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Emotional Expression through Code-Switching in Pakistani Multilingual Discourse

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Abstract

In multilingual societies, speakers often express their emotions through the strategic use of more than one language instead of relying on a single language. This study investigates how multilingual speakers strategically utilize Urdu-English and Punjabi-English code-switching to express and manage emotions during authentic interactions. Using a qualitative research design this study purposively selected ten emotionally rich videos including Pakistani podcasts, interviews, and talk shows available on YouTube. To systematically analyse the data, this study applied an integrated analytical framework that combine Gumperz's Interactional Sociolinguistics (1982), Martin and White's Appraisal Theory (2005), and Pavlenko's (2005, 2012) perspective on bilingual emotions. The findings show that code-switching is a purposeful way of communicating that helps speakers to express vulnerability, emotional assertion, emotional frustration, emotional negotiation, and interpersonal relationships. The findings also suggest that language alternation does not happen randomly. Instead, speakers switch languages based on emotional intensity, cultural meanings, and the goals of the interaction. English was commonly used by speakers for the expression of psychologically complex experiences, and reinforce evaluations, whereas Urdu and Punjabi provided the cultural and emotional foundation through which personal experiences were narrated. By integrating interactional, evaluative, and bilingual emotion perspectives into a single analytical framework, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of code-switching and emotional expression than studies relying on a single framework. This study also provides empirical evidence from authentic Pakistani multilingual discourse, contributing to a deeper understanding of the relationship between language choice, identity, and emotions in multilingual communication.

Keywords: Code-switching, Emotional expression, Multilingualism, Pakistani multilingual speakers, Interactional Sociolinguistics, Appraisal Theory, Bilingual emotion.

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1. Introduction

In everyday communication, multilingual speakers often utilize more than one language to express their emotions (Shakeel et al., 2025). Speakers often switch between languages to communicate their feelings, manage interpersonal relationships, create humor, emphasize their ideas, and negotiate their identities. This practice is called code-switching and is common in multilingual societies where each language may carry its own social, cultural, and emotional meanings. Code-switching is the alternation between two or more linguistic systems or varieties within the same conversation (Blom and Gumperz, 1972). Instead of being a random alternation between languages, code-switching functions as an important communicative strategy through which speakers express emotions and communicate effectively in different situations. Research in sociolinguistics and bilingualism shows that code-switching is a systematic way of communication utilized by multilingual speakers for various interactional purposes. Through code-switching, speakers contextualize meaning, maintain interpersonal relationships, express solidarity, and organize the flow of conversations (Gumperz, 1982; Auer, 1998; Gardner-Chloros, 2009). Studies by Pavlenko (2005, 2012) shows that multilingual speakers often feel stronger emotional attachment and greater authenticity in their first language (L1), whereas the second or additional languages (LXs) may provide emotional distance and help in emotional regulation. Similarly, Dewaele (2004, 2010) explains that multilingual speakers may utilize different languages to express different emotions depending on the situation, emotional intensity, and level of intimacy.

Despite the growing body of research on code-switching and multilingualism, several important gaps still remain in understanding how language switching functions during emotional interactions. Previous researchers have studied code-switching from structural, grammatical, pragmatic, and identity-related perspectives. These studies focus more on linguistic and communicative functions rather than how code-switching helps speakers in expressing and regulating emotions (Auer, 1998; Gardner-Chloros, 2009). Recent research has shown that multilingual speakers strategically switch languages to express emotional authenticity and construct interpersonal relationships (Liu, 2023; Zhang & Hatzidaki, 2025). However, most of these studies relies on experimental, survey-based, or cognitive methods to examine bilingual language use. In Pakistani context, code-switching and multilingualism have been widely studied in relation to identity, education, language policy, and media discourse (Rahman, 1996; Mansoor, 2004; Gul et al., 2024). Recent research has also explored Urdu-English code-switching in Pakistani digital and media contexts (Batool & Akram, 2025). However, less attention has been given to how Pakistani multilingual speaker utilize code-switching to express and manage emotions in naturally occurring conversations. This gap is especially visible in digital platforms such as podcasts, interviews, and talk shows, where spontaneous multilingual interactions provide important insights into the interactional functions of emotional code-switching.

