



MULTILINGUAL INTERACTION IN THE COMMENT SECTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL YOUTUBE CHANNELS: A QUALITATIVE ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

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Abstract

Within a surprisingly short space of time, YouTube has become a world-wide hub for informal education, whereby learners from far and wide can have access to tutorials, lectures and training on skills. While most research concentrates on the pedagogical value of video content, there is a considerable gap in studying interactional discourse existing in the comment sections – a less studied, yet rather dynamic space where global users communicate with one another in various languages. This study considers the multilingual practice that occurs in YouTube comment sections in educational videos and how the users communicate, collaborate, and create meaning in informal learning spaces. Based on Translanguaging Theory (2014), Sociocultural Theory (1978), and Communities of Practice (1991), this work takes a qualitative ethnographic approach. Comments were obtained from English-medium educational YouTube channels in such domains as language learning, coding, and science. From the thematic and discourse analysis carried out by the study, patterns of code-switching, code-mixing, transliteration, and translation have been identified. Findings show that multilingualism is not a stylistics option but a practical and strategic device employed by the learner to access knowledge, be culturally connected, and promote community. Many times, the comment threads are acting as transient learning communities in which the users, as a collective body, decipher complex messages and help each other with their full linguistic arsenals at their disposal. That shows how the comment space in YouTube becomes an organic phase of translanguaging learning, connecting the formal and informal learning processes. The impact of this research on the discipline of Applied Linguistics and Digital Literacies lies in the fact that it highlights the pedagogical meaning of user-generated multilingual discourse on the web attached to education.

Keywords: *Code-Switching, Communities Of Practice, Digital Discourse, Educational Technology & Informal Learning, Multilingualism, Translanguaging, YouTube Comments.*

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1. Introduction

In today's digital age, social media and content sharing sites like YouTube makes the lines between different geographical, language and cultural areas less clear, due to the influence of these platforms it becomes easy for people from various language and cultural backgrounds to interact in lively and sometimes surprising ways. Although people interact in their daily lives in different ways but educational YouTube channels is the one major area where this interaction is particularly noticeable, this platform serves as a great place to study how multilingualism work in daily life. These channels plays its vital role in both formal and informal learning, viewers from all over the world attract and engage in cultural exchanges through their remarks in the comment sections. Educational content of the videos may also be the focus of the people but the conversations happening in the comment sections provide valuable insights into multilingual practices, language hierarchies, identity expressions, and community building online.

This study supervises a qualitative ethnographic investigation into the multilingual exchanges that are held in the comment sections of the educational YouTube channels. This research aims to explore how users from different cultural backgrounds use different languages, navigate language beliefs, and shape meanings and identities in these online platforms. This research connects with many academic fields which includes digital ethnography, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and media studies. Most importantly it contributes to the growing scholarship that views digital communication as more than just a mirror of real-world language norms, but as a unique practice with its own rules, hierarchies, and opportunities.

In the digital world, particularly the platforms where users create content like YouTube or many others, has changed as well as evolved how we create, find, and share knowledge. In the growing era with more than 2 billion users logging in each month and videos offered in over 80 languages, YouTube, being a very widely spread and used platform provides a huge and diverse space for communication. Educational videos which may include such as lectures, tutorials, language lessons, and explanatory clips, are some of the most popular types of content on the site. Channels like English Easy Practice, Khan

Academy, Ecolinguist, and Chetchat – In a Nutshell draw in millions of viewers globally. These videos usually help overcome language and culture differences by adding subtitles, voice-overs, or translations. But the comments on these videos can be messy and aren't always translated. This shows a more natural way people interact in different languages. The difference between the carefully created multilingual videos and the casual user comments gives us a great chance to look into the real experiences of using multiple languages online.

Previously, the research on multilingualism has focused on physical communities where the main focus was on people who speak multiple languages who interact in schools or other institutions. But with the help of new technologies, the study has expanded to include online communities, forums and social media as important areas for language research. The idea of "networked multilingualism" (Androutsopoulos, 2015) describes that in online spaces how users blend languages, switch codes, and express their identities. This idea challenges older views on language limits and speaker groups and highlights the mixed, global, and performative aspects of online communication. In this context, the comment sections of YouTube channels act as "vernacular zones" (Burgess & Green, 2009) where users communicate informally with each other, often using multiple languages.

