



## Instagram reels as a medium of transcultural interaction: A netnographic study of wedding, humor, and diaspora family content

Indah Tjahjawulan<sup>1\*</sup>, Iwan Gunawan<sup>2</sup>

Department of Visual Communication Design, Faculty of Technology and Design, Universitas Bunda Mulia<sup>1</sup>  
(Jl. Lodan Raya No.2, Kamal Muara, Penjaringan, Jakarta Utara, DKI Jakarta 14430, Indonesia)

Department of Visual Communication Design, Faculty of Creative Industry, Universitas Media Nusantara Citra<sup>2</sup>  
(Jl. Panjang Blok A8, Green Garden, Kedoya Utara, Kebon Jeruk, Jakarta Barat, Jakarta 11520, Indonesia)

\*Correspondence author: [indahtja@gmail.com](mailto:indahtja@gmail.com)

### Received:

14/03/2026

### Final Revision:

01/05/2026

### Accepted:

02/05/2026



This work is  
licensed under a  
[CC-BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)

### Abstract.

In the context of globalization, cultural practices and ideologies are increasingly shaped through processes of borrowing, mixing, and remaking, resulting in new hybrid cultural forms. This article examines Instagram Reels as a medium of transcultural interaction by focusing on selected user-generated content related to wedding ceremonies, pre-wedding photo shoots, humor scenes, and slice-of-life narratives of diaspora families or international couples. Using a qualitative netnographic approach, the study selected 15 publicly accessible Reels and analyzed their visual elements, sound, narration, language use, symbolic references, and cultural markers. The findings show that Instagram Reels functions not only as a short-video platform for self-expression and entertainment, but also as a participatory space where local traditions, global popular culture, and everyday intercultural practices are remixed. Through these interactions, influencers and ordinary users produce hybrid cultural expressions that circulate beyond geographical and national boundaries. The study contributes to the understanding of digital platforms as fluid spaces of transcultural dialogue, where culture is continuously negotiated, reproduced, and recontextualized through user participation.

**Keywords:** Instagram Reels, transcultural interaction, netnography, cultural hybridity, digital culture

## Introduction

In the digital age, social media has become a central space in which people communicate, represent identity, and encounter cultural practices from different parts of the world. These platforms do not merely transmit information; they also enable users to borrow, imitate, remix, and reinterpret cultural forms. In this sense, social media can be understood as a site of transcultural interaction, where cultural boundaries become porous and new forms of meaning are produced through digital participation (Dubovi & Tabak, 2021).

The concept of transculturation is useful for explaining this process. Transculturation refers to cultural encounters that generate new forms through exchange, adaptation, and hybridization (Baker, 2022). Rather than viewing culture as fixed or bounded by geography, transculturation emphasizes relational movement: cultures meet, overlap, and are reworked through contact. Transcultural dialogue therefore involves more than simple cross-cultural exchange; it describes a dynamic process in which cultural identities, practices, and symbols are mutually transformed.

Recent studies on social media have discussed engagement, influencer culture, platform visibility, and online identity formation. However, studies of Instagram and short-video platforms often

focus on communication, branding, entertainment, or audience interaction, while the specific process through which short-form videos produce transcultural meanings remains underexamined. This article addresses that gap by analyzing how Instagram Reels becomes a space where local cultural practices, global popular culture, and everyday intercultural experiences are visually and narratively combined.

Instagram Reels is especially relevant for this discussion because its short-video format combines moving images, music, sound effects, captions, filters, remix functions, and algorithmic circulation. These features allow cultural materials to travel quickly and to be recontextualized by users in different locations. A wedding ritual, a pre-wedding photo shoot, a parody of a foreign film, or a family routine in an intercultural household can be recorded, edited, shared, commented on, and imitated by audiences beyond the original cultural setting.

The popularity of Instagram further supports its significance as a site of cultural circulation. Instagram has developed from a photo-sharing application into a multimedia platform for personal expression, entertainment, advertising, and social interaction. Reels extends this development by providing a format that is easy to produce and easy to circulate, enabling both influencers and ordinary users to reach broad audiences. This makes Reels an important site for observing how cultural symbols are selected, stylized, and made visible in everyday digital practice.

This study therefore asks: how do selected Instagram Reels represent transcultural interaction through visual, audio, narrative, and symbolic elements? More specifically, it examines how wedding ceremonies, pre-wedding photo shoots, humor scenes, and slice-of-life narratives show processes of cultural borrowing, adaptation, hybridization, and negotiation. By focusing on these themes, the article argues that Instagram Reels is not merely a communication tool, but a participatory cultural space in which transcultural dialogue is produced and circulated

## Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with netnography as its main methodological orientation. The qualitative approach was operationalized through systematic online observation, documentation, categorization, and interpretation of publicly accessible Instagram Reels. The aim was not to measure audience behavior statistically, but to understand how selected Reels construct and circulate transcultural meanings through visual, audio, narrative, and symbolic forms.

Following Kozinets' netnographic approach, the study treated Instagram Reels as a networked cultural field in which users produce, share, respond to, and reinterpret cultural materials. Data were collected only from public accounts and public posts. The researcher did not contact users, intervene in interactions, or collect private information. The unit of analysis was the Reel as a multimodal cultural text, including moving images, caption, sound, language, setting, costume, gesture, and visible user interaction.

The sampling process was purposive. Reels were included when they met four criteria: (1) the content was publicly accessible; (2) the Reel displayed at least two identifiable cultural references, such as local tradition and global popular culture, or Indonesian and non-Indonesian everyday practices; (3) the content belonged to one of the four themes that repeatedly appeared during observation; and (4) the video provided sufficient visual, audio, or narrative material for analysis. Reels were excluded when the cultural reference was unclear, when the content was purely promotional, or when the video did not provide enough contextual information for interpretation.

Data collection was conducted from October to December, over a three-month observation period. During this period, the researcher archived and categorized Reels that representing four themes: wedding ceremonies, pre-wedding photo shoots, humor scenes, and slice-of-life content involving diaspora families or international couples. These themes were selected because they reflect different forms of transcultural interaction: ritual adaptation, visual lifestyle performance, language and media remixing, and everyday intercultural negotiation.

Table 1: Data Selection and Sampling Rationale of Instagram Reels

Theme	Sub-theme / Focus	Sum	Sampling rationale and relevance to transcultural framework
Wedding Ceremony	Fairy-tale themed wedding	2	Selected to show how local wedding practices adopt global fantasy, Disney-like, or Western ceremonial symbols.
Wedding Ceremony	Casual / hybrid wedding practice	2	Selected to show the blending of local clothing, celebration rituals, and imported wedding performance styles.
Pre-Wedding Photo-Shoot	Outdoor, thematic, and popular-culture inspired shoots	4	Selected to show how couples construct identity through global visual aesthetics, location choice, props, and performative storytelling.
Creation of Humour Scene	Voice-over, meme, wordplay, and cultural-shock parody	4	Selected to show how humor remixes language, accent, global media references, and localized social meaning.
Slice of Life	Diaspora family / international couple	1	Selected to show intercultural negotiation in everyday domestic life and family interaction.
Slice of Life	Culture-mixed everyday practice	2	Selected to show food, clothing, language, and travel as visible markers of lived transcultural experience.
Total		15	The sample was limited to public Reels with clear cultural markers and sufficient multimodal data for close qualitative analysis.

In addition to Instagram Reels data, this research used books, journal articles, online documents, and previous studies to build the theoretical framework on transculturation, social media, visual communication, and digital culture. These secondary sources were used to support interpretation rather than to replace the analysis of the selected Reels.

The analysis was conducted in four stages. First, the selected videos were documented and categorized according to theme and sub-theme. Second, each Reel was read through multimodal indicators: visual elements, setting, costume, gesture, sound, music, narration, caption, language mixing, symbolic references, and cultural markers. Third, the researcher interpreted how these elements indicated borrowing, adaptation, hybridization, or negotiation between cultural references. Fourth, the findings were connected back to the concept of transcultural dialogue to determine how Instagram Reels functions as a medium of cultural interaction.

