



## Translingual practice as a rhetorical tactic in the 2024 gubernatorial election debates

<sup>1</sup>Akhmad Hairul Umam<sup>ID</sup>, <sup>2</sup>Setiono Sugiharto<sup>ID</sup>, <sup>3</sup>Baiatun Nisa<sup>ID</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Communication Science Program, Tanri Abeng University Jakarta, INDONESIA

<sup>1</sup> Jl. Swadarma Raya No. 58 Ulujami Jakarta Selatan 12250

<sup>2</sup>Doctoral Program in Applied English Linguistics, Faculty of Education and Languages,  
Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia, Jakarta, INDONESIA

<sup>2</sup> Jl. Jenderal Sudirman No. 51, Jakarta Selatan 12930

<sup>3</sup>English Literature Program, Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika Jakarta, INDONESIA

<sup>3</sup> Jl. Kramat Raya No. 98, Senen, Jakarta Pusat 10450

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received: July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

Revised: July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Accepted: July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

#### Keywords:

Rhetorical Tactics

Translingual Practice

Political Communication

Translingualism

Critical Discourse Analysis

Gubernatorial Debate

#### Conflict of interest:

None

#### Funding information:

None

#### Correspondence:

Akhmad Hairul Umam

[ahmad.umam@tau.ac.id](mailto:ahmad.umam@tau.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

With an emphasis on the overall rhetorical tactics used in a political discourse, this qualitative case study investigates translingual practice in the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election debates. It specifically examines how the candidates deliberately switched between Indonesian, English, and regional languages to interact with a linguistically varied population and to create compelling political narratives. The study is framed under the frameworks of both translingualism and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Data sources were taken from the transcribed video recordings. The analysis emphasizes the interplay between multilingual communication, voter perception, and identity construction within Jakarta's multicultural context. The findings revealed that translingual practice was purposefully used to appeal to a broader range of demographic groups. Candidates can improve their political messaging, negotiate their identities, and promote inclusivity by mixing languages. Translingual practice is a dynamic and flexible tool for political communication in Jakarta's diverse language environment. By showing that translingual practice serves as a strategic performative tool in electoral engagement rather than just being a reflection of Indonesia's linguistic diversity, this study contributes to the body of research on political discourse in multilingual cultures. It makes the case that, especially in globalized metropolitan contexts, language choice in political discourse is vital for influencing public opinion and for navigating democratic processes.



©Akhmad Hairul Umam; Setiono Sugiharto; Baiatun Nisa

This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) international license.

---

**How to cite (APA Style):**

Umam, A.H., Sugiharto, S., & Nisa, B. (2025). Translingual practice as a rhetorical tactic in the 2024 gubernatorial election debates. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature)*, 10 (2), 391-411. <https://doi.org/10.33369/joall.v10i2.43127>

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

Translingual practice, defined as the fluid and dynamic use of multiple languages and trans-semiotic resources, has gained tractions in political discourse, particularly in debates and public addresses by figures such as presidents and governors. This practice can be viewed as a performative strategy employed by politicians to engage with diverse audiences, assert cultural identity, and navigate sociopolitical complexity.

Standing in stark contrast to monolingual ideologies that treat language as a fixed and discrete system, translingualism acknowledges the fluidity of linguistic repertoires and of how speakers draw upon multiple languages varieties to construct meaning (Canagarajah, 2013; Garcia & Wei, 2014; Wei & García, 2022; Wei, 2022). Translingual practice becomes particularly important in political contexts since candidates need to speak across linguistic and cultural divides to connect with differing voters. Construed as such, translingual practice offers a valuable framework for examining how political leaders strategically use language to establish rapport with different voter segments. It provides crucial insights into language decisions made by candidates for gubernatorial debates by utilizing multilingual discourse to increase their appeal and influence public opinion.

As a conceptual framework, translingualism shifts our attention away from the conventional ideas of language as being static and bounded to the fluid and dynamic language practices people employ to communicate in a variety of linguistic contexts (Canagarajah, 2013; Otheguy et al., 2015; Liu & Fang, 2022). Studies on translingual practice in political discourse are becoming more widely acknowledged in the politics of linguistic diversities in multilingual setting (Canagarajah & Dovchin, 2019; Zhu, 2020), and have embraced the notion of identity, rather than just limited to linguistic proficiency (Jørgensen, 2008). Studies on language mixing practices in political debates have closely aligned political strategies in debates with social identity. In this sense, being able to shift between languages demonstrates not only linguistic proficiency, but also cultural sensitivity and political acumen (Blommaert, 2010; Cheng, 2023; Umam et al., 2023; Permana & Rohmah, 2024).

The political utility of translingual practice is demonstrated in Taiwan by the deliberate employment of Taiwanese Hokkien by politicians like former President Chen Shui-bian. Wei (2015) has been shown that code-switching between Mandarin and Hokkien helps to appeal to local people while preserving the formal stature needed for governmental functions. Other

politicians have also taken this technique from parties that have traditionally been controlled by Mandarin speakers, demonstrating how translingual strategies influence electoral dynamics and voter engagement (Wei, 2015). The prevalence of the "English-only" ideology in the United States has made it difficult for political leaders to implement translingual strategies. According to García and Wei (2014), this movement reinforces monolingual norms in institutional and political discourse while marginalizing multilingual speakers.

