



Social Media Communication Styles of Political Leaders as a Form of Group Identity: A Sociolinguistic Study

Afi Fadlilah¹, Rini Utari², and Irwan Hermawan³

¹ Indonesian Language and Literature Study Program, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

² Indonesian Language Education Study Program, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

³ Business Administration Study Program, Politeknik LP31, Bandung, Indonesia
afifadlilah@upi.edu

Abstract. This research aims to analyze the language code political figures use when communicating on social media as a group identity. This research used a descriptive method with a qualitative approach and the object of this research is the speech of Ganjar Pranowo, Ridwan Kamil, and Sandiaga Uno on Instagram or X/Twitter social media. The data collection techniques in this research are literature study and documentary method by tracing the speech data on social media. The results showed that political communication carried out by political figures gave rise to various language variations that showed the identity of a group. Communication patterns and speech code choices could be classified into two groups, namely the relationship between participants and the surrounding situation, while the context in political communication has a role in the selection of speech code. The results also showed that the selection of speech codes used was adjusted to the purpose of communication and speech partners so that there are several communication patterns and language variations that appear in political communication.

Keywords: Group Identity, Political Communication, Social Media, Sociolinguistics, Speech Code.

1 Introduction

Language as a medium of communication has a role that can determine the social life of society from various aspects, including the political field because with language a person can convey his opinion and thoughts, and express something. Communicative ability is a language ability and skill to express language in accordance with the functions and situations owned by speakers (Puspasari, 2018). The communication patterns used by each speaker vary according to work and environment. A person's character can be seen from his language acts; for example, a politician will use political language, while a writer will use literary language. Thus, the language used by a person can be an identity for individuals and groups.

Social media is an application that allows a person to communicate virtually in a variety of languages. Communication is a language process between speakers and speech partners to provide information to each other. Language is a dynamic communication medium so language users and language users must adjust each other's social language (Kushartanti & Yuwono, 2007). Everyone will adjust the language used when communicating by looking at the intended community group. This is related to the study of sociolinguistics which views that language is related to the prevailing factors in society.

Communication occurs in all aspects of society, one of which is politics. In political activities, there is communication between political actors and the community as political targets. Political communication is communication in which political messages are contained, involving all political actors, related to power, and government policies (Ruslan, 2015). In political communication patterns, the language used plays a major role in spreading power according to one's capacity and rights. Thus, language in political communication patterns will build various variations of language used to achieve political targets.

Political communication is the language of the results of political activities that aim to convey ideas and messages from political actors to political targets. From a sociolinguistic perspective, the language used by political figures has its characteristics that can be seen from the use of speech codes in political situations. Speech code is an utterance of the sound symbol system used by the community in communication (Fishman, 1972). Political communication language in sociolinguistic studies is seen based on the selection of speech codes used. Sociolinguistic studies in political communication try to reveal the phenomenon of political language based on the speech code used and show the social identity of speakers.

The use of language can show the identity of a person or group is closely related to the science of Sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics is a branch of sociolinguistics that is interdisciplinary with sociology with the object of research in the form of a relationship between a language and social factors within the scope of speech society (Fishman, 1972). The identity of a person or group is related to the life of the local community, so the use of language is closely related to the identity of the speakers.

The media can be a channel of communication between the government and citizens who have their interests in the flow of political communication. Political communication also acts as a political communicator who seeks to convey political messages through the use of political means (Makmur, 2016). Political communication as a way used by political figures to convey information about politics to the public can be found orally or in writing. The use of the Internet for political communication through social media is not new in the modern and digital era. Social media does not limit the direction of communication between political figures and the general public so along with the evolution of the internet, which is currently a social order, many political figures use social media to convey their opinions. Social media is used as a medium for delivering political information, such as Instagram and X/Twitter.

The language of communication used by political figures on social media has characteristics that ultimately become the identity of a group or individual (Paramitha, 2017). The pattern of communication choices or speech codes used is adjusted to the

political goals to be achieved by politicians. Thus, language as a system that is understood by all speakers gives birth to various variations due to the diversity of social interactions and functions of activities in society. The language used by speakers is adjusted to the context of communication so that it becomes a characteristic of a group's identity.

