



## Instagram, Code-Switching, and Cultural Discourse: Language Learning Using Malaysian Muslim Fashion Captions

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines how Instagram captions posted by Malaysian Muslim women's fashion brands can serve as pedagogical resources in language education. It explores how code-switching between Malay and English reflects Malaysia's sociolinguistic landscape and creates culturally grounded opportunities for student learning. Data is drawn from captions by four prominent brands, which are known for appealing to modern Muslim women through modest fashion in Malaysia. Using Critical Discourse Analysis, the study focuses on lexical choices and how language constructs identity, normalises hybrid expression, and reinforces persuasive messaging. The analysis of captions and hashtags shows how digital discourse encodes Islamic values, projects femininity, and appeals to diverse audiences. Findings suggest that these captions mirror the everyday bilingual practices of many Malaysian students and represent a rich source of culturally meaningful communication. Instagram thus functions both as a branding platform and a discursive space that embraces hybrid language use, which can be integrated into classrooms to support critical literacy and awareness of local communicative norms. The article argues that



students can learn to read, reflect on, and produce texts that affirm their multilingual identities while engaging with code-switching in purposeful and informed ways.

**Keywords:** code-switching, critical discourse analysis, Instagram captions, Malaysian sociolinguistics, language pedagogy

## INTRODUCTION

In multilingual societies like Malaysia, language is not utilised in static or isolated forms but is instead influenced by continuous flow across linguistic boundaries. Code-switching between Malay and English is a prevalent characteristic of daily communication, especially among urban youth and professionals who adeptly manoeuvre among numerous languages (Muthusamy et al., 2020; Nazri & Kassim, 2023). This linguistic hybridity is especially evident on social media platforms like Instagram (Yunalizza et al., 2024), where bilingual communication is used to express identity, foster intimacy, and establish cultural affiliation. Despite its prevalence, this informal and blended language use is often undervalued in formal language education, where standardised, monolingual models still dominate classroom practices.

At the same time, language educators are increasingly called upon to incorporate real-world texts and digital literacies into their teaching. Social media content provides learners with opportunities to engage in authentic discourse that reflects how language is used in contemporary cultural contexts (Yu & Egger, 2021). In Malaysia, Muslim women's fashion brands on Instagram present a particularly rich site of linguistic and cultural meaning-making (Kudus et al., 2022; McLellan, 2022; Zulkifli & Rajandran, 2024). Their captions do more than sell clothing and other fashion products. They communicate values, signal religious identity, and construct modern Muslim femininity through persuasive and culturally resonant language. These texts frequently rely on bilingual expression and code-switching, using English to convey trendiness or global appeal and Malay to evoke closeness, emotion, or moral grounding.

This article builds on a critical discourse analysis of Instagram captions posted by selected Malaysian Muslim women's fashion brands. It highlights how code-switching and lexical choice function within these texts to communicate meaning, construct identity, and engage diverse audiences. By analysing these features, the article proposes how such content can be recontextualised for language pedagogy, particularly to promote students' critical literacy, sociolinguistic awareness, and reflective thinking. Rather than studying student behaviour, the article draws on discourse patterns in Instagram content to offer a conceptual pedagogical model grounded in Malaysia's cultural and linguistic reality.

In doing so, this study supports a broader argument for culturally responsive teaching practices. It suggests that learners benefit from materials that reflect their own communicative environments and that critical engagement with social media texts can help students develop language skills while also affirming the legitimacy of their bilingual and hybrid identities. The Instagram captions analysed in this study highlight how language is used not just to inform or entertain, but to perform religious, social, and commercial roles. These real-world texts are relevant to learners' lives, which can be used to help them read more critically, write more



purposefully, and reflect more deeply on the cultural functions of language in a multilingual society.

### **Captions on Instagram: From General Practice to Malaysian Muslim Women’s Fashion Brands**

Instagram has become a dominant platform for digital storytelling, where users blend text and visuals to express their identity, narrate experiences, and market products (Piehler et al., 2021; Saxton et al., 2015; Warren, 2019). Captions, often perceived as supplementary to images, play a critical role in shaping how content is interpreted. They provide not only context but also tone, personality, and ideological framing. In the industry of fashion on Instagram, captions frequently use persuasive language, emotive expressions, and strategic hashtags to influence audience perception and foster brand loyalty (Losi et al., 2022; Losi & Rosida, 2022). In this sense, the Instagram caption functions as both a communicative and marketing tool.