These studies demonstrate how translingual practice in particular political contexts is intricately linked to identity, ideology, and power. Public personalities' deliberate use of this practice highlights how effective language can be as a persuasion and engagement tool. Results from earlier studies, however, cannot be generalized since translingual practice might vary considerably between political contexts. Additional research conducted in a different political context is required. The current study aims to close this gap by learning more about the deliberate application of translingualism in Indonesian political discourse, because, to the best of our knowledge, no studies on translingual practice in political contexts have been carried out in Indonesia. Such a study is particularly relevant given that the monolingual ideology is still dominant in communicative practices in almost all domains of life.

It is hoped that it can further generate new insights into how translingualism can serve as a strategic communicative practice, and as such can extend the findings from the previous studies. The framework of translingual practice is employed in this study as a communicative resource, rather than a pedagogical one, with greater applicable value in a multilingual society.

It is important to note that some applied linguists employ the notion of as "translanguaging" in a pedagogical context (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Garcia & Wei, 2014; Wei, 2018), which encourages bilingual and multilingual speakers to employ their complete linguistic repertoires and semiotic resources, enabling a seamless movement between languages (Canagarajah, 2013; 2018; Wei, 2022). However, a broad term of translingualism is used in the present study to capture language practices in socio-political contexts.

Research on political communication in other multilingual societies has shown that candidates often use language to signal group identity, establish rapport with different segments of the population, and demonstrate cultural sensitivity (Jørgensen, 2008; Bull, 2015; Zhu, 2023). English, for instance, is often associated with professionalism, education, and internationalism, while regional languages like Javanese, Sundanese, or Betawi are linked to local authenticity and cultural empathy (Cheng, 2023). This dual strategy allows

candidates to appeal to both urban, cosmopolitan voters and more traditional, local communities. In political environments around the world, where multilingualism is increasingly viewed as a political asset, such strategic language use has been valued (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015).

With nearly 700 languages spoken throughout its archipelago, Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country, boasts remarkable linguistic diversity (Sneddon, 2003; Ethnologue, 2024; Zein, 2020). Jakarta, the nation's political and economic hub, is an excellent illustration of the language diversity of the country, with its diverse population of speakers from various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The 2024 gubernatorial debates, in this context, offer a crucial discursive platform for candidates to express their cultural and linguistic affiliations in addition to their policy positions. This study contends that these translingual practices are an essential component of candidates' political strategy, enabling them to project various aspects of their political identities, rather than just reflecting linguistic variety.

The current study offers new perspectives on how language and politics interact in Indonesia. By combining insights from discourse analysis and translingualism, this study advances our understanding of political communication in linguistically diverse societies, where language choice acts as a tool for persuasion, alignment, and difference, as well as a medium of expression. This research, therefore, aims to address how gubernatorial candidates deploy translingual resources as a strategy for voter engagement in political debates and identity construction.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design & Data Sources**

Drawing on translanguaging theory as the conceptual lens and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the analytical framework, this qualitative case study examines how translingual practices function as rhetorical strategies observed during the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial debates. The primary sources of data were debate video recordings that can be found on openly accessible websites like YouTube (KPU DKI Jakarta) and television networks (e.g., Kompas TV). These materials offer a rich corpus for analyzing how linguistic strategies – especially translingual practices – are deployed to engage diverse voter demographics. Based on emerging patterns of language use, all argument data (e.g., phrases, clauses, and sentences) were transcribed, analyzed, and grouped.

CDA is well-situated for this study as it demonstrates how language use reflects and constructs social power relations in Jakarta's political landscape (Fairclough, 2010; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). It also serves as a powerful tool for uncovering the socio-political meanings of translingual communication by revealing ideologies embedded in discourse (Shah et al.,

2021). When combined with translanguaging theory, which views language use as a deliberate and strategic practice, this frame allows for an in-depth analysis of how candidates utilize different languages to appeal to diverse audiences, assert cultural identities, and shape political personas.

The three officially announced pairs of candidates for governor of Jakarta in the 2024 election were Ridwan Kamil and Suswono, Dharma Pongrekun and Kun Wardana, and Pramono Anung and Rano Karno. These candidates were chosen based on their confirmed status by the General Elections Commission (KPU Jakarta). As observed on the KPU Jakarta YouTube channel, which was aired by TV networks, the candidates' performance exhibited a diversity of language use. Alongside Suswono's usage of formal Bahasa Indonesia, Ridwan Kamil employed English for global topics and Sundanese rhymes to create local connections. While Kun Wardana used straightforward language to interact with the working class, Dharma Pongrekun stressed nationalism through authoritative Bahasa Indonesia. Pramono Anung balanced Javanese rhymes and diplomatic code-switching. At the same time, Rano Karno used Betawi vernacular to draw attention to cultural roots and engage grassroots voters.

