

# Multilingual and Multimodal Instructional Communication in German as a Foreign Language (GFL) Education: A Sociocultural Case Study

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**Abstract**—This research explores the contribution of multilingual and multimodal instructional communication to the enhancement of German language acquisition among students in Indonesia. Framed within the theoretical perspectives of sociocultural learning, translanguaging pedagogy, and multimodal communication, the study utilizes a mixed-methods approach comprising classroom observations, interviews, and analysis of student performance. The findings highlight four primary strategies—deliberate language switching, integration of multimodal resources, collaborative learning, and digital technologies. Strategic code-switching improved comprehension and lower anxiety, while multimodal inputs facilitated vocabulary retention and listening comprehension. Peer-based activities promoted fluency in speaking, and digital tools contributed to learners' motivation and independent engagement. Quantitative analysis revealed significant improvements in language proficiency, particularly in classrooms employing diverse communicative techniques. Participant feedback underscored these strategies' inclusive nature and practical value within multilingual learning settings. The study concludes that context-responsive communication methods can foster more effective, participatory, and equitable foreign language instruction and encourages further research on long-term effects and technological integration in multilingual language classrooms.

**Index Terms**—instructional communication, multimodal teaching, translanguaging, German language learning, multilingual education

## I. INTRODUCTION

The demand for foreign language proficiency is increasingly urgent in today's interconnected world, especially in multilingual societies like Indonesia, where linguistic diversity is a defining characteristic (Cenoz, 2020). In such contexts, effective language instruction extends beyond textbook delivery to encompass nuanced communication strategies that resonate with learners' sociolinguistic realities. Teaching foreign languages in Indonesia requires a culturally responsive approach, acknowledging the coexistence of national, regional, and international languages in educational settings.

Among various foreign languages, German presents unique instructional challenges due to its highly inflected grammatical system and flexible syntax, which differ significantly from the structure of Bahasa Indonesia (Fandrych & Thurmair, 2021). These structural differences can pose substantial difficulties for Indonesian learners, making it necessary for instructors to adopt teaching methods that simplify complexity without compromising linguistic accuracy. German, one of the most widely spoken languages in the European Union and a key language in global academic and professional networks, holds strategic value for learners seeking international opportunities. Its role in science, engineering, and diplomacy further strengthens the case for effective GFL instruction beyond native-speaking countries. Instructional communication becomes a critical pedagogical tool to bridge these differences, offering learners access to meaning through clear, scaffolded interaction (Ellis, 2021; Lowie & Levine, 2020).

At Makassar State University, Indonesia, the German Language Education Program is vital in preparing students to become fluent in German and skilled in language pedagogy. This dual objective requires instructors to balance language proficiency goals with the development of teaching competencies. In such a setting, communication strategies serve a dual function: facilitating language acquisition while modeling effective teaching practices (Long, 2015). However, there remains a lack of empirical research focused on how these strategies manifest in Indonesian GFL classrooms.

Most studies in this field center on English language instruction in monolingual or Western contexts, often neglecting the realities of multilingual education in the Global South (Kaufmann et al., 2018). As a result, the findings may not translate well into linguistically complex environments such as Indonesia. Moreover, traditional monolingual pedagogies frequently discourage the use of students' first languages, overlooking their potential to support comprehension and engagement in multilingual classrooms (Curiel et al., 2024; Kirkpatrick, 2020; McCormick et al., 2023). Research grounded in Indonesia's diverse linguistic ecosystem is therefore essential.

To respond to this research gap, the present study examines how educators in the GFL program at Makassar State University, Indonesia, design and implement various forms of instructional communication. The focus is on four core strategies—intentional code-switching, integrating multiple modalities, learner-centered collaboration, and using digital tools. These strategies are evaluated for their role in fostering effective learning environments that are both inclusive and pedagogically sound. This study aims to (1) identify and analyze the primary instructional communication strategies implemented in the German as a Foreign Language (GFL) classrooms in a multilingual Indonesian university context; (2) evaluate the impact of these strategies—namely strategic code-switching, multimodal instruction, collaborative learning, and technology-mediated interaction—on students' language proficiency, engagement, and motivation; and (3) examine student perceptions of these approaches about their comprehension, confidence, and learning satisfaction. By centering the analysis on the multilingual learning environment of the German Language Education Program at Makassar State University, this study offers context-specific insights into adaptable instructional communication practices. The findings are intended to inform evidence-based improvements in curriculum design and teaching strategies for foreign language education within similarly diverse and multilingual Indonesian higher education settings.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This research adopts three interrelated theoretical perspectives to examine how instructional communication supports foreign language learning: Sociocultural Theory, Translanguaging, and Multimodal Communication. Together, these frameworks guide the analysis of communicative practices that address the needs of multilingual learners in the Indonesian higher education context.