Scholarly work on Instagram captions reveals how they serve as sites of linguistic creativity, informal expression, and community formation (Lee & Chau, 2018; Suh, 2021). This trend is particularly noticeable in influencer and brand accounts, where the captions showcase carefully constructed personas that are meant to appeal to idealised or aspirational personas, frequently focused on values, lifestyle, and beauty (Chen et al., 2023; Czerniawski, 2022; Pemberton & Takhar, 2021).

In Malaysia, Instagram is used not only as a visual platform but also as a space for meaning-making and religious expression (Hassim, 2017; Mohamad & Hassim, 2021; Zulkifli & Rajandran, 2024). For Muslim women’s fashion brands, Instagram offers a platform to convey ideals of modesty, beauty, and piety in culturally specific ways (Beta, 2019; Kütük-Kuriş, 2020; Zulkifli & Rajandran, 2024). The language used in captions often combines promotional elements with ethical and spiritual undertones, reflecting the dual identity of these brands as commercial entities and cultural influencers. Through careful lexical selection, these captions encourage Muslim women to see modest fashion not as restrictive, but as empowering and stylish. Words like “*patuh syariah*” (shariah-compliant), “*selesa*” (comfortable), and “*cantik*” (beautiful) appear frequently alongside English terms like “elegant”, “trendy”, and “modern” (Zulkifli & Rajandran, 2024). This pairing not only enhances product appeal but also bridges religious values with modern aesthetics.

The current study draws on Instagram captions from four Malaysian Muslim women’s fashion brands, whose online presence is noticeable. These brands include both established and emerging names that consistently use bilingual captions to reach a wide demographic of local consumers. In analysing their language practices, it becomes clear that caption writing is not a random or neutral act. Instead, it is a strategic, culturally-informed process shaped by marketing goals, linguistic norms, and audience expectations.

By focusing on captions rather than pictures, this study highlights how text alone can offer insight into how Muslim women’s identities are constructed and negotiated in the digital domain. These captions reflect values deeply embedded in Malaysian society, particularly those related to femininity, modesty, and religious observance. They also showcase the normalisation of code-



switching as a stylistic choice, making them relevant not only to discourse studies but also to language education that seeks to mirror the real-world linguistic environment of students.

### **Code-Switching Culture in Malaysia: Everyday Talk, Texting, and Social Media**

Code-switching is the practice of alternating between two or more languages within a single utterance or interaction, a phenomenon widely accepted as common in Malaysia (Muthusamy et al., 2020; Paramesvaran & Lim, 2018). Malay, English, Mandarin, Tamil, and other indigenous languages are among the many languages spoken in Malaysia, a multicultural and multilingual country. However, the most obvious instance of code-switching in everyday speech is between Malay and English, particularly among Malaysians residing in cities. This blending of languages is not merely a marker of linguistic fluidity, but also a reflection of identity, education, social class, and cultural belonging (Carstens & Hoon, 2019; Stapa & Khan, 2016).

Code-switching has several uses in in-person interactions. It can be used to negotiate etiquette, emphasise points, convey feelings, and include or exclude people according to common language standards. For instance, Malay terms can offer warmth, familiarity, or cultural resonance, while English words can be used to add a contemporary, humorous, or professional tone to Malay sentences. Practices are often unconscious and not regarded as errors but as part of a natural linguistic repertoire. Among bilingual and trilingual speakers, particularly in urban areas and educational institutions (Carstens & Hoon, 2019), this fluid alternation between languages has become the norm rather than the exception.

With the rise of mobile communication, code-switching has extended seamlessly into digital interactions, particularly through texting and social media (Costagliola, 2023). WhatsApp messages, Instagram captions, Facebook posts, and Twitter updates often contain a blend of Malay and English, reflecting the rhythms of spoken interaction in written form. Social media, in particular, has normalised hybrid language use, with users adapting linguistic styles for different platforms and audiences. On Instagram, this is evident in the use of English for global accessibility and Malay for local intimacy. Bilingual captions often include English phrases to align with fashion trends or universal values, and Malay words to root the message in cultural or religious identity.