The study analyzed approximately 150 minutes of video data drawn from the second round of the three official debate sessions held between October 6 and November 17, 2024. All candidates' utterances during the debates were purposively sampled, focusing specifically on segments where translingual practices were evident. These include moments where candidates switched between languages or dialects strategically, which were then transcribed and coded for further analysis using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

### Three Candidate Pairs for Governor and Vice Governor of DKI Jakarta 2024



Figure 1.  
Ridwan Kamil & Suswono



Figure 2.  
Dharma Pongrekun & Wardana Abiyoto



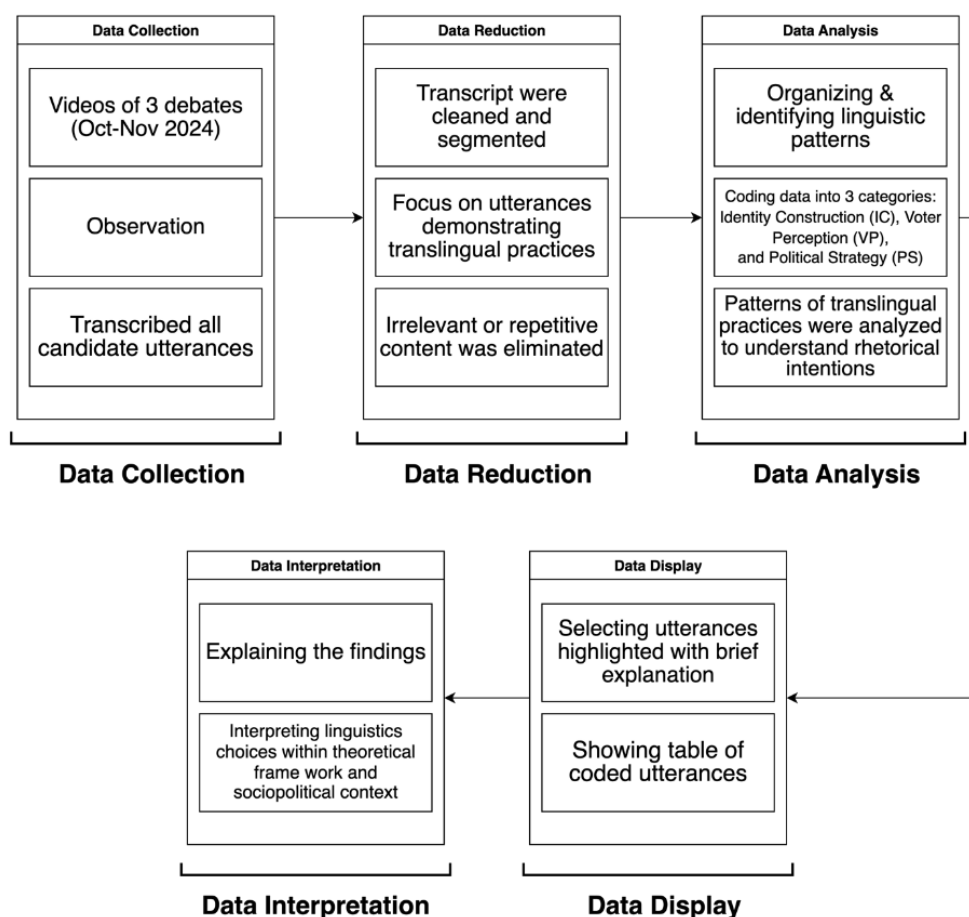
**Figure 3.**  
*Pramono Anung & Rano Karno*

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0kPNXunka0>

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The analysis focuses on several key aspects of translingualism, including the rhetorical roles it plays in shaping political identities and the code-switching between Bahasa Indonesia, English, and regional languages. Transcriptions were analyzed to discover linguistic alterations by candidates and their associated rhetorical techniques. For example, regional languages may be utilized to appeal to particular ethnic populations in Jakarta, while English may be used to indicate sophistication and involvement with international concerns. Due to the scope of the dataset, the researchers selected a small number of translingual practices from the second round of the 2024 DKI gubernatorial debate for definition and examination using insights from CDA.

The study follows a five-step process (see Figure 4) adapted from Miles and Huberman (1994) interactive model, which involves data collection, reduction, analysis, display, and interpretation. Transcripts of the debates were collected and reduced through coding based on identity construction, language, voter perception, and translingual practice as a political strategy. These codes were then analyzed and visualized (e.g., excerpts), allowing for a more in-depth interpretation of how multilingual utterances were used to shape public perception, assert authenticity, and foster solidarity across linguistic and cultural lines.



**Figure 4. Research Procedure**

## FINDINGS

A total of 162 instances of translingual practices were identified during the second-round debate session. These instances were grouped into three major categories. Each category (Table 1) reflects a nuanced approach to multilingual communication within a political context as summarized and presented in the following Excerpts:

**Table 1. Translingual practices in Jakarta gubernatorial debates**

No	Category	Number of Instance	Percentage (%)	Example Use
1	Code-Switching and Identity Construction	67	41.4%	Use of English and local languages to highlight both global and local identity (e.g., "modern leadership")



2	Language and Voter Perception	52	32.1%	English term to frame modern governance (e.g., “smart city”)
3	Translingual Practice as Political Strategy	43	26.5%	Use of translingualism to contrast themselves from opponents.
Total		162	100%	

### 1. Code-Switching and Identity Construction (41.4%)

This category highlights how gubernatorial candidates used code-switching between Bahasa Indonesia, English, and local languages to construct political, religious, or cultural identities. These shifts signaled modernity, religiosity, nationalism, or regional ties. The most common pattern was identity-driven code-switching, with 67 of 162 instances (41.4%) involving alternation between national and regional languages, notably Javanese, Betawinese, and Sundanese, to portray both national credibility and local rootedness.

