# TRANSLINGUALISM AND IDENTITY SHIFT AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS: A SOCIOPRAGMATIC STUDY

BY

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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES**

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# THESIS AND DEFENSE APPROVAL FORM

**The undersigned certify that they have read the following thesis, examined the defense, are satisfied with the overall exam performance, and recommend the thesis to the Faculty of Arts & Humanities for acceptance.**

**Thesis Title**: Translingualism and Identity Shift among Undergraduate Students: A Sociopragmatic Study

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Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis **Translingualism and Identity Shift among Undergraduate Students: A Sociopragmatic Study** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

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# ABSTRACT

**Title: Translingualism and Identity Shift among Undergraduate Students: A Sociopragmatic Study**

Through a focus on students' linguistic practices in academic and social spheres, this study explores translingualism and identity shifts among undergraduate students. The study adopts a mixed-method approach to data collection. The researcher used a closed-ended questionnaire to obtain quantitative data, while unstructured interviews to collect qualitative data, helping to deeply understand students' experience in translingual environments. The findings show how students' language choices are closely linked to their changing identities. While Pashto represents cultural and familial identity, English is associated with professionalism and modernity, and Urdu acts as a bridging language that enhances inclusivity among diverse social groups. Translingual co-construction of knowledge through translingual styles (e.g. strategic language switching) became key means by which these students engaged with topics of academic and social interest and creatively collaborated with peers. They also explained that their ability to change according to the situation helps them reconcile the need for cultural preservation with their experiences of contemporary academic and professional demands. Yet, also identified were challenges, such as societal stigma, processing confusion resulting from constant switching of languages, and tension to maintain key features of the target language, underlining the complex nature of these translingual practices. This study empirically demonstrates how multilingual students work with languages in different contexts to negotiate identity; thus, it adds to sociopragmatic literature. It highlights the ability of translingualism to promote inclusivity, improve language acquisition, and prepare learners for success in a globalized environment. The research calls on educational systems to adopt translingual pedagogies, have positive dispositions towards multilingualism, and view linguistic diversity as a resource to enhance academic and social development.

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# DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved mother. Thank you for your unconditional love, all your sacrifices, and your prayers. Inspired by your undying support and belief in me, this thesis is for you. May Allah bless you always.

# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

In an era of globalization and increased mobility, translingualism has become a defining feature of contemporary societies, reshaping how individuals communicate, learn, and construct their identities. Translingualism—the fluid and strategic blending of languages—reflects this linguistic reality, particularly in multilingual nations like Pakistan, where local, national, and global languages coexist and interact. For university students, who operate at the intersection of cultural heritage and global academic demands, language choices are not merely practical but deeply tied to self-perception, social belonging, and power dynamics. The present study investigates how undergraduate students at the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad, negotiate their identities through translingual practices involving Pashto, Urdu, and English. By analyzing the sociopragmatic factors that influence language selection and the resulting shifts in cultural, ethnic, and national identity, this research aims to shed light on the complex relationship between translingualism and identity formation. The chapter establishes the background, objectives, and significance of the study, setting the stage for an in-depth exploration of translingualism as both a communicative strategy and an identity-shaping force.

The present study starts with the sociopragmatic paradigm (Vygotsky, 1978) and attempts a holistic approach of translingualism and identity shift. Recognizing that language is not simply a vehicle for the conveyance of information but rather a dynamic marker of individual sociopragmatic processes (Gumperz, 1982), the present study looks closely at the ways in which sociopragmatic aspects operate within and through the social and linguistic domains of translingulalism (Lo, 2009). More specifically, its aim is to explore many aspects of translingualism, and how the variety of languages, contexts and social and cultural connections might provide a new perspective to view translingualism. Cultural identity, defined as, the feeling of belonging, attachment, and identification with a specific cultural group, encompassing the shared customs, traditions, beliefs, values, language, and behavioral practices of individuals within the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Culture is a dynamic and transformative experience that is constructed through engagement within one's cultural community and with the world around him or her. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests people

classify themselves into groups, including cultural groups, and their identity is shaped by the groups they are in. It emphasizes how these cultural connections are integral to an individual's social identity, and thus, provides a sense of pride, belonging, and self-esteem. Intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989) recognizes that individuals have multiple social identities that come together to create a complexity of experiences, including those of race, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. These identities intersect with cultural identity, informing the kind of experiences each person may have in society. Fire and Kwan's translation approach is resonant of Vygotsky as they highlight the importance of the social-cognitive contexts within which immigrants develop their identity, both personal and social, as they engage the cultural tools, language included, that shape the latter (Vygotsky, 1978). He emphasized that cultural identity is shaped through socio-cultural experiences in which individuals negotiate their identity in relation to members of their cultural communities. García's focus on translingualism as a qualitative rather than quantifiable approach to the dynamics of language reflects the fluidity of how languages intermingle to affect how identities are formed (García, 2009). Like García, the researcher's view is that cultural identity is produced and negotiated through language practices in diverse sociocultural contexts; the development of a linguistic repertoire or the simultaneous use of numerous languages is broadly recognized as forming the building blocks of identity.

Social identity includes more general social categories than culture and refers to that part of an individual's self-concept that derives from perceived memberships in social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). These social groups can be cultural, religious, occupational, or community associations that shape how people see themselves and interact with each other. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests that to maintain a positive social identity, individuals seek to positively compare their ingroup with relevant outgroups, and social identities lead to self-esteem. Identity negotiation theory (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003) involves how individuals adapt their self-concept during intercultural interactions, which emphasizes negotiation of social identities across diverse cultural situations. Cultural identity and social identity are mutually interactive. Social identity is a crucial aspect of identity and culture, as it impacts how people view themselves in various social groups. When it comes to personal identity, social identity — which includes a variety of associations — plays a key role in how we see ourselves. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes the importance of social

interaction and cultural contexts in developing social identity (Vygotsky, 1978). In Vygotsky's theory, social identity is constructed through interaction with different social groups, in which social experience and cultural tools help to determine an individual's perceptions of oneself in different social experiences.

García's work on translingualism is also in the realm of social identity, as many aspects of identity are negotiated through language choices across diverse social groups and contexts (García, 2009). According to García, social identity through language practices offers two interlocking spaces—the relationship between and among identity processes, institutions, and technology—with language practices being both a reflection of that complex process, and a means to negotiate diverse social identity. In investigating the phenomena of translingualism and identity shift among undergraduate students at the universities, these theoretical frameworks provide strong foundations. They help explain the students' decisions on language use, cultural belonging and social connections that ground their processes of self-identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Crenshaw, 1989; Gudykunst & Kim, 2003). Through the analysis of cultural identity and social identity in this case, it is revealed how people use their language to construct and negotiate their identities.

## 1.1 Background of the Study

In recent years, the phenomenon of translingualism has attracted much attention from contemporary research due to its implications for communication, identity formation and sociocultural integration. Mixing up languages has become a part of everyday life for many people in a globally interconnected world. Translingualism, or the fluid use of multiple languages during one's interaction, is one main strategy that enables speakers to draw from their entire linguistic repertoire to negotiate complex social and academic contexts. It is not only a tool for communication, but a lens through which identity, and cultural connections become understandable and negotiable.

It is also a powerful marker of identity that shapes the way people see themselves, and the way others see them. The post-structuralist theories of identity argue against a permanent self, considering identity as a product of social interactions and ongoing linguistic practices. And for many —especially in multilingual societies—identity means language use. A person may be multiple selves, reflecting the

communicative and cultural expectations of a particular context. Using their native language might give a sense of belonging to a culture while using an international language like English to portray professionalism or a sense of global connection, and switching between both languages serves to balance the complexities of showing interest in the local while also engaging in the global domains. The connection between language and identity is particularly evident in places like Pakistan. Indigenous languages — for example, Pashto — are considered markers of cultural heritage, and Urdu is seen as the national lingua franca, while English is perceived to be a symbol of modernity and socioeconomic mobility. Pakistan's diverse and intricate linguistic landscape makes it an excellent place for this kind of research into translingual practices and how they influence shifting identities. Language is the medium and/or a tool for identity negotiation in action and self-expression, especially in academic settings. Routinely switching between different languages often mirrors wider attempts to balance the weight of cultural legacies and local identity with a more global perspective among undergraduates, who are still very much in the process of defining themselves as people and future professionals. In fact, English as the global language of higher education often interacts with those local languages to produce translingual spaces, or practices that help navigate linguistic and cultural borders. Translingualism has improved comprehension, engagement, and allowed students to make more concrete connections between the abstract theoretical concepts learned in class and their lived experience. Language mixing is often looked down upon, and monolingual norms are privileged in academic discourse, making it challenging for students to embrace their multilingual identities fully.

In informal contexts, language choice is often determined by the members of the group, the reason for the interaction, and an individual's cultural affiliations. A student, for example, might speak their native language with their family at home to help sustain cultural identity, yet speak English or Urdu in mixed-language groups in order to include others and help the give-and-take of conversation flow more smoothly. Translingual practices reveal the sociopragmatic role of language in creating social harmony and in resolving power relations. Although translingualism is increasingly seen as a phenomenon of significance, few have studied the its implications for understandings of identity shift in such multilingual contexts as Pakistan. Previous research has generally emphasized either the sociolinguistic or pedagogical dimensions

of language use, with the subtle interplay between linguistic practices and identity formation often left unexplored. Moreover, although there has been discussion of the educational benefits of translingualism, its sociopragmatic implications, especially with regard to how it enables students to function effectively in a wide range of linguistic contexts, have not been fully explored or documented.

The present study aims to fill these gaps by exploring the dynamics of translingualism and identity shift in the context of undergraduates, and explores how students leverage their translingual competence to negotiate the demands of academic and social contexts, reconcile cultural practices with global forces, and contend with shifting self-perceptions. This mixed-methods study tries to show translingualism as a dynamic and transformative phenomenon as a whole. Moreover, grounding the study in established theories about language and identity, this study contributes not only to the understanding of how language works in social contexts but also provides practical insights for students, educators, policy makers, and linguists eager to use translingualism as a resource for personal and social growth.

This chapter introduces the study's focus on translingualism—the fluid mixing and switching of languages—and its influence on identity shifts among undergraduate students in Pakistan. The research specifically examines students from the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad, who are proficient in Pashto, Urdu, and English. The study is grounded in sociopragmatic and sociocultural theories, emphasizing how language use shapes personal and social identity. In today's interconnected world, multilingualism is common, and translingualism goes beyond mere communication— it plays a crucial role in identity formation. In Pakistan, languages carry deep cultural, national, and global significance: Pashto represents ethnic heritage, Urdu symbolizes national unity, and English is linked to education and socioeconomic mobility. Students often navigate these languages in different settings, balancing local traditions with global influences. However, while previous research has explored linguistic and educational aspects of translingualism, its impact on identity negotiation remains understudied.

The findings will be valuable for students, educators, and policymakers, offering insights into how multilingualism shapes identity and how educational institutions can better support linguistic diversity. While the study is limited to

undergraduate students at two universities, its implications extend to broader discussions on language, identity, and globalization. The subsequent chapters will review existing literature, outline the research methodology, present data analysis, and conclude with key findings and recommendations.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem:

The phenomenon of translingualism, characterized by the fluid and creative use of multiple languages in communication, has become increasingly prevalent worldwide. However, its implications for individual and collective identities are notably understudied. This research addresses this gap by investigating how the dynamic interplay between translingualism and identity shift influences the self-identification of undergraduate students at University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad in multilingual contexts, with a specific focus on languages like Pashto, Urdu, and English. By examining how these students navigate linguistic boundaries and strategically switch between languages, this study seeks to uncover how these language choices impact their cultural, ethnic, and national identities.

## 1.3 Research Objectives

1. To explore social and pragmatic factors which drive language selection behaviors among undergraduate students.
2. To find out how undergraduate students perceive and negotiate their identities within a multilingual environment.

## 1.4 Research Questions

1. What social and pragmatic factors drive language selection behaviors among undergraduate students?
2. How do undergraduate students perceive and negotiate their identities within a multilingual environment?

## 1.5 Significance and Rationale of the Study

The motivation for this study comes from the increasing importance of translingualism and the role it may play in developing identity dynamics in an increasingly globalized world. As translingualism is now the norm in most diverse communities, this raises an urgent need to explore how people are navigating multiple

languages and how these linguistic practices transform all aspects of what it means to be an individual; who you become, how you self-identify. By using a sociopragmatic approach, this study aims to understand the complex sociopragmatic mechanisms behind why people choose certain languages when they speak and how these choices shape their cultural, ethnic, and national identities. By exploring this intricate process by focusing on interaction of Pashto, Urdu and English, as an example of translingualism, the present study not only explores a unique linguistic dynamic but also contributes to a broader understanding of what translingualism means for individuals in multicultural societies worldwide. By doing so, it fills the gap in contemporary literature, both popular and academic, offering a deeper understanding of language use in translingual settings.

## 1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The present study is limited to those undergraduate students who are enrolled at the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad and those who are competent in Pashto, Urdu and English. To understand how translingualism and identity shift occur among this particular group of multilingual individuals in an academic setting is the goal of the research. It examines undergraduate students' linguistic choices, sociopragmatic processes, and identity management in a formal educational context. The present study looks at how language use affects their cultural, ethnic and national identity, focusing on the unique cultures and challenges faced by this demographic category. This research therefore fills not only a gap in research based on the theoretical understanding of translingualism, but also addresses the limitation of previous studies in terms of identification of learners and learning context because it aims to offer the translingual experience of undergraduate learners from University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad.

## 1.7 Organization of the Study

The chapter wise division of the thesis is as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the introductory chapter, the researcher has presented the topic as well as background of the study, providing a comprehensive overview of the whole study. It provides the background of the study, thesis statement, objectives, research questions, significance, rationale, and delimitations of the study to give an overview This research

highlights the key concepts explored in the study. Moreover, it provides a concise summary of the procedure of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review chapter of the study provides a critical analysis of the prior relevant studies. In this section, the researcher has examined the theories, debates, concepts and themes discussed by other theorists and researchers in the related studies. Furthermore, it highlights the research gap that the current study aims to address and contribute to.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter provides a detailed explanation on the methodology and design employed in the study. It outlines the methods and techniques utilized by the researcher to conduct the study. Moreover, the theoretical framework is thoroughly discussed in this chapter. It provides the entire process of data collection, techniques applied for analysis, and the validity of the instruments used in the research.

Chapter 4: Analysis

This chapter provides the analysis of the data collected by means of the closed-ended questionnaire and unstructured interviews. Moreover, it includes of the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Furthermore, it discusses the interpretation of the findings and compares the results present study with the findings of the prior relevant studies.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This is the final chapter of the study which includes the conclusion, and recommendations for future studies. The findings highlight the societal and pragmatic factors which drive language choices. Moreover, this section underscores practical recommendations for educationists, students, universities, policy makers.

# CHAPTER 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical literature related to translingualism, identity shift, and sociopragmatics. It begins by exploring the foundational concepts and evolving definitions of translingualism, followed by a detailed discussion of how language practices intersect with identity construction and negotiation, particularly among multilingual individuals. The chapter also examines the pedagogical and educational implications of translingual practices, with a focus on translanguaging in classroom settings. Furthermore, it highlights the sociopragmatic dimensions of language use, emphasizing how power dynamics, cultural expectations, and context shape communicative choices. The review concludes by identifying the research gap this study seeks to fill, specifically the ways undergraduate students use translingual practices to navigate identity and social interactions in academic contexts.

## 2.1 Translingualism

Translingualism is a concept that argues that the communicators of different mother tongues utilize more than one language during communication (Horner et al., 2011; Canagarajah, 2013). Through this phenomenon, traditional definitions and contexts of language are questioned providing an analytical focus on how individuals contain space for more than one language (Suresh, 2017; Blommaert, 2018). Code-switching, code-mixing, translanguaging, or multilingualism may have been used as a learning strategy, all of which attest to the fluidity of language (García & Wei, 2014; Rymes, 2014). Translingualism identifies cognitive and pragmatic aspects of language related to both cognitive processing as well as contextual shaping of language (Suresh, 2019). Both the theory and the practice of translingualism have become important subjects of research, particularly regarding the implications for language teaching and learning, identity and participation in multilingual communities. In broader terms, translingualism describes the adaptable and evolving use of diverse languages in a single communicative instance, countering the traditional view that languages are discrete and self-contained systems (Canagarajah, 2013). Translingualism provides a blueprint for interpreting how language functions across different cultural and social

contexts. This literature  review explores the main theories behind translingualism and examines the implications of adopting translingual practices as a sociopragmatic and educational practice across various disciplines.

Translingualism highlights the fluidity and contextuality of language (Wei, 2011). Early linguists like  Gumperz (1982) and Hymes (1972) pioneered work that laid the foundation by looking at the various social roles that language plays in people's lives as well as the way those individuals adjust their linguistic choices based on the specific interaction. Pennycook (2007), expanding from these notions, claimed that language can no longer be perceived as a static code, rather a series of practices that are framed by social and cultural exchanges. This perspective challenges the traditional "monolingual bias" which views languages as autonomous and separate entities,  and advocates for a concept of language that is fluid, dynamic and context-sensitive. Extending this, Canagarajah (2013) introduced the concept of translingualism to explain the complexities of multilingual communication in globalizing worlds. Translingual practices, he claimed, reflect speakers' ability to act with their full range of linguistic resources to construct meaning, project identity, and negotiate sociocultural hierarchies. Translingualism foregrounds the agency of multilingual speakers who combine languages to meet the demands of different communicative contexts, in contrast to traditional models which prioritize language norms. A related concept to translingualism is "translanguaging" as the same authors García and Wei (2014) put forward. Although translanguaging overlaps with translingualism, it is more specifically concerned with pedagogical practices. It indicates the purposeful and strategic implementation of multiple languages in an educational context to enhance communication and learning effectiveness. Translanguaging challenges the classification of languages that is traditionally characterized in monolingual or bilingual education frameworks and promotes a more  integrated approach in which learners use their entire linguistic resources.

Commonly cited works characterize translanguaging as a cognitive process (García & Wei, 2014, p. 5), and not a mere communicative technique. Using both their native languages and the language of instruction allows students to draw upon prior knowledge, clarify complex concepts, or participate more actively in classroom discussions. Students come from diverse and multiple linguistic backgrounds and proficiencies, making this approach highly effective in multilingual contexts. Creese

and Blackledge (2010) focused on analyzing the educational implications of flexible bilingualism and described how translanguaging practices can create more learning opportunities through a pedagogical approach. Their research, involving complementary schools in the United Kingdom, found that teachers and students frequently mix languages to co-construct meaning, fill cultural gaps and create a sense of closeness. This study highlights how translingualism can be used not just to improve academic results but also to validate students' cultural and linguistic identities. Translingualism has significant implications for sociopragmatics of communication — how language gets used in social contexts — not only pedagogically. Scholars such as Blommaert (2010) and Pennycook (2010) have highlighted how translingual practices mediate social encounters and negotiate power relations and identities. Blommaert's concept of "polycentricity" illustrates how people switch across different linguistic norms and expectations that are social, cultural, and contextual. This is in line with a translingual view that frames language use as a semiotic process, indicating the strategic nature of (communicative) choices that are co-constructed and mutually adapted.

The work of Kubota (2016) theorized upon the role of translingualism in the construction of identities, even though a multilingual person does not just use languages which reflect their identities, but those acts of using languages also provides a space for identity construction, and controversy between various identities. Speakers, then, may show which languages or linguistic features they orient towards, marking themselves as members of certain social groups, claim authority, or resisting linguistic hierarchies in their speech. Such negotiation of identity across linguistic landscapes is of vital importance primarily in postcolonial contexts, in which complex historical and sociopolitical factors have shaped linguistic domains. The argument is hence also increasingly presented on the basis of the emancipatory dimension translingualism could take, where Canagarajah (2017) states that by moving between varieties and using these strategies flexibly, translingual speakers can challenge linguistic hierarchies and assert their presence in multilingual contexts. While translingualism offers a useful perspective through which to understand multilanguage movements, it is not without its critiques. This study focuses on the fluidity, hybridity and the agency involved in bilingual language use, challenges to obscure the structural inequalities and power imbalances that impact language use (Flores & Rosa 2015). As an example, translingual practices may be valued in some settings and stigmatized or devalued in others,

especially those related to non-dominant communities. However, Cummins (2008) warns against an excessive dependence on native languages in formal education, as it could potentially impede mastery of the target language, especially when English serves as the primary mode of instruction. This challenge demonstrates the importance of a middle ground that acknowledges the benefits of translingual approaches but also maintains that students must learn the linguistic skills necessary for academic or professional growth. Translingualism captures the view that language practices are naturally flexible and interrelated, recovering a flexible interconnected feel against the backdrop of submitting and rigidly applied monolingual frameworks. Translingualism challenges standard boundaries of language by exposing the intricacies of how people navigate the social, cultural, and educational worlds through language use. It is important to note that, as a theoretical and practical framework, it has far-reaching implications for sociopragmatics, education and identity studies, and opportunities for promoting inclusion and understanding in an ever more globalized world.

## 2.2 Translingualism and Identity

At the core of translingual practices is the way people shape their identities; language is a primary marker of individual and group identity. Language choice and use are not just motivated by language functions but deeply internalized in the ways people construct, perform and negotiate their identities (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). As speakers usually step in and out of multiple identities associated with their linguistic repertoires, these negotiations can be particularly complicated in multilingual contexts. This phenomenon is more noticeable among people who use multiple languages, who code-switch according to the social, cultural or professional environments of the various domains of their lives, emphasizing that identity is fluid and dependent on context. Building upon this perspective, Canagarajah (2017) extends the notion of translingualism and emphasizes that translingual practices provide individuals with the ability to dismantle established language hierarchies and to control the ideologies holding power over how their identities are perceived and constructed. By combining two or more languages in strategic, systematic ways, speakers can demonstrate their belonging in particular social or cultural groups as well as proficiency in a professional or global field, he argues. So, a speaker might speak in the native language, such as Pashto, in domestic or cultural settings to show genuineness and emotional resonance

but switch to English in academic or professional environments to show confidence and modernity.

This is especially the case in postcolonial societies in which identities are fluid, and the uses of language carry historical and sociopolitical factors. In these settings, language use is often closely tied to histories of colonialism, social hierarchies and demands for socioeconomic mobility (Canagarajah, 2017). Hence, translingualism is a testament to individual resilience and a challenge against the ongoing cultural and linguistic standardization. This new knowledge illuminates why we might take a different view of language than merely the medium of communication. On the contrary, it is a fluid and powerful tool of identity shaping when speakers can respond and adjust to various expectations and requirements set by their sociocultural and professional environments (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Canagarajah, 2017). This perspective is especially important in additional language, multimodal, and multilingual spaces in which translingual practices help mediate students' identity and social space.

The relationship between translingualism and identity construction has been explored by De Costa and Norton (2022), who argue that language is not simply a medium for expressing identity, but a constitutive element of identity itself. Their work suggests that in multilingual contexts, individuals continuously perform and reconfigure their identities through the selective mobilization of their linguistic repertoires. Translingualism thus becomes a means of exercising agency, resisting dominant ideologies, and cultivating belonging in both local and global communities. Further supporting this view, García and Lin (2021) emphasize the role of translanguaging as a pedagogical and sociopragmatic practice that empowers students to assert their multifaceted identities. Their study highlights how students' ability to shift across languages in academic discourse not only facilitates learning but also validates their cultural backgrounds and lived experiences.

## 2.3 Educational Implications of Translingualism

Translingualism's relevance to education has been much discussed, especially where English is a lingua franca. Translanguaging, as a practice in education, is viewed by the authors as an agent of change of teaching and learning (Garcia & Wei, 2014). These practices support understanding, engagement and critical consciousness because

they enable students to draw upon their entire linguistic repertoire. Here, translanguaging pushes back against monolingual pedagogies, which center English and tend to deprioritize students' source languages and hinder their full engagement with academic content. Moreover, Garcia and Wei (2014) argue that recognizing learners' multimodal identities in the classroom leads to an inclusive and equitable classroom environment, which significantly contribute to the academic and social development of students. From this view, Creese and Blackledge (2010) describes the flexible position of bilingualism in educational contexts, highlighting how the development of meaning can be co-constructed through the use of various languages. Through their study of elementary schools in the UK, their data illustrates how translanguaging is used as a pedagogical tool for bridging home and school environments. These practices create a sense of belonging and inclusivity by allowing students to infuse their cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the learning process. Thus, Creese and Blackledge (2010) also underscore that translanguaging allows teachers to make connections with students' lived experience, thus making the educational experience more meaningful and engaging. While pros of translanguaging in learning spaces are numerous, some researchers have raised doubts about its implications. Cummins (2008) cautioned against an over-use of native languages in school settings, considering how such practices may hinder students' opportunity for developing proficiency over the target language, especially where the learning of English is a priority for achieving academic success. Cummins (2008), on the other hand, points to the need for a balance to be struck between using native languages as resources and providing adequate access to the target language to build higher-level linguistic skills. This change in perspective reflects the complexity of translanguaging and educational practice. While this provides a great benefit for inclusivity and support for students with diverse linguistic backgrounds, challenges arise around language, teacher-student communication, and the overall educational goals in a multilingual setting.

Sun and Wang (2023) present a case study on Chinese university classrooms, revealing how translingual orientations foster inclusive and participatory learning environments. They demonstrate that students engage more deeply when allowed to draw on their complete linguistic repertoires, and that such practices enhance both critical thinking and emotional engagement. Their findings also suggest that

translingualism plays a pivotal role in enabling learners to navigate institutional expectations while remaining authentic to their linguistic identities.

From a sociopragmatic perspective, translingual practices represent more than linguistic behavior—they are social acts that mediate power relations, group membership, and intercultural alignment. García and Lin (2021) assert that translanguaging enables speakers to act as cultural brokers who skillfully navigate classroom hierarchies and bridge the gap between home and institutional language ideologies. This aligns with Pérez-Milans' (2020) argument that the sociopragmatic dimension of translingualism must be seen as a politicized space where speakers negotiate inclusion, legitimacy, and recognition.