Studies on political communication patterns have been conducted with various techniques and approaches. However, the research that has been done only focuses on the use of language used by political figures in general. This research will focus on the language of communication of political figures on social media in terms of the selection of speech codes that can show the identity of a group using sociolinguistic studies. The purpose of this research is to analyze the choice of speech code of political figures in political communication on social media, analyze the function of speech code choices used by political figures in political communication, and the speech used by political figures.

2 Method

The method used in this research is a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The qualitative approach was chosen because the problems studied in this research require actual and contextual data, namely about the language and communication patterns used by political figures on social media as a tool to identify group identity. The qualitative descriptive method was chosen because this research method is used to examine the condition of natural objects and researchers as key instruments. The theoretical study used in this research is sociolinguistic studies because the research conducted is related to the language used by the community.

The data collection techniques in this study used documentary methods and literature studies. The documentary method is a data collection method used in social research methodology to trace historical data in the form of images or photographs containing speech (Bungin, 2017). Research data is taken from social media of political figures in general. The samples of political figures in this study are Ganjar Pranowo, Ridwan Kamil, and Sandiaga Uno.

Data processing technique or data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model. The researcher conducted data reduction on speech information that has been obtained from social media with a focus on speech on political issues. The results of data reduction were then selected based on the problem formulation of the research. The last stage is verification by making conclusions.

3 Findings and Discussion

The result of this research is the analysis of communication language used by several samples of political figures, such as Ganjar Pranowo, Ridwan Kamil, and Sandiaga Uno on social media. The form of communication language used by political figures is analyzed based on the chosen speech code, the function of the choice of speech code, and utterances on social media that have a form of political communication language. Based

on the results of the research, it is found that the communication patterns carried out by political figures have distinctive characteristics that distinguish them from the communication patterns of other professions. Political figures use political language to influence others. In a sociolinguistic perspective, speech or utterances cannot be understood in separate words and use loose words (Devianty, 2019). Viewed from a sociolinguistic perspective, one must imagine what kind of inner conditions occur in language speakers because language reflects the speaker's way of thinking (Sholekhah & Diana, 2021).

Language reflects the reality of human life because through language we can understand the substance of communication. The choice of words and speech codes in communication patterns will show the identity of a person or group. Communication patterns used by political figures aim to influence others because in an utterance there is a dimension of power that appears. A political figure has an existence and a political stage that gives him the power to influence others through his ideas.

In sociolinguistic studies, language reflects the speakers or users so that the characteristics and identity will be seen from the language code used. Political communication patterns from a sociolinguistic perspective try to address the phenomenon of language in the political world based on the choice of speech codes used in communication and show the self-identity and culture of the speakers (Rehanisafira & Afnita, 2021). The language used by political figures in carrying out political practices strongly reflects their identity, self-image, and how they carry out the political process. The language of communication in political practice will give rise to language variations that become the self-identity of groups or individuals. The language variations that arise are very dependent on the relationship of social change that arises, so these variations arise because of the existing context and environment.

The environment of political figures affects the communication patterns used when communicating with speech partners so it can be a certain characteristic for each political figure in communication. The choice of speech code in communication shows the identity of a person or group that can distinguish it from others. In political practice, the language used strongly reflects the identity, self-image, and political process being carried out by political figures. The language of communication in conventional political practice will give rise to various variations of language that can become an identity for some people or groups. In general, political figures will use the language of devotion to communicate, namely language variations that have meaning in the form of missions from the government by involving local cultural aspects. Not infrequently political figures will also use mask language by choosing words that are more subtle in conveying something, mask language is also related to the imaging language raised by political figures by providing a picture of the success achieved, covering up shortcomings, and giving hope to the community in the future. The most dominant language variation or variety that appears as a form of group identity is regulatory language, which is the language of commands used by political figures to encourage work. The language variations that arise are highly dependent on the relationships of social change that may arise (Ruslan, 2015).