Pakistan provides valuable context for investigating emotional code-switching because of its multilingual environment, where Urdu, English, Punjabi and other regional languages are used interchangeably in everyday communication. These languages are not alternative linguistic codes; each language carry its own social, cultural, and emotional meanings (Rahman, 1996; Mansoor, 2004; Ishtiaq et al., 2022). Urdu is often associated with national identity

and interpersonal relationships, English with prestige, education, and professional communication, while Punjabi conveys intimacy, humor, and cultural familiarity within many communities. Digital platforms such as podcasts, interviews, and talk shows provide a useful setting for studying these practices because these provide spontaneous conversations where speakers share emotional experiences with minimal linguistic constraints.

In the light of these observations, the present study investigates how Pakistani multilingual speakers use code-switching to express and manage emotions during naturally occurring conversations. The study analyzes conversational data collected from Pakistani podcasts, interviews, and talk shows which provide authentic examples of emotional code-switching. By focusing on authentic spoken interactions in the Pakistani multilingual context, the study helps in developing a better understanding of emotional code-switching and extends existing research beyond the structural description of language alternation.

1.1. Research Objectives

- To investigate how code-switching is strategically used by multilingual speakers to express and manage emotions in naturally occurring spoken interactions.
- To examine the interactional functions performed by code-switching in emotional communication.

1.2. Research Questions

1) How do multilingual speakers strategically use code-switching to express and manage emotions during naturally occurring spoken interactions?

1.3. Significance of the Study

The study contributes to the growing research on multilingual communication by showing how code-switching functions as a resource for emotional expression in

naturally occurring Pakistani multilingual discourse. Through the integration of Interactional Sociolinguistics, Appraisal Theory, and Pavlenko's perspective on bilingual emotions, the study provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the interactional, evaluative, and emotional functions of code-switching. The study also extends existing research by exploring authentic multilingual conversations from Pakistani podcasts, interviews, and talk shows, which have received limited attention in earlier studies. The findings provide valuable insights for researchers in sociolinguistics, bilingualism, discourse analysis, and applied linguistics by highlighting how language choices shape emotional communication in multilingual contexts.

2. Literature Review

Research on code-switching has evolved significantly over time, moving from viewing multilingual language use as a structural linguistic phenomenon to recognizing it as a meaningful interactional and sociocultural practice. Early research mainly concentrated on the grammatical organization of language alternation and the effects of language contact in bilingual communities (Weinreich, 1953). However, later research challenged the view that code-switching is a sign of linguistic deficiency or interference. Blom and Gumperz (1972) argued that multilingual speakers do not switch languages randomly. Instead, they choose different languages according to both situational and metaphorical contexts, arguing that language choice conveys important social meanings beyond the literal words. Expanding this idea, Gumperz (1982) explained that code-switching functions as a contextualization cue through which speakers express their intentions, manage interpersonal relationships, and shapes how listeners interpret the interaction. Later research continued to support the idea that code-switching is a purposeful communicative strategy, not a random bilingual behavior. Multilingual speakers use code-switching to achieve

interpersonal, social, and cultural goals across different multilingual contexts Gardner-Chloros, 2009). As a result, researchers focus not only on how speakers switch languages but also on why they do so and how these language choices shape meaning in naturally occurring conversations.

