

BILINGUALISM IN THE DIGITAL ERA: UTILIZING LANGUAGES IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES AND EXAMINING ITS INFLUENCE ON CULTURAL IDENTITY

Aneeza*¹, Dr. Aqsa Atta²

*¹MPhil Department of Linguistics and Communications University of Management and Technology Sialkot; ²Associate Professor Department of Linguistics and Communications University of Management and Technology Sialkot

*¹aneezajamil29@gmail.com, ²aqsa.atta@skt.umt.edu.pk

Corresponding Author: *

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ABSTRACT

The intricate interplay between language and identity forms a compelling focus within bilingual communities, introducing complexity to the individual sense of self. Employing a mixed-method approach, this current research delves into the exploration of language utilization and its consequential impact on the perceptual landscape of cultural identity within bilingual cohorts. The investigation extends its purview to scrutinize the strategic negotiation of identity by individuals across various social media platforms. Additionally, the study delves into the ramifications of bilingualism on interactional practices. Data, emanating from the Shireen Gheba's online community, coupled with interviews featuring influential bilingual bloggers, underwent meticulous analysis utilizing the content analysis technique. The study's discernments reveal that a purposeful amalgamation of languages is strategically employed to foster relationships, surmount cultural barriers, and resonate with a diverse audience. Furthermore, this linguistic amalgamation serves to challenge conventional norms, reshape linguistic paradigms, and advocate for linguistic diversity within the digital sphere. This research proffers profound insights into the evolving dynamics of digital discourse, presenting implications of considerable import for the burgeoning domain of bilingual digital communities.

Key Words: Bilingualism, language, culture, identity, online communities.

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital epoch, the internet has undergone a profound transformation of the communicative landscape, ushering in unprecedented levels of interconnectedness and triumphing over hitherto insurmountable geographic constraints. Online communities, as a consequence, have metamorphosed into dynamic arenas wherein diverse linguistic and cultural identities coalesce. Bilingualism, the proficiency in two or more languages, has transcended its traditional confines and emerged as an integral facet of the digital milieu. This research endeavors to scrutinize the intricate interplay between online communities and bilingualism, placing particular emphasis on the

nuanced ways in which linguistic practices within these virtual domains contribute to the configuration of cultural identity.

Bilingualism, traditionally characterized by the capacity to comprehend and articulate in two languages, has long been acknowledged as a noteworthy constituent of human linguistic diversity (Grosjean, 2010). Historically, the principal contexts for bilingualism were frequently associated with regions where multiple languages intersected. Nevertheless, the advent of the digital age has imbued this phenomenon with a newfound complexity. Bilingualism has transcended the confines of physical spaces, flourishing within the

ethereal domains of online communities and social media networks (Grosjean, 2010). Individuals are increasingly navigating between languages in their online interactions, with their choices influenced by an intricate interplay of social, cultural, and individual factors (Li, 2018).

Since digital era bilingualism has the potential to transform the way that people perceive and articulate cultural identities, it is an intriguing area of study. Language, in all of its forms, serves as a medium for artistic expression and preservation and plays a crucial role in the formation of both personal and social identities in the online sphere. People's sense of self and allegiance change when they traverse the intricate connections of cultures and languages in the digital sphere; this makes the topic fascinating and complex enough to need academic study.

Three main goals of the inquiry serve as its foundation. The most important of these is the investigation of how language use in digital settings affects how people perceive their cultural identity and feeling of belonging in bilingual societies. Understanding how language choice affects people's sense of belonging and sense of self in the setting of online interactions is a crucial component of our research. In addition, to explore the strategies people use when employing language to express their ethnic background in online groups and online communication platforms. Through close examination of the linguistic practises and techniques used, we hope to get some understanding of how cultural identities are negotiated in the digital age. The research also aims to understand the sociolinguistic implications of bilingualism.

The purpose of the research endeavour is to investigate how people deal with language variety and how online networks influence their cultural identities. By doing this, it aims to further our knowledge of how the digital era has transformed human identity. In the current online environment, the study aims to investigate the patterns of bilingualism and its significant impact on the establishment and maintenance of cultural identities. The following inquiries are addressed in the study: How do bilingual populations' perceptions of cultural belonging and identity change as a result of using languages in digital spaces?

How do individuals utilise language to express their cultural backgrounds in the digital age of social networking sites and online communities?

What effects does bilingualism have on language use and interactions in social media and online communities?

The significance of the study lies in its valuable contribution in enhancing knowledge in reshaping the identity of bilinguals in digital environments. It clarifies how identity is changing in the digital era and provides insightful information for both theoretical and real-world settings. Research on how people use language on internet platforms to represent their cultural identities has applications that help businesses and politicians communicate effectively with a varied online audience. Moreover, the investigation of sociolinguistic consequences in virtual environments offers crucial perspectives for instructors and linguists who are adjusting to the ever-changing linguistic terrain of the digital age. In conclusion, this research advances our knowledge of language, cultural identity, and the digital environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers are exploring the complex interactions between language usage in online communities and social media platforms, leading to the emergence of bilingualism as a dynamic field of study in the digital age (de Graaff, 2015; Peng et al., 2020). This comprehensive case study investigates the various ways that the digital environment affects language preservation. Social media and online forums have completely changed how people interact and use languages. Because people often transition between languages, sometimes even within the same discussion or post, they provide a special environment where bilingualism is not only common but flourishes (Traxler & Kukulska-Hulme, 2016). Language preservation and identity are called into question by this linguistic flexibility, which also challenges conventional ideas of language borders (Henry & Thorsen, 2019). The effects of these online environments

Social media platforms have grown significantly in popularity in recent years, with sites like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram taking centre stage. The significant influence of technology on language use is shown in the vast supply of linguistic

data analysis that has developed from this video-sharing site. But it's important to acknowledge that different generations have experienced these changes in different ways (McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009).

The rise of technology in the lives of Generation X, defined as individuals born between 1960 and 1980, was a pivotal moment (McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009). For Generation Y, or millennials, born between 1982 and 2000, the increasing ubiquity of technology marked a shift that needed to be adjusted to the always changing digital environment (Hayes et al., 2015). On the other hand, Generation Z, those who were born after 1995, may be regarded as true digital natives as they have lived in a society where technology has permeated every aspect of their existence. Their extensive knowledge of technology, including every digital platform, has had a profound impact on their identities and how they engage with the digital world (Hayes et al., 2015).