The use of communication language used by political figures is of course different from that of a trader. This is because language as a means of communication is used to convey the purpose or mission of the speaker and as a medium to convey the interests

of the wearer to the community group. Based on observations of the social media of several political figures who became research samples, it was found that the political communication used by Ganjar Pranowo, Ridwan Kamil, and Sandiaga Uno gave rise to a diverse or varied choice of speech codes. The diversity of speech codes or language variations is due to the subject of a multilingual so that the use of language or speech codes is adjusted to the function, purpose, and communicative ability of the speaker.

The choice of speech code used by research subjects on social media in communicating with the community at large uses code-switching or code-mixing. The speech used by the research subjects mostly uses the Indonesian code of formal variety, but there are several code mixes, such as regional languages adapted to the origin of the region and the English code. This shows that a politician has knowledge and insight that affects the use of language. In sociolinguistics, the language used will show identity, even social classes that refer to groups of people who have certain similarities, such as economy, education, occupation, position, and so on.

The pattern of political communication carried out by political figures also affects the language code used in communication. The speech code used is adjusted to the participants or speech partners. The choice of speech code determines the public's view of political figures. This is what political figures try to show through the selection of the right speech code to maintain their self-image. Political communication patterns carried out by political figures are classified into two, namely based on the relationship between participants and situations that arise in communication.



Fig. 1. Speech (1): Ganjar Pranowo on X/Twitter (August 19, 2023).



Fig. 2. Speech (2): Ridwan Kamil on X/Twitter (August 4, 2023).

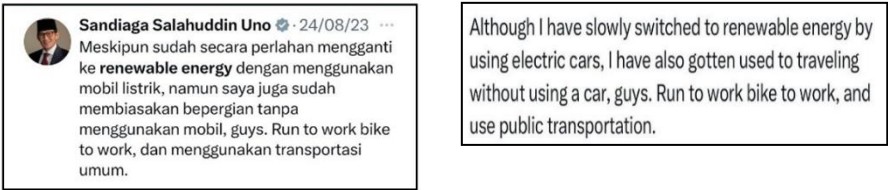


Fig. 3. Speech (3): Sandiaga Uno on X/Twitter (August 24, 2023).

In Fig. 1 there is a speech from Ganjar Pranowo which consists of Indonesian and Javanese code mix. Ganjar Pranowo's statement "Completed *nggih*. Citizens, please participate in protecting the environment, not throwing rubbish in the sewer. "*Matur nuwun*", consists of a code mix in the word "*nggih*" which means "yes" and "*matur nuwun*" which means "thank you". In Figure 2 there is a speech from Ridwan Kamil which consists of Indonesian and Sundanese code mix. Ridwan Kamil's statement on social media, namely "*Hatur nuhun* Mr. President Jokowi. West Java has the highest number of toll road construction. There are nine toll roads that have been and are being built". The statement or utterance consists of a code mix of Sundanese "*hatur nuhun*" which means "thank you". In Figure 3 there is a statement or utterance from Sandiaga Uno on social media which consists of Indonesian and English code mixes. Sandiaga Uno's speech on social media, namely "Although I have slowly changed to renewable energy by using an electric car. However, I have also made a habit of traveling without using a car, guys. Run to work bike to work and use public transport". The speech consists of an English code mix "renewable energy" and "Run to work bike to work".

Speeches (1), (2), and (3) in the picture are one-way communications made by Ganjar Pranowo, Ridwan Kamil, and Sandiaga Uno to the public through social media. The code that appears from each speech is different, speech (1) has Javanese code, speech (2) has Sundanese code, and speech (3) has English code. The three utterances above use Indonesian code as the main code and are inserted by phrases from Javanese, Sundanese, and English to create a code mix. The use of two language codes in one sentence creates language variation which shows that the majority of political figures have more than one language understanding. Understanding more than one language is needed by a politician because the work of political figures is related to many people from various layers. A politician tends to have the competence to use more than one language because of the demands of work related to other political actors related to power. This is also related to the image of the politician himself.

Fig. 4 is Ganjar Pranowo's speech on social media which contains Indonesian and Javanese code mix. Ganjar Pranowo's speech, namely "Bandungan is charming with all kinds of flowers. Not only an economic commodity but also a driver of culture and tradition. *Matur nuwun ya sedulur-sedulurku* residents of Bandungan, Semarang Regency. The flower festival was cool. It should be held next year. Let Bandungan smell good, and its people be happy". The speech contained the local language code mix "*matur nuwun*" which means "thank you" and "*sedulur-sedulurku*" which means "my brothers". In addition, the utterance also contains an order to the people, giving rise to a variation of regulatory language that is identical to political figures.

