



**EXPLORING TRANSLANGUAGING AND INNER
SPEECH AMONG MALAYSIAN AND
INDONESIAN STUDENTS LEARNING TURKISH:
THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

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Putri Nurnazlah NUWAIRAH

**Thesis Advisor
Prof Dr Özkan KIRMIZI**

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Putri Nurnazlah NUWAIRAH

**Thesis Advisor
Prof Dr Özkan KIRMIZI**

**T.C.
Karabuk University
Institute of Graduate Programs
Department of English Language and Literature
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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by Putri Nurnazlah NUWAIKRAH titled “THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON TRANSLANGUAGING AND INNER SPEECH AMONG MALAYSIAN AND INDONESIAN STUDENTS LEARNING TURKISH IN Türkiye: A SURVEY-BASED STUDY” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts English Language and Literature.

Prof. Dr. Özkan KIRMIZI

Thesis Advisor, Department of English Language and Literature

This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English Language and Literature as a Master of Arts thesis. 02/01/2025

Examining Committee Members (Institutions)	Signature
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Chairman : Prof Dr Özkan KIRMIZI (KBU)
--	-------

Member : Assoc. Prof. Dr İrfan TOSUNCUOĞLU (KBU)
--	-------

Member : Assoc. Prof. Dr Aydan İRGATOĞLU (AHBV)
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The degree of Master of Arts by the thesis submitted is approved by the Administrative Board of the Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabuk University.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeynep ÖZCAN

Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

Name Surname: Putri Nurnazlah NUWAIRAH

Signature:

FOREWORD

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

All praise to Allah, who gave me the strength, patience, and resilience to keep going. There were times when I felt completely lost, too exhausted to think, and unsure if I could finish. But through every struggle, He was my anchor, guiding me even when I could not see the way forward. Without His mercy and blessings, I would not have made it this far.

Writing this thesis has been an emotional and often overwhelming journey, one I never imagined would be as difficult as it has been. At times, I found myself questioning whether I could finish, especially during moments when mental exhaustion took over. But through it all, the people who supported me made it possible to keep going.

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To my family, fiancé, and friends, I cannot adequately convey how thankful I am for their love and support—you are my backbone. There were times when I felt utterly adrift, but their compassion and understanding kept me anchored.

Finally, to everyone who has been a part of this journey, whether big or small, thank you. I may not always have shown it, but your support has been the lifeline I needed to get to the end. This thesis is as much yours as it is mine.

ABSTRACT

Türkiye has become a hotspot for diversity, attracting international tourists and students, including Far Southeast Asians like Malaysians and Indonesians. They are multilingual by nature yet underrepresented and face unique challenges while studying Turkish at TÖMER. As beginners, language barriers in a monolingual classroom setting set back their opportunities to interact with locals and hinder cultural adjustments. This study explores how social media serves as an alternative, influencing their translanguaging practices, inner speech and overall language acquisition. Adopting a phenomenographic approach, semi-structured interviews with 20 volunteers were analysed thematically through open and structural coding. The key insights are: firstly, translanguaging does often occur in informal settings like peer interactions; inner speech is primarily shaped by language proficiency, with reliance on L1 or L2 to assist TL comprehension; and social media tools provide authentic contexts beyond the classroom. These strategies and experiences varied among individuals, depending on personal engagement and preferences. Generally, these findings align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, highlighting social media as a modern scaffold within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Besides, translanguaging enabled access to new knowledge by using their full repertoire, while inner speech facilitated self-regulation and deeper cognitive processing. This study suggests that language instructors consider social media for authentic exposure and practice. It also encourages students to leverage these platforms for alternative cultural immersion and supportive self-directed learning, paving the way for future research, especially in non-mainstream multilingual contexts.

Keywords: Social media; Translanguaging; Inner speech; Multilingualism; Turkish language acquisition; International students; Vygotsky

ÖZ

Türkiye, çeşitliliğin merkezi haline gelmiş ve uluslararası turistleri ve öğrencileri, özellikle Malezyalılar ve Endonezyalılar gibi Uzakdoğu Asyalıları çekmektedir. Doğal olarak çokdillidirler ancak yeterince temsil edilmiyorlar ve TÖMER’de Türkçe öğrenirken benzersiz zorluklarla karşılaşılıyorlar. Başlangıç seviyesindeki öğrenciler için, monolingual sınıf ortamındaki dil engelleri, yerel halkla etkileşim fırsatlarını sınırlamakta ve kültürel uyumlarını engellemektedir. Bu çalışma, sosyal medyanın bir alternatif olarak nasıl hizmet ettiğini, translanguaging (diller arası geçiş) uygulamalarını, iç konuşmayı ve genel dil edinimini nasıl etkilediğini incelemektedir. Fenomenografik bir yaklaşım benimsenmiş ve 20 gönüllü ile yapılan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, açık ve yapısal kodlama ile tematik olarak analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen ana bulgular şunlardır: İlk olarak, translanguaging, genellikle arkadaş etkileşimleri gibi gayri resmi ortamlarda sıkça gerçekleşir; iç konuşma, dil yeterliliği tarafından şekillenir ve Türkçe (TL) anlama yardımcı olmak için L1 veya L2’ye başvurulur; sosyal medya araçları ise sınıf dışı otantik bağlamlar sağlar. Bu stratejiler ve deneyimler, bireylerin kişisel katılım ve tercihlerine bağlı olarak değişiklik göstermektedir. Genel olarak, bu bulgular Vygotsky’nin sosyo-kültürel teorisiyle uyumlu olup, sosyal medyanın Yakın Gelişim Bölgesi (ZPD) içinde modern bir iskaf olarak işlev gördüğünü vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca, translanguaging, tam repertuarlarını kullanarak yeni bilgiye erişim sağlarken, iç konuşma da öz düzenleme ve derin bilişsel işleme sürecini kolaylaştırmaktadır. Bu çalışma, dil öğretmenlerinin sosyal medyayı otantik maruziyet ve pratik için dikkate almalarını önermektedir. Ayrıca, öğrencilere bu platformları alternatif kültürel etkileşim ve destekleyici öz yönlendirilmiş öğrenme için kullanmalarını teşvik etmekte ve özellikle ana akım olmayan çokdilli bağlamlarda gelecekteki araştırmalara zemin hazırlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya; Translanguaging; İç Konuşma; Çokdillilik; Türkçe Dil Edinimi; Uluslararası Öğrenciler; Vygotsky.

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ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ (in Turkish)

Tezin Adı	Malezya ve Endonezyalı Öğrenciler Arasında Türkçe Öğrenirken Transdilin Kullanımı ve İç Konuşmayı Keşfetmek: Sosyal Medyanın Rolü
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ABBREVIATIONS

L1 : First Language / Mother Tongue

L2 : Second Language

TL : Target Language

FL : Foreign Language

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

TFL : Turkish as a Foreign Language

SCT : Sociocultural Theory

SM : Social Media

SNS : Social Networking Sites

RQ : Research Question

TR : Translanguaging

IS : Inner Speech

TÖMER: Türkçe Öğretim Merkezi (Turkish Teaching Centre)

SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The study focuses on the concept of translanguaging, along with inner speech in digital social spaces among Malaysian and Indonesian international students enrolled in TÖMER courses at universities across Türkiye. It explores how these students navigate their mother tongue (L1) alongside their other known languages (L2) while acquiring Turkish (L3/L4/FL) as their prerequisite for their degrees to study in Türkiye. Besides, the study aims to understand how students incorporate digital tools such as interactive social media to elevate their language learning experiences along with multiple languages to achieve proficiency in the target language.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The study mainly aims to explore the role of social media and how it may influence translanguaging and inner speech among Malaysian and Indonesian international students in Türkiye who are acquiring the Turkish language. It assesses whether these approaches are effective, especially in multicultural learning contexts, addresses identified gaps in the language learning, as well as suggests practical methodology insights for language teaching. The study also seeks to provide practical insights for language teaching. As globalisation and digital communication continue to grow, learning new languages has become accessible for students worldwide. The findings will be valuable for language instructors, curriculum developers, and policymakers, helping them create flexible teaching methods and policies that support diversity.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Open-ended questions are included to explore key areas and provide deeper insights. The method includes surveys and questionnaires. A baseline survey to collect information about students' demographics, Turkish language proficiency, inner speech habits, and translanguaging practices. The questions do not explicitly mention the main focus of seeing the role of social media in the study to avoid possible bias, but relevant questions are still included. The quantitative data will

be analysed using statistical tools, while qualitative data will be examined through thematic analysis.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study hypothesises that social media has an impactful role in increasing or influencing translanguaging practices and inner speech methods among multilingual students. Especially, it offers indirect interactive digital platforms that facilitate language mixing and blending without much judgment compared to real life, as it may go unnoticed or become a new norm. Such practices may be experienced both externally in daily communication and internally during inner speech, which are at least more engaging and positive than conventional learning approaches.

Moreover, in Türkiye, a foreign language other than Turkish is uncommon, urging foreigners and international students to study the local language to navigate daily life smoothly. However, a significant challenge may arise when multilingual potential is not fully maximised due to limited research in specific contexts, especially among Southeast Asian students. Whereas both Malaysians and Indonesians share similar cultures and languages, the status of the English language among them is not the same, adding necessity to be explored. Most Turkish language acquisition is written in its native language, creating a barrier to interested foreign researchers.

While bilingualism is a common focus in language studies, the rise of digitalisation has created a growing population of multilinguals, highlighting the need to refocus on this emerging challenge. Therefore, this study could bridge these gaps, offering insights into the role of social media and translanguaging in Turkish language acquisition among Malaysian and Indonesian students.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

This study includes 50-100 Malaysian and Indonesian international students enrolled in Turkish language courses (TÖMER) during the 2024-2025 Fall Term at universities in Türkiye. These students who come from diverse linguistic backgrounds

and with varying levels of Turkish proficiency (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) represent the target population for this study.

Later, participants are selected using purposive sampling based on specific criteria: they must be Malaysian or Indonesian nationals, currently enrolled in TÖMER programs at a Turkish university, and active users of social media platforms.

The study seeks approval from TÖMER program coordinators to facilitate the recruitment process. After receiving approval, they will invite potential participants during in-class announcements and emails, providing them with detailed information about the study, as well as its objective and procedure. Simultaneously, the survey will be shared independently on online platforms, such as social media groups, personal networks, and official student representative clubs such as MASAT (Malaysian Student Association in Türkiye) and PPI Turki (Indonesian Student Association in Türkiye) to reach a broader reach and participation. Asking for their informed consent before participation is the study's top priority.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES

This study investigates translanguaging and inner speech in Malaysian and Indonesian international students attending TÖMER programs at universities in Türkiye, with a focus on how social media platforms affect them. It explores both online and offline interactions to offer deeper insights into language learning within a multicultural educational setting.

Nevertheless, there are several limitations to consider. For instance, the samples which were taken from specific TÖMER programs may not completely reflect all Malaysian and Indonesian students in Türkiye, which could affect the findings' generasibility. Next, the results' accuracy could be impacted due to self-reported data through surveys that might lead to bias in responses.

Moreover, since the study only touches on Turkish language acquisition, the findings might not be applicable to different contexts of other languages. Besides, practical issues from the survey design could also influence the results, such as ambiguity, limited access or survey length. Furthermore, finding a diverse and representative sample also comes as challenges, while keeping participants involved

may add another. Whereas, the researcher might find it complex to analyse the qualitative survey data with time constraints.

Despite these challenges and limitations, the study aims to contribute to the existing literature by offering insights about translanguaging and inner speech among underrepresented international students from Malaysia and Indonesia in Türkiye.



1. CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Chapter one discusses the foundation of this study regarding translanguaging and inner speech and its relationship with social media engagement. These elements are important due to their impacts on international students' language learning and cultural adaptation. It starts with an overview of the multilingual environments of Türkiye as a diverse context, followed by background information for each key concept. The chapter then discusses the research problem and gaps to justify the need for more study on translanguaging and inner speech, followed by outlines of the research objectives and questions. Lastly, it emphasises how the research is significant as it can help improve language teaching methods and shape policy, laying the groundwork for a more in-depth discussion of the relevant literature and theoretical concepts in the next chapter. Thus, this chapter sets the stage for exploring how social media influences translanguaging and inner speech among international students in Türkiye, guiding the core of the study's objectives.

1.1. Background

Türkiye's unique location, bridging Europe and Asia, has fostered rich linguistic communities (Akgönül & De Tapia, 2009). When this diversity is combined with advanced technologies, the country has become an important context in terms of translanguaging. According to the University of Kansas Department of Slavic, German, and Eurasian Studies (n.d.), Turkish is spoken by over 80 million people worldwide, making it one of the most spoken languages. For instance, Inal et al. (2021) imply that Türkiye's multilingual nature creates unique insights for studying translanguaging.

International students, especially those from Malaysia and Indonesia, are therefore inherently multilingual and have a multicultural background, which influences their language learning experiences and participation with translanguaging methods. These students make them a key group to study in regards to the intersection of social media, inner speech, and translanguaging.

1.2. Challenges in Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language

However, most international students in Türkiye face unique challenges, mainly due to language barriers. The monolingual practice in and outside the classroom limits their opportunities to interact with native speakers and navigate daily life in a foreign country. This situation does not give enough room for them to practice their typical translanguaging habits, so social media may come as an alternative to bridge communication and culture. The study suggests that these platforms play a crucial role in this context, providing a safe space to catch up on lessons that were left behind during the Turkish class at TÖMER, which was probably caused by a lost in meaning and comprehension. Social media offers an authentic, real-life context, more up-to-date than books, access to interactive language and cultural content, and the chance to interact with peers or English-speaking Turkish locals to practice their language skills and cultural adaptations.

On top of that, teaching Turkish as a foreign language has encountered persistent challenges, including misalignment of teaching materials with students' proficiency levels, limited teaching methods and lack of teacher training, low student motivation and challenges with cultural integration, as highlighted by Abdulqader (2024). These issues may hinder students' progress in both academic and social performance. Therefore, social media serves as an innovative platform to address these gaps by providing students with authentic, contextually appropriate language and opportunities for cultural immersion beyond the classroom.

While Güneşli and Özgür (2007) claim that traditional approach such as Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has been underutilised in Turkish language programs like TÖMER mainly due to financial and pedagogical constraints, the rapid growth of social media platforms introduce a flexible, low-cost alternative for promoting real-life language use, along with translanguaging practices, especially among international students.

1.2.1. International Students' Challenges

In addition to pedagogical challenges, international students often face social integration difficulties stemming from language barriers, as well as introversion

(Aydın, 2020). Such obstacles may hinder interaction with native speakers and reduce opportunities for cultural exchange. Hence, social media's ability to simulate real-life interactions in a less intimidating environment creates the opportunity to overcome these challenges. By leveraging these tools, foreign Turkish learners or international students in general can bridge the gap between class lessons and everyday language use to enrich their experience living abroad.

1.2.2. Context of the Study: Malaysian and Indonesian Students

Among the international student population, those from Malaysia and Indonesia bring rich multilingual and multicultural backgrounds. There are three main races in Malaysia: Malay (Malay language), Chinese (Mandarin) and Indian (Tamil). Malaysians typically speak Malay or Bahasa Malaysia as their official language, along with English as their typical second language (L2), as well as various regional languages. While Bahasa Malaysia shares some similarities with the official language of Indonesia in certain linguistic aspects, Indonesia has a broader linguistic and cultural landscape due to its vast territories, consisting of many ethnic groups and dialects. While English is a foreign language (FL) for Indonesians, most international students can communicate in it with varying confidence levels.

These students' experiences with multilingualism shape their language learning strategies, including translanguaging, even if they are unfamiliar with the term. As they adapt to studying Turkish in a new educational and cultural context, the interaction between their native language or first language (L1), English (L2/FL) and Turkish as their target language (TL)—especially when facilitated through social media—could offer valuable insights into the role of translanguaging in language learning.

