LIBERAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE REVIEW
An International Double-Blind Peer-Reviewed Open Access Journal
ISSN (Online): 3006-3175 | ISSN (Print): 3006-3167
Volume 5, Issue 7 September, 2026

TRANSLANGUAGING AS TEACHER AGENCY: NEGOTIATING MULTILINGUAL PEDAGOGY IN PAKISTANI ENGLISH-MEDIUM HIGHER EDUCATION

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23010247

Keywords
Translanguaging, Translingual agency, English medium in education, EMI, higher education, teacher agency, Pakistan.

Article History
Received: 01 June 2026
Accepted: 23 August 2026
Published: 25 September 2026

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Abstract
This article examines translanguaging as a form of agency within an English-medium higher education institution in Pakistan. Employing a qualitative narrative-ethnographic case-study design, it triangulates classroom observations, teacher and administrator interviews, fieldnotes, and institutional perspectives. The analysis identifies 15 situated practices influenced by teachers' experiences, beliefs, language ideologies, disciplinary aims, and the affordances and constraints of English-medium instruction (EMI). Teachers use multilingual and semiotic resources to establish rapport, provide conceptual scaffolding, gain attention, elaborate meaning, dialogue, reinforce, clarify tasks, negotiate meaning, formatively assess, give feedback, manage the classroom, and support multimodal learning. The results indicate that teacher translingual agency is not binary: English remains valid as a discipline and as a professional language, and familiar linguistic and semiotic resources are used to access concepts, participate, interact, and affect. Agency is afforded more room in lower-stakes, formative environments and is curtailed as assessments move closer to summative, formal, English-oriented assessment. Translanguaging is thus not just an intrinsically good practice, but one that is mediated by the appropriateness of the concepts, mutual intelligibility, purpose of the task, teacher assessment, and institutional demands. In sum, teacher translingual agency is revealed as a contextualized and relational process whereby multilingual resources are strategically managed in the institutional hierarchy of EMI.

1.INTRODUCTION
The use of English-medium instruction (EMI) has gained increasing ground in multilingual higher education, where English is linked to academic prestige, internationalisation, disciplinary access and professional mobility (Rahman & Hu, 2025). But EMI does not eliminate teachers' multilingual repertoires in the classroom. The institutional language norms and everyday meaning-making practices in Pakistani higher education operate in both Urdu and English, creating a space where English and Urdu meanings and norms may not align. This article explores this intersection by using the concept of translingual agency to understand the negotiated strategies that teachers enact when using multilingual

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and multimodal resources for pedagogical, conceptual, interactional, and affective purposes, and as part of a process of repositioning the ongoing institutional and disciplinary value of English.

Translanguaging is not a pedagogical gift for free, nor a lack of EMI or of doing EMI; rather, it is a goal- and context-oriented practice. The analysis focuses on what multilingual practices achieve, the reasons for teachers' choices of multilingual practices, the ways in which their experiences, beliefs, and language ideologies influence these choices, and the institutional and classroom contexts that support or hinder them. Each strategy is then analysed in relation to the teachers' experiences, beliefs, and ideologies involved in its enactment; the strategy's affordances and constraints; and its manifestation as situated translingual agency. This approach illuminates the strategies by which teachers engage with multilingual resources in a context where English remains an important academic, disciplinary, and professional currency.

2. Problem Statement

Although Pakistan is a multilingual society, English is a highly privileged language in higher education institutions, and there is a disconnect between institutional language and multilingual classrooms (Du & Curdt-Christiansen, 2026). While studies on EMI, multilingual pedagogy, and perceptions of translanguaging have been explored, ethnographic studies on the relationship between classroom practices and teacher agency, teachers' beliefs and experiences, disciplinary learning, and the enactment of language policies at the local level remain rare. The question at stake, then, is how and why teachers creatively engage multilingual resources in the context of EMI and English-speaking dominance, and how teachers' translingual agency is facilitated or inhibited in the classroom by disciplinary norms, assessment demands, and institutional EMI policies.

3. Research Objectives

1. To identify and analyse the translanguaging strategies employed by teachers to facilitate teaching, interaction and disciplinary meaning-making.
2. To investigate how teachers' ideologies, beliefs and experiences shape their enactment of translingual agency.
3. To examine how institutional and classroom conditions enable or constrain translingual agency within EMI.

4. Research Questions

1. Which translanguaging strategies do teachers employ to facilitate teaching and learning?
2. What ideologies, beliefs and experiences shape teachers' enactment of translingual agency?
3. How is translingual agency enabled or constrained by the existing EMI environment?

5. Significance of the Study

This research challenges the binary view of English and local languages by revealing the process of negotiating and enacting institutional language expectations in the classroom. It shows how multilingual pedagogical choices are made by placing teachers in the foreground as policy actors and how these choices shape learning and pedagogical adaptation, but are also shaped by assessment demands, professional norms, disciplinary expectations, linguistic hierarchies and institutional definitions of legitimate academic language. An examination of classroom practices, teachers' experiences, beliefs, language ideologies and EMI affordances and constraints allows for building a context-specific understanding of teacher translingual agency in the context of EMI in Pakistan's higher education and offers a more nuanced foundation for EMI pedagogy and language-policy enactment than either an unqualified celebration of multilingualism or strict monolingualism.

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LJLLR
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6. Literature Review

It is increasingly recognized from empirical studies that translanguaging in the context of higher education is not a mere language switch, but a context-sensitive pedagogical, interactional and meaning-making resource. Multilingual resources are documented in the areas of explanation, elicitation, recapping, peer interaction, disciplinary meaning-making, and affective support (Wang & Shen, 2024). Galante (2020) identified 7 teachers and 79 students in a Canadian university English programme who generally showed receptivity to pedagogical translanguaging, though it was more confined in formal classes. Likewise, Fang and Liu (2020) demonstrated that translanguaging in Chinese university classes depended on task complexity, linguistic resources, and teachers' medium of instruction. These studies provide evidence that translanguaging is influenced by the participants' repertoire, pedagogical goals, classroom contexts, and conceptions of authentic academic language (Wu & Othman, 2024).

Ethnographic studies also show that it is important in disciplinary learning (Dang et al., 2026). Wang and Curdt-Christiansen (2019) found that bilingual label quests, simultaneous code-mixing, cross-language recapping, and dual-language substantiation occurred in a Chinese–English Business Management programme, as a result of a supportive environment and more freedom of language choice. These practices facilitated conceptual access and disciplinary meaning-making, not simply for the less-English-proficient. Similarly, Canagarajah (2011) demonstrated how multilingual university students negotiate meaning, engage in academic discourse, and meet communicative demands strategically by drawing on broader linguistic repertoires. These studies collectively indicate that multilingual materials have the potential to support comprehension, participation and learning in the target discipline, but that the effectiveness of their use is contingent on task requirements, participants' repertoire and context.

