



UNIVERSITAT DE
BARCELONA

UAB
Universitat Autònoma
de Barcelona

Universitat
de Girona



Universitat
Pompeu Fabra
Barcelona



UNIVERSITAT
ROVIRA I VIRGILI



MASTER IN COGNITIVE SCIENCE AND LANGUAGE

MASTER THESIS

September 2026

**"Hermanos" and "Helal Olsun": Transnational
Solidarity and Othering in Turkish and Spanish
YouTube Comments**

by Ruken Şeker

Under the supervision of:

Elin McCready

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona



Abstract

In March 2026, Spain's refusal to host US strikes against Iran triggered an unexpected wave of transnational affection between Spain and Turkey on social media. That was followed by a Turkish anchor's viral Spanish thank-you on live TV, whose gesture added a further dimension of the same wave and provided the starting point for this study. This thesis examines how Spanish and Turkish YouTube commenters discursively seem to construct transnational solidarity around this "*no a la guerra*" moment, and how that solidarity depended on constructing a moral "other." Drawing on Social Media Critical Discourse Studies and van Dijk's (2011) ideological square, the study takes a qualitative approach to youtube comments across four videos, asking through which discursive strategies; such as kinship terms, historical reference, multimodal symbols, and translanguaging, Spanish and Turkish commenters build an imagined in-group, and whether the resulting "other" differs across the two communities. The findings show clear asymmetry: Spanish commenters rely on kinship language (*hermano/fraternidad*) and historical memory such as the 2003 Yak-42 accident, while Turkish commenters favour admiration and honour-based praise (*adam gibi*) over kinship. This asymmetry extends to othering: Spanish commenters criticise inward, at domestic political figures, while Turkish commenters criticise outward, at the broader Muslim and Arab world. The study extends existing work on transnational YouTube discourse (Sharma, 2014; Vergani & Zuev, 2011) and offers an early qualitative application of Karimova and Khudoyorov's (2026) brotherhood-metaphor framework to a Turkic-Romance pair.

Keywords: social media critical discourse studies, transnational solidarity, ideological square, othering

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Elin McCready, for her energy, guidance, and support in bringing this thesis to completion, and to my unofficial co-supervisor, Mario Bisiada, for his extensive feedback and encouragement throughout the development of the project, both of which greatly shaped this work.

I would also like to thank my Spanish teacher, Laura, whose teaching helped me improve my Spanish and engage more confidently with the Spanish-language data in this thesis.

My thanks also go to my family, simply for being there for me, and to my friends, who listened as I talked through the many doubts and occasional crises that accompanied this project. I am also grateful to my therapist for her support throughout a demanding period.

Finally, I would like to thank the cat I hope to have one day.

Acknowledgements	2
1.Introduction	4
2.State of the Art	5
2.1 Social Media as a Transnational Discourse Environment	5
2.2 Identity, Solidarity and Othering in Online Discourse	6
2.3. Research Gap and the Present Study	7
3. Methodology	8
3.1. Data Sources	8
3.2. Data Collection	8
3.3. Data Analysis	9
4.Findings	10
4.1. Transnational Solidarity and Constructing Affiliation	10
4.2. Turkish expressions of admiration	12
4.3. Moral Positioning and Constructing the Other	14
4.4. Humour Elements	17
5. Discussion	17
6. Limitations	19
7. Conclusion	19
References	21
AI disclosure statement	23
Appendix A	24
Appendix B	28

1.Introduction

In March 2026, a diplomatic dispute over the war in Iran produced an unexpected wave of transnational affection between two countries with little widely-known linguistic or diplomatic connection. On March 4th, Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's government publicly refused Donald Trump's request to use the Rota and Morón military bases for strikes against Iran, adopting an explicit "*no a la guerra*" stance (eldiario.es, 2026a). Turkish social media reacted almost immediately, further fuelled by news that a Spanish Patriot missile battery stationed in Turkey had helped intercept an Iranian missile crossing Turkish airspace (eldiario.es, 2026a): Turkish users flooded platforms with memes and affectionate posts toward Spain, including humorous gestures such as promises of hair transplants (eldiario.es, 2026b).

Simultaneously, Spanish users responded in kind, addressing Turkey as *hermano*, and the exchange grew into a fast-moving social media movement between the two publics. During this wave, Turkish news anchor Ece Üner closed her main bulletin on Halk TV with a message in Spanish, thanking Spain for "being on the right side of history" (eldiario.es, 2026a), a moment that itself went viral. Because two of the four videos in this study's corpus concern this broadcast and its aftermath, Üner's message receives particular attention here.

What first drew my attention to this discourse was, somewhat unexpectedly, its humour, though humour is not this study's focus. Beneath the jokes was something that seemed worth investigating: an evident desire, on both sides, simply to come together. Watching this movement emerge so quickly out of ordinary social media interaction raised questions that felt as much cognitive as discursive, how language is used to construct this sense of closeness, and what possible connections users draw on to build an affiliation with no *obvious* basis in geography or language. As a student of cognitive science and language, this intersection of perception, mind, and discourse, unfolding in an unusually live case, seemed too rich not to pursue.

Grounded in Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (Kopf, 2026; Khosravinik, 2018) and van Dijk's (2011) ideological square, this study analyses YouTube comments responding to the "*no a la guerra*" moment across four videos in Turkish and Spanish. It asks two related questions: first, through which discursive strategies; such as kinship terms, historical reference, multimodal symbols, translanguaging, do Spanish and Turkish commenters construct an imagined transnational in-group; and second, how does this in-group simultaneously depend on the construction of a moral "other," and does that other differ across the two language communities.

The rest of this thesis is organised as follows. The next section reviews previous work on social media as a space for transnational discourse and on how identity, solidarity and othering are constructed online, and explains where this study fits. S3 introduces the corpus and the analytical framework. S4 presents the findings, first looking at how solidarity is built (4.1-4.2) and then at how a moral "other" is constructed (4.3), with a shorter section on humour (4.4). S5 discusses what the two comment sections do differently, S6 sets out the limitations of the study, and finally S7 concludes.

2.State of the Art

2.1 Social Media as a Transnational Discourse Environment

Every day, millions of people enter social media platforms and interact with each other, even without sharing a language, a country/diaspora, or even when not directly affected by an event/issues, people still feel the need to react and engage with each other. This is echoed by Kopf (2026): "...social media are not limited nationally. People from around the globe can post, react and interact on social media, which, in this day and age of global crises (e.g. climate change, public health crises) is invaluable" (p.223).

For example, an earthquake happening somewhere in an Oceanic country can still generate reactions from someone in Asia sharing their perspective or emotions regarding the event when encountering them online, demonstrating that people do not need to be directly connected to an event to participate in the discourse surrounding it. A similar dynamic is studied by Statham (2021): during the 2018 Irish abortion referendum campaign, the Together for Yes page on Twitter drew endorsements from public figures with no personal connection to Irish law, such as Gary Lineker and Emma Watson (p.198). Evidently, this is thanks to social media itself, without such platforms, people would stay within their smaller circles.

Beyond simple comments on blog posts, the online equivalent of printed newspaper articles, video content has become far more dominant online over the last few years, and in many ways stronger in effect than its traditional counterpart, television (Statham, 2021, p.192). Moreover, today many platforms centre on short, fast-paced content designed to capture attention quickly.

However, YouTube remains one of the main platforms for long-form video content, hosting millions of channels created by people from different backgrounds, Saglik (2025, p.5) describes this as "a digital sphere". In a sense, this creates a massive digital television environment where creators continuously produce content while audiences are able not only to watch but also to publicly react and engage with one another. Following Sharma (2014), "YouTube media content offers such a contact zone around which communities and nations can be imagined by its viewers and respondents through their different modes of discursive engagement." (p.20). Meaning, given the opportunity, people interact and find ways to construct meaning around social, cultural, political events or basically any human-related experience across the world.

With more than 2.5 billion users every month, YouTube is the second most used social media platform after Facebook (Statistico, 2026), and its global, highly interactive nature makes discourse environments there inevitable. Crucially, these environments are not bound by geography: following Rampton (1998), Sharma (2014) reframes the sociolinguistic unit from a "linguistics community" to a "linguistics of contact," arguing that YouTube functions as a contact zone where communities are imagined through shared, co-constructed stances rather than geopolitical affiliation (p.20). This visibility also produces linguistic variety and multilingual communication, giving researchers access to translingual public opinion that was previously difficult to encounter (Kopf, 2026).