## 2.4 Sociopragmatic Dimensions of Translingualism

Translingualism allows sociopragmatic ability by its very nature. it is shaped not only by the idiolectal and syntax-semantic rules, but also by the social power effort. The work of Blommaert and Rampton (2011) shows that linguistic practices are socially situated and institutionalized, meaning they can either reproduce or subvert social order and power structures. Translingual practices, extend beyond linguistic selections, representing a form of identity negotiation and resistance (Wei and Hua 2013). Translingualism occurs in social interaction when speakers mix languages in order to express solidarity and accommodate different speakers. Their findings highlight the richness of translingual practices as creative ways of social cohesion and intercultural competence. Translingualism is not without its challenges, though it does have its benefits. According to Otheguy et al (2015), translingual practices could be seen as stigma, as society believes this behavior is unprofessional (speaking with no fluency in a given language). As a result, some people may feel ashamed of their multilingualism. In addition, they claim, the stress on translingualism can be seen as a downplay on the need to master individual languages, especially in formal and professional contexts (Kubota, 2016). These critiques emphasize the need for nuanced approaches addressing the importance of both perspectives in the translingual conversation, drawing the line between the need for translingualism and the need for language-specific competence.

Translingualism offers useful perspectives on sociopragmatics by showing how linguistic practices are constructed in the social contexts and cultural norms.

Translingual practices in multilingual contexts are shaped and negotiated by local customs and global pressures. Works such as Pennycook 2010 emphasize the "glocal" quality of language use where the global and the local intersect to generate idiosyncratic forms of communicative practice. In postcolonial contexts, translingualism has been employed to examine the legitimacy of language through reclaiming and de-colonizing languages (Canagarajah, 2013). Translingualism addresses significant changes in establishing linguistic inclusivity through the expression of identities and the bridging of cultural divisions. Questioning the idea of language as static systems, translingualism generates a nuanced perspective of multilingual practices, and their social interactions. Indeed, as this review demonstrates, translingualism is not simply an abstract theory; it is also an applied framework with significant consequences in education, sociopragmatics, and identity studies.

Translingualism is a lens that is explicitly designed to give us a new approach for making sense out of language. It challenges the traditional standpoint about languages as separate entities, further suggesting that languages are taken to be an issue of elasticity, interrelated systems, which are made by its users (Canagarajah, 2013). Within this lens, importantly, multilingual speakers are considered as being able to navigate across linguistic systems at will, highlighting their flexibility and agency in communication (Li, 2018). Translingualism highlights how people who use language do not obey the microcosms of a singular language and instead draw on their full linguistic repertoire to respond to communicative demands. Translingual practices have been demonstrated in educational contexts. Horner et al. (2011) maintain that integrating students' native languages in academic discourse not only makes understanding easier but also affirms their cultural and linguistic identities. These practices challenge the hegemony of monolingual ideologies in academia and contribute to a more equitable pedagogy of language (García & Wei, 2014) A case in point is translanguaging, a specific type of translingualism, which describes the intentional use of different languages in the same communicative act, and has been found particularly valuable in merging language and culture in a classroom context (Creese & Blackledge, 2015).

The role of language is central to aspects of identity construction and negotiation, and research outlines the active and dynamic relationship between self and language to align with different sites of experience in their lives. Thus, multilinguals

will tend to flex their choices for each and every facet of their identity — be it their cultural background, professions, etc. Translingualism provides a  useful lens through which to consider, that these identity changes can be fluid and context-dependent. Pennycook (2010) elaborates on the idea of translingualism arguing that speakers have the flexibility of moving between languages at ease which allows them to negotiate and re-negotiate their own meaning based on what their identities demand in  response to social forces constantly in flux. This characterization of language use takes it out of the static realm of identity indicators and into an active and ongoing process of negotiation that  reflects the complexity and messiness of lived experiences of multilingual people. Moreover, in her book, A Multilingual Nation: The Changing Role of Languages in Japanese Society, Kubota  (2016) draws on this to closely explore the more complex facets of the relationship between language and identity and how, for multilinguals, the use of language is neither a default, nor a representation of their identity; but rather a site in flux for both identity construction and contestation. Kubota's point is that through the prudent use of language, people assert their own agency, challenge the forces of power in play, and navigate the social and cultural topography within which they find themselves. In addition to that, this approach underscores the affordability of language as a signifier and intermediary of identity, and shows the complex layers of significances for people at work across culture, work and society who have  access to diverse linguistic tools.

Translanguaging practices can also be considered through a sociopragmatic lens, as they offer views  on the connection between language and social interaction and how practices are mediators of power relations. This aligns with Bourdieu's (1991) notion of linguistic capital that how the conscious and strategic use of multiple languages in social and professional domains can serve to increase one's levels of social mobility in a given society. This  skill matters especially in multilingual, multicultural societies, in which mixing linguistic resources is often crucial for sharing information. But translingualism is not without its disadvantages. According to Makoni and Pennycook (2007), this focus on fluidity can cover up structural inequalities that reproduce linguistic hierarchies. In addition, social beliefs about code-switching and language mixing stigmatize translingual practices, through the idea that translingual acts are  treated as deficiencies rather than resources (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Next  to that, there is English translingualism reported as an enhanced language learning

process. That is, by drawing on whatever linguistic resources they have available, these learners can leverage what they know to learn new languages more effectively (Wei, 2018). Studies show that a translingual approach reduces the cognitive burden, boosts learner autonomy and enhances understanding of how the languages function (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015). This view criticizes a dominant monolingual orientation in language education and promotes language teaching practices that recognize linguistic diversity as an asset for pedagogy.

Zhu (2020) offers a nuanced understanding of translingualism as a situated, everyday communicative practice rather than a mere theoretical abstraction. Through ethnographic insights, Zhu demonstrates that multilingual speakers fluidly navigate across linguistic codes, making deliberate choices that reflect social positioning, relational goals, and contextual constraints. This challenges the conventional view of languages as autonomous systems and emphasizes the performative and strategic nature of multilingual language use.

Similarly, Pérez-Milans (2020), in his study of Hong Kong youth, reveals how translingual practices are deeply entwined with identity negotiation and sociopolitical critique. Young speakers, particularly in educational contexts, deploy hybrid linguistic resources to position themselves vis-à-vis institutional norms and peer communities. This strategic positioning reinforces the idea that translingualism is both an act of linguistic creativity and a mode of sociopragmatic resistance.

## 2.5 Identity Shifts and Sociopragmatic Concerns

As discussed earlier in this chapter, undergraduate students (the focus of this study) provide a rich example of translingualism as they often lie at the intersection of multiple linguistic, academic, and cultural practices. Because of the fluid and scale-dependent nature of their linguistic availabilities (Blommaert 2010), it is clear that the translingual practices of young adults show how they draw upon these linguistic resources to navigate easily between social and academic contexts. These practices create what García and Wei (2014) call "translanguaging spaces," where creativity in language use overlaps with identity negotiation as students express their identities in ways that are open to their environment. Research on translingual practices, for example, supports the finding by revealing how they list, mediate, and navigate complexities inherent in academic discourse and social integration among

undergraduate students. According to Velasco and García (2014), students that use more than one language in the classroom are more engaged and better understanding of complex or abstract topics. This well establishes the characteristic of translingualism to be as it is; not simply a means for communication, but rather, also and more so a distinctive method to learn, and to bond socially. In doing so, they not only make understanding more readily available but also cultivate a sense of inclusivity and belonging in academic and social spaces. Language and identity go hand in hand, and changes to how a person speaks often come through small changes in identity, social roles, and the way others treat the speaker. Norton (2000) explains that choices in language are the tools by which identities are formed, especially among students at the crossroads of emotional and professional development, as emerging professionals. Digital Englishes are often linked, for instance, with professionalism, modernity and academic capability, while native languages such as Pashto and Urdu are attached to nostalgia, emotional proximity and kinship (Kubota, 2016). These preferences for linguistic modes reflect the multiple identities that students build and enact in relation to their sociocultural contexts. Translingualism—especially its sociopragmatic dimension—reveals the strategic ways in which undergraduate students mobilize language to engage and intervene in particular social and cultural hierarchies. Translingual practice empowers the individuals to question and re-negotiate institutional power and encourages agency both in formal and informal processes (Pennycook, 2010). This is particularly relevant in multilingual societies where language flexibility is not merely an asset but an essential need to survive and thrive. Students show resilience and adaptability by drawing on their multilingualism to become active agents in an ever more global and interconnected world. Their opportunities for translingualism not only highlight important cognitive and communicative abilities, but also emphasize the importance of understanding the broader cultural and social dynamics at play, showing how translingualism is a vital component of their academic and personal growth. Young adults use multilingualism as a critical aspect of how they make and remake their identity. According to Canagarajah (2013), "multilinguals are not simply bearers of multiple codes; rather, they are active agents who exploit those codes to negotiate and construct identities" (p.219). This study highlights the sociolinguistic aspect of language use in the work place encountered by undergraduate students, whom, due to their level of education, have a greater exposure to social situations where the blend of linguistic resources

would accompany the image of identity they would like to project. For instance, Wei (2018) maintains that translingualism is a means of self-expression and social belonging, enabling speakers to pluralize their identity by negotiating its many facets at once. This mirrors the findings of Creese and Blackledge (2015) who discovered that learners operating in multilingual contexts frequently utilized translingual practices to resolve clashing linguistic and cultural influences in a hybridized identity reflective of their multidimensional lives.

Translingualism in sociopragmatic terms has broader social implications than individually, but this cannot be separated from the other. Language use is a social action that reflects and shapes interpersonal relationships, power structures, and cultural norms (Bourdieu, 1991) from a sociopragmatic perspective. As emerging professionals and cultural workers, undergraduate students apply translingual practices in negotiating these competing demands; it is possible that academic rigor and social inclusiveness/cultural authenticity are instead working in concert. This is consistent with Norton's (2013) idea of "investment", which argues that the learning and use of language are motivated by the wish to obtain symbolic and material resources. Insights from translingual practices can be framed as an investment, where students use their resources to gain access to new opportunities, create meaningful relationships, and assert identities in the world. While translingualism has many positive aspects, it is not free of difficulties. In academia, undergraduate students experience social stigma when engaging in code-switching or language mixing, as these practices are sometimes seen as a sign of linguistic incompetence (Flores & Rosa, 2015). The academic focus on English proficiency often conflicts with the emotional weight of native languages, leading to considerations of identity conflicts in contexts where linguistic hierarchies have firmly established (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). Consequently, responding to such challenges necessitates a sociopragmatically-informed, nuanced appreciation of the student's language use. Promoting translingual practices in educational contexts, as well as confronting societal stereotypes surrounding multilingualism, are steps toward creating an environment that sees linguistic diversity as an asset rather than a hindrance.

## 2.6 Expanding the Horizons of Translingualism in Sociocultural Contexts

The following section explores the broader historical, cognitive, digital and sociocultural contexts of translingualism.

### 2.6.1 Historical Context and Evolution of Translingualism

The history of translingualism inherits its basis from global migrations, especially in contexts of colonial and postcolonial times. For instance, Pratt (1991) introduced the notion of "contact zones" as sites where cultures and languages come in contact, often leading to the mixing and transformation of linguistic practices. These contact zones lay down the groundwork for translingual practices that are highly charged with power relations, cultural exchanges, and identity negotiations. Taking up Pratt's idea, Canagarajah (2013) further elaborated that translingualism not only happens in multilingual environments but also serves as a strategy of resisting linguistic hegemony. It is in these contexts where language emerges as an instrument of empowerment, granting speakers the capability to maneuver through intricate social frameworks without losing cultural identity. We can therefore see translingualism as a reaction against such rigidity, as a call for a multilingualism of use, a use which is not restricted to formal, prescriptive rules.

### 2.6.2 Identity Formation and Translingual Practices

Language and identity are very interrelated. Language is one of the main vehicles for construction and negotiation of identities (Norton, 2000). But attending to interesting disciplines which move across linguistic and cultural identities (based on mastery) for whom identity shifts are practically inevitable (particularly multilingual individuals). This is consistent with Pavlenko and Blackledge's (2004) claim that language choices are linked with a tension between individual agency and sociocultural norms. This conceptualization enables a translingual approach to explore these identity reconfigurations. Translanguaging spaces are described by García and Li Wei (2014) as dynamic and fluid, allowing participants to inhabit multiple identities through a concurrent performance that draws on different language resources (p. 176). A student in an English-speaking classroom, for example, may use English in the school context to signify professionalism and competence and switch to a native language for

emotional or cultural expression. Such fluidity in composition highlights the transformative power of translingualism in constructing self and adaptivity.

Translingualism is as much a sociopolitical phenomenon as it is a linguistic one. The struggle around the power dynamics in local multilingual interactions constitute the crux of the literature. Bourdieu's (1991) notion of "linguistic capital" helps us understand how, within social hierarchies, language operates as a kind of power. In multilingual societies, some languages — typically those of the colonial or global powers — are valorized, while others are minimized. By asserting agency and defying conventional power structures, translingual practices trouble these hierarchies. Until then, Pennycook (2010) reminds us that translingual practices are political, a matter of choice and, therefore, both individual and collective acts of resisting linguistic oppression. For example, the use of indigenous languages alongside English in professional or academic contexts can communicate a resistance to monolingual norms and an assertion of cultural identity. This perspective is consistent with the claim by Canagarajah (2017) that translingualism enables people to cross and reconfigure sociopolitical boundaries.

In recent years, translingualism in education has received a great deal of attention. García and Li Wei (2014) reflect on moving away from monolingual pedagogies to translanguaging pedagogies that draw from students' full linguistic repertoires. This upheaval is given a lot of significance, particularly in multilingual classrooms, where traditional approaches often do not meet the diverse needs of the students. As a pedagogical approach, translanguaging ensures all students can participate through utilization of their native tongues with the language of instruction. Flexible bilingualism, what do we understand it to be in the discussion of bilingualism in education Creese and Blackledge (2010) explore the notion of flexible bilingualism and how that may reflect the Indo-Chinese concept of freely switching between languages as a form of linguistic tool use at both home and school. Their work with complimentary schools in the UK illustrates how translanguaging practices can give students a sense of belonging and cultural continuity. Cummins (2008), however, expresses concern regarding the impact of excessive reliance on native languages within the academic environment, which may affect target language proficiency, arguing for a more balanced approach.

### 2.6.3 Cognitive and Affective Dimensions

Translingual practices, however, are not only linguistic strategies but also cognitive and affective ones. Translanguaging, as argued by Velasco and García (2014), promotes cognitive flexibility since it forces students to think critically and creatively between languages. This advantage is especially prevalent when it comes to solving problems — multilingual people are much better able to access a range of linguistic systems to come up with solutions. Affective factors (e.g., motivation, emotion) also guide translingual practices. Language is also involved in our feelings of identity and self, (Godlove, 2004; Kubota, 2016). For instance, the use of a native tongue might generate feelings of closeness and authenticity, whereas framing discourse in terms of a second language might trigger feelings of professionalism and cosmopolitanism. This emotional binding highlights the complex phenomenon of translingualism as an affective and cognitive one.

### 2.6.4 Translingualism in Digital Spaces

Richardson (2005) was the first to consider these principles in relation to translingual communication, and demonstrates how digital communication opens new avenues for translingual practices. Social media have been described as "translingual spaces" where languages are mixed as users switch or blend between them creatively in order to construct identities and communicate with people from diverse backgrounds (Androutsopoulos, 2015). Such platforms have given polyglots the opportunity to experiment with languages in ways that mirror their cultural hybridity and global experiences. For example, switching languages (or even switching up the spelling/pronunciation of the English language) in a conversation online is used to signal group membership, assert cultural identity, or appeal to the emotional tone of a message. As such, digital translingualism expands upon and transcends conventional, "real-world" linguistic practices, providing new reflections and insights on how language and identity converge in our modern age. Although translingualism provides meaningful considerations, it is not without its successful initiatives. Language heroism, writers like Flores and Rosa (2015), while advocating for the celebration of linguistic fluidity, caution that this celebration can obscure the structural inequalities that shape linguistic behavior. Transliteracy practices, for instance, may be valued in academic or professional domains of discourse but stigmatized in social contexts,

particularly for speakers of marginalized languages. In addition, pragmatism challenges the possibilities of translingual pedagogies as educators and institutions rooted in monolingual ideologies may be resistant to translingual practices. To overcome such challenges, however, we need to reflect more critically on the broader sociopolitical context of translingual practices.

Translingualism is ever-developing and is a topic that offers many avenues of research to explore advancement. Scholars like Canagarajah (2017) have begun to call for more attention to the intersection of translingualism and global topics, not just migration, but even digital communication and social justice. It also needs more research to see how translingual practices are effective in other cultural and linguistic contexts. These advances, paired with new methodologies, such as ethnographic research and discourse analysis, open up rich possibilities for investigating translingual practices in the world. Translingualism shapes culture, language acquisition, and citizenship, and by interdisciplinary thinking, brought as a new lens, researchers can explore implications of translingualism on identity, education, and society.

## 2.7 Sociopragmatics

Sociopragmatics—a specialized subfield of pragmatics—examines the multifaceted interplay among language and its sociocultural contexts (Levinson, 1983). Not just the basics of different languages, but also how humans utilize different words, expressions, and structures to create meaning, achieve social connection and conformity, and defy or question social patterns and conventions. As Levinson (1983) stresses sociopragmatics is the study of how context, including the social environment, influences how language is used as a tool for interaction, negotiation, and implicit meaning across different social contexts. We equally understand that effective communication has very little to do with linguistic competence or an understanding of how to respond to the words spoken but rather includes social competence and the ability to read the situation. Sociopragmatics offers an interesting area of research with translingual practices, which describe the flexible and dynamic deployment of more than one linguistic resource. Therefore, when individuals become translingual, they employ their entire linguistic repertoires, creatively mixing languages when necessary to meet communicative purposes (García, 2009). Such deployment is not arbitrary; it stems from the speakers' understanding of sociocultural conventions and of particular

conversational purposes. For example, code-switching may be an expression of solidarity, a way to assert authority, and a means to create inclusivity, depending on the context of the situation and the individuals or groups involved.

Indeed, these translingual practices extend beyond communicative assistance, rather, these practices participate in the continual identity building and negotiation process. From this, Wertsch (1991) goes on to explain that identity is not a stable or permanent feature; instead, it represents a product of social interaction and the discursive choices we make in such interaction. Translanguaging enables the speaker to negotiate complex sociolinguistic ecosystems, using various linguistic codes when appropriate according to their development in social identity (personal, cultural, or professional) statuses. For example, a speaker might use a non-standard variety of the same language for expressing their cultural heritage in a family environment and a standard variety of the same language for professional development in workplace. Next, it offers a sociopragmatic perspective that shows how translingualism subverts the idea of linguistic boundaries and hierarchies. The act of pulling from multiple resources highlights the interconnectedness of languages and their contextualization, pushing against the idea that languages are separate. This playful manipulation of language bears witnesses not just to individual creativity, but also reflects the social realities of multilingual contexts where linguistic fluidity is both a practical necessity and a means of self-expressive and identity negotiation in written and spoken communication. In conclusion, sociopragmatics provides perspectives that broaden our understanding of language interaction within society. This reframes understanding of the empowering role translingual practices play in traversing intersecting sociocultural dynamics, addressing communicative goals, and constructing and reconstructing identities in continuously shifting cultural contexts.

In translingualism literature, identity is the focal point of cognitive pragma-dialectical approaches. Language is not only a basic dimension of identity, since it denotes, among others, cultural ties, social association and self-concept (Norton, 2013; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Translingual practices encompass not just language use, but also identity negotiation—both personal and collective (Heller, 2007; Li Wei, 2011). Translinguals thus traverse a multilayered landscape of linguistic ambiguity, a mobility that requires "multiple, contested, and dynamic sets of linguistic allegiances" (Canagarajah, 2007, p. 372) and cultural loyalties (Li Wei, 2013). Intersection of

cognitive and pragmatic elements with identity construction activity touches on how individuals construct and renegotiate their identities in multilingual environments (Block, 2007; Pavlenko, 2008). Hence this intersection of translingualism, cognition, and identity illustrates the complex and elaborate relationships language use constructs within individuals and with others (Schmid, 2014; Schumann, 1978). Taking inspiration from Kramsch's (1993) concept of the "third place", this study aims to investigate the ways in which university students studying English as a foreign language understand themselves as multilingual agents and how their language practices shape their identities. As one construct which frames foreign language learning as a crucial path for shaping intercultural relations, this idea contradicts foreign language learners with a tendency to reframe their social identities, integrating components of their cultural background. Overall, through this study, it seems as though a majority of multilingual learners have positive attitudes towards the notion of multilingualism. They use their languages in a variety of contexts and actively negotiate and adapt their linguistic repertoire. They also conveyed that they had undergone changes in their identities as a direct result of their multilingual practices. The dynamic implies that multilingual students tend to negotiate their identities across the boundaries of their language. These identities are all modern, global, open, and committed to interculturality, all because of their multilingualism. That is, in these impressive findings, this study offers practical implications for study.

## 2.7.1 Negotiations of Identities in Multilingual Contexts

Post-modern, post-structural, and post-colonial frames have offered new metaphors for understanding social life, often used to critique political ideologies that suppress the expression of certain personal identities (Bourdieu, Foucault). These approaches of critique aim to expose latent power relations, dismantle fixed discourses and show the co-relational complexity of social identities (Bakhtin, Derrida). However, despite the aims of these approaches to liberate marginalized identities, these approaches come rife with biases and often lack empirical rigor. In the volume "Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts" (2003) edited by Pavlenko & Blackledge, who are grounded firmly in a post-structural paradigm, the editors argue that identity should be viewed as a dialogic, dynamic construct or narrative that is constructed and re-constructed through language in multilingual situations. This perspective confronts several central essentialist tenets in sociolinguistics, which often

consists of a 1:1 correspondence between language and social variables, and points to how historical circumstances inform the manner identity is conceptualized, and the possibilities for identity are constructed. One chapter by Pavlenko, for example, describes an evolution of immigrant identities in the United States across the 20th century, and illustrates that essentialist definitions of identity can no longer respond to the complexities of identities. In the introductory chapter, the authors explicitly did not want to define identity or multilingual identity or endorse particular theoretical or methodological perspectives, because they wanted to recognize the diversity of approaches represented in the special issue papers. They did not provide a lengthy overview of the key theoretical perspectives on multilingual identity in psychology, sociocultural, and post-structural approaches. The writers emphasized that the prevailing post-structural view, which treats identity as malleable and fluid, remains dominant. They also noted the emergence of new kinds of methods to more fully understand multilingual identity's complexity. This special issue focuses on the analytics of multilingual identity within education, paying attention to the critical role that education plays in the development of multilingual identity within individuals.

Translingualism is a dynamic and fluid approach to language that challenges traditional monolingual frameworks by emphasizing the strategic use of multiple linguistic resources in communication. Scholars such as Canagarajah (2013) and García and Wei (2014) argue that translingual practices—including code-switching, translanguaging, and multilingualism—reflect how speakers creatively blend languages to negotiate meaning, identity, and power in multilingual contexts. Unlike rigid language boundaries, translingualism views communication as adaptive, context-dependent, and shaped by social and cultural factors (Horner et al., 2011; Blommaert, 2018). This perspective highlights the agency of multilingual speakers who navigate diverse linguistic repertoires to meet communicative demands, resisting static language norms.

A central theme in translingual research is the role of language in identity negotiation. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) demonstrate that language choices are deeply tied to self-perception and social positioning, with multilingual speakers shifting between languages to assert belonging, resist hierarchies, or adapt to professional and cultural spaces (Canagarajah, 2017). For instance, a student may use their native language for emotional expression in informal settings while switching to English in

academic contexts to signal professionalism. These practices illustrate how identity is fluid and context-dependent, shaped by historical, sociopolitical, and postcolonial influences (Kubota, 2016).

The educational implications of translingualism have been widely explored, particularly through translanguaging pedagogy, which encourages students to leverage their full linguistic repertoires for learning (García & Wei, 2014). Studies show that this approach enhances comprehension, engagement, and inclusivity, particularly in multilingual classrooms (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). However, critics like Cummins (2008) caution against over-reliance on native languages, arguing that students still need structured exposure to the target language for academic success. This debate underscores the need for balanced pedagogical strategies that recognize linguistic diversity while ensuring proficiency in dominant academic languages. From a sociopragmatic perspective, translingualism intersects with power dynamics, social norms, and cultural negotiation. Blommaert and Rampton (2011) highlight how language use can either reinforce or subvert social hierarchies, with translingual practices serving as acts of resistance or accommodation. However, such practices are not always valued equally—Flores and Rosa (2015) note that code-switching and language mixing are often stigmatized in formal settings, particularly for speakers of marginalized languages. Emerging research also examines translingualism in digital and globalized contexts, where social media and migration foster hybrid language use (Androutsopoulos, 2015). Digital platforms act as "translingual spaces," allowing users to creatively blend languages to express identity and cultural hybridity. Meanwhile, historical and postcolonial studies (Pratt, 1991; Canagarajah, 2013) frame translingualism as a form of resistance against linguistic imperialism, particularly in societies where colonial languages dominate.

Despite extensive research on translingualism, a gap remains in understanding how undergraduate students navigate these practices in academic and social settings. This study aims to fill that niche by exploring how multilingual students employ translingual strategies to negotiate identity, manage sociopragmatic tensions (e.g., balancing professionalism with cultural authenticity), and cope with cognitive and affective challenges in higher education. By focusing on this demographic, the study contributes to translingual pedagogy, identity studies, and sociolinguistics, offering insights for fostering inclusive multilingual learning environments.

# CHAPTER 3

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methods used to study translingualism and identity shift among undergraduate students at the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad. It describes the mixed-method approach, combining quantitative surveys (closed-ended questionnaires) and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data. The chapter outlines the research design, sampling strategy, data collection tools, and analysis techniques (using SPSS for statistics and thematic analysis for interviews). It also discusses ethical considerations and the theoretical framework, which blends Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and García's translingualism to analyze how language use shapes identity.

The researcher has used a mixed method approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. For quantitative data, a closed-ended questionnaire was used to gather structured responses, allowing for statistical analysis. For qualitative data, unstructured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into participants' experiences and perspectives. Using mixed method approach, the researcher has analyzed translingualism and identity shift from multiple perspectives to have better understanding of the study.

## 3.1 Research Methods

This section provides the details of the methods of the study.

## 3.1.1 Research Design

The researcher has used an exploratory descriptive research design to determine the relationship between translingualism and identity shift. The exploratory descriptive research design is used to help gain insight, understand concepts, and generate hypotheses in a relatively understudied area (Zikmund et al., 2013).

## 3.1.2 Method of data collection

This study employed a mixed-method approach, using closed-ended questionnaires (See Appendix A) for quantitative data and unstructured interviews (See

Appendix B) for qualitative insights. The combination allowed for both statistical analysis and deeper understanding of participants' experiences.