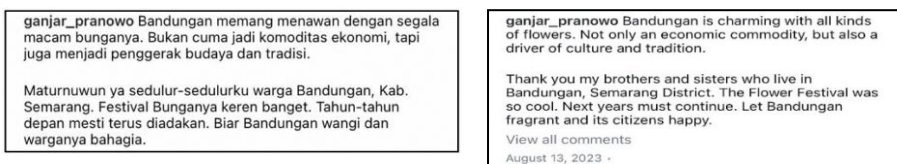


Fig. 4. Speech (4): Ganjar Pranowo on Instagram (August 13, 2023).

The use of local language code in speech (4) in the form of language code mix shows the existence of communication patterns between political figures and local communities. The above speech event is addressed to the local community with Javanese language code mix. The choice of speech code is used by Ganjar Pranowo to establish closeness with the people in Central Java, especially the people of Semarang, Indonesian. The choice of speech code to the local community by considering that the community is “sedulur” or brother shows that the leader does not want a barrier with the community. The pattern of Ganjar Pranowo’s speech code choice to the local community is interpreted as a sibling relationship and provides mutual motivation to continue to develop. The form of interaction spoken by Ganjar Pranowo makes local people feel cared for and helped by Ganjar Pranowo. This pattern of political communication is often displayed by political figures as a form of service and devotion to the community and maintaining their existence. The use of speech codes above also raises language variation, namely regulatory language variation which is shown by a motivation for the community from a leader to be enthusiastic about working or doing something in order to advance the region. This is one of the missions of political figures to channel their aspirations.



Fig. 5. Speech (5): Ganjar Pranowo on X/Twitter (September 10, 2022).

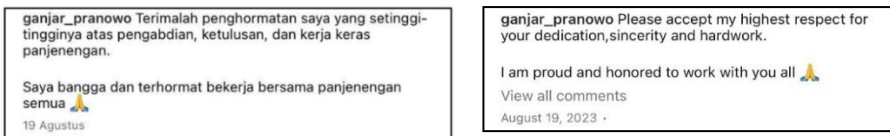


Fig. 6. Speech (6): Ganjar Pranowo on Instagram (August 19, 2023).

Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 are utterances from political figure Ganjar Pranowo on social media. The speech in picture 5, namely “Then the slogan was born, my master is the people, the governor is only a mandate. And that expression must also be held by all levels of the Central Java Provincial Government. I just want to apply the philosophy of people taking a bath who must flush their heads first” and the utterance in picture 6, namely “Please accept my highest respect for your devotion, sincerity, and hard work. I am proud and honored to work with all of you”. The two utterances are one of the political communication patterns used to show the identity of political figures who must serve the people, giving rise to the language of devotion.

Speech codes (5) and (6) are speech events between Ganjar Pranowo as the Governor of Central Java and the public on social media at large. The speech code chosen by Ganjar Pranowo portrays a figure who considers the people not as subordinates because they are under his leadership but as masters, so that they must be served and respected. The choice of speech code in the phrase “Tuanku Ya Rakyat Gubernur Cuma Mandat” which means that the people are masters, and the governor is only a mandate gives rise to the language of devotion or service, which is a variation of language that arises as the government’s mission to improve the welfare of the people. The use of language in these utterances shows that the language of communication used by political figures can be a unifying tool or media, building morale, and togetherness that can enhance the positive image of a politician. This is in line with Ruslan’s (2015) statement that politics is a game of words.

The use of language codes by political figures usually uses formal and informal patterns that are adjusted to the purpose and function of communication. Formal and informal communication patterns are adjusted to the surrounding situation. Political figures will use formal communication during meetings, inaugurations, ceremonies, and other meetings that are official. The atmosphere that tends to be official will affect the choice of speech code. Formal communication patterns found in the choice of speech codes of research subjects in political communication on social media are speech obtained through work meetings and work visits.