Hence, this study is grounded in Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS), a field formally established by KhosraviNik (2018) and systematised by Kopf (2026) as the critical exploration of social media as a particular element of the digital world (Kopf, 2026, p.216). Following this framework, digital discourse is examined not simply as text but in relation to the

broader social and ideological phenomena it covers. Within this classification, this paper approaches social media platforms as rich discourse environments for analysis or in Saglik's (2025) terms, "a digital public sphere where users freely express ideological orientations and cultural anxieties" (p.5).

2.2 Identity, Solidarity and Othering in Online Discourse

Comparably, an anti-war discourse analysis by Kavada (2012) would be quite the relevant example that shows a nation's ideological dynamics and 'the anxiety' revolving around the war. Kavada (2012) claims that "migrating onto participatory platforms is not without precedent: advocacy campaigns such as Avaaz have long mobilised cross-border publics around conflicts from the Middle East to Iraq through social media." (p.29). Therefore, the focus of this current study, the sociopolitical context surrounding the "*no a la guerra*" movement, is treated as a constitutive part of the discourse itself rather than serving just a background context.

Once people share opinions on political or social events, they inevitably begin positioning themselves within groups, creating sides and oppositions, invoking the concept of the ideological square (van Dijk, 2011), a discourse analytic tool for how in-groups and out-groups are constructed through positive self- and negative other-presentation (detailed further in section 3.3). Under this scope, the language of 'othering' (Vaahensalo, 2021) is highly visible across this type of discourse: analysing YouTube comments under a politically themed video, Li (2024) identifies explicit labelling, othering, rhetorical questioning, and humour as recurrent strategies through which commenters construct and defend group boundaries. Through such discourse, users indirectly reveal how they see the world and how they perceive different groups, offering researchers access to narratives of collective identity that can be traced through discourse analysis frameworks.

Yet othering is not the only outcome of this kind of identity work: Li (2024) also finds that explicit group labelling can function inversely, "fostering a sense of community and facilitating intercultural communication by prompting more supportive comments" (p.86) rather than marginalising an out-group. Prior work (Vergani & Zuev, 2011) on YouTube shows that comments can construct imagined solidarity across borders around shared causes, while other studies (e.g., Diabah, 2023; Saglik, 2025) show that online discourse often organises around us/them polarisation and othering instead.

Since the current study includes three languages, mainly Spanish and Turkish, with English functioning more as a secondary or bridge language, the multilingual aspect of the discourse becomes particularly important in understanding how communication occurs across different linguistic communities. Wentker and Schneider (2022) argue that switching into another language in YouTube comments is itself metaphorical, since it works to signal the speaker's cultural membership and affiliation rather than simply conveying information which can be perceived as a pattern comparable to translanguaging.

Additionally, people may also deliberately use another group's language, even partially or through translation tools, as a directional gesture of appreciation, respect, or affiliation, distinct from the general in-group signalling above. This extends to what some scholars call ambient affiliation (Zappavigna, 2012), where users create temporary emotional alignments through shared discourse. Even without words, a symbol such as TR ♥ES demonstrates closeness within the discourse;

Vergani and Zuev (2011) similarly observe that visual symbols function as a key vehicle for shared belonging in other transnational YouTube contexts, independently of verbal content.

This affiliation is also visible, in the vocabulary itself, in the present corpus, "*hermano*" and its Turkish counterpart "*kardeş*", both establishing emotional closeness and symbolic solidarity through language choice. This kinship usage makes conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) worth mentioning, even though it is not the current study's analytical lens: abstract relationships are structured through familiar domains such as family. When kinship vocabulary is extended toward political or ideological alliance instead of actual blood or national ties, the underlying frame suppresses shared origin while foregrounding solidarity regardless of it (Karimova & Khudoyorov, 2026), arguably the exact move that allows commenters with no shared nationality to address one another as *hermano* or *kardeşim* in the first place.

Vergani and Zuev (2011), whose account of imagined solidarity was discussed above, also found more specifically that kinship or relational-proximity-based appeals tend to outperform religiously grounded ones as a basis for cross-border solidarity on YouTube. While their case concerns a diasporic in-group instead of two unrelated national publics, the underlying mechanism, kinship framing as a low-barrier route to cross-border identification, which offers a useful point of comparison for how *hermano* and *kardeş* appear to function in the present corpus.

2.3. Research Gap and the Present Study

Several studies have applied CDA to YouTube comment sections, but they tend to fall into one of three structural patterns, none of which matches the present study. Some, such as Diabah (2023), examine ideological polarisation within a single language, without treating cross-national or multilingual exchange as a relevant dimension. Others, such as Vergani and Zuev (2011) and Sharma (2014), study transnational discourse, but from a diasporic in-group broadcasting outward to a dispersed audience that already shares a national or ethnic bond, a structure quite different from two unrelated national publics addressing each other directly within the same comment threads. A final pattern, exemplified by Saglik (2025), compares two national publics side by side, American and German YouTube commenters reacting to migration, but they never actually address one another such as the discourse of this study; each remains within its own national comment ecosystem.

To summarize, the Turkish-Spanish interaction around the "*no a la guerra*" movement is different; it involves two countries with no shared language, ethnicity, or diaspora connection, exchanging solidarity language in real time, directly with one another, around a single, spontaneous political moment rather than an organised movement. This also means the specific mechanism explored in this thesis, kinship terms extended toward political solidarity, discussed above, has not yet, to my knowledge, been tested on a case of this kind; indeed, Karimova and Khudoyorov (2026) explicitly call for research extending their brotherhood-metaphor framework into "spoken and digital registers... incorporating Turkic, Semitic, Romance, and Slavic languages" (p.70), which is precisely the gap the present study addresses. Furthermore, this discourse is highly recent and possibly short-lived, especially considering how rapidly political contexts and international dynamics continue to change, making it a case worth documenting while it is still unfolding.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Sources

The corpus consists of user-generated comments from four YouTube videos Shorts (see more in Table 1) published in March 2026 around the "*no a la guerra*" movement, structured into two complementary pairs to keep the dataset balanced: Video 1 (and its Spanish counterpart, Video 2) was selected as the wave's most widely known, television-originated moment, anchoring the mainstream-media pair; Videos 3 and 4 were then chosen among Shorts as broader and more concise explainers of the same social-media movement.

The Mainstream Media Pair

V1 - Halk TV (Turkish, 5:11, March 5, 2026) - "Different Languages, Same Feelings! A Heartwarming Gesture from Ece Güner to Spain": A Turkish anchor from a highly-watched Turkish mainstream broadcast addresses Spain speaking Spanish to show her gratitude and sincerity over the sudden wave of Turkish-Spanish friendship on social media.

V2 - elDiario.es (Spanish, 0:40, March 6, 2026) - "A Turkish TV presenter to Spain: 'Thank you for being on the right side of history'": This video captures how Spanish users responded to the Turkish anchor's gesture.

The Social Media Wave Pair (Shorts)

V3 - DW Türkçe (Turkish, 1:04, March 6, 2026) - "How Did Turkey and Spain Become 'Brothers'?" :Video summarising the geopolitical context and the social media wave from a Turkish perspective.

V4 - Diario Público (Spanish, 1:57, March 6, 2026) - "This is the brotherly love between Turks and Spaniards flooding social media"

Together, these four videos capture the same discursive moment from two languages and two content formats, which makes a direct comparison across communities possible. It would also be worth noting that the discourse of long-format videos did not originate on social media, Ece Güner's gesture began on live television before circulating on YouTube, meaning these comment sections represent audiences responding to a traditional media event through a digital platform.

3.2. Data Collection

Comments were collected in two steps: a third-party GitHub application (Peta, n.d.) (using a Google API key from the researcher's account) extracted publicly available comments from each video, then a Python script added a language-detection column for categorisation. The overall dataset comprises 1,836 comments: 1,117 Turkish, 475 Spanish, and the remainder is in English or other languages. This imbalance reflects each community's organic engagement and not necessarily a sampling limitation.

3.3. Data Analysis

Following Kopf (2025), this study takes a qualitative Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS) approach which treats platforms like YouTube not just as communication spaces but as environments where ideology, identity, and social relations are actively constructed through discourse. The example comments were selected as such; first, for each of the four videos, the 20 most-liked comments were exported and read closely, once a recurring pattern detected (e.g. kinship terms or moral-praise expressions), the wider dataset (the ~40 most liked) was searched for the same or closely related wording to establish whether the pattern extended beyond a small number of salient examples. This engagement prioritisation is reflected in the final analytical sample: 35 of the 45 comments cited in the analysis (77.8%) fall within the top 10% most-liked comments of their respective videos, and 42 of 45 (93.3%) fall within the top 20%. Finally, a small number of comments with low like counts were also included where they made an implicit pattern more explicit (e.g. C08, C036 etc.).