A study of the higher education landscape in Pakistan shows similar trends, with English still playing a prominent role in both academic and institutional settings. In their study, Panezai, Channa, and Bibi (2023) found that translanguaging served as a space for meaning-making, a means of communication between the teacher and students, and a means of engagement in EMI classrooms. Saleem et al. (2023) found outcomes associated with inclusive teaching and learning, as well as challenges and the need for teacher preparation and institutionally informed learning. Atta (2024) also found that teachers' and students' beliefs regarding translanguaging depended on prior learning experiences and contextual factors; despite participants' positive attitudes towards multilingual support, they were cautious about over-relying on the first language. Multilingual resources, therefore, can support access, participation, identity expression, and communication in learning, but these are always dependent on shared repertoires, pedagogical uses, classroom dynamics, task requirements, and the ongoing presence of English (Uras Eren, 2026).

Overall, the literature questions the monolingual EMI approach and unqualified cheer for translanguaging. Its pedagogical value lies in the how, why, when and by whom of mobilising multilingual resources. Few studies, however, relate observed classroom practices to teacher experience, beliefs, and language ideologies, and consider EMI policy, assessment, disciplinary expectations, and classroom relationships as both affordances and constraints, especially in the context of Pakistani higher education. The present study addresses this gap by studying teachers' classroom strategies as enactments of a larger agentive process, and how teachers strategically mobilise and regulate culturally and linguistically diverse and multimodal materials in ways that provide access to concepts and disciplines within a context of continuing orientation to English as academic, institutional and professional capital.

7. Theoretical Framework

The analysis combines Bouchard and Glasgow's (2019) process view of agency with Li Wei and Lin's (2019) translanguaging approach. Agency is viewed as a situated and relational capacity for action that is influenced by sociocultural values, institutional language policy, professional expectations, assessment,

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classroom relationships and the linguistic and semiotic resources available. Teachers' decisions can thus range from accommodating, adapting, negotiating, or resisting, with limited impact, and their degrees of freedom can widen or narrow across classroom practices and varying levels of academic responsibility.

Li Wei and Lin's view emphasises dynamic crossing of boundaries across language, semiotic, and educational domains, and the continuous nature of meaning-making (Escobar-Lluch & Ruiz-Madrid, 2025). The analysis thus goes beyond the identification of the switches between English and Urdu to consider how teachers synchronize the disciplinary terms, examples, gestures, images, media, class interaction and previous experiences with English and familiar languages. Translanguaging is therefore construed as the purposeful use, mixing, and managing of communicative tools and not merely an alternation between the bounded languages.

These frameworks combine to define teacher translingual agency as an interplay between individual actions and contextual factors. Each strategy is explored through both teachers' linguistic and semiotic practices and experiences, as well as the beliefs and language ideologies that influence and drive their strategies, and the institutional and classroom affordances and constraints that shape them. The framework thus focuses on teachers' strategic mobilisation and regulation of multilingual and multimodal resources to gain conceptual and disciplinary access and participation within the institutional hierarchy of EMI.

8. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative narrative-ethnographic case study method in the Department of Management Sciences at NUML, Islamabad, to explore teachers' classroom translanguaging through their experiences, beliefs, language ideologies, and institutional conditions. The data were triangulated using intensive narrative interviews with seven teachers, semi-structured interviews with four administrators (Dean, Head of Department, two coordinators), classroom observations, audio-recorded teacher-student interactions, fieldnotes, and institutional documents.

A classroom episode was deemed relevant if the teachers changed, merged, translated, paraphrased, and/or utilized more than one LSRCR for teaching, conceptual clarification, participation, classroom management and/or meaning negotiation. Language attitudes, past teaching experiences, perceptions of EMI, and the relationship between language, disciplinary knowledge, and academic achievement were the themes covered in teacher interviews. Expectations and policies, as well as professional and pedagogical affordances and constraints, were explored through interviews with administrators.

The analysis was structured around integrated strategy narratives, which facilitated data triangulation and allowed for the analysis of translanguaging as situated teacher agency rather than as a standalone language-switching event. Each teacher strategy is followed by the teacher's experiences, beliefs, and language ideologies, as well as administrator perspectives on institutional affordances and constraints. The analysis thus progresses in a step-by-step manner from observable practice to teacher interpretation, to experience, to belief and ideology, to affordance and constraint, and finally to teacher translingual agency.

9. Results and Analysis

Classroom strategies are understood as situated enactments of teacher translingual agency rather than isolated instances of language switching. Classroom observations provide evidence of teachers' use of linguistic and semiotic resources, and teacher accounts provide insights into the experiences, beliefs, and language ideologies that underlie these practices. The institutional, pedagogical, interactional and assessment affordances and constraints that enable or constrain multilingual action are identified through administrator interviews. Each strategy thus unfolds from observable practice and its interpretation, to teachers' experiences, beliefs, and ideologies, to affordances and constraints, and finally to an integrated

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interpretation as teacher translingual agency, showing how teachers negotiate with multilingual resources within the institutional hierarchy of EMI.

9.1 Classroom Observation Checklist

Observed indicator	Teacher
Strategic movement between English and familiar languages	✓
Multilingual explanation/clarification of disciplinary concepts	✓
Retention of English disciplinary terminology	✓
Questioning/answering through mixed repertoires	✓
Peer-mediated multilingual meaning-making	✓
Use of local examples and experiential resources	✓
Affective/relational use of familiar languages	✓
Multilingual task or procedural clarification	✓
Feedback/evaluation through flexible language	✓
Multimodal/digital resources coordinated with language	✓
Movement back toward disciplinary English	✓
Evidence of EMI/assessment constraints	✓

9.2 Teacher Translingual Strategies

9.2.1 Building Rapport and Engagement

Some of the teachers' multilingual decisions were not explanatory but relational. Ma'am Amna started teaching the Business Ethics class in English, noticed lower engagement, briefly switched to Urdu to reduce barriers between people, and then returned to English to continue with the disciplinary portion. This was her situated judgement that sometimes a more socially accessible interactional space is needed to enable meaningful participation.

Ma'am Amna (Business Ethics): "Good morning everyone. You all look unusually serious today. Aaj itni khamoshi kyun hai—assignment ne thaka diya?" (Why is everyone so quiet today—has the assignment exhausted you?)

Student: "Ma'am, deadline ka asar hai." (Ma'am, it is the effect of the deadline.)

Ma'am Amna: "I can see that. Let us use that experience today when we discuss employee stress and organisational behaviour."