## Result and Discussion

### The Rise of Social Media and Instagram's Dominance

The opening observation reflects a major cultural shift in how people share their personal experiences and interact with others. Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, have become integral to daily life, enabling individuals to connect, share, and interact globally. The increasing dependence on social

media underscores its significance as a primary communication tool in modern society. Instagram's popularity skyrocketed after its acquisition by Facebook, with the two platforms becoming interlinked, which allowed Facebook's advertising infrastructure and user base to fuel Instagram's growth.

Instagram's evolution into a key advertising platform is critical here. Initially, a simple photo-sharing app, Instagram now offers targeted advertising, brand promotions, and influencer partnerships, making it a highly lucrative commodity for advertisers. The rise of Instagram's Reels feature can be seen as part of this shift: not only do users post personal content, but Reels also provides businesses, creators, and advertisers with a way to promote their products in a highly engaging, interactive format.

Instagram Reels stands out as a preferred medium for advertisement because of its ability to blend short-form video with interactive features, such as the ability to like, comment, share, and remix content. The ability to create visually dynamic and short, snappy videos that engage the audience on a personal level has led to Reels being one of the top advertising tools within Instagram.

Moreover, Instagram Reels has transformed into a primary source of news, commentary, and entertainment. Unlike traditional media outlets, where news is curated by journalists and editors, Reels allow users—both individuals and brands—to become the producers of news, commentary, and entertainment. In this way, Reels has become a public forum, where people across the globe consume, share, discuss, and comment on various topics in real-time (Badham & Mykkänen, 2022). This democratization of news allows for the swift dissemination of information across diverse audiences.

### Instagram Reels as a Platform for Transcultural Dialogue

One of the key findings of this research is that Instagram Reels facilitate transcultural dialogue, a process in which different cultures, identities, and practices blend and interact in a hybrid and dynamic manner. This is central to understanding the transcultural phenomenon on social media.

In this study, a Reel is read as transcultural when it shows at least one of the following indicators: the juxtaposition of local and global symbols; the adaptation of a cultural practice into a new context; the mixing of languages, accents, or popular media references; or the presentation of everyday intercultural negotiation. These indicators guide the analysis of wedding, pre-wedding, humor, and slice-of-life content below.

Transculturality refers to the interactions and mixing of cultures, beyond the traditional boundaries of nation-states and ethnic groups. Instagram Reels, by virtue of being a global platform, enable users from diverse backgrounds to engage with each other, share their cultural experiences, and create new, hybrid cultural forms. This cross-cultural exchange allows users to learn from one another, adapt cultural elements, and create something entirely new.

The "hybrid" nature of this dialogue refers to the blending of various cultural elements—whether it be a combination of different visual styles, musical genres, languages, or even cultural practices. Instagram Reels, with their ability to combine videos, audio tracks, text overlays, and special effects, provide the perfect space for such hybrid cultural expressions.

"Dynamic" indicates that this exchange is fluid and ever-evolving, influenced by trends, memes, social issues, and viral content. This fluidity allows cultural elements to be continuously remixed, adapted, and transformed in real time.

The phrase "beyond geographical and cultural boundaries" is particularly significant. Instagram Reels transcend traditional notions of geography and cultural separation. People in different parts of the world can now watch, participate in, and comment on content created in faraway locations, breaking down previous limitations imposed by physical distance or cultural barriers.

Through Instagram Reels, users—both influencers and followers—actively produce and reproduce cultural content. For example, an influencer from one part of the world may post a Reel showcasing a traditional festival, only for it to be adopted and adapted by users from different cultures, who remix the content or add their own interpretations. This co-creation fosters a kind of digital cultural exchange, where traditional practices, new trends, and pop culture references are constantly

evolving as they are consumed and reshaped by different audiences. The research identifies several popular themes on Instagram Reels that exemplify this transcultural exchange:

### Wedding Ceremonies in Instagram Reels as a Transcultural Phenomenon

Reels showcasing weddings, particularly those influenced by fairy-tale or globalized themes, blend local traditions with global trends. The transcultural element can be seen in the combination of Indonesian wedding settings and attire with globally recognizable symbols such as castle decorations, princess-like dresses, Western-style celebration rituals, balloons, and staged performances. These elements do not simply decorate the wedding; they reshape the ceremony into a hybrid cultural product that reflects both local identity and global imagination.

The wedding ceremony, as discussed, is not only a pivotal life event but also a deeply cultural and personal occasion. It has been recognized globally as a universal symbol of love, union, and the creation of a new family unit. However, when we explore the wedding ceremonies showcased on Instagram Reels, we observe that these events have become a dynamic space for transcultural exchange, with elements borrowed from different cultures, regions, and traditions. This evolution can be understood within the broader context of globalization, where local customs blend with international influences, creating new, hybrid forms of celebration.

#### 1. Universal Dreams and Local Traditions

Wedding ceremonies have long been tied to cultural and regional identities. In many parts of the world, including Indonesia, weddings are steeped in tradition, with each ethnic or regional group having its unique customs, rituals, and symbols. These ceremonies reflect a deep sense of identity and community.

In Indonesia, for example, wedding ceremonies vary significantly from one region to another. The rich diversity of traditions is evident in the elaborate ceremonies, which often involve detailed rituals, traditional clothing, and local customs passed down through generations (Novianti et al., 2019). However, these traditions, while deeply meaningful, also come with practical considerations, including significant time, energy, and financial investment (Ramlah et al., 2020).

Yet, as we observe in the context of Instagram Reels, the globalization of wedding culture is leading to the blurring of these boundaries. More and more couples, especially in urban areas, are opting for weddings that deviate from their traditional roots. These weddings often reflect personal dreams, international trends, and individual tastes rather than strictly adhering to regional customs.

#### 2. The Influence of Global Trends: Thematic and Fairy-Tale Weddings

One of the most significant changes in contemporary wedding ceremonies is the rise of thematic weddings. As noted in the research, Cinderella-style weddings have become a popular theme worldwide, especially in digital media platforms like Instagram Reels. In these weddings, couples embrace fairy-tale narratives, often drawing inspiration from classic stories such as Cinderella, Arabian Nights, or other fantastical themes. This theme is supported by extravagant decorations—castles, horse-drawn carriages, enchanted gardens, and elaborate backdrops designed to transport the couple and their guests into a dream-like world.

These fairy-tale wedding concepts are not exclusive to couples with large budgets. They have been democratized in the digital age, where Instagram Reels plays a role in making these extravagant dreams accessible. As an example, we see Sandra Dewi and Ria Ricis (Figure 1), two Indonesian influencers, who both opted for Cinderella-themed weddings. While Sandra Dewi held her wedding in the grand setting of Disneyland, Ria Ricis chose a more modest venue in Jakarta, yet still managed to create a fairy-tale atmosphere with a castle-shaped cake, a "dating train", and a blue dress that emitted a magical glow during her dance with her partner. Visually, the castle-like setting, blue princess dress, dramatic lighting, and choreographed couple performance transform the wedding into a staged fantasy narrative. These details demonstrate transculturality because a Western fairy-tale vocabulary is localized within an Indonesian celebrity wedding context and then recirculated through Reels as an aspirational wedding model.



Figure 1: Cinderella wedding on Instagram Reels  
Source: ig@pernikahanimpianku

This shift in wedding themes highlights how Instagram Reels serves as a platform for sharing these personal and yet globally influenced cultural experiences. By capturing such thematic weddings, influencers and users alike are able to share and reproduce cultural symbols that transcend national boundaries, bringing different people together through a shared cultural experience. These weddings no longer strictly adhere to a singular cultural identity but instead blend Western, Eastern, and personalized cultural motifs, creating new forms of wedding rituals that are widely accessible and recognized by global audiences. In terms of transculturation, the wedding becomes a site where cultural signs are detached from a single origin, recombined, and given new social meaning through digital visibility.

### 3. Hybrid Elements: Integration of Western and Eastern Practices

Another intriguing aspect of wedding ceremonies today, as seen in Instagram Reels, is the fusion of Western and Eastern wedding practices. This is reflected in the ways couples incorporate different rituals or hybrid practices that combine elements from both cultural spheres.