The study qualifies as mixed-method because it integrates both numerical and narrative data to provide a fuller picture of the research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The rationale for this approach lies in triangulation, which enhances the validity and reliability of findings by cross-verifying results from multiple sources. This was essential to accurately capture the complexities of translingualism, identity shifts, and sociopragmatic behavior among participants.

The questionnaire for this study was developed by drawing on key elements from Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and García's Translanguaging Theory. From Vygotsky's perspective, the focus was on the idea that language is a mediating tool for learning, social interaction, and identity construction. Accordingly, several questionnaire items explored how students use different languages as tools to navigate academic tasks, interact with peers, and construct meaning within their social and educational environments.

From García's translanguaging framework, the emphasis was on the fluid and dynamic use of linguistic resources beyond fixed language boundaries. This guided the development of items that examined how participants blended Pashto, Urdu, and English in both academic and social contexts, how comfortable they were in shifting between languages, and how they perceived the effectiveness of such practices for communication and expression.

By integrating elements of both theories, the questionnaire was designed not only to capture participants' observable language practices but also to connect those practices with deeper sociocultural and identity-related dimensions. This ensured that the instrument reflected the dual focus of the study: the sociocultural functions of language use and the identity negotiations emerging from translanguaging practices.

During the process of data collection, certain challenges were encountered which slightly affected the pace of the study. Some students initially showed reluctance to participate due to concerns about confidentiality and the formal nature of academic research. It required repeated reassurance and clear explanations about anonymity to build their trust. Another difficulty was scheduling interviews, as students had varying academic timetables and personal commitments, which led to delays and rescheduling.

Moreover, linguistic sensitivity was also an issue; a few participants hesitated to openly discuss their language choices and identity-related experiences, particularly in the presence of peers, which necessitated creating a comfortable and private environment for interviews. These challenges, although time-consuming, were addressed through flexibility, patience, and continuous engagement with the participants, ensuring that the quality of data was not compromised.

### 3.1.2.1 Population

The population of this study consists of undergraduate students from universities in Swat and Islamabad. Data were collected from the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad respectively.

### 3.1.2.2 Sampling

This study employed purposive sampling combined with elements of convenience sampling. Purposive sampling was chosen because the research focused specifically on undergraduate students who actively engage with Pashto, Urdu, and English in their academic and social communication, making them most relevant to the objectives of the study. Convenience sampling was also applied due to practical constraints, such as accessibility to participants within the available timeframe and institutional settings.

The sampling criterion required participants to be undergraduate students enrolled in a recognized higher education institution in Swat, multilingual with active use of Pashto, Urdu, and English in daily life, and willing to participate in both the questionnaire and, where selected, the follow-up interviews. This criterion ensured that participants could provide authentic insights into translingual practices and their relationship with identity.

A representative sample of 200 undergraduate students from the selected Universities proficient in Pashto, Urdu, and English. 100 students have been chosen from the University of Swat, and another 100 from NUML, Islamabad. After distributing the questionnaire link to all eligible undergraduate students at the University of Swat and NUML Islamabad through official university channels and student networks, responses were collected over a predetermined period. From the total pool of respondents, a random selection algorithm was applied to choose 200 complete

responses (100 from each institution) for final analysis. Furthermore, for the interview phase, a total of 12 students have been selected—6 from each university, comprising an equal representation of 3 male students and 3 female students.

The sample of this study was unequal in terms of gender, academic disciplines, and linguistic backgrounds. This imbalance occurred primarily because participation was voluntary, and not all students showed the same level of willingness or availability to take part in the study. Moreover, access was constrained by institutional schedules and class timings, which limited opportunities to achieve equal representation across groups. While the use of a non-representative sample enabled the collection of rich and context-specific insights, it also meant that the findings are more reflective of the participating group rather than the entire undergraduate population.

Several factors have influenced the decision to choose the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad for this study. Being a resident of Swat Valley, collecting data is more convenient and practical at the University of Swat, utilizing the local context and available resources. Moreover, NUML, Islamabad is chosen due to the researcher's current enrollment there to ensure data collection easily and serve the academic community. In addition, they both provide comparable environments in which to study translingualism and identity shifts among undergraduates. Located in an area where Pashto is culturally relevant, the University of Swat provides linguistic insights at a local level. On the other hand, given its diverse student body, NUML, Islamabad provides different multilingual identities however it is more as a land mark of languages. The selection of the two universities under study also aligns with the objective, which is to better understand the relationship between language and identity in young students both in theory and practice. By connecting these two domains of research, it is possible to ensure that the socio-pragmatic aspects are covered and that the findings are relatable and applicable in the practical world as well.

## 3.2 Theoretical Framework

The researcher has applied Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and García's (2009) concept of translanguaging as a theoretical framework. Vygotsky's emphasis on social interaction as the foundation of cognitive development provides the structural framework, while García's concept of translingualism specifies the linguistic

mechanisms—code-switching, translanguaging, and polylingualism—through which identity is dynamically constructed.

The integrated framework guided the research design in three key ways: First, it positioned language as both a cultural tool (Vygotsky) and a fluid repertoire (García), allowing an analysis of how students employ Urdu, Pashto, and English for self-expression. Second, it framed identity formation as an internalization process shaped by institutional and sociocultural contexts, linking macro-level influences (university environments, language ideologies) with micro-level linguistic behaviors. Third, it informed the methodological approach, with survey questions probing language use patterns and interview questions exploring identity negotiation in social interactions. By merging Vygotsky's developmental perspective with García's linguistic focus, this study offers a comprehensive lens to analyze translingual identity shifts, capturing both the cognitive and sociolinguistic dimensions of multilingual students' experiences.

The present study aimed to explore this complex nature of translingualism and identity shift among the undergraduates of the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad. To examine this complex phenomenon extensively, this study adopts an integrated theoretical framework by combining Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory with Ofelia García's translingualism. One enables a multifaceted view of language use, identity negotiation, and sociocultural factors among a cohort of students.

## 3.2.1 The Sociocultural Theory of Vygotsky

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) reflects key components of the contextual and social influences of cultural interaction in cognitive development. From Vygotsky's perspective, cognitive and identity development occurs through interactions with cultural tools, especially language, which was one of the core cultural tools, and it shapes not only how communication works, but also how cognition and identity are constructed, and that is precisely why this research is so meaningful.

Vygotsky emphasizes the importance of social interaction in cognitive growth (Vygotsky, 1978). This idea resonates with García's work on translingualism, in which students negotiated language and identity as they engaged in a dialectic (or dialogical) relationship with the people and environment around them. This study is based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of cognitive development. New social-cognitive

theories place crucial importance on social interaction and cultural context in the cognitive development of children. These include culturally-specific tools, vectors and private speech. This theory has been applied in analyzing identity shift and translingualism. Translingualism is the practice of communication across different languages and cultures, which can illustrate cultural adaptation and the utilization of shared cultural instruments. Identity shift, however, is when a sense of who you are shifts based on which cultures and languages you interact with. The sharing of social norms is what Vygotsky refers to as the internalization of culture. Translingualism as process was the focus of the study, including how social interaction and cultural context shape identity shift. The study, in general, creates a solid base to comprehend the correlation of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the study of translingualism and identity shift.

## 3.2.2 García's Work on Translingualism

The concept of García on translanguaging (2009) aligns with Vygotskian sociocultural theory and also gives insight into the trajectory of dynamic language use at the crossroads of multilingual practice and identity. Ofelia García is among the well-known scholars of bilingualism and multilingualism (García, 2017), whose primary interest is translingualism, and what it signifies for identity.

### 3.2.2.1 Translingualism

García draws on the concept of translingualism, which gives people the ability to communicate and perform in multiple languages, and not be closely bound to any one particular system of language (García, 2009). Translingualism acknowledges an altogether more fluid, flexible and creative process of using language, during which speakers draw on features from an array of language repertoires for specific communicative purposes.

### 3.2.2.2 Fluid Language Use

García's framework draws attention to the varieties of dynamic, creative ways people draw on different languages. This complexity encompasses a variety of linguistic practices but not limited to code-switching, code-mixing, translanguaging and polylingualism (García, 2009). These practices acknowledge the fluidity, flexibility, and social/cultural-contextual nature of language.

### 3.2.2.3 Identity Implications

One of the ideas Garcia centers in framing her work is the impact of translingualism on identity, or the ways in which people internalize and transform language. That language is not neutral but has serious consequences for how identities are constructed and negotiated, which is evident in her research, which explores the relationship between identity and language choice and usage. Translinguals are those who operate in multiple, ideologically, and linguistically diverse worlds (García, 2009). During negotiation and expression of cultural, ethnic and national identities, language use becomes a critical component. According to García's work, individual utilizations of multiple languages serve to develop their perspective and are, therefore, shaped by their social positions.

### 3.2.2.4 Cultural and Linguistic Repertoires

García points to the importance of people's own linguistic repertoires, "the sets of languages and other linguistic resources that people have available to them and use in different contexts of communication" (García, 2009). Such repertoires are dynamic instead of being fixed and are actively constructed and refined throughout sociocultural experiences, interactions, and learning spaces. In García's perspective (García, 2009), languages reflect diverse linguistic repertoires, which should be taken into consideration and valued as they become essential aspects of individual and collective identity.

### 3.2.2.5 Sociocultural Contexts

Framed within a sociocultural view of language use, García's framework highlights the importance of social interactions, historical backgrounds, power dynamics, and social attitudes toward multilingualism as critical in shaping language practices and identity processes. Individuals navigate and negotiate their linguistic and cultural identifications according to the sociocultural contexts in which they are situated (García, 2009). A theoretical framework of translingualism, Garcia's findings prove to be significant around the variability of language practices and the depth of their effects on selfhood and grouphood in socio cultural settings.

Using Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of human consciousness and identity as a theoretical lens, this study has brought together findings from a dynamic, complex

approach to the socio-mechanical aspects of identity negotiation and to investigate the sociocultural influences of undergraduate students at the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad with the approach of translingual, transcultural literacies (García et al., 2017).

## 3.3 Methods of Data Analysis:

Following are the methods of data analysis for this study.

## 3.3.1 Quantitative Analysis:

The data for this research were analyzed using statistical software, namely SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Variables were categorized based on key themes such as language use and identity perception. Quantitative findings were presented using pie-charts and descriptive statistics to highlight trends. Such a research strategy has enabled systematic analysis of quantitative outcomes, uncovering statistical trends, patterns and associations in the data. SPSS has been used due to which quantitative understanding about translingualism and identity shift has been observed in order to add numerical findings in these qualitative observations. This reconciliation process has supplemented unstructured interviews to provide a deep understanding.

## 3.3.2 Qualitative Analysis:

The qualitative data collected through unstructured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. First, all interviews were transcribed carefully to ensure accuracy. The transcripts were then read multiple times to become familiar with the data and to identify recurring patterns and meaningful expressions related to translingual practices and identity perceptions. Next, initial codes were generated to categorize segments of data that captured important aspects of participants' language practices, attitudes, and identity negotiations. These codes were gradually organized into broader themes and sub-themes that reflected the objectives of the study, such as the use of multiple languages in academic tasks, the role of Pashto as a cultural anchor, and students' perceptions of English in shaping professionalism.

The analysis followed an inductive approach, allowing themes to emerge from the data rather than being imposed entirely from the theoretical framework. However, the interpretation of these themes was also informed by Vygotsky's Sociocultural

Theory and García's Translanguaging Theory, ensuring that the findings were grounded in established conceptual lenses. This process allowed for a nuanced understanding of how students negotiate their identities through multilingual practices in different contexts.

### 3.3.3 Validity

The instruments used for this study were valid because they are adequately aligned with the aim of determining the changing linguistic practices and identity of the target population. The questionnaire was carefully crafted; all items were directly related to core concepts and research questions of this study. The questionnaire was subsequently validated by four Ph.D. researchers at NUML, who gave valuable suggestions that helped refine and improve the research instrument. The researcher carefully integrated the suggestions, aligning the questionnaire more closely with the study's goals. Both the open and closed-ended questionnaires and interviews gave a deep insight into students' translingual behaviors and their effect on the formation of their identities. The results effectively illuminate students' perceptions of their translingual practices and shifts in identity, showcasing the instruments' success in drawing relevant and meaningful data. Thus, the accuracy of the tools used in this study is well-established and confirms their validity for meeting the purpose of the research.

Furthermore, validity was ensured by grounding the questionnaire in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and García's Translanguaging Theory, taking expert feedback, and conducting a pilot test for clarity and alignment with research objectives. For interviews, validity was strengthened through triangulation with questionnaire data. Reliability was checked through Cronbach's Alpha in SPSS, which confirmed internal consistency of the questionnaire items. For qualitative data, reliability was maintained through systematic transcription, coding, and an inter-coder check, ensuring stability of themes and transparency in interpretation.

### 3.3.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethics are an integral part of any research activity, borne with the process to safeguard participants' privacy, safety, and rights. Stringent ethical protocols were followed during data collection to ensure integrity as well as participants' well-being. To ensure an ethical conduct, the questionnaire was approved by four Ph.D.

department faculty members. This chapter also made use of their feedback to increase the precision of the research tools, while also ensuring that the tools were ethical and appropriately designed. Furthermore, in the introductory part of the research instruments, the educational purpose of the study as well as ethical commitments were presented. Respondents were told the research was for educational purposes and their answers would be kept strictly private. That transparency was a major step in building trust and obtaining their informed consent. The researcher was neutral and did not interfere during data collection. This ensured the credibility of conversations, as the topics were not driven by any externality. This ethical principle was implemented in the application of the questionnaire, where the autonomy of its freedom of expression without pressure was respected. These ethical principles guaranteed the protection of the rights and confidentiality of all the participants and increased the reliability and validity of the collected data. At both the analysis and interpretation levels, this involved placing the participants at the center of the study, with the researchers taking a back seat reflecting high standards of ethics and trustworthiness of the research environment.

This chapter outlines the comprehensive methodology employed to investigate translingualism and identity shifts among undergraduate students at the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the study combines quantitative data from 200 randomly selected students (100 from each university) through closed-ended questionnaires with qualitative insights from 12 in-depth interviews (6 per university with gender balance). The exploratory descriptive research design facilitates examination of this understudied phenomenon, with data collection strategically conducted at two contrasting yet complementary sites: the Pashto-dominant University of Swat and the linguistically diverse NUML Islamabad. The study is grounded in an innovative theoretical framework integrating Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes language as a cultural tool for cognitive development, with García's (2009) translingualism concept that views language as a fluid repertoire for identity negotiation. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS to identify statistical patterns in language use and identity perception, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis to uncover deeper narratives about linguistic choices and identity formation. Rigorous validity measures were implemented, including expert validation of instruments by four PhD researchers, while strict ethical protocols ensured

participant confidentiality and voluntary participation. This robust methodology enables a multidimensional analysis of how undergraduate students navigate multilingual identities across academic and social contexts, bridging macro-level sociocultural influences with micro-level linguistic behaviors.

# CHAPTER 4

# DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

## 4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the data analysis and interpretation based on qualitative and quantitative types of research oriented to investigate the translingualism and transformation of identity of undergraduate students at the University of Swat and NUML, Islamabad. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study seeks both quantitative data in a closed-ended questionnaire and qualitative data in unstructured interviews, providing a full picture of the phenomenon being studied.

For the quantitative part, a closed-ended questionnaire was used to collect data on the language practices, preferences, and perceptions of participants across several contexts was administered to the sample. Using this to track actual representations of some of the factors that drive language use. This data provides statistical measures on what key factors lead to shifts as well as on identity engagement/code switching.

The unstructured interviews, which produced qualitative data aimed at translingualism, bring out the participants' lived experiences and reflections on language use and identity. Through this qualitative exploration of sociocultural contexts and individual perspectives aligning with the quantitative outcomes, this approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the sociocultural dynamics and individual perspectives that shape and govern the quantitative outcomes. By the means of these methods, this chapter intends to deliver a holistic analysis based on Vygotskyan sociocultural theory and García's concepts on translingualism, in order to analize the data collected. Justification is given for the integrated framework which encourages an understanding of how students utilize their linguistic repertoires and negotiate identities in various social, academic, and cultural contexts. The present study investigates a set of variables to understand the relationship between translingualism and identity shift among undergraduates. Language choices and practices are influenced by independent variables such as societal expectations, academic requirements, and evolving social environments. The dependent variable is achieved through examining identity shifts, code-switching, and language's role in cultural affiliation. Data has shown how this leads to linguistic challenges, sense of acceptance

in peers and society, and perceptions on how different horizons of translingualism assist in a child/individual's developmental dimensions (social, emotional, personal). By incorporating such variables, the study offers an in-depth exploration of the intersection between language use and identity negotiation in both sociocultural and academic settings.

## 4.2 Quantitative Analysis

Through quantitative methods, the study aimed to assess shifts in language practices and identity among undergraduate students. Questionnaire data were analyzed to discern trends, correlations, and patterns in  language preference and identity. This analysis indicated clear differences in preference for English in academic and professional settings versus native languages, such as Pashto and Urdu, that were mostly employed in informal scenarios. And the results were  statistically significant—they show a really robust relationship between language use and self-concept, indicating that students modify their linguistic behavior to satisfy different environments, both socially and academically. Such observations made sense of translingual practices in a principled way and revealed their sociopragmatic underpinnings.

## 4.2.1 Demographic Information of the Participants

The following is the demographic information of the participants.

4.2.1.1 Age of the Participants

**Figure 1**

*Age of the Participants*
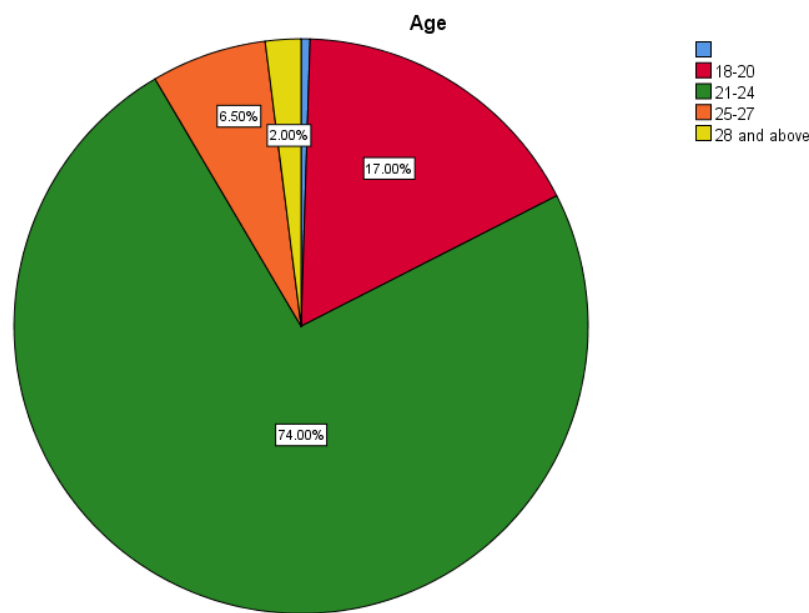


The pie chart in Figure 1 represents the age distribution of the respondents. The majority of participants (74%) fall within the age range of 21-24 years, indicating that the study primarily targeted individuals in this age group, likely university students or young adults. This is followed by 17% of respondents aged 18-20, suggesting that younger adults are also represented but to a lesser extent. Respondents aged 25-27 constitute 6.5%, while those aged 28 and above make up a mere 2% of the sample. The dominance of the 21-24 age group reflects the focus of the study on a relatively youthful demographic, possibly due to their active engagement in educational or social environments where multilingual practices and identity exploration are prominent. The smaller representation of older age groups could be attributed to the study's context, as older individuals may have less direct involvement in academic or social settings that prioritize multilingualism. This age distribution may influence the study's findings, as individuals in their early 20s are often in transitional stages of life, experiencing shifts in identity and increased exposure to diverse linguistic and cultural environments. In

contrast, older participants may exhibit more stable identity constructs and language preferences. Understanding this age-related variability is very important for understanding how diverse age groups understand and experience the connection between language use and identity. Further researches might consider growing the age range to capture a more diverse set of experiences.

4.2.1.2 Gender of the Participants

**Figure 2**

*Gender of the Participants*
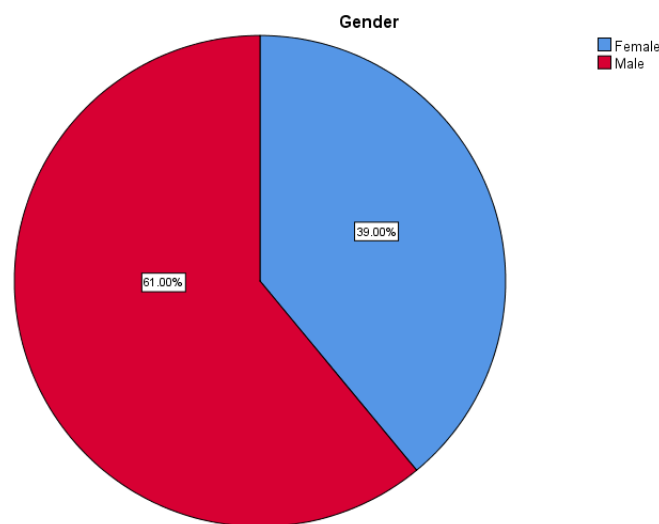


The gender distribution of study participants is shown in this pie chart (Figure 2), in which 61% of respondents were male compared to 39% female. This discrepancy suggests that the male participants outnumbered the females. The reported gender of the sample is one demographic variable that may have an impact on the study findings, especially when the variable will affect attitudes, behaviors, or experiences. Such a significant imbalance in representation may be indicative of greater cultural norms, accessibility differences, or interest levels between genders regarding the subject matter of the study. In the context of research data, it means that males were more accessible, participating, or engaging than females who may have been disadvantaged by social, institutional or personal barriers. This could have implications for the generalizability of the findings as, from a broader perspective, such a distribution might limit the applicability of the results. If more men were to respond to the survey, the

results may become biased to reflect a more male viewpoint, while the female experience is less represented. This disparity highlights the need to view any findings with consideration of the ways that gender dynamics may affect the data. Subsequent research should focus on achieving more equal gender representation in order to facilitate a well-rounded understanding of the investigational topic, or to investigate how disparities in gender influence the examined variables. This demographic fact, thus, allows us to situate and analyze the data, at a literacy level.

The unequal gender distribution observed in this study—61% male and 39% female—reflects broader contextual, cultural, and practical factors rather than researcher bias. In many educational and social settings, particularly in conservative or gender-sensitive regions, male participants may be more accessible, willing, or permitted to engage in research activities. Cultural norms, institutional structures, and even familial restrictions can limit female participation, especially in studies that require interaction with unfamiliar individuals or public disclosure of personal experiences. Additionally, interest levels or perceived relevance of the study topic may differ across genders, influencing voluntary participation rates. In some cases, male students may feel more confident or socially encouraged to express their views in academic research, while females may hesitate due to privacy concerns, time constraints, or lack of encouragement.

This imbalance, though unintentional, underscores the sociocultural dynamics at play in research settings and must be taken into account when interpreting findings. It also highlights the need for future studies to adopt inclusive recruitment strategies, ensuring that gender representation is more balanced to allow for broader generalizability and deeper insight into gendered experiences related to translingualism and identity.

4.2.1.3 University of the Participants

**Figure 3**

*Universities of the Participants*
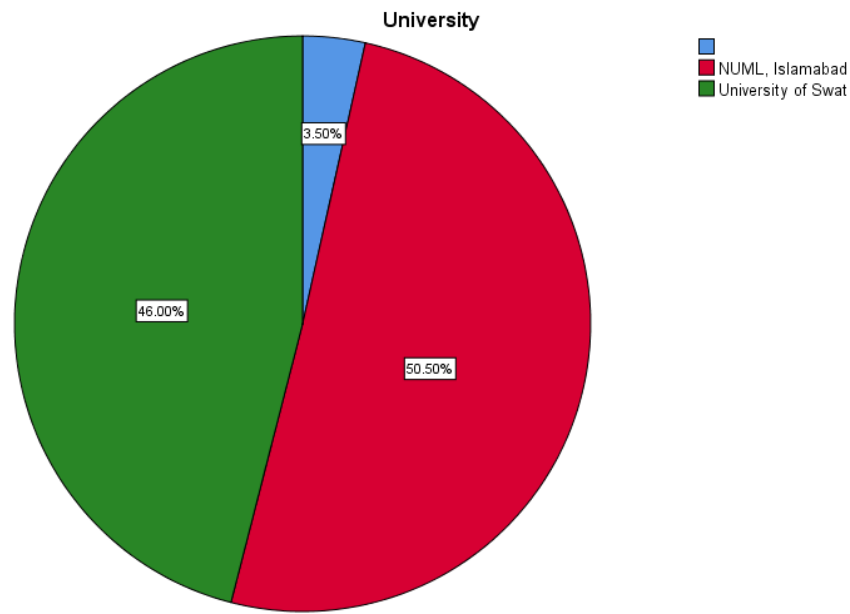


The pie chart in Figure 3 depicts the distribution of respondents based on their university affiliation. A majority, 50%, are affiliated with NUML, Islamabad, while 46% are from the University of Swat. A smaller segment, comprising 3.5%, represents no responses from the respondents. This distribution highlights a nearly balanced representation from NUML and the University of Swat. The chart reflects the primary focus of the study on respondents from these two key institutions.