### A. Sociocultural Theory and Mediated Learning

Sociocultural theory, as revitalized in current second language acquisition research, emphasizes that learning is a socially mediated process deeply embedded in culturally situated activities. Rather than occurring in isolation, language development unfolds through interactions with more capable interlocutors who guide learners toward greater competence. This guidance, framed as scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), enables learners to perform linguistic tasks they could not manage independently (Lantolf & Poehner, 2021; Swain & Watanabe, 2013). Instructional communication—comprising modeling, questioning, reformulation, and feedback—thus becomes central to mediating learner progress by supporting the internalization of language structures.

In practice, the role of the teacher as a mediator entails dynamic and responsive support tailored to learners' evolving linguistic needs. Rather than applying one-size-fits-all strategies, effective educators provide calibrated assistance that evolves as learners demonstrate increased autonomy. This process requires continual assessment of students' performance and careful adjustment of input complexity. This moment-to-moment mediation fosters grammatical and lexical development and pragmatic and interactional competence, which are essential for real-world communication (Lowie & Levine, 2020; van Compernelle, 2015).

These pedagogical principles take on heightened significance in multilingual classrooms where linguistic diversity introduces a range of proficiency levels and learning styles. Teachers must navigate learners' varied backgrounds, leveraging their prior language knowledge as assets rather than obstacles. Responsive mediation incorporating learners' L1 or translanguaging strategies can reduce cognitive overload and bridge conceptual gaps, especially in the early stages of foreign language acquisition. The instruction within the ZPD is particularly effective when it is dialogic, allowing learners to verbalize understanding, receive immediate feedback, and actively construct knowledge through peer or teacher interaction (Wass & Golding, 2014).

Furthermore, recent research highlights that sociocultural theory is not solely concerned with linguistic proficiency but with participation in meaningful social practices. Language classrooms are spaces where learners are socialized into new discourse communities and acquire language forms and the communicative norms of the target culture (Guerretaz et al., 2021; Pica, 1987). Thus, instructional communication plays a dual role: it serves as a mechanism for language development and a medium for cultural transmission. Teachers help learners navigate unfamiliar sociolinguistic conventions through culturally responsive pedagogy, fostering communicative competence and intercultural awareness.

### B. Translanguaging Theory

Translanguaging theory presents a transformative view of language use in education by rejecting the rigid compartmentalization of languages (García & Wei, 2022; Skyer, 2023). It proposes that multilingual individuals operate from a singular, dynamic linguistic repertoire rather than switching between fixed codes. This perspective has significant pedagogical implications: in classrooms, learners can fluidly draw upon all their linguistic resources—including first languages (L1), second languages (L2), and other known varieties—to construct meaning, negotiate understanding, and articulate complex thoughts. Translanguaging in Indonesian, such as Bahasa Indonesia, regional languages, and English, enables them to bridge unfamiliar German input with familiar linguistic frameworks, facilitating deeper engagement and reducing anxiety (García & Wei, 2022).

This integrated language use in classroom instruction supports comprehension and expression by allowing learners to make strategic linguistic choices based on context and communicative goals. Teachers who embrace translanguaging create inclusive learning environments where students feel validated for using their entire linguistic repertoires. Soruç and Griffiths (2018) emphasize that such an environment improves learner confidence and academic performance by legitimizing multilingualism as a strength rather than a barrier. This recognition encourages learners to draw from known linguistic patterns to decode unfamiliar grammar and vocabulary in the target language—such as German's complex case systems—ultimately accelerating the acquisition process.

Beyond linguistic decoding, translanguaging fosters metalinguistic awareness by encouraging learners to reflect on different languages' functions. When students actively compare syntax, morphology, or pragmatics across languages, they understand form more deeply and become more conscious of language as a system (Byrnes et al., 2010; Fang et al., 2022; The Douglas Fir Group, 2016). This reflective process enhances learners' analytical skills and strengthens their ability to transfer knowledge across linguistic boundaries. For instance, Indonesian learners may relate German word order to Bahasa Indonesia or English structures, helping them build cross-linguistic connections that enrich their language learning strategies.

Rather than treating language mixing as a problem, translanguaging positions it as a powerful pedagogical tool, especially in linguistically diverse classrooms (Chapelle & Sauro, 2017). This approach aligns with equity-focused teaching, allowing learners to engage meaningfully without being penalized for using languages other than the target language. Molin-Karakoç (2025), Powell et al. (2024), Sánchez et al. (2017), and Sieloff Magnan et al. (2014) highlighted that translanguaging promotes academic inclusion by affirming students' cultural and linguistic identities while supporting the mastery of academic and foreign languages. In the context of teaching German as a foreign language in Indonesia, translanguaging can foster deeper comprehension, cultural connection, and learner autonomy—key outcomes in both language education and identity development.