#### Excerpt 1: RKIC01

“...Saya mengeluarkan kebijakan *equal opportunity employer*, jadi artinya semua kantor di Jakarta *insya Allah* wajib menandatangani kontrak bahwa mereka adalah perusahaan yang akan memperkerjakan siapapun tanpa memandang apakah dissabilitas atau tidak, selama disabilitas itu bisa” [“...I have issued the **equal opportunity employer policy**, which means that all offices in Jakarta, *insya Allah* (God willing), will be required to sign a contract declaring that they are companies committed to hiring anyone, regardless of whether they have a disability or not, as long as the individual with a disability is capable”] (Ridwan Kamil).

Ridwan Kamil's statement demonstrates the role of translanguaging in constructing identity through political discourse, emphasizing inclusivity and modern leadership. By blending Indonesian with English terms like “equal opportunity employer” and the religious expression “*insya Allah*”, the speaker strategically projects a multifaceted identity—one that is progressive, globally informed, and culturally rooted.

#### Excerpt 2: DPIC03

“...mengutamakan kesehatan masyarakat melalui *preventive medicine*, yang aman dan beradab” [“...**prioritizing public health through preventive medicine, which is safe and civilized**” [Dharma Pongrekun].

The use of translanguaging strategically to create complex identities that combine local cultural values with global awareness is reflected in



Dharma Pongrekun's statement. His conformity with globally accepted health methods is demonstrated by the use of the English word "preventive medicine" in an otherwise Indonesian statement, which conveys a sense of modernity, competence, and openness to embrace international standards while tackling public health challenges. The phrase "yang aman dan beradab" places the idea within an Indonesian moral and cultural framework, highlighting characteristics that appeal to the local audience, such as safety and civility.

### Excerpt 3: PAIC02

"... Saya punya impian besar sebagai penghormatan kepada nama besar Benyamin Sueb, maka saya akan menyeleggarakan *Benyamin S Award* yaitu singkatan dari Bersih, Nyaman Indah, dan Sejahtera" [...**"I have a big dream to honor the great name of Benyamin Sueb, so I will establish the Benyamin S Award, which stands for Clean, Comfortable, Beautiful, and Prosperous"**] (Pramono).

Pramono's remarks during the gubernatorial debate illustrate the dynamic interaction between language and identity construction in the context of translanguaging. Invoking "Benyamin Sueb," a cultural figure of Betawi origin, allows Pramono to connect with the Jakarta electorate by aligning himself with local traditions. His decision to utilize the acronym "Bersih, Nyaman, Indah, dan Sejahtera" to introduce the "Benyamin S Award" further exemplifies strategic language use by blending formal Indonesian with culturally relevant aspects. Pramono demonstrates the potential of language choice and cultural embeddedness in political discourse by bridging traditional legacy and new goals through translanguaging, which combines linguistic inventiveness with cultural reference.

## 2. Language and Voter Perception (32.1%)

This category examines deliberate word choices that aim to sway voters' opinions, gain trust, and create emotional resonance. To appeal to particular demographics, including young people, religious audiences, and local communities, candidates used language that was well-known, amusing, and culturally rooted. In 52 instances (32.1%), translingual expressions – particularly English terms like "MRT," "*Salus populi suprema lex esto*," and "job fair" – were used to project intelligence, modernity, and global awareness, appealing to educated, urban voters.

**Excerpt 4: RKVP02**

“...memfasilitasi pergerakan MRT (*Mass Rapid Transit*) LRT (*Light Rail Transit*) Transjakarta Busway, bikeway dan lain sebagainya dan... kita akan berinovasi membuat *river way* melintasi 13 sungai di Jakarta, kemudian juga perluasan *flyover*... masih dibutuhkan secara *reality* ya” [**“...facilitating the movement of MRT (Mass Rapid Transit), LRT (Light Rail Transit), Transjakarta Busway, bikeway, and so on, and... we will innovate by creating a river way crossing 13 rivers in Jakarta, as well as expanding flyovers... which are still needed in reality”**]

 (Ridwan Kamil).

Ridwan Kamil's statement during the gubernatorial debate showcases translanguaging as a powerful political strategy to shape voter perception. By skillfully integrating Indonesian with English terms like “MRT”, “LRT”, “Transjakarta Busway”, “bikeway”, and “river way”, Ridwan Kamil presents himself as a leader with a modern and innovative vision aligned with global urban development trends. This linguistic blending allows him to address Jakarta's diverse electorate, combining the familiarity of local language with the aspirational appeal of global terminology. The statement of a “river way” crossing 13 rivers not only highlights his innovative urban planning ideas but also positions him as a proponent of environmental stewardship, resonating with eco-conscious voters.