1.2.3. Translanguaging: Definition and Importance

The term “translanguaging” is rooted in the Welsh word ‘trawsieithu’, introduced by Williams (1994). It was later translated into English by Baker (2001), who describes translanguaging as two languages used together to create meaning, shape experiences, and gain understanding. Similarly, García (2009) defines it as a

bilingual who uses different linguistic repertoires to improve communication. Likewise, Canagarajah (2011) views translanguaging as an entire set of languages that is a single, connected system. These perspectives highlight that speakers blend and use their language skills flexibly to enhance communication and understanding.

For international students in Türkiye, translanguaging serves as a coping mechanism and a tool for overcoming linguistic barriers in both academic and daily life. It supports their adaptation to a new context by engaging a full linguistic repertoire in various contexts. In academic settings, translanguaging helps bridge the gap between their existing knowledge from other known languages and the new Turkish-medium instruction for better comprehension and expression. On top of that, socially, translanguaging allows them to participate in multilingual interactions, both offline and online. Thus, this study aims to explore different target populations, i.e. Malaysian and Indonesian international students on translanguaging use, specifically its interaction with digital social media platforms. This study aims to illustrate the critical role of linguistic flexibility of translanguaging and social media to assist their language learning journey despite being within a monolingual environment.

1.2.4. Social Media and Translanguaging

Social media provides an ideal space for translanguaging due to its informal, interactive and flexible nature. Translanguaging has become more prevalent online as a result of globalisation, as users adapt their language use to different audiences and contexts. Online platforms provide greater freedom than face-to-face communication, where social norms may restrict language use. They become a valuable tool for translanguaging through linguistic expression and creativity. According to research, young adults frequently communicate in a variety of circumstances and express themselves in multiple languages online (Dumrukic, 2020; Ng & Lee, 2019; Lemus, 2018; Li & Wang, 2018; Schreiber, 2015). This dynamic role of social media not only reflects the evolving nature of global communication but also highlights its potential in fostering language learning and adaptation in multicultural environments, especially when communication barriers impede development or increase anxiety in a foreign country.

1.2.5. Inner Speech in Language Learning

Inner speech (IS) refers to internal dialogue or silent conversation we have in our minds. Besides, it plays an important role in learning a new language. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, inner speech starts externally from talking with others, which later turns into self-regulation and problem-solving (Jones, 2009). In contrast to private speech (PS), which is spoken out loud, inner speech is silent; hence, learners can practice language in their minds and process new words and sentences (De Guerrero, 2017). In the language learning process, silent self-talk helps strengthen new language skills, organise thoughts and manage tasks better (Resnik, 2018).

This study proposes that inner speech may involve translanguaging, especially among international students learning Turkish. Through inner speech, they can switch between languages in their thoughts to help them understand and internalise new concepts. Since inner speech is a judgement-free space, it may build their confidence and improve their spoken ability in real-life interactions. In a predominantly monolingual environment like Türkiye, where students may face limited exposure to diverse languages, inner speech becomes a powerful tool for negotiating meaning and adapting to unfamiliar linguistic contexts,

1.3. Research Problems and Gaps

Even though considerable research has been done in the translanguaging field, especially in bilingual learning (Baker, 2011; Canagarajah, 2011), there is limited exploration of its role in multilingual digital contexts. Specifically, how translanguaging, when facilitated by social media, interacts with inner speech that may influence language acquisition among diverse background students remains underexplored (Canli & Canli, 2023; Dumrukci, 2020). Thus, this study addresses this gap by focusing on Malaysian and Indonesian international students in Türkiye, who are experiencing multilingualism daily, in order to understand how these elements could offer valuable insights into Turkish language learning. While translanguaging is spontaneous in Malaysia and Indonesia, studies on its application in less commonly studied languages like Turkish and their context are scarce (Karakaş, 2023; İnal & Balcı, 2022; Yüzlü & Dikilitaş, 2021).

In Malaysia, Too (2023) notes that teachers have been using students' L1 informally to aid English language learning, bridging the gap between students' L1 and TL, even though the national curriculum does not officially recognise translanguaging in the curriculum. This practice highlights how translanguaging, though not officially recognised, can be a useful tool for language acquisition in multilingual classrooms (Too, 2023).

Similarly, in Indonesia, although there is growing recognition of translanguaging benefits in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, the practice remains complex and underutilised due to the dominance of monolingual teaching practices. Studies have shown that while teachers hold positive views about translanguaging, it is still not widely implemented as a formal pedagogical practice in Indonesian classrooms (Setyarini & Jocuns, 2024).

Despite growing awareness of these challenges, there remains a gap in addressing them attentively for international students learning Turkish. Abdulqader (2024) identified the key problem of a lack of culturally integrated teaching methods and proposed solutions for improvised teacher training. Nevertheless, there are still limited empirical studies to focus on its direct application in diverse environments. Moreover, studies like Demir and Genç (2019) highlight gaps in academic Turkish curricula which are critical for international students, especially in vocabulary and comprehension. The issues remain when no multimodal support to overcome the monolingual instruction limitations. While research on social and cultural adaptation challenges has arisen (Aydın, 2020; Gebru & Yuksel-Kaptanoglu, 2020), the role of social media in addressing these issues remains underexplored.

These contexts suggest the potential for translanguaging to enhance language learning across diverse settings like the international students' context in Türkiye, where Malaysian and Indonesian students must navigate linguistic barriers in a predominantly monolingual environment. This study seeks to fill identified gaps by exploring the role of social media, especially in translanguaging and inner speech, this study contributes fresh insights into how these practices support language learning as strategies for underrepresented groups (Shalihah, 2024; García & Lin, 2017; Schreiber, 2015) in the Turkish education system. It also broadens the existing literature by focusing on Turkish—a less commonly studied language, at least in English, thus,

making it more accessible—and examining the intersection of language, cognitive, technology and culture in education and beyond.

1.4. Research Objectives

1. To explore the influence of social media on translanguaging practices among Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER.
2. To investigate the role and nature of translanguaging within inner speech as experienced by Malaysian and Indonesian students studying Turkish at TÖMER.
3. To understand students' experiences on the effectiveness of translanguaging and inner speech strategies, particularly through social media, in supporting their Turkish language learning journey.

1.5. Research Questions

1. How do Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER describe the influence of social media platforms on their translanguaging behaviours during Turkish language acquisition?
4. What are the experiences of Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER regarding translanguaging within their inner speech during Turkish language acquisition?
5. How do Malaysian and Indonesian students perceive the contribution of social media-facilitated translanguaging and inner speech strategies to their Turkish language learning outcomes?

1.6. Research Significance

This study holds significant value in the field of applied linguistics, particularly within language studies, by extending the focus beyond traditional language learning contexts to explore multilingualism and language acquisition in monolingual environments. By focusing on translanguaging and inner speech, this study highlights strategies that can support effective and inclusive language learning. It addresses

further implications for more flexible and dynamic practices (García & Lin, 2016; Wei, 2017) for translanguaging as a theory, pedagogy and policy in multilingual contexts over a restrictive monolingual approach.

The importance of this study is reflected in its contributions to understanding and improving language learning and teaching practices. Firstly, studying translanguaging helps us gain insight into how multilinguals communicate using their repertoires to communicate and learn, facilitating effective language acquisition (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012). This finding provides useful information that can help language teachers create efficient teaching strategies that raise students' competency (Wei, 2017). Secondly, exploring how inner speech functions in language learning provides a gateway into the cognitive processes involved. It enhances our understanding of how students internalise and practice new language with the help of their first language (García & Lin, 2016; de Guerrero, 2013).

Moreover, recognising the importance of translanguaging and inner speech promotes an inclusive teaching approach. Teachers can adapt their methods to meet different linguistic needs by recognizing the diversity of learners' languages, which will increase learning effectiveness and engagement (Lewis et al., 2012). Besides, exploring the connection between translanguaging and inner speech offers a unique perspective on multilingual cognition, with potential benefits for both academic and social achievement in diverse educational contexts (Duarte, 2019; Wei, 2017).

Finally, the study's findings may develop language regulations that better represent the linguistic diversity of the students. It is hoped that this study provides insights into multilinguals' language learning and offers recommendations to enhance pedagogy and policy to be more inclusive, flexible, supporting fluid language practices (Sun, Wang, & Qin, 2021; García & Lin, 2016). Ultimately, this study aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice that aligns with multilingual learners' realities (Resnik, 2021; Ticheloven et al., 2019; de Guerrero, 2017; Canagarajah, 2011; Arshad & Chen, 2009).

1.7. Chapter Summary

The study's introduction in Chapter One focuses on each key concept, followed by existing research gaps, the current study's problems, objectives, and questions. This chapter also emphasises the importance of the study to improve language learning, teaching and policies. This chapter lays the foundation for the next section of the relevant literature review.



2. CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review

The second chapter reviews relevant literature to understand the relationship between social media influence with translanguaging and inner speech among Malaysian and Indonesian students learning the Turkish language. It is meant to provide a broader context and synthesise important subjects. Eventually, it concludes by highlighting identified research gaps so this study could enrich the existing literature on translanguaging and inner speech, especially in the context of Türkiye.

2.1. Theoretical Framework (Key Theories and Concepts)

This section discusses several theories guiding the current study, including Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, García's translanguaging theory, and social media theory, along with their key concepts and other essential elements. Such comprehensive theoretical frameworks are crucial as they provide a structured lens through which the research is conducted, ensuring coherence and depth in the analysis.

2.1.1. Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory

This theory highlights the importance of social interaction and cultural contexts in cognitive development. Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934), a Russian and Soviet psychologist, emphasises that learning is a social activity shaped by the environment and mediated through language. For instance, students' cognitive capacities can be improved by learning from more knowledgeable people (MKO), such as classmates or teachers. In this study's context, the theory suggests that international students learning Turkish in a supportive social (media) environment may improve their language acquisition.

Social media platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok create interactive learning spaces that facilitate peer-to-peer scaffolding and exposure to authentic language use (Dumrukic, 2020; Lai et al., 2021). By overcoming language barriers in face-to-face contact, these digital exchanges help international students study outside of the classroom (Resnik, 2021). Additionally, to promote cognitive engagement and knowledge co-construction, translanguaging also allows students to

utilise their entire linguistic repertoire, which includes English, Turkish, and Bahasa Malaysia or Indonesia. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) view that learning is mediated through cultural tools and interaction. As Duarte (2019) demonstrates, translanguaging in multilingual classrooms fosters collaborative scaffolding, allowing students to engage more deeply with learning tasks while using multiple languages. Therefore, social and digital interactions reinforce the sociocultural aspects of learning and act as important mediators in language acquisition.

2.1.1.1. Key Elements of Vygotsky's Theory

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasises the role of social interaction and cultural context in learning and cognitive development. The theory offers a thorough framework for comprehending the situation of the current study, which involves multilingual foreign students learning Turkish. The following helps to clarify the key ideas of this theory and how they relate to this study:

1. **Mediation:** Mediation through tools and resources, e.g. language and social interaction, is essential to facilitate learning (Vygotsky, 1978). To close gaps in target language ability, students frequently use bilingual dictionaries, work in peer-assisted study groups, or even rely on their L1 as a mediation tool (Shafiai et al., 2024).

2. **Translanguaging:** This concept fits well within Vygotsky's framework, as it acknowledges the dynamic use of learners' multiple languages. Students may regularly use translanguaging, alternating between their native languages (L1), English (L2/FL), and Turkish (TL), to better explain and comprehend concepts, much as researchers have shown how translanguaging promotes collaborative learning in multilingual classrooms (Zhang, 2024; Triastuti, 2023; Yusri et al., 2022; Chen & Zhu, 2021). This dynamic use of multiple languages helps them apply their linguistic repertoire better.

6. **The Relationship Between Cognition and Emotion:** Vygotsky highlights the importance of emotions in the learning process, stating that positive emotions enhance learning while negative ones hinder it (Vygotsky, 1978). This concept aligns well with the findings from Zhang (2024), which highlight how learners inside their ZPD can be supported by emotional scaffolding and the establishment of

translanguaging spaces. The study shows that classroom dynamics and teacher-student connections have an impact on students' emotional and cognitive growth. In the international students' context, they are more likely to feel positive emotions that improve their learning when they are surrounded by supportive people or environments, including teachers and social media.

7. **The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD):** The ZPD is the range of tasks learners can achieve with guidance from more knowledgeable others (MKO) such as teachers or peers. This is important to close the gap between their present skills and their future development, particularly when it comes to learning a language. Arshad and Chen (2020) emphasise that the role of semiotic mediation, when applied to early literacy along with other supporting tools, is essential in helping learners within their ZPD and internalising knowledge. Meanwhile, in this current study, international students may rely on peer support in language classes or seek help through social media for interactive explanation, as they are only beginners with challenging aspects of Turkish. Gradually, they can achieve greater independence in using Turkish confidently.

8. **Scaffolding:** Scaffolding provides temporary assistance until learners can perform tasks independently. Language teachers, for example, simplify complex grammatical rules to help students understand before applying them in writing. Similarly, social media serves as a modern scaffolding tool, offering interactive spaces where learners can engage with peers and native speakers to navigate Turkish language challenges (García & Wei, 2014). According to Lai, Yang, and Chu (2021), social media fosters “collaboration, communication, knowledge-sharing, and enhancing students' engagement and autonomy in formal learning environments.” Through this assistance, students can eventually acquire the skills they need to manage their education independently.

In summary, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory provides a foundational lens for understanding how social interaction, cultural context, and multilingual abilities support cognitive development and facilitate language learning. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), scaffolding, and internalisation, all of which support language acquisition, are at the heart of this framework. Social media sites like YouTube and Instagram could act as modern scaffolding for multilingual foreign students, enhancing their language learning and encouraging immersion in the real world. These elements

create a rich and supportive environment for cognitive and linguistic development, enhancing Turkish language acquisition for them.

The following Figure 1 illustrates how these theoretical concepts intersect within Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory to support language learning and cognitive development:

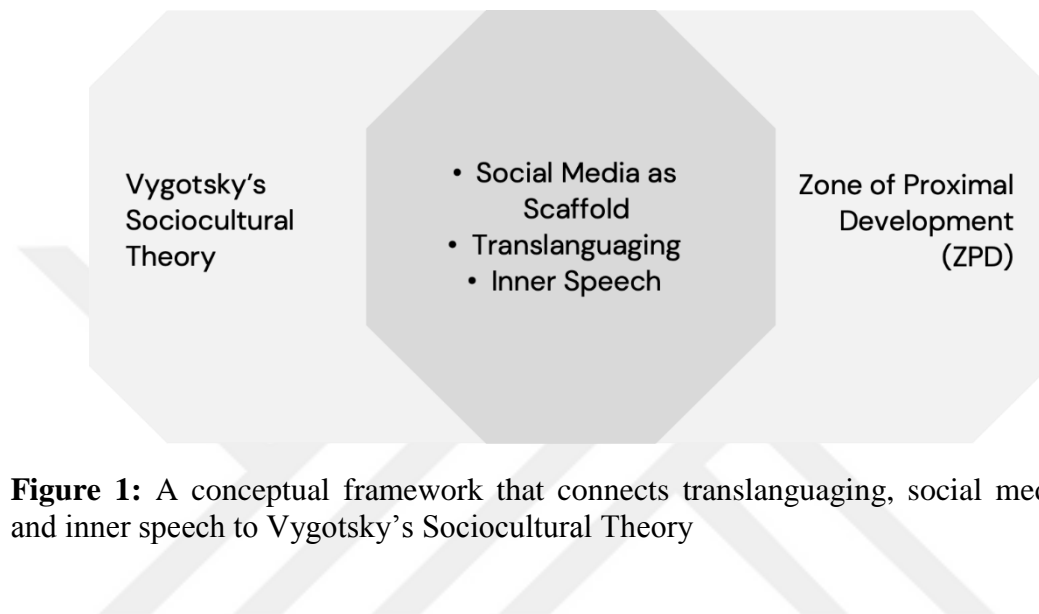


Figure 1: A conceptual framework that connects translanguaging, social media use and inner speech to Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

This framework highlights the role of inner speech, translanguaging as a flexible strategy, and social media in language learning within a sociocultural context. The figure suggests that social media acts as a scaffold, helping learners operate within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) when engaging with the target language. Translanguaging and inner speech serve as key mechanisms for overcoming linguistic challenges. Nonetheless, the impact of social media depends on the learner's level of active engagement. These findings support Vygotsky's view that cognitive development is shaped by social interaction and external tools, with digital platforms extending this process beyond the classroom.