The Urdu shift was brief; it did not aim to replace English or academic content, but to build interpersonal connections and encourage participation before the class returned to English-medium disciplinary discussion. Ma'am Amna related this to her experience of teaching:

"When I was a new teacher, I thought professionalism meant keeping everything in English. Over time, I noticed that students sometimes interpreted it as distance. A familiar sentence can open the class, and then they participate more confidently in the academic discussion."

Thus, her experience had modified her professional conviction that all proper university teaching must take place in English at all times. She continued to appreciate the English language for its discipline and professionalism, but felt that interaction in the familiar language was compatible with EMI if it fostered rapport and academic engagement.

An administrator explained the institutional boundary:

"The courses are English-medium, but faculty are not expected to behave as if other languages do not exist. Natural interaction is acceptable; the course should, however, remain academically oriented to English."

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This position allows and limits practice. Multilingual resources for rapport and immediate interactional needs are allowed at the teacher's discretion, but EMI expectations are that teaching and participation in the discipline should be oriented towards English.

Ma'am Amna's practice, experience, and shifts in beliefs and language ideology, together with the institutional conditions, illustrate negotiated translingual agency. She adeptly switches to Urdu when the challenge of interpersonal distance threatens engagement, and then links interaction to the discipline of English. The trajectory, then, is English-medium opening – multilingual relational engagement – renewed English-medium disciplinary participation, with agency defined as the intentional use of linguistic resources within the EMI restrictions.

9.2.2 Scaffolding Conceptual Understanding

Translingual agency is exercised by teachers when conceptual and linguistic difficulties are intertwined. They initially drew on familiar language resources and experiences to connect abstract English formulations and disciplinary concepts. When the students were silent in the Consumer Behaviour classroom, Ma'am Beenish responded with a multilingual example rather than an English definition, then switched back to the disciplinary language of English.

Ma'am Beenish (Consumer Behavior): "Consumer perception is the process through which information is selected and interpreted."

Several students remain silent.

Ma'am Beenish: "Same product ko do customers dekhte hain, lekin ek kehta hai expensive hai aur doosra kehta hai premium hai. Product same hai, interpretation different. That difference takes us to consumer perception." (Two customers look at the same product, but one says it is expensive while the other says it is premium. The product is the same, but the interpretation is different. That difference takes us to consumer perception.

Student: "So it is not only the product; it is how the customer understands it?"

Ma'am Beenish: "Exactly. Now explain that distinction in English."

The movement from English input to multilingual mediation and then to English output is at the core of the strategy. Ma'am Beenish keeps the disciplinary language intact, but makes it understandable with a familiar example. Multilingual mediation serves as temporary conceptual scaffolding rather than a replacement for disciplinary English, as demonstrated by the student's reformulation of the distinction and the teacher's request to restate it in English (Lan, 2025).

Ma'am Beenish related this practice to her teaching experience:

"I learned after teaching the course several times that repeating a definition in easier English does not always solve the problem. Students may know the words and still miss the idea. A familiar example tells me whether the concept has clicked."

Through her experience, she became aware of the difference between linguistic familiarity and conceptual understanding, and of the helpfulness of multilingual scaffolding when simplified English is not enough. However, she continued to value English disciplinary terminology:

"I keep the terminology in English because that is what they meet in the textbook, examination and workplace."

Her language ideology thus views the complementary roles of language resources as follows: familiar languages are used to access concepts, and English is valued for disciplinary, assessment, and professional purposes.

The institutional boundary was identified by an administrator:

"Teachers can clarify difficult ideas, but students ultimately need to function in English, so support should not become permanent dependence."

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In this way, pedagogical discretion allows for temporary scaffolding of multilingualism, while examinations, institutional expectations, and the need to function in English limit the possibility of continual, scaffolded dependence on multilingualism. The timing of the introduction, the amount of use, and the point at which it is phased out will therefore be under the teacher's control.

This collection of the classroom practice, Ma'am Beenish's experience and beliefs, her approach to disciplinary English, and institutional conditions shows a kind of scaffolded and regulated translingual agency. Her agency lies in deciding when and how much multilingual mediation is needed, and when it should be discontinued. The trajectory is English disciplinary input - multilingual conceptual mediation - English disciplinary reconstruction, with the widening of the conceptual access and the retention of English for the disciplinary terminology and academic functioning.

9.2.3 Drawing Learners' Attention

Teachers also employed marked multilingual shifts to regain learners' attention and re-establish conditions for learning. In this instance, translanguaging was not used as a primary means of conceptual explanation; rather, it was used as a salient attentional cue. In one Marketing Management class, Ma'am Faryal observed that students were not responding to the English-medium explanations and, after a few minutes, briefly explained in Urdu and then in English.

Ma'am Faryal (Marketing Management): "Psychographic segmentation focuses on lifestyle, values and interests..."

Several students look down at their phones.

Teacher: "Acha, ab zara idhar focus karein—next point se aapka case solve hoga. Psychographics can explain why two customers with similar income buy very different products." (Now, please focus here—the next point will help you solve your case. Psychographics can explain why two customers with similar income buy very different products.)

The Urdu language was used for only a few sentences, and, given that the surrounding language was English, the Urdu language shift would have been interactionally marked, disrupting the flow of the conversation and drawing attention to a pertinent matter. An immediate switch back to English was then made, showing how linguistic contrast can be used strategically as a tool for attention, in addition to EMI.

Ma'am Faryal connected this with experience in a job:

"You learn to read the room. Sometimes students are physically present but have disconnected. One familiar sentence changes the rhythm and tells them this part matters."

She has noticed that students are not engaged in the classroom, so she feels that effective EMI is not about students speaking English continuously but about their engagement. English was the primary language of discipline, but for a short time, multilingual instruction was acceptable as a means of re-engaging in English-medium learning.

An administrator explained the institutional boundary:

"We do not regulate every sentence; teachers have autonomy to manage their classes. What matters is that the academic course is conducted through English overall."

This role gives teachers the freedom to act according to classroom needs, but also limits the extent of multilingualism, since English must be the primary language of instruction.

Ma'am Faryal's practice and experience, beliefs about engagement, orientation towards English, and institutional conditions constitute interactionally responsive translingual agency. Her power lies in her ability to detect disengagement, cleverly switch back to the comfort of a familiar language to regain engagement, and manage the transition before reverting to the rigour of proper English. The progression is English disciplinary instruction – multilingual attentional cue – back to disciplinary English instruction and getting back on task; here, the language contrast serves to get students back on task while still meeting EMI expectations.

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9.2.4 Semantic Elaboration of Disciplinary Terms

Teachers' multilingualism was not limited to translating words but also included the semantic elaboration of disciplinary terms through English labels, Urdu explanations, contrasts, examples, and familiar situations. Ma'am Eshaal applied this in her Leadership & Organizational Behaviour classroom to ensure that she does not use an oversimplified Urdu term in place of the English term to convey its meaning, and is also precise in her use of the English term.