Research has shown that code-switching is not only prevalent but purposeful in digital spaces (Muthusamy et al., 2020). It has been argued that social media users draw on code-switching to construct personas, engage diverse audiences, and manage tone (Rafi, 2017). For Malaysian Muslim women, this flexibility allows them to communicate modesty, empowerment, and faith in ways that resonate with both local and global discourses. For instance, a caption like *“Siapa besties korang yang suka shopping berjam-jam? Tag them in the comment section!”* signals cultural grounding while remaining linguistically accessible to both Malay and English-speaking followers.

This digital code-switching culture reflects deeper patterns in Malaysian society. The bilingual or multilingual speaker is not seen as someone navigating conflicting identities but as someone embodying multiple voices that co-exist in harmony. Language is used creatively and contextually, often shaped by social roles, audience expectations, and desired persona. The



captions produced by Malaysian Muslim fashion brands reflect this very reality. Their use of Malay-English code-switching is not simply a stylistic trend but a communicative strategy that mirrors the everyday linguistic behaviour of their consumers.

For language educators, this linguistic culture presents a valuable opportunity. Rather than discouraging code-switching as a sign of deficiency, it can be embraced as a valid form of expression and utilised as a teaching tool. When integrated into classroom materials, bilingual digital texts, such as Instagram captions, can help students recognise the social meanings of their own language use, encouraging critical reflection and deeper engagement with how language shapes identity.

### **Daily Practices Become Identity: From Routine Expression to Learning Culture**

Language is not only a tool for communication but also a means through which individuals perform and negotiate identity (Richards, 2022; Woolard, 2020). Everyday linguistic choices in how we greet, express opinions, or tell stories reveal much about our cultural affiliations, social roles, and sense of belonging. In Malaysia, where linguistic fluidity is a cultural norm, these daily practices are particularly layered. Malaysians frequently shift between languages in ways that reflect complex social dynamics involving ethnicity, class, education, and religion. These patterns are reinforced and amplified in digital spaces, where social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp have become extensions of daily interaction (Baker & Walsh, 2018; Mañas-Viniegra et al., 2019).

Among university students, social media discourse often mirrors and shapes personal and group identity. Students use Instagram to share not only moments of leisure or celebration but also ideas, beliefs, and affiliations. Their captioning habits, commenting styles, and hashtag choices reflect both individuality and group norms. When students post “*Study week stress, tapi tetap kena on point*” or “*Finals coming but still sempat self-care with my hijab game,*” they are engaging in acts of identity construction. These utterances, though casual, carry embedded messages about values, resilience, lifestyle, and self-representation (Tiggemann et al., 2020; Zappavigna & Ross, 2022). They also reproduce wider community practices where bilingual expression is seen as relatable, stylish, and culturally authentic.

As such, social media becomes a discursive space where students continually participate in shaping their linguistic and cultural identities (Baker & Walsh, 2018; Lee et al., 2020; Zulkifli & Rajandran, 2024). Through repeated exposure to similar styles of expression, especially in captions by influencers and brands, students absorb not only vocabulary or phrases but also the tone, rhythm, and ideological framing of language. Over time, this influences how they write, speak, and even think in academic or semi-formal contexts. In particular, Instagram captions by Muslim women’s fashion brands serve as influential texts because they combine linguistic familiarity, cultural values, and aspirational tone. The brands present an idealised form of modest, confident, and modern femininity that resonates strongly with young audiences, many of whom are in the process of forming their own identities.

These practices are not isolated from the learning process. Instead, they seep into how students participate in classroom discussions, how they write personal reflections or narratives, and how



they frame arguments in essays. However, formal education systems often resist this integration of lived language use, privileging standardised grammar and academic tones that may not fully reflect students' actual communicative repertoires. This disconnection risks alienating students from their own voices, especially when their everyday bilingualism is dismissed as informal or incorrect.

Recognising that daily linguistic practices shape identity opens new pathways for language teaching. Instead of viewing social media discourse as outside or beneath academic relevance, educators can draw on it as a valid and engaging learning resource. By analysing how meaning is created in real captions and how students and brands alike use language to position themselves, connect with others, and express their values, learners can begin to see how language functions beyond rules and correctness. This encourages a deeper understanding of language as a cultural and social tool. When classrooms incorporate the discourses students already interact with, learning becomes more relatable, empowering, and meaningful.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a qualitative approach informed by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate how Instagram captions created by Malaysian Muslim women's fashion brands reflect cultural values, linguistic identity, and code-switching practices. The focus is specifically on lexical choices and how these shape meaning in culturally embedded and pedagogically relevant ways. The analysis does not include images but focuses solely on textual elements, such as captions, as the main units of discourse.