The shifts in generational experiences have left a profound impact on how individuals present themselves and shape their identities on digital platforms that provides a plethora of multimodal resources (Darvin, 2016). Users creatively deploy these resources, including their linguistic repertoires, to construct their online identities. Bilingual undergraduate students, who form part of this study, draw upon their diverse linguistic resources in their online communities' content. These resources encompass spoken and written languages, as well as the textual and visual strategies they employ in their videos and online communication. As students negotiate the challenges of expressing their multilingual identities on this platform, the changing digital world calls for a reevaluation of linguistic identity, particularly in the digital arena.

In addition, social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube have been crucial in forming ethnic identities in these generational contexts. Language choice is one of several identity markers that impact ethnic identification, which is described as a feeling of belonging to a particular ethnic group (Lenihan & Kelly-Holmes, 2017). The importance of linguistic identity is highlighted by the fact that people often use YouTube to interact with members of their particular ethnic communities in their native tongues. The dynamic environment of the platform, which is defined by a wide variety of material, affects the formation and expression of

ethnic identities. People can negotiate and display their ethnic identities in unique ways in online networks, which frequently mirror their experiences being multilingual and multicultural.

The environment of social contact and activity has been profoundly altered by globalization, which has led to a restructuring of sociolinguistic repertoires and the values they represent (Blommaert, 2009). Consequently, one of the core components of global citizenship that has evolved is the possibility of cultural and linguistic exchange (Jaffe, 2012). Due to this paradigm change, multilingualism is now seen as a desirable quality that everyone should strive for. People from all over the world are connected to each other in our modern globalized society, which makes it easier for ideas to be shared and for cultural expressions to be traded internationally, just like consumer items are. Nonetheless, there is frequently discrepancy in the dominant social narrative around multilingualism. Despite the constant focus on the value of learning foreign

Users of social media platforms have access to a wide range of tools that help them create and express their identities. These multifaceted identities use written, spoken, visual, and multimedia elements to create a distinct online persona. This online linguistic identity may not match their offline linguistic identities for people from ethnic minority backgrounds. According to this viewpoint, language shapes identity and is the means by which concepts, self-representation, and social interactions are expressed (Darvin, 2016).

Nonetheless, it appears that the traditional division of identities into main and secondary languages is unable to adequately represent the complexity of language usage in digital environments (Schreiber, 2015). Users are able to switch between languages with ease, viewing the several languages that they speak as a single, cohesive system (Canagarajah, 2011). However, little is known about the dynamics of multilingual users' identity constructions and digital language practices inside social networking networks. One of the main areas of current study focus is on understanding how people manage their linguistic identities in the digital domain (Schreiber, 2015).

In the contemporary digital landscape, the youngest generations, often referred to as "digital natives," have grown up in a world saturated with digital technologies. They are considered "native speakers

of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet" (Prensky, 2001), spending a significant portion of their daily lives online. Previous research underscores the pivotal role of these generations in the preservation of languages. The attitudes that individuals form toward minority languages during their adolescent years can significantly influence their language choices in later life (Morris, 2010; Cunliffe et al., 2013). With the increasing prevalence of social media as a primary mode of communication for teenagers, there arises the potential for social media to play a vital role in upholding language vitality. However, the specific languages used on social media platforms, particularly within bilingual communities, remain relatively unexplored areas of research. Cunliffe (2007) has identified a persistent power imbalance between majority and minority languages, both in offline and online societal contexts. Using a minority language can be perceived as impolite, especially when others are proficient in the majority language, and it can carry political connotations.

Carroll (2008) has documented the multifaceted language usage patterns of multilingual people on social media, emphasizing platform-specific differences. Cunliffe, Morris, and Prys (2013) conducted a study on the usage of Welsh on social networks and found that Facebook is one of the few online venues where Welsh communication is used. Their findings are consistent with these findings. Additionally, their study shows that language use on social networks frequently reflects patterns of language use in offline groups. Cunliffe, Morris, and Prys (2013) predict that social networks will play a significant role in maintaining the Welsh language in its current setting. On the other hand, Androutsopoulos (2013, 2014) has investigated the language practices of German youth who have Greek ancestry, illuminating the difficulties encountered by minority or immigrant languages on the internet. His research implies that there may be pressure on people to convert to dominant languages as the usage of these languages online is not always welcomed. Minority languages are frequently only used in genres that are strongly related to the relevant minority culture, especially in formulaic discourse and quotations. Marwick and Boyd (2011) established the notion of "context collapse," which is especially pertinent to the world of online social

networks, where many social groupings come together and cross borders that are offline. It draws attention to how difficult it may be to communicate successfully with people from different linguistic backgrounds, making language selection and style management more difficult for network owners. Androutsopoulos (2014) goes into further detail on techniques for interacting with a variety of audiences, such as selecting a common language for widespread understanding, using several languages in the study emphasizes linguistic death's symbolic aspect and offers a cognitive perspective on it. It draws attention to the significance of cutting-edge technology like social media and virtual communities. The study draws on Bourdieu's idea of cultural capital to suggest a paradigm in which the occurrence of language dying itself has cultural importance. The group whose native tongue is in danger of going extinct sees this cultural capital negatively and believes it might cause trauma and suffering. Consequently, the study indicates that when a knowledge system is in danger of dying, efficient technology utilization might offer a way to maintain not just the language but also its larger cultural context and identities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research is a mixed method research and it provides full knowledge of how people express their cultural identity in online spaces by combining digital discourse analysis, social media analysis, and in-depth interviews. Through the analysis of language choices, identity markers, and displays of belonging, social media analysis offers important insights into how people perceive their cultural identity and sense of belonging. In the realm of academic research, the content analysis process is rigorously structured, commencing with the systematic development of an extensive coding framework that primarily focuses within the context of Corpus. This coding framework encompasses pivotal variables, including language choices, identity markers, and expressions of belonging, all thoughtfully aligned with the research's fundamental objectives. Informed by a comprehensive review of pertinent literature and established coding frameworks, this hierarchical structure lays the foundation for a methodical and systematic analysis. Subsequently, the manual coding phase

systematically categorizes the collected content, ensuring strict adherence to the established framework and emphasizing the paramount principles of consistency and reliability. This emphasis is particularly vital when multiple coders are involved. The essential task of data organization, inclusive of observations and notes, is undertaken meticulously, with potential support from qualitative data analysis software. Ultimately, the primary aim is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the coded data, unveiling language usage patterns, linguistic markers associated with cultural identity, and expressions of cultural pride. This holistic approach integrates both quantitative and qualitative perspectives, ensuring that the research adheres to the highest standards of academic rigor while effectively addressing its defined objectives