For instance, the act of throwing flowers or releasing balloons (Figure 2), both symbols of celebration and joy, is increasingly common in Indonesian weddings. While these practices may have originated in Western traditions, they have now been fully integrated into Indonesian wedding customs, reflecting the broader trend of cultural hybridization. In this case, the wedding ceremony becomes fluid—drawing on both local and global influences to create an event that resonates on a more personal level, as well as a global one.



Figure 2: releasing balloons at wedding  
Source: ig@abimriyan

Another hybrid example is the majorette-led drum band performance during wedding ceremonies (Figure 3). The majorette, a distinctly Western style of parade performance, is integrated into Indonesian weddings, where it is paired with traditional Indonesian attire like the kebaya. This combination reflects how cultures are blending in real-time, facilitated by platforms like Instagram Reels. What might have once been seen as a divide between Western and Eastern practices is now a dynamic cultural negotiation, where wedding ceremonies become a place of cross-cultural expression.



Figure 3: Casual Wedding in Instagram Reels  
Source: ig@antzcreator

These hybrid practices serve as a metaphor for globalization. Weddings no longer merely reflect national or regional identities but instead create new transcultural identities that draw on diverse influences. The Instagram Reels platform serves as a space where such global and local hybridization can be visually captured and disseminated widely.

#### 4. Accessibility and Democratization of "Dream" Weddings

What's particularly notable is that dream weddings, often portrayed in Reels, are no longer limited to the elite or those with unlimited financial resources. The democratization of wedding culture, amplified by social media, means that even couples with more modest means can recreate a version of their idealized wedding dream.

For example, couples may adopt the Cinderella or fairy-tale theme without having a massive budget. They can still rent spaces with beautiful settings, decorate with less expensive materials that evoke the magical ambiance, or even use technology (e.g., special lighting effects, photo filters, and augmented reality) to create an enchanting atmosphere. The blue dress worn by Ria Ricis, for instance, which created a light effect during her dance, could easily be a small-scale, affordable version of a larger, more expensive vision. This accessibility enables a broader range of couples to participate in a globalized cultural experience, regardless of financial limitations.

Moreover, Instagram Reels allow users to capture and share these wedding moments, making the dream wedding a shared cultural experience. The "king and queen for a day" fantasy is thus not limited to a privileged few, but can be experienced by anyone who has access to the right tools and a social media platform.

#### 5. Wedding Ceremonies as Sites of Transcultural Dialogue

Wedding ceremonies captured in Instagram Reels represent more than just personal milestones—they have become a globalized form of cultural exchange. The mix of local and global influences in these ceremonies demonstrates how cultures are not fixed but are continuously hybridized and reinterpreted. Traditional wedding practices are redefined by new ideas, symbols, and practices from other parts of the world, resulting in new cultural expressions that are fluid and dynamic.

Reels, as a social media platform, facilitate these transformations by offering a space where diverse cultural elements can be shared, modified, and reproduced. Weddings—once primarily cultural markers of national identity—have become a site where global trends and personal dreams merge, creating new cultural products. This is the essence of transcultural dialogue, where boundaries between cultures become porous, and new meanings emerge from the interaction and fusion of different cultural elements. In this way, wedding ceremonies, as depicted on Instagram Reels, offer a compelling example of how globalization and social media are reshaping cultural traditions.

#### 6. The Need for Unique Wedding Ceremonies and Their Display through Instagram Reels

The desire for couples to showcase their weddings in unique and culturally diverse ways is a reflection of broader social and cultural shifts. Over the past few decades, the meaning and significance of wedding ceremonies have evolved, with many couples increasingly seeking ways to personalize their weddings and make them stand out as distinctive cultural expressions. Instagram Reels, as a powerful social media platform, plays a crucial role in this process by providing an accessible space for couples to share their wedding experiences, showcase their creativity, and, ultimately, gain recognition for having a "unique" or "innovative" wedding ceremony.

##### a. The Evolving Desire for Personalized and Distinct Wedding Ceremonies

Marriage has always been considered a momentous life event, deeply embedded in both personal and cultural significance. Historically, wedding ceremonies were strictly defined by regional customs, cultural practices, and religious rituals. The notion of a "perfect wedding" was often dictated by long-established traditions and social expectations. However, in the context of globalization and increasing individualization (particularly in Western societies), weddings have become less about adhering strictly to cultural norms and more about expressing individual identity and personal preference.

In the present day, couples increasingly seek to personalize their weddings to reflect their unique relationship, desires, and backgrounds. This trend is especially pronounced on social media platforms like Instagram, where showcasing a personalized or creative wedding ceremony has become an expression of self-identity. With the influence of social media, couples often want to ensure their wedding is seen as special, one-of-a-kind, and even "viral-worthy".

The modern desire to create a wedding that reflects personal values, tastes, and influences results in a growing trend of creating weddings that are culturally hybridized and innovative. This means that couples are increasingly looking to incorporate multiple cultural elements into their wedding ceremonies, creating a blend of traditions, symbolisms, and styles. The fusion of cultures allows couples to mix Eastern and Western elements, or combine local cultural practices with international trends, creating a ceremony that is both personal and reflective of broader global influences.

This evolving desire to craft a wedding that speaks to personal identity is not just a reflection of changing societal norms—it also intersects with the increasing global connectedness facilitated by the internet and social media. With the ability to draw inspiration from cultures across the world, couples feel a growing pressure to have a wedding that stands out, captures attention, and is deemed special or unique by their social circle.

##### b. Instagram Reels as a Platform for Sharing Unique Weddings

Instagram Reels has rapidly become one of the most prominent spaces where couples, influencers, and creators share and display their wedding ceremonies. The platform's short-form, visually engaging format allows users to capture moments, highlight creativity, and engage with their audience in dynamic ways. For wedding ceremonies, Instagram Reels offers the ideal medium to share not only the wedding day itself but also the lead-up to the ceremony, the behind-the-scenes planning, and even cultural adaptations or innovative twists that reflect the couple's personality and identity.

The key point here is that Instagram Reels enables couples to broadcast their wedding to a much wider audience than ever before. Weddings, which were traditionally private family affairs, are now seen through the lens of social media as performances for public consumption. The videos that couples post on Instagram Reels are no longer just about the ceremony itself but about constructing a narrative around the couple's journey, their values, and their creative choices. In this sense, weddings have become a performance of identity, a means for individuals to express how they define themselves within the larger cultural context.

By posting their wedding ceremonies on Instagram Reels, couples are participating in a cultural dialogue, one in which the very act of showcasing their wedding ceremony allows them to gain recognition for their unique celebration. The wedding becomes a product—a product that is not just a personal celebration but also a public spectacle that receives likes, comments, shares, and, potentially, media attention.

c. The Desire for Cultural Recognition and Validation

One of the driving forces behind this trend is the need for recognition—specifically, the desire for acknowledgment of the wedding ceremony as something "unique" or "innovative." As previously mentioned, there is a growing need for weddings to be distinctive in a world where social media has amplified our awareness of what's happening globally. Couples want to share their creativity and get approval for doing something different—whether it's a wedding that combines traditional Indonesian rituals with Western pop culture influences, or a wedding that incorporates a personalized theme, such as Disney-inspired elements, boho chic aesthetics, or cultural fusions.

In Instagram Reels, these weddings are actively curated to highlight what makes them stand out. Reels allows couples to manipulate every aspect of their wedding presentation, whether it's the choice of location, fashion, music, or even the rituals themselves. Couples, in collaboration with wedding planners, influencers, or designers, may specifically design their weddings with the goal of making them appear as the most visually captivating, memorable, or distinctive event on the platform. The emphasis on visual impact in Reels is key to gaining visibility and validation in a space where millions of weddings are showcased, often in similar ways.

In addition to visual appeal, couples might also incorporate emotional storytelling into their wedding Reels. For example, narrating the personal journey of the couple, incorporating cultural symbolism, or including family and community involvement in creative ways. All of this adds to the emotional appeal of the wedding and enhances its potential to go viral or gain attention. The broader audience that engages with these videos, such as friends, family, and even strangers, provides a platform for cultural recognition, whereby the uniqueness of a wedding ceremony can receive validation from a larger, often global, community.

d. The Role of Instagram Reels in Defining Wedding Trends

As Reels continues to grow in popularity, it plays a critical role in defining new trends within the wedding industry. The visibility of creative wedding concepts on Instagram Reels encourages other couples to replicate these ideas or even put their own spin on them, thus fostering an ongoing cycle of innovation and cultural exchange. Weddings, as showcased on Instagram Reels, become part of a larger cultural ecosystem in which trends—be they thematic, fashion-oriented, or ritualistic—are constantly evolving and adapting to the changing desires of couples around the world.