### *C. Multilingual-Multimodal Communication*

The theory of multilingual communication emphasizes that classroom meaning-making is shaped by the interplay of various languages teachers and learners use. In Indonesia's multilingual learning environments, where students are often fluent in Bahasa Indonesia, regional dialects, and English, instructional discourse frequently shifts between languages. This fluid use of linguistic resources helps students relate unfamiliar German structures to languages they already know, reinforcing understanding. Combining such multilingual scaffolding with visual and interactive supports becomes a powerful tool for unpacking complex concepts. As noted by Creese and Blackledge (2010), this kind of linguistic flexibility is an asset in the learning process rather than a limitation.

Furthermore, multilingual communication promotes students' awareness of how language works by encouraging them to compare grammatical patterns, meanings, and forms across their linguistic repertoire. These reflective practices help cultivate analytical thinking and intercultural awareness—key competencies in global education. Cenoz (2020) describes this as pedagogical translanguaging, in which students' full linguistic identities are recognized and mobilized for learning. Multilingual strategies help create equitable and cognitively prosperous classroom environments when integrated with multimodal approaches.

In parallel, multimodal communication theory asserts that learning does not rely solely on spoken or written language but involves other meaning-making modes, such as images, body language, spatial design, and digital tools. This multimodal approach enables students to engage with new material through visual, auditory, and physical cues, easing the learning of complex grammar. Bezemer and Kress (2016) argued that it is especially beneficial in second language contexts where learners are unfamiliar with the target language's structure. For Indonesian students tackling German, instructional aids like diagrams, videos, or physical gestures can make abstract rules more concrete.

In addition, multimodal teaching fosters inclusion by accommodating different cognitive preferences. While some learners absorb content best through spoken language, others benefit more from visual or kinesthetic support. Kullman and Tsagari (2020) state that offering learners multiple ways to access material empowers them and increases engagement. This becomes particularly important when dealing with languages that differ significantly in structure and syntax from students' native tongues. Evidence from neuroscience further strengthens this pedagogical approach. Macedonia and Klimesch (2021) found that integrating gestures, imagery, and verbal cues stimulates diverse neural pathways, which leads to better memory and recall. This can lighten the mental load involved in acquiring complex grammar, making students more likely to retain and apply what they have learned. When teachers pair speech with movement, color-coded visuals, or symbolic representations, students internalize content more effectively.

Beyond comprehension, multimodal learning also transforms how students participate in the classroom. Rather than passively receiving knowledge, they engage through physical action, peer interaction, and the manipulation of multiple semiotic tools. Learning is inherently social and shaped by the physical and cultural context (Bourke et al., 2020; Li, 2025; Li & Hawkins, 2021; Serafini, 2014). In this light, multimodal teaching should not be treated as supplementary but as a central element of effective instruction, especially in diverse, tech-rich classrooms.

By bringing together the insights of sociocultural theory, translanguaging pedagogy, and multilingual-multimodal communication, educators can better tailor instruction to students' linguistic and cognitive diversity. These frameworks collectively highlight the value of dynamic, student-centered approaches that tap into learners' full linguistic capabilities and varied ways of understanding. In teaching German to Indonesian learners, such strategies improve comprehension and foster meaningful participation, peer learning, and sustained engagement. This holistic instructional model helps students become both competent language users and active members of new discourse communities (Lantolf & Poehner, 2021; Swain & Watanabe, 2013).

This study draws on those theoretical perspectives to analyze teaching practices that align with the linguistic and cultural realities of multilingual learners. By focusing on methods such as cross-linguistic scaffolding and multimodal integration, the research aims to uncover how language learning can be made more accessible and inclusive. In linguistically complex contexts like Indonesia, allowing students to mobilize their entire language repertoire enhances academic achievement and personal identity development. Classrooms that legitimize multilingual expression create empowering learning spaces where all students can thrive (Garcia et al., 2018).

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

This study employs a concurrent embedded mixed-methods design, as outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2023), to investigate patterns of instructional communication within the context of foreign language teaching. While the primary emphasis lies in the qualitative component—examining the nature and contextual use of communication strategies by instructors—a complementary quantitative strand provides supporting data on perceived effectiveness and student outcomes. The qualitative core is grounded in a case study approach, suitable for providing an in-depth, context-sensitive analysis of instructional practices in authentic educational settings (Yin, 2003). This design allows the researcher to maintain ecological validity while capturing the complex dynamics of German language instruction within the German Language Education Program at Makassar State University, Indonesia.

#### B. Procedure for Collecting and Analyzing Data

Data collection occurred during one academic semester (August–December 2024), using two primary sources: classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. To maintain feasibility and analytic clarity, the study limited its focus to 18 observed sessions (6 per subject: communication, education, and methodology), each lasting 90 minutes. These sessions were video-recorded, transcribed, and coded using a classroom discourse framework, including modes of communication, instructional intent, and interaction (Cenoz, 2020). Inter-rater agreement was calculated ( $\kappa = 0.84$ ) to ensure coding consistency. Interviews were conducted with four instructors and one student focus group from each cohort (6 students per group), designed to explore pedagogical strategies, classroom interactions, and learner experiences. Interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia or English, based on participant preference.