There are multiple reasons for selecting Youtube comment sections as the foremost focus of this study. Firstly, these sections provide a relatively undiscovered area for multilingual interaction. Although research has focused on multilingualism on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, YouTube comments—especially those on educational videos have not received much attention before, even though this section displays a very rich variety of languages. Secondly Youtube comments are open to the public and they can be reachable and viewed at any time, unlike more private or semi-public platforms. Youtube comments allow for ongoing and comparative observation. Third, the educational nature of the videos creates a special setting for multilingual communication, as users may share a common interest in learning but come out with different language skills, goals, and cultural backgrounds. This combination provides a productive space for understanding meaning, identity, and community.

This study utilises a digital ethnographic practice to explore the patterns, purposes, and effects of multilingual communication in YouTube comment sections. Ethnography, which traditionally involves in -detail research in real-life communities, has been altered for online settings and is often referred to as "netnography" or "virtual ethnography" (Hine, 2000; Kozinets, 2010). In this research, digital ethnography is employed to observe and analyze multilingual interactions over time, directing on selected educational channels with an immense international audience. Data collection involves capturing, coding, and interpreting comment threads, as well as placing them within larger discussions about

language, identity, and education. The analysis builds on important concepts from sociolinguistics, such as code-switching, Translanguaging, language beliefs, and discourse positioning.

Translanguaging plays a vital role in this study. Emerging from research in bilingual education (García & Wei, 2014), translanguaging explains how multilingual speakers use different languages in a resilient and fluid way. Instead of observing languages as separate systems, translanguaging identifies how people use all their language skills to create and find meaning, express their identities, and negotiate social interactions. In the YouTube comment sections being examined, translanguaging appears in many ways: switching languages within a single comment, mixing writing systems (like Roman, Devanagari, and Cyrillic), or replying in various languages depending on the situation. These actions challenge the norms of utilizing just one language and highlights the creative, adaptable methods that users apply in online interactions.

The study also examines the impacts of language hierarchies and power relations in online communication. While many people like the internet for creating equality, research identifies that language inequalities are still present and can even worsen in digital spaces. English is often the primary language being used on the web and serves as the default way to communicate. However, many users also comment in their own languages like Spanish, Hindi, Arabic, Portuguese, and Russian. Sometimes, comments in less common or regional languages receive little or less attention, are overlooked, or even face negative or no reactions. By exploring these problems, the study disclosed how digital platforms can mirror and maintain language hierarchies, even in spaces that seem wide and welcoming for learning.

Another key theme of this research is identity construction. Online comment sections cannot be just considered as places to share information but they also serve as platforms for self-expression, community belonging, and cultural display. Users often engage in multilingual interaction, showing their linguistic, national, or ethnic identities through their choice of words, usernames, or direct remarks in their comments (for example, “Proud to be Filipino” or “Watching from Nigeria!”). Occasionally, using multiple languages helps to express support, humor, or resistance. For instance, users may switch to a less common language to have conversations which are private within a bigger discussion or to express their cultural pride. The study focuses on these moments of expressing identity and highlights that language acts as both a tool and a place for conflict in online interactions.

Also, this study looks at the unique qualities and limitations of the YouTube platform. Unlike live chatting tools for example Zoom or WhatsApp, YouTube comments are typed and allow for delayed conversations. This setup allows users from multiple time zones and language backgrounds to be a part of ongoing discussions. However, it also

brings challenges like misunderstandings, scattered conversations, and possible language barriers. YouTube's comment filtering system, absence of real-time translation, and limited language support further influence how users engage in multiple languages. These specific aspects of the platform are essential for understanding how interactions happen on YouTube.

This study is necessary because it helps us learn how multilingualism operates in informal online learning environments. As education leans more on digital tools, it's crucial to understand how learners communicate in various languages. This research provides valuable information for linguists, ethnographers, teachers, platform designers, and lawmakers who aim to create inclusive and multilingual online learning spaces. By looking at the experiences and language use of users in YouTube comment sections, the study reveals how common online activities can challenge prevailing language beliefs and encourage fairer exchanges of knowledge and ideas.