What makes Instagram Reels particularly effective in shaping these trends is its short-form video format, which can easily go viral or become part of wedding culture on social media. The videos allow for a quick, digestible experience, offering users the opportunity to consume wedding content in real-time, whether it's a new wedding theme, a fashion trend, or a creative twist on a traditional practice. These viral trends inspire others, contributing to the rapid spread of wedding innovations that often transcend regional and cultural boundaries.

## Pre-Wedding Shoots and Their Cultural Significance on Instagram Reels

Pre-wedding photo shoots differ from wedding ceremony Reels because they are less bound to ritual obligation and more open to experimentation. They function as staged visual narratives in which couples construct identity through location, fashion, props, cinematic style, and popular-culture references. In this sense, pre-wedding Reels show transculturality through aesthetic performance rather than through ceremonial practice.

The phenomenon of pre-wedding photo shoots has grown exponentially in recent years, becoming a cultural trend that is not only a reflection of personal identity but also a public performance on social media platforms like Instagram. While pre-wedding photo sessions were not traditionally a part of Indonesian wedding customs, they have evolved into an integral part of modern weddings. Through Instagram Reels, these photo shoots have become more than just aesthetic displays—they represent a convergence of personal dreams, cultural hybridity, and global influences.

### 1. The Evolution of Pre-Wedding Photo Shoots

Pre-wedding photo shoots, once simply a collection of formal images of the engaged couple to be displayed at the wedding reception, have undergone a significant transformation. Historically, Indonesian weddings did not include pre-wedding photography, and the concept of capturing moments before the wedding ceremony was not a standard practice (Zaicovski, 2022). Traditional wedding photos would typically focus on the ceremony itself, with little emphasis on the couple's journey before the event.

However, over time, pre-wedding photos evolved from simple posed pictures to an opportunity for couples to express their personal style, dreams and aspirations. Today, it has become an essential part of wedding planning, with many couples regarding it as an indispensable component of their wedding experience. The pre-wedding photo shoot allows couples to engage in more personalized, creative, and emotionally expressive photography that is separate from the formality of the wedding day. This practice has now become a social phenomenon, especially amplified by social media platforms like Instagram, where wedding-related content garners significant attention and validation.

In contrast to the wedding ceremony, which is often steeped in tradition and family expectations, the pre-wedding photo shoot offers couples greater freedom to create their own narrative, choose meaningful locations, and explore themes that resonate with their relationship. This personalization and self-expression are significant factors driving the rise in pre-wedding photo shoots.

### 2. The Rise of Outdoor Locations and Creative Concepts

A key feature of contemporary pre-wedding photo shoots is the increasing popularity of outdoor locations and creative themes. While early pre-wedding photos often involved formal studio settings, couples now prefer to take their photos in natural environments or unique settings that capture the essence of their relationship. According to Wibawa et al. (2019), outdoor shoots are seen as more memorable and visually striking because they offer dynamic backdrops that enhance the personal and emotional appeal of the images.

On Instagram Reels, this shift is even more prominent. The platform allows couples to document not just the final photos but also the process of the photo shoot. The behind-the-scenes footage, interactions between the couple and the photographer, and sometimes even the candid moments leading up to the perfect shot become part of the shared narrative. Reels can showcase the creative journey itself, turning the pre-wedding photo shoot into a multimedia spectacle that mixes visual appeal, personality, and authenticity.

### 3. The Role of Instagram Reels in Showcasing Pre-Wedding Photo Shoots

On Instagram Reels, pre-wedding photo shoots are no longer just about the still images but also the motion and storytelling behind them. Reels, with their short-form video format, offer couples the chance to capture the entire photo shoot process—from the initial setup and location scouting to the final moments when the couple poses for their iconic shots. This behind-the-scenes

narrative is not only engaging but also adds a layer of intimacy and relatability to what might otherwise be seen as a polished, perfect moment.

The four pre-wedding examples in Figure 4 demonstrate different strategies of transcultural visual performance: an everyday drive-through location is transformed into a playful romantic setting; a mountain landscape is used to evoke global adventure aesthetics; an album-cover concept borrows from popular music imagery; and a night-time shoot relies on cinematic lighting effects. Each example shows that the pre-wedding Reel is not merely a record of a couple, but a stylized cultural performance shaped by circulating global visual references.

Each of these photo shoot themes serves as a form of visual storytelling. Couples choose to engage in these creative, themed shoots to reflect aspects of their personality or their shared interests. For example, the drive-through food shoot might reflect a quirky, fun, and relaxed aspect of the couple's dynamic, while a shoot in a mountain location could represent a sense of adventure and beauty. Similarly, a nighttime shoot might symbolize the couple's romantic side, using lighting effects to create a dreamy atmosphere. Each of these Reels not only documents the wedding journey but also builds an emotional connection with viewers, who can find common ground or draw inspiration from the shoot's creativity.

#### 4. The Influence of Global Trends and Popular Culture

The integration of global trends and popular culture in pre-wedding photo shoots has led to a hybridization of cultural forms. In many ways, the pre-wedding photo shoot represents a blending of Eastern and Western influences, as couples mix traditional elements with more contemporary, global aesthetics. For example, the fairy-tale themes mentioned earlier, where a wedding or photo shoot may have elements reminiscent of Cinderella, Arabian Nights, or Hollywood glamour, have now made their way into pre-wedding shoots. These references are cross-cultural, combining elements from different traditions and adapting them into a modern, personalized context.

This blending of cultures can be seen in the wide variety of pre-wedding photo shoot concepts featured on Instagram Reels. Couples are no longer bound to traditional settings or poses. They are experimenting with fashion, location, and props from around the world. As a result, the pre-wedding photo shoot becomes a globalized and fluid expression of identity. The photos and videos shared on Instagram Reels showcase these cross-cultural fusions in ways that would not have been possible in a more rigidly traditional wedding context.

Below we have four different themes for the Reels of pre-wedding photo-shoot (Figure 4): The first image is of a photo shoot process carried out in a fast-food drive-through. the second image tells of a photo shoot that took place in a cold and windy mountain location; the third image shows the photo shoot process to get a photo result such as an album cover; while the last image shows the photo shoot process carried out at night, to get a different effect.

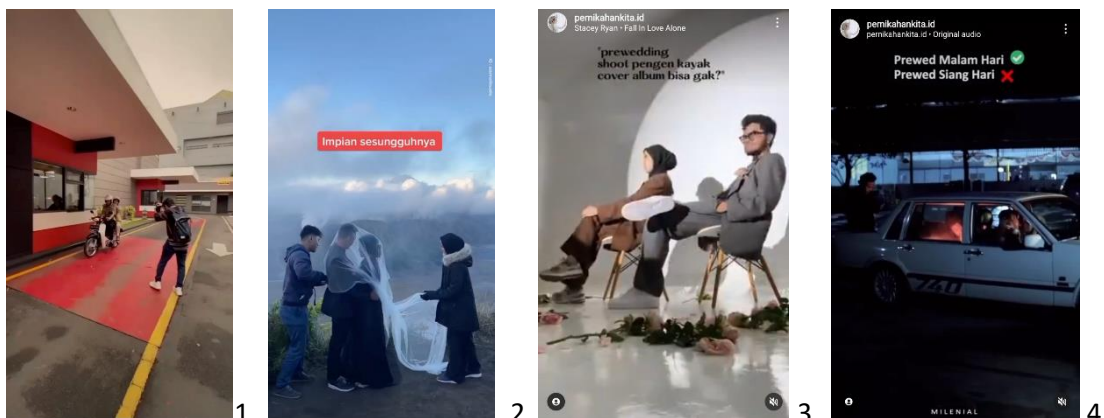


Figure 4: Pre-wedding Photo Shoot in Instagram Reels

Source: ig@pernikahankita.id

## 5. The Impact of Social Media on Pre-Wedding Photo Trends

As pre-wedding photo shoots become more widespread, Instagram Reels plays an essential role in creating and popularizing new trends. When couples share their pre-wedding photos and the behind-the-scenes process, they provide a visual reference for others to replicate or adapt. The shareability and viral potential of Instagram Reels ensure that new photo trends can quickly spread, inspiring other couples to adopt similar ideas or even put their own twist on them.