Social Media Analysis

In the initial phase, the research focuses on quantitative data collection by conducting content analysis of the online community surrounding Shireen Gheba, a well-known public figure with bilingual proficiency and a significant online following. Operating on Facebook and Instagram, widely used bilingual platforms with a diverse audience from various Asian regions, this choice aligns with the research's emphasis on language use and cultural identity. Shireen Gheba's substantial following, numbering approximately 116,000 individuals, provides an ideal opportunity to explore bilingualism's influence on cultural identity in the digital context. Data collection spans 2021 to 2022, offering contemporary insights into language choices, identity markers, and expressions of belonging within this digital community. For the current study the Corpus based tool AntConc has been used. The second phase of this research entails qualitative, in-depth interviews with a targeted sample of bilingual community members actively engaging in digital spaces, specifically from the region of Asia. A total of 20 in-depth interviews were conducted to delve deeper into individuals' personal experiences of expressing their cultural identities through language in the context of online communities. The selection criteria for these participants are based on their status as active bloggers on prominent social media platforms, specifically Facebook and Instagram, where

bilingualism is prevalent. Furthermore, each interviewee boasts a substantial following of over 60,000 followers, indicating their influence in these digital spaces. The interviews were conducted in the time span of 1 hour by following a semi-structured format, affording participants the opportunity to narrate their experiences and perspectives concerning cultural identity and language use in the digital realm. The interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed to facilitate thorough analysis in alignment with the research objectives.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Professional Identity of Shireen Gheba

Resilient and unflappable, Shireen Gheba succeeds in a variety of capacities as a self-employed artist, blogger, author, and teacher and is a catalyst for positive change. Her steadfast dedication is evident in her many accomplishments, which include solo shows, several published articles, and a variety of written pieces. This introduction encapsulates her commitment to literature, the arts, and an appreciation of life's good things. Gheba's impactful writings, ranging from amusing reflections to profound spiritual insights, have left a transformative mark on readers. Her multifaceted contributions, spanning scriptwriting, book authorship, and recognition in competitions, exhibitions, and education, showcase a rich professional identity. Presently thriving as a freelance blogger, influencer, and artist in Islamabad, her prolific career sets the stage for a comprehensive analysis of the intersections between art, writing, and positive living.

Choosing Shireen Gheba: Bilingualism, Identity and Cultural Representation in the Digital Realm

The selection of Shireen Gheba for the study on "Bilingualism in the Digital Age: Language Use in Online Communities and its Impact on Cultural Identity" is purposeful, grounded in her bilingual proficiency in English and Urdu, aligning with the research focus on language dynamics in online communities. Predominantly using English, a second language in Pakistan, Gheba's choice reflects the nuanced linguistic landscape in the country's digital era. Noteworthy is her distinctive representation of culture and identity through language, particularly emphasizing religion in works like "Fun Cookbook."

Incorporating both local and foreign dishes, she portrays a multifaceted cultural heritage transcending linguistic boundaries. Her book "It's All About Entertaining Your Guests" takes center stage, exploring cultural practices and identity through hospitality, providing insights into diverse approaches of Asians and Europeans. Additionally, in her blog, she wrote "My love for the coming generations has motivated me to get into many exciting ventures," commitment to shaping cultural identity for future generations, aligns with the research theme on language use's impact on cultural identity in the digital realm.

Further enriching this exploration is Gheba's active presence on social media platforms. On Instagram,

she regularly updates her followers about her life and addresses social issues through live stories. On YouTube, she hosts podcasts covering a range of topics such as social issues, education, donation, religion, and facing life's challenges. This additional dimension of her digital engagement enhances the research's comprehensive understanding of how language use contributes to cultural identity in the digital age. In summary, Gheba's bilingualism, thematic focus, and digital engagement make her a valuable subject for unraveling the intricate dynamics of language use and its implications on cultural identity in the digital age.

Digital Discourse Analysis: A Corpus Examination of Shireen Gheba's Blog

In delving into the intricate tapestry of Shireen Gheba Najib's blog, a corpus analysis unfolds as a fascinating journey through the linguistic landscape she navigates.

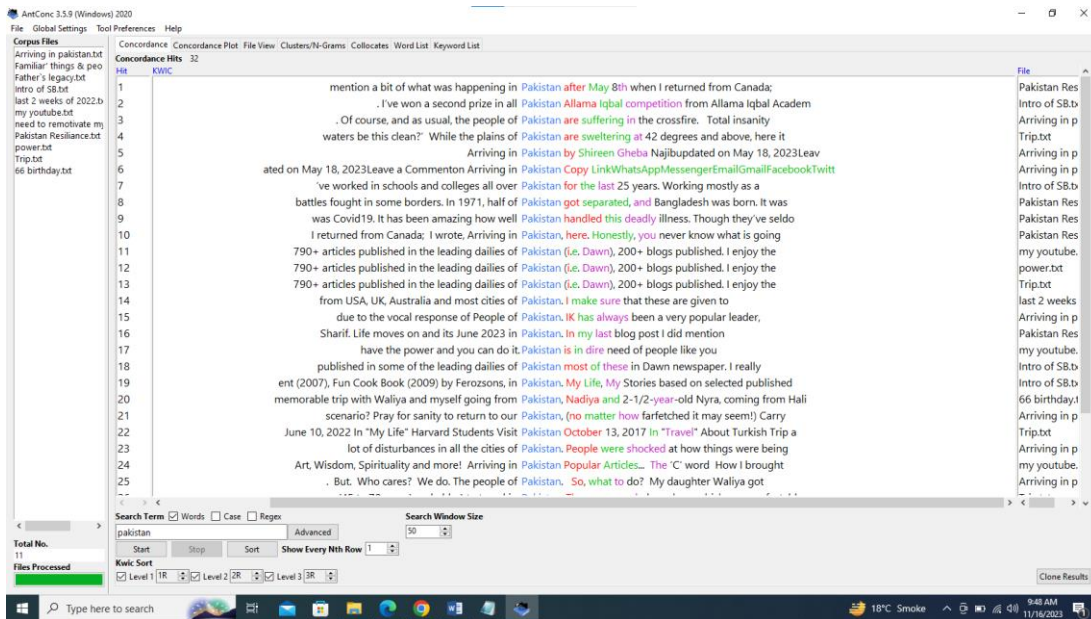


Figure 1: JPEG Image of use of the word "Pakistan" in Gheba's blog to analyze cultural identity