### **Data Selection**

The dataset comprises Instagram posts from four Malaysian Muslim women's fashion brands, each selected based on their visibility, consistent bilingual captioning, and strong follower engagement. The brands are Ariani, Bella Ammara, Radiusite and Scarffeya. These brands were selected to represent a range of styles, tones, and brand positions, while sharing a common commitment to modest fashion and Muslim identity. The following criteria guided the selection:

- i. Active Instagram presence over a consistent period
- ii. Regular use of Malay-English code-switching in captions

A total of thirty Instagram posts from these four brands, published in 2022, were purposively selected for analysis. This time range was chosen because it shows the time after the pandemic when fashion brands were actively involved in online branding and digital interaction. Only captions were extracted for analysis, while posts unrelated to fashion, marketing, values, or identity were excluded.

### **Analytical Framework**

The study uses principles from Critical Discourse Analysis, drawing particularly on approaches that highlight lexical choice as a reflection of power, ideology, and identity (Fairclough, 1992).



Captions were treated as socially situated texts that construct meaning through word selection, tone, and affiliative strategies.

The focus of the analysis was on:

- i. Lexical patterns: frequently used words, repeated phrases, evaluative adjectives, and culturally significant terms
- ii. Code-switching: the deliberate alternation between Malay and English within the same sentence or caption

This study is grounded in the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis, particularly informed by Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model, which views discourse as simultaneously a text, a discursive practice, and a social practice (Fairclough, 1992; Koller, 2009). Through this lens, the captions are not only linguistic artefacts but also cultural tools that shape and reflect social realities, including the commodification of Islamic values, the performance of modern Muslim femininity, and the normalisation of bilingual identity in Malaysia. Lexical choices and code-switching are analysed not merely for their stylistic features, but also for how they position audiences, construct subjectivities, and reproduce ideological assumptions about modesty, consumer behaviour, and digital belonging.

The analysis was also supported by NVivo software, which was used to generate word clouds and word trees to visualise lexical frequency and collocation patterns.

### **Scope and Limitations**

This study focuses solely on textual features, i.e., captions from four Malaysian Muslim women's fashion brands on Instagram. While visual elements are integral to this social media platform, they are intentionally excluded to centre the analysis on written discourse. The findings reflect discourse strategies used within a specific cultural and commercial domain and may not be generalisable to other types of social media texts or non-Muslim fashion content. Nonetheless, the linguistic patterns uncovered offer valuable insights into culturally embedded language use and provide a strong basis for pedagogical application in Malaysian language classrooms.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Lexical Patterns: Evaluative Language and Cultural Familiarity**

Across all four brands, the captions rely heavily on evaluative adjectives, promotional phrases, and culturally resonant expressions that are familiar to Malaysian audiences. The seamless blending of Malay and English reflects a localised bilingual norm, where code-switching is used not only for clarity or emphasis but as a marker of belonging and shared lifestyle (Muthusamy et al., 2020; Nazri & Kassim, 2023). This interplay of languages in brand captions connects deeply with how Malaysian audiences speak, shop, and interact online, making the language both persuasive and culturally authentic. Below are several examples from the brands.



### **Ariani**

In Ariani's captions, language is expressive, playful, and interaction-driven. In "*the beautiful @syadmutalib mengongsikan 2 quick tutorial dengan gaya yang berlainan...*", the English adjective *beautiful* is used to praise the influencer, while *mengongsikan* (to share) and *gaya yang berlainan* (different styles) reflect a friendly tone and focus on variety. In another post by Ariani that states, "*Siapa besties korang yang suka shopping berjam-jam? Tag them in the comment section!*", uses the colloquial *besties korang* and the playful tone of *shopping berjam-jam* to engage a peer audience. The caption combines product promotion with social engagement, using language that feels natural and relatable.

### **Radiusite**

Radiusite's captions use language that emphasises practicality and comfort. One caption says, "*Cutting ASTER ni bukan macam tudung sarung biasa. Awning dia boleh adjust ikut bentuk muka. Yang paling best ASTER ni ironless dan pinless ok!*". Words like *ironless* and *pinless* are repeated across captions to highlight ease. The phrase *paling best* adds informal emphasis. In another caption, "*Senang dan effortless je awak. Plus, drape terus jadi auto cantik ok?*", the word *senang* (easy) and *effortless* reinforce convenience while *auto cantik* creates a stylised description of instant beauty.