The personalization and creativity behind pre-wedding photos captured in Reels are not just about aesthetic appeal but also about identity expression. Through Reels, couples can highlight what makes their relationship unique and how they want to be seen in a global context. By doing so, they contribute to the larger social narrative of weddings in the digital age, where weddings are not only private events but also public performance that receive validation and recognition from both family, friends, and even strangers.

### Creation of Humour Scenes

One of the most interesting ways in which transculturality manifests is through humor. Humor in Reels is culturally productive because it does not only entertain; it also reworks language, accent, gesture, and global media references into locally meaningful jokes. The selected humor Reels show how users translate and reinterpret foreign cultural materials through Indonesian and regional cultural codes.

Humour plays a central role in human communication, transcending barriers of language, culture, and geography to bring people together through shared laughter. On social media platforms like Instagram, humour has become a powerful tool for engagement and interaction, with Instagram Reels emerging as a key space for the creation and sharing of comedic content. In this context, humour is not just a form of entertainment, but a mode of digital activism, enabling individuals to foster connection, express creativity, and comment on social and cultural phenomena.

The creation of humour scenes in Instagram Reels, as discussed in the statement, refers to the many diverse ways in which users incorporate humour into short-form videos. This process is multifaceted, often involving cultural hybridity, language play, media references, and digital techniques. These elements contribute to a rich and dynamic landscape of digital comedy that is able to connect with audiences from different backgrounds, while also reflecting the creative potential of social media.

#### 1. Humour as a Universal Connector

Humour, in its various forms, is a universal tool for provoking laughter, amusement, and entertainment across all ages and cultures. As Laaksonen et al. (2022) explain, the success of humour in digital spaces, including Instagram Reels, lies in its ability to foster interaction and connectivity. Social media platforms allow users to engage with humour in ways that can transcend cultural and linguistic barriers. Humour provides an entry point into shared experiences, allowing people to express emotions, comment on social trends, and explore cultural differences through a light-hearted lens.

Humour in Instagram Reels can serve several functions, from pure entertainment to more political or satirical commentary, often creating spaces where people can connect emotionally and culturally. With Reels, users are not just consuming content but actively participating in the creation of comedic narratives, remixing cultural elements, and sharing their unique perspectives.

#### 2. The Diverse Forms of Humour in Instagram Reels

Humour in Instagram Reels manifests in a wide variety of ways, often drawing on different comedic genres. Some of the most common forms of humour found in Reels include: Slapstick Comedy: This is the more physical, exaggerated form of humour, often involving accidents, pratfalls, or absurdly exaggerated reactions. Slapstick is effective on Instagram Reels because it can be conveyed quickly and visually, relying on visual cues rather than extensive dialogue; Memes: Memes have become an integral part of internet culture, often involving images or short video clips paired with text that delivers punchlines or absurd scenarios. Memes can be based on viral trends, pop culture references, or everyday situations, and they resonate with a wide audience

due to their brevity and relatability; Riddles and Wordplay: Instagram Reels also features humour based on language games, such as riddles, puns, or wordplay. The popularity of these types of humour is linked to how they play with \*\*linguistic boundaries, often mixing languages or incorporating local expressions that connect with specific cultural contexts; Voice-over Techniques: One of the most popular comedic techniques on Instagram Reels is the voice-over, where users take clips from movies, TV shows, or even viral videos and overlay them with new, humorous dialogue or commentary. This technique is highly versatile and has become a hallmark of meme culture.

### 3. The Use of Popular Movie Scenes and Media References

A significant part of humour in Instagram Reels revolves around the recontextualization of popular media. The statement notes how foreign movies and television shows, particularly those from Korean culture (such as Korean dramas and K-pop), are frequently used in Reels. These media clips are often "remixed" through the voice-over technique, in which users apply local languages, accents, or cultural references to alter the original context of the scene.

For example, the voice-over of a Korean film scene using Javanese language with a Korean accent (as mentioned in the statement) creates a hybrid cultural product (figure 5). This fusion is intriguing and entertaining for viewers, particularly because it combines elements of Korean pop culture with local Indonesian cultural references. The playful use of accent and language creates a novel and humorous juxtaposition, making it both amusing and culturally relevant. What is hybridized here is the visual source of Korean popular media, the Javanese linguistic code, and the humorous social meaning produced for Indonesian audiences. The joke works because viewers recognize the foreign visual frame while hearing a localized voice that changes the scene's cultural meaning.

This kind of cultural remixing is a common feature of Instagram Reels, where popular scenes from global media are "reinterpreted" through local lenses. This process adds layers of meaning, especially for audiences familiar with both the original media and the local culture. The hybridization of foreign and local cultures in Reels serves as a form of transcultural dialogue, where humour becomes a vehicle for sharing and negotiating cultural identities and experiences.



Figure 5: voice-over Korean movie with Javanese  
Source: ig@dian\_kusuma\_aw

### 4. The Impact of Local Cultures on Global Media

The hybridisation of different cultures is not limited to Korean or Javanese cultural mixes. Instagram Reels sees cross-cultural exchanges that blend Japanese culture with Javanese culture, Korean culture with Sundanese culture, and so on. The juxtaposition of global media (such as BTS, a popular Korean boy band) with local Indonesian music or humorous commentary allows for the creation of content that speaks to both local and global audiences. For instance, a Reels video

featuring BTS might be paired with local Indonesian music or an entirely different soundtrack, making the content both familiar and novel to followers (figure 6). In the BTS meme example, the globally circulated image of Korean idol culture is combined with Indonesian meme logic and local audience expectations. The result is a layered text in which global celebrity culture becomes material for local humor and social commentary.



Figure 6: Meme of BTS boy-band  
Source: ig@bts\_parkjimin\_29

This hybrid approach to creating humour on Instagram Reels not only reflects the globalization of culture but also the localization of global media. It highlights how digital platforms like Instagram enable the flow of cultural products across boundaries and allow them to be reinterpreted and remixed by users to reflect their own cultural context.

#### 5. Word-Guessing and Parodies: Local Humour with Universal Appeal

Another important aspect of humour in Instagram Reels is wordplay, particularly homophones, which are words that sound the same but have different meanings. The statement mentions a word guessing game as a common comedic feature in Reels. These language-based games create humour by exploiting the ambiguities and quirks of language. In multi-lingual contexts like Indonesia, homophones can generate funny situations that play with the meaning of words, leading to misunderstandings or double meanings (figure 7). In word-guessing content, transculturality appears through the movement between languages and meanings: foreign words, regional accents, and Indonesian everyday expressions become playful resources for negotiating difference.



Figure 7: word guessing  
Source: ig@aminemofficial

Additionally, parodies (such as the portrayal of a foreigner experiencing cultural shock in Indonesia) are another form of humour that mixes local and global experiences (figure 8). These parodies often involve exaggerating cultural differences to make a satirical commentary on the challenges of adapting to new cultural environments. In the case of the foreigner in Indonesia, the humour derives from the contrast between the foreigner's expectations and the local realities, poking fun at the missteps or misunderstandings that arise when someone from a different culture is immersed in a new environment. The cultural-shock parody is therefore not only a comic performance, but also an accessible way of narrating how people interpret unfamiliar habits, manners, and social expectations.

Parodies and wordplay in Instagram Reels are not just humorous but also reflective of the cultural tension and transcultural experiences that characterize the globalized world. They create a space where cultural norms and stereotypes can be examined and laughed at, often promoting a sense of shared humanity despite cultural differences.



Figure 8: Parody of cultural shock experience  
Source: ig@vigus\_vio

### Slice of Life of Diaspora Families or International Couples

A particularly prominent theme is slice-of-life content, where families or couples from different cultural backgrounds share everyday domestic routines, travel, food, parenting, and adaptation. This theme is important because it moves transcultural dialogue beyond symbolic borrowing and into lived negotiation. Culture appears not only as costume or style, but also as daily practice.