The percentages reported throughout the analysis come from this second step and indicate that the examples discussed represent a broader trend rather than isolated instances; some comments were also prioritised for their resonance within the community even without a high like count. Spam and irrelevant comments were discarded, mostly during the initial GitHub-scraping stage. In text examples are cited by code (e.g. C01); user IDs, dates, and like counts for each are provided in Appendix A, with English translations in Appendix B.

Given the researcher's primary languages are Turkish and English, Spanish language comments were analysed in consultation with a Spanish-language tutor with a background in applied linguistics, with AI-assisted translation tools used where needed.

The primary analytical lens is van Dijk's (2011) ideological square which examines how discourse constructs a binary between in-groups and out-groups through four strategies:

- Emphasising the positive things about us
- Emphasising the negative things about them
- De-emphasising the negative things about us
- De-emphasising the positive things about them

Even at first glance, the discourse of this study demonstrates some recurring patterns; kinship metaphors like *'kardeş'* and *'hermano'* ('brother'), significant shifts between we and they, and translanguaging practices (Li, 2018) which could easily be identified across the dataset. Under these lights, a clear image of 'us' and 'them' is created throughout the discourse; however, due to the solidarity driven nature of the event (the whole social media movement about being brothers), the distribution of these discursive strategies naturally leans heavily towards the construction of the cohesive 'In-group', while 'Out-Group' functions as a more fragmentation of different actors to justify this moral alliance which the study will more focus on as a second theme.

Two themes structure the analysis accordingly: The first, 'Solidarity and Brotherhood Narratives', operationalises the "Us" dimension: familial framing (*kardeş/hermano*), non-verbal markers such as TR/ES flag-and-heart combinations, and translanguaging, all contributing to what Zappavigna (2012) calls ambient affiliation. The second, 'Moral and Ideological Positioning', maps the "Them" dimension by examining how users define 'Other' while legitimising their anti-war stance; this differs across the Turkish and Spanish comment spaces, reflecting each community's distinct domestic and geopolitical context.

4. Findings

4.1. Transnational Solidarity and Constructing Affiliation

One of the most prominent findings in this discourse is the recurrent use of kinship terms in the Spanish comments: users address Turkey as *hermano* 'brother', and frame the relationship through expressions such as *hermanamiento* 'brotherhood' and *fraternidad* 'fraternity'. Kinship terms occur in roughly one in ten Spanish-language comments (48 of 475, $\approx 10\%$), rising to 18% among the top 10% most-liked comments (≥ 10 likes), suggesting that kinship language is one of the ways transnational solidarity is constructed here, and more so among the discourse's most-engaged voices. Besides simply expressing support for Turkey, Spanish commenters symbolically create a familial relationship between the two countries: calling another nation a brother creates a bond that does not exist in everyday life, yet becomes meaningful within this discourse.

(C01) Hermanamiento con todos los que estamos del lado correcto de la historia.

(C02) Amor fraterno que no conoce fronteras. Bendiciones para España y Turquía. ❤️

(C03) El amor fraterno entre quienes sea SIEMPRE es mejor que el odio cuñadil y enfermizo que demuestran algunos.

(C04) ¡No a la guerra! ¡Sí al hermanamiento con Turquía! ❤️❤️❤️

(C05) Gracias, hermanos mediterráneos. Viva la solidaridad y la fraternidad entre los *pueblos*.

(C01) implies that fraternity is only possible when people position themselves on what they perceive as "the right side of history." Meaning, Spain and Turkey are brought together under a shared moral identity and not actually through political alliances throughout the discourse. Another interesting point is that one of the comments defines this brotherhood in geographical terms. By referring to Turkey as *hermanos mediterráneos* 'Mediterranean brothers' in (C05), the commenter turns the Mediterranean into a symbolic bridge connecting the two nations, creating another layer of shared identity to imagined union.

(C06) 🇹🇷❤️🇪🇸 LA FAMILIA – 21st Century

(C07) España y Turquía

1571 🇹🇷
2026 🇪🇸

(C06) explicitly describes Spain and Turkey as a family, another suggestion that the relationship has moved beyond simple friendship or political support. Similarly, (C07) contrasts the historical conflict between the two countries with their current relationship through the use of emojis. Rather than ignoring the past, the Battle of Lepanto between Spanish and Ottoman empires over the dominance of the Mediterranean in 1571, this comment highlights how the relationship has changed over time. This especially becomes a consideration to this change in (C05) is remembered, the geographical name once indicated a war at time, now it is a way of forming the brotherhood.

This is not the only instance in which Spanish commenters draw on history to reinforce the discourse of solidarity. The following comments further suggest that this sense of brotherhood is not perceived as something entirely new. While constructing this imagined in-group, users also recall historical moments in which Spain and Turkey were brought together through humanitarian acts.

(C08) No es nuevo... En 2008 pasé mes y medio en Turquía y, nada más saber que era español, me trataron como un hermano... Y yo, que ya tengo una edad, recuerdo perfectamente cómo, tras el accidente del Yak-42, las personas de las aldeas próximas recibieron con abrazos y dieron consuelo a los familiares de las víctimas, y cómo el ejército turco rindió honores y guardia de honor a los féretros de soldados españoles muertos.

(C09) Los turcos ya nos dieron una lección de humanidad cuando el accidente del Yak-42. Bravo por el pueblo turco.

The Yak-42 accident is a well-documented event in Spanish-Turkish relations: on 26 May 2003, a charter flight carrying 62 Spanish peacekeepers home from Afghanistan crashed near Maçka, Trabzon, killing everyone on board; local residents were among the first responders, and the event remains part of the two countries' shared memory (Hürriyet Daily News, 2023). These comments suggest that the imagined solidarity here may not be purely digital, users in (C08) and (C09) draw on this historical tragedy to reinforce the solidarity expressed in the present.

Although the discourse initially emerged between Spain and Turkey, some of the most engaged Spanish-dataset comments were written by Latin American users, worth noting since nationality can only be identified when a user states it explicitly, as in the following examples.

(C10) La PAZ debe prevalecer y España está en el rumbo correcto. NO A LA GUERRA. Desde México, les saludamos fraternalmente.

(C11) Saludos y abundantes bendiciones, hermanos españoles y turcos, desde su herman@.


These comments suggest that the solidarity expressed here extends beyond a bilateral Spain-Turkey interaction, becoming a more inclusive space where anyone supporting the anti-war message positions themselves within the same community. While Spanish naturally enables this participation, the central finding is that people come together through a shared moral stance against war and in favour of peace, the imagined community constructed here is, in practice, might be a wider Hispanophone one rather than strictly Spain-Turkey.

(C12) Paz y amor y un abrazo a estos hermanos turcos. 

Beyond words, users also rely heavily on emojis and other visual symbols to reinforce this discourse. Hearts and national flags appear throughout the dataset, but some emojis carry a more specific symbolic meaning. In (C12), for example, the hugging emoji () adds another dimension to the expression of solidarity. More than simply stating support, it symbolically performs a physical act of affection, creating a sense of emotional closeness despite the geographical distance between the two countries.

Similarly, the dove emoji appears alongside the anti-war slogan.

(C13) NO A LA GUERRA. 

The dove (🕊️) functions as a widely recognised symbol of peace and once again strengthens the anti-war message that runs throughout the discourse. Together with the repeated use of hearts, flags, and hugging emojis, these visual elements complement the verbal expressions of brotherhood and solidarity, showing that users construct transnational solidarity not only through language but also through multimodal resources. Besides, as Zappavigna (2012) would also support, this type of affiliation is created through such semiotic elements.

4.2. Turkish expressions of admiration

In comparison to the Spanish comments, the Turkish dataset shows a different pattern. In the most popular comments, references to Spain as a "brother" are less frequent (%4.9 to %10.1). Instead, solidarity is expressed through admiration, gratitude, and moral endorsement. Instead of framing Spain as a member of an extended family, Turkish users praise the country for what they perceive as a principled and humanitarian stance against the war. The use of applause (👏) symbols in comments (C15) and (C16) once again adds a physical dimension to the appreciation while they are praised for not 'losing their humanity'.