In the corpus analysis of Gheba's blog, Figure 1 reveals a notable recurrence of the term "Pakistan," highlighting a deep connection between the writer and her cultural identity. The frequent use, especially upon her return from abroad, underscores the significance she places on her national belonging, suggesting a sense of pride. Additionally, strategically linking the term with major life achievements, such as winning the 2nd prize in the Allama Iqbal Academy, illustrates a symbiotic relationship between success and national identity. This nuanced linguistic pattern not only unveils the personal importance of 'Pakistan' in Najib's life but also underscores the intricate interplay between linguistic choices, cultural identity, and the emotional fabric of her narrative.

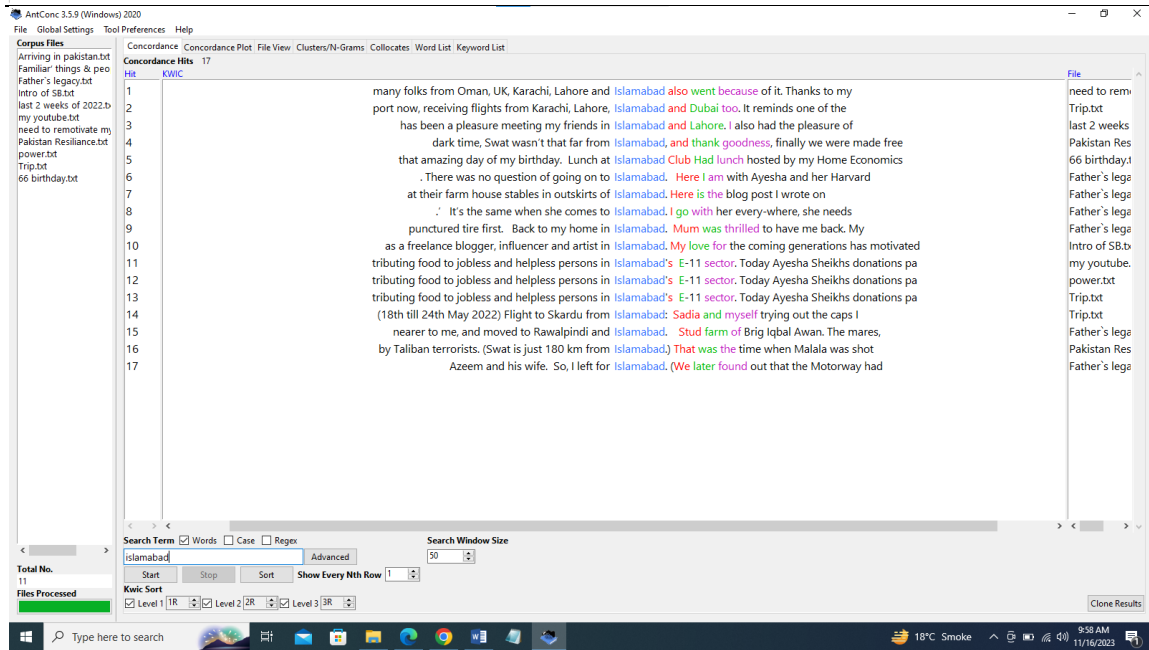


Figure 2: JPEG Image of use of the word “Islamabad” in Gheba’s blog to analyze cultural identity

In her blog, Gheba consistently references "Islamabad," as shown in Figure 2, underscoring the city's pivotal role in shaping her identity, particularly when contrasted with other urban centers like Lahore and Karachi. The linguistic nuances she employs in her digital narratives provide a unique lens through which her audience can explore and appreciate the cultural tapestry of her experiences. The immensely favourable feedback she receives from her audience, who show great appreciation for her embrace of identity and the cultural representation she provides, is a testament to the resonance of her narrative. Gheba's longevity, fortitude, and unwavering tenacity as a survivor are the beneficiaries of this outpouring of support, which goes beyond simple gratitude. These comments emphasise how Gheba's language use in digital spaces has a significant influence on people's notions of cultural identification and how it helps multilingual groups feel like they belong.

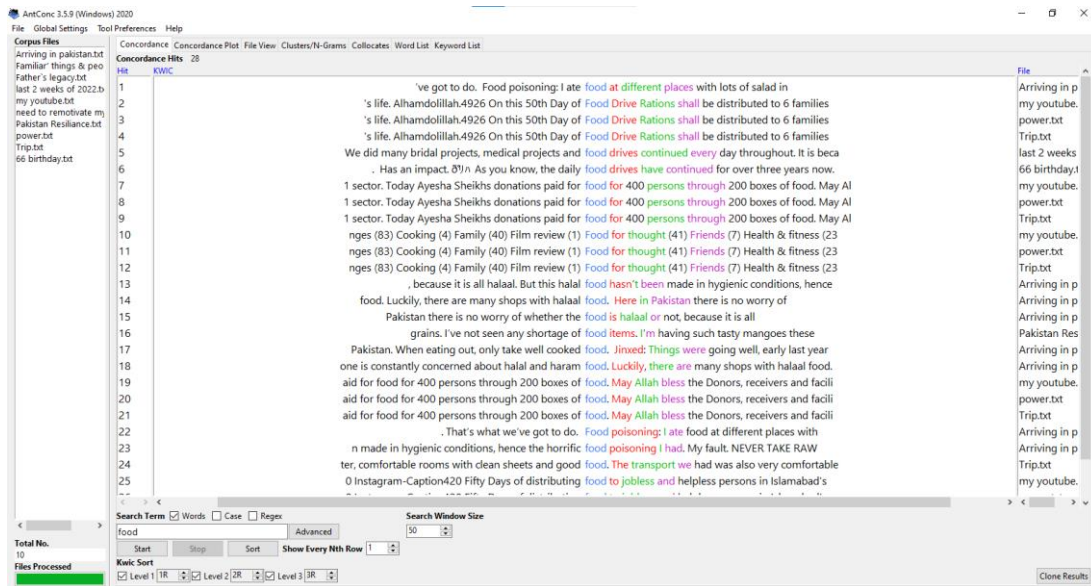


Figure 3: JPEG image of use of the word “Food” in the digital sphere in Gheba’s blog