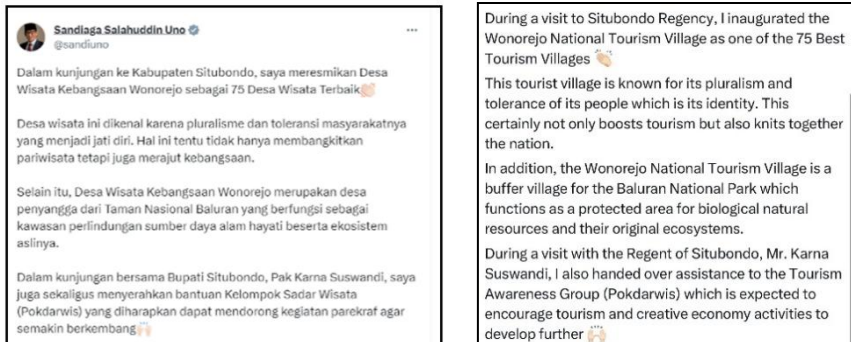


Fig. 7. Speech (7): Sandiaga Uno on X/Twitter (August 12, 2023).

Fig. 7 is an utterance from Sandiaga Uno using formal patterns on social media. Sandiaga Uno’s speech in Figure 7, namely “During a visit to Situbondo Regency, I inaugurated Wonorejo National Tourism Village as the 75 Best Tourism Village. This tourist village is known for its pluralism and tolerance of the people who have become its identity. This certainly not only generates tourism but also knits nationality. In addition, Wonorejo National Tourism Village is a buffer village of Baluran National Park which functions as a protection area for biological natural resources and their original ecosystems. During the visit with the Regent of Situbondo, Mr. Karna Suswandi, I also handed over assistance to the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) which is expected to encourage parekraf activities to grow. The statement or utterance uses formal

language that is adjusted to the communication participants and the context to be conveyed.

Based on the results of the analysis, it can be identified that the context in communication has a very important role in choosing the speech code of a political figure. The official scope of the situation will require political figures to use official language varieties. This can be proven by Sandiaga Uno's statement when delivering the results of a working visit in Situbondo Regency as in speech (7). Sandiaga Uno uses a formal language code that illustrates formal patterns in political communication. The use of formal language used by Sandiaga Uno is still adapted to communication participants, namely the general public so that the language used is more easily understood by the public. Of course, when in a meeting, the language code used by political figures will be slightly different from the language code used when speaking officially in front of the general public.

Speech (7) also shows one of the goals of politics raised by political figures by describing the success achieved, covering shortcomings, and giving hope to the community in the future. The handover of assistance to the Tourism Awareness Group which is expected to encourage *parekraf* activities to develop further shows a political goal that wants to provide hope for future success. This communication pattern is a communication pattern that often appears in politics.

Informal communication patterns found in research subjects on social media are speech obtained through casual activities, visits to the community, art performances, friendship, and various activities that are not official in nature. According to Eliya and Zulaeha (2017), even informal language codes can break down the barriers between leaders and the community so that the selection of speech codes in political communication is seen from the purpose and function of communication.

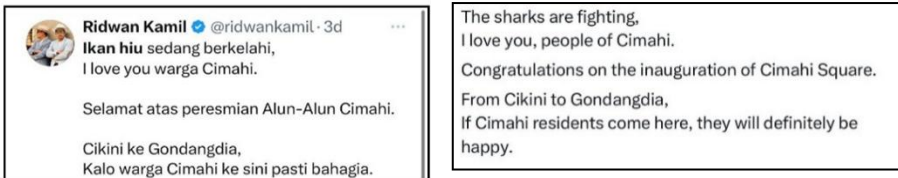


Fig. 8. Speech (8): Ridwan Kamil on X/Twitter (August 29, 2023).

Fig. 8 is a non-formal utterance made by Ridwan Kamil on social media. The informal communication pattern found in Ridwan Kamil's choice of speech codes in social media is a speech event obtained through a form of greeting to the people of Cimahi for the inauguration of Cimahi Square. The speech event shows that Ridwan Kamil paid a casual visit to Cimahi Square. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that when in an unofficial situation the use of language code or speech code will be more diverse. Ridwan Kamil used a two-line rhyme to congratulate the community. *Pantun* is an old form of Indonesian poetry. The *pantun* used by Ridwan Kamil is a two-line *pantun* expressed spontaneously as a form of closeness to the community. The speech code used will be more familiar. This proves that a political figure must be able to adjust the speech code used in accordance with the situation and conditions that are happening.