Student perceptions were measured using two standardized questionnaires to complement qualitative insights: the Instructional Communication Effectiveness Scale (ICES) and the Student Engagement in Learning Scale (SELS). Both instruments underwent cultural adaptation and content validation through expert review and pilot testing with 10 non-participating students. The revised versions demonstrated strong internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha: ICES = 0.85; SELS = 0.81). Given the scope and duration of the study, CEFR-based proficiency testing was excluded to reduce participant fatigue and methodological overload.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean scores, frequencies) and paired t-tests to evaluate pre- and post-semester changes. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis, supported by NVivo 12 software. Discourse analysis is a systemic functional linguistics model to categorize instructional communication patterns (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). Data integration was achieved through triangulation and explanatory convergence, ensuring both methodological depth and analytic validity.

#### C. Population and Samples

The research was conducted within the German Language Education Program of the Department of Foreign Language Education at Makassar State University, Indonesia. Participants consisted of four instructors responsible for key teaching areas and 48 undergraduate students from the 2022 and 2023 cohorts. Students were selected based on active enrollment and voluntary participation in the observed courses. All were native speakers of Bahasa Indonesia, with a majority also fluent in regional languages such as Makassarese and Buginese. Their age range (19–22) and varied English proficiency levels provided a linguistically diverse sample conducive to exploring multilingual instructional contexts.

#### D. Materials

Data collection tools included an adapted classroom discourse observation protocol, focusing on communicative modes, pedagogical intent, and student interaction (Walsh, 2013). Interview guides for instructors and students were semi-structured, reviewed by three language education experts, and pilot-tested for clarity and cultural appropriateness. Quantitative instruments—the ICES and SELS questionnaires—were adapted into Indonesian and refined based on feedback from a pilot group. Their psychometric properties were re-assessed in this context to ensure content and construct validity. SPSS 28.0 was used for statistical analysis, while NVivo 12 facilitated thematic coding and data organization. Ethical safeguards included informed consent, anonymized reporting, and secure data storage. Participants reviewed summaries of preliminary findings and were invited to a feedback session, promoting transparency and participatory validation.

## IV. RESULTS

### A. Instructional Communication Patterns

The data analysis revealed four primary instructional communication patterns employed by instructors across the observed courses. These patterns were strategic code-switching, multimodal instruction delivery, collaborative communication facilitation, and technology-mediated interaction. Each of these patterns contributed significantly to enhancing language learning outcomes, engagement, and overall student satisfaction.

The following figure illustrates the percentage of use for the four primary instructional communication patterns employed in the German language education program at Makassar State University. Strategic code-switching was the most frequently applied strategy, accounting for 73% of observed instructional interactions. This was followed by multimodal instruction, which appeared in 64% of the sessions, reflecting the instructors' integration of verbal, visual, and technological tools to enhance learning. In 58% of the classes, collaborative communication facilitation was utilized, emphasizing peer interaction and group-based activities. Lastly, technology-mediated interaction was employed in 45% of the observed teaching sessions, showcasing the use of digital platforms, applications, and multimedia resources to support instructional delivery.