4.2.1.4 Language Proficiency

**Figure 4**

*Language Proficiency of the Participants*

How proficient are you in each of the following languages? (Rate from 1 to 5, 1 being least proficient and 5 being most proficient)
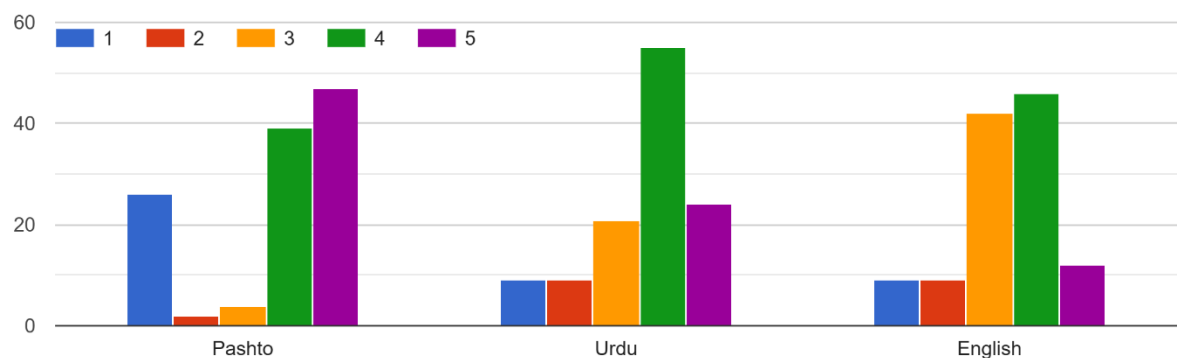


     The bar-graph in Figure 4 illustrates self-reported proficiency levels in Pashto, Urdu, and English on a scale from 1 (least proficient) to 5 (most proficient). For Pashto, the majority of respondents rated themselves at level 5, indicating native or near-native fluency. This high proficiency aligns with Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), who emphasizes the foundational role of mother tongues in shaping linguistic competence and identity through early socialization and daily communication. In Urdu, the concentration of responses at level 4 reflects a strong but slightly less dominant command. As the national language and medium of formal communication in Pakistan, Urdu is widely taught and used in institutional settings. Rahman (2002) explains that Urdu occupies a significant ideological and functional space, which supports high but not always native-level proficiency among speakers of other mother tongues like Pashto. Proficiency in English appears more varied, with the highest number of respondents at level 3, followed by level 4 and a smaller number at level 5. This distribution indicates moderate to advanced competence. Mahboob (2009) observes that English in Pakistan functions as a second language, often acquired through education and used in academic and professional domains. The limited representation at levels 1 and 2 suggests that most

respondents have at least basic working knowledge of English, supporting their translingual abilities across languages.

Overall, the data reflects strong native proficiency in Pashto, high institutional proficiency in Urdu, and growing functional proficiency in English. These trends highlight the multilingual and translingual realities of the respondents, who navigate diverse linguistic contexts in daily life.

4.2.2 Language Usage and Preference

**Figure 5**

*Language Choices Expressing Cultural Identity*
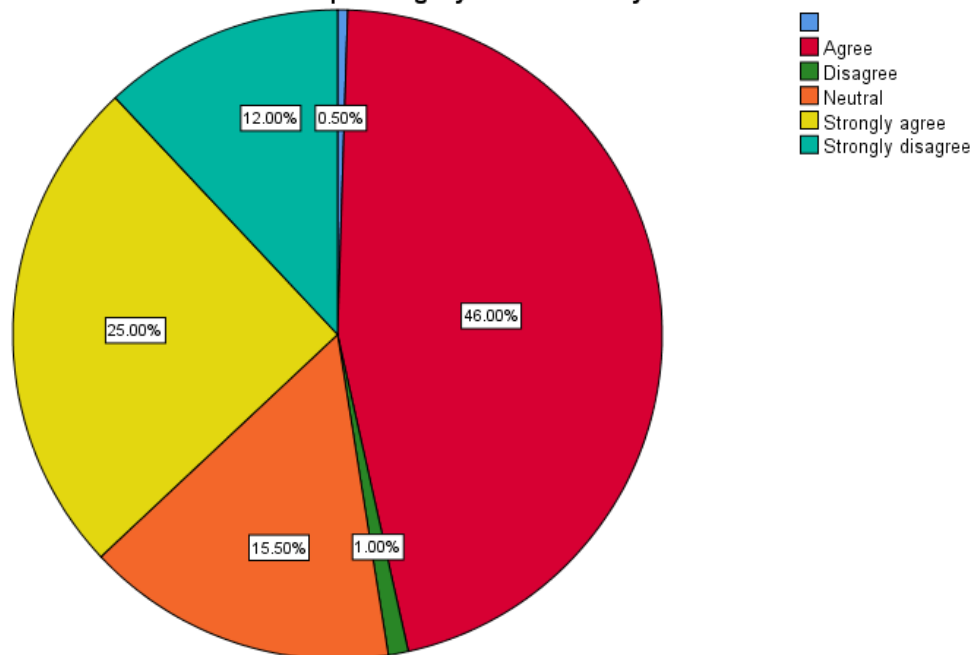


The data in Figure 5 indicates that a majority of respondents (71%) agree or strongly agree that language choice significantly influences the expression of their cultural identity, with 46% agreeing and 25% strongly agreeing. This suggests that language is widely perceived as an important marker of cultural identity. A smaller portion, 15.5%, remains neutral, indicating uncertainty or mixed feelings about the relationship between language and cultural expression. Only a minimal percentage disagrees, with 1% disagreeing and 12% strongly disagreeing. This minority view

suggests that for some, language choice may not play a major role in their cultural identity, possibly due to other dominant factors such as values or traditions. While 0.50% of the respondents have ignored answering the question. Overall, the data highlights the pivotal role language plays in cultural identity for the majority of respondents.

**Figure 6**

*Comfort Level of the Participants in Each Language*

How comfortable are you communicating in each of the languages mentioned? (Rate from 1 to 5, 1 being least comfortable and 5 being most comfortable)
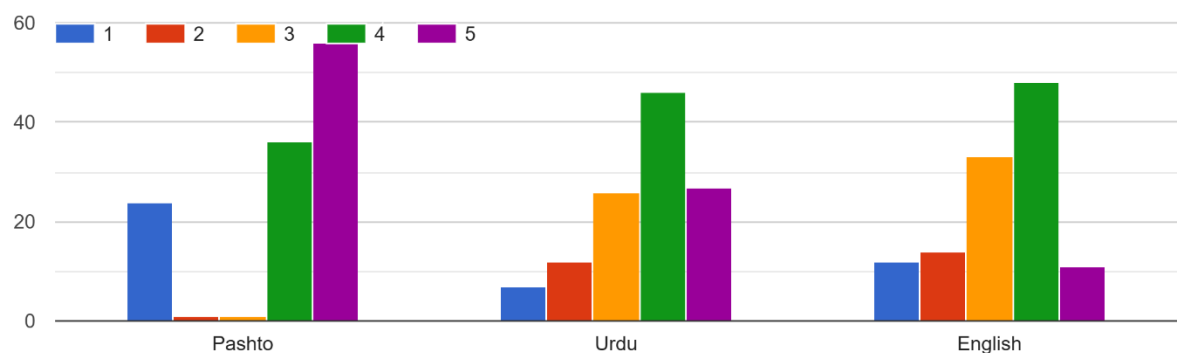
The bar graph in Figure 6 illustrates the level of comfort participants feel when communicating in Pashto, Urdu, and English on a scale from 1 (least comfortable) to 5 (most comfortable).

For Pashto, the majority of respondents (approximately 50) rated their comfort level as 4, indicating a high level of ease in communicating in their native or regional language. A significant number of participants rated their comfort level as 3, while lower comfort levels (1 and 2) were less frequent. This suggests a strong linguistic familiarity and confidence with Pashto among the respondents.

In the case of Urdu, the distribution is also skewed towards the higher levels, especially at level 4, where around 40 of the participants reported feeling very comfort level. but there is a fairly even distribution across the other levels compared to Pashto,

with significant percentages at levels 3 and 5. This suggests that the respondents have varying degrees of comfort with Urdu, which may also be a direct reflection of its status as a second language for many of the respondents.

Again, numbers for English reflect similar pattens as we see for Urdu, in that quite a few people rated their comfort level as 4. At levels 3 and 2, comfort is still seen, albeit through a more collectively variegated lens of proficiency and confidence. That suggests English — which, in this context, is often a third language — may be less embedded in everyday communication, yet also recognizable to many. The self-reported proficiency levels in Pashto, Urdu, and English from Figure 4 closely align with comfort levels shown in Figure 6. For example, high proficiency in Pashto corresponds to high comfort levels, while English, with more moderate proficiency, also reflects more varied comfort. This internal consistency strengthens the validity of the data and underscores the strong relationship between language competence and communicative comfort.

Overall, Pashto emerges as the most comfortable language for the majority, reflecting its cultural and regional prominence. Urdu holds a strong secondary position, and English demonstrates varied comfort levels, highlighting its role as a more formal or academic language in the respondents' linguistic repertoire. These findings align with multilingual dynamics where native languages provide a foundation of comfort, while secondary and tertiary languages are associated with varying degrees of proficiency and situational usage.

**Figure 7**

*The Need to Adjust Language Use*

How often do you feel the need to adjust your language use based on the social group you are interacting with?



Legend:
- Always
- Never
- Often
- Rarely
- Sometimes

15.00%
5.00%
49.00%
21.50%
9.50%
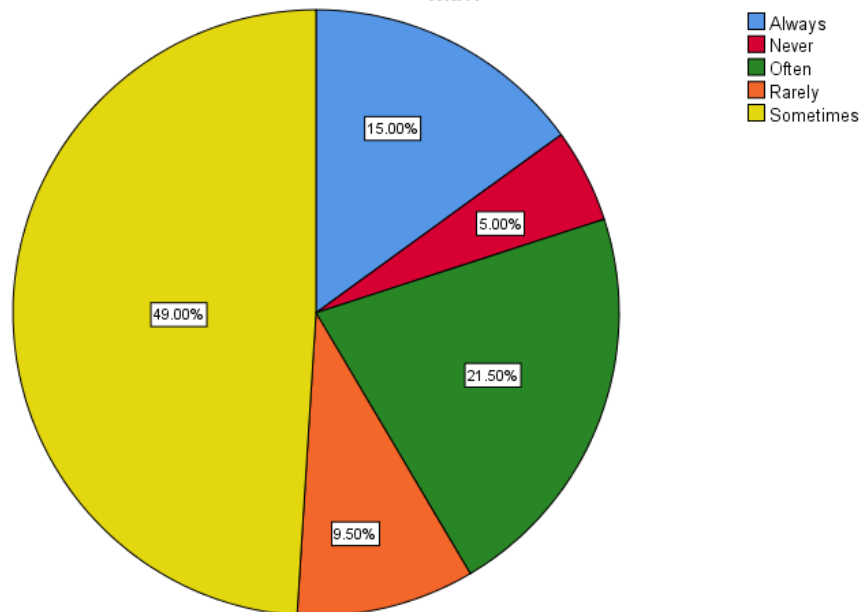
The data in Figure 7 indicates that a significant portion of respondents (85%) feel the need to adjust their language use at least occasionally, with 49% indicating they "sometimes" make adjustments, 21.5% doing so "often", and 15% "always" adapting their language based on the social group they are interacting with. This trend highlights the importance of linguistic flexibility in navigating social contexts, aligning with García's concept of fluid language use and translingual practices. A smaller number of respondents show little flexibility, with 9.5% saying they "rarely" and 5% "never" change their language. These findings add to a growing body of work that emphasize the importance of social interaction and the influence of social and cultural environments on language use, found in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Language as a cultural tool for identity negotiation and social adaptation is evident throughout the data, which is striking, given the diversity of contexts.

## 4.2.3 Translingual Practices

**Figure 8**

*Engagement of the Participants in Code-Switching*



How often do you engage in code-switching between languages during conversations?

Legend:
- Frequently
- Never
- Occasionally
- Rarely

- 40.00%
- 5.00%
- 40.50%
- 14.50%
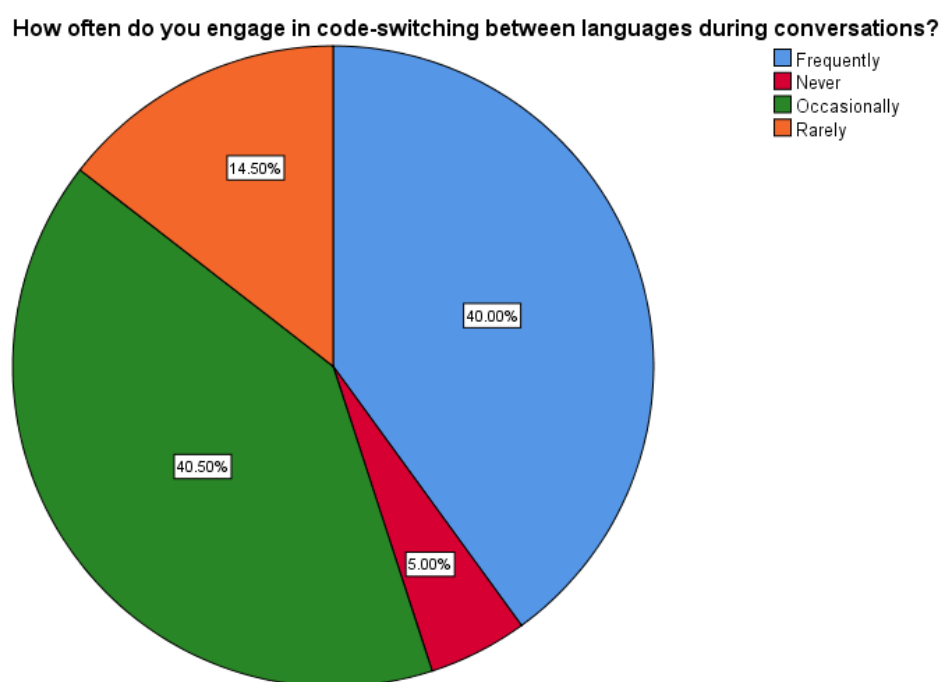
There is a  large majority of participants that carry out this practice frequently (40%) or occasionally (40.5%) which implies that switching from one language to another is only the norm among a majority of the participating individuals (see Figure 8). This aligns with García's translingual orientation, which shows the fluid and dynamic use of multiple languages to accommodate a variety of communication demands. The above figure indicates that a smaller percentage of respondents engages in code-switching "rarely" (14.5%), and even fewer, only 5%, say they "never" do, indicating that code-switching holds less relevance or necessity in their linguistic interactions. Importantly, these analyses highlight the fact that language use as a sociocultural tool is dynamic – functioning in the moment and co-constructed through social interaction and cultural context, as per Vygotsky. It reflects the importance of

code-switching especially given how it both enables effective communication and captures the fluidity of identity in multilingual contexts.

**Figure 9**

*Situations or Contexts Prompopting Code-Switching*
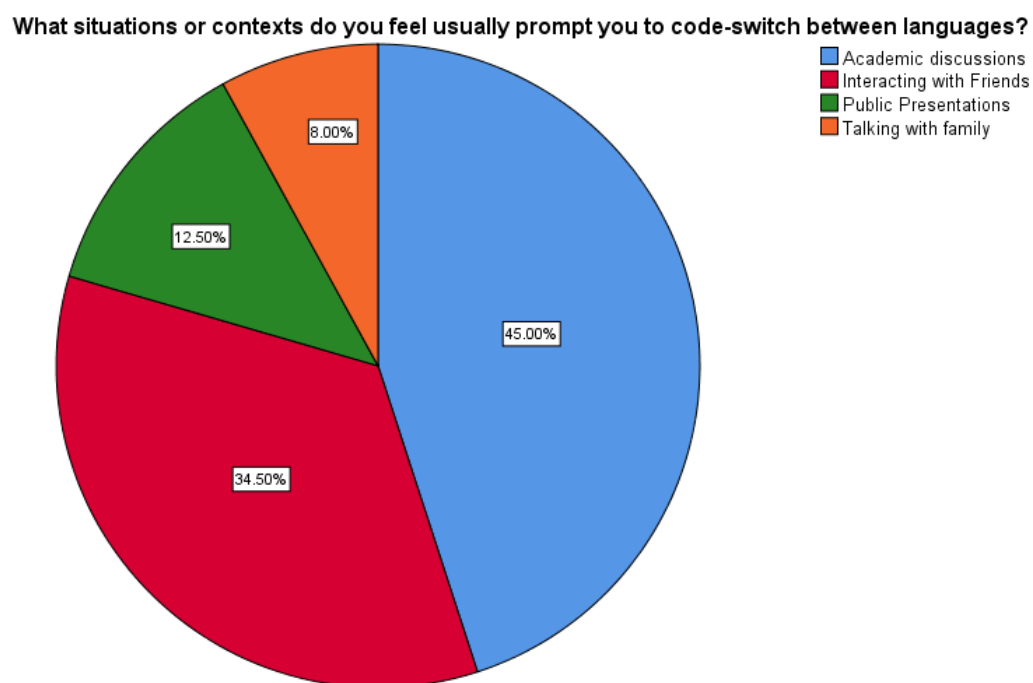


The data in Figure 9 shows that academic contexts (45%) are the most likely contexts for respondents when they will engage with code-switching, as they need to navigate technical or multilingual academic language even in formal environments. Interactions with friends (34.5%) come second, indicating that even informal social situations lend themselves to fluid language, probably for convenience of expression or solidarity. Public speeches (12.5%) are associated with rare code-switching, suggesting a preference for a standard or uniform linguistic style in formal contexts. Family (8%) is the context least associated with code-switching, perhaps due to existing shared linguistic norms during conversation. These findings resonate with García's translinquialism, where language choices and use are context-bound and informed by interpersonal connections (García, 2009). They also align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which places importance on the context and interactional aspects of the language practices. Overall, the data highlight the role of specific contexts in

motivating individuals to modify their language families to different communicative situations.

**Figure 10**

*Multiple Language Usage's Effect on Identity*



Do you feel that using multiple languages affect your sense of identity?
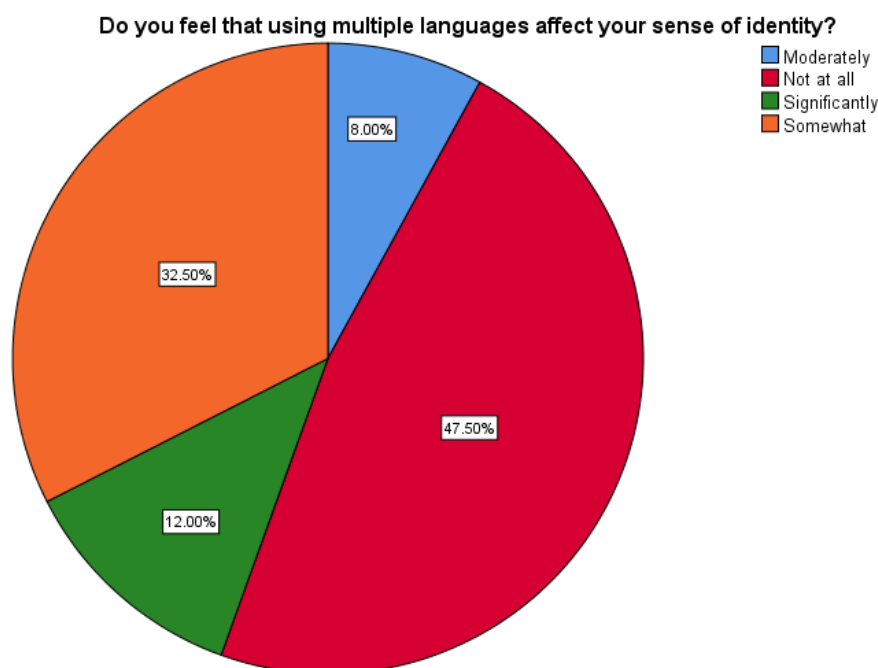
The data presented in Figure 10 shows that almost half of the respondents (47.5%) do not at all feel that using different languages makes them feel less or more of a certain identity, implying that understood empirically, language use and identity, for many people, operates separately. But a significant segment (32.5%) said it was "somewhat" important to their identity; smaller percentages said it was "moderately" (8%) or "significantly" (12%) important. The results indicate a spectrum, where some people see multilingualism as central part of identity others consider it a neutral or practical tool for communication. In Figure 10, 47.5% of respondents say that using different languages has *no effect* on their sense of identity, while Figure 5 shows that 71% agree or strongly agree that language choice shapes cultural identity. This suggests that while language is clearly seen as a marker of *cultural* identity, it may not always affect one's *personal* or psychological sense of self — a nuanced distinction worth exploring. This variation suits the context of García's work with translingualism, with showing us how judgements about linguistic practice can be a matter of a context-

dependent fluidity in which identities come to be reproduced, or sometimes broken. Moreover, it resonates with Vygotsky's concept of sociocultural factors, where the relationship between language and identity varies as per individual social interactions and cultural settings. The data overall shows that the relationship between translingualism and identity is complex and differs from one person to another.

**Figure 11**

*Importance of Cultural Background in Shaping Identity*
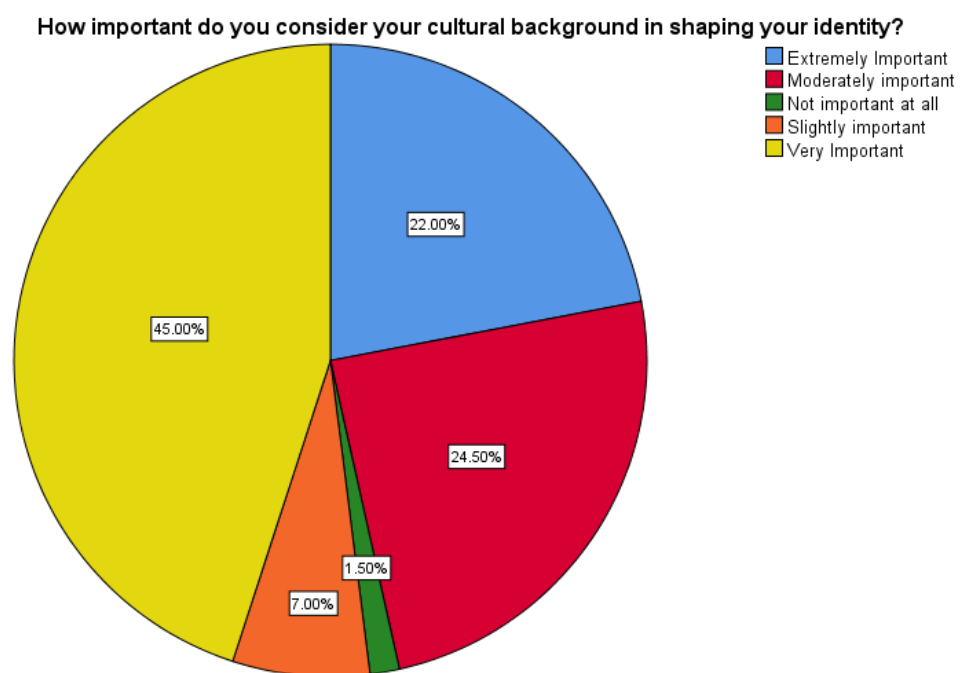


The data in Figure 11 shows that a significant majority of respondents (67%) consider their cultural background to be either "very important" (45%) or "extremely important" (22%) in shaping their identity. This highlights the centrality of cultural heritage in individual identity construction. Additionally, 24.5% find it "moderately important," indicating that while culture plays a role, other factors may also contribute significantly to their sense of self. A small percentage views it as "slightly important" (7%) or "not important at all" (1.5%), suggesting minimal reliance on cultural roots for identity formation. These findings align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, emphasizing the influence of cultural tools and social interactions on identity development. They also resonate with García's notion that cultural and linguistic practices deeply intertwine with identity. Overall, the data underscores the predominant

role of cultural background in shaping individuals' identities, while recognizing the diversity of perspectives on its importance.

**Figure 12**

*Cultural Affiliations Influence on Social Interactions within the University*

To what extent do your cultural affiliations influence your social interactions within your university environment?
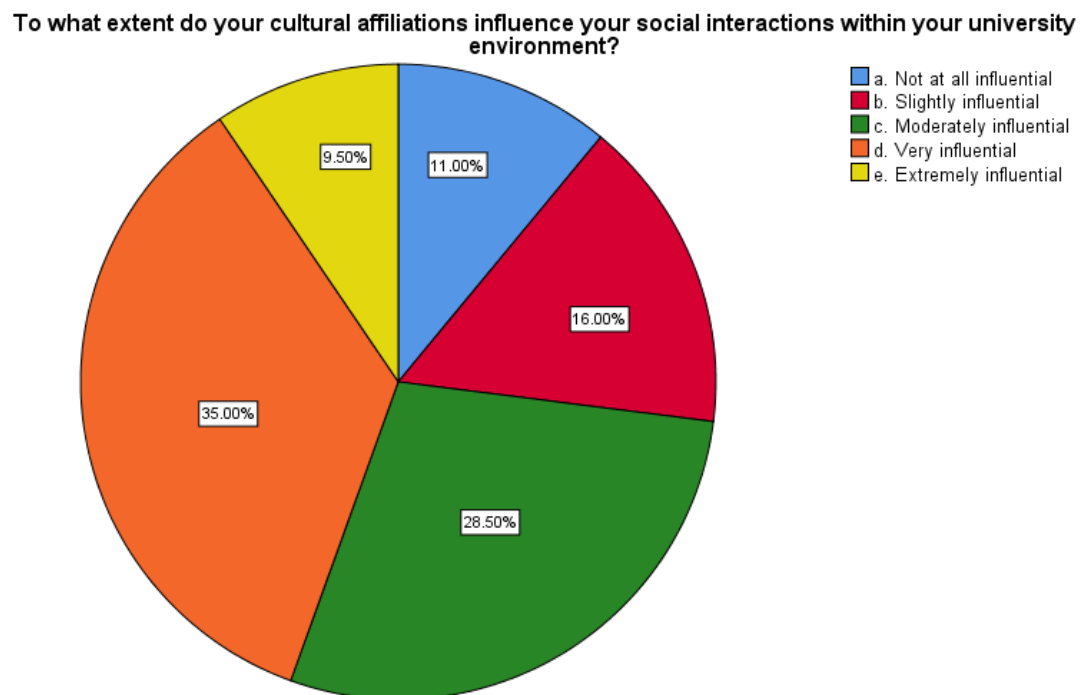


The data in Figure 12 reveals that cultural affiliations have varying degrees of influence on respondents' social interactions within the university environment. A majority (73%) report that their cultural affiliations are at least "moderately influential" (28.5%), "very influential" (35%), or "extremely influential" (9.5%), indicating that cultural identity plays a significant role in shaping their interpersonal dynamics. Meanwhile, 16% find it "slightly influential," and 11% consider it "not at all influential," suggesting that some individuals prioritize other factors, such as shared academic goals or personal interests, over cultural connections in social interactions. These results are consistent with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the interaction of social interactions and cultural context in behavioral development. Moreover, they present similarities with García's understanding of translingualism, where language use is used to perform a cultural orientation, in turn, helping to

negotiate identity. This analysis emphasizes the complex interplay between cultural connections and social networks in a  multicultural university environment.