2.1.2. García's Translanguaging Theory

García's (2009) translanguaging theory offers a new perspective on language use as a single linguistic repertoire, focusing on its flexible and combined language use. This perspective shows the benefits of using all linguistic resources for communication while challenging the traditional notion of languages as distinct. In this

study, García's theory is crucial for understanding how Malaysian and Indonesian international students acquire Turkish and use language abilities in daily life and online environments. Studies comparing translanguaging with code-switching highlight key distinctions. Code-switching maintains linguistic boundaries, while translanguaging blends languages seamlessly to aid meaning-making (García & Lin, 2016; Dumrukci, 2020). Additionally, studies show that digital translanguaging promotes linguistic adaptability and cognitive flexibility in language learning (Triastuti, 2023; Mısıır, 2023).

2.1.2.1. Differences and Overlaps with Related Concepts

Translanguaging vs. Code-Switching: According to García and Lin (2016), translanguaging uses integrated languages flexibly, while code-switching assumes bilinguals have two separate language systems. For instance, translanguaging speakers use whatever comes naturally from their linguistic repertoires, "Benim için bir pizza al, what do you think?". In this sentence, the speaker mixes Turkish ("Get a pizza for me") with English fluidly.

Dumrukci (2020) highlights that translanguaging and code-switching are not the same. Code-switching usually happens when someone switches languages due to reasons such as a lack of proficiency in one language, excluding others, introducing new topics, or impressing others to fit in with a certain group (Myers-Scotton, 1979). For example, a group of friends is having a conversation, and one person switches languages. They start in English, "I just got a new job!" while another friend replies and switches to Turkish, "*Harika! Nerede çalışacaksın?*" (Great! Where will you work?). Here, the latter friend switches to Turkish to show enthusiasm and to connect with a Turkish-speaking friend in the group. It is clear and intentional, with the two languages kept separate. Although some of these reasons might also apply to translanguaging, the key difference is that translanguaging involves a smoother and more natural blending of languages.

Code-Mixing and Code-Meshing: Code-mixing is frequently used interchangeably with code-switching (Muysken, 2000), whereas code-meshing

involves blending informal language or dialects with standard language in academic contexts (Dumrukcić, 2020; Canagarajah, 2006). Code-mixing may refer to inserting words or phrases from one language into another within a sentence without fully blending the languages, as they remain distinct systems. For instance, “I need to buy some *buah*” (Malaysian and Indonesian for fruit).

Crossing and Metrolingualism: ‘Crossing’ refers to using multiple languages to align with a particular culture or community and shares some overlap with translanguaging, particularly in terms of expressing a sense of belonging (Dumrukcić, 2020; Rampton, 1999). It may involve switching to another language or dialect to connect with a particular cultural identity or community. For example, a group of Malaysian and Indonesian students at an English-speaking university start using slang and expressions from their local dialects while conversing in English. One Malaysian student might say, “That *nasi goreng* (fried rice) was really *sedap!*” while speaking mostly in English. An Indonesian student might respond, “I know, right? It’s so *enak!*”. In this context, both students switch to using Malay and Indonesian terms (*sedap* and *enak*, both meaning delicious) to express their shared cultural experiences while navigating a third language.

Furthermore, ‘metrolingualism,’ a term coined by Otsuji and Pennycook (2010), describes the fluid use of multiple languages in urban settings. For instance, a friend might say, “Hey, *kankam*, let’s go to the *AVM* (mall), *yuk!*”. Here, the speaker mixes Turkish (*kankam* is a casual and affectionate term for close friend, similar to ‘buddy’ or ‘pal’ in English and *AVM*) with English and Indonesian. The word *yuk* exists in both Turkish and Indonesian to informally invite someone to do something. In Turkish, it means ‘come on’, encouraging someone to take action. Yet, in Indonesian, it is used to say ‘let’s go’ or suggest doing something together. While metrolingualism focuses on urban areas, translanguaging can occur in various contexts, including both physical and digital spaces.

These distinctions highlight how natural and flexible translanguaging represents a more integrated and flexible approach to language use compared to the more rigid and segmented views associated with traditional bilingualism.

2.1.2.2. Key Elements of Translanguaging Theory

García's translanguaging theory highlights how multilingual speakers can flexibly use different languages in diverse contexts. It shares similarities with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory in several ways:

1. **Dynamic Bilingualism:** Like Vygotsky's concept of internalisation, where learners adopt new tools into their thinking, speakers in multilingual settings combine languages fluidly when thinking and speaking (Zhang, 2024). For example, an international student might draft a Turkish essay but complete the thought in their L1. This process mirrors internalisation, where learners adapt tools to meet cognitive demands. This can also be seen on social media, where individuals mix languages across various contexts naturally.

9. **Socially Constructed Language Use:** Both theories focus on how important social interaction is for learning. Just as Vygotsky believes language helps develop thinking, García's theory views language use in social settings as crucial for learning. Meanwhile, social media enables fluid linguistic exchanges, strengthening language retention (Chen & Zhu, 2021).

10. **Multilingual Repertoires:** Translanguaging views language as a tool for cognitive development, and similarly, translanguaging supports the idea that learners use all their languages as resources. For example, students might comment on an Instagram post in Turkish while responding to peers' comments in their native language.

11. **Pedagogical Scaffolding:** Translanguaging supports cognitive scaffolding by higher-order thinking and comprehension (Yusri et al., 2022), where learners are allowed to use multiple languages with guidance. This can be done by encouraging students to annotate a Turkish text with their L1 translations to clarify meanings.

12. **Integration of Cognitive and Social Dimensions:** Translanguaging fosters both cognitive and social aspects of language use in learning. A group of friends might use a mix of Malay, Indonesian, Turkish, and English during a casual conversation, seamlessly navigating languages to express shared experiences.

This shows how García's key elements align with Vygotsky's theoretical framework, especially in multilingual learning contexts.

2.1.2.3. Challenges and Implications

Translanguaging encourages us to think of language as a flexible mix of skills rather than separate systems. While this idea offers benefits, it also faces challenges.

Viewing language as integrated can be difficult for educators who are used to traditional language teaching methods (such as curriculum limitations, teacher training and institutional resistance), as it requires a new approach which may not be readily accepted in all educational settings. In traditional approaches, a language is often taught in isolation, focusing on grammar, vocabulary, and syntax specifically for that language. This separation comes from the idea that each language operates independently, and learning them requires distinct processes and structures.

The differing opinions about how languages should be used may create obstacles in implementing translanguaging, especially in educational contexts. **Strong view** promotes the idea that bilinguals use a single, flexible integrated language system. However, educators who hold onto traditional views may struggle to embrace this approach, assuming language mixing dilutes the quality of each language. Meanwhile, the **weak view** maintains that although different languages can be used flexibly, boundaries exist within set limits (García & Lin, 2016). Nevertheless, this can create tension in the classroom where educators want to promote translanguaging but also feel compelled to uphold distinct language boundaries.

Additionally, **local contexts and (national) language policies** could influence translanguaging. Such contexts include Türkiye, where the national language may not reflect how people actually use languages (Mısıır, 2023).

Generally, the challenges of shifting perspectives and navigating conflicting views may hinder the effective and practical application of translanguaging. Therefore, there are several implications that can be derived from understanding these challenges. Educators and policymakers need to find a balance that considers students' language identities while acknowledging local contexts, realities of language use, and institutional expectations.

2.1.3. Inner Speech

Inner Speech (IS) explores the role of internal dialogue in supporting cognitive processes such as self-regulation, problem-solving, and reflective thinking. Vygotsky asserts that inner speech is a crucial instrument for better learning and thought organisation. It is an internalised communication that helps manage and process information. Translanguaging in inner speech enables multilingual learners to efficiently comprehend complicated linguistic information (Resnik, 2018; Dewaele, 2015).

In this study, inner speech is important for understanding multilingual students who may use internal dialogue to navigate multiple languages while learning Turkish. The study intends to investigate its effects on language learning and students' assistance in making efficient use of their language abilities.

2.1.3.1. Factors Influencing Inner Speech

There are several factors that may affect the language choice in inner speech, as identified by research:

- **Proficiency level:** L2 inner speech usage increases following greater exposure to Turkish (Resnik, 2021).
- **Contextual factors:** Emotional attachment and cognitive load influence the language used in inner speech (Pavlenko, 2011).
- **Digital engagement:** Social media interactions reinforce L2 thinking habits, thereby promoting fluency development (Tomlinson, 2020).

These findings suggest that inner speech and social media complement one another to improve cognitive engagement and language memory.

Resnik (2018) examines whether results from earlier studies are applicable to diverse L1 speakers and how bilingual or multilingual speakers transition between L1 and L2 during inner speech. The study revealed that most participants tend to use their L1 more often in inner speech. However, certain conditions can change from L1 to L2, such as increased exposure to and use of the L2, greater proficiency in L2, and natural settings where L2 is spoken.

Personal experiences may offer further insights into these changes. For instance, Ye (2004, p.138), a Chinese immigrant in Australia, elaborates on his situation, switching constantly between Chinese and English while thinking. He sometimes starts thinking in English, only to quickly change to Chinese mid-thought. In other words, his thoughts or “substance” seem rooted in Chinese yet “wrapped” in the English language as he speaks.

For example, Malay-English speakers in Malaysia may think in Malay while planning an activity (“*Esok nak pergi mana?*”), then mentally switch to English for specific terms (“...oh, to buy groceries”). Similarly, Indonesian-English speakers might reflect on their day in Bahasa Indonesia (“*Tadi pagi aku ke pasar...*”), then insert English words like “budget” or “schedule,” which are commonly borrowed into daily speech. These changes show how language and context influence inner speech.

2.1.3.2. Key Elements of Inner Speech

Inner Speech includes a number of essential components and processes that are essential to language acquisition and cognitive growth, such as:

1. **Egocentric Speech:** Children first use egocentric speech, which is talking aloud to themselves to direct their behaviour and ideas. This egocentric speech changes into inner speech or verbal thought as they get older. Children benefit from this process by learning self-regulation and how to organise their ideas.
2. **Internal Dialogue:** Speaking to oneself in private is known as inner speech. This conversation facilitates decision-making, activity control, and planning.
3. **Self-Regulation:** Self-regulation enables people to control their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour, where inner speech is crucial to this process. Learners can stay focused, solve problems, and make better decisions by engaging in inner dialogue.
4. **Condensation:** Inner speech usually breaks down difficult concepts into simpler ones. This is comparable to condensing notes into key elements, which facilitates content comprehension and memorisation.
5. **Language Transfer:** Using information from one language to aid in the learning of another is known as language transfer for bilingual and multilingual

learners. Inner speech supports this by allowing learners to apply their current linguistic resources in new language contexts.

6. **Internalisation:** Inner speech develops into a spontaneous aspect of thought as it becomes natural.

These concepts show how inner speech serves as an essential cognitive tool for language growth and learning.

2.1.3.3. Importance and Role of Inner Speech in Multilingual Contexts

Inner speech, often referred to as internal dialogue or verbal thought, is a crucial aspect of cognitive development and language learning. Inner speech, which has its roots in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, develops from external social interactions and becomes an essential instrument for self-control, problem-solving, and introspection (Vygotsky, 1962; 1978).

Despite significant interest, research on inner speech in multilingual learners remains limited (Resnik, 2018; Dewaele, 2015; Pavlenko, 2011). Speaking or writing in a foreign language acquired after the age of three has been the subject of the majority of research on multilingual situations (Resnik, 2018; Dewaele, 2016, 2017). These studies are distinct from inner speech research, as speaking and writing have different purposes and limitations. Nevertheless, studying inner speech is crucial, given that it reveals how the minds of multilingual learners' function and process in several languages.

Inner speech might be more common than speaking out loud or writing (Resnik, 2018). Inner speech is a part of the thought process, just like the inevitable everyday conversation. We can learn more about "human consciousness" and "psychic activity" by investigating inner speech (Sokolov, 1972, p. 1).

Inner speech is essential in second language acquisition as it supports learners' cognitive processes. Learners can practice the language in their heads without the pressure of speaking out loud. They can strengthen vocabulary, practice grammar, and try out new language forms (Tomlinson, 2020). By fixing mistakes and increasing fluency, this mental activity aids in solving language-related problems. When they

struggle with their L2, they may utilise inner speech to help them retain and process information.

2.1.3.4. Inner Speech and Translanguaging

Inner speech supports translanguaging by allowing multilinguals to switch between languages within their internal dialogue. Learners can use their entire linguistic repertoire for improved comprehension and self-expression owing to this mental flexibility (Sokolov, 1972; Vygotsky, 1962). They might first think in their L1 and later translate or adjust into L2 to express and communicate clearly (Pavlenko, 2011; Dewaele, 2015). A Malay/Indonesian-English bilingual student, for instance, would think in L1, “*Aku harus menyelesaikan tugas ini,*” and change it to, “I have to finish this task,” especially in an academic context where English is prioritised. These shifts highlight how learners draw on multiple languages to process and express their thoughts effectively.

Linguistic competency and fluency would eventually be improved as learners develop a habit of using L2 in inner speech. This skill, of being able to switch between languages in their mind, also allows them to understand complex ideas and express subtle thoughts in different languages (García & Wei, 2014; Lin, 2013). By using all language skills in one’s repertoire, learners’ communication may improve and better manage and integrate the languages. This mental flexibility is valuable in both academic and daily contexts to understand complex ideas (Canagarajah, 2011; Wei, 2011).

2.1.4. Social Media

Social media refers to web-based platforms that facilitate interaction, content sharing, and networking (Reinhardt, 2019). It includes social networking sites (SNS) such as TikTok, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and Facebook, where users engage in multimodal communication through text, images, and videos (Zappavigna, 2012). While all SNSs fall under social media, not all social media platforms function primarily as networking sites. The interactive nature of SNS makes them essential for modern communication, enabling users to connect, collaborate, and build relationships.

This study suggests that social media plays a significant role in language learning among Malaysian and Indonesian students in Turkish universities. It explores how social media may influence inner speech and translanguaging strategies to boost communication beyond the classroom.

2.1.4.1. The Role of Social Media in Language Learning

Social media platforms offer opportunities for language learning by promoting engaging and authentic communication. According to Van Den Beemt et al. (2020), these platforms facilitate translanguaging and informal learning by offering real-time exposure to target languages. For example, a study by Melo-Pfeifer and Araújo e Sá (2018) shows that using online chat rooms promotes peer collaboration through community-based learning and improves learner competency, especially in Romance languages. Essentially, research have shown that using digital platforms encourages:

- **Language fluidity:** Online spaces help students to naturally mix different languages into the conversation, such as their native languages (Bahasa Malaysia/Indonesia), Turkish, and English. This “digital translanguaging” allows learners to communicate more comfortably, as mixed-language sentences can feel less intimidating than solely Turkish ones (Koralage et al., 2023).

- **Cultural immersion:** Students who are exposed to Turkish-language content on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are more likely to pick up phrases and colloquialisms, which may improve their language and cultural awareness in general (Shalihah, 2024).