This ethnographic research looks at how multilingual interactions occur in the comment sections of educational YouTube channels. It seeks to reveal the complex and often unnoticed ways in which language, identity, and community develops in online spaces. By carefully analyzing user comments, the research captures the voices, techniques, and challenges of multilingual users as they engage with educational content and each other. Overall, this research aims to deepen our understanding of digital multilingualism as a dynamic, changing, and socially significant aspect of the 21st century.

1.1. Research Questions

1. How much do socio-cultural determinants, including educational level, cultural values, and social background, influence the manner in which users of multiple languages manage knowledge and conduct collaboration practices in the context of the Internet?
2. To which extent do the multilingual interaction patterns presented in the comment sections of YouTube align or do not align with the main concepts of Sociocultural Theory, Communities of Practice, and Translanguaging Theory?
3. What are the pedagogical inferences to the multilingual behaviours in YouTube comment sections to improve the teaching and learning practice in an online educational setting?

2. Literature Review

The digital platforms have changed the way people interact, gather knowledge and social learning. Youtube, in specific, becomes a global arena for connecting people interacting beyond linguistic barriers. Experts such as Androutsopoulos (2015) and Sultana et al. (2013) note that the fact that online platform is an inextricable component of contemporary online communication underpins their multilingualism, reflecting diverse

linguistic repertoire of users as well as their regions' sociolinguistic life. These platforms are not only broadcasting tools but also space where usage of language shows identity, emotion, belonging and knowledge construction.

The study by Snelson (2011) and Mayar (2020) recognizes the contribution of YouTube as the venue for informal education with specific emphasis to such fields as language, coding, science and DIY tutorials. In order to seek peer support, clarification and engagement outside of the video, learners often rely on comment sections. However, the major part of this research covers video content, leaving the interactional discourse like user comments; a promising environment for studying grassroots multilingual communication.

Translanguaging concept, which was presented by García and Wei (2014), questions the rigorous line separating named languages. Instead, it perceives language usage as being flexible and dynamic, especially in a multilingual context. Comments on the online community especially posted under the educational content often shows translanguaging where users switch from English to other languages in order to express better, to explain or to achieve a more emotional effect (Canagarajah, 2011). This theory can be an insightful lens through which it is seen how users leverage their full linguistic arsenals to enable learning and social connection.

The idea of participatory culture (Jenkins et al., 2009) provides another helpful perspective from which it is possible to learn about multilingual interaction on YouTube. In educational channels, users do not only consume the information, but they are the active participants that provide feedback, correct and translate, scaffold, and scaffold each other's learning with the help of comments. This participatory dynamic leads to what Jenkins refers to as a "networked affinity space," which involves contributions without any formal expertise in order to be based on common interest. In this space, multilingual practices develop naturally as users pull on the full range of their linguistic reservoir to put ideas in more basic terms, give follow-up questions in local dialects, or supply community-specific examples. Such practices are consistent with Barton and Lee's (2013) perception of digital literacy as social and multilingual in nature as users improvise on different languages to increase their accessibility and enable mutual understanding. In spite of this, most educational technology research still focuses on teacher-led approaches ignoring these decentralized, learner-centered spaces that are by-nature collaborative and multilingual.

Code-switching (switching between two or more languages) and code-mixing (inserting pieces of one language in another) are common in online spaces. Androutsopoulos (2007) and Bieswanger (2013) studies on social media platforms indicate that these strategies have several communicative functions e.g, transmitting identity, elucidation, comedy, or unity. However, there is still a lack of targeted research on the ways in which these phenomena manifest in educational YouTube videos' comment

threads. The theory of Communities of Practice by Lave and Wenger (1991) argues that learning can be socially located and is likely to take place in non-formal circumstances through interaction. On YouTube, the comment sections tend to become temporary learning communities where multilingualism is transformed into a mechanism of peer support, scaffolding, and the maintenance of communities. The users explain hard terms, give translations and have discussions that are indicative of real, situated language practices (Gee, 2004).