Gheba skillfully uses language in the digital sphere to encourage engagement in her philanthropic endeavours by harnessing the power of internet platforms. As shown in Figure 3, using the term "food drive," she effectively expresses a call to action, bringing a varied audience together in support of charitable causes through the use of multiple digital platforms including Instagram, YouTube, and her blog. Geographical barriers are overcome by the seamlessness of online transactions and the inclusive multilingual communication that promote a sense of community. This digital strategy greatly increases the effect of her charitable endeavours by amplifying her message and streamlining the collection and distribution of funds.

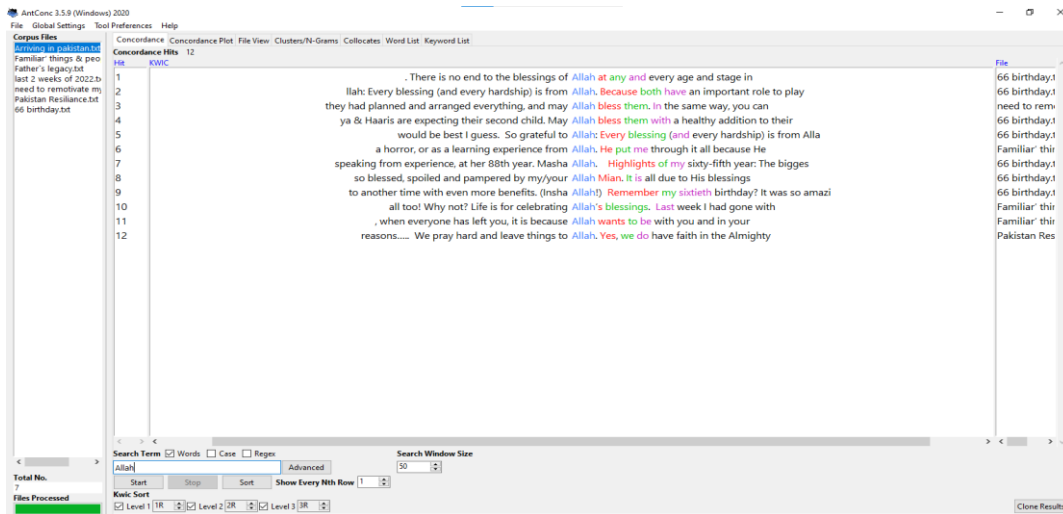


Figure 4: JPEG image of use of the word “Allah” in Gheba’s blog to see religious element in her writings

Figure 4 shows Gheba's ability to navigate both Urdu and English fluently in her online persona plays a crucial part in shaping how others view her culture. By overcoming linguistic and cultural gaps and creating a strong sense of belonging among her multilingual audience, code-switching is a strategic weapon she employs. The usage of religious terms, such "Allah," highlights the complexity of cultural identity and creates a social space for those who have similar views, strengthening the bond between people who share both language and culture.

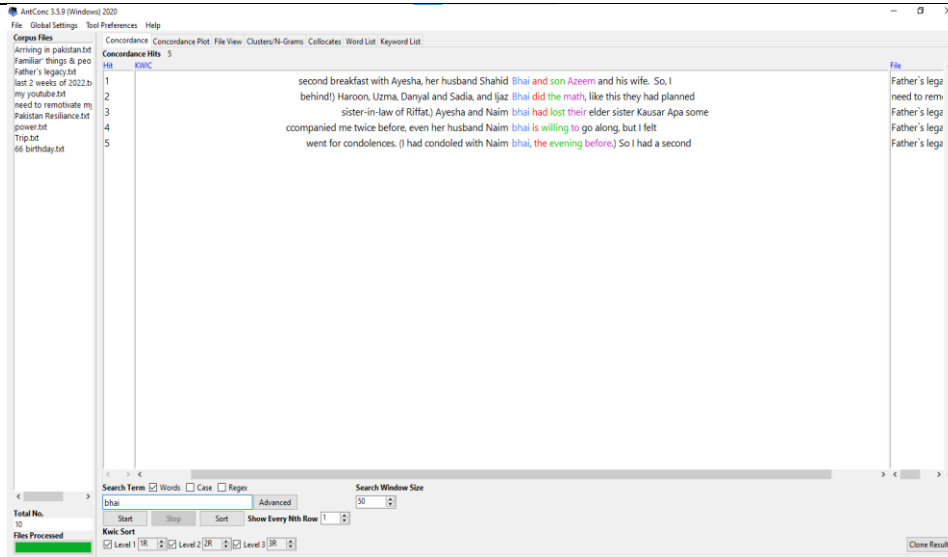


Figure 5: JPEG image of use of the word “Bhai” in Gheba’s blog to identify cultural identity

People like Gheba use language as a potent tool to convey their cultural identity in the digital sphere. She is a prime example of the fluid ways that multilingual people use the internet by fusing Urdu and English. Gheba is able to define her cultural identity authentically because she purposefully uses phrases that are distinctive to her culture, such as "Bhai," which overcomes language barriers, as manifested in Figure 5. This exemplifies a wider trend in which language is increasingly used as a means of expressing and maintaining cultural identity in the virtual world.