Instagram Reels has become a platform where diaspora families and international couples share snippets of their daily lives, offering a unique glimpse into the intercultural experiences they navigate. This form of social media content not only provides entertainment but also serves as a means of cultural expression, adaptation, and dialogue. Reels, as short, shareable videos, allow users to portray their lives in ways that are accessible and relatable to a broad audience, making it an ideal space for presenting the complexity of cross-cultural interactions and diaspora life.

#### 1. Life of Diaspora Families and International Couples

Diaspora families, or families formed through intercultural or intermarriage relationships, often experience unique cultural blending in their daily lives. Instagram Reels allows these families to showcase their lifestyle, including how they combine or navigate multiple cultural identities, practices, and languages. By posting videos that highlight aspects of their everyday life—such as the foods they eat, the languages they speak, and their approaches to tradition and modernity—they present a kind of cultural hybridity that speaks to both the challenges and joys of living across cultural boundaries.

Reels featuring international couples or diaspora families frequently capture moments of everyday life, but these moments are often coloured by the intercultural dynamics at play. Whether it's a family meal where different cuisines are combined, or a child growing up with

exposure to multiple languages and customs, these videos reveal the fluidity of culture in action. As the statement mentions, this content typically has a positive nature, reflecting the success stories of cultural adaptation and the blending of traditions, showcasing how families merge diverse cultural elements in a harmonious and functional way.

## 2. Sharing Experiences of Adaptation and Cultural Shock

Another important theme addressed in the statement is the cultural shock that diaspora families and international couples often experience when adjusting to new environments. Instagram Reels provides a platform for sharing how individuals and families cope with these challenges, turning them into moments of connection rather than division. The videos often highlight efforts to navigate and adapt to new cultural norms and social expectations, showcasing both the struggles and successes of the adaptation process.

For instance, the statement mentions a mixed Indonesian-Japanese family where a child is eating 'cireng' (a traditional Indonesian street food) using chopsticks, an act that symbolizes the blending of Indonesian and Japanese cultural practices (figure 9). In this context, Reels become a platform for negotiating identity, where families share not only the process of adaptation but also the joy and pride that comes from embracing multiple cultural influences. Analytically, this example matters because food becomes a marker of belonging and adjustment: a local Indonesian snack is inserted into an intercultural family routine and made visible to audiences who may read it as both ordinary and culturally specific.



Figure 9: Cireng, local street food, for breakfast  
Source: ig@mas\_natsuki

This sharing of personal experiences can serve as an educational tool for others in similar situations, helping to normalize the intercultural adaptation process and providing guidance on how to navigate the challenges of living between cultures. At the same time, it opens up spaces for discussions about cultural differences, misunderstandings, and how these can be overcome through communication, understanding, and openness.

## 3. The Positive Nature of Reels Content: Building an Image

As noted in the statement, one reason for the popularity of Reels, particularly those showcasing intercultural lives, is the positive portrayal of these experiences. Much like companies that use social media to build their image, Instagram users (especially influencers and content creators) seek to project a positive image of their lives. This can involve showcasing success stories such as successful intercultural marriages, family moments, and personal triumphs in adapting to multiple cultures. These portrayals aim to highlight the richness of cultural diversity and the joys of cross-cultural exchange, while also appealing to a broad audience of followers.

This positivity is a key aspect of social media dynamics, where the content is curated to reflect desirable or idealized versions of reality. In the context of diaspora families or international couples, Instagram Reels often emphasize the celebration of cultural differences rather than the tensions that might arise from them. By focusing on the harmonious blending of cultures, these videos promote an image of success in navigating the complexities of intercultural life.

#### 4. Sharing Cultural Content as a Social Media Phenomenon

The increasing tendency to share cultural content through platforms like Instagram Reels is not only a personal endeavour but also part of a larger social media trend. As the statement mentions, the rise of global interaction through social media features (such as hashtags, comment sections, and video-sharing capabilities) has made it easier for users to connect over shared experiences. This ease of sharing allows users from all over the world to engage with content that is not only locally relevant but also globally accessible. As a result, Reels becomes a tool for transcultural communication, where people from different cultural backgrounds can exchange ideas, experiences, and knowledge.

The increasing globalization of culture, facilitated by platforms like Instagram, has made it easier for people to access and understand diverse cultural perspectives. This democratization of cultural content through digital means has blurred traditional cultural boundaries and created a shared space for people to celebrate their differences while finding common ground. The ease of creating, sharing, and consuming content related to intercultural experiences makes Instagram Reels a central player in the global conversation about identity, culture, and belonging.

Another example highlights an Indonesian influencer who attends a Japanese culture exhibition while wearing a kimono (Figure 10). The influencer's use of a Javanese accent while narrating her experience of participating in Japanese traditions underscores how different cultural practices can coexist within the same personal identity (Tang & Li, 2022). This Reel serves as an example of how users share their personal cultural journeys while presenting a multicultural identity as something normalized and celebrated (Wu, 2021). The kimono, Japanese exhibition setting, Indonesian narration, and Javanese accent produce a layered identity performance in which cultural admiration, bodily participation, and local voice coexist in one Reel.



Figure 10: Experience attending popular Japanese culture exhibitions  
Source: [ig@nowthisiscooking](#)

These examples, through their light-hearted yet meaningful presentation of cultural exchanges, show how Instagram Reels functions as a document of modern, globalized life, where identities are fluid and cultural boundaries are increasingly porous.

## 5. Real-Life Stories and Their Value

Real-life stories are currently valuable issues in human activities (Ismail et al., 2022) through social media, especially via Instagram Reels. Real-life stories shared on Instagram Reels are more than just entertainment; they illustrate the complexity of culture and human experiences. They allow for the sharing of authentic experiences, including the ways in which people from different cultures adapt, negotiate, and thrive in a multicultural world. This is especially valuable for diaspora communities, where identity can often be a complex negotiation between the culture of origin and the culture of residence.

By sharing personal stories—like the example of a child ranking their parents (Figure 11) during a vacation—users create content that is relatable to a wide range of followers, offering insight into everyday intercultural experiences. These videos also serve as cultural education, helping followers understand different ways of life, family dynamics, and cultural practices in a manner that is engaging, accessible, and entertaining.



Figure 11: holiday with family  
Source: ig@yeojinlee

### Instagram Reels as a Fluid and Accessible Medium for Transcultural Exchange

Instagram Reels emerges as a dynamic medium for transcultural dialogue, where users from all over the world can interact, create, and share hybrid cultural products. The interactive nature of Reels, combined with its multimedia features (such as video, music, text, and effects), allows users to engage with cultural content in ways that transcend traditional boundaries. These digital interactions are often fluid, spontaneous, and reproducible, making Instagram Reels a particularly potent form of cultural exchange in the digital age.

As the research suggests, the widespread use of Reels not only facilitates cultural sharing but also creates new cultural forms, allowing cultures to merge and evolve through continuous engagement. The platform exemplifies how globalization—in the context of social media—results in the formation of hybrid cultural identities, where boundaries are blurred and new transcultural narratives are formed. Ultimately, Instagram Reels become a site where cross-cultural communication is not only possible but actively fostered, enabling users to participate in a shared global culture while simultaneously expressing local identities and traditions.

Across the four themes, the pattern of analysis moves from example to implication: wedding Reels show ritual hybridization; pre-wedding Reels show aesthetic self-performance; humor Reels show linguistic and media remixing; and slice-of-life Reels show everyday intercultural negotiation. Together, these findings demonstrate that transculturality on Instagram Reels is not a single form, but a range of practices shaped by the platform's visual, audio, and interactive affordances.

Instagram Reels as a new-media platform has interactive, intertextual, and multimedia characteristics in the form of videos, images, and text that can be read anywhere, anytime where the public can easily and directly connect to respond (Safitri & Ayunita, 2022). Through Reels, the users both the influencers and the followers interact with each other in order to produce and reproduce diverse cultural products. On Instagram Reels we are able to see that transculturation takes place by way of cultural hybridity process. Such cultural mixes bring about a new cultural form or product. For more details see the following diagram.