The multilingual discourse in online learning settings is not only use-value oriented but also intense with affect and identity-oriented. Scholars like Pavlenko (2007), and Androutsopoulos (2013) point out that shifting between languages in digital environments frequently permits users to demonstrate emotions, stress belonging to the same group, or indicate their belongings to a specific cultural circle. In educational YouTube conversations, acts of thanking, joking, complaining, and encouragement are often mixed in the users' native languages or even in the blended forms (e.g., English, local idioms, and scripts). This use of language is a performative mechanism that enables the users to speak with authority, exploit locality, and develop interpersonal relationships. Additionally, these practices illustrate that the identity in online areas is not fixed but is dynamic and arises out of language options and interactive placement (De Fina & Perrino, 2011). After all, there is a critical lack of studies that specifically investigate how these identity and emotional aspects of multilingualism constitute these experiences.

Discourse analysis-related research on YouTube (Thelwall, 2018; Georgakopoulou (2017) suggests that the comment section is dialogic, dynamic, and loaded with user interaction. While certain scholarship tackles the issues of identity and stance-taking in comments, there are very few that focus on the way multilingual discourse is constructed, negotiated, or maintained within these digital learning forums. This gap points the way to investigate the sociolinguistic dynamics of comment-based interaction in which the material structures of formal education do not exist but communicative wealth exists.

Even with the emerging research in the field of digital discourse, translanguaging, and online informal learning, there are still several loopholes. Most of the studies would concentrate on monolingual or classroom-based data. Scholarship on multilingual comment sections is scarce, particularly in the educational settings. There is little investigation into how the diversity of language facilitates or complicates learning in non-formal peer-to-peer interactions. The sociocultural influence of multilingualism on knowledge acquisition and expression of emotions in digital learning settings is under-researched.

3. Methodology

This research used a qualitative ethnographic approach to find out how users using various languages engage in the comment sections of educational YouTube channels. Since the field focuses on digital ethnography or netnography (Hine, 2000; Kozinets, 2010), the study aimed to record how global learners use language to express and establish their identities online.

The research method was an ethnographic study that enabled the researchers to observe, collect and examine natural conversations that people posted as YouTube comments. Using ethnography, this research examined language use, studied how the community functioned and observed pupils while they interacted in a virtual setting. Since the study took place on the web, we have kept personal communication unchanged.

Information for this study was taken from the comment sections of English-medium educational videos on YouTube channels; Khan Academy, Chetchat, English Easy Practice and Ecolinguists in three domains: Language learning, STEM education includes (e.g., coding, science) and Educational material about cultural or general topics.

This research chose multiple videos because they were watched a lot, reflected a multilingual audience and had many comments. This research gathered around 100 samples from people using purposive sampling to include different languages, ways of using both languages together and cultural backdrops. All comments were written down by hand and then arranged into a dataset used for coding and analysis. When a comment was added, its metadata recorded the video title, the date and an anonymous user name.

Data was collected by reading open, publicly accessible comments, so there was no need for consent. Even so, the research was done according to ethical guidelines for the Internet (Bruckman, 2002). User information was anonymized and no usernames or images were included in the analysis so no one's privacy was violated. Both thematic analysis and discourse analysis were used to understand the data. Using the thematic approach, this research discovered main findings such as identity, sharing information, supporting each other and interacting emotionally through online conversations. Using sociolinguistic ideas, the analysis of discourse looked at how users talk, interact and make communities using different languages in their written comments. This research based the coding process on the study's underlying theories: Translationg Theory (García & Wei, 2014) as an explanation for fluid language usage to analyze group learning, use of Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Lave and Wenger (1991), the research identified the concept of Communities of Practice to help find informal learning and identity performance. The comments were examined to see not only their meaning, but also their role in how users connected, helped, wondered and discussed across multiple contexts.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study is a mixture of ideas from many fields, which includes sociolinguistics, digital ethnography, discourse studies, and critical media theory. In order to understand the idea of how people communicate in different languages in YouTube comment sections, it is very important to see how language plays its role as a social practice in uneven digital, global environments. This framework includes significant theories about multilingualism, online communication, beliefs about language, and identity performance. In this section, we will discuss the theoretical perspectives used to explore multilingual interaction on educational YouTube channels. We will be focusing on ideas like translanguaging, code-switching, language ideologies, digital discourse, and the creation of online identities.