## 4.2.4 Sociopragmatic Factors

**Figure 13**

*Societal Norms Influence on Language Choice in Different Contexts*



To what extent do societal norms influence your choice of language in different contexts?
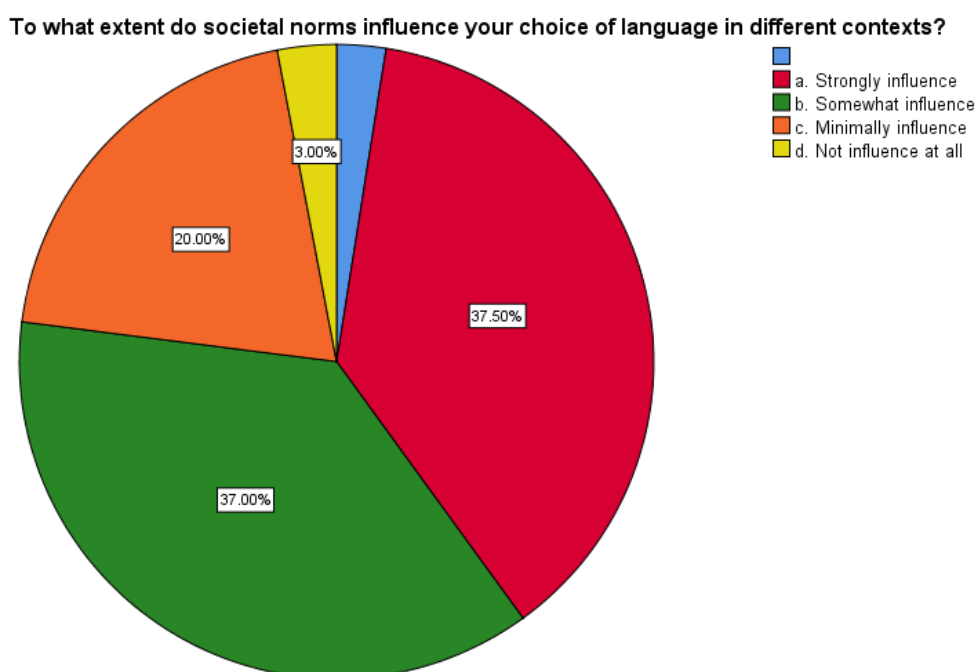
As seen in Figure 13, the data shows that societal norms play an important role in language choice for a number of respondents, with 37.5%, stating that they are "strongly influenced" and 37% describing themselves as "somewhat influenced." This indicates that everything is framed by what society expects  and what the culture thinks it should be like. A smaller group of respondents (20%) say societal norms  do have a "minimal influence" on their speech, and just 3% claim it has "no influence at all". These results in accordance with Vygotsky sociocultural theory describe the interaction of social and cultural forces in directing behavior, including language use. Moreover, García's lens of translingualism significantly complements the socially

constructed nature of language choices as the dynamic negotiation of language choices mediated by societal norms, especially in multilingual contexts.

**Figure 14**

*Impact of Societal Expectations on Language Choices in Social Interactions*

How do you perceive the impact of societal expectations on your language choices in social interactions?

Legend:
- a. No impact
- b. Minimal impact
- c. Moderate impact
- d. Significant impact
- e. Very significant impact

Pie chart values: 3.50%, 9.50%, 14.00%, 30.50%, 34.50%, 8.00%
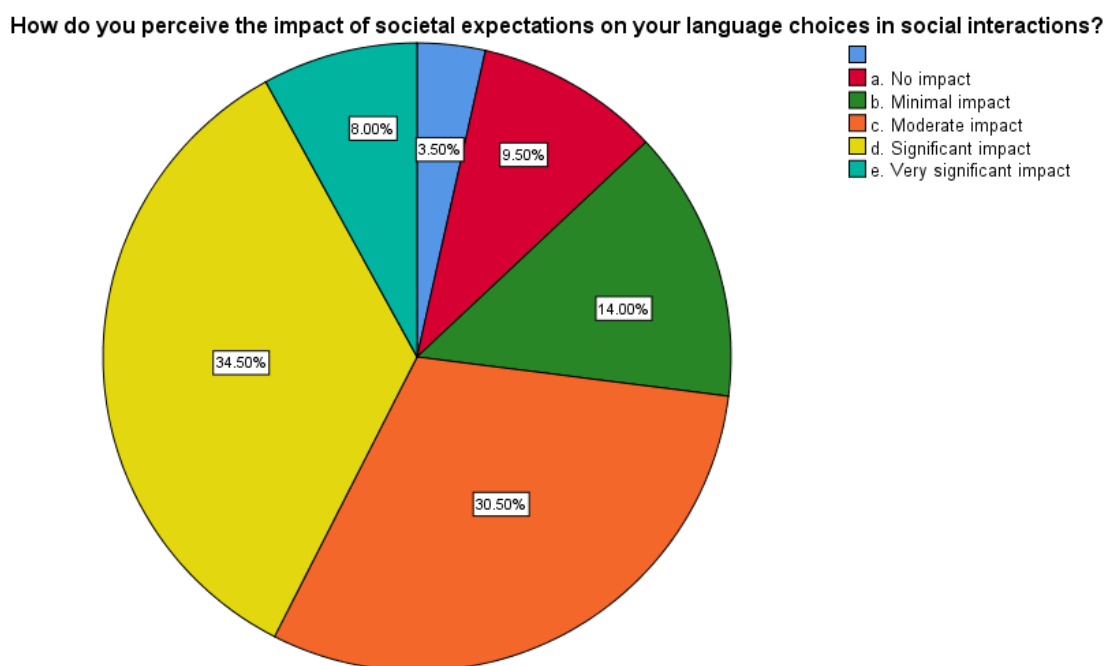
The data in Figure 14 shows that societal expectations effect language choices in social interactions to varying degrees. A majority of respondents (73%) report experiencing at least a "moderate impact" (30.5%), "significant impact" (34.5%), or "very significant impact" (8%), indicating that societal norms are a key factor in shaping linguistic behavior. Meanwhile, 14% feel a "minimal impact" and 9.5% perceive "no impact", suggesting that a minority maintain greater autonomy in their language choices. These findings align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which highlights the influence of social contexts and cultural tools, like language, on individual behavior. Additionally, they resonate with García's translingualism framework, emphasizing the adaptability of language use in response to external social pressures. Only 3.50% of the respondents have not recorded their answers which is negligible. Overall, the data underscores the significant role of societal expectations in guiding language practices, while recognizing individual variability in sensitivity to these influences.

**Figure 15**

*Feeling of Acceptance by Peers during Switching Languages*
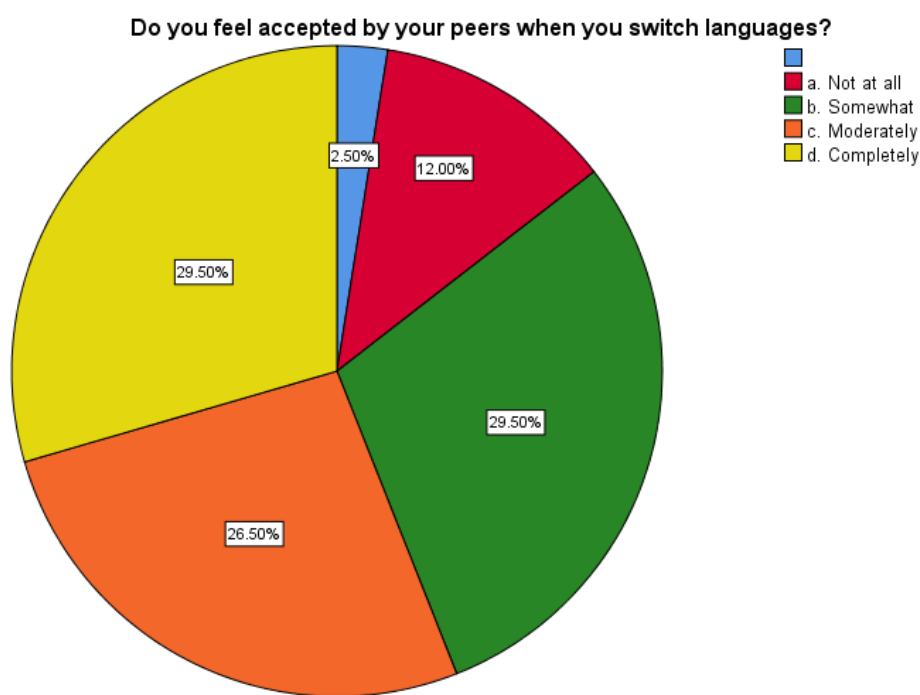


The data in Figure 15 indicates a mixed perception of peer acceptance when switching languages. A majority of respondents (85.5%) feel some level of acceptance, with 29.5% feeling "somewhat" accepted, 26.5% "moderately" accepted, and another 29.5% "completely" accepted. However, 12% report feeling "not at all" accepted, suggesting that language switching may still be a source of discomfort or exclusion for a minority. These findings align with García's concept of translingualism, which emphasizes the dynamic negotiation of language use within social contexts, often influenced by cultural and linguistic attitudes. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory further supports the idea that social interactions, including acceptance by peers, shape language practices and identity. Whereas, 2.50% of the respondents didn't respond to the question. The results highlight the importance of fostering inclusive attitudes toward multilingual practices to ensure greater acceptance and ease in language switching within peer groups.

**Figure 16**

*Effects of Language Choice on How Others Perceive One's Cultural Identity*



How much do you believe your choice of language affects how others perceive your cultural identity?
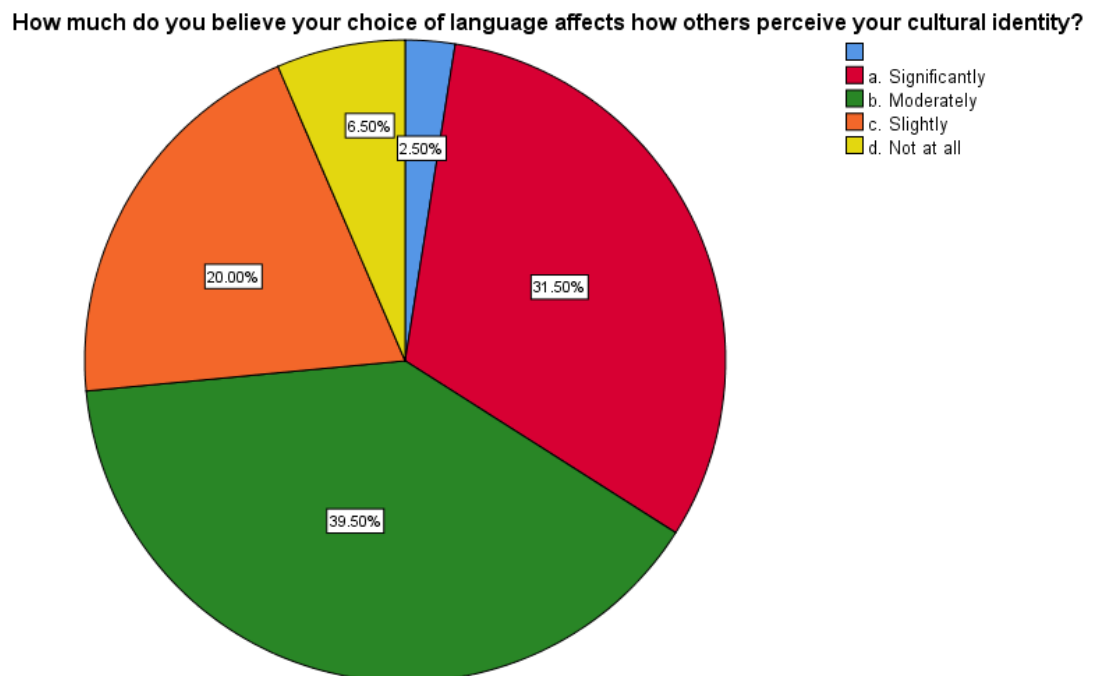
The data in Figure 16 indicates that most respondents believe their choice of language affects how others perceive their cultural identity, with 31.5% reporting a "significant" impact and 39.5% a "moderate" impact. This suggests a strong connection between language use and the perception of cultural identity. Meanwhile, 20% feel the impact is "slight," and 6.5% believe it has "no impact," reflecting a minority perspective where language is less tied to cultural identity. These findings align with García's framework on translingualism, emphasizing the role of language as a dynamic tool for expressing and negotiating identity. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory further supports the view that language, as a cultural tool, mediates social interactions and influences how identity is constructed and perceived. However, only 2.50% of the respondents didn't record their answers. Overall, the results underscore the significant role language plays in shaping and projecting cultural identity in social contexts.

**Figure 17**

*Challenges Faced during Switching between Languages in Multilingual Settings*



What challenges, if any, do you face when switching between languages in multilingual settings?

a. Difficulty in finding appropriate words
b. Grammar structure confusion
c. Difficulty in maintaining fluency
d. Feeling of discomfort or self-consciousness
e. Not Applicable
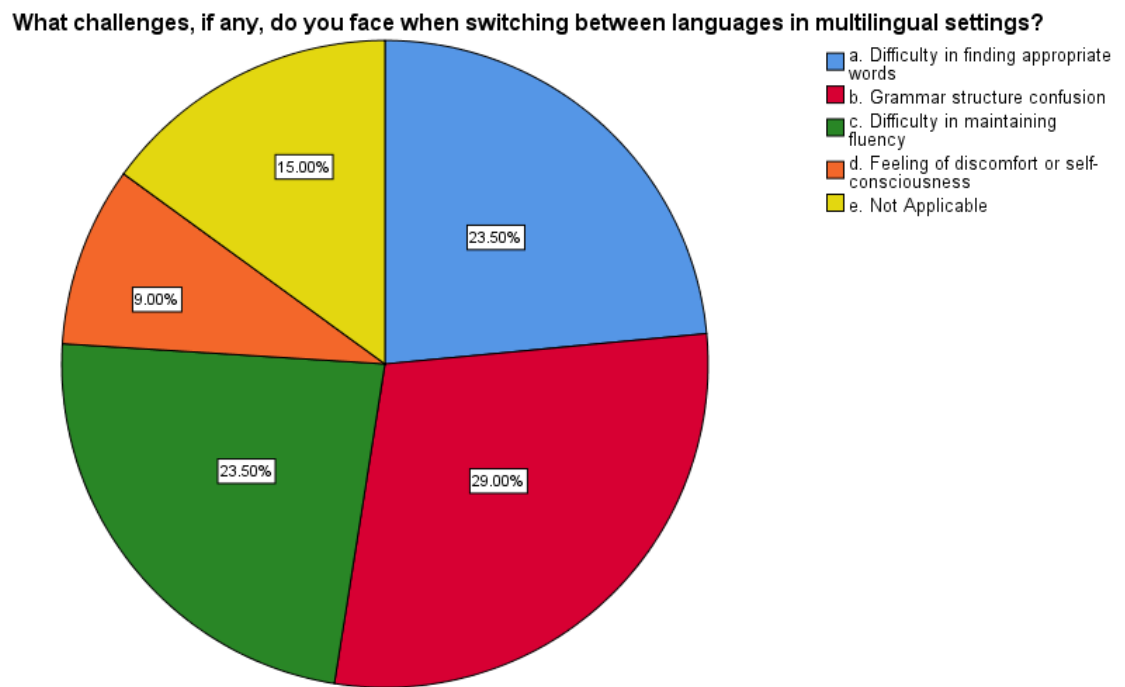
The data presented in Figure 17 shows the challenge various respondents experience when switching languages across multilingual scenarios. The most frequent problem is "grammar structure confusion" (29%), which demonstrates the complexity of navigating different languages systems. An almost equal proportion (23.5%) indicate difficulty finding suitable words and difficulty maintaining fluency, suggesting problems with vocabulary retrieval and flowing speech. Another small proportion (9%) reports a "feeling of discomfort or self-consciousness" implying some emotional obstacles to switching languages. Notably, 15% of respondents find these challenges "not applicable", suggesting ease in switching languages for a minority. When 9% of respondents in Figure 17 reported *"feeling of discomfort or self-consciousness"* while switching languages, this emotional challenge may stem from perceptions of peer attitudes. As Figure 15 shows, while 85.5% feel some level of peer acceptance during language switching, 12% reported feeling "not at all accepted." This lack of acceptance can explain the discomfort expressed by some, highlighting how peer dynamics influence emotional ease in multilingual interactions. While these findings support García's notion of translingualism when individuals navigate dynamic linguistic

practices that can be overwhelmingly challenging at times. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory further emphasizes that linguistic adaptation is context-bound and reliant on individual proficiency, as it is heavily influenced by social interactions and cultural instruments. In general, the data displays a variety of linguistic challenges on the part of the users indicating the requirement of aid for improving multilingual skills.

**Figure 18**

*Connection Felt to Cultural Heritage while Communicating in a Specific Language*
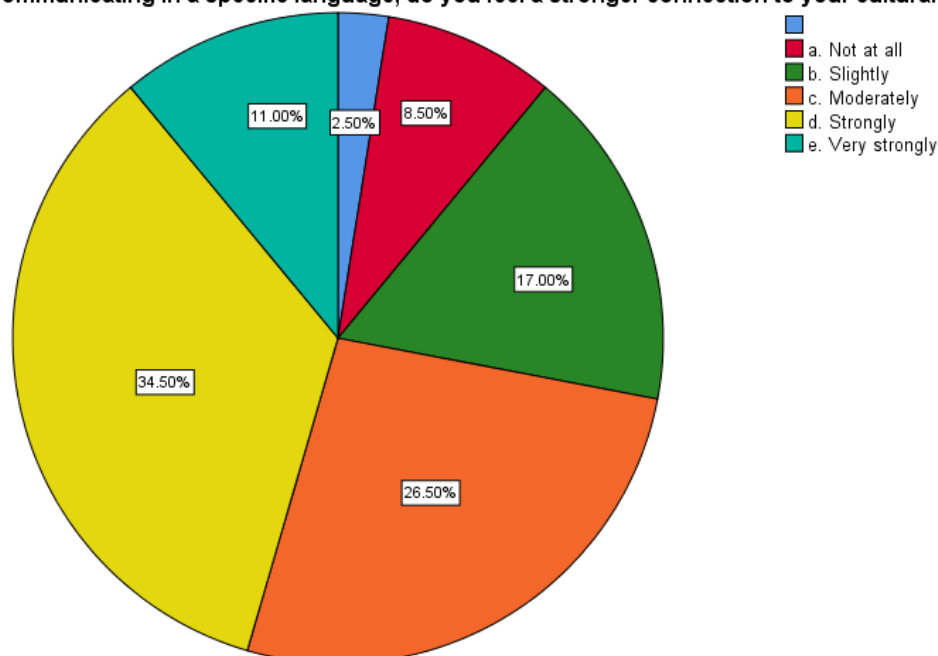


As presented clearly in figure 18, 34.5 percent of respondents connect their cultural heritage "strongly" when speaking in a particular language, and 11 percent "very strongly." And another 26.5 percent say that relationship is "moderate" — meaning for a solid majority (72 percent) of respondents, language is a considerable facet of their connection to their authenticity, to their cultural roots. 17 percent, on the other side of the scale, say they feel a "slight" connection and 8.5 percent say they feel "no connection at all", showing that the language spoken for many may not be a fundamental aspect of their cultural identity at all. These findings relate to García's translingual work which recognizes language as an ongoing vehicle, contributing to, and mediating, culture identification. In this sense, language is a cultural tool; some

intermediary between the child and their cultural environment, the foundation of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Miller, 2011).

## 4.2.5 Identity and Translingualism

**Figure 19**

*The Impact of Being Translingual on Sense of Self-Identity*
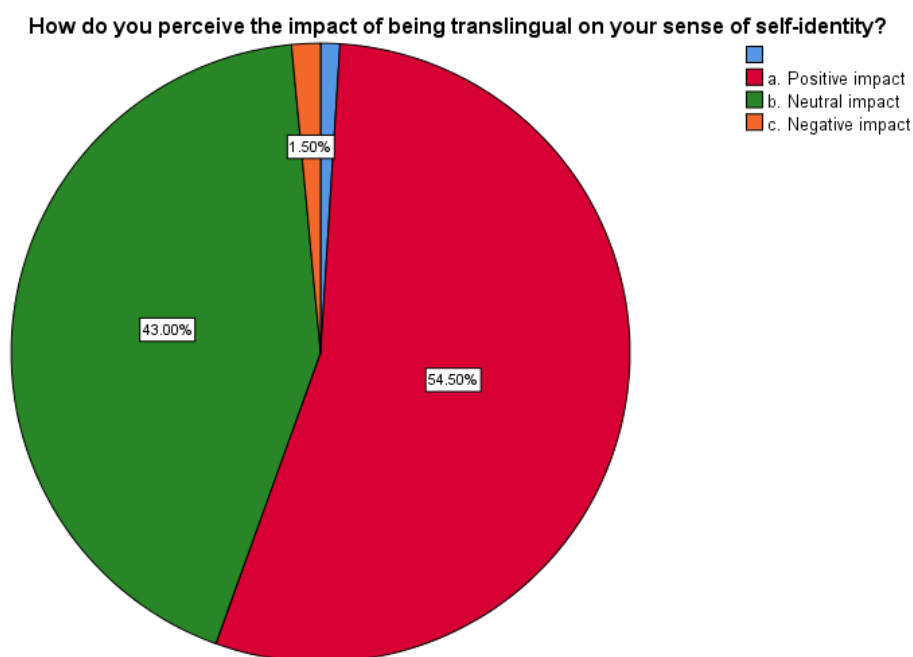


The data in Figure 19 indicates that being translingual has a predominantly positive influence on respondents' sense of self-identity, with 54.5% perceiving a "positive impact." A significant portion, 43%, views the impact as "neutral," suggesting that while they may not see translingualism as transformative, it remains a part of their identity. Only a small minority (1.5%) perceive a "negative impact," indicating that translingualism is generally viewed as a beneficial or non-intrusive aspect of identity. These findings align with García's translingualism framework, which highlights translingualism as a dynamic resource for identity expression and negotiation. Linguistic scaffolding leading to higher-level skills is about quality rather than quantity; rather than how many words are said to children, the impact of the words said is crucial for cognitive and later identity development. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory also supports this view, in which, in addition to interactions mediated by the theoretical

teachers, language is a tool that shapes intertwined cognitive  and cultural development. The overwhelmingly positive perception underscores the empowering role of translingualism to foster adaptability, cultural belonging, and self-expression, while neutral responses reflect its intersection with everyday  identity with little bearing.

**Figure 20**

*Experiencing a Shift in Identity while Switching between Languages*
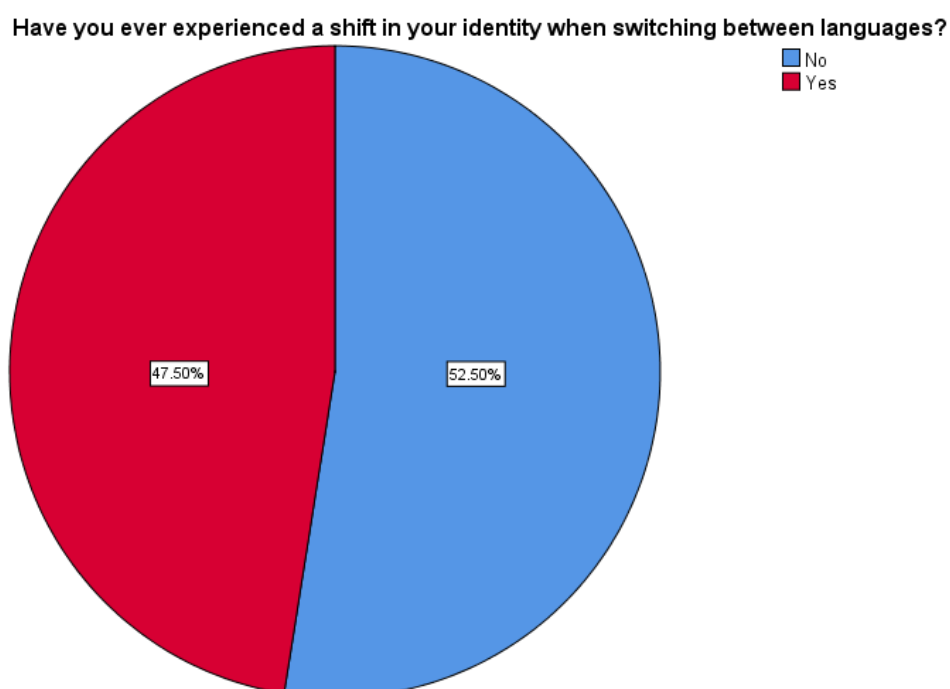


The data in Figure 20 reveals a nearly equal split in responses regarding experiencing a shift in identity when switching between languages. A slight majority (52.5%) report not experiencing such a shift, indicating that for many, language choice does not play a significant role in shaping and expressing different facets of their identity. In contrast, 47.5% say they have undergone an identity shift, which  means that for a large minority, their sense of who they are has shifted according to the language in which they're speaking. This study resonates with  García's framework of translingualism—whereby multilingual speakers will navigate through a complex linguistic and cultural ecology which may in turn provoke transformations of identity based on context and interaction. Language is an important tool in that process and sociocultural theory by Vygotsky even highlights how identity construction is

mediated by social and cultural factors. These findings reveal the complex interaction between the use of language and identity, with most of individuals not experiencing these aspects uniquely.