(C14) İnsanlığını kaybetmemiş İspanya, gurur duyuyoruz sizlerle.

Spain has not lost its humanity. We are proud of you.

(C15) İnsanlığın ölmesine kayıtsız kalmadığın için gracias España. 🙌❤️🇹🇷❤️🇪🇸

Thank you, Spain, for not remaining indifferent while humanity is dying.

(C16) İnsanlığını ve karakterini koruyan şerefli İspanya'ya saygı ve sevgilerimi iletiyorum. Canı gönülden destekçisiyim. 🙌🙌🇪🇸🇹🇷

My respect and love go to honourable Spain, which has preserved its humanity and character. I wholeheartedly support you.

(C17) Cesur lider İspanya.

Brave leader, Spain.

(C18) İspanya onurlu bir ülke. İspanya'yı seviyorum.

Spain is an honourable country. I love Spain.

Spain is regarded as a country 'to be proud of', 'honourable', 'brave'; clearly admired for taking a moral stance against the war, and this admiration centres less on kinship and more on ethical values such as humanity, honour, and integrity. In this respect, the Turkish discourse constructs solidarity differently from the Spanish one.

In addition to praising Spain as a country, many Turkish users also direct their admiration towards Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, who is portrayed as a courageous and honourable leader.

(C19) Gerçek bir şövalye Sanchez. Tüm kalbimle seni selamlıyorum. Tebrikler.

A true knight, Sánchez. I salute you with all my heart. Congratulations.

While previous comments praise Spain more generally, (C19) shifts the focus to Sánchez himself. By referring to him as a *şövalye* 'knight', the commenter presents him as a heroic figure who stands for moral values and not just a merely acting political leader. On top of that a more Turkish impression seems to become a pattern throughout the comments; the use of the expression '*adam gibi adam*' when referring to Sánchez.

(C20) İspanya'nın başkanı adamın dibi.   

Spain's president is the best of men. (Literally: "the bottom/foundation of a man," meaning someone of outstanding character.)

(C21) Adamsın Pedro. 

You're the man, Pedro.

(C22) Adamsın Sanchez.

(C23) Adam gibi adam, dünya lideri bu adam.

A real man. This man is a world leader.

(C24) ADAM GİBİ ADAM PEDRO SANCHEZZZZZ

This significant expression deserves some attention, as its meaning is difficult to translate directly into English. Although it literally refers to being "a real man," *adam gibi adam* is an idiomatic expression in Turkish used to describe someone as honourable, trustworthy, principled, or morally upright. In this context, it functions as a particularly strong form of praise rather than a literal reference to masculinity. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the repeated use of masculine language, together with the recurring references to brotherhood in the Spanish comments, more likely to suggest that solidarity and moral leadership are often articulated through gendered metaphors. While this observation falls beyond the scope of the present study, it may offer an interesting direction for future research.

Alongside admiration, Turkish users also occasionally construct solidarity by identifying themselves with Spain.

(C25) Hepimiz İspanya'yız.  

We are all Spain.

(C26) Kalbimiz sizinle İSPANYA!

Our heart is with you SPAIN!

(C27) Kardeş ülke ispanya      

Brother country Spain

(C25) is particularly interesting because there is no direct equivalent in the Spanish dataset. Instead of saying "We are all Turkey," Spanish users tend to construct solidarity through familial terms, referring to Turkey as a brother or a friend. Turkish users, on the other hand, symbolically place themselves alongside Spain by adopting Spain's identity or stating 'their heart is with them'.

Moreover the Spanish ‘*hermano*’ also seems to be reciprocated (C27) although once again not that visible in the popular comments section.

A final aspect of transnational solidarity concerns the translanguaging practices observed throughout the comments. Spanish and Turkish users have used one another's languages to express appreciation, affection, and support. While it is impossible to determine every instance in which translation tools may have been used, some commenters explicitly mention translating their messages before posting them. The effort invested in communicating in another language can itself be understood as an act of solidarity, reflecting a willingness to reduce linguistic distance in order to establish interpersonal closeness. In this sense, the imagined community is constructed not only through shared values but also through attempts to communicate across linguistic boundaries.

As seen below, some users prefer English as a common language, while others choose to write directly in their interlocutors' native language.

(C28) I love you dearly, my Turkish brothers and sisters. Benim arkadaşım.

My friend.

(C29) Turkey, love from Spain - we are brothers♥

(C30) Teşekkürler Türk kardeşlerim, sizi ve Türkiye'yi çok seviyorum. Zaragoza'dan mesaj.



Thank you, my Turkish brothers and sisters. I love you and Turkey very much. Greetings from Zaragoza.

(C31) Como turco, estoy orgulloso de España. Has demostrado tu diferencia con respecto a otros países europeos. No a la guerra. Saludos desde İstanbul.

The willingness to communicate in another language as seen in (C30) and (C31), even imperfectly, further reinforces the discourse of solidarity. Not just relying solely on their own linguistic resources, users also actively attempt to reduce both linguistic and symbolic distance. These translanguaging practices therefore complement the recurring use of other discourse findings. Together, they contribute to the construction of a transnational imagined community centred on shared humanitarian values and opposition to war.

Considering all these findings, an apparent divergence emerges in how the two discourses construct solidarity: Spanish commenters use familial terms to bond with Turkey and express appreciation, while Turkish commenters use fewer kinship terms, instead focusing on moral praise for Spain's leadership, a family bond in the Spanish case, moral admiration in the Turkish one. Unsurprisingly, this divergence extends to how each side constructs the "other," as the next section shows.

4.3. Moral Positioning and Constructing the Other

Another prominent finding concerns the moral positioning of different actors throughout the discourse: while Spain and Turkey are constructed as allies, or even brothers, in the previous section, commenters simultaneously construct an "other," building solidarity not only through positive representation of the in-group but also through negative representation of those perceived to stand opposed. This corresponds to the other side of van Dijk's (2011) ideological square: the construction of out-groups through negative evaluation.

Although the conflict discussed involves multiple actors such as Israel, Palestine, Iran, the United States, these are not always the primary "others" constructed in the discourse, still they do appear in some of the most engaged comments, particularly in the Spanish dataset.

(C32) Ignorar a Trump y a Netanyahu, fin a la guerra.

(C33) Es el imperio de la sensatez. No al genocidio de Gaza por Israel. Y menos al ataque gringo-israelí.

Although these comments position Israel and the United States as responsible actors, they do not contribute directly to the Spain-Turkey relationship itself; rather, they reflect a broader anti-war, anti-imperialist stance common within the wider Hispanophone context, signalled by the term '*gringo*', used mainly by Latin American speakers to refer to non-Spanish speakers.

A more distinctive pattern emerges in comments on Spain's domestic politics: other than directing criticism at external actors, many Spanish users construct the "other" within their own country, repeatedly targeting right-wing figures, particularly Santiago Abascal, criticised for his stance on the war and for representing values commenters reject.

(C34) Ese Abascal es otro lamebotas gringas, más amor por EEUU que por España.

(C35) Yo mandaría a Abascal, Feijóo y Ayuso a pelear en la guerra que tanto defienden.

(C36) Abascal trabaja para los extranjeros.

(C37) Jamás encontraréis a un solo espécimen de derecha racional que defienda a los pueblos en lugar de sus propios bolsillos.

These comments demonstrate that, for many Spanish users, the "other" is represented not only by foreign governments or political figures but by domestic opponents. As opposed to, positioning Spain as a unified national actor, commenters draw a moral distinction within their own political framework, separating those who support the anti-war stance from those perceived to support war or foreign interests. Particularly striking is the repeated accusation that Abascal "works for foreigners," an "American footlicker" suggesting the moral boundary is constructed not only around political disagreement but around loyalty and national belonging.

This pattern differs noticeably from the Turkish comments: although criticism is equally visible in the Turkish dataset, if not stronger, it is generally directed outward and not at specific domestic figures. References to "politicians" and "leaders" are often left deliberately vague (C38, C39), with no explicit names appearing in the most engaged comments; instead, Turkish comments criticise broader groups such as "Muslim countries" or "Arab countries".

(C38) bizim ülkede alkışlanacak kalmayınca...

When there's no one left to applaud in our country...

(C39) Türkiye deki yöneticilerin yapamadığını yaptı helal olsun

He accomplished what the administrators in Türkiye couldn't, kudos to him.