- **Peer collaboration:** Through multilingual exchanges, social media facilitates community-based learning, allowing students to collaborate on skills and improve their competency (Melo-Pfeifer & Araújo e Sá, 2018).

Additionally, learners may be encouraged to try out new vocabulary by being exposed to mixed-language phrases, which frequently combine English with foreign languages (Dumrukic, 2020). These multilingual practices align with broader linguistic concepts, such as metrolingualism and transglossia, which refer to the use of many languages for certain purposes in a single context (Mısır, 2023).

However, overdependence on informal grammar structures and the possible fossilisation of errors are some concerns that still exist (Liu et al., 2019). Addressing these issues requires a balanced approach to integrating social media into formal language education (Stroud, 2023).

2.1.4.2. Enhancing Second Language Acquisition through Social Media

Regardless of one's first language (L1), digital translanguaging has the potential to enhance language acquisition for any target language (TL). Nowadays, people frequently blend their first language (L1) with other languages on social media platforms, usually by employing colloquial expressions or online slang (Liu et al., 2019). Among the examples are:

1. **LOL (Laugh Out Loud):** This expression is widely used across languages, even in literal speech.
2. **Gracias for the pic!:** This phrase combines the English word 'pic' (picture) with the Spanish word '*gracias*' (thank you).
3. **Oh, mein Gott!:** The typical English abbreviation is 'OMG' (Oh My God) but is used in German and becomes '*mein Gott*' for (my God).
4. **Arigathanks:** This is a unique blend of the Japanese word '*arigatou*' (thank you) with the English word 'thanks'. Perhaps it is due to the popularity of anime among youngsters.
5. **Hola, what's up?:** In this expression, the Spanish greeting 'Hola' (hello) is paired up with the English phrase 'what's up'. Many people find this phrase fun and nostalgic, even if they are not bilingual in these languages, thanks to the popularity of "Dora the Explorer" in many countries.

These examples show that internet slang mixes different languages to convey messages informally and creatively. Such expressions make language learning less intimidating, as students can relate Turkish phrases to themselves. Research on bilingual and multilingual online communication, like Dovchin and Lee (2019), suggests that language mixing serves functional purposes, making communication more fluid and relatable. However, terms like code-switching and bilingualism may not fully capture the complex modern online language use (Dovchin & Lee, 2019).

2.1.4.3. Social Media and Translanguaging Practices

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory offers a perspective to explore social media platforms' influence in supporting translanguaging practices and language learning. The theory becomes relevant as it highlights the importance of social interaction and cultural context, especially among international students learning a new foreign language. It can be further understood through the following elements:

Language Fluidity and Flexibility: The availability of social networking sites (SNS) allows users to mix languages in their everyday communications, which promotes fluid language use and flexibility. The versatility in translanguaging is consistent with Vygotsky's theory that language tools adapt to the demands and circumstances of learners. According to García and Wei (2014), combining different languages enhances comprehension and communication.

Authentic Interaction: Vygotsky's theory is supported by social media, which makes authentic interactions possible, which are crucial for language acquisition. Furthermore, by interacting with cultural and linguistic content online, students can immerse themselves in different surroundings while improving their translanguaging habits and language acquisition. International students, for instance, might follow Turkish influencers on TikTok, leave comments in a variety of languages, and be exposed to Turkish cultural references, which would enhance their linguistic and cultural appreciation.

Adapting Learning to Individual Needs: Social media platforms accommodate a variety of learning demands and methods, which echoes Vygotsky's theory of individualised learning within the ZPD. Social media's flexibility allows students to modify their translanguaging strategies to suit their own interests and objectives. This dynamic engagement supports both linguistic and cognitive growth while assisting learners in improving their language proficiency.

As a result, social media platforms could be an effective translanguaging means that gives students access to authentic engagement, language fluidity, and flexible learning opportunities. By extending socially mediated learning outside of the classroom, these platforms support Vygotsky's theory that contextual and interactive experiences influence cognitive development.

2.2. Conceptual Framework

This study investigates the relationships between three major concepts—social media engagement, translanguaging practices, and inner speech—as well as their collaborative effects on Turkish language learning. Through a survey-based approach, participants’ self-reported experiences and perceptions are gathered, along with any other confounding variables that might affect these relationships.

2.2.1. Key Concepts

1. **Social Media Engagement:** Multilingual learners can engage with collaboration among peers and language mixing through social media. According to Alek (2023) and Dağgöl and Akçayoğlu (2018), platforms such as WhatsApp, X, Instagram, and TikTok expose users to a variety of linguistic information, which helps them improve their language abilities, clarify misconceptions, and feel more connected to people. Thus, social media is an effective tool for assisting multilingual students in their language acquisition since it encourages translanguaging activities.

2. **Translanguaging Practices:** Translanguaging is the process of communicating and learning more efficiently by utilising the student’s entire linguistic vocabulary. For instance, combining TL (Turkish) with L1 (such as Bahasa Malaysia / Indonesia) improves comprehension and memory of language-related information. Translanguaging fosters inclusive learning environments and recognizes learners’ identities (Yuzlu & Dikilitas, 2021). Henceforth, this study focuses on how participants’ every day and social media translanguaging practices affect their ability to speak Turkish.

3. **Inner Speech:** Before conversing, inner speech enables students to practice and process language elements in their minds. For example, they can evaluate their vocabulary and grammar in a secure setting by mentally practicing a conversation in Turkish, which boosts confidence and lowers mistakes (de Guerrero, 2012; Tomlinson, 2000). Therefore, this study investigates how inner speech aids multilingual learners’ acquisition of the Turkish language and enhances translanguaging practices.

2.2.2. Confounding Factors

This study investigates the impact of social media on inner speech and translanguaging, considering other significant variables through interviews. These include participants' prior language learning experiences, both formal and informal, their social media usage patterns, and demographic details like age, gender, nationality, and educational attainment. The study also examines various learning environments, such as TÖMER classes, self-study with language apps, and real-life interactions while speaking Turkish. Each of these elements contributes to a clearer understanding of the findings.

The study suggests that higher engagement with social media could be linked to increased translanguaging practices, which may then act as a bridge between social media interactions and improved Turkish language proficiency. However, the influence of social media may vary depending on factors like class attendance, self-learning habits, and real-life interactions.

2.2.3. Identified Research Gaps

Although significant research has focused on translanguaging in classroom settings, there are remaining gaps in the literature, particularly regarding its application in diverse contexts, such as various educational settings, languages, nationalities, and social media platforms. These areas need further investigation to better understand their impact on the language learning process:

Table 1: Identified research gaps

Area	Trend	Research Gap
International students' context	Research on translanguaging in formal education settings may be limited to bilingual or domestic contexts, overlooking international learners (Mısıır, 2023; İnal & Balcı, 2022).	Few studies on international students, particularly those in Türkiye. Research on Southeast Asian students from Malaysia and Indonesia learning Turkish and using translanguaging is lacking.
Role of social	Most research has focused on	Research on the influence of social media on

media	face-to-face interactions and formal educational contexts rather than digital spaces.	translanguaging remains limited (Lu & Gu, 2024; Dumrukci, 2020). Particularly, the role of social media in language acquisition and translanguaging is underexplored. Further studies should examine how different digital platforms (Lu & Gu, 2024) shape translanguaging strategies among learners of Turkish as a second language.
Inner speech in translanguaging	Most translanguaging studies examine external communication (Resnik, 2018).	There is limited research on inner speech in languages other than English, particularly in Turkish language acquisition (Resnik, 2021; Dewaele, 2015). Future studies should explore how inner speech development in Turkish learners interacts with their L1 and L2 (de Guerrero, 2004). Research should investigate the cognitive mechanisms of inner speech in multilingual learners (de Guerrero, 2013).
Cultural and social contexts	Cultural and social factors significantly impact translanguaging (Shalihah, 2024).	Most research on translanguaging strategies has focused on bilingual learners in Western contexts (de Guerrero, 2017). However, there is limited exploration of how non-Western populations, particularly Malaysian and Indonesian students, use translanguaging in Türkiye (Loo et al., 2022). Additionally, the impact of social and national policies on translanguaging in language learning and integration requires further exploration (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021).
Pedagogical implications	Translanguaging strategies are widely emphasised in education.	Lack of studies on effective translanguaging strategies in TÖMER programs (Canlı & Canlı, 2023). Further research is needed to assess the impact of translanguaging on learning outcomes (Wei, 2017), including its role in social media and inner speech. There is a need for longitudinal studies on how translanguaging affects language acquisition over time (Özkaynak, 2023).

2.3. Chapter Summary

This chapter has synthesised the key theories underpinning social media's influence on translanguaging and inner speech. It critically reviewed how Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory and García's translanguaging theory explain multilingual language learning in digital contexts. Additionally, it highlighted research gaps, reinforcing the study's significance in understanding how social media and inner speech shape Turkish language acquisition. The next chapter outlines the methodological approach used to explore these relationships empirically.



3. CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology employed to explore the social media platforms' influences on translanguaging practices and inner speech among international Malaysian and Indonesian students enrolled in the TÖMER program. First, it covers the qualitative research design, its justifications, and the methodology used to answer the research questions of the study. The chapter then explains the necessary aspects, including demographics, participants, pilot testing, data collecting, instrumentation, and data analysis procedures. Finally, it declares constraints and ethical issues into consideration to guarantee the validity and reliability of the study.

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach to explore the influence of social media on translanguaging and inner speech experiences in Malaysian and Indonesian students studying Turkish. It seeks to discover the variances and differences among participants with regard to their individual preferences for each practice. The study design is visually represented in **Figure 2**, adapted from Ramussen (2015, p.15) *The Ability to Access Post-Secondary Education: Adult Learners' Conceptions of Choosing Online Learning* (Ramussen, 2018):

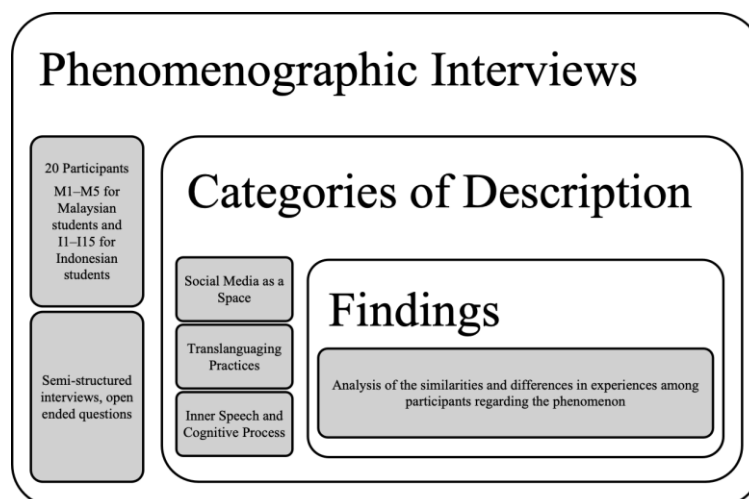


Figure 2: Research design

Instead of developing a new theory or model, this study uses a qualitative phenomenographic framework to examine translanguaging practices from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Ticheloven, 2019). Phenomenography is appropriate for educational research because it focuses on understanding variations in how individuals experience and interpret a phenomenon, emphasizing participants' perspectives (Sosyal & Saruhan, 2023) and emphasising the ways learners perceive and make sense of a specific phenomenon (Marton, 1981). Therefore, this study explores how students understand and use translanguaging in their language learning. It focuses on their use of different languages on social media and in their inner speech.

Unlike phenomenology, which seeks to uncover the essence of a phenomenon, phenomenography highlights the diversity in how people experience and interpret the same phenomenon under different conditions (Sosyal & Saruhan, 2023). This aligns with the study's objective of capturing the various ways in which students' multilingualism shapes their social media usage and translanguaging practices.

Phenomenography's Variation Theory, which is central to this method, implies that variations in learners' experiences lead to different patterns of understanding (Han & Ellis, 2019). In this study's context, it may come from how students distinguish or fuse their experiences of using social media for language learning and translanguaging. These variations can be explored through the analysis of participants' responses via the semi-structured interview to identify patterns of how they can conceptualise and practise translanguaging and inner speech. For instance, students may distinguish between formal and informal language use, contrast their learning experiences in different cultural contexts locally and abroad, or fuse multiple languages for communication depending on their listener.

To ensure a rich and diverse dataset, purposeful sampling was used to select 20 participants, reflecting a range of experiences based on factors such as social media use (Sosyal & Saruhan, 2023). Semi-structured, open-ended interviews will serve as the primary method for data collection, allowing participants to share their thoughts freely and explore their personal experiences of language learning in depth (Orgill, 2012). This flexible, conversational approach will enable the study to capture a broad spectrum of students' conceptualisations, ensuring that their voices remain at the forefront of the study process.

Generally, phenomenography offers a robust framework for understanding the varied ways in which international students experience translanguaging and inner speech in the context of social media engagement and language learning. By focusing on learners' perspectives, this approach allows for a deeper exploration of how students conceptualise and navigate challenges in learning Turkish in a monolingual class and digital environment. This methodology provides valuable insights into the underrepresented experiences of Malaysian and Indonesian students, offering a comprehensive understanding of their engaged learning process.

3.2. Participants

20 Malaysian and Indonesian students who are enrolled in Turkish universities' Turkish Language Preparatory Class (TÖMER) are involved in this study. The sample size is chosen to allow a deep analysis of detailed qualitative responses while ensuring a rich and diverse range of perspectives. While maintaining the practicality of the data-gathering procedure, this method can extract valuable insights from participants' experiences. According to Marshall et al. (2013), manageable sample sizes are especially helpful in survey-based research that includes qualitative components since they enable a thorough investigation of individual replies and facilitate data analysis.

Purposive and snowball sampling are used in the selection process to make sure that participants are enrolled in TÖMER programs and meet the requirements of being active social media users. This ensures a wide range of linguistic origins and social media habits, allowing for important insights into the phenomenon under study (Etikan et al., 2016). To establish the study context, demographic data will be collected, including age, gender, nationality, educational background, and TÖMER language proficiency levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). Furthermore, additional information about the participants' university, mother tongue, other languages spoken, and the language of instruction in their TÖMER class (either Turkish or a combination of both) will also be collected. This approach ensures the sample is representative of the study's focus and enables in-depth exploration of participants' language learning experiences influenced by social media.

3.3. Pilot Testing

3.3.1. Purpose and Objectives

A pilot test is conducted to improve the interview questions used for data collection, ensuring that they are clear, reliable, and valid. This test includes a similar small group of participants to the main study, helping to identify any potential problems, such as unclear questions, confusing instructions or technical issues. Feedback from participants allows necessary adjustments before beginning the full study (Ruel et al., 2015).

3.3.2. Pilot Participants

The pilot test involves 5 participants who are Malaysian and Indonesian students enrolled in Turkish language courses. Pilot participants are selected based on criteria similar to the main study to ensure alignment and increase the pilot test's validity (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

3.3.3. Pilot Process and Feedback

During the pilot test, participants will complete the interview process and share feedback regarding the clarity, relevance, and ease of understanding of the questions. Any identified issues are addressed, and the instruments are revised to improve their effectiveness and accuracy.

3.4. Data Collection

This study uses semi-structured interviews to collect rich and detailed insights of qualitative data on participants' experiences. The interview explores how Malaysian and Indonesian international students learning Turkish at TÖMER use social media for language acquisition, along with how it may influence their translanguaging and inner speech. The semi-structured format is ideal as it allows flexibility for participants to express their thoughts freely while ensuring that key areas of the research questions are addressed.