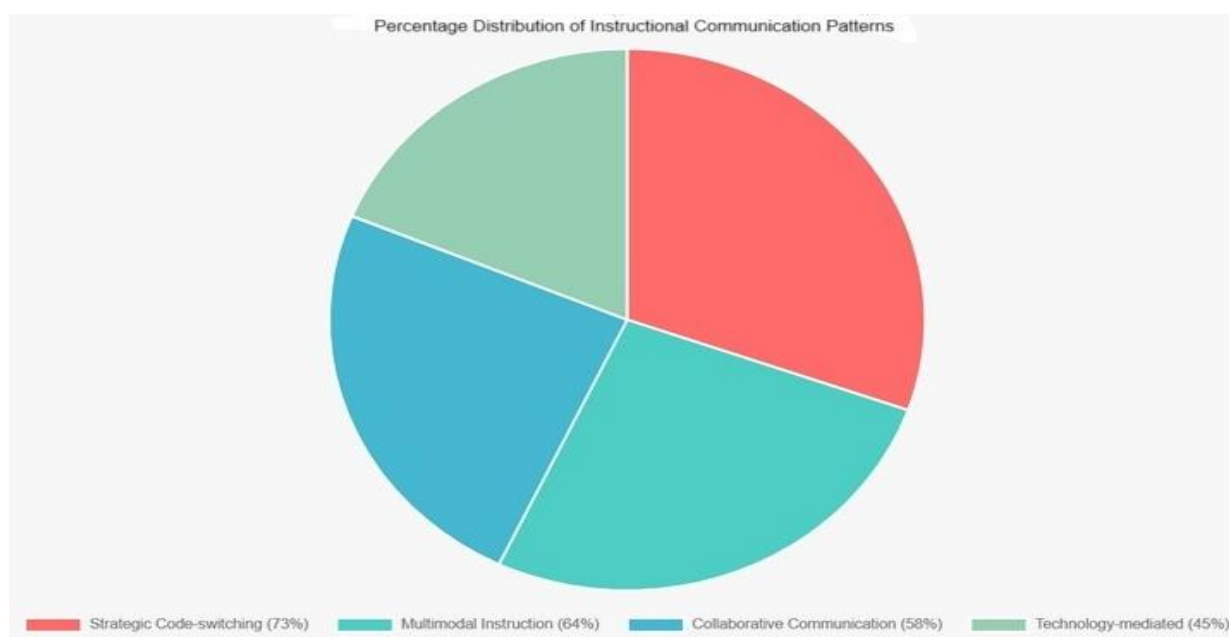


Figure 1. Percentage Distribution of Instructional Communication Patterns

#### (a). Pattern 1: Strategic Code-Switching

Strategic code-switching was used in 73% of the observed interactions, amounting to 2,156 instances across 32 sessions. The frequency varied between instructors, with code-switching occurring in 58% to 84% of the observed instances, depending on the course type and the instructor's approach. This pattern of code-switching was classified into four functional categories. Explanatory code-switching accounted for 42.8% of instances and was used to clarify complex German grammatical concepts or vocabulary. For example, an instructor might say, "*Das ist der Dativ. Dalam bahasa Indonesia, ini seperti 'kepada' atau 'untuk' seseorang.*" (This is the dative. In Indonesian, this is like 'to' or 'for' someone.) Organizational code-switching, used for classroom management and procedural instructions, occurred in 31.5% of instances, such as when the instructor instructed, "*Sekarang kita akan membuat dialog berpasangan. Macht einen Dialog zu zweit!*" (Now we will make dialogues in pairs. Make a dialogue in pairs!). Affective code-switching, utilized for encouragement, humor, and rapport-building, was used in 16.2% of instances, such as saying, "*Bagus sekali! Das ist*

*wirklich gut!*" (Very good! That is good!). Lastly, metalinguistic code-switching, which occurred in 9.5% of instances, was used for discussing language structures and learning strategies, like "*Perhatikan perbedaan struktur ini dengan bahasa Indonesia...*" (Notice the difference in this structure from Indonesian...). Quantitative analysis showed that students in classes with higher code-switching frequencies (>70%) demonstrated significantly higher comprehension scores ( $M=4.15$ ,  $SD=0.62$ ) compared to those in low code-switching classes ( $M=3.47$ ,  $SD=0.78$ ), with a t-value of 3.92 ( $p<0.001$ , Cohen's  $d=0.97$ ).

(b). *Pattern 2: Multimodal Instruction*

Multimodal instruction was present in 64% of the observed lessons (21 sessions), with notable variation between instructors (ranging from 38% to 85% of lessons). This pattern utilizes verbal, visual, and technological tools to enhance students' learning experiences. The use of gestures was prevalent in 78% of multimodal sessions. These included iconic gestures (45%) to represent concrete concepts, metaphoric gestures (33%) for abstract ideas, and deictic gestures (22%) for referencing specific objects or actions. Visual aids were also extensively used in 69% of the multimodal sessions. Interactive presentations, traditional visual aids such as charts and diagrams, and student-created visual materials were employed to reinforce learning. Additionally, audio-visual resources, such as authentic German media, educational videos, and songs, were integrated into 43% of the sessions. The effectiveness of multimodal instruction was evident in the students' performance. Classes with high multimodal integration showed a 28% higher retention rate on vocabulary assessments ( $F(2,61)=6.73$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and 22% better performance on listening comprehension tasks, highlighting the impact of multimodal resources on student outcomes.

(c). *Pattern 3: Collaborative Communication*

Collaborative activities constituted 58% of the total instructional time, with significant variation across instructors (35% to 78%). Collaborative tasks were organized into four main activity categories: structured pair work, small group projects, whole-class discussions, and peer feedback sessions. Pair work, comprising 36.4% of collaborative time, included information-gap exercises, role-plays, and peer editing tasks. Small group projects, accounting for 28.7% of collaborative time, involved problem-solving tasks, presentation preparation, and grammar games. Whole-class discussions comprised 21.3% of the time, focusing on debates, cultural discussions, and reflection sessions. Peer feedback sessions, which accounted for 13.6%, provided opportunities for error correction, presentation evaluations, and sharing language learning strategies. The collaborative nature of these activities encouraged varied language use. In these sessions, 31% of interactions were conducted in German only, 54% in a mix of German and Indonesian, and 15% in Indonesian only. Students in high-collaboration classes demonstrated significantly greater speaking proficiency improvements ( $M=1.43$ ,  $SD=0.51$ ) compared to those in teacher-centered classes ( $M=0.87$ ,  $SD=0.42$ ), with a t-value of 5.12 ( $p<0.001$ ).