As given in these Turkish comments, explicit names rarely appear in the most engaged ones, making the criticism more collective than individual. Turkish users tend to construct the "other"

outside their own national community. While praising Spain, they express disappointment towards the wider Muslim and Arab world, suggesting that these countries have failed to take the moral position that Spain has adopted. This finding grows stronger with engagement: comments comparing Spain to the Arab or Muslim world make up 7.6% of all Turkish comments, but rise to 13.8% among the most-liked 5%.

(C40) Hiç İslam ülkesinin yapamadığını İspanya yaptı. Helal olsun İspanya. İnsan olmak ayrı bir şey. Bütün İslam ülkesi Amerika ve İsrail'in kölesi olmuş durumda.

Spain has done what no Muslim country could do. Well done, Spain. Being human is something else. All Muslim countries have become slaves to America and Israel.

(C41) Arapların yapamadığını İspanya yapıyor, helal olsun.

Spain is doing what the Arabs could not do. Well done.

(C42) Helal olsun İspanya'ya. Müslüman ülkelerin yapamadığını yapıyor.

Well done, Spain. It is doing what Muslim countries could not do.

Several of these comments, see above, also pair the comparison with *helal olsun*. Alongside criticism towards the Muslim world, the expression '*helal olsun*' that addresses Spain indicates an underlying reading that Muslim countries failed to fulfil what commenters perceive as a humanitarian responsibility. In this way, admiration for one actor is constructed when evaluating the moral values of another.

Although these comments do not explicitly mention Turkey and criticize it, they implicitly include it among the countries that failed to take a similar stance, since Turkey is considered to have the majority of a Muslim population, alongside being a secular country.

(C43) Aslında Türk halkı olarak kendi yöneticilerimizden beklediğimiz tepkiyi ve dik duruşu göstermedikleri için bu ilğimizi çekti. Seviliyorsun İspanya. Gracias España. ❤️❤️❤️

As Turkish people, what caught our attention was that our own leaders did not show the reaction and firm stance we expected from them. We love you, Spain. Thank you, Spain.

This comment perhaps summarises the broader discourse observed in the Turkish dataset. The strong admiration towards Spain does not emerge in isolation but partly reflects disappointment with actors whom expected support but rather who are perceived to have remained silent. In other words, Spain becomes a moral reference point precisely because it is seen as doing what others, including the commenters' own leaders have failed to do.

Read side by side, the two comment sections construct the "other" in significantly different ways. Spanish commenters name domestic political figures openly and directly, while Turkish commenters express their displeasure more indirectly, avoiding the names of individual leaders and referring instead to broader groups such as the Muslim and Arab world. In the Spanish discourse, then, the other is *individual*, whereas in the Turkish discourse it appears as a *collective*.

What both datasets share is that the in-group is outside the national identity. In each case, commenters position themselves against actors within their own political and social context, and what motivates this positioning is a moral stance against the war. Following van Dijk's ideological square, the Turkish comments are particularly telling. The model predicts that speakers will

downplay the failings of their own group; however commenters do the opposite and foreground them. Here the square may seem not to apply, but in fact it locates the group boundary outside the nation: the "us" being defended is not a national one. Therefore, the shared "us" is better understood as a moral community formed through opposition to war, rather than as an alliance between Spain and Turkey as nations.

4.4. Humour Elements

Although humour is not the primary focus of this study, it is worth briefly mentioning as another recurring feature of the discourse. Two particular comments are especially significant since they both are among the five most-liked comments in their respective videos; relying on humorous references, suggesting that humour also functions as a way of strengthening solidarity within the community.

(C44) Nunca más un español calvo. 😂😂😂

(C44) humorously refers to Turkey's international reputation for hair transplant tourism. Within the context of the newly established "brotherhood" between Spain and Turkey, the commenter jokingly suggests that Turkish "brothers" can now solve Spain's baldness problem. Not really mocking either country, the humour actually depends on shared cultural knowledge and functions as a tool to create a closeness.

(C45) Bir sabah kalktım... İSPANYOLCA konuşuyorum. 😂😂🇪🇸🇹🇷

One morning I woke up... and I was speaking Spanish.

This one references a popular line from the Turkish comedy series *Gibi*, in which a character suddenly begins speaking a foreign language without explanation. Here, the utterance refers to the anchorwoman Ece Güner's gesture of switching into Spanish during the broadcast. The humour lies in the absurdity of the sudden language change, it can also be read as how the discourse itself creates a space where speaking another language becomes natural and even desirable. Instead of interrupting the discourse of solidarity, humour becomes another way of expressing it.

Overall, the findings presented in this section demonstrate that solidarity and othering are constructed simultaneously throughout the discourse. While commenters repeatedly position Spain and Turkey on the same moral side, they also distinguish themselves from actors perceived as supporting war, remaining silent, or failing to act. Whether these actors are domestic political opponents or broader international communities, they function as the moral "other" against which the imagined community defines itself.

5. Discussion

Throughout this study, the question of how transnational solidarity is constructed has been examined through YouTube comments under the "*no a la guerra*" videos. The findings show clear bonding over a shared moral position: Spanish and Turkish commenters take the same anti-war, humanitarian stance, and use various discursive elements such as kinship terms or admiration to close the distance between them. But the most striking finding is not this imagined bond itself. It is an eye-catching asymmetry in how each side constructs its "other."

Following van Dijk's (2011) ideological square, the out-group is not just an extra detail, it helps build the in-group. In this discourse, the clearest shared out-group is the United States, Israel, Netanyahu, and Trump, and both Spanish and Turkish commenters position themselves against them (C32, C33, C39). This shared enemy partly explains why two nations with no language, colonial, or diaspora connection would find each other online at all. Kavada (2012) shows that cross-border publics have mobilised around Middle Eastern conflicts on online platforms before, so this is not new. But a 'shared enemy' alone does not explain why Spain and Turkey seem to become each other's chosen *online* ally among other actors within the broader anti-war discourse. It might be, as this study tentatively suggests, that a kind of "loneliness"; in fact, the lack of allies who share the same motive, pushed users from both nations to meet online and build what could be called a 'digital relationship'. Sharma (2014, p.20) calls this kind of space a "contact zone," where communities are imagined through shared stances rather than geopolitical ties.

Beyond this shared other, each nation also builds a second and more specific 'other', in which the asymmetry becomes visible. Turkish commenters, while praising Spain, repeatedly express disappointment in the Arab and Muslim world for not taking a similar stance (C40-C42). Spanish commenters, on the other hand, place their "other" at home, criticising right-wing figures like Abascal and others for what they see as complicity with the same interests being opposed (C34-C37). Both are acts of labelling and boundary-work in Li's (2024) sense, but the line is drawn in a different place each time. For Spanish users, the split is within the nation. For Turkish users, it separates the nation -somewhat ambiguously- from a wider religious and civilisational group that Turkey is often assumed to belong to.

Indeed, this raises a real question about identity. Although Turkey is constitutionally secular, most Turks still say they believe in God, around 94% overall, and about 90% even among 18-24 year-olds (TİDA, Nişancı et al., 2021-2022). But belief is not the same as devoutness. A more recent KONDA (2025) survey found that only 46% of people now describe themselves as "devout," down from 55% in 2008, while those who call themselves atheist or nonbeliever rose from 2% to 8% over the same period.

Therefore, Turkey is still, by most measures, a Muslim-majority country, but what that majority looks like in practice -belief without observance, generational change, rising nonbelief- is far less uniform than the label suggests. Nevertheless, this becomes interesting in the focus of this study, especially when a commenter criticises "the Muslim world" while praising Spain, it is not clear whether they place themselves outside that group, or include themselves in the same criticism, an seemingly out-group turned inward as much as outward. Both readings are possible from the data, and this cannot be resolved with certainty. But the ambiguity itself says something about how national and religious identity are negotiated together in this discourse, and not treated as two separate things.

This asymmetry in "othering" also matches the asymmetry found in how solidarity itself is built. Spanish commenters use kinship words '*hermano, hermanamiento, fraternidad*' (used in 10% of Spanish comments, vs. 5.4% for the Turkish equivalent *kardeş*) to bring Turkey into an imagined family and pair this with a domestic critique. Turkish commenters instead use admiration and moral praise, calling Spain "honourable" and Sánchez a "real man" (*adam gibi adam*) or a "knight", and pair this with an external -with a touch of not so obvious internal- critique. Vergani and Zuev (2011) found that kinship framing tends to be a lower-barrier route to cross-border identification than appeals based on shared religion. This may explain the pattern here too: Turkish commenters, whose in-group already carries a religious and civilisational identity that Spain does not share, may find it harder to use the same kinship metaphor without complication, and instead build solidarity

by admiring an external actor who embodies values they feel their own leaders have failed to show. (C43) makes this unusually explicit: a Turkish user directly connects their admiration for Spain to disappointment in "our own leaders." Sánchez is not just praised, he is praised in the place where a domestic figure was expected to stand.