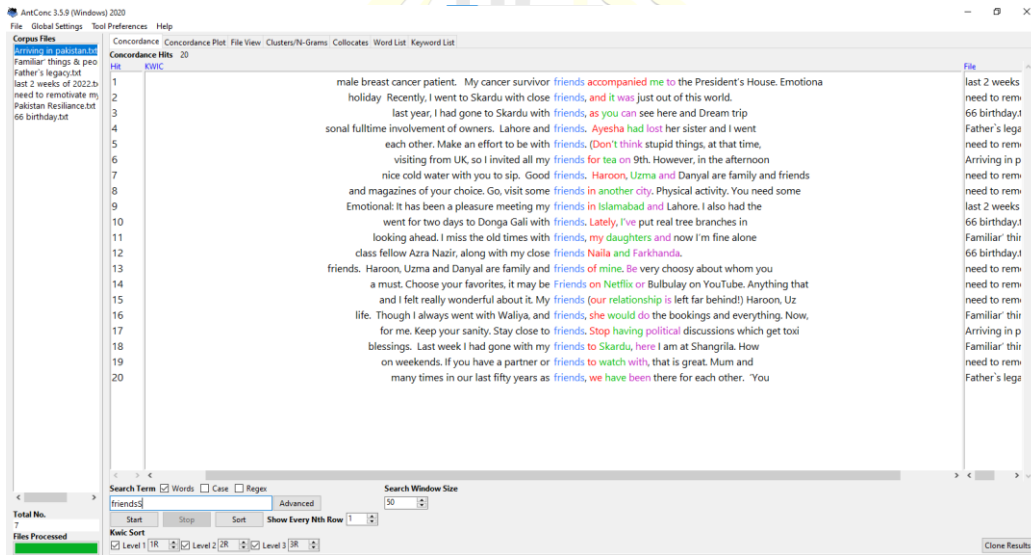


Figure 6: JPEG image of use of the word “Friend” in Gheba’s blog to identify cultural identity

Figure 6 shows that the phrase "friends" appears frequently in Shireen Gheba Najib's blogs, which begs the issue of why she uses it in the context of her investigation of cultural identity. The term's repeated use seems to go beyond an accidental allusion, indicating a conscious attempt on Najib's behalf to highlight the significance of human relationships in forming her cultural identity. It is conceivable that Najib is trying to convey a cultural mindset that values social ties and community by using the term "friends" so frequently. By emphasising the

collective nature of her experiences, this deliberate language choice, in the context of digital platforms, influences how cultural identity is seen. The repetition of "friends" may, therefore, be a linguistic strategy employed to convey a sense of belonging and interconnectedness, shedding light on how language choices in digital spaces contribute to shaping perceptions of cultural identity within bilingual communities.

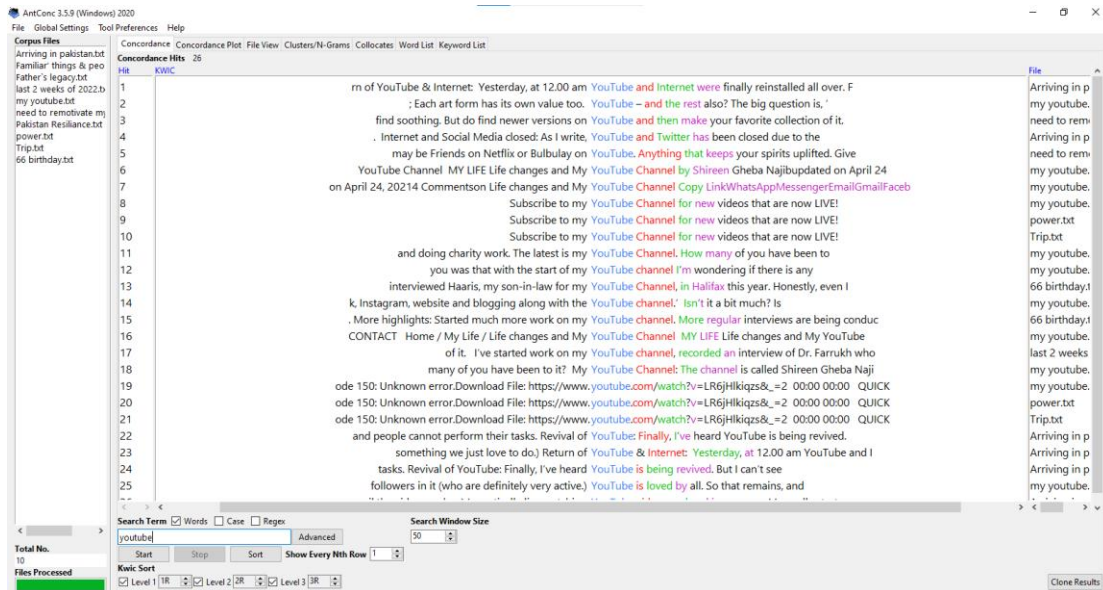


Figure 7: JPEG image of use of the word "YouTube" in Gheba's blog reflects a deliberate choice to emphasize the role of digital platforms in shaping her cultural identity.

In Gheba's blogs, the recurring mention of "YouTube" as shown in Figure 7, reflects a deliberate choice to emphasize the role of digital platforms in shaping her cultural identity. Beyond a casual reference, this linguistic pattern suggests an active engagement with YouTube as a means of expressing and sharing cultural aspects. Encouraging her audience to watch her videos on the platform further underscores a desire for active participation, inviting them to a multimedia experience beyond text. In the context of bilingual communities, this strategic use of "YouTube" contributes to influencing perceptions of cultural identity by highlighting the modern, interconnected nature of cultural expression and fostering a shared digital space for community engagement.

Social Media Insights: Analysis of Shireen Gheba Najib's Online Platforms

In the comprehensive social media analysis of Shireen Gheba Najib's blog, which predominantly unfolds on platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, a compelling dimension emerges regarding the positive influence she consistently exerts over her audience. The evidence is discernible in the abundance of supportive comments, as articulated in expressions such as "You are doing an amazing job. May Allah bless you" and "I also want to be as strong as you are," underscoring the profound admiration and inspiration she imparts to her followers. The bilingual responsiveness observed in comments, with engagement in both English and Urdu, serves as a poignant illustration of the rich linguistic diversity inherent in bilingual communities, particularly within the context of these specific social media platforms. Gheba's role as a mentor is further underscored by followers expressing gratitude for her impactful teachings during their personal journeys. Beyond mere admiration, the depth of community engagement extends to a level of personal sharing, with followers openly discussing challenges and concerns through comments and private messages. Gheba's willingness to share some of these personal narratives on her Instagram and YouTube platforms adds a layer of authenticity and connectivity. This nuanced social media

analysis offers valuable insights into the intricate ways in which language use on platforms like Instagram and YouTube contributes to fostering a profound sense of belonging within bilingual communities, shedding light on the multifaceted expressions of cultural identity within the online realm. The accompanying visual content substantiates these observations, serving as tangible proof of the dynamic and engaging interactions documented in the analysis.