### **Bella Ammara**

Bella Ammara's language focuses on affordability and emotional appeal. The caption, "*Aira sarung cuma rm39 je tauuu! Tapi kalau beli 2pcs belle bagi harga combo rm70. So lebih jimat beli 2 tau. Sapa yang confuse nak pilih color mana satu?*" draws the readers in by using informal, playful language and a persuasive tone to emphasise affordability, urgency, and personal engagement. The use of rhetorical questions and casual expressions creates a sense of intimacy, encouraging the audience to consider the offer while identifying with the relatable dilemma of choosing colours. The next caption emphasises demand: "*ramai yang request... best sangat sebab material dia less ironing...*". Words like *best sangat* and *senanglah* are examples of expressive, familiar promotional language tailored for local audiences.

### **Scarffeya**

Scarffeya's promotional tone is direct and colloquial. In one caption, "*Harga tersangatlah mampu milik... memang korang rugi sangatlahh*", the emphasis is constructed through hyperbolic expressions such as *tersangatlah* (extremely) and *rugi sangatlahh* (you'll really miss out), which heighten the sense of urgency and reinforce the product's value. This type of evaluative language is emotionally charged and functions as a persuasive tool by tapping into shared cultural expressions of enthusiasm and regret. The phrase *korang* (you all) adds a layer of social closeness, establishing a friendly and inclusive tone that mirrors everyday Malaysian speech patterns, particularly among peers.

Such lexical choices reflect a broader cultural familiarity in Malaysian discourse, where exaggeration and collective address are common in informal conversation. These strategies help build trust and relatability, making the brand's message feel more personal and authentic (Carstens & Hoon, 2019; Nordin, 2023). From a pedagogical perspective, analysing this kind of caption can offer students insight into how language operates beyond grammar and vocabulary, reflecting how tone, context, and cultural nuance shape meaning and persuasion. It provides an



accessible entry point for learners to explore how discourse reflects identity, community norms, and social interaction in real-world texts they regularly engage with.

### **Code-Switching: Linguistic Fluidity as Norm and Identity Marker**

The data reveal how Malaysian fashion brands adopt code-switching not only as a stylistic trend but also as a naturalised form of bilingual expression that reflects the country's sociolinguistic reality. English and Malay are intertwined at the word, phrase, and sentence levels to enhance relatability, clarity, and cultural appeal. More significantly, code-switching operates as a marker of social identity, reflecting how Malaysians navigate multiple cultural worlds through language (McLellan, 2022; Muthusamy et al., 2020; Nordin, 2023). In the context of fashion branding, it reinforces a hybrid identity that blends modernity, religiosity, and local sensibilities.

This linguistic fluidity is not only widespread but also widely accepted and understood, making it an effective tool for engagement and persuasion. From an educational perspective, exposing students to such real-world examples allows them to examine how language functions contextually, how choices are culturally and socially motivated, and how code-switching can be analysed critically rather than dismissed as informal or incorrect.

#### ***Ariani***

In one caption, Ariani blends languages smoothly: *“the beautiful @syadmutalib mengongsikan 2 quick tutorial dengan gaya yang berlainan...”* The shift from English (*the beautiful, quick tutorial*) to Malay (*mengongsikan, dengan gaya yang berlainan*) reflects how bilingualism is used to combine praise, instruction, and familiarity. This blending constructs a relatable and aspirational voice that appeals to bilingual followers. The use of English serves to frame the product as modern and professional, while Malay adds a layer of personal connection. In the classroom, this example allows students to explore how code-switching is purposeful and can carry different connotations depending on the language used and the message conveyed.

#### ***Radiusite***

There is one caption that provides a distinct example: *“Kali ni Kak Ika belanja sikit level ironless ADRA Long Shawl. Tak nampak kedut pun kan? Jangan lupa ADD TO CART corak kegemaran anda.”* Here, *ironless* and *ADD TO CART* are English terms embedded within a predominantly Malay caption. This shift from casual narration to a commercial call-to-action reflects the influence of global e-commerce discourse on local communication. It demonstrates how brands encode purchasing language in a way that resonates with digitally literate audiences who are comfortable navigating both digital and traditional languages. This offers pedagogical value by helping students understand how digital consumer language blends with cultural discourse and how functional, economic, and stylistic factors drive code-switching.