Ma'am Eshaal (Leadership & Organizational Behavior): "Empowerment is not simply ikhtiyar dena—giving authority. Suppose your manager says you may handle the client yourself. Aap ko decision ka ikhtiyar bhi mila aur us decision ki responsibility bhi. Authority, responsibility, and trust work together. That is closer to empowerment." (Empowerment is not simply giving authority. Suppose your manager says you may handle the client yourself. You are given the authority to make the decision as well as responsibility for that decision.)

Student: "So only giving a task is not empowerment?"

Teacher: "Correct. The quality of discretion matters."

Ma'am Eshaal does not regard the term ikhtiyar dena as an act of empowerment per se, but rather as a semantic entry point that needs to be expanded through authority, responsibility, trust, and discretion. The student's question further probes the conceptual boundary. The translanguaging can therefore not only serve as a means of translation but also as an instrument for semantic differentiation and conceptual precision.

Ma'am Eshaal related this to her experience in the teaching field:

"Direct translation can be dangerous because students think two words are completely equivalent. I prefer to keep the English term, explain the nearest familiar meaning and then give a situation that shows the limits."

Having come from a background of over-literal translation, she came to believe that comparing different languages can sharpen concepts by bringing similarities and differences to attention. Her language ideology thus validates known languages as means for accessing meaning and validates English as the language of disciplinary terminology.

The institutional boundary was described by an administrator:

"Technical vocabulary has to remain recognisable in English because students read and are assessed through it. Explanation can be flexible."

This allows for explanation and flexibility of language to teach understanding, and also demands that students understand and apply the terminology in the books and tests, which are in English.

Ma'am Eshaal's practice, experience, and beliefs about conceptual precision and institutional expectations manifest semantic and regulatory translingual agency. Her role is to introduce a familiar meaning, define its boundaries, elaborate on it in context, and tie it back to the English disciplinary term. The path is English disciplinary meaning, familiar-language semantic access, comparison and conceptual elaboration, and refined disciplinary meaning in English, which allows multilingual resources to deepen rather than dilute disciplinary meaning.

9.2.5 Dialogic Engagement through Multilingual Questioning

Teachers facilitated classroom discussion by adapting their language to ensure it continued, rather than ending with short answers or silence, when students required English for immediate use. So, in the Business Communication classroom, when one student gave a very short answer, Ma'am Hania temporarily allowed the logic to develop before directing it to Disciplinary English.

Ma'am Hania (Business Communication): "Would you call the company's decision ethical?"

Student: "No, maybe not."

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Teacher: "Kyun nahi? Problem kis point par start hoti hai? Give me the reason, even if you need to mix." (Why not? At what point does the problem begin? Give me the reason, even if you need to mix languages.)
Student: "Because customer ko complete information nahi di ja rahi, so consent is not informed." (Because the customer is not being given complete information, so consent is not informed.)
Teacher: "Good. Now connect that to transparency and informed choice."
Ma'am Hania provides a safety net that allows the student to use language freely, and, as a result, intellectual participation is temporarily reduced. This allows the student to present their argument that the lack of information precludes informed consent, and the teacher can again tie this back to the disciplinary discussions of transparency and informed choice. Multilingual questioning is therefore a dialogic scaffolding for building reasoning before it is refined in academic English.
Ma'am Hania connected this practice with her observation of the students being silent while at the same time they work to develop acceptable English:
"Sometimes a student has an idea but is using all their attention to construct a perfect English sentence. If I loosen the language demand for one turn, the thinking continues. Then I help them express the same reasoning more academically."
Based on her experience, she believed that being silent in EMI does not necessarily mean that a student has low conceptual understanding; it might be because they are struggling to articulate their ideas in English or they are afraid of evaluation. Hence she does not use the attainment of immediate fluency in English as an indicator of intelligence. Yet her language ideology remains one in which the development of English is valued: multilingual interaction serves as an interim, prior to re-expression in disciplinary English, for reasoning and participation.
The administrator stated the institutional boundary:
"Participation is part of learning, but graduates also need professional English. Teachers can create supportive discussion as long as students are gradually brought toward the required academic language."
Formative flexibility and teacher discretion afford multilingual participation; academic and professional expectations constrain it with the expectation of gradual movement towards English.
Dialogic translingual agency is reflected in Ma'am Hania's classroom practice, her experiences, beliefs about participation, orientation towards English development, and institutional expectations. The art of the agency is to temporarily disconnect intellectual engagement from flawless English delivery and then reengage students' thinking with the discipline's English. The path is from English questions to multilingual reasoning elaboration to disciplinary refinement to English-oriented academic expression to increased participation and language expectations in EMI.

9.2.6 Reinforcement and Cross-Language Recapping

Multilingual recapping was also used by teachers to recap content previously introduced in a discipline. They did not use Urdu as the first language for concepts, but used it as a selective language, following English-medium explanations, to reinforce linkages between ideas and to aid retrieval of disciplinary vocabulary. Ma'am Gul-e-Irum explained the components of positioning in Urdu, and then asked the students to recall these terms in English.
Ma'am Gul-e-Irum (Strategic Marketing): "Before we finish, remember three elements of positioning: distinctiveness, relevance and consistency. Yani customer ke zehan mein brand ki clear jagah ho, woh us ke liye relevant ho, aur message bar bar unnecessarily change na ho. Now—without looking at the slide—give me the three terms again." (Before we finish, remember three elements of positioning: distinctiveness, relevance and consistency. In other words, the brand should occupy a clear position in the customer's mind, be relevant to the customer, and its message should not be changed repeatedly without reason. Now—without looking at the slide—give me the three terms again.)
Students: "Distinctiveness, relevance, consistency."

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The order of sequence is important: English disciplinary terms, synthesis in familiar language, retrieval in English. Therefore, Urdu is a conceptual bridge and not a replacement, nor a word-to-word translation, but instead helps students associate distinctiveness, relevance, and consistency with the larger concept, brand positioning.

Ma'am Gul-e-Irum connected this strategy to a memory she had for the students memorizing definitions and not comprehending their relationships:

"At the end I sometimes summarise the relationship in Urdu, not because they need a translation of every word but because I want them to hold the whole structure together. Then I immediately ask for the English terminology."

Her experience led her to differentiate between knowledge of isolated terminology and organised conceptual knowledge. Her effort to rapidly reengage with English indicates the continued importance of English for disciplinary language and formal academic achievement, and multilingual recapping helps consolidate conceptual knowledge.

An administrator explained the institutional boundary:

"Revision can be flexible, but students should leave the class knowing the proper terminology because assessment remains in English."