Based on the results of the analysis related to the political communication language code used by political figures, it can be concluded that work, participants, environment, situation, and conditions greatly affect the use of speech codes. The language used will also show the identity of individuals and groups.

4 Conclusion

Language as a medium of communication has a role that can determine the social life of society from various aspects, including politics. In political activities, there is communication between political figures and the community, so political communication is created. Political communication is the language of the results of political activities that aim to convey ideas and messages by political actors to the public. From a sociolinguistic perspective, the speech code used by political figures has characteristics that can be an identity for a group. In conducting political communication, the speech code used is adjusted to the participants or people who become speech partners and the situation of the communication environment. Based on the results of the study, Ganjar Pranowo, Ridwan Kamil, and Sandiaga Uno as samples in the study used various speech codes that were adjusted to the conditions so that they gave rise to many language variations and became identities for individuals and groups.

References

- Bungin, M. (2017). *Metodologi penelitian kuantitatif, komunikasi, ekonomi, dan kebijakan publik serta ilmu-ilmu sosial lainnya* [Quantitative research methodology, communication, economics, and public policy and other social sciences]. Penerbit Kencana.
- Devianty, R. (2019). *Membangun bahasa anak usia dini melalui siasat pemerolehan Bahasa: Strategi pendidikan anak usia dini dalam membina sumber daya manusia berkarakter* [Building early childhood language through language acquisition strategies: Early Childhood Education Strategies in Developing Human Resources with Character]. UINSU.
- Eliya, I., & Zulaeha, I. (2017). Pola komunikasi politik ganjar pranowo dalam perspektif sosiolinguistik di media sosial Instagram info artikel [Ganjar Pranowo's political communication patterns from a sociolinguistic perspective on social media, Instagram, article info]. *Seloka: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 6(3), 286–296. <https://doi.org/10.15294/SELOKA.V6I3.16044>
- Fishman. (1972). *The sociology of language: an interdisciplinary social science approach to language in society*. Rowly. Mass: Newbury House Publisher.
- Kushartanti, & Yuwono, U. (2007). *Pesona bahasa langkah awal mehamai linguistik* [The charm of language is the first step to understanding linguistics] (M. R. Lauder, Ed.). PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

- Makmur, R. (2016). Gaya dan karakter komunikasi politik presiden Joko Widodo [President Joko Widodo's political communication style and character]. *Journal Communication*, 7(1).
- Paramitha, N. P. (2017). Implementasi pendekatan sosiolinguistik dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab [Implementation of a sociolinguistic approach in Arabic language learning]. *AL-MANAR: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Pendidikan Islam*, 6(2), 163–192.
- Puspasari, A. (2018). Masyarakat bahasa [Language society]. *Jurnal Ilmiah Bina Bahasa*, 11(1), 11–21.
- Rehanisafira, M., & Afnita. (2021). Pola komunikasi politik pada akun media sosial instagram Dedi Mulyadi perspektif sosiolinguistik [Political communication patterns on Dedi Mulyadi's Instagram social media account from a sociolinguistic perspective]. *Jurnal Ilmiah Bina Bahasa*, 4(2), 151–160. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33557/binabahasa.v14i2.1517>
- Ruslan. (2015). Kontribusi sosiolinguistik dalam pemahaman komunikasi politik [The contribution of sociolinguistics to the understanding of political communication]. *Stimulasi*, 8(1), 45–42.
- Sholekhah, A., & Diana, A. (2021). Idiolek petani padi di dusun marga rahayu desa bukit suban kecamatan air hitam kabupaten sarolangun (Kajian sosiolinguistik) [Idiolect of rice farmers in Marga Rahayu hamlet, Bukit Suban village, Air Hitam sub-district, Sarolangun district (Sociolinguistic study)]. *PELITRA: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 4(2), 70–80.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