3.4.1. Instrumentation

To collect data effectively, this study follows an interview protocol that is developed around the research objectives, particularly focusing on:

- General experiences with learning Turkish: This will help us to understand the participants' motivations, challenges, and experiences in learning Turkish at TÖMER and Türkiye or any previous scenarios.
- Social media use: Participants' experiences with social media to support their Turkish learning, apart from the traditional classroom at TÖMER.
- Translanguaging: Participants' multilingual practices (e.g., Malay, Indonesian, English, Turkish) in daily life and on social media, as well as within their inner speech, if exists.
- Inner speech: The role of inner speech in the language learning process, especially during the thought process of panning, translating, and mixing languages.

Table 2: Mapping research questions to interview questions

Research Question (RQ)	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1: How do Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER describe the influence of social media platforms on their translanguaging behaviours during Turkish language acquisition?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do you use social media every day? How many hours do you typically spend on it, and for what purposes?2. What types of content do you engage with on social media (e.g., language learning, culture, entertainment), and how does it help you learn Turkish?3. Do you use any language resources (e.g., online dictionaries, translation tools) when engaging with Turkish content on social media? How do these tools support your learning?4. Are you aware of translanguaging in real-life contexts, influencers, or content creators?5. In what situations do you typically choose to use Turkish on social media (e.g., messaging, commenting on posts) or in conversations? Are there specific topics or situations that influence your decision?

RQ2: What are the experiences of Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER regarding translanguaging within their inner speech during Turkish language acquisition?

1. What are your opinions about translanguaging (negative/positive), and why?
2. Do you think in Turkish at times? If yes, in what situations do you find yourself thinking in Turkish, and how does it help your language learning?
3. Do you ever switch between languages in your thoughts, such as translating between Turkish and your first language? Can you share an example?
4. When you hear or read something in Turkish (e.g., in class or on social media), do you mentally repeat it, practice it, or reflect on it in your mind?
5. Do you ever plan out how to say something or imagine having conversations in Turkish before speaking? Can you describe how you do this?

RQ3: How do Malaysian and Indonesian students perceive the contribution of social media-facilitated translanguaging and inner speech strategies to their Turkish language learning outcomes?

1. Generally, do you find that social media helps with your translanguaging and use of Turkish in real-life conversations? How does this affect your confidence in speaking Turkish?

Additional Contextual Questions (Optional for building rapport or understanding participants' background)

1. Can you share your general thoughts about living and studying in Türkiye as an international student?
2. Why did you decide to study Turkish at TÖMER? How important is it to reach fluency?
3. How long have you been learning Turkish, and how is the TÖMER class structured?
4. How comfortable are you using it for reading, writing, and speaking?
5. When do you use Turkish outside of class (e.g., in daily life, with friends, on social media)? How comfortable are you using Turkish in these situations?

3.4.2. Interview Questions Design

The study adapts interview questions from two significant studies: Schriber's (2015) study on digital translanguaging and multilingual identity, along with de Guerrero's (2004) research on inner speech in second language (L2) acquisition. These studies explore the dynamic role of language use, particularly through digital platforms and inner speech, in shaping multilingual identities and language learning processes. The questions aim to uncover how translanguaging practices manifest in both external spaces like social media and daily conversation, and internal cognitive process such as

inner speech, with a particular focus on multilingual learners using Turkish as a foreign or target language (FL or TL), instead of typical research around SLA (L2). Furthermore, they are also meant to connect the two domains of translanguaging in social media and inner speech, exploring whether both processes evolve together or separately while learning a new language, as learners have their own preferences as well.

3.5. Procedures

Data will be collected over a period of three weeks to a month, or for as long as necessary to ensure sufficient data saturation. Participants are recruited from Malaysian and Indonesian international students at TÖMER from any universities across Türkiye through purposive sampling to ensure the selection of students meets the study's criteria. Snowball sampling is also employed to reach more participants through referrals from initial respondents. This combined approach saves time and helps to gather a diverse sample that reflects the study's target group. Informed consent will be obtained prior to the interviews. All interviews will be conducted in English, Malay or Indonesian, depending on the participants' preferences, to ensure clarity and comfort. The interview process involves the following steps:

1. **Recruitment:** Students who meet the selection criteria (active social media users, learning Turkish at TÖMER) will be invited to participate. Consent forms detailing the purpose of the study, confidentiality and their rights are provided.
2. **Scheduling:** Interviews will be scheduled at times convenient for the participants, either face-to-face but mostly virtually, yet it always depends on accessibility.
3. **Conducting the interview:** Semi-structured interviews are conducted, with participants encouraged to discuss their experiences freely, guided by the prepared questions. The interviews will be audio-recorded, at least by two different devices in case of data loss, and later transcribed for analysis with the help of Restream's transcription service. The generated transcription will be thoroughly checked for clarity and accuracy.

4. **Debriefing:** After the interview, participants will be given an opportunity to ask questions or provide additional comments.

Specifically, the following steps are involved in the data analysis (Holubek, 2015, p. 33):

1. Transcribing the interviews & selection of relevant utterances.
2. Coding of relevant utterances.
3. Grouping the utterances according to the similarity of themes (Thematic analysis).
4. Building the preliminary set of categories of description and looking for further varieties of conceptions.
5. Going back to transcripts and adjusting the categories of description.
6. Analysing the categories in terms of their structural and referential aspects (data) and formulating the final set of categories of descriptions.
7. Making the outcome space.

3.6. Data Analysis

Data Analysis The data will be analysed using a phenomenographic approach, which focuses on identifying qualitative variations in how participants experience and conceptualise translanguaging, inner speech, and social media engagement. This approach allows for the exploration of multiple ways in which Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER understand and navigate these phenomena rather than assuming a single developmental trajectory (Sosial & Saruhan, 2023).

The analysis will aim to compare and contrast participants' statements, identifying recurring themes and unique perspectives. These themes will be grouped into three distinct but interconnected categories of description:

- **Social media as a Space:** Examining how participants perceive and engage with social media as a language-learning environment.
- **Translanguaging Practices:** Exploring the flexible ways participants use multiple languages to support their Turkish learning.

- **Inner Speech and Cognitive Process:** Investigating how internal dialogue influences language processing, recall, and self-regulation.

Thus, participants' language learning experiences are shaped by the dynamic interactions between these categories rather than viewing them separately. Some students may follow a step-by-step pattern in which exposure to social media results in translanguaging techniques, which help foster inner speech. However, this is not always the case, as learners may transition between categories in different ways based on individual factors such as motivation, proficiency, and circumstance.

3.6.1. Coding and Analysis Process

There will be two major phases to the analysis. Firstly, by open coding to identify early themes and concepts arising from participants' input, the interview transcripts will be examined and coded. Secondly, structural coding is meant to catch the various ways that participants interpret the phenomenon; open codes will be categorised into more general themes. This step will concentrate on mapping variances across the three main categories rather than creating a linear hierarchy.

3.7. Outcome Space Development

The Outcome Space, which is designed by the open and structural coding approach, will show participants' experiences of inner speech, translanguaging, and social media in their Turkish language acquisition. The various ways that students interact with these elements and the variety of their perspectives will be depicted in this diagram. The participants may use several strategies to acquire knowledge, such as applying, memorising, or critically analysing their own learning processes. Their reasons will be investigated, whether they are driven by external factors such as entertainment or cultural adaption, or by internal factors such as personal growth. Additionally, participants may assess their development by evaluating the quality (e.g., their ability to use the language in real circumstances) or quantity (e.g., the number of words learnt) of their efforts. By mapping these variations, the Outcome Space will provide a structured understanding of how learners integrate different language practices, capturing the diverse approaches they take in acquiring Turkish.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

This study places a high priority on ethical practices to ensure the protection and rights of all participants. They are fully informed about the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. We also maintain participants' confidentiality by making their data anonymous and storing all records securely. To maintain anonymity, participants are labelled as M1–M5 for Malaysian students and I1–I15 for Indonesian students. The study follows the university's and ethic committees' guidelines and requirements.

Besides, to ensure the validity and the reliability of the findings, the study will employ communicative validity, ensuring that interpretations are consistent and justified through pragmatic validity, accessing the applicability of the findings to other language contexts (Sosial & Saruhan, 2023). The researcher will also practice "bracketing" to minimise personal bias and engage in active listening during the interview, ensuring an unbiased representation of participants' experiences (Marton, 1981). This involves consciously setting aside personal experiences or assumptions to better understand participants' perspectives.

3.9. Limitations

This study acknowledges several limitations that may affect the interpretation and generalisation of the findings. First, the indirect nature between social media usage and translanguaging and inner speech, which makes it challenging to fully capture how social media influences language learning. Additionally, participant bias may rise, as individual experiences might not represent the broader population, a common limitation in phenomenographic studies where participants' perspectives are central but not always generalisable (Sosial & Saruhan, 2023).

Furthermore, the reliance on self-reported data may lead to biased accounts, as participants could present idealised or selective versions of their experiences. To address these issues, the study employed iterative refinements during the coding process, using phenomenographic methods to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings. The iterative coding process used in this study follows the phenomenographic

method, which requires careful comparison of similarities and differences to identify meaningful variations in experience (Han & Ellis, 2019). Although this approach helped identify patterns in participants' experiences, the limited sample size may restrict the generalisability of the results. Future studies should consider triangulating data from multiple sources and engaging in thorough discussions to ensure balanced interpretations.

3.10. Chapter Summary

The chapter presents the qualitative phenomenography methodology employed to explore the translanguaging and inner speech practices of Malaysian and Indonesian international students in Türkiye. By employing open-ended and semi structured interviews, the qualitative data collected through this study aims to bridge theory with practical applications, especially in understanding how social media influences language acquisition in monolingual educational contexts, where multilingualism may be overlooked. The next chapter will focus on analysing the collected data and presenting findings that highlight the variations based on personal preference over social media in supporting language learning and blending, translanguaging and inner speech.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: Findings and Analysis

This study explores how Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER perceive the role of social media in their Turkish language learning, particularly in relation to translanguaging and inner speech. Through a phenomenographic analysis, the data were examined following seven steps of analysis, leading to the identification of three overarching categories of description, each encompassing distinct subcategories. These categories reflect participants' varied experiences and perspectives on (1) Social media as a Space, (2) Translanguaging Practices, and (3) Inner Speech and Cognitive Process. To maintain anonymity, participants are labelled as M1–M5 for Malaysian students and I1–I15 for Indonesian students. Each category represents a unique way in which students engage with, understand, and experience language learning, shaped by their linguistic backgrounds, learning strategies, and social media usage. The findings are organised according to these categories, with participant quotes illustrating key conceptions. Additionally, the structural relationships between these categories will be explored in the outcome space, highlighting how social media use, translanguaging, and inner speech interact in the learning process.

4.1. Categories of Description

The Categories of Description present a detailed breakdown of the different ways participants experience and conceptualise social media use in translanguaging and inner speech during Turkish language acquisition. These categories are derived from a thematic analysis of interview data and are organised sequentially to reflect increasing levels of sophistication in participants' understanding and engagement with social media as a language-learning tool.

Each category highlights a distinct way participants experience the phenomenon, reflecting variation theory in phenomenography. The categories are not mutually exclusive, meaning some participants may shift between multiple categories depending on the context, personal motivation, or learning goals.

4.1.1. Social Media as a Space

The majority of the participants described social media as a platform that can support Turkish language learning and practising, actively or passively. For instance, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube played a significant role in exposing learners to authentic Turkish usage in real-life contexts, which they found more interactive and easier to understand compared to their monolingual lessons at TÖMER.

Apart from typical social media, some participants also rely on other applications like Google Translate. One of them describes using *Busuu* as an alternative learning tool to practice their Turkish proficiency:

“I learned this through an app called Busuu, which turns language learning into a game. At the early levels, we’re shown a picture with an unclear caption beneath it. After swiping through a few times, we’re given options to identify the language of the image, engaging with the content like a game.” (I1).

This illustrates that language learning applications can be turned into an interactive, game-like experience, blending play with educational content. The app uses visual cues and words with matching exercises to help users practice language in an engaging way.

Additionally, the participant highlights another app, *Speaky*, where users connect with others for language exchange. They describe interacting with native speakers for practical learning:

“In the app, we meet people who are looking to benefit from us. Before using the app, we fill out a form stating what language we speak and what language we want to learn. I chose English because many people need to learn it, and I wanted to learn Turkish. I was then matched with people who wanted to learn English. We exchanged languages, helping each other.” (I1).

This interaction demonstrates how an app like *Speaky* provides space for reciprocal language exchange, where users participate in new languages with others in a social and informal context. The participant emphasises learning through conversation rather than the structured lessons:

“My language partner taught me phrases and vocabulary, not in a structured way, but through practical conversation. For example, we practiced numbers and simple greeting sentences, memorising their meanings and using them in conversation.” (I1).

This informal, peer-based approach reflects the role of social media and digital platforms in providing an accessible, flexible environment for language learning,

where translanguaging may occur naturally through shared understanding and informal exchanges.

4.1.1.1. Informal learning through exposure

Learning is not limited only to attending physical classes but includes observation and exposure as well. Observing Turkish content on social media (e.g., Instagram posts, YouTube videos). Indirect vocabulary acquisition and cultural awareness through passive exposure. For instance, one Malaysian participant shared that his passive engagement with Turkish content on platforms like TikTok contributed to their vocabulary acquisition and cultural awareness. They describe their use of social media apps, noting their limited social interaction but significant time spent on platforms:

“I’m not a social person; I prefer sitting in my room (dormitory) after class, but yes, I use TikTok and WhatsApp to communicate...I spend about 4 hours on TikTok and 1 or 2 hours on WhatsApp...I mostly watch videos related to life in Türkiye on TikTok...I know the context of what they’re talking about, even though we speak different languages.” (M2).

When asked about their understanding of Turkish content, the participant reveals that they can comprehend it, despite the language barrier, due to their exposure to the context of the discussions. The participant further explains how social media, particularly TikTok, aids in their Turkish language learning by allowing them to observe how people speak, thus accelerating their language acquisition:

“It’s very helpful because on social media, I can see how people speak, and it speeds up my language learning” (M2).

This highlights how exposure to authentic content on social media platforms, even passively, can foster language acquisition and cultural understanding in an informal and engaging manner, especially for reserved students living in a heavily monolingual context.

4.1.1.2. Multimodal scaffolding

Another Indonesian participant describes leveraging multiple languages—Arabic, Turkish, and Indonesian—as part of their multimodal approach to language learning. They highlight the use of various media, including podcasts and social media

platforms, to enhance their Turkish comprehension. For instance, they find it easier to understand certain explanations in Arabic:

“Sometimes I watch podcasts, or if there’s content with Arabic-Turkish or Turkish-Indonesian translations, I’ll watch that...because sometimes it’s easier in Arabic” (I3).

This is because Arabic is their primary language, as they spent some of their childhood growing up in Jeddah and went to primary education there. That is why they feel more comfortable with explanations in Arabic, even though they still rely on Indonesian for other contexts. Furthermore, while special media platform like YouTube provides easy access to Turkish content, the absence of subtitles or translations can make understanding challenging:

“But if it’s directly Turkish sentences without translation—like reading Turkish news, listening to Turkish news without subtitles—it’s really hard to understand unless there are subtitles...It depends on the type of content. For example, if your FYP (for you page) has everything in Turkish, it’s not possible to understand because I don’t know the language. There must be understanding as well” (I3).

They note that the content type also plays an important role in making Turkish content accessible. In short, multimodal scaffolding, like using different media such as visual, auditory, and additional resources like subtitles, could help participants to engage with Turkish content. Their translanguaging practice, where they draw on Arabic to supplement their Turkish comprehension, makes learning more flexible and accessible, even in informal settings like social media.