#### ***Bella Ammara***

Bella Ammara's caption reads, *“Aaira sarung cuma RM39 je tauuu! Tapi kalau beli 2pcs Belle bagi harga combo RM70...”* English numerical and promotional terms (*2pcs, combo*) are used for clarity and branding, while the Malay structure (*cuma, je tauuu*) adds warmth and emotional appeal. This combination supports a persuasive message that strikes a balance between professionalism and approachability. Through this, bilingualism is presented not just as a



linguistic resource but as a social strategy. In classroom discourse analysis, students can examine how mixing languages communicates affordability, friendliness, and trend-awareness, all while preserving a tone that reflects Malaysian speech habits.

### *Scarffeya*

Although the core structure is in Malay, lexical imports from English are evident. One caption reads, “*Harga tersangatlah mampu milik, RM89 dari Normal Price RM129.*” The term ‘*Normal Price*’ is an English phrase that retains its commercial function and recognisability among local audiences. Its pairing with the Malay superlative *tersangatlah mampu milik* creates a message that is both emotionally persuasive and commercially direct. This pattern demonstrates how code-switching can reinforce local values, such as thriftiness, while also incorporating a modern retail vocabulary. Students can use this example to reflect on how language and culture intersect in ways that shape consumer behaviour, emotional appeal, and the construction of identity.

Across all brands, English is not used to replace Malay, but to supplement and strengthen expression, particularly when referring to product descriptions, pricing terms, or interactive commands. Code-switching in this context signals cultural fluency and social belonging (Gardner-Chloros, 2020). For language learners and educators, these captions provide a rich and authentic resource for understanding how language use reflects both identity and ideology. When brought into learning spaces, such texts can help students critically examine their own linguistic practices and become more aware of how discourse operates across multiple domains of life, including religion, fashion, commerce, and peer culture.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study has explored how Instagram captions from Malaysian Muslim women’s fashion brands reflect the multilingual and culturally rich linguistic environment in Malaysia. The analysis shows that code-switching between Malay and English is not merely a stylistic choice but a natural part of communication that reflects everyday language use in Malaysian society. The captions demonstrate how bilingual expression is used creatively to convey identity, promote engagement, and express cultural values.

These language patterns are not isolated to social media. They are deeply embedded in how young people, including university students, communicate in both informal and semi-formal settings. The fluid movement between Malay and English mirrors how students speak, text, and write, making code-switching an essential part of their linguistic identity. Instagram, as a popular platform among Malaysian youth, provides a space where these practices are performed, reinforced, and shared. Through repeated exposure to such digital discourse, students develop familiarity with hybrid language forms that feel natural and expressive.

This shift from daily interaction to learning behaviour suggests that language educators should pay closer attention to the texts students already engage with. Instagram captions, though brief and informal, carry complex meanings that involve persuasion, identity work, and social belonging. When brought into the classroom, these texts can help bridge the gap between formal instruction and real-world literacy practices. For example, captions could be used in tasks where students deconstruct persuasive techniques, explore identity work, or practise producing hybrid



texts that reflect their own multilingual realities. They provide an opportunity for students to analyse how language functions in their own lives, and to reflect on how values, culture, and communication are shaped through words. By acknowledging the educational value of social media discourse and the legitimacy of code-switching in Malaysia's linguistic landscape, language teaching can become more inclusive, culturally relevant, and reflective of students' lived experiences.

Since the analysis of this study focused solely on captions posted by the brands, future research could broaden the scope to include hashtags, audience responses, such as user comments and interactions. Further studies could also explore content produced by students themselves on Instagram or other platforms to examine how learners replicate or transform code-switching practices in their own digital expression. By analysing how students frame their identities and values through their social media writing, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the evolving relationship between informal discourse and academic literacies in Malaysia.

By continuing to explore the connections between social media, language practices, and student learning, future research can contribute to more inclusive and culturally grounded approaches to language education in multilingual contexts.

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### **Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted Technologies in the Writing Process**

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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### **Authors' Contributions**

Che Nooryohana Zulkifli contributed to the conceptualisation of the study, data collection, data analysis, and drafting of the manuscript. Mohamad Putera Idris contributed to the literature review, data organisation, and provided critical feedback on the manuscript structure and content. Both authors read and approved the final version of the article.