So, teachers can review and consolidate, but the final language is limited to English-oriented assessment. Assessment thus influences multilingual support, both the expected terminology and the order in which support is provided.

Ma'am Gul-e-Irum's practice, experience, conceptual consolidation beliefs, attitude towards English terminology and assessment requirements collectively reveal sequenced and consolidative translingual agency. Her agency lies in controlling the order and use of linguistic resources in line with the learning objective. The trajectory is English disciplinary input - multilingual conceptual consolidation - English disciplinary retrieval, with cross-language recapping to consolidate concepts and ready students for English-medium assessment.

9.2.7 Functional Translanguaging for Task Instructions

Teachers employed multilingual materials when needed to clarify instructions and prevent students from being unable to demonstrate disciplinary knowledge due to misunderstandings. This approach separated the language level of the task instructions from the task's cognitive level. Sir Daniyal was explaining an English/Urdu task on a business idea in the Entrepreneurship classroom and outlined the language for the end-product assessment in English.

Sir Daniyal (Entrepreneurship): "You have fifteen minutes to develop a feasible business idea. Sirf idea ka naam nahi dena. Problem identify karni hai, target customer batana hai, aur value proposition justify karni hai. Your final two-minute pitch will be in English." (You have fifteen minutes to develop a feasible business idea. Do not only give the name of the idea. You have to identify the problem, specify the target customer, and justify the value proposition. Your final two-minute pitch will be in English.)

The multilingual explanation alleviates ambiguity in the procedural aspects, whilst not reducing the cognitive or disciplinary demands of the task. Students will still need to find a problem, define their target customer, explain their value proposition, and pitch in English. Therefore, translanguaging is not about making the learning outcome easier but about access to the task requirements.

Sir Daniyal shared his experience and belief in this practice:

"If students fail because they misunderstood what I asked them to do, I am not assessing entrepreneurship; I am assessing their decoding of my instructions. I would rather make the procedure absolutely clear and keep the intellectual task challenging."

This experience prompted him to distinguish between language that is the learning outcome and language that serves only as a means of access to it. However, while English is important for disciplinary and

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professional performance, it is not necessary to require English at all stages of task preparation. Multilingual clarification is thus appropriate when necessary to eliminate language barriers without diminishing the intellectual level of the activity or altering the desired or expected result.

An administrator talked about the institutional boundary:

"Clarifying instructions is reasonable. Learning outcomes and assessment requirements should remain intact."

This job provides pedagogical autonomy in the mediation of processes, but also pedagogical limitations in the form of set learning goals, assessment criteria and an English-oriented final assessment.

As a whole, Sir Daniyal's practice, experience, stance on procedural clarity, focus on English performance and institutional expectations represent a functional and regulatory translingual agency. His agency is in the difference between avoidable linguistic barriers and required English performance, and his regulation of language. The trajectory is: English task framing → multilingual procedural clarification; disciplinary task engagement, with no language ambiguity preventing students from showing the required disciplinary knowledge and skills; and English-assessed output.

9.2.8 Negotiating Meaning and Clarifying Concepts

Teachers applied translanguaging when students' conceptualizations of the discipline were fragmented or when they were too narrow. Multilingual resources were used not for direct translation but for negotiation and repair in conceptual diagnosis. Ma'am Gul-e-Irum used familiar language and examples to broaden the interpretation of corporate social responsibility (CSR), as a student had interpreted it only as charity.

Student: "Ma'am, corporate social responsibility basically means charity?"

Teacher Gul-e-Irum: "Charity us ka ek hissa ho sakti hai, lekin responsibility is broader. If a company reduces pollution, treats workers fairly and reports honestly, it is acting responsibly even if it makes no donation. So what is the problem with defining CSR only as charity?" (Charity can be one part of it, but responsibility is broader. If a company reduces pollution, treats workers fairly and reports honestly, it is acting responsibly even if it makes no donation. So what is the problem with defining CSR only as charity?)

Student: "It makes the concept too narrow."

The problem wasn't just linguistic. Ma'am Gul-e-Irum did not provide another definition but expanded CSR to include environmental responsibility, employee treatment and organisational transparency as other elements of charity. The student's final answer shows some progress towards the more differentiated understanding. Thus, Translanguaging is not about lexical replacement but about conceptual diagnosis, negotiation, and repair.

Ma'am Gul-e-Irum explained the belief underlying this practice:

"I do not switch automatically. I usually do it when a student's answer shows me that the concept is becoming narrower or different from what the discipline means."

This experience resulted in a selective attitude toward translanguaging, rather than an ordinary one. Multilingual mediation is needed when a diagnostic indicator from a student's response suggests that such assistance is required; and not every English explanation should be translated into Urdu. Her language ideology validates multilingual resources because they enhance disciplinary correctness without compromising English as the accepted language for disciplinary concepts and expression.

The boundary of the institution was described by an administrator:

"The priority is correct disciplinary understanding. Faculty have discretion in how they clarify, but students must ultimately use the accepted academic concepts."

This provides teachers with disciplinary and pedagogical freedom to use multilingual explanations, examples, comparisons, and questioning to repair concepts, but recognised disciplinary and English-oriented academic expression limits the outcome.

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Ma'am Gul-e-Irum's practice and experience, coupled with her belief in selective translanguaging, her discipline to accuracy and the institutional conditions, reflect diagnostic and corrective translingual agency. Her agency reveals conceptual divergence, strategically mobilising multilingual resources, and disciplining them until accuracy is achieved. The trajectory is student interpretation, diagnosis of conceptual difficulty, multilingual negotiation and clarification, and disciplinary refinement and reconnection with academic English. Therefore, translingual agency is less about the amount of language switching than about its intentional control to meet the needs of a discipline.

9.2.9 Assessing Understanding through Multilingual Group Evaluation

In some instances, teachers during pair and group work recognized reasoning in other languages as evidence of understanding prior to asking it to be restated in the discipline's second language. This practice separated formative assessment of disciplinary knowledge from English language performance assessment and gave teachers the opportunity to assess students' reasoning first, then their English language form.

Ma'am Faryal, approaching a group: "Why have you selected social-media marketing?"

Student: "Sir, hamara target mostly young customers hain aur Instagram se un tak direct reach milti hai." (Our target is mostly young customers, and Instagram gives us direct access to them.)

Teacher: "The reasoning is good. Now use today's terms: target segment, platform suitability and reach. How would you present the same argument?"

Ma'am Faryal considers the multilingual response epistemically meaningful and the student's comprehension of the relationship between the target audience and platform suitability before directing the response towards the target segment, platform suitability, and reach. Multilingual reasoning is therefore a window into disciplinary understanding; second-language English reformulation, in turn, is preparation for expressing disciplinary knowledge in academic and assessment settings (Rahman & Hu, 2025).