4.1. Multilingualism in Digital Contexts

Traditional perspectives on multilingualism usually see languages as distinct and countable groups (such as English, French, and Hindi) that connect to particular countries and stable speaking communities (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). However, new studies question this viewpoint by pointing out that how we use language is more flexible and blended, especially in our digital age. Online, multilingualism becomes more apparent and takes on new, creative forms that exgo beyond the usual language rules witnessed in face-to-face interactions (Androutsopoulos, 2015). We can describe online multilingualism through code-switching, translanguaging, mixed scripts, blended language styles, and both intended and accidental misunderstandings. Researchers like Blommaert (2010) propose a “sociolinguistics of globalization” that investigates how language resources are utilized in different ways within communication networks. In YouTube comment areas, users frequently use their entire range of language skills to communicate with different people, meanings, and showcase their cultural identities. The global nature of platforms like YouTube allows interactions that do not follow standard language norms, making it a great place to study and understand new trends in multilingualism.

4.2. Translanguaging as a Key Idea

Translanguaging is an important idea for this study. It is a term created to define how multilingual people utilize their language skills in flexible and creative ways to make meaning (García & Wei, 2014). It is not like code-switching, which is basically switching between two separate languages. Translanguaging is different; it suggests that multilingual speakers use a combined set of language tools instead of separate language systems. This examination challenges the concept of “named languages” as fixed categories and pays attention to how people create meaning across different languages.

On YouTube, translanguaging can be seen in many ways: users might use a mixture of English and Hindi in a single comment, combine Roman and non-Roman scripts forms, or include emojis and other visuals with their text to express their feelings towards the

particular content. These practices display a way of communicating that values interaction rather than strict grammar rules. García and Li Wei (2014) suggest that translanguaging is both a method of teaching and a political statement— dominant language beliefs are challenged while validating the styles of communication of multilingual groups. This is foremost a necessity for educational YouTube channels, where users learn using their own language choices.

Translanguaging also provides support to the idea of a diverse digital space (Bakhtin, 1981), where different voices and viewpoints exist together in a single space . This concept fits well with the digital ethnographic approach used in this study, as it helps understand how users switch languages not just for practical reasons but also to express their identities, share feelings, and build connections or resistance.

4.3. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) highlights that learning is a social process shaped by culture, mediated primarily through language and interaction. The comment sections of educational YouTube channels, primarily those in which multilingual users are involved, serve as contemporary digital places where such processes can be seen in action. A key idea in Vygotsky's theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which suggests the difference between what can be independently achieved to the learners and what they can achieve with guidance or collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). In YouTube comment sections, this idea is operationalized through interactions and communication where users help each other by translating content, rephrasing complex ideas, or providing culturally related examples. For a particular time, a user may explain a difficult English-language concept in Hindi or Swahili for the benefit of other speakers of that language. This type of informal support exemplifies the social mediation of learning that Vygotsky described, and it highlights the role of multilingualism as a resource for extending comprehension within digital learning communities.

Language, in Vygotsky's view, is not just a tool for communication but a primary vehicle for cognitive development. He points up the importance of social speech in early learning, which later becomes internalized as "inner speech" (Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of multilingual comment sections, users often engage in translating smoothly between languages in a single communicative act to process and grasp knowledge. These multilingual practices are not accidental ; rather, they are strategically planned and context-dependent, which allows users to draw on the full range of their linguistic repertoires to make educational content sensible. This portrayal of the sociocultural view of language and thought develop through socially mediated activity. Additionally, YouTube itself can be seen as a cultural artifact or mediational means (Wertsch, 1991) that shapes how individuals understand and interact with knowledge and ideas.

4.4. Communities of Practice and Multilingual Interaction in Educational YouTube Comment Sections

The Communities of Practice (CoP) theory which was developed by Lave and Wenger (1991), offers an interesting way through which we can get an idea of the dynamic, interactive, and participatory nature of multilingual engagement in the comment sections of educational YouTube channels. This framework elaborates, learning is not just limited to formal institutions or strict instruction but also happens when people participate in social groups in shared practices, often within informal or semi-structured environments. These communities are defined by mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire of resources, including language, tools, norms, and routines (Wenger, 1998). Educational YouTube comment sections, specifically those which are characterized by multilingual interaction, exhibit many qualities of such communities and serve as decentralized, learning driven by shared interests.