**Excerpt 5: DPVP06**

“...*Salus populi suprema lex esto*: Keselamatan rakyat adalah hukum tertinggi, oleh sebab itu adegium jangan dibalik balik” [**“...*Salus populi suprema lex esto*: The safety of the people is the highest law, and therefore, this adage must not be twisted or misinterpreted”**]

 (Dharma Pangrekun).

In order to strengthen his leadership style and sway voters' engagement, Dharma Pangrekun used translanguaging strategically in his remark. He projects an image of scholarship and morality by quoting the Latin phrase *Salus populi suprema lex esto*, which means “The safety of the people is the highest law,” along with its Indonesian translation. Voters who respect justice are drawn to Dharma's focus on the adage's integrity, which establishes him as a leader who is both principled and approachable and who can engage a wide range of people.

**Excerpt 6: PAVP04**

“... Badai PHK masalah ini harus ditangani serius dengan *job fair-job fair* 3 bulan sekali di kecamatan dan tersedia pelatihan bersertifikat dengan Balai Latihan kerja yang lebih modern” [**“...The wave of layoffs (PHK)**

**must be addressed seriously through job fairs held every three months at sub-districts and by providing certified training with more modern vocational training centers”]** (Pramono).

Pramono’s statement during the gubernatorial debate reflects the use of translanguaging to shape voter perception by blending formal Indonesian with English phrases like “job fair”. This choice underscores a progressive and practical approach, resonating with an electorate familiar with global employment practices. By emphasizing “job fair” and “pelatihan bersertifikat”, Pramono constructs an image of a leader focused on modern solutions to address critical issues like mass layoffs (PHK).

### **3. Translingual Practices as Political Strategy (26.5%)**

This category refers to the intentional use of multiple languages as a strategic tool for differentiation and political positioning. It emphasizes how candidates use translingualism to enhance authority, vision, and contrast themselves from opponents or to reinforce key policy stances, values, or ideologies. In 43 instances (26.5%), candidates employed translingual practices—such as sudden language shifts during rebuttals, ironic code-switching, or local dialects—to contrast themselves with opponents and reinforce key values or ideologies.

#### **Excerpt 7. RKPS02**

“Jakarta ini sangat konkret.... karena kunjungan devisa ke Kepulauan Seribu sangat sedikit, kami mengusulkan *social economic zone*” [**“Jakarta is very concrete... Because the foreign exchange visits to the Thousand Islands are very low, we propose a social economic zone”]** (Ridwan Kamil).

Ridwan Kamil's statement during the gubernatorial debate exemplifies the strategic use of translanguaging in political discourse. Voters who desire modernity and international participation will find Ridwan Kamil appealing since he ties himself with global economic concepts by incorporating English terminology like “social economic zone” into his Indonesian discourse. This intentional linguistic blending helps to create the impression of a forward-thinking leader who can carry out complex economic plans. Through the use of translanguaging, Ridwan Kamil not only successfully conveys intricate economic concepts but also establishes himself as a leader attuned to both regional goals and worldwide trends. By showcasing an inclusive vision that goes beyond his linguistic restrictions, this strategy increases his relatability and credibility with Jakarta's voters.

**Excerpt 8: DPPS03**

“...kemudian kita perlu mengurangi kemacetan dengan *compound-compound* yang tersentralisasi, dimana disitu ada tempat tinggal, sekolah, sehingga transportasi ini bisa terkonsolidasi dengan baik dengan dibuat minimal 500 meter dari pemukiman” [**“...then we need to reduce traffic congestion with centralized compounds, where there are residential areas, schools, and so on, so that transportation can be well consolidated, with a minimum distance of 500 meters from residential areas”**] (Darma Pangrekun)

Dharma Pangrekun's speech, which skillfully combines English and Indonesian words like "compound-compound" exemplifies the successful application of translingual practices as a political strategy. The linguistic choice positioned him as a progressive leader who integrates international urban planning ideas while maintaining his relatability to local audiences. Voters who appreciate creative solutions to Jakarta's traffic problems may find the word "compound-compound" appealing because it conjures up images of modernism and organization. Dharma successfully connects local and global viewpoints by highlighting pragmatic components like "500 meter dari pemukiman" and "transportasi terkonsolidasi," appealing to people who value community-oriented solutions as well as those who are driven by innovation.

**Excerpt 9: PAPS03**

“...kalau cara ini bisa dilakukan, saya meyakini bahwa Jakarta akan sangat cepat untuk berkembang dan orang-orang yang dari sub-urban area juga dia bisa tinggal di TOD-TOD tersebut” [**“..if this approach can be implemented, I believe that Jakarta will develop very quickly, and people from suburban areas will also be able to live in those TODs (Transit-Oriented Developments)”**] (Pramono)

Pramono's statement, which combines Indonesian with technical urban planning terms like "Transit Oriented Development (TOD)," exemplifies translanguaging as a political strategy. This attempt to match Jakarta's development goal with globally accepted patterns is shown in the blending of local terminology with global urban planning jargon. Pramono uses "TOD-TOD" in his speech to deliver a complex idea while leveraging context and repetition to make it understandable to local audiences. Pramono establishes himself as a progressive leader who is aware of both local issues and worldwide trends by relating TODs to the demands of suburban communities. His credibility is increased by this translingual

strategy, which cultivates relatability and trust among voters who appreciate creative and inclusive urban solutions.