4.1.1.3. Building confidence and autonomy in language use

In addition, one of the participants explains how social media complements their learning from formal lessons at TÖMER. They realise that while textbooks provide a more structured approach, like grammar and academic terms, social media actually exposes them to natural spoken Turkish in daily life and helps them to become more confident:

“Okay, from my opinion, in class, we learn from books, which is great for grammar and academic Turkish. But social media helps in a different way—it teaches the casual and general Turkish sentences that people actually use. We usually speak in a more formal and complete way in class, but in real life, people don’t always talk like that.” (M4)

The engagement and exposures to social media makes them feel more connected and prepared with native speakers in informal settings after being informed with the authentic Turkish content. They have the freedom or autonomy in their own language learning strategy to choose what to watch, read and engage with without relying solely on classroom instruction. One participant describes how social media provides a balanced learning experience, where content is neither too easy nor too difficult, allowing them to progress at their own pace:

“Actually, from my perspective, social media helps connect you to content. Some of it isn’t very easy, but it’s not too hard either. That’s how you grow” (M5)

This shows that autonomous learning through informal social media allows learners to regulate their own learning process, appropriating materials to match their levels and needs. Unlike structured classroom tutorials, social media seems to be a more flexible, low-pressure, learner-driven approach that may enable confidence growth naturally.

4.1.2. Translanguaging Practices

Translanguaging practices play a crucial role, especially among multilingual international students, to aid their comprehension and communication. Most participants describe their experiences of language mixing for cultural bridging as essential, as it is natural and beneficial:

“In my opinion, in the context of international students that study in a foreign country, speaking a language that is maybe their third, fourth, or even fifth language, it’s already a good thing. It’s not a problem... I mean, it’s something that can be improved, but I wouldn’t label it as a bad thing.” (M1)

The participant believes that translanguaging is not necessarily a weakness but rather an inevitable part of learning multiple languages. They acknowledge that while there is always room for improvement, speaking multiple languages, even imperfectly, is already an achievement. Instead of viewing translanguaging as a deficiency, they see it as a natural strategy that reflects the complexity of multilingual communication.

4.1.2.1. Translanguaging based on context

The participants' use of translanguaging varies depending on their setting, context and mostly, audience/listener. In academic or official environments, students tend to follow formal structures, sticking to a single language of instruction (Malaysian/Indonesian/Turkish/English), while in informal settings, like with peers or social media interactions, they are open to more flexible language use. This ability to adapt their language practices to different contexts demonstrates a high level of linguistic awareness and strategic learning. For example, one participant describes how they mix Malay, English, and Turkish depending on the situation:

“I’ve mixed Malay, English, and Turkish before. For example, I use Malay at home, but when I’m speaking with Turkish or foreign people, I tend to use Turkish or English more often” (M3)

However, in academic contexts, they lean towards English, as it feels more comfortable for academic discussions:

“For academic matters, I prefer using English., But for daily life, I tend to use other languages more” (M3)

This adaptability illustrates that translanguaging is not just about filling gaps in understanding but is also context-dependent. While students use English for academic purposes because of their familiarity with its academic lexicon, they prefer other languages for daily conversations, suggesting a strategic approach to language use.

Translanguaging practices also depend heavily on the individuals involved in the conversation. As one Indonesian participant explains, the languages (Indonesian and English) they use often shift depending on who they are speaking to:

“It depends on who you’re talking to...This happens a lot when I’m talking with people who understand both languages, like younger people or university students. But when I’m speaking to elders in more traditional settings, where the level of understanding of Indonesian is lower, I have to adjust... It can be frustrating, especially when the audience is not familiar with the mix of languages, but I adapt depending on the context and the people I’m speaking with.” (I14)

This reflects how translanguaging is not just a practical tool for overcoming gaps in vocabulary but is also strategically employed based on the context. In more formal or traditional settings, students might lean more heavily on one language, like Indonesian, while in informal or academic contexts, they feel comfortable mixing languages, such

as English and Indonesian, to ensure clarity and expressiveness. Another similar situation was quoted by another multilingual participant:

“If I’m speaking with someone who isn’t very fluent in Arabic but understands a little, I use more Indonesian” (I3).

4.1.2.2. Language proficiency and translanguaging frequency

The frequency and manner of translanguaging often depend on a speaker’s language proficiency and the context in which communication takes place. Participants describe how they naturally switch between languages based on familiarity, comfort, and the linguistic background of their conversation partners. One Indonesian participant explains that when learning Turkish, they naturally translate into English first, as it is the most familiar language to them. This process happens unconsciously, and sometimes they do not even realise whether they are thinking in English or Indonesian.

“When learning Turkish, I always translate into English first. Sometimes, I don’t even realise whether I’m thinking in English or Indonesian—it just happens...For example, I prefer using English for self-expression, academic discussions, and entertainment-related topics because I’m more comfortable with the vocabulary. Meanwhile, for school-related tasks, I tend to use Indonesian since I learned those concepts in that language” (I8).

This frequent use of English for communication is tied to the fact that they have grown up with English as a primary language, making it the default option for many forms of expression. However, the participant also reveals that they feel more comfortable using English for certain topics, like self-expression, academic discussions, or entertainment, as it aligns with their deeper understanding of vocabulary in these areas:

“Since I grew up speaking English from the age of four, it naturally comes out when I talk. There are even moments where I find it easier to express myself in English rather than Indonesian, especially when discussing certain topics” (I8).

4.1.2.3. Overcoming gaps in vocabulary and fluency through translanguaging

Participants also discussed overcoming gaps in vocabulary and fluency through translanguaging, particularly in informal contexts. I3 explains how they frequently mix Indonesian and Arabic when communicating, particularly with friends. The ability to

switch between languages happens naturally, and they sometimes use both languages in a single sentence when one word is forgotten:

“For example, mixing Indonesian and Arabic is quite common. Many of my friends speak like that, and even I do the same when talking with them. Sometimes, I feel more comfortable speaking in Arabic, but if I forget certain words, I switch to Indonesian and then back to Indonesian. Or sometimes, I mix both languages within the same sentence” (I3).

Translanguaging ensures that the message is communicated clearly despite the challenges of language limitations. I11 echoes a similar experience when they struggle to find the right word in Indonesian, switching to English to maintain the flow of conversation. The participants’ use of English serves as a bridge to overcome gaps in their vocabulary and fluency in Indonesian, especially when they cannot recall the correct term quickly:

“For example, I can speak both English and Indonesian, so sometimes when I can’t find the right words, I switch between languages. For instance, if I’m explaining something, I might start in Indonesian, but if I can’t recall a term, I’ll switch to English... I might mix in some English terms when I can’t remember the Indonesian equivalent quickly.” (I11)

Through these strategies, students develop a more flexible and adaptive approach to language learning. Rather than being a sign of weakness, translanguaging becomes an active tool for overcoming linguistic challenges and expanding their proficiency.

4.1.3. Inner Speech and Cognitive Process

Inner speech plays a vital role in the cognitive process of learning Turkish, allowing students to process and organise their thoughts before expressing them. This internal dialogue helps learners recall vocabulary, structure sentences, and make sense of complex grammar rules. Most of them needed some time to reflect when asked about their inner speech activities, as they were not consciously aware of the process. As multilingual international students living abroad, they would describe their inner speech as a mix of languages, depending on their level of proficiency in Turkish and their familiarity with the topic.

4.1.3.1. Problem-solving through multilingual thinking

When faced with challenges in understanding Turkish, students rely on multilingual thinking to problem-solve. By switching between languages in their inner

speech, they can work through unfamiliar words, recall grammar structures, and formulate responses more effectively. This approach helps them overcome gaps in comprehension by using their stronger language skill for cognitive support.

M4, who is also learning Korean, shared how they use different languages to work through difficulties in Turkish:

“Since I usually use Korean for personal purposes, when I talk to myself or take notes, sometimes Korean naturally appears because it feels easier to understand. Actually, before I learned Turkish, whenever I encountered a new sentence, I would first translate it into Korean before translating it into Turkish. This was especially the case in the early stages of learning before coming to Türkiye” (M4).

This demonstrates how translanguaging is not merely about filling gaps in communication but is also a strategic tool for problem-solving. By leveraging multiple languages, students can maintain fluency and accuracy in their thought processes, allowing them to navigate linguistic challenges more efficiently.

4.1.3.2. Internal translation and reflection on language use

Many students use internal translation as a strategy to process Turkish more effectively. When encountering unfamiliar words or sentence structures, they mentally translate them into a language they are more comfortable with before responding. This reflective process allows them to evaluate their language use, ensuring clarity and coherence in their communication. I8 describes how they internally translate before speaking:

“When learning Turkish, I always translate into English first. Sometimes, I don’t even realise whether I’m thinking in English or Indonesian—it just happens naturally. Since I grew up speaking English from the age of four, it comes out instinctively when I speak. There are even moments where I find it easier to express myself in English rather than Indonesian, especially when discussing certain topics” (I8).

This shows that internal translation is not only about converting words between languages but also about selecting the most suitable language based on context. By reflecting on their language use, learners can refine their Turkish skills and build confidence in expressing themselves across different settings. Another Indonesian adds:

“For example, I can speak both English and Indonesian, so when I struggle to find the right words, I switch between languages. If I’m explaining something, I might start in Indonesian, but if I can’t recall a term, I’ll switch to English. Sometimes, I mix in English words when I can’t quickly remember their Indonesian equivalent” (I11).

This highlights how inner speech involves constant reflection on language choices, switching when necessary.

4.1.3.3. Cognitive flexibility and integration of multiple languages

The ability to switch between multiple languages in inner speech demonstrates cognitive flexibility, a key skill in multilingual language learning. Instead of strictly separating languages, students integrate them fluidly depending on context, emotional state, and familiarity with a topic. For instance, some learners find it easier to use English when discussing abstract ideas, while Turkish is more accessible for everyday interactions. M1 reflects on how their background in Arabic helps them understand Turkish more easily:

“Outside of Jordan, I also mix in Arabic when speaking. But now, since I am surrounded by multiple languages at once, it feels like everything blends together. Since I previously studied Arabic, I sometimes recognised similarities between Arabic and Turkish while learning Turkish. For example, some terms are similar in both languages, which makes it easier for me to understand them compared to someone without an Arabic background. When I see a word in Turkish that also exists in Arabic, I immediately make a connection between them” (M1).

This illustrates how multilingual learners rely on existing knowledge to form associations between languages. The participant's ability to recognise shared vocabulary across Arabic and Turkish allows them to process new words more efficiently:

“Learning Turkish is easier in that sense because of my Arabic background. If I come across a word, I can sometimes link it back to Arabic. For example, in Arabic, the word *jami'a* means university, and I noticed a similar structure in Turkish. Even if there are slight differences, it helps me process new words faster. However, when speaking, it still takes time for me to get used to using these words naturally” (M1).

This demonstrates how cognitive flexibility enables students to transfer linguistic knowledge between languages. While recognising familiar words helps with comprehension, actively using them in speech still requires time and practice. It suggests that cognitive flexibility in translanguaging is not just about language switching but also about knowing when and how to use different languages effectively. By developing this skill, students can adapt to diverse linguistic environments and enhance their overall language learning experience.

4.1.4. Learning Outcomes

This section examines the influence of participants' engagement with social media, categorised as passive, active, or neutral, on their Turkish language learning outcomes. Additionally, it explores how translanguaging and during inner speech affects their language development. The findings indicate that different engagement styles with social media and distinct inner speech strategies contribute in varied ways to vocabulary acquisition, cultural understanding, and communication skills. The three sub-themes identified in this section are:

4.1.4.1. Passive Engagement

Participants who engage passively with social media typically observe Turkish content, such as Instagram posts or YouTube videos, without actively interacting with it. This form of engagement often leads to indirect language learning through exposure to new vocabulary, cultural norms, and language structures. While passive engagement is less interactive, it still plays a crucial role in enhancing comprehension and providing real-life context to language use. Several participants mention that they “mostly watch videos about society, especially on TikTok or Instagram, about life in Türkiye.” This passive engagement with TikTok content allows the participant to develop an understanding of cultural and linguistic elements in an observational manner.

4.1.4.2. Active Engagement

In contrast, active engagement involves participants interacting directly with Turkish content, such as commenting on posts, sending messages, or even creating their own content in Turkish. This engagement leads to more immediate and dynamic learning outcomes as participants use translanguaging strategies to bridge gaps in comprehension or fluency. Active engagement fosters greater confidence in using Turkish and can enhance both receptive and productive language skills. Some participants “have Turkish followers, so (they) engage with them in Turkish.” It could be through stories, posts, comments, or even messaging. These participants' active engagement with Turkish speakers on social media provides real-time interaction and practice, enhancing their fluency and confidence.

4.1.4.3. Neutral Engagement

Neutral engagement refers to a mixed or limited level of interaction with social media, where participants may reflect on Turkish language use or practice language skills in their inner speech without actively engaging with others. Although this form of engagement is less observable, it still significantly contributes to cognitive processes and language development. Participants often rely on their inner speech to reflect, plan, or make sense of new words or phrases they encounter online. Most beginners in Turkish describe that, “At first, I still thought in English, but now I try to think in Turkish.” This indicates that even without direct engagement, inner speech plays a role in structuring and reinforcing language learning. “Sometimes, but I often translate it mentally into other languages to understand it better.” This habit of mentally translating words shows the cognitive process behind language acquisition through inner speech.

4.2. Outcome Space

The outcome space represents the structural relationships between the three categories of description identified in this study: Social Media as a Space, Translanguaging Practices, and Inner Speech and Cognitive Process. The identification of social media as a space for learning aligns with the phenomenographic approach, which focuses on how individuals experience a phenomenon rather than the phenomenon itself (Han & Ellis, 2019). In phenomenography, the focus is on variations in experience rather than a singular objective reality, making it particularly useful for understanding how students engage with language learning through different means (Han & Ellis, 2019). These categories form a dynamic system that influences the way Malaysian and Indonesian students experience Turkish language acquisition. The degree of engagement with social media (passive, active, or neutral) determines how participants interact with these categories, leading to variations in learning experiences and cognitive development.

Table 3: Outcome space

Category	Description	Representative Quote	Variations
Social media as a Space	Social media functions as an informal learning environment, offering exposure to Turkish through multimodal scaffolding (text, images, video, audio). It provides context-rich input, enabling learners to engage with authentic linguistic and cultural material. (Lai et al., 2021)	“On social media, I follow Turkish pages and learn while scrolling. Sometimes, I don’t even realise I’m learning.”	Differences in platform preference (Instagram, TikTok, YouTube), content type (news, entertainment), and frequency of exposure.
Translanguaging Practices	Learners employ translanguaging as a flexible strategy to comprehend and communicate in Turkish. By integrating multiple languages, they navigate meaning and compensate for gaps in proficiency (Wei, 2017), including in digital interactions (Mısır & Güler, 2024).	“If I can’t find the right word in Turkish, I use English—it feels like a shortcut, but it helps me keep the conversation going.”	The extent of translanguaging varies based on Turkish proficiency, context (academic, social, online), and interlocutors (native speakers, peers).
Inner Speech and Cognitive Process	Inner speech plays a critical role in Turkish language development by facilitating internal translation, self-regulation, and problem-solving (de Guerrero, 2013). Learners mentally rehearse Turkish phrases, translate words across languages, and use self-talk to reinforce comprehension (Resnik, 2021).	“When I hear Turkish in class, I first think in Arabic, then make sense of it in Turkish. Sometimes, I repeat words in my head to remember them better.”	Influences include prior language knowledge, complexity of the task, and the environment.

4.2.1. Interconnections Between Categories

These categories do not function in isolation but rather interact dynamically, shaping the participants’ language learning experiences. According to phenomenographic research, categories of description are best understood in terms of their structural relationships rather than as isolated themes (Han & Ellis, 2019).

Firstly, social media serves as an entry point for language exposure, providing learners with Turkish input in an engaging, low-pressure environment (Dumrukci, 2020). The multimodal nature of social media supports scaffolding, mimicking the

effects of structured language-learning apps. This aligns with phenomenographic perspectives that emphasise the role of external environments in shaping learners' experiences of knowledge acquisition (Han & Ellis, 2019).