**Figure 21**

*Effect of Code-Switching on Cultural Identity*
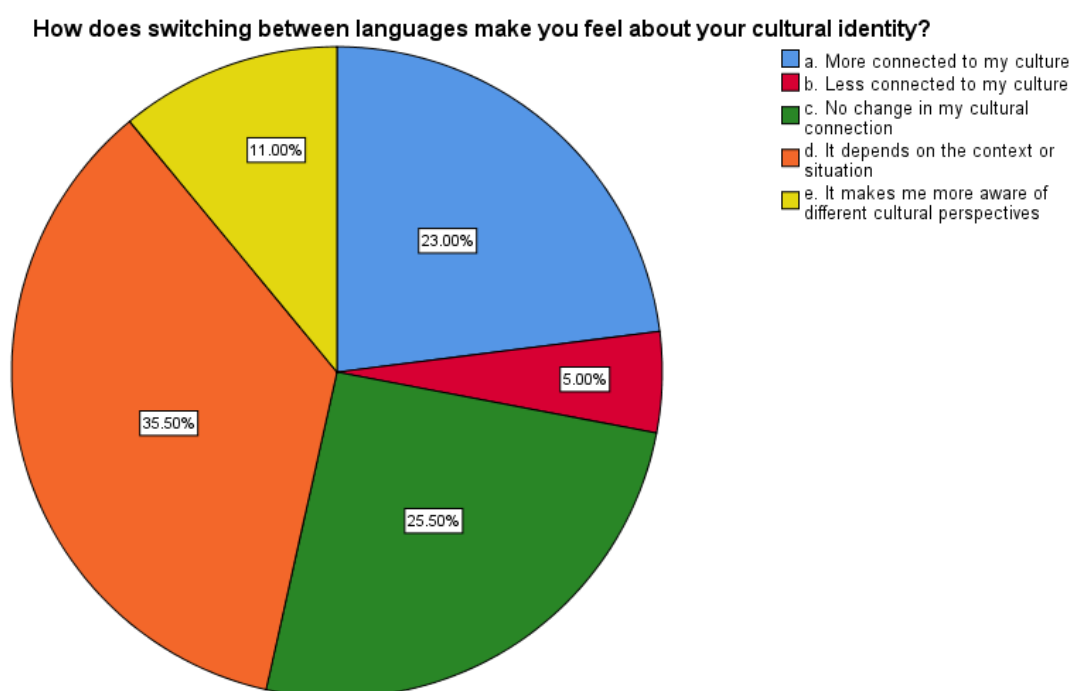


The data in Figure 21 shows different perspectives on how switching languages influences cultural identity. A significant portion (35.5%) feels the impact is context-dependent, suggesting that language choice and its influence on cultural identity are shaped by situational factors. Meanwhile, 23% feel "more connected to their culture," highlighting the reinforcing role of language in cultural affiliation. A smaller group (11%) indicates that language switching increases their awareness of different cultural perspectives, emphasizing its role in broadening intercultural understanding. Conversely, 25.5% report "no change" in their cultural connection, suggesting a neutral impact of language switching on their cultural identity, while a minority (5%) feel "less connected," indicating potential dissonance between language use and cultural ties. The context-dependence of cultural identity impact in Figure 21 (35.5%) can be linked with Figure 9, where different social contexts prompt code-switching, especially in academic

(45%) and friendly (34.5%) settings. This reinforces that the impact of translingualism on cultural identity is closely tied to the context in which the language switching occurs. These findings align with García's translingualism, emphasizing the fluid and adaptive nature of language use in navigating cultural identities. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory further underscores how cultural tools like language mediate identity construction, with the varied responses highlighting individual and contextual differences in this dynamic process.

**Figure 22**

*Identity Negotiations while Interacting with Speakers of Different Languages*
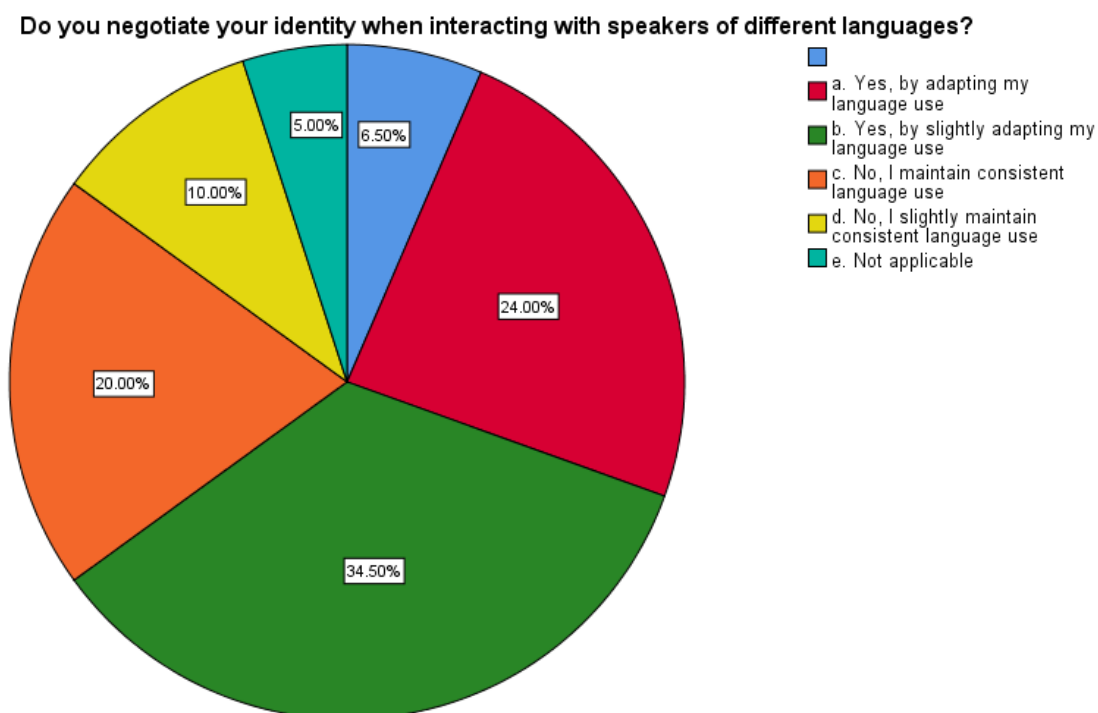


The data in Figure 22 illustrates that most respondents actively negotiate their identity through language adaptation when interacting with speakers of different languages. A combined 58.5% report doing so, with 24% fully adapting their language use and 34.5% making slight adjustments. This reflects the dynamic role of language in accommodating social and cultural contexts, as individuals tailor their linguistic behavior to facilitate interaction and align with diverse interlocutors. Conversely, 30% prefer to maintain consistency, with 20% adhering strictly to their usual language use and 10% making slight efforts to remain consistent. This group values linguistic

stability, suggesting a strong connection to their established language identity. Additionally, 5% find the question inapplicable, indicating language negotiation may not be a relevant concern for them. While 6.50% of the respondents chose not to record their responses. These findings align with García's translingualism framework, emphasizing flexible and context-sensitive language practices as tools for identity negotiation. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory supports this adaptability, as language serves as a cultural tool mediating interactions and identity construction in varying sociocultural settings.

**Figure 23**

*Positive Impact of Translingual Skills on Interactions with Individuals from Diverse Cultural Backgrounds*



To what extent do you believe that your translingual skills have positively impacted your interactions with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds?

Legend:
- a. Not at all
- b. Slightly
- c. Moderately
- d. Quite a bit
- e. Very much

Pie chart values: 0.50%, 11.50%, 16.50%, 27.50%, 25.50%, 18.50%
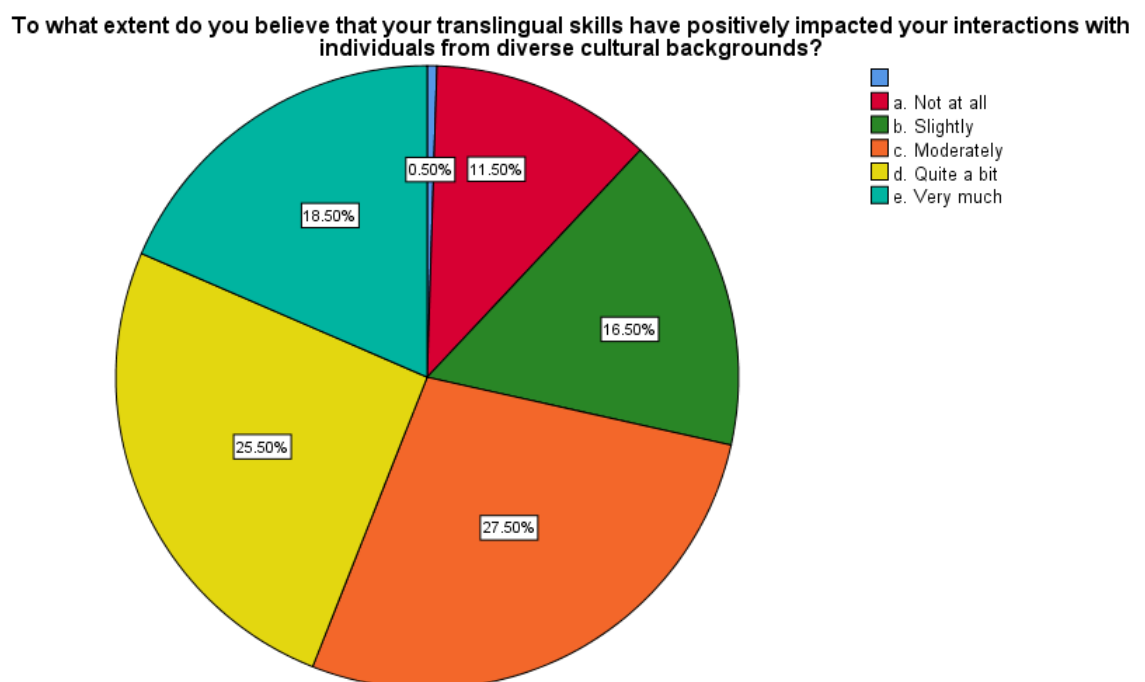
The data in Figure 23 reveals that a majority of respondents believe their translingual skills have positively impacted their interactions with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. A combined 69% report positive effects, with 25.5% indicating a "quite a bit" impact and 18.5% perceiving a "very much" impact. Additionally, 27.5% feel the impact is "moderate," demonstrating that translingualism is a valuable asset in cross-cultural interactions for most respondents. However, 16.5%

feel the impact is "slight", and 11.5% report "no impact at all", suggesting that for some individuals, translingualism may not significantly affect their ability to engage with diverse groups. Only 0.50% of the respondents didn't record their answers. These findings are consistent with García's translingualism framework, which underscores the role of language in fostering intercultural communication and understanding. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory further supports the idea that translingual skills, as cultural tools, facilitate social interactions and shape identity within diverse sociocultural contexts. The data highlights the benefits of translingualism in enhancing communication across cultural boundaries and promoting positive social connections.

## 4.2.6 Sociocultural Context

**Figure 24**

*Acceptability of Society or the University towards Translingualism*
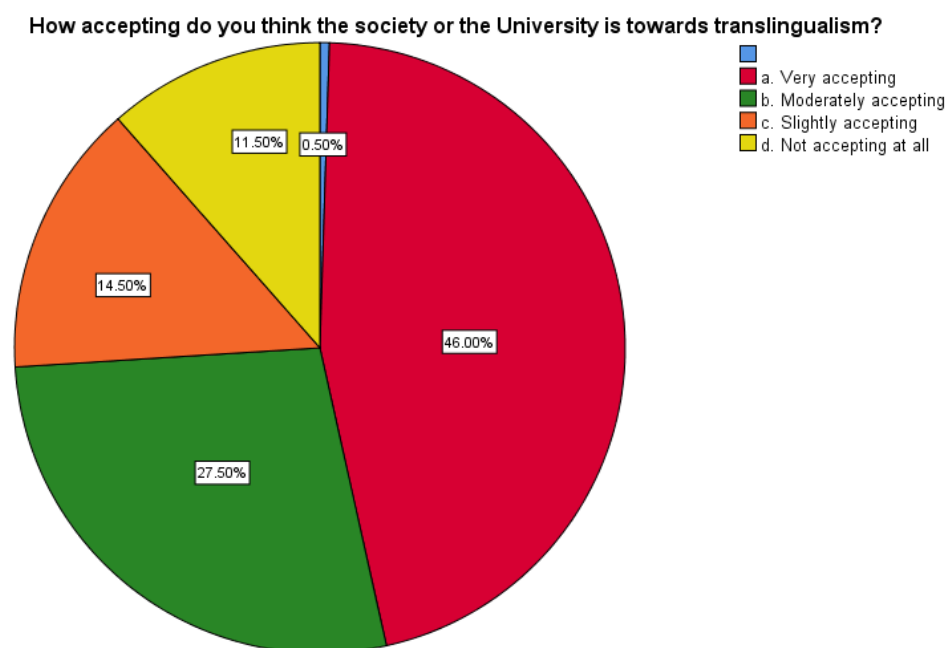


The data in Figure 24 indicates a generally positive view of society and the university's acceptance of translingualism. A significant 46% of respondents believe the environment is "very accepting," showing that translingualism is largely valued and embraced. Additionally, 27.5% feel it is "moderately accepting," suggesting that although translingual practices are recognized, there may still be some limitations or gaps in their full integration. A smaller portion—14.5%—sees the environment as

"slightly accepting," and 11.5% feel it is "not accepting at all," indicating that translingualism is still met with resistance or indifference by some. Meanwhile, 0.5% of respondents skipped the question. These findings show that while translingualism is generally appreciated, there is still a need for broader and more explicit support, especially in educational and institutional settings. While Figure 24 shows a generally positive institutional and societal acceptance of translingualism (46% "very accepting"), Figure 15 reveals that a portion of students (12%) still feel *"not at all accepted"* by their peers during language switching. This suggests a gap between institutional discourse and interpersonal realities. Even when translingualism is formally accepted, actual experiences of exclusion persist, indicating the need for more than symbolic support. This aligns with García's (2009) view that language practices are shaped by sociocultural contexts, and that true acceptance requires institutional support for diverse language use. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) also emphasizes that learning and identity development are influenced by the social environment, which includes language norms and attitudes. Studies such as Canagarajah (2013) and Lee & Canagarajah (2019) further argue that institutions must move beyond token inclusion of multilingual practices and actively promote spaces

where students can freely draw on their full linguistic repertoires. Without such support, translingualism may remain limited or superficial.

Thus, the data highlights a promising trend toward acceptance but also calls for more intentional efforts to make translingualism a fully supported and normalized practice within both academic and societal contexts.

**Figure 25**

*Societal Expectations Influence on Language Choices*



Have your language choices been influenced by societal expectations?
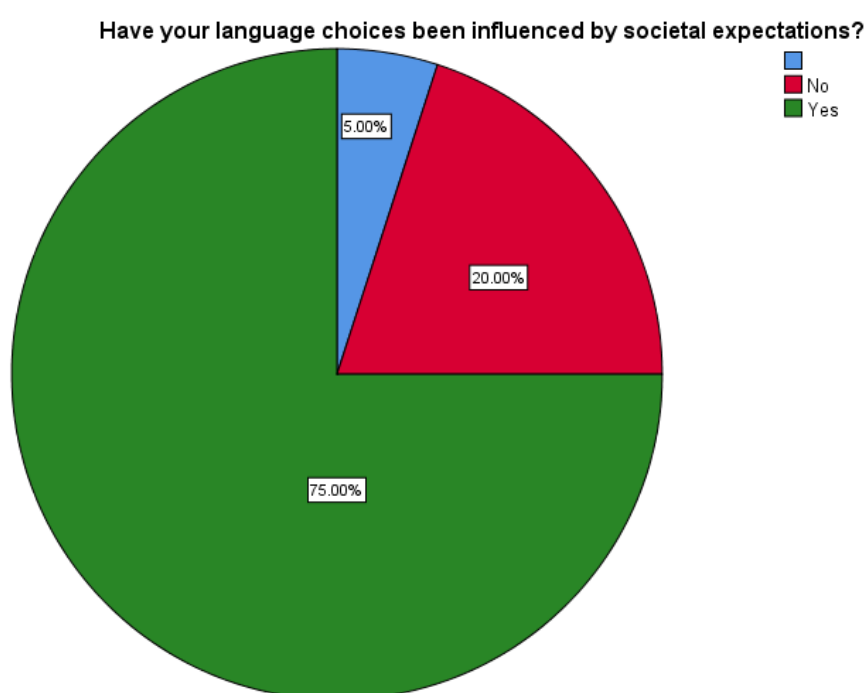
Figure 25 shows that societal expectations (75%) are a  major influence in the language choices of the respondents, which means that as they are socialized into a community, they tend to use language that is contextualized within the social norms and cultural values and expectations of that community. This is,  a result of outside societal pressure to change how someone talks to fit someone else's version of right or wrong for a certain situation like around those types of people, types of situations, or for types of jobs. Alternatively, 20% of respondents indicate that the expectations of society do not influence the way they speak, which implies a degree of linguistic independence or pushback against societal standards such that people may speak in a way that corresponds with individual preference or ethnic identity. However, 5% of

the respondents have avoided this question. These results are consistent with García's idea of translingualism, whereby language is used fluidly by all speakers in context and is frequently produced and constrained by societal expectations. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, language choices are shaped by social interactions and cultural tools that are internalized based on a person's interactions in society (Rist, 2023).

**Figure 26**

*Evolution of Language Preferences or Choices Due to Changes in Social*

*Environment*



Have your language preferences or choices evolved over time due to changes in your social environment?
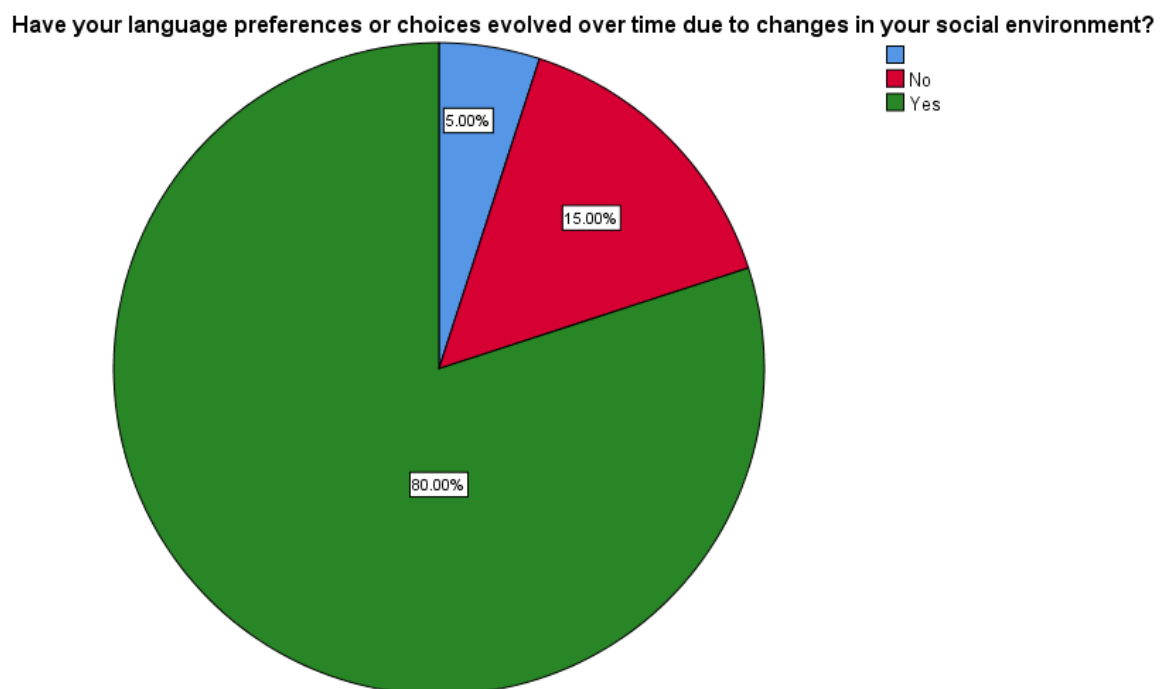
Eighty percent of the respondents reported that changes in their social environment (in this case, language) over the years have transformed their language preferences or choices (Figure 26). This indicates that the language people use is inherently flexible and is guided by the social contexts in which people are embedded. With changes in social environments—be it through different peer group influences, cultural exposure or social institutions— the respondents seem to adjust the way they speak accordingly to the new context they find themselves which suggests that social identity and cultural affiliation are highly related to the constant change of how and

why they use language. Conversely, 15% of respondents indicate no changes in preference or choices, which could potentially represent those who have been relatively disparate to changes in their social context and have continued to engage in similar linguistic behaviour independent of their environment, possibly due to greater attachment to their linguistic identity or merely a preference for maintaining consistency in their language. And only 5% of the respondents have no answer to the question which is negligible. This discovery aligns with Vygotskian sociocultural theory, which posits that cognitive processes and identity formation are heavily influenced by social interactions and contexts. This is also in line with García's idea of translingualism, in which language use is fluid and continually constructed in response to changing social and cultural contexts. This adaptability of language practices in response to evolving social contexts is indicative of the interrelation between language, identity, and sociocultural dynamics.

**Figure 27**

*Positive Impact of Multilingualism on Personal Development*
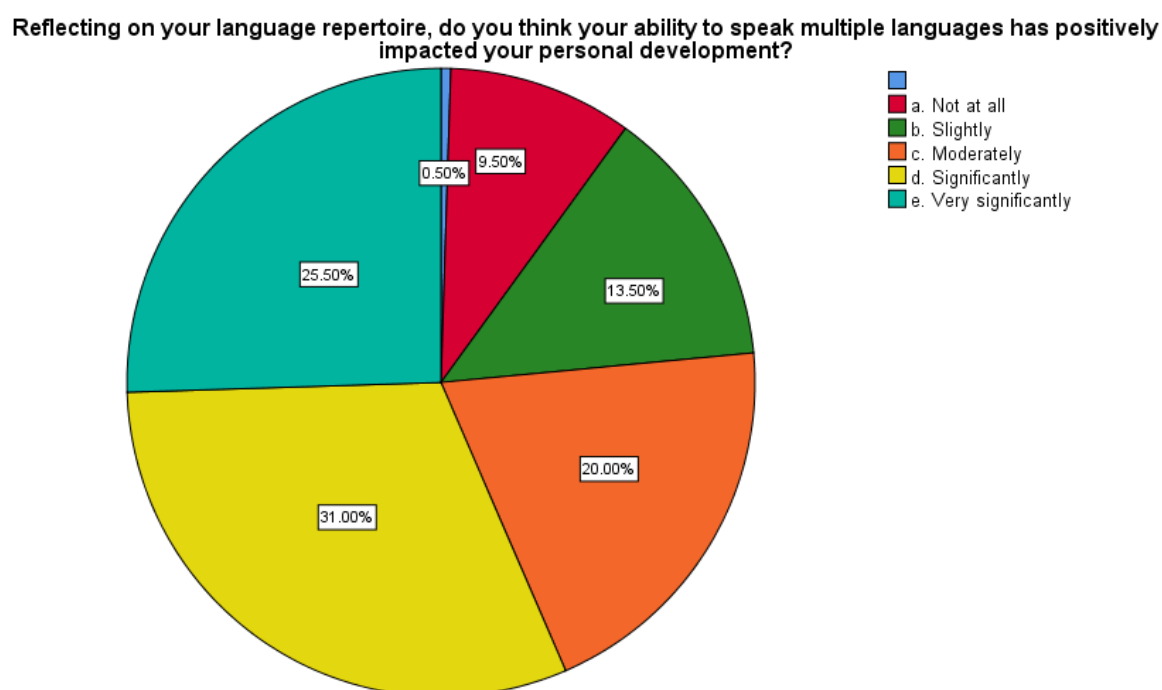


Over 70% of the respondents confirm that their multilingualism had a positive effect on their personal development (Figure 27). In all, 56.5% report significant to very

significant positive impacts, including 31% reporting a  "significant" impact and 25.5% a "very significant" impact. Despite that, this may also indicate a state of  mind in which multilingualism is considered an essential element for personal development which probably leads to cognitive flexibility, cultural understanding and better social interactions. Additionally, 20% report a "moderate" impact,  meaning they know it went well, but possibly not as well. By contrast, although a smaller percentage of respondents, 13.5% believe that multilingualism has had a "slight"  impact on their personal development and 9.5% of respondents believe it has had "no impact at all", indicating that for some individuals, multilingualism does not play a pivotal role in their personal development. Only 0.50% of the respondents have  skipped this question. These findings align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, where language serves as a cultural tool that shapes cognitive processes and personal development. García's concept of translingualism also resonates here, as multilingualism provides individuals with a broader linguistic and cultural repertoire, enriching their sense of self and enhancing their ability to navigate different sociocultural environments.

**Figure 28**

*Experiencing Changes in One's Self-Identity Due to Language Use*
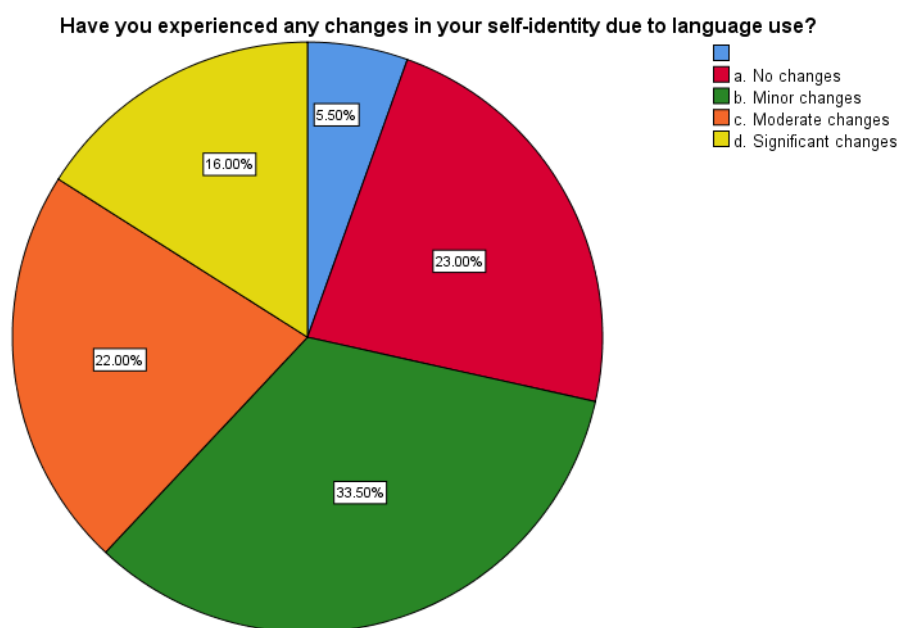


The data in Figure 28 reveals that 23% of respondents have not experienced any changes in their self-identity due to language use, indicating that for a portion of the

sample, language may not have had a significant impact on their sense of self. However, a majority (33.5%) report "minor changes", suggesting that language use has subtly influenced their identity, perhaps through small shifts in how they perceive themselves or how they are perceived by others. Additionally, 22% report "moderate changes", and 16% experience "significant changes", pointing to the more pronounced effects that language use can have on identity, especially in multilingual or multicultural settings. These respondents likely experience shifts in self-perception or identity negotiation as they navigate different linguistic and cultural contexts. However, only 5.50%, a negligible amount, of the respondents have not recoded their responses on this question. The identity shifts reported in Figure 20 (where 47.5% experience a shift when switching languages) are mirrored in Figure 28, where 71.5% reported at least some change in self-identity due to language use. This consistency supports the argument that translingual practices do not just involve code-switching but are deeply tied to personal and social identity negotiation. These results align with both Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and García's translingualism framework. Vygotsky emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural tools (like language) in shaping identity, while García highlights the fluidity of identity in multilingual contexts. As a cultural tool, language plays a very important role in how individuals construct, maintain, and transform their identities across diverse social and linguistic environments.