## **DISCUSSION**

The analysis has shown that Jakarta gubernatorial candidates use translingual practices as strategic instruments to affect identity perception, voter connection, and competitive positioning in a multilingual election environment, rather than just as stylistic choices. This deliberate use of language emphasizes how crucial linguistic awareness is to political communication and how language usage may play a key role in voter engagement and candidate performance. Three notable translingual practices that could be observed during the gubernatorial candidate debates are identified in the analysis and are grouped as follows: (1) code-switching and identity construction, (2) language and voter perception, and (3) translingual practices as a political strategy. In this section, each category will be discussed in more detail below.

The analysis of the debates shows that one of the main strategies used by candidates to create their political personas is code-switching. When discussing issues such as the global city, policy, smart city, and innovation, all three candidates regularly switch between Bahasa Indonesia and English to project an image of being a progressive, globally-minded leader. Ridwan Kamil's remark, which emphasizes inclusivity and contemporary leadership, illustrates the function of translanguaging in forging identity through political discourse (Hume, 2024). The term "equal opportunity employer" is in line with international standards and demonstrates a dedication to these ideals of justice and diversity in hiring processes. Ridwan Kamil's reputation as a contemporary leader who can incorporate global best practices into Jakarta's government is further enhanced by this selection. Simultaneously, the expression "insya Allah" evokes a feeling of religious and cultural authenticity, indicating reverence for Islamic principles that genuinely appeal to the local electorate (Newland, 2000).

Such deliberate use of diverse linguistic resources promotes communication that links local and global views, as highlighted by García and Wei (2014). Ridwan Kamil creates an identity that is both locally rooted and globally aware by negotiating various linguistic and cultural codes, which promotes relatability and trust among a variety of stakeholders.

The statement made by Dharma Pongrekun (see sample 2) exemplifies the deliberate application of translanguaging to create complex identities that combine local cultural values with global understanding. As a former police officer, he frequently presents himself as a disciplined and authoritative character, virtually entirely utilizing Bahasa Indonesia to communicate a sense of integrity, order, and nationalism. This is consistent with the

translanguaging theory of Garcia and Wei (2014), which emphasizes how utilizing a variety of linguistic resources can unite local and global viewpoints to produce inclusive and contextually relevant speech. Through the use of translanguaging, Dharma creates an identity that is both progressive and firmly grounded in regional ethical standards, appealing to voters who respect cultural authenticity and societal values as well as urban, globally-minded citizens.

Pramono's statement (Excerpt 3) illustrates a dynamic interaction between language and identity construction in the context of translanguaging (Creese & Blackledge, 2015). The politician can create complex identities that appeal to a range of audiences by purposefully combining language resources and cultural symbols. Pramono demonstrates the potential of language choice and cultural embeddedness in political discourse by bridging traditional legacy and new goals through translanguaging, which combines linguistic creativity with cultural reference.

The influence of translingual practices on voter perception is one of the key findings. Various voter segments typically view candidates who are proficient in numerous languages as more capable and relatable. While regional languages generate a sense of authenticity and local participation, English in particular is linked to modernity and professionalism (Lee, 2006). Translanguaging allows candidates to present various aspects of their linguistic identity and to voters from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

This finding is consistent with earlier studies on political communication, which indicate that language choice is an effective means of influencing public opinion. Jørgensen (2008) asserts that a politician's ability to switch between languages might improve their perception as flexible and able to handle both domestic and international issues. Translingual strategies enable candidates to interact with voters from various languages and social backgrounds in Jakarta, a multicultural city with a diverse electorate, increasing their appeal.

In political discourse, the integration of local relevance and global goals through translanguaging can strengthen relatability and credibility. By employing this tactic, Ridwan Kamil, for instance, crosses linguistic and cultural divides (Yanaprasart, 2017), appealing to both traditional and progressive voter groups. He also positions himself as a leader who can strike a balance between Jakarta's local needs and international advancement, which promotes a favorable voter perception on a wide scale.

The use of translanguaging strategically to support Dharma Pongrekun's leadership style and influence voter perception is seen in his statement (excerpt 5). His statements frequently contain allusions to national security and police jargon, which appeals to those who value security and

stability in Jakarta's government. According to Garcia and Wei (2014), translanguaging enables speakers to create meaning that appeals to a range of audiences by utilizing a variety of linguistic resources. Dharma's legitimacy and intellectual appeal are increased by the combination of Latin, a representation of legal and intellectual authority, and Indonesian, a language that is approachable and relevant. Canagarajah (2013) also emphasizes how such actions might improve relatability by connecting local cultural settings with global intellectual traditions. Voters who respect justice are drawn to Dharma's focus on the adage's integrity, which establishes him as a leader who is both principled and approachable and who can engage a wide range of people.