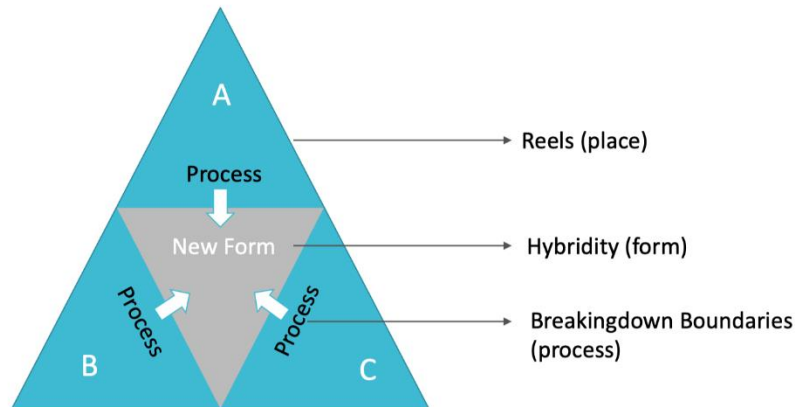


Figure 12: Diagram of Transculturality in Instagram Reels

The triangles represent spaces or places where the culture takes place are Instagram Reels; A, B, and C describe different cultures, which are mixed processes, where in that process, they encounter boundaries or patterns and patterns of the original culture. So that hybridity is formed into a new form.

Instagram Reels has evolved into a dynamic platform that embodies the essence of transculturality, facilitating the exchange, blending, and reshaping of cultural elements across geographical, linguistic, and social boundaries. The platform’s interactive, intertextual, and multimedia nature supports a fluid, cross-cultural dialogue, enabling users from diverse backgrounds to engage in the co-creation of new cultural meanings. Instagram Reels not only connects cultures but also fosters the hybridization of cultural practices, reflecting the complexities of modern global interactions.

One key aspect of transculturality on Instagram Reels is its interactive nature. Users can engage with content through likes, comments, shares, and remixes, enabling two-way communication between creators and their followers. This interaction allows users to actively shape and reproduce cultural products, contributing to the transformation and fusion of cultural elements. For example, an influencer may post a video of a wedding ceremony inspired by both Western fairy tales and local traditions. As followers from different cultural backgrounds engage with the video, sharing their experiences and modifications, the video evolves, gaining new interpretations and versions. This continuous interaction fosters cultural hybridity, where diverse cultural identities merge to create new, blended forms of culture.

Intertextuality further enhances the transcultural dialogue on Instagram Reels. The platform thrives on the combination of various cultural references—be it through popular media, memes, or traditional practices from different parts of the world. A video might incorporate a K-pop song (from South Korea) while showcasing traditional Indonesian dance, creating a unique cultural product that appeals to a global audience. This blending of diverse texts, sounds, and visuals creates a space for cultural negotiation, where multiple cultural narratives coexist and interact, evolving as they are consumed by different audiences. The intertextual nature of Reels allows cultural symbols to cross-pollinate and transform, reflecting the globalized nature of the platform.

Instagram Reels also provides a powerful vehicle for transcultural expression through its multimedia characteristics. By combining videos, images, text, and audio, the platform offers a multi-sensory experience that transcends linguistic and cultural barriers. For instance, a Reel could feature a

traditional Indonesian wedding ceremony, enhanced with a Western-style love song or modern pop music, blending two distinct cultural expressions into a harmonious whole. Similarly, memes or humorous voiceovers can mix cultural references from various countries, demonstrating how the blending of sounds, visuals, and texts produces new meanings that are not confined to a single cultural context. These multimedia elements make Instagram Reels a rich space for transcultural exchange.

At the heart of Instagram Reels' transculturality is cultural hybridity—the process by which elements from different cultures are combined to create new, hybrid cultural forms. For example, a wedding ceremony inspired by Cinderella might incorporate Western fairy tale elements, like a horse-drawn carriage, alongside local cultural practices, such as traditional Indonesian rituals. This hybridization blurs the cultural boundaries that once separated these traditions, creating a new cultural expression that resonates with a global audience. Through such transcultural processes, Instagram Reels becomes a platform where cultural products are constantly reshaped and redefined, reflecting the fluidity of contemporary cultural identity.

User engagement is a key indicator of the platform's transcultural reach. The likes, comments, and shares on videos demonstrate the widespread appeal of hybrid cultural expressions. For instance, a pre-wedding photo shoot video combining Indonesian dress with a Cinderella theme might receive global attention, highlighting how transcultural content resonates across cultural boundaries. This suggests that transculturality on Instagram Reels is not a niche phenomenon, but a mainstream form of communication, where cultural differences are celebrated rather than seen as barriers.

Through remixing and reproducing content, Instagram Reels also fosters an ongoing transcultural dialogue. Users can take existing videos and add their own creative touches—whether through new soundtracks, voiceovers, or cultural reinterpretations. This constant remixing ensures that cultural dialogue remains fluid and dynamic, allowing content to evolve as it circulates across different cultural contexts. For example, a traditional Japanese tea ceremony video could be remixed with a Latin American song and a Spanish-language voiceover, blending Japanese and Latin American cultures. This dynamic interaction reflects the platform's role in reshaping how culture is understood and shared globally.

In conclusion, Instagram Reels represents a new form of cultural interaction, where transculturality thrives through cultural hybridity, interactivity, and multimedia expression. The platform serves as a dynamic space where cultures blend, remix, and evolve, creating new cultural products that transcend traditional boundaries. By facilitating continuous transcultural dialogue, Instagram Reels reflects the growing fluidity of culture in the digital age, where cultural identities are constantly reshaped through global interaction.

## Conclusion

This study finds that Instagram Reels function as a medium of transcultural interaction by enabling users to combine, adapt, and recirculate cultural materials through short-form audiovisual content. The selected Reels show that transculturality appears through ritual hybridization in wedding content, aesthetic performance in pre-wedding shoots, linguistic and media remixing in humor scenes, and lived negotiation in diaspora or international family narratives.

The article contributes to the study of digital culture by showing that transcultural dialogue on Instagram Reels is not limited to explicit cultural exchange. It also emerges through everyday practices, visual styling, sound, captions, language choice, popular-culture references, and user participation. Reels therefore operates as a fluid cultural space where local and global references are continuously recontextualized.

The study also has limitations. The dataset is limited to 15 publicly accessible Reels and four thematic categories, so the findings should be read as qualitative interpretation rather than broad statistical generalization. Future research may expand the dataset, compare Instagram Reels with

other short-video platforms such as TikTok or YouTube Shorts, or examine audience comments more closely to understand how transcultural meanings are received and negotiated by viewers.