**Figure 29**

*Influence of Academic Requirements on Language Choices*
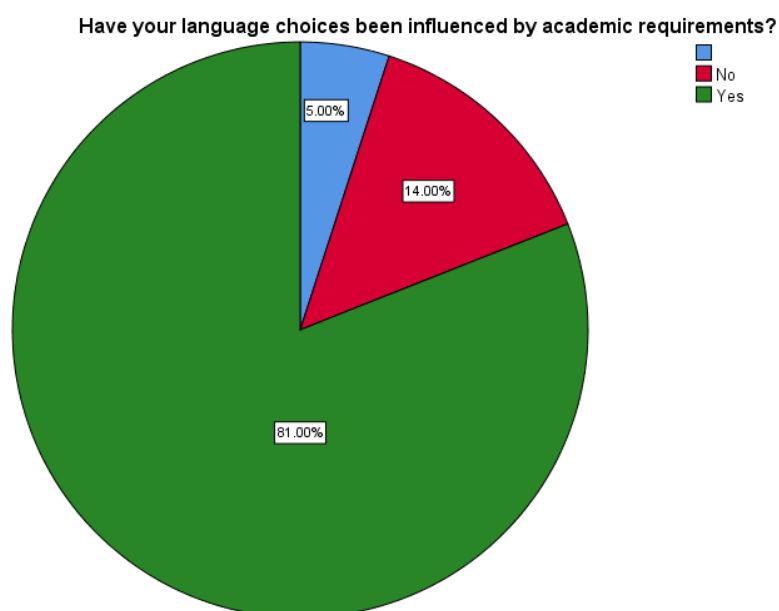


This means that academic requirements are seen as a major factor in determining how students use language; in fact, 81% of respondents claimed that their choice of language is influenced by their academic requirements (shown in Figure 29). Formal standards of writing, particular disciplines, or professors or peers or the academic context might expect a certain way of using language, and they would follow those expectations. Only 14% of respondents state that academic requirements did not influence their language choices, perhaps reflecting linguistic independence or a sense of feeling comfortable using a preferred language despite the customs of the academy. While 5% of the respondents skipped this question. The call for greater institutional acceptance in Figure 24 is echoed by Figure 29, which shows that 81% of respondents say academic requirements influence their language choices. If academic institutions are truly to support translingualism, they must align their language policies and assessment standards with students' multilingual realities, as these choices shape linguistic identity and learning experiences. This finding is consistent with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and García's framework of translingualism. Vygotsky talks about the cultural tools of academic environments that develop cognition and language in interactions, and García's framework emphasizes language use in multilingual contexts

as fluid. It illustrates how identity and language usage are affected by institutional requirements and societal expectations.

## 4.2.7 Conclusion of the Quantitative Analysis

This study highlights the complex interplay of translingualism, cultural identity, and social interaction within the chosen population's context. Socio-cultural and academic influences profoundly shape linguistic competence, comfort and  patterns of use as the analysis shows. With the majority of participants being native speakers of Pashto, it remains the most comfortably spoken and socially accepted language amongst all speakers and those engaged in the conversation, showing us that performing cultural identity and a sense of belonging  are also an integral part of communication in Pashto. The national language, Urdu, plays a vital secondary role as a medium of interregional communication and is a connection for the greater society. Covering  their respective spheres — English is, of course, a language of academia with varying degrees of comfort and experience.

In addition, these sociodemographic variables provide insight into linguistic diversity and its consequences. The use of various languages by different segments of the population—based on factors like gender and age—indicate more nuanced patterns, including a slight gender preference  among boys to use multiple languages broadly but also age-based variables; younger subjects were more likely to adapt to a changing lexicon. Linguistic diversity is well reflected among the authors, as their academic affiliations demonstrate, which points to how institutional contexts can shape practices and attitudes with respect to language. The results further indicate that the long-term preference of language is significantly governed by social expectations and needs, along with shifting social surroundings. Notably, a noticeable proportion of them also said their identity  changed when they changed the language, which is further evidence of the sociopragmatic identity of multilingual people at play as they negotiate between self-perception and culture. Moreover, being able to speak multiple languages was widely considered to be a good type of personal development and a good way to interact with other cultures, reiterating the belief in the transformational nature of translingualism. Collectively, the research demonstrates the multifaceted nature of translingualism's impact on cultural identity and community-building. The case demonstrates that language does not just use as a communication tool, but also serves

as a powerful medium for construction of identity, negotiation of culture, and adaptability of social aspects. The Language and Cultures Sphere is designed, anyhow, to give shape to the notion that the link between language and sociocultural context is so closely intertwined that it was thus important to uphold translingualism and linguistic diversity as a mode of cultural heritage or as a means of upholding globalization and global identity. This will surely enhance our understanding of sociopragmatics and how we may engage in linguistic research and teaching, most especially in multilingual and multicultural settings.

## 4.3 Data Summary Table

| Figure | Theme | Key Findings |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Age Distribution | 21–24 years: 74%, 18–20 years: 17%, 25–27 years: 6.5%, 28+ years: 2% |
| 2 | Gender Distribution | Male: 61%, Female: 39% |
| 3 | University Affiliation | NUML Islamabad: 50%, University of Swat: 46%, No response: 3.5% |
| 4 | Language Proficiency | Pashto: High (mostly level 5), Urdu: Mostly level 4, English: Spread, peak at level 3 |
| 5 | Language & Cultural Identity | Strongly Agree: 25%, Agree: 46%, Neutral: 15.5%, Disagree: 1%, Strongly Disagree: 12%, Skipped: 0.5% |
| 6 | Comfort in Languages | Pashto: Highest (mostly level 4), Urdu & English: Mixed, peaks at levels 3–4 |
| 7 | Language Adjustment in Social Contexts | Always: 15%, Often: 21.5%, Sometimes: 49%, Rarely: 9.5%, Never: 5% |
| 8 | Code-Switching Frequency | Frequently: 40%, Occasionally: 40.5%, Rarely: 14.5%, Never: 5% |
| 9 | Contexts for Code-Switching | Academic: 45%, Friends: 34.5%, Public Speech: 12.5%, Family: 8% |
| 10 | Multilingualism & Identity | Not at all: 47.5%, Somewhat: 32.5%, Moderately: 8%, Significantly: 12% |
| 11 | Cultural Background Importance | Extremely Important: 22%, Very Important: 45%, Moderately Important: 24.5%, Slightly Important: 7%, Not Important: 1.5% |
| 24 | Perceived Acceptance of Translingualism | Very Accepting: 46%, Moderately Accepting: 27.5%, Slightly Accepting: 14.5%, Not Accepting: 11.5%, Skipped: 0.5% |
| 25 | Societal Expectations and Language Use | Influenced: 75%, Not Influenced: 20%, Skipped: 5% |
| 26 | Social Environment & Language Change | Language Change: 80%, No Change: 15%, Skipped: 5% |

| 27 | Multilingualism & Personal Development | Very Significant: 25.5%, Significant: 31%, Moderate: 20%, Slight: 13.5%, None: 9.5%, Skipped: 0.5% |
|---|---|---|
| 28 | Language Use & Identity Change | Significant: 16%, Moderate: 22%, Minor: 33.5%, None: 23%, Skipped: 5.5% |
| 29 | Academic Requirements & Language Choice | Influenced: 81%, Not Influenced: 14%, Skipped: 5% |

## 4.4 Critical Discussion

### 4.4.1 Demographic Composition: Age and Gender (Figures 1 & 2)

The dominant age range of 21–24 years (74%) reveals a study population largely situated in transitional life stages—university years or early professional life—where identity construction is fluid and susceptible to sociolinguistic influences. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory provides an essential lens here, suggesting that identity and cognitive development are co-constructed through social interactions and cultural tools—language being primary among them. The concentration in this age group, likely due to the university-based recruitment strategy, positions the study within a demographic experiencing heightened linguistic contact and identity shifts.

The gender distribution, with males comprising 61%, signals a representational imbalance. In sociolinguistic terms, gendered language behavior has been well-documented; hence, this skew could influence interpretations of identity performance and code-switching frequency. As research (Pavlenko & Piller, 2008) has shown, gendered access to language education, public discourse, and digital spaces can shape translingual identity trajectories differently. Future research must explore intersectional dynamics of gender and language to avoid male-normative bias.

### 4.4.2 Institutional Distribution (Figure 3)

A near-equal distribution from NUML and the University of Swat allows for cross-institutional comparison in terms of linguistic exposure, institutional ideologies on language, and regional-cultural variance. NUML's urban and international orientation contrasts with Swat's regional focus, which may result in differing translingual practices—a factor critical for understanding institutional impact on identity.

### 4.4.3 Language Proficiency and Comfort (Figures 4 & 6)

The majority of respondents demonstrated native-level proficiency and comfort in Pashto, which serves as a cultural anchor and identity marker. Urdu proficiency, peaking at level 4, reflects its role as a widely shared second language in Pakistan, facilitating interethnic communication and institutional engagement. English proficiency, more varied and less confident, symbolizes an aspirational language—often associated with modernity, upward mobility, and academic capital. This aligns with Bourdieu's (1991) concept of linguistic capital, where language knowledge translates into symbolic power.

The correlation between comfort and proficiency further reinforces the claim that linguistic ease is grounded in both usage and identity proximity. English's relative discomfort signals its positioning as a more formal, institutional language rather than one embedded in daily interpersonal interaction.

### 4.4.4 Language and Identity: Perceptions and Practice (Figures 5, 10 & 11)

The assertion by 71% of participants that language influences cultural identity supports García's (2009) translingual framework, which posits language as a site of identity negotiation. The split responses in Figure 10 regarding multilingualism's relevance to identity (47.5% claiming "not at all") highlight the multiplicity of linguistic ideologies: for some, language is a practical tool; for others, it is deeply entangled with self-concept. Meanwhile, Figure 11's emphasis on cultural heritage (67% finding it "very" or "extremely" important) underlines that language practices are often mediated through cultural lenses. This demonstrates the layered nature of identity, where culture and language converge, diverge, or exist in parallel.

### 4.4.5 Sociolinguistic Flexibility and Code-Switching (Figures 7, 8 & 9)

A striking 85% of respondents admit to adapting their language based on social context, suggesting a high degree of *linguistic agency*. This adaptability is central to Vygotsky's notion of language as a *mediational tool* in social interaction. The data suggests that code-switching—seen as frequent or occasional by 80.5% of respondents—is not merely a linguistic necessity but a performative act of identity modulation. The context-specific nature of code-switching (Figure 9) further emphasizes the strategic deployment of language: academic domains require bilingual/multilingual maneuvering for epistemological access, while social domains

(friends) necessitate solidarity-based shifts. The minimal code-switching within family domains signals stabilized linguistic norms and shared linguistic repertoires, supporting the concept of home language loyalty (Fishman, 1991).

## 4.4.6 Cultural Identity and Social Dynamics (Figures 12, 16, 18, 21)

Data from Figures 12, 16, 18, and 21 reveal a strong sense of cultural orientation facilitated through language. Cultural affiliations significantly influence interpersonal dynamics (73%), and 72% of respondents feel that language serves as a conduit to cultural heritage (Figure 18). These findings affirm Vygotsky's view of language as a mediating tool within social and cultural development. In alignment, García's translingualism shows that language is not static but performs identity and culture dynamically, adjusting to context (evident in the 35.5% who reported context-dependent identity change in Figure 21).

## 4.4.7 Societal and Peer Norms (Figures 13, 14, 15)

Societal expectations are shown to shape language practices strongly. With over 74% recognizing societal norms as influential (Figure 13), this emphasizes that social constructs guide linguistic behavior. Likewise, peer acceptance when switching languages is mostly positive (Figure 15), but the 12% who feel rejected highlight linguistic vulnerability in identity expression. These findings support sociocultural theory, emphasizing how external factors, such as social pressures and peer validation, influence language use and self-perception.

## 4.4.8 Language, Identity, and Translingual Consciousness (Figures 19, 20, 22)

More than half (54.5%) view translingualism as having a positive impact on identity (Figure 19), while 47.5% experience identity shifts when switching languages (Figure 20). These statistics point to the fluidity and multiplicity of identity within translingual contexts, consistent with García's translingual lens. Furthermore, 58.5% consciously adapt language in multilingual interactions (Figure 22), reinforcing the idea that language is actively negotiated rather than passively inherited. This showcases the performative and strategic nature of language use in shaping self-identity.

## 4.4.9 Intercultural Communication (Figure 23)

Translingualism proves beneficial in intercultural engagement, with 69% reporting enhanced interaction across cultures. This finding supports translingualism's potential as a bridging tool in multicultural settings, allowing for fluid communicative adaptability and deeper cultural empathy. Vygotsky would interpret this as a demonstration of advanced sociocultural competence, where language use is contextually embedded and directed by interactional needs.

## 4.4.10 Acceptance of Translingualism (Figure 24)

The generally positive perception of translingualism within academic and societal contexts (46% "very accepting", 27.5% "moderately accepting") is promising. It reflects a broader shift in attitudes toward linguistic hybridity, challenging monolingual ideologies that often dominate institutional discourses. However, the 26% who perceive little to no acceptance underscore persistent structural and ideological resistance.

García's advocacy for institutional reformation to embrace translingual pedagogies is especially relevant here. The findings suggest a dual reality: progressive linguistic ideologies are emerging, but conservative norms still gatekeep formal spaces, limiting identity expression through hybrid language use.

## 4.4.11 Societal Expectations and Linguistic Conformity (Figure 25)

The overwhelming influence of societal expectations (75%) reflects the deep-rooted internalization of community norms in respondents' language practices. This supports Vygotsky's notion of the "Zone of Proximal Development" where learners, through guided social interaction, acquire behavior patterns and cultural norms. García's translingual perspective furthers this understanding by framing language as a socially responsive and adaptable tool, where speakers continuously reorient their linguistic strategies based on environmental pressures. The 20% who resist societal influence reflect translingual agency—individuals actively negotiating or rejecting dominant norms to preserve linguistic autonomy or cultural authenticity.

## 4.4.12 Environmental Influence on Language Preference (Figure 26)

Eighty percent of respondents indicate that their language preferences have changed with their social environment. This dynamic shift evidences the co-construction of language and identity, central to both Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and García's translingualism. In Vygotskian terms, new environments act as scaffolding structures that modify linguistic behaviors and mediate the internalization of new cultural identities. For García, these transitions underscore the fluidity of language use in response to evolving linguistic ecologies.

## 4.4.13 Multilingualism and Personal Development (Figure 27)

More than 70% of respondents perceive multilingualism as a catalyst for personal development, especially in enhancing cognitive flexibility, empathy, and intercultural awareness. This aligns with Vygotsky's view that language is a foundational cultural tool for psychological development. García's framework positions multilingualism as a strategic advantage in translingual navigation, enabling individuals to operate effectively across different cultural registers and domains. The findings also suggest that personal development is not merely about linguistic competency but the ability to leverage language as a means of cultural positioning and identity negotiation.

## 4.4.14 Language and Self-Identity Transformation (Figure 28)

The distribution of responses reveals a spectrum of identity experiences influenced by language. For many, language is transformative—changing how they perceive themselves and how they are perceived. This observation reinforces the interplay of language and identity as socially constructed phenomena. Vygotsky's model accounts for the internalization of social feedback through language, while García's work highlights how language is instrumental in crafting, shifting, and performing identities across contexts.

## 4.4.15 Academic Requirements and Language Choice (Figure 29)

The dominance of academic expectations in shaping language use (81%) indicates how institutional norms operate as powerful sociocultural tools that guide discourse and identity within academia. Vygotsky's theory again finds relevance, as the academic setting becomes a key context in which language behavior is scaffolded. García's translingualism, on the other hand, draws attention to how students strategically adapt their language use to conform to or resist academic conventions, making identity negotiation a continuous process.

## 4.5 Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative component of this study obtained through unstructured interviews explores the lived experiences and sociopragmatic constructs of translingualism and  identity shifts for undergraduate students. Data from un-structured interviews was subjected to thematic analysis to highlight recurring themes and significant outcomes. The subsequent sections summarize the emergent themes from the  analysis.

## 4.5.1 Language and Identity

The spoken language of the participants reflected and constructed their identities. It was noted to a greater degree than what was seen in previous linguistic studies; this demonstrates how language and identity were tied to each other  and made part of a complex whole. Since Pashto was the first language of the majority of participants, it served as a deeper  form of cultural and family identity. Participants felt speaking Pashto helped preserve their heritage and ensured  they were connected to their cultural roots, particularly closely with family and tight-knit social structures. For them, Pashto represents closeness, tradition, and a sense of identity that binds  them to their community and family. In contrast, there was a strong association with English, professionalism, competence and  upward mobility. Participants elaborated that using English in academic and professional environments signals confidence, modernity, and willingness to engage  with global opportunities. For many, English is not merely a means of communication, but an act of self-empowerment, a way to help forge a distinct professional identity to accompany their aspirations. Urdu, in contrast, was seen as a flexible and broad-based "bridge language". Participants mentioned that Urdu

frequently acted as a bridge in communication between different social groups which included speakers of multiple native languages. This allows that all the participants can smoothly communicate in mixed language condition, allowing inclusiveness and common understanding in multiracial and multicultural conditions. Quantitative data from Figure 4 shows strong proficiency in Pashto, moderate to high in Urdu, and varied levels in English. Similarly, Figure 6 confirms that Pashto is the most comfortable language, while English presents more difficulty. This correlates well with qualitative findings where students express deep emotional and cultural identity ties to Pashto, and view English as a symbol of professionalism and global aspiration. Urdu acts as a flexible middle ground.

The fluid movement that takes them back and forth between languages unveils how they negotiate the multiple referents to their identity, when they do perform an identity to fit into the linguistic expectations of the context, they find themselves in at that moment in time. For instance, whereas participants thought that Pashto affords them roots of their cultural identity, they also believed that English provides them a stage for success in academia and work, and that Urdu broadens their social networks. As one participant expressed so beautifully that Speaking Pashto at home helps him have his feet grounded to know where he comes from, but speaking English at university makes him feel like he could achieve his goals. It reveals how students would fluidly draw on their linguistic repertoires to invoke and negotiate their cultural pride, social integration and professional aspirations. Switching back and forth between the three languages is also a display of the participants' linguistic dexterity and their capacity to bridge traditional values and modern aspirations, creating nuanced identities that are sensitive to the specific social, cultural, and academic settings they occupy.

## 4.5.2 The role of Translingual Practices

A central theme that emerged throughout the interviews was the participants' conscious, strategic use of translingual practices, both academically and socially. Participants openly explained that they switch between the three languages — Pashto, Urdu, and English — depending on one's audience, context and specific purpose of interaction. This code-switching was not merely seen as a practical way to communicate, but as an expression of their unique multilingual identity. Some

respondents, for instance, said that in small group discussions, they occasionally switch between languages to foster inclusion and understanding. The participants explained, that they might begin in English, but when it gets complicated or someone isn't following, they just moved to Urdu or Pashto to make things clear. They added that It's not something they thought too much about; it simply was because it felt right. The participants emphasized that the practice isn't limited to academic contexts. In casual conversation, especially among friends, code-switching often carries with it the additional meaning of pulling your audience closer to you in terms of humor or cultural reference. This creates an environment in which conversation can organically occur, based on different levels of language skill, acquisition and individualized comfort zones. This angle emphasizes that translingualism underlies not just a linguistic strategy, but also a strategy for encouraging cooperation and inclusion. For many, slipping seamlessly between languages is not merely a sign of flexibility, but of a creative and individual approach to the bilingual or multilingual world in which they move. It's a poignant reminder that language, for these students, is not just a system of words, but a path toward connection and understanding. Quantitative data indicates that over 85% of participants adjust their language depending on context (Figure 7), and 81% engage in code-switching regularly (Figure 8). This is supported by qualitative evidence, where participants describe shifting between Pashto, Urdu, and English fluidly to suit social, emotional, and academic contexts.

### 4.5.3 Translingualism in Educational Contexts

Translingual practices might advance a wider learning experience and further engagement through academia, as illustrated by interviews. Participants shared how their mix of languages — English, Pashto and Urdu — is essential for creating a more inclusive and effective classroom environment. While English is generally used in the classroom, the participants added more than once that they felt the strategic use of their native languages made challenging concepts much more accessible and lessened the intimidation factor that often comes with academic English. Several participants said identically that teachers who switch back and forth between languages at lectures or discussion greatly facilitate their understanding. When speaking about something that's challenging in Urdu or Pashto after teaching it in English, one student said, "It's a light bulb moment." It helps connect the abstract theory to something I can relate to or, like, understand in simpler terms". Such an approach providing clarity by using both visual

and textual aids also help in boosting the confidence and participation of students when it comes to highly specific and complicated terms. The majority of students (69%) see positive impacts of translingualism on cross-cultural interactions (Figure 23), and 81% report language choices are shaped by academic requirements (Figure 29). In qualitative accounts, participants highlight how teachers who incorporate Pashto and Urdu in classrooms enhance comprehension and participation, especially when academic English feels intimidating.

Another frequent insight was how translingual practices support participation. Several said that students who don't speak up in English are far more likely to participate when they can also speak Pashto or Urdu. Consequently, students can communicate freely without concern over whether they are speaking proper English, creating more engaging and interactive classroom environment. "Sometimes you know the answer, but you're too afraid to say it in English," one participant said. "When you have Pashto or Urdu, it's like the focus is on what you're thinking, rather than your capabilities as a language learner." Simultaneously, the interviews also expressed concern about an overuse of native languages within academic spaces. While many participants valued the inclusion of Pashto and Urdu for the purposes of explanation and engagement, others caution against moving to familiar within these languages. On the other hand, they express the fear that overuse of the native languages may impede their progress on the road to attaining English fluency, which is the prerequisite for their academic discourses, research and job enterprise. "If we continue to make use of Pashto or Urdu, we won't be forcing our English to get better," one participant reflected. This dichotomy between accessibility and competence became a key theme of the conversation. And while participants found translingual practices to be supportive, particularly of foundational understanding, they also highlighted a perspective of balance. They recommended that teachers use the native languages as a supplementary vehicle, not the main one, making sure students are familiar with and slowly get used to English in academic contexts. These insights highlight how translingualism serves a dual purpose in academia as a means of learning and a hindrance to academic language knowledge when used inappropriately. For many students, the translingual advantage is more than just a pragmatic necessity; it is also a manifestation of how they adapt, solve problem, and make their way through the world despite linguistic barriers. Such practice reinforces the need to understand learners'

linguistic needs and develop classroom practices that nurture linguistic diversity and can be drawn on to support students in their development in the target language.

## 4.5.4 The Role of the Linguistic Repertoire in Social Contexts

Through the interviews, it became evident that participants displayed a remarkable amount of linguistic flexibility in social situations, where mixing languages was a natural use of language that was often embraced. Taking these settings, Pashto was the reported most spoken language by participants based on their cultural tie and sense of belonging. However, Urdu and English were often intermingled in conversation for the sake of specific words, phrases, or ideas that did not have Pashto equivalents, or to adapt to the conversational rhythms of mixed groups. Participants highlighted that in social contexts, the reasons behind their code-switching behaviour were context-dependent and in part influenced by the members of the group they were with. For example, the language used with friends or family members would often be Pashto, establishing a cultural bond with one's family members and a sense of closeness. When the interviewer asked a young man why he preferred speaking Pashto with certain friends, he explained, "When I'm with my friends from the same background, it feels natural to stick to Pashto — it's who we are. But in groups where everyone doesn't know Pashto, I use Urdu or English so that no one feels left out." This intentional movement between languages draws attention to the sociopragmatic function of translingualism at work in our ability to create in-group solidarity while also navigating cultural ambiguity in social settings. By using Urdu or English in groups containing both languages, participants not only were allowing for communication, but also demonstrating sensitivity of their peers' linguistic preferences. They also described code-switching as a creative and expressive tool that enabled them to navigate meaning and context in more nuanced ways. Pashto was used to express emotional depth and cultural resonance, while English and Urdu were often reserved for modern or academic ideas. This flexible dynamics of interaction between languages responds to the social needs and identities of participants. The findings exemplify how the phenomenon of language use (both social and situational) can provide a platform for cultural representation and social diversification. While Figure 24 shows that 46% find their university "very accepting" of translingualism, Figure 15 reveals that 12% still feel "not at all accepted" by peers when switching languages. This is echoed in interviews where participants describe feeling stigmatized or seen as deficient when

using multiple languages. This dissonance suggests that while institutional attitudes may be evolving, social perceptions lag behind, creating tension in identity expression.

## 4.5.5 Translingualism Perceived Benefits

The interviews highlighted a range of benefits that participants associated with translingual practices, which were related to both linguistic and social, as well as cognitive, social, and affective aspects. For many participants, translingualism was so central to their linguistic practice because it provided them with tools to better learn new languages, and place them in part of their identity. They effortlessly understood concepts which were difficult to comprehend solely in English — and this was because each language offered a different depth to the topic, making it easier to understand fantasy versus reality. This helped them develop a more integrated understanding of the related topics. Besides language learning, translingualism was understood as similarly instrumental in reinforcing copresence. The use of multiple languages in conversations allowed participants to accommodate the linguistic preferences of others, leading to inclusivity in conversations and a greater sense of belonging.

Another key theme was translingual approaches as enabling creative and innovative potential. The participants were able to express their ideas vividly and meaningfully by drawing on the many languages available to them to create a linguistic co-existence. This of course led to the blending of vocabularies, and in this way new ideas often emerged, encouraging a communicative style that was dynamic and engaged. In sum, the interviews showed that translingualism has many apparent advantages, from making it easier to learn a language, forging social ties, and resulting in creativity. Such advantages highlight the value of translingual practices in participants' academic, social, and personal dimensions, illustrating the broader range of benefit that linguistic flexibility can bring.