A main idea of CoP theory is that learning occurs through legitimate peripheral participation, where the new coming people become experienced members with the passage of time by being a part in the practices of a community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In the context of YouTube comment sections, this process is seen in how users, especially those less fluent in the dominant language of instruction, begin by asking basic questions or expressing confusion or doubts. As more experienced users become interested with them and give answers to them, they often begin to contribute their own explanations, translations, or culturally contextualized examples. With the passage of time these users can become more central participants in the discourse community, offering help to newer participants and thereby continuing the cycle of learning and knowledge-sharing.

5. Discussion and Findings

5.1. Translanguaging as a Core Feature of Online Learning

It is easy for learners to obtain, convey and express information using the many tools that language offers. It challenges the traditional idea of only using one language and stresses how language can be used in various ways online.

5.1.1. Code-Switching and Code-Mixing as Dynamic Communicative Strategies

Many instances of code-switching and code-mixing demonstrate translanguaging.

Example 1: A learner in a language-learning channel used English words and phrases to write something that appeared in Azerbaijani as *“My name is Nasibe lam, from Azerbaijan and I live in Ganja. I am 11 years old.”* It might be that Azerbaijani was chosen for emotional conversations and English for sharing factual details (how old the patient was). This shows how efficiently the user can use both languages.

Example 2: A user added “*Mashallah Bhat pyari*” to a comment on the cultural education channel written in English. The expression “*Mashallah*” shared a cultural and religious attitude, so people could relate to one another.

Emojis added to the message, highlighting that online communication uses several ways to communicate.

As seen, bilingual individuals make use of methods such as code-switching and code-mixing to smoothly share complex thoughts, display who they are and handle internet communication.

5.1.2. The Multilingual Landscape

Comments in Arabic, Turkish, Portuguese, Spanish, French, Ukrainian, Greek and Thai can be found in online learning communities.

Example 1: Commonly, some people share their ideas in Turkish on channels related to scholarly subjects. “Bu kadar guzel bir kanalı, bu kadar gec fark ettiğime inanamıyorum. Emeklerinize saglık”. (*I can't believe I discovered such a great channel so late. I appreciate all that you have done for me*). This means they feel closer to their parents by thanking them in the language they grew up with.

Example 2: One person posted thorough remarks in Portuguese in the linguistics-focused channel's comment area, such as: “*Uma vantagem que no português tem sobre o inglês e o francês... os nativos desse idioma tem maior inteligibilidade com línguas do mesmo t...*” An advantage for Portuguese speakers is that they understand other languages within this group much better. They are showing a greater commitment and focus on exploring the facets of their mother tongue.

Example 3: On an instructional channel with visual aids, a user requested in Thai: “น่าจะใส่ภาษาไทยด้วยเพราะบางภาพบางคำดูไม่ออกว่าน่าจะหมายถึงอะไรคำไหนแน่ ” (*You should probably add Thai because some pictures and words are not clear what they mean, what word exactly*). This ensures that everyone can communicate in their own language.

Opposing the use of a single language in online courses and promoting different languages assures a wide variety of perspectives for students in the classroom

5.1.3. Transliteration and Adaptation

Those using the Internet find new ways to talk with each other.

Example 1: On a channel covering global cultures, a user employed “*Salmalikom*” a transliteration of the Arabic greeting “*Assalam-o-Alaikum*” This adaptation using the English alphabet makes it accessible to a wider audience while retaining cultural significance.

Example 2: In the comment section of a general knowledge channel, an individual used “*Thanku*” an informal variation of “*Thank you*”. This illustrates the brief manner of writing on the internet and may be influenced by someone’s mother tongue.

They show that language changes as it is used on the internet, based on people's conversations.

Table 1: Transliteration and Adaptation

Example	Language(s)	Strategy Used	Function/Purpose
"My name is Nasibe lam, from Azerbaijan..."	Azerbaijani + English	Code-switching	Identity sharing, factual expression
"Mashallah Bhat pyari"	Urdu + English	Code-mixing	Cultural/religious sentiment
"Bu kadar guzel bir kanalı..."	Turkish	Full L1 use	Emotional closeness, appreciation
"Uma vantagem que o português tem..."	Portuguese	Full L1 use	Deep reflection on native language
"น่าจะใส่ภาษาไทยด้วย..."	Thai	L1 use for accessibility	Request for inclusion/subtitles
"Salmalikom"	Arabic (transliterated)	Transliteration	Cultural identity via script adaptation
"Thanku"	English (nonstandard)	Informal adaptation	Casual, fast-paced online style

5.2. Language as a Tool for Identity Construction and Community Building

Users within online learning communities can rely on language to identify with specific cultures, make themselves understood and bond with other participants.