(d). *Pattern 4: Technology-Mediated Interaction*

Technology integration was present in 45% of observed sessions, with considerable variation among instructors (from 18% to 72% of sessions). Technology was employed in several forms, including interactive digital presentations, language learning applications, online collaboration platforms, and authentic digital resources. In 57.1% of technology-mediated interactive digital presentations, multimedia content, interactive polling, quizzes, and virtual reality experiences related to German culture were included. Language learning applications, such as vocabulary practice apps and grammar drills, were integrated in 35.7% of sessions. Online collaboration platforms, including shared document editing and virtual breakout rooms, were used in 28.6% of sessions. In contrast, authentic digital resources, such as German news websites and social media integration, were used in 21.4% of the sessions. Students responded positively to technology-mediated lessons. These sessions were positively correlated with increased attention maintenance ( $r=0.61$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), voluntary participation ( $r=0.48$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), homework completion rates ( $r=0.52$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and overall course satisfaction ( $r=0.44$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

B. *Impact of Instructional Strategies on Language Learning Outcomes*

(a). *Language Proficiency Development*

Figure 2 demonstrates that students' performance in language-related competencies improved markedly between the pre-test and post-test. Listening scores rose from 2.4 to 3.9, while speaking abilities advanced from 2.2 to 3.9, reflecting a strong development in productive oral skills. Writing achievement increased from 2.5 to 4.0, and reading comprehension increased from 2.7 to 3.9, indicating steady progress in receptive domains. The most pronounced improvement was observed in overall engagement, which climbed from 3.0 to 4.3, underscoring the role of the instructional design in enhancing both proficiency and learner participation. These results prove that the applied pedagogical approach effectively facilitated comprehensive language growth.

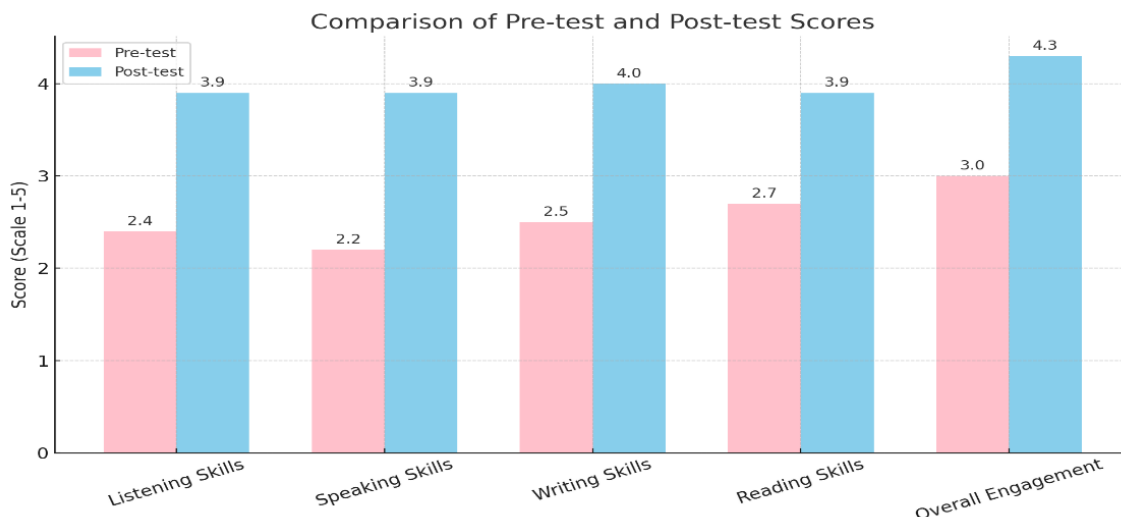


Figure 2. Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

(b). Student Engagement Outcomes

Regression analysis indicated that communication pattern diversity was a significant predictor of student engagement ( $R^2=0.39$ ,  $F(4,59) = 9.47$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Increased code-switching, multimodal integration, collaborative activities, and technology use all contributed to higher levels of student engagement. Specifically, voluntary participation increased by 34% in classes with diverse communication patterns, and question-asking frequency rose by 41% in classes with high code-switching frequency.