By blending formal Indonesian with English expressions like "job fair," Pramono's statement (excerpt 6) influences the impression of voters. By emphasizing "job fair" and "pelatihan bersertifikat," Pramono presents himself as a leader who is committed to finding contemporary answers to pressing problems like mass layoffs. According to Garcia and Wei (2014), translanguaging allows speakers to effectively engage with a variety of audiences by utilizing a variety of linguistic resources. These phrases' incorporation together with mentions of regional initiatives, like quarterly employment fairs in subdistricts, supports Canagarajah's (2013) claim that translingual practices connect local and global viewpoints. Pramono may appeal to a wide range of voter demographics with this strategy, demonstrating creativity and inclusivity while tackling pragmatic issues with language and cultural sensitivity.

The strategic use of translingual practices in the debates also highlights the political utility of language (Chomsky, 2004). Candidates do not switch languages arbitrarily; instead, these shifts are carefully timed and contextually motivated. For instance, all candidates frequently switched to English when discussing Jakarta's economic potential or global urban planning, as English is perceived as the language of business and global communication. This choice allows candidates to position themselves as competent leaders capable of navigating Jakarta's economic future in a globalized world.

Thus, translingual practice serves a dual political purpose by enabling politicians to strengthen their local credibility while also projecting an image of global ability. In a city like Jakarta, where voters come from a diverse variety of language and cultural backgrounds, this dual strategy is especially crucial. Candidates can successfully navigate the city's complex social landscape by switching between languages, appealing to both traditional, community-focused groups and contemporary, metropolitan voters.

An example of the deliberate application of translanguaging in political discourse is found in Ridwan Kamil's speech (excerpt 7). Here,



translanguaging serves as a political instrument. It is described as the use of multiple linguistic resources to make meaning outside of designated languages (García & Kleifgen, 2020). It enables Ridwan Kamil to bridge local and global viewpoints by connecting with a variety of audiences. This method challenges established boundaries and embraces linguistic fluidity, reflecting a political position that acknowledges language as a construct shaped by social and political influences (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Through the use of translanguaging, Ridwan Kamil not only successfully conveys complex economic concepts but also establishes himself as a leader sensitive to both regional goals and worldwide patterns. By showcasing an inclusive vision that goes beyond his linguistic restrictions, this tactic increases his relatability and credibility with Jakarta's voters.

By skillfully combining Indonesian and English terminology, Dharma Pongrekun's statement (excerpt 8) exemplifies the successful application of translingual practices as a political strategy. In this regard, Garcia and Wei (2014) argue that translanguaging makes it possible to produce meaning that appeals to a wide range of linguistic and cultural audiences. In a similar line of argument, Canagarajah (2013) emphasizes how accessibility and relatability can be improved by combining localized syntax with universal terminology.

García and Wei (2014) have proposed that translanguaging is an approach that effectively engages diverse voter demographics by utilizing a variety of linguistic resources to cross language and cultural borders. As a forward-thinking leader who is aware of both local issues and global trends, Pramono connects TODs (excerpt 9) with the demands of suburban communities. Among people who appreciate creative and inclusive urban solutions, this translingual strategy enhances their reputation and fosters relatability.

## **CONCLUSION**

The current study has shown that translanguaging different languages by the candidates has proven effective in reaching a variety of voters. This translingual practice serves as an important rhetorical tactic to woo voters. As has been found before, Dharma Pongrekun's emphasis on Bahasa Indonesia indicates his patriotic stance, but Ridwan Kamil's translanguaging between English and Bahasa Indonesia demonstrates his cosmopolitan personality. Pramono Anung's proficiency in several languages shows his cultural sensitivity and political adaptability. The fact that each of the three candidates used different translingual strategies reflects their respective political platforms and supporting bases.

Ridwan Kamil's cosmopolitan leadership style is demonstrated by his frequent usage of English when speaking about global cities and government,

as well as economic development. In these situations, Ridwan presents himself as a leader capable of handling both internal and foreign difficulties by speaking in English. His employment of a Sundanese accent when discussing cultural concerns demonstrates his ability to reconcile local beliefs with modern governance, indicating that he stays rooted in his heritage while discussing global challenges.

In contrast to Ridwan's cosmopolitan outlook, Dharma Pongrekun employs Bahasa Indonesia nearly entirely, which is indicative of his nationalistic and security-focused agenda. His sparse use of foreign languages highlights his dedication to nationalism and internal stability, making him appealing to people who value Indonesian sovereignty over international involvement.

Pramono Anung demonstrates his diplomatic skills and readiness to lead Jakarta in a globalized world by transitioning between Bahasa Indonesia and English with ease. He demonstrates cultural sensitivity by using Javanese accent during the debates, which helps him establish a strong connection with people hailing from his ethnic group.

All in all, this study highlights the importance of translingual practice in influencing political discourse in Jakarta, a city known for diverse linguistic practices and cultural backgrounds. However, to what extent the effects of the translingual practice on voting patterns and political outcomes in other Indonesian regions remain consistent with the present findings warrants further empirical scrutiny.