5.2.1. Demonstrating Tradition and Culture Through Language

It often takes effort to express yourself through a language other than English.

Example 1: A Spanish-speaking user eagerly posted on a language-learning channel: "me encanta me esta ayudando muchísimo en el English" (*I love it it is helping me a lot with English*). This asserts their Spanish-speaking identity and contributes to the community's diversity.

Example 2: In the comment section of a channel focused on European history, an individual commented in Ukrainian: "Дякую за чудову роботу :) Ви реально красунчики)))" (*Thank you for the wonderful work :) You are really beautiful*)). In addition, using this language might let them build relationships with other Ukrainian speakers.

These examples reveal how language allows users to highlight their language and culture in the classroom.

5.2.2. Incorporating Cultural and Religious Elements - Weaving Identity into Learning

Online exchanges can be shaped by the cultural and religious aspects present in a person's language.

Example 1: On a religious education channel, an individual's use of "*Mashallah*" conveyed a specific religious sentiment, connecting them to a broader community sharing that expression.

Example 2: In the comment section of a channel discussing global social issues, the use of "*Salmalikom*" established a sense of connection and shared values within a specific cultural group. They prove that language reflects a student's culture and religion, creating a sense of belonging in the online classroom. The presence of language groups in the community shows that these users could create their smaller communities as well. Just because members of these groups may rarely meet in person, using a common language can still support their interaction and make them feel connected.

5.2.3. Relationships Outside of Classrooms

A user commented their name, birthplace and age on a general interest learning channel: "*Hey l.a.m. I'm Nasibe Lam, an Azerbaijani living in Ganja with an 11-year-old son*". By sharing this information, I am trying to help the class feel more connected and personally involved.

Table 2: Relationships Outside of Classrooms

Example	Language(s)	Strategy Used	Function/Purpose
"me encanta me esta ayudando muchísimo..."	Spanish	L1 usage	Identity display, appreciation
"Дякую за чудову роботу..."	Ukrainian	Full L1 use	Building community with co-speakers
"Mashallah"	Arabic	Cultural insertion	Religious identity expression
"Salmalikom"	Arabic (transliterated)	Cultural marker	Community connection
"I'm Nasibe Lam, from Azerbaijan..."	English + identity info	Personal info sharing	Community bonding, self-representation

5.3. Multilingualism and the Negotiation of Learning

5.3.1. Online Learning Experience with Multilingualism

Speaking and understanding more than one language strongly affects students' online learning experience.

Example 1: Many people express what they are concerned about or seek answers using their own language.

"ben ingilicenin kurallarini bilmeden dinliyorum ve bilmedigim kelimeleri ogreniyorum ve boylece kulak asinaligi oluyor sifirdan basliyorum dogru gidiyor muyum" (*I am listening without knowing the rules of English and learning the words I don't know, and thus I am getting used to the sound. Am I starting at the beginning stages.* They probably expressed themselves in their L1 for nuanced feedback because of the question's complexity. Being allowed to get help in their native tongue calms the learner and instills confidence.

Frequently, using their mother language, students express that they are learning and enjoying the new language.

Example 1: A user remarked in Portuguese on a linguistics channel, examining the speaker's manner in the video: "*Pelo que pude ver em varios videos eles falam som cantante como uma musica romântica t...*" It seems to me, based on the videos I watched, that they speak with their voices elevated in a tone often heard in romantic music. It demonstrates that the writers were able to write in complex language.

Example 2: In the comment section of a history channel, an individual simply stated in Greek: "Ηταν πολύ ωραίο. *"I had a pleasant time"* means (I really enjoyed it). This word sounds more personal when written in your mother tongue. Those who use their linguistic skills to understand new information may improve their comprehension through multilingualism.

5.3.2. Taking Accessibility into Account

Language accessibility is being addressed by request for subtitling and translation.