Moreover, the same pattern also shows in how directly each side speaks for itself. Spanish users take a more direct role, the animacy is apparent, which is not surprising, since it was Sánchez's own "*no a la guerra*" comment that started the discourse, even though the memes on both sides appeared almost at the same time. Turkish users, in contrast, define themselves more indirectly, through idealising an external ally and its leader, or through othering a wider religious community. In both cases users reveal their own values without stating them directly, which fits what Zappavigna (2012) calls ambient affiliation: brief, shared alignments built through discourse rather than direct address. The humour found in (C44) and (C45) works in a similar, lighter way, closing distance through shared cultural knowledge instead of moral argument (Li, 2024).

6. Limitations

One limitation concerns the difficulty of identifying commenters' nationality reliably and using it as an analytical category. A closer look complicates the framing that revolves around the "*no a la guerra*" bond between Spain and Turkey. Some of the most engaged comments in the Spanish-language dataset came from other Spanish-speaking countries, most notably Mexico (C10-C11). Since these comments were among the most liked in the corpus, they carry an analytical weight, and their presence suggests that what looked like a bilateral Spain-Turkey bond is, in practice, might also be considered as a wider Hispanophone one, even if not fully. Still, because nationality can only be inferred when a commenter states it directly, the "Spanish" and "Turkish" datasets used here should be read as an approximation, not a precise national divide. Moreover, it cannot be avoided that some comments might have been posted by automated accounts. Usernames (which can be found in Appendix A) were inspected for obvious signs of automation and no clear cases were found, though this is not a systematic check.

7. Conclusion

This thesis examined how Spanish and Turkish YouTube users discursively constructed transnational solidarity around the "*no a la guerra*" moment of March 2026, and how that solidarity simultaneously constructed a moral "other." Both communities built an imagined bond between Spain and Turkey, but through different routes: Spanish commenters relied on kinship language ("*hermano, hermanamiento, fraternidad*") and, to a lesser extent, historical memory such as the 2003 Yak-42 accident, while Turkish commenters expressed solidarity less through kinship than through admiration and honour-based moral endorsement ("*adam gibi adam*", "*helal olsun*"). What is concluded is connected with van Dijk's (2011) ideological square this way: the construction of solidarity proved inseparable from the construction of an "other"; Spanish commenters directed criticism inward, at domestic figures such as Abascal, while Turkish commenters directed it outward, at the broader Muslim and Arab world, implicitly rebuking their own government's silence. Despite having different definitions of "other", two nations arrived at the same moral position. As a result, the "us" being defended in both datasets was a moral community formed through opposition to war, one route built on family, the other on admiration, but each producing its own version of the "other" meanwhile.

To sum up, these findings extend existing work on transnational YouTube discourse (Sharma, 2014; Vergani & Zuev, 2011): two unrelated national publics, with no shared language, religion, or diaspora tie, addressing each other directly around a single, spontaneous social-media moment. The study also offers an early, qualitative application of Karimova and Khudoyorov's (2026) brotherhood-metaphor framework outside its original context, across a Turkic-Romance pair, though only its account of kinship-to-solidarity extension is drawn on here, not its treatment of brotherhood as a gender-marked concept, which this thesis was not positioned to test systematically.

Finally, the study has some limitations. The corpus only covers the most-engaged comments from four videos, so it may overrepresent already-popular framings, and the discourse is tied to a specific, fast-moving political moment, so the findings may not generalise well to other cases. One point worth exploring further, related to the gender dimension of Karimova and Khudoyorov's (2026) model: *hermano* and *'adam gibi'* both showed up alongside each other, hinting that solidarity and moral leadership may be expressed through gendered language in this corpus, something this thesis noticed but did not dig into systematically, and a good direction for future research.

References

- Diabah, G. (2023). Gendered discourses and pejorative language use: An analysis of YouTube comments on We should all be feminists. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 51, Article 100667.
- Hürriyet Daily News. (2023, June 28). *Documentary to tell story of 2003 plane crash in Türkiye*.
- Karimova , S., & Khudoyorov , D. (2026). The Conceptual System Associated with Brotherhood: A Cross-Cultural and Cognitive-Linguistic Analysis. *INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE CONFERENCE*, 1(5), 62-72. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20089363>
- Kavada, A. (2012). Engagement, bonding, and identity across multiple platforms: Avaaz on Facebook, YouTube, and MySpace. *MedieKultur: Journal of Media and Communication Research*, 52, 28-48.
- KhosraviNik, M. (2018). Social media critical discourse studies (SM-CDS). In J. Flowerdew & J. E. Richardson (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of critical discourse studies* (pp. 582-596). Routledge.
- KONDA Araştırma. (2025). *Hayat Tarzları 2025*.
- Kopf, S. (2025). Unravelling social media critical discourse studies (SM-CDS) - four approaches to studying social media through the critical lens. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 215-232.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago Press.
- Li, P. (2024). Exploring intercultural communication through identity construction: A case of YouTube comments. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 14(4), 79-89.
- Li, W. (2018). Translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(1), 9–30. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amx039>
- Li, P. (2024). Exploring intercultural communication through identity construction: A case of YouTube comments. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 14(4), 79–89.
- Liew, T. S., & Hassan, H. (2021). The search for national identity in the discourse analysis of YouTube comments. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(4), 1806-1821.
- Nişancı, Z. et al. *Türkiye İnanç ve Dindarlık Araştırması (TİDA)*. Marmara Üniversitesi
- Peta, V. K. (n.d.). YouTube Comment Extractor [Computer software]. GitHub. GitHub repository
- Rampton, B. (1998). Speech community. In *Handbook of Pragmatics* (pp. 1-30). John Benjamins.
- Saglik, C. (2025). The "Other" through the eyes of the host: A discourse analysis of American and German YouTube users' reactions to migration and immigrant issues. *Comparative Migration Studies*.
- Sharma, B. K. (2014). On high horses: Transnational Nepalis and language ideologies on YouTube. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 4–5, 19-28.

Statham, S. (2021). *Critical discourse analysis: a practical introduction to power in language*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429026133>

Vaahensalo, E. (2021). Creating the other in online interaction: Othering online discourse theory. In J. Bailey, A. Flynn, & N. Henry (Eds.), *The Emerald international handbook of technology-facilitated violence and abuse* (pp. 227-246). Emerald Publishing.

van Dijk, T. A. (2011). Discourse and ideology. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction* (2nd ed., pp. 379-407). Sage.

Vergani, M., & Zuev, D. (2011). Analysis of YouTube videos used by activists in the Uyghur Nationalist Movement: Combining quantitative and qualitative methods. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 20(69), 205-229.

Wentker, M., & Schneider, B. (2022). And she be like "Tenemos frijoles en la casa": *Code-switching and identity construction on YouTube*. *Languages*, 7(3), Article 219.

Zappavigna, M. (2012). Discourse of Twitter and social media: How we use language to create affiliation on the web. Continuum.

AI disclosure statement

The research design and question, corpus collection, findings and interpretations in this thesis are my own. I used an AI assistant (Claude) in the following ways: for coding to extract and tidy data, to create tables for Appendix A/B; to compute the descriptive frequencies/percentages, for language editing and for suggestions on restructuring and condensing sections during revision, which I reviewed and rewrote. AI was not used to generate any type of analysis or discussion, to produce citations, or to write the literature review.