## References

- Annur, C. M. (2021). *Ada 91 Juta Pengguna Instagram di Indonesia, Mayoritas Usia Berapa?* <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2021/11/15/ada-91-juta-pengguna-instagram-di-indonesia-mayoritas-usia-berapa>. [Databoks](#)
- Annur, C. M. (2022). *Capai Rp36 M Sekali Unggah, Inilah Influencer Instagram dengan Bayaran Termahal Dunia*. <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2022/09/21/capai-rp36-m-sekali-unggah-inilah-influencer-instagram-dengan-bayaran-termahal-dunia>
- Badham, M., & Mykkänen, M. (2022). A relational approach to how media engage with their audiences in social media. *Media and Communication*, 10(1), 54–65. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i1.4409>
- Baker, W. (2022). From intercultural to transcultural communication. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 22(3), 280–293. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2021.2001477>
- Bellentani, F., & Arkhipova, D. (2022). The built environment in social media: towards a biosemiotic approach. *Biosemiotics*, 15(2), 193–213. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12304-022-09497-5>
- Bhandari, A., & Bimo, S. (2022). Why's everyone on TikTok now? The algorithmized self and the future of self-making on social media. *Social Media+Society*, 8(1), 205630512210862. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221086241>
- Bhatia, A., Gaur, P. S., Zimba, O., Chatterjee, T., Nikiphorou, E., & Gupta, L. (2022). The untapped potential of Instagram to facilitate rheumatology academia. *Clinical Rheumatology*, 41(3), 861–867. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10067-021-05947-6>
- Bonilla-Del-río, M., Figueroa-Benítez, J. C., & García-Prieto, V. (2022). Influencers with physical disabilities on Instagram: Features, visibility and business collaboration. *Profesional de La Informacion*, 31(6), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2022.nov.12>
- Boulianne, S., & Larsson, A. O. (2023). Engagement with candidate posts on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook during the 2019 election. *New Media & Society*, 25(1), 119–140. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211009504>
- Chang, C. chen, Cheng, G. J. Y., Nghiem, T. P. Le, Song, X. P., Oh, R. R. Y., Richards, D. R., & Carrasco, L. R. (2020). Social media, nature, and life satisfaction: global evidence of the biophilia hypothesis. *Scientific Reports*, 10(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-60902-w>
- Cohen, Y., & Lev-On, A. (2022). The Dormant Volcano: Social media and the temple mount, Jerusalem. *Social Media + Society*, 8(4), 205630512211387. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221138754>
- Cuesta-Valiño, P., Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, P., & Durán-Álamo, P. (2022). Why do people return to video platforms? Millennials and centennials on TikTok. *Media and Communication*, 10(1), 198–207. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i1.4737>
- Dowling, D. O., Johnson, P. R., & Ekdale, B. (2022). Hijacking journalism: legitimacy and metajournalistic discourse in right-wing podcasts. *Media and Communication*, 10(3), 17–27. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i3.5260>
- Dubovi, I., & Tabak, I. (2021). Interactions between emotional and cognitive engagement with science on YouTube. *Public Understanding of Science*, 30(6), 759–776. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963662521990848>
- Duffy, B. E., & Sawey, M. (2022). In/Visibility in social media work: the hidden labor behind the brands. *Media and Communication*, 10(1), 77–87. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i1.4460>
- Ferrer-Conill, R., Karlsson, M., Haim, M., Kammer, A., Elgesem, D., & Sjøvaag, H. (2023). Toward 'Cultures of Engagement'? An exploratory comparison of engagement patterns on Facebook news posts. *New Media & Society*, 25(1), 95–118. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211009246>

- Frischlich, L. (2022). "Resistance!": Collective action cues in conspiracy theory-endorsing Facebook groups. *Media and Communication*, 10(2), 130–143. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i2.5182>
- Gillett, R., Stardust, Z., & Burgess, J. (2022). Safety for whom? Investigating how platforms frame and perform safety and harm interventions. *Social Media + Society*, 8(4), 205630512211443. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221144315>
- Hamid, N. A., Rashid, S. M., Ishak, M. S., & Wulan, R. R. (2022). Effects of social media usage: The well-being and flourishing of housewives. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 38(1), 284–304. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2022-3801-16>
- Ismail, I. R., Rashid, R. A., Ab Rashid, R., Singh, P. K. S., & Yushriman, Y. S. B. (2022). Challenges and intercultural adaptation among Japanese students to Malaysian culture: A case study. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 38(1), 162–178. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2022-3801-09>
- Kasmani, M. F., Aziz, A. R. A., & Sawai, R. P. (2022). Self-disclosure on social media and its influence on the well-being of youth. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 38(3), 272–290. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2022-3803-17>
- Kozinets, R. V. (2015). *Netnography: Redefined*. SAGE Publications.
- Kreling, R., Meier, A., & Reinecke, L. (2022). Feeling Authentic on social media: subjective authenticity across Instagram stories and posts. *Social Media + Society*, 8(1), 205630512210862. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221086235>
- Kynigos, C., & Daskolia, M. (2021). Boundary crossing creativity in the design of digital resources for teaching and learning about climate change. *Creativity*, 8(1), 213–235. <https://doi.org/10.2478/ctra-2021-0013>
- Laaksonen, S., Koivukoski, J., & Porttikivi, M. (2022). Clowning around a polarized issue: Rhetorical strategies and communicative outcomes of a political parody performance by Loldiers of Odin. *New Media & Society*, 24(8), 1912–1931. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444821989621>
- Li, Y., & Sai, Q. (2020). The effects of language and religion on cross-border acquisition completion. *Research in International Business and Finance*, 54(June), 101294. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ribaf.2020.101294>
- López-Rabadán, P. (2021). Framing studies evolution in the social media era. digital advancement and reorientation of the research agenda. *Social Sciences*, 11(1), 9. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11010009>
- Lowenstein-Barkai, H. (2022). "Write it down! I am an Arab": The role of reader comments in the formation of networked counterpublics. *New Media & Society*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448221101163>
- Martínez-Sanz, R., & Fernández, C. G. (2018). Brand communication on Instagram, a gender issue? The role the fashion influencer. *Masculinities and Social Change*, 7(3), 230–254. <https://doi.org/10.17583/mcs.2018.3693>
- Novianti, E., Susilawati, E. A., Sesunan, M. F., Syamsiyah, N., & Astuty, E. Y. (2019). Development wedding planner using extreme programming method. *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering*, 673(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/673/1/012049>
- Purba, K. R., Asirvatham, D., & Murugesan, R. K. (2020). Classification of Instagram fake users using supervised machine learning algorithms. *International Journal of Electrical and Computer Engineering*, 10(3), 2763–2772. <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijece.v10i3.pp2763-2772>
- Ramlah, Pabendon, M. B., & Daryono, B. S. (2020). Local food diversification of foxtail millet (*Setaria italica*) cultivars in West Sulawesi, Indonesia: A case study of diversity and local culture. *Biodiversitas*, 21(1), 67–73. <https://doi.org/10.13057/biodiv/d210110>
- Rivero, P., Navarro-Neri, I., García-Ceballos, S., & Aso, B. (2020). Spanish archaeological museums during COVID-19 (2020): An edu-communicative analysis of their activity on twitter through the sustainable development goals. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 12(19), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12198224>

- Rizati, M. A. (2022). *Bertambah lagi ini jumlah pengguna Instagram per kuartal I 2022*. <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2022/06/17/bertambah-lagi-ini-jumlah-pengguna-instagram-per-kuartal-i-2022>
- Safitri, R., & Ayunita, R. (2022). Suicide framing on online media in Indonesia. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 38(1), 256–269. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2022-3801-14>
- Sethi, B., Williams, A., & Leung, J. L. S. (2022). Caregiving across international borders: a Systematic review of literature on transnational carer-employees. In *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*. Springer US. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10823-022-09468-w>
- Tang, F., & Li, F. (2022). The translation of otaku and transnational construction of East Asian masculinity. *Cogent Arts and Humanities*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2114222>
- Tenenboim, O. (2022). Comments, shares, or likes: what makes news posts engaging in different ways. *Social Media + Society*, 8(4), 205630512211302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221130282>
- Trye, D., Keegan, T. T., Mato, P., & Apperley, M. (2022). Harnessing indigenous tweets: The Reo Māori Twitter corpus. In *Language Resources and Evaluation* (Vol. 56, Issue 4). Springer Netherlands. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10579-022-09580-w>
- Wibawa, S. C., Maspiyah, Indriyanti, A. D., Prehanto, D. R., Sumbawati, M. S., Mashudi, & Dharmayanti, D. (2019). Teaching applied: synectics application using leadership instructional on creative design subject for upgrading creativity. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1387(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1387/1/012068>
- Wijaya, B. S., Anitawati, M. T., Suharyanti, & Fortunisa, A. (2022). Media brand reputation in the digital milieu: the effects of online news ethics and logic on media brand image. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 38(3), 106–125. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2022-3803-07>
- Wijayanti, R. I. (2022). Selebgram Terkaya Indonesia Ini Punya Penghasilan Fantastis, Ria Ricis Rp200 Juta Per Bulan? *Celebrities.id*. [Celebrities.id](https://www.celebrities.id)
- Wu, Y. (2021). Can pop culture allay resentment? Japan's influence in China today. *Media and Communication*, 9(3), 112–122. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v9i3.4117>
- Zaicovski, T. (2022). Pre-wedding traditions, matchmaking and wedding among the Old Believers of the Republic of Moldova. *The Journal of Ethnology and Culturology*, 31, 92–99. <https://doi.org/10.52603/rec.2022.31.10>