## REFERENCES

- Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bull, P. (. (2015). Political language and persuasive communication. In *Language, discourse and social psychology* (pp. 255–275). Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230206168\\_11](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230206168_11)
- Canagarajah, S. (2013). *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203073889>
- Canagarajah, S. (2018). Translingual Practice as Spatial Repertoires: Expanding the Paradigm beyond Structuralist Orientations.pdf. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(1), 31–54. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amx041>
- Canagarajah, S., & Dovchin, S. (2019). The everyday politics of translingualism as a resistant practice. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 16(2), 127–144. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2019.1575833>
- Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2020). Teaching English through pedagogical translanguaging. *World Englishes*, 39(2), 300–311. <https://doi.org/>

10.1111/weng.12462

- Cheng, S. (2023). Translingualism in Political Debates: A Multimodal Approach. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 27(2), 145–163.
- Chomsky, N. (2004). *Language and politics*. AK Press.
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? *The Modern Language Journal*, 97(1), 103–115. <https://doi.org/10.1063/1.3624780>
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2015). Translanguaging and Identity in Educational Settings. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 35, 20–35. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000233>
- Ethnologue. (2024). *Language of the World* (26th editi). SIL International.
- Fairclough, N. (2010). *Critical Discourse Analysis "The Critical Study of Language"* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- García, O., & Kleifgen, J. A. (2020). Translanguaging and Literacies. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(4), 553–571. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.286>
- Garcia, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism, and education*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hume, D. (2024). Political discourses. In *The History of Taxation Vol. 1*. In Routledge. Routledge.
- Jørgensen, J. N. (2008). Polylingual languaging around and among children and adolescents. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 5(3), 161–176. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790710802387562>
- Lee, J. S. (2006). Linguistic constructions of modernity: English mixing in Korean television commercials. *Language in Society*, 35(1), 59–91. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404506060039>
- Liu, Y., & Fang, F. (2022). Translanguaging Theory and Practice: How Stakeholders Perceive Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language. *RELC Journal*, 53(2), 391–399. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220939222>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2nd Ed). SAGE Publications.
- Newland, L. (2000). Under the Banner of Islam: Mobilising Religious Identities in West Java. *Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 11(3), 199–222. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1835-9310.2000.tb00056.x>
- Otheguy, R., García, O., & Reid, W. (2015). Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 6(3), 281–307. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2015-0014>
- Pennycook, A., & Otsuji, E. (2015). *Metrolingualism: Language in the City*. Routledge.
- Permana, P. G. A. M., & Rohmah, Z. (2024). Contemporary translingual English language policy and practice in Indonesia. *Cogent Education*,

- 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2404059>
- Shah, M. I., Ahmad, S. A., & Danishs, A. (2021). Controversies in Political Ideologies: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Speeches of Indian and Pakistani Premiers on Pulwama Incident. *Register Journal*, 14(1), 43–64. <https://doi.org/10.18326/rgt.v14i1.43-64>
- Sneddon, J. N. (2003). *The Indonesian Languages: Its History and Role in Modern Society*. UNSW Press.
- Umam, A. H., Sugiharto, S., & Manara, C. (2023). *Translingual practice in remote EFL tertiary education: How multilingual speakers create translanguaging spaces*. 13(2), 257–268.
- Wei, L., & García, O. (2022). Not a First Language but One Repertoire: Translanguaging as a Decolonizing Project. *RELC Journal*, 53(2), 313–324. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/00336882221092841>
- Wei, L. (2015). Translingual Strategies in Taiwanese Politics. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 14(3), 123–141.
- Wei, L. (2018). Translanguaging as a Practical Theory of Language. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(1), 9–30. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amx039>
- Wei, L. (2022). Translanguaging as a political stance: implications for English language education. *ELT Journal*, 76(2), 309. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccac001>
- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2016). *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies*. SAGE.
- Yanaprasart, P. (2017). Transcending borders – bridging language boundaries in linguistically mixed team. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 18(1), 9–27. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2017.1401036>
- Zein, S. (2020). *Language Policy in Superdiverse Indonesia* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429019739>
- Zhu, H. (2020). Translanguaging as Everyday Practice. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 175, 181–193.
- Zhu, H. (2023). Multilingual Politics and Identity: Translingualism in Political Discourse. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 44(1), 62–80.

## THE AUTHORS

<sup>1</sup>**Dr. Akhmad Hairul Umam, M.Hum.**, is a lecturer in the Communication Studies Program at Tanri Abeng University, Jakarta. He holds a Doctorate in Applied English Linguistics and has expertise in English teaching, applied linguistics, and intercultural communication. His research covers translingual practices, technology-integrated learning, and community-based education. He actively publishes in academic journals and leads capacity-building workshops, supported by national research grants and community empowerment programs.

<sup>2</sup>**Prof. Dr. Setiono Sugiharto, M.Hum.**, is a lecturer in the Doctoral Program of Applied English Linguistics at Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia. He specializes in language education, discourse analysis, and applied linguistics. With extensive academic experience, he actively supervises doctoral research and contributes to scholarly publications. His work reflects a deep commitment to advancing linguistic research and fostering academic excellence in language teaching and learning in Indonesia.

<sup>3</sup>**Dr. Baiatun Nisa, M.Pd.**, is a lecturer in the English Literature Program at Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika Jakarta. She specializes in English language pedagogy, literary analysis, and cultural studies. Driven by a deep commitment to language education, she actively mentors students and supervises research projects that enhance their linguistic competence and critical thinking. She regularly publishes in national and international journals and participates in academic conferences. Her dedication to effective language teaching inspires students to engage meaningfully with English in academic and real-world contexts.