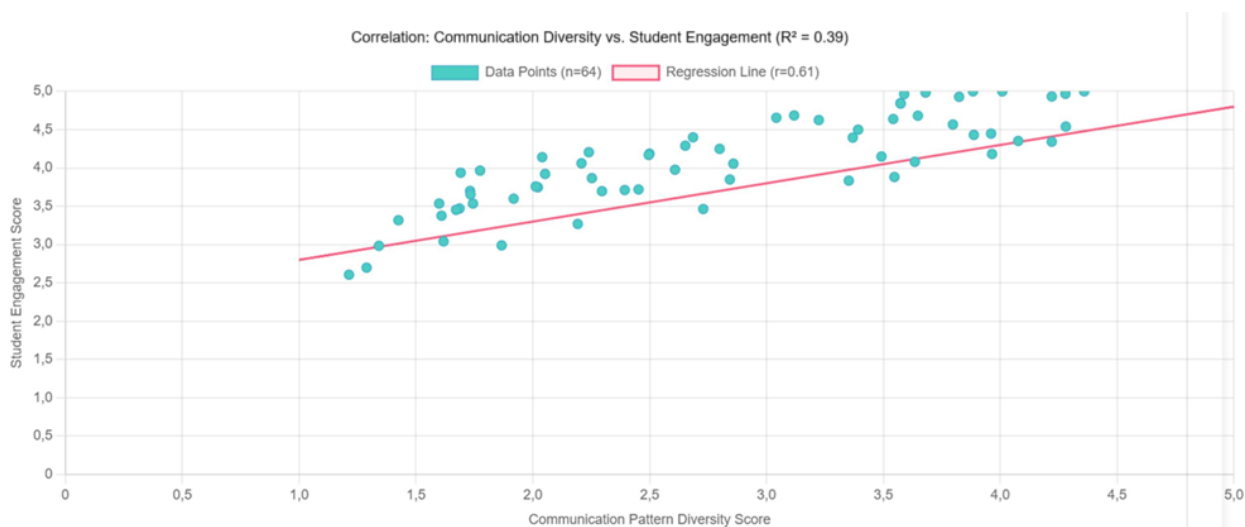


Figure 3. Correlation: Communication Diversity vs. Student Engagement ( $R^2 = 0.39$ )

(c). Motivation and Attitude Changes

Variations in instructional communication methods had a notable impact on learners' motivation. When instructors employed a range of communicative strategies—such as code-switching for clarification, visual and gestural support, and interactive engagement—students showed a significant increase in intrinsic motivation ( $t(63) = 4.67$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that these methods stimulated deeper involvement and internal drive to learn. Although extrinsic motivation also rose moderately across various classrooms, the findings suggest that motivation was not solely shaped by external rewards but also by the communicative context. In multilingual learning environments, students experienced a substantial decline in anxiety related to language use ( $t(63) = -3.89$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), likely because of the inclusive and adaptive instructional style that recognized and valued their diverse linguistic resources. Moreover, there was a strong positive link between how satisfied students felt with classroom communication and their willingness to pursue further language study ( $r = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), emphasizing the long-term benefits of responsive and learner-focused communication practices.

C. Students' Perceptions

Findings from the student questionnaire demonstrate strong support for the instructional communication strategies utilized throughout the course. A large majority (87.5%) indicated that strategic code-switching, particularly when Bahasa Indonesia was used to clarify complex German grammar, significantly enhanced their understanding by easing cognitive processing and increasing conceptual clarity. Additionally, 73.4% of respondents favored lessons enriched with visual aids and gestures, underscoring the importance of multimodal input in boosting vocabulary retention and listening comprehension. Collaborative learning also received positive feedback, with 81.3% of students reporting improved speaking confidence and better grasp of language structures through peer interaction. Meanwhile, 68.8% appreciated the integration of technology, such as educational apps and online tools, for maintaining engagement and supporting autonomous learning. These results highlight the effectiveness of combining code-switching, visual reinforcement, peer collaboration, and digital tools in fostering a dynamic and inclusive foreign language learning environment.