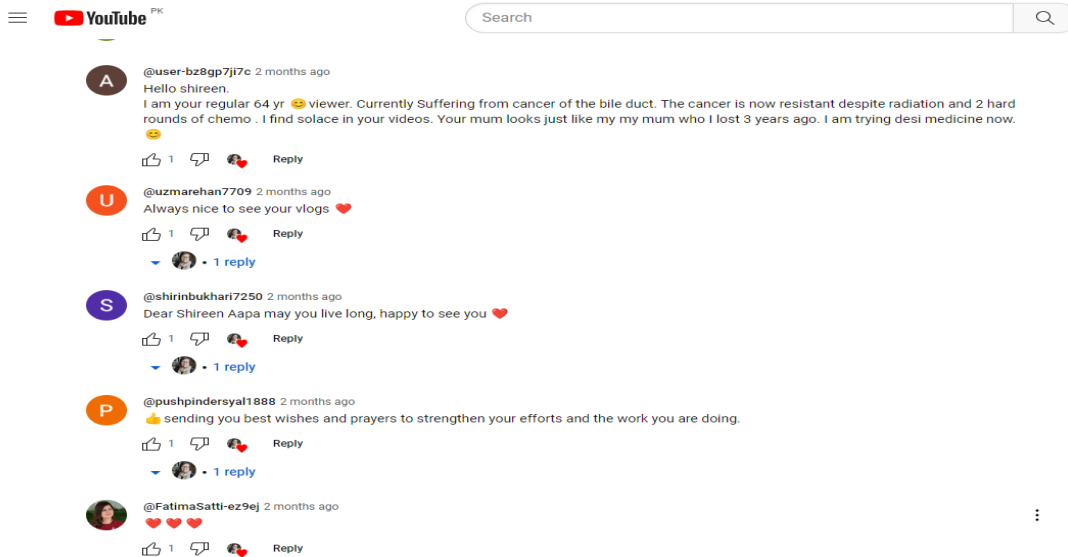


Figure 8: JPEG image of the comments as proof of the dynamic and engaging interactions

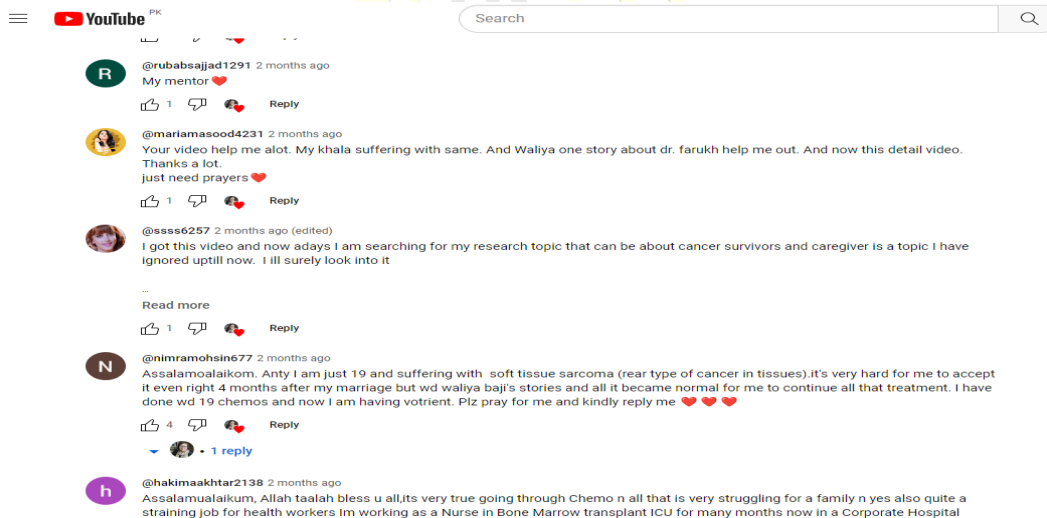


Figure 9: JPEG Image of the comments as proof of the dynamic and engaging interactions



Figure 10: JPEG image of the Comments as tangible proof of the dynamic and engaging interactions

In examining the impact of language use in digital spaces on the perception of cultural identity and belonging within bilingual communities, the analysis of Shireen Gheba Najib's blog reveals a nuanced interplay of linguistic choices. The recurrent positive interactions in both English and Urdu comments underscore the significance of linguistic diversity in shaping a sense of community and belonging. Gheba's influential role as a mentor, evident through expressions of gratitude for her teachings, highlights how digital language use contributes to the construction of cultural identity online. This scrutiny aligns with broader inquiries into how individuals express their cultural identity through language in online communities and on social media platforms during the digital age, emphasizing the multifaceted ways linguistic choices shape perceptions of cultural belonging and facilitate diverse expressions of identity within bilingual communities.

Analysis of 20 In-Depth Interviews Sociolinguistic Implications of Bilingualism in the Digital Age

The 20 in-depth interviews conducted with bilingual bloggers active on prominent social media platforms shed light on the intricate sociolinguistic implications of bilingualism in the digital age. This analysis aims to explore how linguistic practices and interactions within online communities, particularly on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, are shaped by the phenomenon of bilingualism.

In the interviews, the recurring theme of code-switching emerges as a pivotal linguistic strategy for bilingual bloggers. Participants frequently draw attention to the smooth transition between languages within a single piece of material, highlighting the subtle ways in which code-switching may be used to express emotions, cultural quirks, and particular

contextual meanings. When questioned about how being bilingual affected her writing and helped her engage readers, a blogger emphasizes that bilingualism is about embracing two worlds rather than just one language. She explains how her purposeful code-switching in her work represents the challenges of travelling across cultures, forging a special bond with her audience—people going through comparable cultural dualities. Code-switching highlights the sociolinguistic implications of this practice in the digital age by acting as a bridge between disparate communities through deliberate language choices that promote understanding and togetherness. An instance from one of the interviews is provided here:

Interviewer: Your impact may be seen in the digital sphere. Could you elaborate on how being multilingual affects the way you write and how you engage your audience?

Blogger: Certainly. Being multilingual is about embracing two worlds, not just one language. The subtleties of traversing other cultures, languages, and finding common ground are reflected in my material. It establishes a special bond with my audience, who can be going through similar cultural paradox. Language turns into a tool for promoting comprehension and creating connections across various populations.