Example: Because the graphics and vocabulary on an instructional channel with visual content were unclear, a user asked to see the content in Thai: "น่าจะใส่ภาษาไทยด้วยเพราะบางภาพบางคำดูไม่ออกว่าน่าจะหมายถึงอะไรคำไหนแน่" meaning (*You should probably add Thai because some pictures and words are not clear what they mean, what word exactly*). This shows that language inclusion is essential for an equal status of education. Access to knowledge for all needs language assistance.

5.3.3. Thinking Back on Education

Linking language to personal development language and learning are interwoven, as seen by comments that relate language acquisition to individual linguistic objectives.

Example: One user on a language-learning channel said that the material was really advancing their English: "me encanta me esta ayudando muchísimo en el English"

(*I love it it is helping me a lot with English*). This highlights the personal relevance and motivation provided by language learning.

Table 3: Thinking Back on Education

Example	Language(s)	Strategy Used	Function/Purpose
"ben ingilicenin kurallarini bilmeden..."	Turkish	L1 usage	Clarifying learning status, seeking feedback
"Pelo que pude ver em vários vídeos..."	Portuguese	L1 usage	Deep analysis of language behavior
"Ηταν πολύ ωραίο"	Greek	L1 usage	Emotional response, personal enjoyment
"น่าจะใส่ภาษาไทยด้วย..."	Thai	Accessibility request	Inclusion, equality in education
"me encanta me esta ayudando muchísimo..."	Spanish	L1 for feedback	Learning progress, emotional link

5.4.The Online Learning Community as a Multilingual Space

YouTube comment sections serve as vibrant, multilingual communities where a range of learners engage in knowledge-seeking interactions.

5.4.1. Good and Helpful Relationships - a Basis for Community

Regardless of the words employed, interactions are overwhelmingly constructive and encouraging.

Example 1: A person posted a straightforward "*thank you*" in French on a language-learning channel: "Merci pour le cours ❤️ ❤️ ❤️" (*Thank you for the lesson*). The emojis are also mentioned, which emphasize their appreciation.

Example 2: A person's casual "*Thanku*" in a science channel's comment area also expressed appreciation. Everyone feels accepted, thanks to the positive attitudes shared by everyone. Many people have different languages, yet English is often used to communicate with others. This does not, however, lessen the significance of users' native tongues in forming comprehension and articulating identity.

Having Different Languages in Education: Exposure to differing cultures and ways of thinking made possible by various languages strengthens education and helps students become global citizens.

Table 4: Exposure to Multilingualism in Education

Example	Language(s)	Strategy Used	Function/Purpose
"Merci pour le cours ❤️ ❤️ ❤️"	French	L1 + emoji	Gratitude, emotional connection

Example	Language(s)	Strategy Used	Function/Purpose
"Thanku"	English (informal)	Digital register	Friendly acknowledgment
Various native languages used	Multiple	Multilingual engagement	Enhancing global citizenship

6. Conclusion

This research has reviewed comments on YouTube education channels from people around the globe to understand how online communication plays a role in global learning. By evaluating comments left by users, it was determined that language impacts the way users interact in school and with society. Therefore, speaking more than one language is used by users for exchanging ideas, connecting with others and representing their culture. Seeing various languages or mixed sentences on the Internet helps us understand how people grasp the things happening globally in them. To ensure everyone feels welcome, commenters change their messages and make them easier for all to understand. Because of this reason, educational material producers should be aware of the benefits of multilingual learning. Besides, this study proves that the environment they are in, their personal traits and those they interact with influence the things they do online. It allows for exploring multilingual education in online classes and guides the implementation of better language rules. For this reason, people in these channels can exchange ideas worldwide. Noticing students' use of various languages can teach us to create digital lessons for all students.

6.1. Recommendations, & Implications

This analysis calls for a paradigm shift in online education to actively embrace linguistic diversity and to adjust and embrace the use of various languages.

Embracing Multilingualism: Internet courses and instructors ought to activate the benefits of multilingualism, with it not simply being observed. Consequently, there should be efforts to ensure that online discussions and material welcome many languages and zones where students can chat in any kind they choose.

Translanguaging Pedagogies - Empowering Learners through Language: Translanguaging pedagogies offer a framework for creating online learning environments that are more effective and equitable by recognising and valuing students' full linguistic repertoires.

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