Ma'am Faryal connected this to her experience of students, whose mastery of English may not be the best indicator of their mastery of the discipline:

"In group work, I first want to know whether they understand. If I insist on perfect English at that point, I may end up measuring fluency instead of the concept. After I know the concept is there, I push them to express it in the language of the course."

Her experience left her convinced that conceptual competence and immediate fluency in English were not the same. Multilingual reasoning can show something that might not otherwise have been seen in low-stakes interaction, and that translation into polished English too early might have hidden. However, there is still a need for English in formal academic achievement and disciplinary communication.

An administrator explained the difference between the two institutions:

"Formal assessment follows approved course requirements. Informal classroom checking gives teachers more flexibility."

This distinction results in an affordance and a constraint. The more informal and low-stakes, the more multilingual flexibility; the more formal assessment, the less. Thus, the space of translinguality expands during formative moments of learning and understanding, and shrinks when students are about to participate in an English-testing moment.

Ma'am Faryal's practice, experience, beliefs about conceptual competence, orientation towards English academic performance and institutional assessment requirements illustrate the diagnostic and assessment-sensitive translingual agency. Her agency lies in assessing knowledge using students' language resources and helping it be expressed in the language of the discipline. The trajectory is multilingual disciplinary reasoning, formative recognition of conceptual understanding, disciplinary terminology, and English-

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oriented academic reformulation and illustrates how translingual agency is related to the purpose and stakes of assessment.

9.2.10 Providing Multilingual Feedback

Multilingual resources were also provided for teachers to help students understand feedback and take revision actions. It was not only to point out flaws but to explain what the issue was, why it compromised the argument, and how it might have been better. Multilingual feedback thus functioned as a catalyst for diagnosis and academic revision.

Ma'am Eshaal: "Your example is relevant, but the conclusion is too general. Aap ne problem identify kar di hai, lekin evidence se conclusion connect nahi kiya. Show me which sentence supports your claim." (You have identified the problem, but you have not connected the evidence to the conclusion. Show me which sentence supports your claim.)

Student revises the paragraph.

Teacher: "Yes. Now the argument is evidence-based."

Multilingual feedback in the episode demonstrates how revision logic can be made accessible in multiple languages while maintaining the required academic language. Ma'am Eshaal pinpoints the point of weakness, in this case, a lack of linkage between evidence and conclusion, and helps the student with that. In a successful revision, it is evident how multilingual explanation can be transformed into disciplinary action.

Ma'am Eshaal connected this approach to her first-hand observations of students having difficulties with the highly linguistic feedback:

"If feedback itself is linguistically dense, some students only remember that their work was weak. I sometimes explain the nature of the problem in Urdu and then show them how the repair should appear in English."

This experience led to the conviction that feedback should facilitate revision rather than merely convey judgment. Explanation is provided in familiar language to aid student understanding, and the academic repair is delivered and eventually created in English. Her language ideology thus involves the accessibility of multilingualism and accountability to English academic conventions.

The institutional stance was said to be:

"Feedback should improve the required academic performance; teachers can communicate it in the way that is most effective."

This gives teachers pedagogical flexibility in providing feedback, while assessment requirements and English-medium academic standards limit the final product. Feedback can therefore be given by the teacher in multiple languages; however, the student should show improvement in the language of instruction for the discipline.

Developmental and mediational translingual agency can be seen in Ma'am Eshaal's practice, experience, beliefs about actionable feedback, orientation towards English academic standards, and institutional conditions. Her agency lies in her ability to manoeuvre between multilingual diagnosis and English-language academic repair. The path is: identify weaknesses, diagnose/explain multilingually, revise, and refine in English without lowering academic expectations.

9.2.11 Managing Classroom Discipline and Interaction

Moreover, teachers' use of multilingual resources to regulate attention, taking turns, and classroom behaviours shows that translingual agency is not limited to disciplinary explanation but also to the social and interactional organisation of learning. During times like these, familiar-language instructions enabled effective classroom management prior to a shift back to English-medium instruction.

Several students continue a side conversation.

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Sir Daniyal: “Everyone, please listen. Jo discussion karni hai, group task mein kar lena; abhi mujhe do minute de dein. Thank you. Now look at the model on the screen.” (Everyone, please listen. You can continue that discussion during the group task; please give me two minutes now. Thank you. Now look at the model on the screen.)

In this episode, there is a working differentiation of the linguistic resources. For a short while, Sir Daniyal switches to Urdu to discuss the side conversation, then switches back to English to issue the disciplinary instructions. Urdu offers an immediate, more familiar and less threatening way of reconstructing attention; English is the main academic medium.

This approach was linked by Sir Daniyal to his experiences in classroom management:

“Management language has to work immediately. A long formal English instruction can sound artificial when I simply need the class to settle. Urdu is sometimes faster and less confrontational.”

His experience led him to believe that linguistic resources provide different interactional affordances. English is still linked to the instructional aspect of discipline, while Urdu offers immediate, interpersonal sensitivity in classroom management. His language choice is thus indicative of functional differentiation, not of a preference for one language over the other.

An administrator explained the 'institutional affordance':

“Classroom management is the faculty member’s responsibility; we do not prescribe the language of every instruction.”

This gives teachers professional discretion in how to use effective resources to manage interaction. But this flexibility is limited within the broader EMI framework, which uses English as the primary language of instruction across disciplines.

Sir Daniyal's practice and experience, combined with his thinking about effective classroom management, the effective use of linguistic resources, and institutional autonomy, provide evidence of interactional and regulatory translingual agency. His agency is in the choice and control of language, in relation to specific social and pedagogical demands. The pathway is English-medium instruction through multilingual classroom-management intervention, to restored attention, to reversion to disciplinary English, thus making a multilingual resource a means of arranging conditions for learning without replacing English as the predominant academic medium.

9.2.12 Multimodal Translanguaging for Inclusive Learning

Teacher translingual agency was not limited to shifts between English and Urdu as spoken language, but also included coordinating language, visual, cultural and digital resources. Images, videos, advertisements, and screenshots, along with gestures and multilingual commentary, helped teachers link students' communication practices in their daily lives to the discipline's meaning-making. An advertisement familiar to the community made such a connection in Ma’am Beenish's classroom.

The teacher, Ma’am Beenish, displays a Pakistani advertisement containing an English slogan, an Urdu voice-over and a family-centred image.

Teacher: “Do not look only at the words. What identity is this brand constructing?”

Student: “Modern but still local.”

Teacher: “Exactly. Yahan language bhi positioning ka part hai. Now identify how image, language and audience work together.” (Exactly. Here, language itself is also part of positioning. Now identify how image, language and audience work together.)