Whereas, translanguaging emerges as a cognitive and communicative tool, enabling learners to make sense of unfamiliar Turkish content (García & Lin, 2016) encountered on social media or in real-life conversations. This strategy facilitates both comprehension and production, especially in online interactions.

Meanwhile, inner speech bridges external input and internal processing, allowing learners to mentally rehearse Turkish, apply translanguaging strategies, and integrate prior language knowledge into their thought processes (Dewaele, 2015). This reflects phenomenographic insights that learning involves internalising and reorganising knowledge through interaction with one's environment (Han & Ellis, 2019). The relationship between social media, translanguaging, and inner speech in the process of learning Turkish is depicted in the following figure, Figure 3, which highlights both structural and experiential levels of influence:

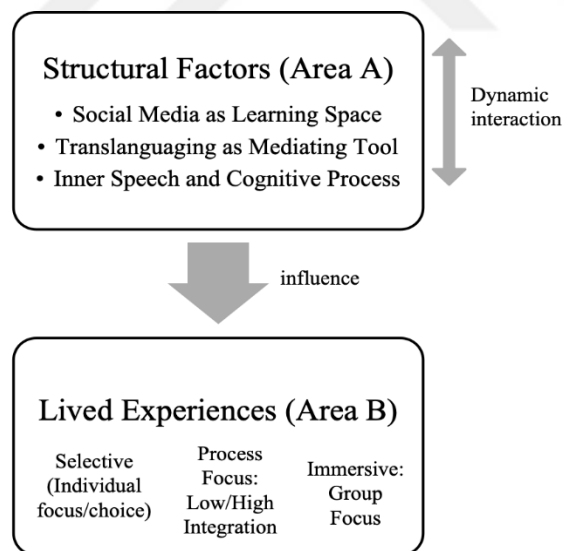


Figure 3: The dynamic interaction factors at structural and experiential levels

At the structural level, social media offers a unique platform for informal exposure, while translanguaging assists learners in connecting different languages, and inner speech aids cognitive processing. Meanwhile, at the experiential level,

participants interact with these components in different ways, ranging from passive browsing to active use for more in-depth learning. These processes dynamically influence one another, affecting language acquisition through both internal comprehension and external interaction.

4.2.2. Engagement and Variation in Experiences

The way learners experience these categories varies depending on their level of engagement with social media. Passive engagement provides exposure to Turkish through observation, indirectly supporting vocabulary acquisition and cultural awareness. Meanwhile, active engagement strengthens productive skills as learners interact, comment, and use Turkish in digital spaces. Nevertheless, neutral engagement reflects internal cognitive processing, where learners use social media as a reference while relying on inner speech to consolidate learning.

These engagement styles reflect the flexible nature of digital language learning (Van den Beemt et al., 2020). It also illustrates how social media, translanguaging, and inner speech function as interconnected components in the process of Turkish language acquisition, with variations influenced by learners' engagement styles and linguistic backgrounds.

On top of that, learners engage with these categories for different reasons, for instance, external motivations, where some learners engage with Turkish content for entertainment, cultural adaptation, or academic purposes. In the meantime, there are some internal motivations, such as being personally driven by curiosity, self-improvement, or linguistic interest. Moreover, social context also plays a role where learners with regular contact with Turkish speakers may show stronger motivation for active engagement, while those in L1-dominant circles might rely more on passive learning.

At the end of the interview, participants may perceive the learning outcome by assessing their progress in different ways. First, a quantity-based evaluation to measure success by how many words they have learned or how much content they have consumed. Regarding its quality, others may focus on their ability to apply Turkish

effectively in real-life situations, such as conversations or writing. Some learners may mix of both depending on the context and their personal goals.

4.3. Structural Relations Among Categories

This section examines how the three categories—Social media as a Space, Translanguaging Practices, and Inner Speech and Cognitive Process are structurally related in the process of Turkish language acquisition. Phenomenographic research does not seek to establish fixed relationships but rather captures variations in how learners experience these categories (Soysal & Saruhan, 2023). As such, while hierarchical relations may emerge, they are not universal—some learners progress through these categories, while others move between them dynamically (Han & Ellis, 2019). These categories do not function in isolation; instead, they interact in dynamic and complex ways, influencing learners’ experiences and outcomes. The structural relations among these categories can be understood through three perspectives:

1. **Hierarchical Relations** (Does one category lead to another?)
2. **Contextual Relations** (Do different learners experience these categories differently?)
3. **Processual Relations** (How do learners move between categories over time?)

Social media fosters exposure and interaction with Turkish as TL, along with other languages like L1 (Bahasa Malaysia or Indonesia) and L2/FL (English), indirectly supporting translanguaging practices. Translanguaging aids in clarifying meaning and cultural adaptation, while inner speech reinforces language skills gained through social media.

4.3.1. Hierarchical Relations

Phenomenographic research often identifies hierarchical relationships between categories, where one concept serves as the foundation for another (Han & Ellis, 2019). In many cases, the categories form a progressive learning cycle, where one category serves as a foundation for the next. Social media exposure often serves as an

entry point, leading to translanguaging strategies, which in turn contribute to the development of inner speech.

In this study, a similar pattern emerges. First, social media provides exposure to Turkish through multimodal content (text, video, images, and audio). Besides, translanguaging allows learners to process and use the language, bridging comprehension gaps by integrating other known languages. Meanwhile, inner speech develops as learners gain proficiency, enabling them to think in Turkish independently.

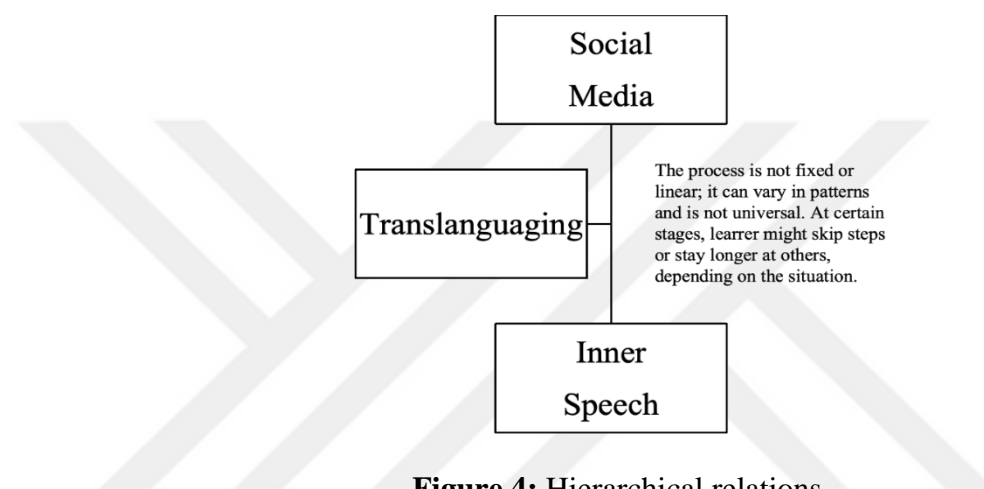


Figure 4: Hierarchical relations

While this hierarchy is common, it is not universal. Some learners skip stages, while others remain in early stages without progressing to inner speech (Guerrero, 2017). Although many learners follow a progressive learning cycle, where social media exposure leads to translanguaging strategies and subsequently develops inner speech, this is not always the case. Han and Ellis (2019) emphasise that learning does not occur in a fixed linear sequence; rather, different learners engage with and internalise knowledge in varying patterns based on awareness, prior experience, and context. Furthermore, Soysal and Saruhan (2023) caution against assuming universal learning pathways, as phenomenography aims to capture differences in experience rather than impose a predetermined structure.

4.3.2. Contextual Relations

Learners do not all experience social media, translanguaging, and inner speech in the same way. Individual differences—such as motivation, prior language knowledge, and learning context—shape how these categories interact. According to phenomenographic theory, the same phenomenon can be experienced in different ways depending on a learner’s background, prior knowledge, and engagement with their learning environment (Han & Ellis, 2019).

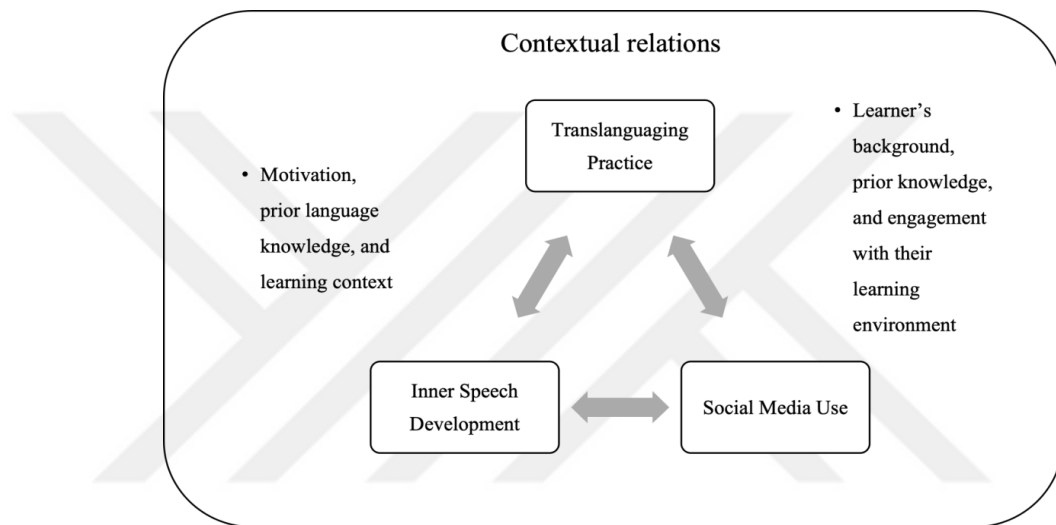


Figure 5: Contextual relations

Highly motivated learners actively engage with Turkish content via social media, which may lead to stronger translanguaging and inner speech development. Meanwhile, learners’ language background, i.e., strong other language skills, may find translanguaging strategies easier, while others struggle with comprehension. Moreover, those with regular contact with Turkish speakers are more likely to progress from social media to translanguaging to inner speech, whereas those in L1-dominant social circles may rely on passive social media use without active translanguaging. Studies show that learners immersed in Turkish-speaking environments are more likely to transition from social media exposure to translanguaging and inner speech development (Canlı & Canlı, 2023).

Therefore, the same categories may function differently depending on the learner, meaning that hierarchical progression is not guaranteed. Phenomenographic

research highlights that the same phenomenon can be experienced in multiple ways depending on learners' backgrounds, prior knowledge, and engagement with their learning environment (Han & Ellis, 2019). However, researchers must ensure that these variations emerge organically from participant data rather than being imposed (Soysal & Saruhan, 2023). In this study, differences in social media engagement, linguistic backgrounds, and motivation shaped how learners transitioned between translanguaging and inner speech, reinforcing the fluidity of language acquisition.

4.3.3. Processual Relations

Language learning is not static; learners move between categories over time, depending on exposure, practice, and internalisation of knowledge. Some learners progress naturally, while others struggle to move beyond the early stages. The iterative nature of phenomenographic analysis helps capture these variations in experience (Han & Ellis, 2019).

Types of Processual Relations:

- **Linear Progression:** Learners start with social media, then use translanguaging, and finally develop inner speech as they internalise Turkish.
- **Cyclical Process:** Learners shift between translanguaging and inner speech depending on the complexity of the task (e.g., using inner speech to rehearse a sentence before using translanguaging to communicate).
- **Stagnation:** Some learners remain in early stages (e.g., passive social media engagement) without actively using translanguaging or inner speech.

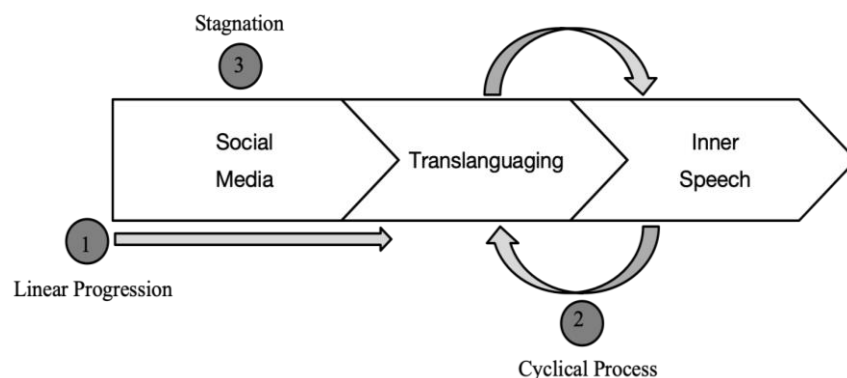


Figure 6: Processual relations

This variation underscores phenomenographic differences in how students approach Turkish language learning, reinforcing the need for an individualised, context-dependent perspective (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012). In short, processual relations highlight that language learning is fluid, with learners moving forward, backward, or cyclically between social media, translanguaging, and inner speech.

While social media, translanguaging, and inner speech collectively support language learning, their use and effectiveness vary across individuals. Personal engagement, preferred learning styles, and degree of social interaction influence how each student experiences and benefits from these strategies. Thus, understanding these structural relations helps explain reasons for learners' experiences to differ. It also highlights why some learners acquire Turkish more effectively, while others struggle despite exposure. These differences reflect the phenomenographic variation in how students approach Turkish language learning, reinforcing the need to view language acquisition as an individualised, context-dependent process.

The phenomenographic approach has been crucial in structuring the outcome space for this study. Han and Ellis (2019) emphasise that understanding variations in experience is key to identifying patterns in learning and knowledge acquisition. In this study, the three categories—Social media as a Space, Translanguaging Practices, and Inner Speech and Cognitive Process—illustrate how learners differently engage with Turkish language learning, depending on their exposure, motivation, and interaction with digital resources. This reinforces the phenomenographic perspective that learning is not a uniform process but a dynamic, context-dependent phenomenon (Han & Ellis, 2019).

4.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the findings, exploring how Malaysian and Indonesian international students in Türkiye engage with social media, translanguaging, and inner speech in Turkish language acquisition. Using a phenomenographic approach, the analysis identifies key variations in participants' experiences, structured into categories

of description. It also examines learning outcomes before integrating the findings in the outcome space, which highlights the relationships between these elements and variations in learning experiences. The next chapter will discuss the implications of these findings and provide recommendations for future research.



5. CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion and Implications

This chapter interprets the findings in relation to the research questions posed in the study, comparing the results with existing literature. The discussion will address the implications of the findings, limitations, and recommendations for future research. It is structured around the three main themes identified in the study: the influence of social media on translanguaging behaviours, the role of translanguaging in inner speech, and the perceived contributions of these strategies to language learning outcomes.

5.1. Theme 1: Social Media's Influence on Translanguaging Behaviours

RQ1: How do Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER describe the influence of social media platforms on their translanguaging behaviours during Turkish language acquisition?

The findings suggest that social media platforms provide crucial informal learning opportunities, exposing students to multilingual content that significantly influences their translanguaging practices. Many participants indicated that social media allows them to access and interact with diverse linguistic communities, which, in turn, affects how they use multiple languages while acquiring Turkish. Social media serves as a dynamic environment where language learners can engage in translanguaging as a natural and pragmatic response to the demands of communication (Canagarajah, 2011). Studies have demonstrated that translanguaging in digital spaces is not only a tool for effective communication but also an essential part of identity construction, as learners strategically switch between languages to engage with global audiences and enhance their language acquisition process (Dumrukci, 2020; Shalihah, 2024).