## 4.5.6 Challenges in Implementing Translingual Practices

Translingual practices were welcomed in terms of the many benefits they afford, but participants also pointed to the challenges they faced in terms of moving across more than one language. Participants highlighted this as a practice that, at times, took away their ability to hold fluency or really master one language fully. This was most poignantly felt in academia, where the medium through which one conveys their

thoughts is generally considered to be a relatively widely spoken language, typically English and getting the words down on paper as clearly as possible was paramount. The other complication was how society was viewing the mixing of languages. As some practices of translingualism were interpreted as instances of linguistic deficiency, multiple presenters expressed feeling stigmatized or criticized for exploiting (or profiting from) translingualism in their work. Thereby, this societal perception led to a tension between the advantages of translingualism, and the societal pressure to adapt to the monolingual norms. This is a refrain that mirrors the internal conflict many of the respondents faced — trying to achieve some level of linguistic congruence while simultaneously battling against stereotypes that they faced about translingualism. This challenge motivated participants to also promote the translingual practices as a genuine and valuable mode of communication. Their experiences underscore the necessity of an inclusive approach that celebrates linguistic variation and its importance.

## 4.5.7 Translanguaging and Identity Transformation

The analysis showed that translingual practices can both constrain and enable changes in identity among undergraduates. And the participants explained how their language use is not only responsive to new identities as students, professionals and member of a multicultural society. The authenticity of their identities is multifaceted and dynamic, changing with the conversation. Participants stated, for example, that speaking and writing in English would often render them feeling more formal, competent, and professional, which requirements are intrinsic among most academic and professional environments. Pashto, by contrast, became the language of emotion and culture — the balm and the bond. As one participant explained it, "When I speak in English, I feel as if I'm a different version of myself — more confident, more modern. But Pashto that's my heart." Such observation highlights the ways that students use language as a resource to negotiate their identities, shifting fluidly across languages to respond to the demands of different social and academic contexts. This and the interweaving of English and Pashto present in the Data demonstrate how translingualism does the work of allowing students to navigate between global competence demands and their domestic heritage. Nearly half of respondents (47.5%) report experiencing identity shifts when switching languages (Figure 20), and many identify different emotional or cultural selves when speaking different languages, as elaborated in interviews. One participant noted: "When I speak in English, I feel more

confident and modern. But Pashto—that's my heart." This highlights how translingualism is not just a communicative strategy but a means of constructing multifaceted identities, tied to emotion, profession, and heritage.

## 4.5.8 Conclusion of the Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative segment strongly focuses on the relationship among translingualism, identity, and sociocultural factors of undergraduates. Using their multiple languages strategically and effectively, students clearly re-draw boundaries and embrace values that emphasize the socio-cultural dimensions of language proficiency, demonstrating their linguistic flexibility and creativity as they successfully navigate the often rich social, academic and cultural contexts surrounding them. The ability to switch between languages illustrates that translingual practices are practices of adaptation, self-expression, and connectivity in an increasingly multicultural world. These findings are pivotal in the way they clarify the transformative nature of translingualism, providing greater opportunities for inclusion and enhancing a more constructive context for language learning and thriving students in multilingual contexts.

## 4.6 Findings of the Study

## 4.6.1 Demographic Profile

- The majority of participants (74%) are aged 21–24, suggesting the data primarily reflects perspectives of young adults navigating academic and sociolinguistic transitions.
- 61% of respondents are male, and most are affiliated with either NUML Islamabad (50%) or the University of Swat (46%), offering regional and institutional diversity.

## 4.6.2 Language Proficiency and Comfort

- Respondents report the highest proficiency and comfort in Pashto, followed by Urdu, and then English.
- This hierarchy indicates Pashto as the dominant native language, with English and Urdu serving instrumental or academic roles.

### 4.6.3 Language and Cultural Identity

- 71% of respondents believe language is central to their cultural identity.
- 67% consider their cultural background extremely or very important, emphasizing the strong link between language, ethnicity, and identity.

### 4.6.4 Translingual Behavior and Code-Switching

- 80.5% of participants frequently or occasionally code-switch, mostly in academic (45%) and friendship (34.5%) contexts.
- 85% report adjusting language based on social context, indicating translingual flexibility.
- This reveals a conscious and strategic use of multiple languages depending on context, audience, and purpose.

### 4.6.5 Multilingualism and Identity Construction

- While 47.5% state multilingualism does not impact their identity, 32.5% believe it does to some extent, and 12% significantly.
- 56.5% report a positive impact of multilingualism on their personal development, with 20% noting a moderate effect.
- These findings suggest that while not all speakers see a direct link between language and identity, multilingualism is often associated with cognitive, social, and cultural growth.

### 4.6.6 Societal and Academic Influences

- 75% of respondents acknowledge that societal expectations influence their language choices, reflecting the internalization of social norms.
- 80% say their social environment has shaped their language use over time, demonstrating adaptability and social sensitivity.
- 81% report that academic requirements affect their language choices, revealing the strong role of institutional settings in shaping linguistic behavior.

### 4.6.7 Identity and Language Change

- 72.5% of participants experience some level of change in self-identity due to language use: 33.5% minor, 22% moderate, and 16% significant.
- This highlights the fluid and evolving nature of identity as individuals navigate different linguistic and cultural spaces.

### 4.6.8 Perception of Translingualism

- 73.5% perceive translingualism as moderately to very acceptable, indicating a general openness to linguistic hybridity and multilingual practices.
- This suggests a shift away from monolingual ideologies toward a more inclusive and flexible linguistic worldview.

## 4.7 Conclusion

Chapter 4 presented a comprehensive analysis of the data collected through both quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews to explore the translingual practices and identity shifts among undergraduate students. The integration of these two approaches has provided a multidimensional understanding of how students navigate language in academic, social, and cultural contexts.

The quantitative findings revealed clear trends in language proficiency, with Pashto being the most dominant and comfortable language, followed by Urdu and English. Language use was shown to be highly context-dependent, with significant engagement in code-switching, especially in academic and peer-related settings. The data also indicated that language plays a central role in shaping cultural identity and that societal and institutional acceptance of translingualism is growing, although some resistance remains. Many respondents reported experiencing identity shifts and challenges during language switching, further highlighting the emotional and social complexity of multilingual communication.

The qualitative analysis enriched these findings by capturing the lived experiences behind the statistics. Participants described their strategic use of Pashto, Urdu, and English to express cultural belonging, social connection, and academic or professional identity. Translingualism was not merely a communicative tool but a

meaningful practice that enabled self-expression, inclusion, and adaptation. However, students also faced tensions — such as concerns about losing fluency in English, societal stigma, and internal conflicts between linguistic comfort and external expectations.

Together, these analyses underscore that translingualism is both a resource and a challenge. It empowers students to construct hybrid identities, engage more meaningfully in learning, and navigate multicultural environments. At the same time, it requires supportive institutional structures to ensure that linguistic diversity is valued, not merely tolerated. The chapter highlights the importance of recognizing and validating students' translingual realities to foster inclusive educational and social spaces. An unexpected finding of this study was that many Pashtoon participants did not report experiencing a noticeable identity shift despite their frequent use of Urdu and English in academic and social contexts. While the literature often suggests that multilingual practices contribute to transformations in cultural or professional identity, a significant number of Pashtoon students maintained that their core cultural identity remained stable. For them, Pashto continued to function as a strong marker of belonging, tradition, and pride, which buffered against identity displacement. This finding suggests that the strength of cultural attachment among Pashtoons may play a decisive role in resisting identity shifts, even when individuals actively engage in translingual practices.

In sum, the findings affirm that language use among multilingual students is dynamic, fluid, and deeply tied to identity, social interaction, and institutional contexts — offering crucial insights for language policy, pedagogy, and intercultural understanding.

# CHAPTER 5

# CONCLUSION

This final chapter presents the concluding remarks of the study by summarizing key findings, interpreting their implications, and offering practical recommendations. It revisits the central research questions regarding translingual practices, identity negotiation, and sociopragmatic behavior among undergraduate students. The chapter synthesizes the insights drawn from both quantitative and qualitative data, discusses the significance of these findings within broader sociolinguistic frameworks, and outlines directions for future research and practice. By doing so, it seeks to highlight the relevance of translingualism in shaping identity and educational experiences in multilingual contexts. The present study's findings contribute to ongoing sociolinguistic debates on translingualism and identity negotiation, while also raising critical questions about power, pedagogy, and linguistic hierarchies.

With regard to the research focus, the study is guided by two central questions:

1. What social and pragmatic factors influence language selection behaviors among undergraduate students?
2. How do undergraduate students perceive and negotiate their identities within a multilingual environment?

## 5.1. What Social and Pragmatic Factors Drive Language Selection Behaviors Among Undergraduate Students?

The findings reveal that undergraduate students' language selection is strongly influenced by contextual, functional, and social pragmatics:

- Contextual Flexibility: Students engage in strategic code-switching based on setting—Pashto in familial or informal contexts, English in formal, academic, or professional domains, and Urdu in mixed or inclusive spaces. This selection is context-sensitive, driven by the need for clarity, connection, and inclusion.
- Social Roles and Cultural Symbolism:

- o Pashto represents emotional intimacy, familial bonding, and cultural heritage. Its use affirms cultural belonging and reflects a deep-rooted connection to identity.

- o English symbolizes modernity, professionalism, and intellectual capital. Its use in academic and global contexts allows students to perform competence and sophistication.

- o Urdu acts as a bridge language, facilitating communication across ethnic or linguistic boundaries, especially in group interactions.

- Educational Pragmatics: Within academic contexts, translingual practices help students enhance understanding of complex concepts, especially when English—the medium of instruction—is a second or third language. Students often revert to Pashto or Urdu to digest abstract ideas and participate meaningfully.

- Perceived Acceptability: While a significant number of students (46%) believe society is "very accepting" of translingualism, the stigma around code-mixing— seen by some as a sign of incompetence—also shapes when and how students switch between languages.

- Comfort and Proficiency: Students reported the highest comfort levels in Pashto, yet showed greater usage of English in academic environments, highlighting the pragmatic negotiation between ease and necessity.

## 5.2 How Do Undergraduate Students Perceive and Negotiate Their Identities Within a Multilingual Environment?

Students view language as a core component of their evolving identities, and their identity negotiation occurs at the intersection of personal values, societal expectations, and institutional demands:

- Dynamic Identity Construction:
  - o Identity is not static but fluid, shifting according to language use and sociocultural positioning.
  - o English allows students to adopt an identity aligned with ambition, global belonging, and intellectualism.
  - o Pashto, conversely, is closely tied to heritage, authenticity, and emotional expression.

- Selective Language Use as Identity Work:
  - Students use different languages to project specific identities in various contexts (e.g., formal vs. informal, academic vs. familial).
  - This selective deployment of language illustrates their agency in navigating multiple linguistic and cultural domains.
- Cultural Tensions and Hybrid Identities:
  - Many participants reported an internal conflict between maintaining traditional cultural identity (rooted in Pashto) and adapting to modern linguistic expectations (dominated by English).
  - This balancing act results in hybrid identities, where students combine elements of local culture with global modernity.
- Translingualism as Empowerment and Challenge:
  - Translingualism provides students with linguistic capital that enhances participation, expression, and inclusivity.
  - However, frequent language switching can also hinder fluency development in any single language, especially English, raising concerns about long-term competence.
  - Additionally, external judgments can affect students' confidence in using their full linguistic repertoire.

## 5.3 Summary of Key Themes Across Both Questions

| Theme | Implication for Language Use | Implication for Identity |
|---|---|---|
| Contextual Sensitivity | Language use shifts based on formal/informal, academic/social contexts | Identity is performative and shifts with setting |
| Language Symbolism | English = prestige & global access; Pashto = authenticity & emotion; Urdu = inclusivity | Students express or suppress identity depending on language used |
| Educational Functionality | Translingualism enhances comprehension and participation | Supports identity affirmation in multilingual learning |

| Theme | Implication for Language Use | Implication for Identity |
|---|---|---|
| Social Perceptions | Code-switching may be stigmatized or valorized | Impacts confidence and language-based identity negotiation |
| Hybrid Identity Formation | Multiple languages co-exist in a functional repertoire | Identity becomes layered and adaptive in multilingual environments |

The data reinforce the idea that language is both a communicative and identity-shaping resource, supporting poststructuralist and sociocultural theories of language and identity. The study foregrounds the agency of students as translingual users, constantly adapting their language choices to match shifting social roles, educational contexts, and cultural affiliations.

## 5.4 Contributions of the Study

This study makes several important contributions to the existing body of literature on translingualism and identity. Empirically, it brings forward evidence from the Pakistani context, particularly undergraduate students in Swat, which remains an underexplored setting in research on language and identity. By examining the interplay of Pashto, Urdu, and English in both academic and social domains, the study extends the scope of translingual scholarship beyond Western frameworks where most previous research has been concentrated. This provides new insights into how multilingual practices in South Asian contexts shape cultural belonging, professional aspirations, and identity formation.

Theoretically, the study advances the understanding of translingualism by positioning it not merely as code-switching but as a dynamic process linked to identity shift. Through a sociopragmatic lens, it demonstrates how pragmatic language choices reflect ongoing negotiations of cultural, ethnic, and professional identities. This contributes to the broader discourse on language and identity by showing that translingual practices are not only linguistic strategies but also identity-shaping mechanisms.

Methodologically, the study adds value by adopting a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative data from closed-ended questionnaires with qualitative insights from unstructured interviews. This design not only captures linguistic patterns but also highlights the lived experiences behind them, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of translingual practices. Such an approach underscores the importance of integrating linguistic behavior with identity narratives in exploring multilingual contexts.

Finally, the findings carry practical implications for educators and policymakers. By showing how students' language practices influence their sense of belonging and professional development, the study highlights the need for higher education institutions in multilingual societies to recognize and accommodate translingual practices. This contribution is especially significant for designing language policies and classroom strategies that acknowledge linguistic diversity while supporting students' identity development.

## 5.5 Recommendations

Derived from the data reported in this study, several recommendations are provided to advance the knowledge as well as practical usage  of translingualism across academic and sociocultural settings. They include increasing support for translingualism at university and academic contexts, creating spaces for translingual learners to escape the stigma and marginalization of being translingual, and to embrace the benefits translinguals bring to socializing, professional life, and the nation's economy.

### 5.5.1 For Educators

Translingual approaches should  be incorporated into educational contexts. By encouraging and allowing students to use their first languages, as well as English, teachers can assist in explaining complex concepts, improving understanding and ultimately helping students to learn more easily. This can be achieved through translanguaging pedagogies, including bilingual explanations, group discussions in different languages, or translation of key terms. Integrating culturally relevant examples that link academic content to  students' linguistic and cultural experiences. It is advised to teachers to take translingualism as a resource, not a hindrance, in the

classroom. Incorporating linguistically creative activities such as code-switching in presentations or multilingual group projects can allow students to engage with course material on a deeper level while embracing their linguistic identities. Schools and universities can provide professional development programs that teach educators specialized translingual teaching strategies. Such programs should be centered around the benefits of translingualism, practical ways to bring native languages into instruction and approaches to maintain a balance between target language acquisition and inclusivity. Educators can do a lot to dispel the stigma of mixing languages. Teachers can create a classroom culture of linguistic diversity so that all students feel free to use the whole of their linguistic repertoire without worrying about being judged.

## 5.5.2 For Students

It must be encouraged that language used by students should be clear, which makes them use their linguistic skills for learning and self-expression. Strategically switching between languages to help explain concepts or ideas helps students to understand better and build interpersonal relationships. Group work requiring multiple languages should be incorporated. It not only enhances their learning but also builds their ability for adjust to different linguistic environments. Students can play an active role in promoting the acceptance towards translingual practices. This will help students challenge stereotypes and foster an encouraging environment among their peers as they share their experiences and highlight the benefits of translingualism.

## 5.5.3 To the Policymakers and Organizations

Educational institutions must design curricula that reflect what it means to live in a multilingual world. That means incorporating multilingual texts, activities, and assessment that recognize and respect their students' linguistic diversity. Specifically, policymakers must begin awareness campaigns that encourage translingualism and challenge societal stigma associated with mixing languages. These campaigns include seminars, workshops and media initiatives aimed at students, and the surrounding community. Universities and schools must build environments that embrace translingualism. This could mean setting up language resource centers, hosting multilingual cultural events, or something as simple as making sure people can get material in their native tongues. Institutions must also invest in sociopragmatic research, in combination with pedagogical benefits of translingualism.

### 5.5.4 For Society

Societal attitudes often include misconceptions about code-mixing. Some people think it shows a lack of fluency while others think it shows lack of cultural loyalty. Public discourse should emphasize the benefits of translingualism and frame it as an asset — an advantage — instead of a liability. Communities should organize events, discussions and collaboration to highlight linguistic diversity for intercultural exchange. This fosters a better sense of understanding and respect for those belonging to different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Employers and organizations must acknowledge translingualism as a target of development, something that is incorporated into hiring and workplace policy. A recognition of the additional, strategic advantages that translingual employees offer can also encourage students to maintain and develop their translingual skills. Taking a more balanced and closer view of the recommendations mentioned above helps create a well-rounded approach which connects academic, social, and professional aspects, especially in a world where many languages are spoken and used together. It is very important now that as people migrate and settle into new places, the cultures, identities and languages are preserved. Educators, students, policy makers and societies can work together to use the benefits of translingualism to bring people closer and create a positive change.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This study has examined the relationship of translingualism, identity, and sociocultural dynamics among undergraduates. The research is based on an extensive analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data that has offered critical insights into how translingual students manage their academic and social lives as they make sense of complex linguistic and social landscapes. This research highlights the transformative potential of translingualism by connecting theoretical perspectives to lived experiences through an exploration of translingual practices, ultimately addressing the importance of inclusivity, adaptability, and interconnectivity amid the growing interconnectedness of today's global landscape. Among the key findings of the study are the deep relationships between identity and language use. The students strategically modify their language choices to fit for their roles and contexts that they are in. English emerged as a language of professionalism, competence, upward mobility, and was commonly linked to those academic and professional spaces. In contrast, Pashto was closely tied

to cultural and  familial identity, a medium of emotive expression, and a way to express cultural belonging. Urdu, a mediating language, emerged as the language that united students from various  backgrounds and the only means of communication between different social groups. This study also highlights the importance of translingual practices  in the academic context. Both quantitative and qualitative findings reveal that students switched from one language to the other for understanding, especially, when they encountered difficult concepts. Bringing Pashto and Urdu into classroom discourse, along with English, was seen as strengthening the bonds between theory and practice. However, among the participants there was a concern that an excessive use of native languages would interfere with the learners' progress in English. Translingual practices—using multiple languages in flexible and creative ways—serve as practical tools to navigate and embrace diversity in everyday social contexts. By  observing the language choices made by participants across social groups, the study showed that participants proved to be extremely flexible when managing their language choices. Pashto was clearly dominant in informal interactions, highlighting a strong cultural preference. While English and Urdu were used strategically to accommodate   different audiences and facilitate inclusion. Adapting to how someone else speaks is a natural and social way of using language. It helps build a positive connection between people from different backgrounds.

While looking at the advantages translingualism, the study  also highlights some of the challenges that may arise with translingual practices. Some  participants reported they felt confusion when there was inconsistency during the code-switching and others said they faced social stigma for mixing languages, which is often seen as a lack of fluency in either language or lack of loyalty to a particular culture. These challenges highlight the need to address stereotypes and to foster a more sophisticated understanding of translingualism as an asset rather than a deficit. This study adds to the research on translingualism and identity, providing empirical evidence for its sociopragmatic implications. The results support the perspective that translinguals are not just passive users of language, but agents who flexibly and creatively draw on their linguistic repertoire  to negotiate different situations. Theoretical lenses that consider language as performative have some resonance here, as language both reflects and shapes identity in fluid, dynamic ways. On a practical level, while emphasizing translingual concepts and approaches, the  study brings up the need for educational

institutions for new and better attitudes towards translingual practices to improve student engagement, understanding, and language learning in more positive ways. Teachers and education specialists should treat students' native languages as assets; classrooms should be designed to appreciate linguistic diversity. Educators can empower students to succeed academically and preserve their cultural identities by creating a supportive environment where translingualism is encouraged. Through the lens of these findings, it highlights the ways in which translingualism can promote linguistic and cultural inclusivity, in the wider theoretical and practical frames. In today's increasingly globalized world, it is very important to acknowledge and value translingual practices—using multiple languages in creative ways. Doing so can help build a more inclusive, connected, and culturally diverse society.

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# APPENDIX A

## Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

I am Shoaib Khan, an MPhil Scholar at NUML, Islamabad. I am conducting a study on translingualism and identity shift among undergraduate students.

This questionnaire serves as a tool for investigating the multifaceted interplay between language usage, cultural identity, and identity shifts among undergraduate students proficient in Pashto, Urdu, and English. Further, it aims to gather valuable insights into how language choices, social factors, pragmatic considerations, and multilingual experiences influence identity construction within diverse linguistic contexts. Your responses will remain confidential and will only be used for academic purposes. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may skip any question you prefer not to answer.

Thank you for your participation.

**Demographic Information:**

**Name:** _____

**Age:**

    a. 18-20
    b. 21-23
    c. 24-26
    d. 27 and above

**Gender:** _____

**University:**

    a. University of Swat
    b. NUML, Islamabad

**Proficiency in Languages:**

How proficient are you in each of the following languages? (Rate from 1 to 5, 1 being least proficient and 5 being most proficient)

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Pashto |  |  |  |  |  |
| b. Urdu |  |  |  |  |  |
| c. English |  |  |  |  |  |

**Section 2: Language Usage and Preference**

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement: "Language choice is a significant factor in expressing my cultural identity"?

    a. Strongly disagree
    b. Disagree
    c. Neutral
    d. Agree
    e. Strongly agree

2. How comfortable are you communicating in each of the languages mentioned? (Rate from 1 to 5, 1 being least comfortable and 5 being most comfortable)

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Pashto |  |  |  |  |  |
| b. Urdu |  |  |  |  |  |
| c. English |  |  |  |  |  |

3. How often do you feel the need to adjust your language use based on the social group you are interacting with?

    a. Never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Often
    e. Always

**Section 3: Translingual Practices**

4. How often do you engage in code-switching between languages during conversations?

    a. Frequently
    b. Occasionally
    c. Rarely
    d. Never

5. What situations or contexts do you feel usually prompt you to code-switch between languages?

    a. Talking with family
    b. Interacting with friends
    c. Academic discussions
    d. Public presentations

6. Do you feel that using multiple languages affects your sense of identity?

    a. Not at all
    b. Somewhat
    c. Moderately
    d. Significantly

7. How important do you consider your cultural background in shaping your identity?

    a. Not important at all
    b. Slightly important
    c. Moderately important
    d. Very important
    e. Extremely important

8. To what extent do your cultural affiliations influence your social interactions within your university environment?

    a. Not at all influential
    b. Slightly influential
    c. Moderately influential
    d. Very influential
    e. Extremely influential

**Section 4: Sociopragmatic Factors**

9. To what extent do societal norms influence your choice of language in different contexts?

    a. Strongly influence
    b. Somewhat influence
    c. Minimally influence
    d. Not influence at all

10. How do you perceive the impact of societal expectations on your language choices in social interactions?

    a. No impact
    b. Minimal impact
    c. Moderate impact
    d. Significant impact
    e. Very significant impact

11. Do you feel accepted by your peers when you switch languages?

    a. Not at all

b. Somewhat
c. Moderately
d. Completely

12. How much do you believe your choice of language affects how others perceive your cultural identity?

a. Significantly
b. Moderately
c. Slightly
d. Not at all

13. What challenges, if any, do you face when switching between languages in multilingual settings?

a. Difficulty in finding appropriate words
b. Grammar structure confusion
c. Difficulty in maintaining fluency
d. Feeling of discomfort or self-consciousness
e. Not Applicable

14. When communicating in a specific language, do you feel a stronger connection to your cultural heritage?

a. Not at all
b. Slightly
c. Moderately
d. Strongly
e. Very strongly

## Section 5: Identity and Translingualism

15. How do you perceive the impact of being translingual on your sense of self-identity?

a. Positive impact
b. Neutral impact
c. Negative impact

16. Have you ever experienced a shift in your identity when switching between languages?

a. Yes
b. No

17. How does switching between languages make you feel about your cultural identity?

    a. More connected to my culture

    b. Less connected to my culture

    c. No change in my cultural connection

    d. It depends on the context or situation

    e. It makes me more aware of different cultural perspectives

18. Do you negotiate your identity when interacting with speakers of different languages?

    a. Yes, by adapting my language use

    b. Yes, by slightly adapting my language use

    c. No, I maintain consistent language use

    d. No, I slightly maintain consistent language use

    e. Not applicable

19. To what extent do you believe that your translingual skills have positively impacted your interactions with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds?

    a. Not at all
    b. Slightly
    c. Moderately
    d. Quite a bit
    e. Very much

**Section 6: Sociocultural Context**

20. How accepting do you think the society or the University is towards translingualism?

    a. Very accepting

    b. Moderately accepting

    c. Slightly accepting

    d. Not accepting at all

21. Have your language choices been influenced by academic requirements?

   a. Yes

   b. No

22. Have your language choices been influenced by societal expectations?

   a.  Yes
   b.  No

23. Have your language preferences or choices evolved over time due to changes in your social environment?

   a. Yes

   b. No

24. Reflecting on your language repertoire, do you think your ability to speak multiple languages has positively impacted your personal development?

   a.  Not at all
   b.  Slightly
   c.  Moderately
   d.  Significantly
   e.  Very significantly

25. Have you experienced any changes in your self-identity due to language use?

   a.  No changes
   b.  Minor changes
   c.  Moderate changes
   d.  Significant changes

# Appendix B

## Interview Questions

The following semi-structured interview questions were used to explore participants' translingual practices, identity negotiation, and sociopragmatic experiences. These questions aimed to elicit detailed, reflective responses relevant to the study's research objectives.

1. Can you describe your experiences of navigating between different languages in various social contexts?

2. How do you perceive the relationship between language use and your sense of cultural identity?

3. Can you share a time when the way you talked or the language you used made people see you differently or made you think differently about yourself?

4. In what ways do you think your language choices reflect or shape your understanding of your own cultural background?

5. Have you encountered any challenges or difficulties when switching between languages? If so, how do you manage these challenges?

6. Can you describe an experience where using multiple languages has positively impacted your communication or interaction with others?

7. How do you feel your multilingualism has affected your self-identity or sense of belonging within your cultural community?

8. Have you observed any changes in your language preferences or identities over time? If yes, could you elaborate on these changes and their reasons?

9. How do you think your multilingualism might influence your future career aspirations or personal goals?

10. Can you share any thoughts or reflections on how language choices among your peers or within your academic setting impact social interactions or group dynamics?