The Participants emphasized that bilingualism on digital platforms allows for a nuanced expression of cultural identity. The use of multiple languages becomes a powerful tool to share diverse cultural experiences, traditions, and perspectives. Bloggers see their bilingualism as a means to break down cultural barriers and foster a sense of shared understanding among their followers as shown in the following communication.

Interviewer: How do you manage the expectations that come with being an influential voice in the digital realm?

Blogger: It's a balancing act. On one hand, I feel a responsibility to my community to provide valuable content. On the other hand, I stay true to my authentic self. It's essential not to lose sight of the personal aspect amid the numbers. I constantly remind myself that behind each follower is an individual seeking connection and understanding.

Interviewer: Building on that, can you elaborate on the strategies you employ to maintain authenticity while also meeting the expectations of a growing and diverse digital audience?

Blogger: Absolutely. Maintaining authenticity requires a constant evaluation of my content's resonance with my audience. I make conscious decisions to share personal experiences that align with my cultural identity. At the same time, I stay attuned to the evolving needs and interests of my followers, ensuring that my content remains relevant and relatable. It's a delicate balance between staying true to my authentic self and adapting to the dynamic digital landscape.

The interview dialogue effectively captures the nuanced challenges of managing expectations in the digital realm. The blogger's thoughtful response demonstrates a keen balance between providing valuable content, staying authentic, and recognizing the individuality of each follower. This exchange highlights the strategic thinking and adaptability

influencers employ to navigate their roles in the dynamic landscape of online communities.

The another interview revealed that bilingual bloggers leverage language diversity to enhance audience engagement. Participants noted that using multiple languages attracts a broader audience, creating a more inclusive online space. Followers appreciate content that resonates with their own bilingual experiences, leading to stronger connections and a sense of community.

Interviewer: Your following has indeed grown significantly. Can you share some insights into how being bilingual plays a role in shaping your content and connecting with your audience?

Blogger: Absolutely. Being bilingual is not just about language; it's about embracing two worlds. My content reflects the nuances of navigating between cultures, code-switching between languages, and finding common ground. It creates a unique connection with my audience — those who may be experiencing the same cultural duality. Language becomes a tool for fostering understanding and building bridges between diverse communities.

The above dialogue effectively underscores the impact of bilingualism on content creation and audience connection. The blogger's response, highlighting bilingualism as more than language and a tool for fostering understanding. This dialogue also provides valuable insights into the sociolinguistic implications of bilingualism in the digital age, particularly in shaping language practices and fostering connections within diverse online communities.

Bilingual bloggers acknowledged facing challenges in managing linguistic expectations. Striking a balance between two languages and catering to diverse language preferences among followers requires careful consideration. Participants expressed the need for flexibility and adaptability in their linguistic practices to meet the dynamic demands of the digital audience.

Interviewer: The selection criteria for this research included bloggers with substantial followings. How do you manage the expectations that come with being an influential voice in the digital realm?

Blogger: It's a balancing act. On one hand, I feel a responsibility to my community to provide valuable content. On the other hand, I stay true to my authentic self. It's essential not to lose sight of the personal

aspect amid the numbers. I constantly remind myself that behind each follower is an individual seeking connection and understanding.

Interviewer: Expanding on that, could you elaborate on any specific challenges you've encountered in maintaining authenticity while catering to a substantial and diverse online audience?

Blogger Certainly. One challenge lies in navigating the evolving expectations of a large and varied following. Striking a balance between providing content that resonates broadly while staying true to my individual voice can be complex. It involves a continuous reassessment of trends, remaining adaptable to the dynamic digital landscape, and ensuring that my authenticity remains at the core of my content. It's a challenge, but it's also a rewarding process of growth and connection with my audience. The interviewer's focused questions and the blogger's candid responses effectively illuminate the challenges faced by influential voices in the digital realm. The dialogue adeptly navigates the balancing act of providing valuable content while staying true to one's authentic self, with the blogger offering insights into specific challenges tied to maintaining authenticity in a diverse online landscape. This concise yet insightful exchange contributes significantly to our understanding of the nuanced dynamics shaping influential voices and their interactions with a substantial digital audience.

The research highlighted the transformative impact of bilingualism on linguistic norms within digital communities. Participants discussed how their content contributes to shaping new linguistic norms, challenging traditional language conventions, and fostering acceptance of linguistic diversity. Bilingual bloggers are seen as influencers not only in terms of content but also in reshaping language practices within their online spheres.

Interviewer: Lastly, could you share a memorable experience that highlights the power of language and cultural expression in your online journey?

Blogger: There have been a lot, but one in particular jumps out: a follower contacted me and said that my writing had helped them understand their own bicultural identity. These kinds of incidents serve to highlight the importance of the job that influencers like us undertake. It's all about giving people a feeling of community and giving them the confidence to own their own cultural stories.

Ultimately, the examination of the 20 in-depth interviews sheds light on the significant sociolinguistic consequences of bilingualism in the digital era. In order to create a dynamic and inclusive linguistic environment, bilingual bloggers are essential in influencing language practises and interactions within online communities. The findings demonstrate how important it is to recognise and understand the various ways in which bilingualism influences the online sociolinguistic environment.

CONCLUSION

The current study has offered significant insights to understand the interlinking of digital surrounding language and culture. The analysis at three levels testifies the effects of diversity in language use on cultural identity and sense of belonging. To overcome cultural variances, intentional language mixing has become an important skill among bilinguals. Moreover, the use of vocabulary also manifest the cultural identity of people from diverse backgrounds. In addition to it, Shireen Gheba Najib's tactful mixing of two languages, show that language is used as a vehicle for the expression of culture that connect diverse audiences. The last findings of interviews with bloggers reveal that bi/multilingual bloggers also modify their language usage to build their relationships in online communities. Moreover, it is also apparent from the findings that intentional use of more than one language and strategic use of jargons aids in reshaping linguistic norms, promotion of linguistic variety in the digital environment. In conclusion, this study shows how language may significantly alter cultural identity and community dynamics in the digital sphere. When used strategically, bilingualism becomes an important tool for promoting inclusiveness, creating relationships, and changing language practices, highlighting its significant sociolinguistic consequences in the digital era.

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