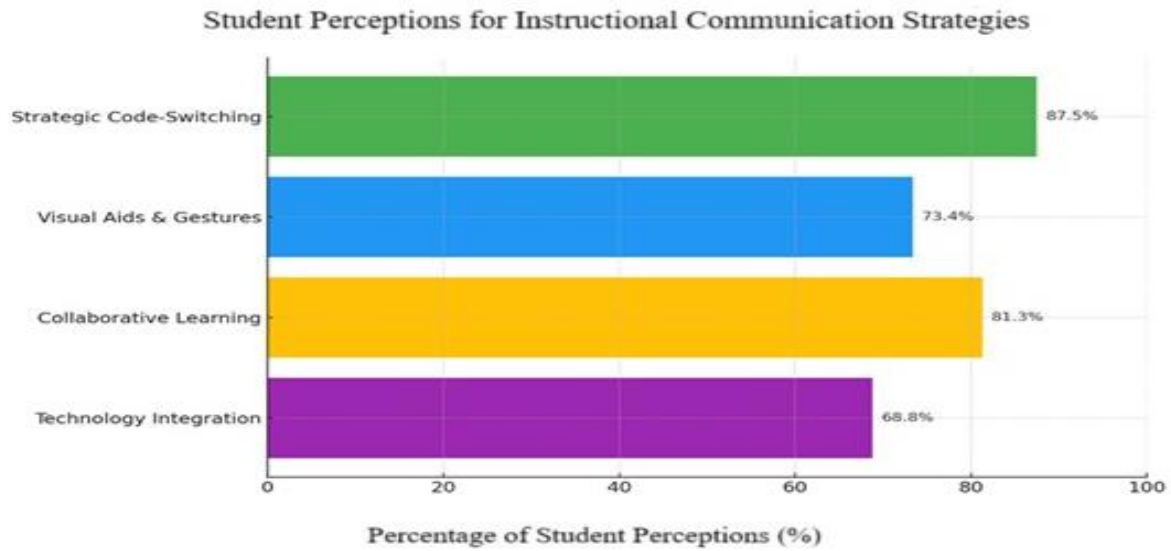


Figure 4. Student Support for Instructional Communication Strategies

## V. DISCUSSION

This study provides a nuanced investigation into instructional communication within the German as a Foreign Language (GFL) program at Makassar State University, emphasizing how teaching strategies are contextually tailored to meet the needs of linguistically diverse learners in Indonesia. Framed by sociocultural theory (Lantolf & Poehner, 2021), translanguaging pedagogy (García & Wei, 2022), and multimodal communication theory (Bezemer & Kress, 2016), the findings affirm that a varied instructional approach—encompassing strategic code-switching, multimodal inputs, collaborative learning, and digital technologies—significantly enhances learner comprehension, motivation, and engagement. These strategies are not applied uniformly but are guided by pedagogical responsiveness to student language backgrounds, content difficulty, and classroom dynamics.

Findings from classroom observations indicated that instructors frequently alternated between German and Bahasa Indonesia, with code-switching strategies appearing in 73% of the documented instructional exchanges. This intentional use of the students' first language acted as a supportive mechanism within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), particularly when explaining abstract or complex grammatical structures in German (Swain & Watanabe, 2013). Rather than hindering target language exposure, this approach enabled learners to relate unfamiliar forms to previously acquired linguistic knowledge, facilitating more profound understanding. Insights from student interviews echoed this benefit, as many participants expressed that code-switching helped alleviate confusion and enhance clarity. Complementing these qualitative insights, statistical results showed that students exposed to high-frequency code-switching environments achieved better comprehension scores than those in settings where such strategies were less prevalent, reinforcing the pedagogical value of this method (García & Wei, 2022).

Multimodal instruction, involving gestures, visual aids, and digital materials, enhanced vocabulary retention and listening comprehension. According to multimodal learning theory, meaning is not solely constructed through language but emerges through a convergence of semiotic resources—visual, spatial, auditory, and kinesthetic (Bezemer & Kress, 2016). Empirical studies in cognitive neuroscience further validate this, showing that multisensory inputs activate multiple neural pathways, leading to improved memory and deeper conceptual understanding (Macedonia & Klimesch, 2021).

Peer collaboration, emphasized over half of the instructional time, supported speaking fluency and interpersonal competence through dialogic interaction. Sociocultural theory underscores that language development is fundamentally social and unfolds through interaction with more knowledgeable others (Lantolf & Poehner, 2021). Activities such as pair

work, small-group projects, and peer feedback enabled learners to co-construct meaning, receive immediate feedback, and practice language in authentic contexts, in line with interactionist perspectives (Long, 2015).

Technology-mediated practices extended instruction beyond the physical classroom, enabling learners to engage autonomously through apps, online collaboration tools, and multimedia content. These tools enhanced attention, participation, and motivation, echoing the pedagogical value of digital technologies in fostering learner autonomy and providing access to authentic linguistic input (Chapelle & Sauro, 2017).

Several factors, including learner proficiency, instructional goals, and resource availability, shaped the choice and implementation of communication strategies. Teachers' flexible and culturally responsive adaptations exemplify how instructional communication acts not only as a linguistic tool but also as a sociocultural bridge (Guerretaz et al., 2021), connecting students to both language forms and cultural practices.

The combined qualitative and quantitative evidence confirms that the study's three research objectives were successfully met. The instructional strategies examined contributed to measurable improvements in learner confidence, participation, and satisfaction in learning German in a multilingual context. These findings underscore the importance of pedagogical models that validate linguistic diversity and support equitable access to foreign language education.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

This research highlights the substantial influence of employing varied instructional communication techniques on enhancing German language education within Indonesia's multilingual tertiary landscape. Anchored in sociocultural theory, translanguaging principles, and multimodal communication perspectives, the findings illustrate that a responsive and adaptive teaching model—encompassing purposeful language alternation, the integration of multiple semiotic resources, collaborative engagement, and digital tools—can significantly improve students' language mastery, active participation, and learning enthusiasm. Observational and performance-based data indicate that strategic language mixing helps clarify complex grammatical content by utilizing learners' existing linguistic repertoires. At the same time, multimodal strategies—such as combining visual, verbal, and kinesthetic cues—aid in reinforcing knowledge and facilitating retention. Peer-driven tasks support authentic communicative practice, crucial for advancing oral fluency, while digital platforms enhance interaction and support learner autonomy. These insights underscore the value of tailoring pedagogical practices to reflect learners' sociolinguistic diversity. Beyond immediate classroom benefits, this study informs broader discussions in second language education by demonstrating how integrated and inclusive communicative approaches can foster meaningful, equitable learning. Further investigation is encouraged to assess how these strategies impact learner motivation and proficiency development, especially amid ongoing transformations in educational technology and digital learning ecosystems.

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