Appendix A

Table 1. Comments Metadata

Comment ID	Section	Comment	Username	Date & Time	Likes	Replies	Language
C01	4.1	Hermanamiento con todos los que estamos del lado correcto de la historia	@luigiviachi2702	2026-03-07 00:29:13	32	0	ES
C02	4.1	Amor fraterno que No conoce fronteras. Bendiciones para España/Turquía❤	@juanferreira2497	2026-03-08 21:39:50	14	0	ES
C03	4.1	El amor fraterno entre quienes sea SIEMPRE es mejor que el odio cuñadil y enfermizo que demuestran algunos.	@MariaJesusRojo-y3y	2026-03-06 19:53:08	12	0	ES
C04	4.1	No a la guerra!! Sí al hermanamiento con Turquía ❤❤❤	@geomad2219	2026-03-07 16:58:14	11	1	ES
C05	4.1	Gracias, hermanos mediterráneos. Viva la solidaridad y la fraternidad entre los pueblos.	@tamiglia	2026-03-06 18:21:14	343	6	ES
C06	4.1	 LA FAMILA ✨ 21 CENTURY	@GioBianicci	2026-03-07 03:03:36	8	0	UNKNOWN
C07	4.1	España y Turquía: 1571 🇹🇷 2026 🇪🇸	@sergiovidal4326	2026-03-06 18:47:38	18	1	ES
C08	4.1	No es nuevo... En 2008;pase mes y medio en Turquía y, nada más saber qué era español, me trataron como un hermano... Y yo, que ya tengo una edad, recuerdo perfectamente como tras el accidente del Yak-42 las personas de las aldeas próximas recibieron con abrazos y dieron consuelo a los familiares de las víctimas y como el ejército turco rindió honores y guardia de honor a los féretros de soldados españoles muertos...	@PacoJones26	2026-03-10 17:23:13	1	0	ES
C09	4.1	Los turcos ya nos dieron una lección de humanidad cuando el accidente del yakolev 42. Bravo por el pueblo turco	@juandiazromero6563	2026-03-06 22:35:10	54	2	ES
C10	4.1	La PAZ debe prevalecer y España está en el rumbo correcto, NO A LA GUERRA, desde México, le saludamos fraternalmente	@aurolopez7267	2026-03-08 01:40:00	32	2	ES
C11	4.1	SALUDOS Y ABUNDANTES	@erendiracamachomendez7485	2026-03-06 20:48:41	31	1	ES

		BENDICIONES 🙏 HERMANOS ESPAÑOLES, Y TURCOS, DESDE SU HERMANA @ 🇪🇸🇮🇹🇹🇷					
C12	4.1	Paz y amor y un abrazo a estos hermanos turcos 🇪🇸🇮🇹🇹🇷🇵🇸	@hispanistaIberia	2026-03-06 19:34:03	179	7	ES
C13	4.1	Gracias a usted, por sus amables palabras en español. NO A LA GUERRA. 🇪🇸🇮🇹	@sonsoles-u7g	2026-03-07 01:36:12	63	1	ES
C14	4.2	İnsanlığını kaybetmemiş İspanya gurur duyuyoruz sizlerle	@Sanukatakinyatun	2026-03-06 16:34:32	1091	28	TR
C15	4.2	İnsanlığın ölmesine kayıtsız kalmadığın için Gracias España 🇪🇸🇮🇹🇹🇷	@TuncerKaranlık	2026-03-05 22:03:30	35	0	TR
C16	4.2	İnsanlığını ve karakterini koruyan şerefli İspanyaya saygı ve sevgilerimi iletiyorum canı gönülden destecileriyim 🇪🇸🇮🇹🇹🇷	@hazretidogan26	2026-03-06 17:31:29	16	0	TR
C17	4.2	Cesur lider İSPANYA.	@Ozdemir-xz8rf	2026-03-06 16:40:27	63	0	TR
C18	4.2	İspanya onurlu bir ülke. İspanyayı seviyorum	@alinmustafa3638	2026-03-06 16:58:17	82	2	TR
C19	4.2	Gerçek bir şövalye Sanchez tüm kalbimle seni selamlıyorum.Tebrikler	@ismailiskender6096	2026-03-06 18:17:08	21	0	TR
C20	4.2	İspanya'nın başkanı adamın dibi 🇪🇸🇮🇹🇹🇷	@daokiyi_2026	2026-03-06 20:30:58	28	1	TR
C21	4.2	Adamsın Pedro 🇪🇸	@talattalat-em9ns	2026-03-06 17:36:16	5	0	TR
C22	4.2	ADAM gibi ADAM dünya lideri bu adam	@theredqueenster	2026-03-06 17:54:13	2	0	TR
C23	4.2	Adamsın Sanchez	@bilenadam6551	2026-03-06 22:47:10	2	0	TR
C24	4.2	ADAM GİBİ ADAM PEDRO SANCEZZZZZ	@mustafacam2289	2026-03-05 21:37:39	18	0	EN
C25	4.2	Hepimiz İspanya'yız 🇪🇸🇮🇹	@delibesiktaslkartal9909	2026-03-06 20:51:52	17	1	TR
C26	4.2	Kalbimiz sizinle İSPANYA!	@ydoner	2026-03-05 21:32:52	118	1	TR
C27	4.2	Kardeş ülke İspanya 🇪🇸🇮🇹🇹🇷	@2tanetürevai	2026-03-06 23:24:24	3	0	TR
C28	4.2	I love you dearly my Turkish brothers and sisters, Benim arkadasim 🇪🇸🇮🇹	@javelem	2026-03-06 16:24:31	49	1	EN
C29	4.2	Turkey, love from Spain - we are brothers 🇪🇸🇮🇹	@artukai3831	2026-03-06 17:10:18	329	6	EN
C30	4.2	Teşekkürler Türk kardeşlerim, sizi ve Türkiye'yi çok seviyorum. Zaragoza'dan mesaj 🇪🇸🇮🇹🇹🇷 Gracias hermanos turcos,Os quiero mucho y a Turquia.Mensaje desde Zaragoza 🇪🇸🇮🇹🇹🇷	@legospainfan9542	2026-03-06 16:26:50	540	20	TR
C31	4.2	Como turco, estoy orgulloso de España. Has demostrado	@cankatozel7208	2026-03-07 17:56:49	6	1	ES

		tu diferencia con respecto a otros países europeos. No a la guerra. Saludos desde İstanbul					
C32	4.3	Ignorar a Trump y a Netanyahu, fin a la guerra	@eduardourquijo4574	2026-03-06 21:56:55	9	0	ES
C33	4.3	Es el imperio de la sensatez. No al genocidio de Gaza por Israel. Y menos al ataque gringo -israeli..	@joseluisespeta6356	2026-03-06 18:44:35	91	4	ES
C34	4.3	Ese Avascal es otro lame botas gringas, más amor por EEUU qué por España.	@nesuarez9366	2026-03-06 19:12:42	47	7	ES
C35	4.3	Yo mandaría a Abascal, Feijoo y Ayuso a pelear en la guerra que tanto defienden.	@luvillap.411	2026-03-06 19:43:38	15	1	ES
C36	4.3	Abascal trabaja para los extranjeros	@elensuenodeacero.9770	2026-03-06 21:23:19	1	0	ES
C37	4.3	Jamás encontrareis a un solo espécimen de derecha racional que defienda a los pueblos en lugar de sus propios bolsillos.	@fabiolatovar5160	2026-03-06 20:35:46	27	5	ES
C38	4.3	bizim ülkede alkışlanacak kalmayınca...	@sahafiec	2026-03-06 16:42:22	700	39	TR
C39	4.3	Türkiye deki yöneticilerin yapamadığını yaptı helal olsun	@aysekaragoz3341	2026-03-06 20:13:17	93	4	TR
C40	4.3	Hiç İslam ülkesinin yapamadığını İspanya yaptı helal olsun İspanya insan olmak ayrı bir şey bütün İslam ülkesi amerika ve İsrailin kölesi olmuş durumda	@Kenan-c6h	2026-03-05 20:52:18	351	5	TR
C41	4.3	Arapların yapamadığını İspanya yapıyor helal olsun..	@ersinsaritasofficial	2026-03-05 22:00:13	874	47	TR
C42	4.3	Helal olsun İspanya ya Müslüman ülkelerin yapamadığını yapıyor	@hikmetsanl3468	2026-03-05 22:09:25	197	3	TR
C43	4.3	Aslında Türk halkı olarak , Kendi yöneticilerimizden beklediğimiz tepkiyi dik duruşu göstmedikleri için bi ilgimizi çekti. Seviliyorsun İspanya Gracias İspanya ❤️❤️❤️	@gulsencoskun4806	2026-03-05 22:33:11	379	39	TR
C44	4.4	Nunca más un español calvo 😂😂😂	@misterno999	2026-03-06 19:49:22	105	1	ES
C45	4.4	Bi Sabah Kalktım İSPANYOLCA konuşuyorum 😂😂🇪🇸🇹🇷	@nova-kroks	2026-03-05 22:03:03	508	16	TR