The advertisement uses a mixture of English slogans, Urdu voice-over, and culturally familiar images to help create brand identity. Ma'am Beenish guides learners beyond the literal word, considering the interaction between these resources. The student's answer, "Modern but still local," expresses this relation, and the teacher connects it to the disciplinary concept of positioning. Multimodal translanguaging is

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therefore a way of connecting the familiar media experience and disciplinary interpretation (Escobar-Lluch & Ruiz-Madrid, 2025).

Ma'am Beenish connected this practice with the students' daily interaction with multilingual media:

"Students already live in a multilingual media environment. When I bring an advertisement or a screenshot, they can see that language, image and culture work together. A textbook definition cannot always show that."

This experience helped develop the understanding that the full meaning of a disciplinary text cannot always be conveyed in English as printed. The use of language, images, sound, culture and digital media already undertaken by students can be leveraged for learning in the academic realm. Her language ideology thus expands the range of legitimate meaning-making tools while keeping the promise that the students will analyze these with suitable disciplinary concepts.

An administrator said of the institutional affordance:

"Multimedia and local examples are encouraged when they support the course outcomes."

This gives teachers the flexibility to use multilingual, multimodal materials when teaching the discipline. But differing access to digital resources, varying reliability of those resources, disciplinary relevance, and academic expectations in the English language might limit their use.

It is a multimodal, translingual agency exhibited in Ma'am Beenish's practice, experience, beliefs about multimodal meaning-making, and institutional conditions. Her agency is manifested in the choice and arrangement of linguistic and semiotic resources which take the learner from familiar communicative experiences to disciplinary interpretation. The trajectory is known: multilingual and multimodal experience and guided interpretation across language, image, and culture, towards disciplinary conceptualisation, towards academically accountable expression, broadening access to meaning while remaining faithful to the disciplinary expectations of EMI (Pawliszko, 2025).

9.2.13 Culturally Situated Analogy and Local Knowledge

Teachers' translingual agency also included culturally familiar analogies and local knowledge to make abstract disciplinary concepts more recognisable in everyday life. In contrast to terminology translation, teachers used culturally appropriate examples as conceptual tools and maintained English-language disciplinary terminology. Market segmentation was explained using a local example in Ma'am Amna's class.

Ma'am Amna: "Think about a halwai. Har customer ki pasand same nahi hoti. Some prefer gulab jamun, some barfi, some something less sweet. A business also cannot assume that every customer wants the same thing." (Every customer does not have the same preference.)

Teacher: "So when the halwai prepares different products for different preferences, what marketing idea can help us understand this?"

The halwai analogy brings the concept of segmentation down to earth, making it more relatable to customers and the different products they are offered. Instead of replacing the English concept, Amna, Ma'am, uses local cultural knowledge as a bridge towards disciplinary understanding. There are also similarities in the use of the halwai analogy to explain market segmentation, as described in the fieldnotes.

Ma'am Amna related this to the classroom where she worked:

"Students understand better when they can connect an abstract idea with something they already know. Then we can bring that understanding back to the academic concept."

Her experience led her to the conviction that, in some cases, the difficulty of the concept must be overcome by more than just simplifying English. Some culturally familiar information might provide an alternative pathway to comprehension, and English is essential for disciplinary jargon and academic language.

The Coordinator also said:

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"We encourage our faculty to use multiple strategies to clarify doubts and make difficult concepts accessible. We believe that when students can visualize a concept in familiar terms, they engage more deeply and retain the knowledge longer."

This institutional flexibility affords culturally situated explanation. But culturally specific analogies are not necessarily known to all and, if not carefully recoupled to academic terms, may oversimplify the disciplinary concepts.

Ma'am Amna's practice and experience, her notions of culturally situated meaning-making, and institutional circumstances provide together evidence of culturally mediational translingual agency. Her agency is not in choosing the resource per se, but in the judicious or creative use of familiar cultural resources to link with disciplinary meanings. Pathway: English disciplinary concept, culturally familiar analogy, conceptual link, disciplinary elaboration, and back to academic English.

9.2.14 Metalinguistic Comparison for Conceptual Differentiation

Teacher translingual agency was also evident in the process of metalinguistic comparison, which involved the teacher's presentation of parallel English disciplinary phrases and familiar-language phrases to illuminate differences in meaning between them and to avoid false equivalences. This was not a simple translation - rather, the strategy involved making cross-language comparisons to help clarify the discipline. Ma'am Eshaal's classroom used this type of comparison to differentiate between closely related concepts.

Ma'am Eshaal: "Leadership aur management ko hum aksar ek jaisa samajh lete hain, but academically they are not identical. Management mein system aur process important hain; leadership mein direction and influence become more central." (We often understand leadership and management as the same, but academically they are not identical. In management, systems and processes are important; in leadership, direction and influence become more central.)

Teacher: "So do not translate both into one general idea. Keep the distinction in mind when you use these terms academically."

Urdu words for leadership and management are not translated in the multilingual comparison. No, rather, Ma'am Eshaal points out their conceptual limits and shows that what may seem like the same meaning across different languages is not necessarily the same. Familiar-language resources thus help achieve conceptual differentiation while keeping the disciplinary terms in English.

Ma'am Eshaal correlated such decisions to her classroom experience:

"I can usually see when the English wording is blocking the idea. A short Urdu explanation at that moment brings the class back to the concept."

She further explained:

"The flexibility is useful, but I do not want students to think English no longer matters; I use both languages with a clear purpose."

The experience she describes is one of mediation that is not routine, but intentional—with multiple languages. Thus, her language ideology is non-binary – familiar languages make conceptual relationships clear, and English has disciplinary and academic value.

An administrator also said that"technical terminology should remain recognisable in English even when teachers use flexible explanatory resources."

Multilingual competence, disciplinary expertise, and teacher autonomy support this strategy, while inaccurate equivalence, excessive elaboration, instructional time, and English-oriented assessment may limit it.

Ma'am Eshaal's practice, experience, and beliefs about conceptual precision, along with the institutional conditions, illustrate metalinguistic and contrastive translingual agency. The path is: English disciplinary concepts, multilingual comparison, identification of semantic differences, conceptual differentiation, refined disciplinary meaning in English.

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9.2.15 Anticipatory Translanguaging for Preventing Conceptual Difficulty

Teacher translingual agency was also seen when multilingual resources were used not only when there was evidence of misunderstandings but also proactively to foresee conceptual difficulties. Based on past teaching, teachers identified concepts likely to cause problems and provided brief multilingual mediation before switching to English-medium instruction.

Ma'am Hania: "This next distinction usually creates confusion, is liye pehle basic difference clear kar lete hain. Keep the English terms in mind, because we will use them throughout the discussion." (This next distinction usually creates confusion, so let us first clarify the basic difference.)