Additionally, students reported gaining exposure to cultural nuances and colloquial language use through social media interactions. For instance, one participant noted, "On Instagram, I see how native speakers mix Turkish with English, and it helps me understand how language is used in real life." This aligns with research indicating that digital translanguaging fosters the integration of linguistic and cultural

resources, allowing learners to observe and imitate authentic linguistic practices in real-world settings (Schreiber, 2015; Mısıır & Güler, 2024). Moreover, studies have highlighted that social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter facilitate the development of multilingual competencies by providing learners with opportunities to engage with varied linguistic inputs and refine their language use based on contextual demands (Lu & Gu, 2024).

5.1.1. Theoretical Implications

Relating these findings to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), social media can be seen as a "modern scaffold" that provides opportunities for learners to engage with linguistic and cultural practices in a social context. Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) underscores how learners are able to use digital tools to bridge gaps in their language proficiency, providing a virtual space for the mediation of language and thought (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Research on digital translanguaging suggests that social media serves as an interactive scaffold, enabling learners to use their linguistic repertoire flexibly while receiving linguistic support from peers and online communities (Tzirides, 2021).

5.1.2. Practical Implications

Educators can leverage social media as a tool to encourage translanguaging practices, thereby fostering a more interactive and culturally immersive learning environment. Studies suggest that integrating translanguaging into digital learning environments can enhance linguistic creativity, encourage peer-to-peer learning, and support multilingual identity formation (Ng & Lee, 2019; Canlı & Canlı, 2023). Social media platforms could be integrated into language curricula to expose students to authentic language use, providing opportunities for students to practice and reflect on their language learning in a real-world context (Canagarajah, 2013). Furthermore, incorporating digital translanguaging activities into formal education can bridge the gap between classroom instruction and informal language use, allowing learners to apply their knowledge in meaningful ways (Dumrukci, 2020).

5.2. Theme 2: Translanguaging in Inner Speech

RQ2: What are the experiences of Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER regarding translanguaging within their inner speech during Turkish language acquisition?

The findings indicate that participants use translanguaging in their inner speech as a cognitive strategy for enhancing comprehension and learning. Inner speech, described as the silent verbalisation of thoughts, was found to facilitate processing in both Turkish and other languages. This aligns with research highlighting the role of inner speech in cognitive and linguistic regulation, particularly in bilingual and multilingual settings (de Guerrero, 2017; Resnik, 2021).

Participants reported using inner speech to regulate their cognitive processes, construct meaning, and resolve language-related challenges. For instance, one participant noted: "I think in both Turkish and English when I'm trying to understand a difficult concept. It helps me process the information better." This supports previous studies that suggest multilinguals strategically switch between languages in their inner speech depending on task complexity, linguistic proficiency, and emotional attachment to a language (Dewaele, 2015).

Drawing on de Guerrero's (2004) typology, participants' inner speech can be categorised as follows:

- **Concurrent Processing:** Inner speech during reading or listening to Turkish, enabling comprehension.
- **Recall:** Inner speech that draws from previous experiences or knowledge.
- **Preparation:** Inner speech used before speaking or writing in Turkish.
- **Silent Verbalisation:** Self-reflection or problem-solving using inner speech.

These strategies are particularly crucial in foreign language contexts, where learners balance multiple languages to make sense of new information. Studies have shown that L2 learners rely on their inner speech to mediate between their first

language and the target language, supporting internalisation and linguistic adaptation (de Guerrero, 2004; Pavlenko, 2011).

5.2.1. Theoretical Implications:

This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) view of inner speech as integral to cognitive development and learning. Inner speech is a crucial part of internalising external speech and eventually using language as a cognitive tool for thought and self-regulation. Vygotsky's concept of semiotic mediation explains how inner speech bridges social communication and internal cognition, fostering metacognitive awareness in language learning (Arshad & Chen, 2009).

Moreover, research suggests that translanguaging in inner speech aids in metacognitive regulation, allowing learners to engage in linguistic self-scaffolding and meaning-making processes (Wei, 2017). This supports the argument that multilinguals actively construct and reconstruct meaning through an interplay of multiple languages in their cognitive processing.

5.2.2. Practical Implications:

Encouraging students to use translanguaging in their inner speech can be a powerful tool for language acquisition. Educators can develop exercises that promote self-regulation and cognitive engagement through translanguaging-based inner speech strategies. Research suggests that raising metalinguistic awareness of inner speech can enhance learners' ability to use it effectively in second language acquisition (Stroud, 2023).

Furthermore, structured activities such as diary writing and self-reflection exercises have been found to facilitate the development of inner speech in the target language (de Guerrero, 2004). By integrating these strategies into language instruction, educators can support learners in their transition from external verbalisation to internal cognitive processing in Turkish.

5.3. Theme 3: Perceived Contributions of Social Media and Inner Speech to Language Learning Outcomes

RQ3: How do Malaysian and Indonesian students perceive the contribution of social media-facilitated translanguaging and inner speech strategies to their Turkish language learning outcomes?

The findings suggest that participants perceived both social media and inner speech as crucial in improving their Turkish language learning outcomes. Social media provided learners with real-world exposure, allowing them to acquire vocabulary, understand cultural expressions, and observe authentic language use in different contexts. This aligns with research indicating that digital platforms enhance language learning by fostering interaction, peer engagement, and multilingual practices (Van Den Beemt et al., 2020; Dumrukic, 2020). One participant explained: “I learn new Turkish words on Twitter, and sometimes I use them right away in conversation with my friends.” This supports findings that language learners actively incorporate online-acquired vocabulary into their speech, reinforcing language acquisition through real-world application (Shalihah, 2024).

Additionally, inner speech strategies helped students process and remember language more effectively. Participants reported that translanguaging within their inner speech allowed them to navigate language difficulties, improve comprehension, and enhance fluency. This is consistent with studies that suggest inner speech serves as a self-regulation tool, allowing learners to internalize new linguistic structures and rehearse language production before externalising speech (de Guerrero, 2017; Resnik, 2021). Research further indicates that advanced language learners tend to use inner speech in the target language, whereas beginners rely more on their first language for mental rehearsal (Dewaele, 2015).

5.3.1. Theoretical Implications:

These findings further support Vygotsky’s (1978) sociocultural theory, emphasising the role of social interaction and cognitive tools in learning. Social media and inner speech serve as scaffolds that mediate language learning, providing external (social media) and internal (inner speech) support for linguistic development. The

concept of semiotic mediation within Vygotskian theory highlights how learners internalise linguistic input from digital environments and use inner speech to process and regulate language learning (Wei, 2017).

5.3.2. Practical Implications:

Given these findings, educators should consider incorporating social media into language curricula to enhance both linguistic and cultural understanding. Research has demonstrated that structured digital engagement can facilitate collaborative learning, allowing students to practice language skills in authentic settings (Lai et al., 2021). Additionally, raising students' awareness of inner speech strategies could foster self-regulation and deeper cognitive engagement with Turkish, ultimately improving language proficiency (Stroud, 2023).

5.4. Outcome Space and Synthesis

The study's conclusions reveal that social media, translanguaging, and inner speech interact dynamically, and each has a distinct role in helping participants learn Turkish. Regarding social media and translanguaging, increased translanguaging practices are correlated with higher social media engagement. Given that social media offers a user-friendly and engaging environment for students to interact with real Turkish material, supporting multimodal scaffolding, informal learning, and confidence-building. This lends credence to the notion that social media promotes translanguaging as a means of navigating foreign linguistic input (Dumrukic, 2020).

Meanwhile, translanguaging appears to be a mediating tool that ties social media interactions to improving Turkish proficiency. Multiple language usage helps learners make sense of social media content and may participate in internal (inner speech) and external (real-life communication) meaning-making processes. According to Han and Ellis (2019), this supports the phenomenographic perspective that learning is rearranging information in response to outside forces.

In addition, formal class attendance, self-learning practices, and in-person interaction are all additional or confounding influences that may affect the relationship between social media, translanguaging, and inner speech. Content from social media

could be observed differently by learners who are more accustomed to structured instruction than by those who are generally self-directed learners. This supports the argument by Soysal & Saruhan (2023) that experiences are organised within a flexible yet hierarchical learning process in which individuals internalise information at different paces. Thus, this study highlights the fluid movement between these categories rather than a rigid, linear process (Han & Ellis, 2019; Soysal & Saruhan, 2023).

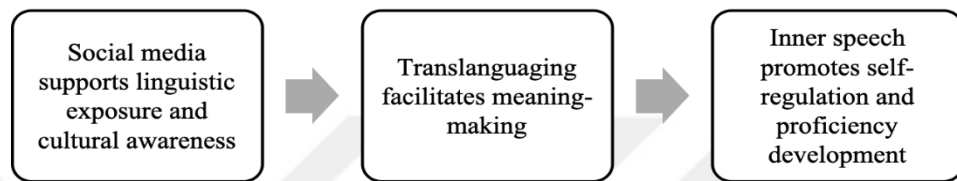


Figure 7: The interaction between categories

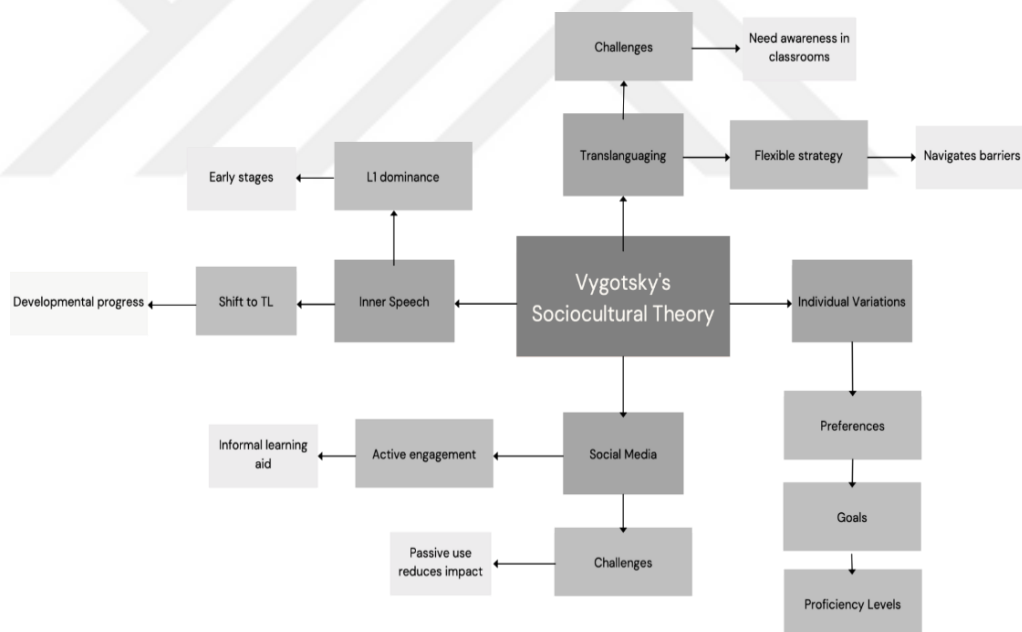


Figure 8: The relationship between social media, translanguaging, and inner speech under Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Figure 8 above portrays the bigger picture by mapping these variations, illustrating how students navigate their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) through social media, translanguaging, and inner speech. Rather than a single uniform process, the findings reveal a dynamic engagement, where social media-driven translanguaging

is experienced differently based on individual preferences, goals, and levels of Turkish proficiency. This synthesis underscores that language learning through social media is not a fixed pathway but a dynamic and personally constructed experience.

5.5. Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies could expand on this research by exploring the longitudinal impact of social media on language learning outcomes over a longer period. Additionally, it would be beneficial to investigate how translanguaging and inner speech strategies function in other educational contexts or with learners of different languages, which could provide a broader understanding of their role in language acquisition. Moreover, future researchers can examine the cognitive mechanisms underlying translanguaging and inner speech to better understand their role in second language acquisition.

5.6. Limitations of the Study

Several limitations must be acknowledged in this study. First, the sample size was relatively small, and the participants were limited to Malaysian and Indonesian students at TÖMER, which may not fully represent the experiences of all international students in Türkiye. Second, the data collection period was short, which may have impacted the depth of the insights. Lastly, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases, as participants may have responded based on social desirability or personal perceptions rather than objective realities.

CONCLUSION

This study's findings reinforce the concept that language learning is a socially mediated process, where learners utilise external resources, such as social media and translanguaging, before developing internal cognitive strategies like inner speech. These results align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasises the role of social interaction and external tools in cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). The study highlights how social media, translanguaging, and inner speech function as mediational tools that enhance language development, supporting Vygotsky's view that language acquisition is not only an individual cognitive process but also deeply rooted in social contexts.

From a phenomenographic perspective, language learning is shaped by external factors such as digital environments and interactions with linguistic communities (Han & Ellis, 2019). Social media acts as a modern scaffold, providing real-time exposure to diverse linguistic content and enabling learners to practise Turkish beyond the classroom (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). This exposure extends their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), offering authentic and dynamic language input while creating opportunities to bridge knowledge gaps through translanguaging. As learners engage with multiple linguistic systems, translanguaging helps them make meaning and enhances comprehension, supporting both cognitive flexibility and language development (García & Wei, 2014).

Inner speech also plays a key role in self-regulation and deeper cognitive processing. As learners internalise language structures, they move from relying on external resources, such as social media interactions, to using inner speech for independent language processing (Vygotsky, 1978). This transition reflects the shift from external mediation to self-regulated learning, reinforcing the role of inner speech in mastering Turkish (Wei, 2017). Phenomenographic studies must capture these individual differences in internalisation, as learners experience cognitive development in varying ways (Soysal & Saruhan, 2023).

Therefore, this study enhances our understanding of how social media, translanguaging, and inner speech interact in Turkish language acquisition among international students. It highlights the role of external tools such as social media and

translanguaging in supporting language learning before learners' transition to internal strategies like inner speech. By recognising social media as a scaffold, educators can help students practise and engage with Turkish in real-world settings.

Moreover, the findings show that social media and translanguaging are particularly useful for multilingual learners in foreign language environments where the target language (Turkish) may not be commonly spoken. Educators can support students' learning by incorporating digital tools that encourage interaction, exposure to authentic language, and meaning-making.

For multilingual learners, the study highlights the benefits of using multiple languages in their learning process. This flexible approach helps learners overcome language barriers, improve proficiency, and communicate more effectively in social and academic settings. Meanwhile, for educators, the study calls for adapting teaching methods to include social media and translanguaging. Recognising these tools as valuable resources can create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment. Encouraging students to use social media for informal learning can also help build a supportive learning community beyond the classroom.

On top of that, the integration of social media and translanguaging into language education holds broader importance for the future of language teaching. As technology continues to evolve, the opportunities for learners to engage with language in authentic, meaningful ways are expanding. Social media offers a wealth of resources for real-time language use, cultural exchange, and peer interaction, which traditional classroom settings may not fully provide. Translanguaging further enriches the language learning experience by allowing learners to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire, making language acquisition more accessible and relevant to their everyday lives (García, 2009).

Thus, incorporating these strategies into language curricula could lead to more engaging and effective language instruction, allowing learners to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps while also fostering critical thinking and self-regulation. The combination of these modern tools with traditional pedagogical approaches offers a promising avenue for enhancing language acquisition and empowering learners to thrive in multilingual, multicultural environments.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Putri Nurnazlah Nuwairah is currently a Master's student in the Department of English Language and Literature at Karabük University's Faculty of Literature. She holds a Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). Her academic journey began with Foundation Studies in English at the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) IIUM, where she first developed a strong interest in English language studies.

In 2020, Putri participated in the Mevlana Exchange Program at Selcuk University, which sparked a deeper interest in Turkish culture and education, leading her to pursue further studies in the country.

Her academic journey has been distinguished by consistent excellence, with recognition on both the Dean's List and Rector's List at the IIUM.

Putri gained practical teaching experience as an English Language lecturer at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Alor Gajah, in 2023, and also worked as a casual relief teacher at Sekolah Rendah Islam Soffan, Malaysia, in 2017.

Putri is looking forward to building a rewarding professional career upon her graduation.