Appendix B

Table 2. Translations

Comment ID	Language	Original Text	English Translation
C01	ES	Hermanamiento con todos los que estamos del lado correcto de la historia.	Brotherhood with everyone who stands on the right side of history
C02	ES	Amor fraterno que no conoce fronteras. Bendiciones para España y Turquía. ❤️	Fraternal love knows no borders. Blessings to Spain and Turkey
C03	ES	El amor fraterno entre quienes sea SIEMPRE es mejor que el odio cuñadil y enfermizo que demuestran algunos.	Fraternal love, whoever it is between, is always better than the bitter and toxic hatred shown by some people.
C04	ES	¡No a la guerra! ¡Sí al hermanamiento con Turquía! ❤️❤️❤️	No to war! Yes to brotherhood with Turkey!
C05	ES	Gracias, hermanos mediterráneos. Viva la solidaridad y la fraternidad entre los pueblos.	Thank you, our Mediterranean brothers. Long live solidarity and fraternity among peoples.
C06	ES	🇹🇷❤️🇪🇸 LA FAMILIA – 21st Century	—
C07	ES	España y Turquía	—
C08	ES	No es nuevo... En 2008 pasé mes y medio en Turquía y, nada más saber que era español, me trataron como un hermano... Y yo, que ya tengo una edad, recuerdo perfectamente cómo, tras el accidente del Yak-42, las personas de las aldeas próximas recibieron con abrazos y dieron consuelo a los familiares de las víctimas, y cómo el ejército turco rindió honores y guardia de honor a los féretros de soldados españoles muertos.	This is nothing new... In 2008 I spent a month and a half in Turkey and, as soon as people learned I was Spanish, they treated me like a brother... And, since I am old enough to remember, I vividly recall how, after the Yak-42 accident, people from nearby villages embraced and comforted the victims' families, while the Turkish army paid military honours to the coffins of the Spanish soldiers.
C09	ES	Los turcos ya nos dieron una lección de humanidad cuando el accidente del Yak-42. Bravo por el pueblo turco.	The Turkish people already taught us a lesson in humanity during the Yak-42 accident. Bravo to the Turkish people.
C10	ES	La PAZ debe prevalecer y España está en el rumbo correcto. NO A LA GUERRA. Desde México, les saludamos fraternalmente.	Peace must prevail, and Spain is on the right path. NO TO WAR. Greetings from Mexico in a spirit of fraternity.
C11	ES	Saludos y abundantes bendiciones, hermanos españoles y turcos, desde su herman@. 🇬🇧🇮🇹❤️	Greetings and abundant blessings to our Spanish and Turkish brothers and sisters, from your sibling in Mexico.
C12	ES	Paz y amor y un abrazo a estos hermanos turcos. 🇪🇸🇬🇧🇹🇷🇺🇦❤️	Peace, love, and a hug to our Turkish brothers.
C13	ES	NO A LA GUERRA. 🇪🇸🇬🇧	NO TO WAR.
C14	TR	İnsanlığını kaybetmemiş İspanya, gurur duyuyoruz sizlerle.	Spain has not lost its humanity. We are proud of you.
C15	TR	İnsanlığın ölmesine kayıtsız kalmadığın için gracias España. 🙌❤️🇹🇷❤️🇪🇸	Thank you, Spain, for not remaining indifferent while humanity is dying.
C16	TR	İnsanlığını ve karakterini koruyan şerefli İspanya'ya saygı ve sevgilerimi iletiyorum. Canı gönülden destekçisiyim. 🙌🇪🇸🇹🇷	My respect and love go to honourable Spain, which has preserved its humanity and character. I wholeheartedly support you.
C17	TR	Cesur lider İspanya.	Brave leader, Spain.
C18	TR	İspanya onurlu bir ülke. İspanya'yı seviyorum.	Spain is an honourable country. I love Spain.
C19	TR	Gerçek bir şövalye Sanchez. Tüm kalbimle seni selamlıyorum. Tebrikler.	A true knight, Sánchez. I salute you with all my heart. Congratulations.

C20	TR	İspanya'nın başkanı adamın dibi. 🇪🇸❤️🇹🇷	Spain's president is the best of men. (Literally: "the bottom/foundation of a man," meaning someone of outstanding character.)
C21	TR	Adamsın Pedro. ❤️	You're the man, Pedro.
C22	TR	Adam gibi adam, dünya lideri bu adam.	A real man. This man is a world leader.
C23	TR	Adamsın Sanchez.	You're the man, Sánchez.
C24	TR	ADAM GİBİ ADAM PEDRO SANCHEZZZZZ	PEDRO SÁNCHEZ IS A REAL MAN.
C25	TR	Hepimiz İspanya'yız. 🇪🇸❤️	We are all Spain.
C26	TR	Kalbimiz sizinle İSPANYA!	Our heart is with you SPAIN!
C27	TR	Kardeş ülke ispanya 🇪🇸🇹🇷🇪🇸🇹🇷🇪🇸🇹🇷	Brother country Spain
C28	TR	I love you dearly, my Turkish brothers and sisters. Benim arkadaşım.	My friend.
C29	EN	Turkey, love from Spain - we are brothers ❤️	—
C30	TR	Teşekkürler Türk kardeşlerim, sizi ve Türkiye'yi çok seviyorum. Zaragoza'dan mesaj. 🇪🇸❤️🇹🇷	Thank you, my Turkish brothers and sisters. I love you and Turkey very much. Greetings from Zaragoza.
C31	ES	Como turco, estoy orgulloso de España. Has demostrado tu diferencia con respecto a otros países europeos. No a la guerra. Saludos desde İstanbul	As a Turk, I am proud of Spain. You have shown how you differ from other European countries. No to war. Greetings from Istanbul.
C32	ES	Ignorar a Trump y a Netanyahu, fin a la guerra.	Ignore Trump and Netanyahu. End the war.
C33	ES	Es el imperio de la sensatez. No al genocidio de Gaza por Israel. Y menos al ataque gringo-israelí.	This is the empire of common sense. No to Israel's genocide in Gaza, and even less to the American-Israeli attack.
C34	ES	Ese Abascal es otro lamebotas gringas, más amor por EEUU que por España.	That Abascal is just another American bootlicker. He has more love for the United States than for Spain.
C35	ES	Yo mandaría a Abascal, Feijóo y Ayuso a pelear en la guerra que tanto defienden.	I'd send Abascal, Feijóo and Ayuso to fight in the war they defend so much.
C36	ES	Abascal trabaja para los extranjeros.	Abascal works for foreigners.
C37	ES	Jamás encontraréis a un solo espécimen de derecha racional que defienda a los pueblos en lugar de sus propios bolsillos.	You will never find a single rational right-wing politician who defends ordinary people instead of their own pockets.
C38	TR	bizim ülkede alkışlanacak kalmayınca...	When there's no one left to applaud in our country...
C39	TR	Türkiye deki yöneticilerin yapamadığını yaptı helal olsun	He accomplished what the administrators in Türkiye couldn't, kudos to him.
C40	TR	Hiç İslam ülkesinin yapamadığını İspanya yaptı. Helal olsun İspanya. İnsan olmak ayrı bir şey. Bütün İslam ülkesi Amerika ve İsrail'in kölesi olmuş durumda.	Spain has done what no Muslim country could do. Well done, Spain. Being human is something else. All Muslim countries have become slaves to America and Israel.
C41	TR	Arapların yapamadığını İspanya yapıyor, helal olsun.	Spain is doing what the Arabs could not do. Well done.
C42	TR	Helal olsun İspanya'ya. Müslüman ülkelerin yapamadığını yapıyor.	Well done, Spain. It is doing what Muslim countries could not do.
C43	TR	Aslında Türk halkı olarak kendi yöneticilerimizden beklediğimiz tepkiyi ve dik duruşu göstermedikleri için bu ilgimizi çekti. Seviliyorsunuz İspanya. Gracias España. ❤️❤️❤️	As Turkish people, what caught our attention was that our own leaders did not show the reaction and firm stance we expected from them. We love you, Spain. Thank you, Spain.
C44	ES	Nunca más un español calvo. 😂😂😂	Never again a bald Spaniard.
C45	TR	Bir sabah kalktım... İSPANYOLCA konuşuyorum. 😂😂🇪🇸🇹🇷	One morning I woke up... and I was speaking Spanish.