Teacher: "Main Urdu mein sirf basic relationship explain kar rahi hoon; terminology English mein hi retain karein." (I am explaining only the basic relationship in Urdu; retain the terminology in English.)

The multilingual move here is not remedial, but is a preventive measure. The teacher does not wait for students to stop talking or say they don't understand; rather, the teacher draws on pedagogical experience to anticipate where English may, in his or her experience, block conceptual understanding. Urdu is temporarily used to access concepts, with disciplinary English being deliberately maintained.

As Ms Hania tells, this practice exemplifies professional judgement:

"I can usually see when the English wording is blocking the idea. A short Urdu explanation at that moment brings the class back to the concept."

This experience suggests that full English is not a prerequisite for effective EMI. Selective multilingual mediation can help avoid foreseeable conceptual obstacles, but it should be kept to a minimum and not overdone.

The Coordinator also said:

"We recognize that students come from diverse backgrounds, and their ability to grasp complex ideas varies. That's why we encourage our faculty to use multiple strategies to clarify doubts and make difficult concepts accessible."

This practice can be enabled by teaching experience, awareness of common challenges, teacher autonomy, and institutional flexibility; and challenged by instructional time, the need for multilingualism where it is not needed, linguistic diversity, and English-as-a-goal expectations.

The teacher's practice, accumulated experience, and beliefs about preventive mediation, together with the institution's conditions, collectively demonstrate anticipatory and preventive translingual agency. The path is expected to be conceptual difficulty → preventive multilingual mediation → conceptual access → ongoing English disciplinary instruction → English disciplinary consolidation.

10. Discussion

The model of negotiation, not binary agency, can be seen in the pattern across the fifteen teacher strategies. Teachers do not merely accept or reject EMI, but rather mix languages and semiotics based on conceptual challenges, task requirements, participation needs, disciplinary goals, audience, and institutional pressure. In practice, teachers often switch from English input to mediation, clarification, or interactional support in multiple languages, and then return to a familiar English term. This corroborates Bouchard and Glasgow's (2019) view of agency as situated within sociocultural and institutional contexts and negotiated, adapted, and decided upon in context-sensitive ways.

The results also enable thinking about translanguaging as deliberate and meaningful language switching rather than random (Wang & Shen, 2024; Wu & Othman, 2024). Wang and Curdt-Christiansen (2019) also confirm the presence of bilingual meaning-making and cross-language recapping in higher education courses, and Panezai, Channa, and Bibi (2023) demonstrate that translanguaging can facilitate interaction and meaning-making in Pakistani EMI classrooms. In addition, the current findings reveal that teacher agency moves in and out of the EMI ecology; multilingual flexibility is provided by conceptual

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explanation, questioning, interaction and other low-stakes activities, while formal presentations and assessment consolidate expectations for English.

Teacher practices reflect how larger multilingual repertoires can be used to negotiate academic meaning (Rahman & Hu, 2025; Escobar-Lluch & Ruiz-Madrid, 2025). Rapport-building, conceptual scaffolding, shifts in attention, elaboration of semantic knowledge, multilingual question-asking, recapping, clarifying tasks, negotiating meaning, formative evaluation, feedback, classroom management, and multimodal teaching enabled teachers to facilitate participation, clarify concepts, regulate interaction, and organise disciplinary learning. These practices highlight how teacher translingual agency is not only tied to language competence but also to the pedagogical, disciplinary, and institutional agendas of specific practices. It is further analyzed that teachers design culturally situated analogy, metalinguistic comparison, and anticipatory multilingual mediation as pedagogical tools to link local knowledge with disciplinary concepts, safeguard conceptual differences, and avoid conceptual pitfalls.

Significantly, teachers' multilingual decisions were guided by their experiences, beliefs and language ideologies (Wu & Othman, 2024; Rahman & Hu, 2025). Selective multilingual scaffolding, clarification, feedback, rapport-building, and classroom management resulted from teachers' experiences of classroom silence, misunderstanding, and disengagement. However, English still held significant disciplinary, academic, assessment and professional capital, with familiar languages and other semiotic resources fulfilling complementary cognitive, interactional, relational and affective functions.

The results also suggest that translanguaging is not always good. Multilingual support can become a habit; explanations may be oversimplified; multimodal or digital support may lack academic rigour; and excessive mediation can limit opportunities for further English development. Consistent with Saleem et al. (2023), translanguaging, then, should be understood as a conditional affordance contingent on the teacher's judgement, opportunities for ongoing English development, shared intelligibility, task purpose, disciplinary relevance, and equitable participation.

Another is the distinction between translanguaging and teacher translingual agency. Translanguaging is related to mobilisation of multilingual and multimodal resources, and teacher translingual agency to the situated ability of teachers to select, sequence, combine, evaluate and regulate resources in specific affordances and constraints. Thus, teacher agency is evident not only in the use of Urdu alongside English, but also in the identification of pedagogical needs and the movement between resources.

The prevailing trend is from linguistic access to disciplinary participation, not multilingualism per se. Multilingualism and multimodality provide opportunities for conceptual access, participation, disciplinary reasoning, affective engagement and meaning negotiation, while teachers focus on the disciplinary aspects of accuracy and English-medium academic accountability. Teacher translingual agency thus becomes a relational, context-dependent, and continually negotiated process shaped by teachers' experiences and ideologies, classroom relationships, task demands, teacher autonomy, assessment expectations, and the institutional hierarchy of English (Du & Curdt-Christiansen, 2026).

11. Conclusion

It concludes that the teacher's agency in the Pakistani EMI context is adaptive, relational, context-sensitive, and strategically bounded. Teachers leverage multilingual and multimodal resources for conceptual access, participation, affective connection, classroom interaction and disciplinary reasoning, while retaining English as the language of formal academic performance, assessment and professional communication. Thus, translanguaging is most effective when used as a meaningful and intentional mediating process that links multilingual resources to conceptual precision, disciplinary engagement, and learning in academic English. Finally, teacher translingual agency lies in teachers' ability to choose, order, and manage the use of linguistic and semiotic resources to meet varying pedagogical, interactional, and institutional requirements.

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12. Recommendations

In universities with EMI, the strategic use of multilingual and multimodal mediation must be acknowledged as a legitimate pedagogical resource, and there is a need for clear expectations for disciplinary learning and academic English. Teachers should be given flexibility in conceptual clarification, participation, and collaborative learning through translanguaging, especially in formative and low-stakes tasks, and formal assessment and professional communication should be more strongly oriented towards English. Teacher development should promote purposeful multilingual mediation, appropriate disciplinary terminology, linguistic inclusion and gradual transition towards independent use of English. EMI pedagogy should thus encourage meaningful, inclusive, and context-rich teacher translanguaging, which could facilitate conceptual understanding, learning in the target language, and the development of academic English.

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