Code-switching is recognized as an important communicative resource that helps multilingual speakers organize conversations and negotiate social interaction. While structural approaches focus on focus on grammatical rules that shape language switching, functional perspectives shifted attention to the interactional purposes that code-switching performs in everyday communication. Poplack (1980) demonstrated that speakers switch languages in systematic ways through intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching patterns, showing that code-switching follows linguistic rules rather than happening randomly. Building on these structural perspectives, Myers-Scotton (1993) Markedness Model explained that speakers choose languages deliberately to negotiate social relationships, rights, and obligations in different communicative contexts. Similarly, according to Auer (1998) the meaning of code-switching depends on where it occurs within the flow of conversation, rather than on its linguistic form alone. Together, these studies show that code-switching is strategically utilized by multilingual speakers for negotiating identities, emphasizing ideas, expressing solidarity, and organizing the flow of conversation.

Research shows that multilingual speakers experience and express emotions depending on the language they use. Emotional expression is influenced by their linguistic experiences, personal memories and cultural backgrounds, making language choice a meaningful resource for communicating emotions. According to Pavlenko (2005), multilingual speakers often feel more emotionally connected to their first language because it is learned through family interactions and in early socialization contexts. Pavlenko (2012) furthers suggested that bilingual speakers

switch languages strategically according to the emotional meanings they wish to communicate rather than simply on the basis of their linguistic competence. Similarly, according to Dewaele (2010) language choice changes according to the intensity of emotions, intimacy and communicative context. Speakers often utilize different languages to express affection, happiness, anger, frustration, embarrassment, or psychological distress. Together, these findings show that is not just a linguistic phenomenon but also an emotional resource that that helps multilingual speakers in the expression and regulation of emotions during conversations.

Recent research expanded the understanding of code-switching by exploring its social, cognitive, and interactional dimensions. These studies show that language switching is not only a way of communicating but also a strategy that helps multilingual speakers in regulating their emotions and negotiating identities in different communicative contexts. Zhang and Fan (2023) found that emotional processing and cognitive control influence how bilingual speakers select languages, suggesting that speaker's emotional states can affect code-switching behavior. Similarly, Liu's (2023) systematic review concluded that code-switching is strategically utilized by multilingual speakers to manage emotions, construct interpersonal meanings, and communicate effectively in emotionally sensitive situations. Zhang and Hatzidaki (2025) argued that switching to a second language does not always mean creating emotional distance. Instead, speakers may do it intentionally to express emotions and negotiate interpersonal relationships in different social contexts.

Pakistan provides a rich context for exploring emotional code-switching due to its multilingual linguistic landscape, where Urdu, English, Punjabi and other regional languages are used interchangeably in everyday communication. In Pakistan, language choice is not simply a matter of communication but is also

connected with education, social status, cultural identity, and relationships. Rahman (1996) explained that English is associated with prestige and institutional power in Pakistan, whereas Urdu serves as the national language that promotes shared cultural identity and social unity. In contrast, Punjabi and other regional languages are linked with emotional attachment and familial associations because of their connection to home, community, and cultural heritage. According to Mansoor (2004), multilingual speakers in Pakistan frequently switch between languages depending on the situation, audience, and purpose of communication. This reflects the flexible and dynamic nature of bilingual and multilingual practices in Pakistan. As a result, code-switching has become normal part of communication in educational settings, workplaces, television programs, social media, podcasts, and daily conversations. Recent research in Pakistan also showed that multilingual speakers strategically alternate between Urdu and English for identity negotiation, enhancing communication, and engaging diverse audiences. According to Idrees et al. (2025) speakers switch between Urdu and English for emotional expression and reinforce social meanings. Batool and Akram (2025) studied Urdu-English code-switching in Pakistani television dramas and reported that language switching performs important sociolinguistic functions. These includes identity construction, humor, and the creation of pragmatic meanings.

Similarly, research on Pakistani digital discourse show that code-switching is used by multilingual speakers as an important communicative practice to present modern identities, express social connections, and interact more effectively with online audiences. Studies of Pakistani social media demonstrated that code-switching is not just a linguistic choice; it also functions as a means of expressing cultural identity, reflecting social identities, and encouraging greater audience engagement in digital environments (Hajra & Akram, 2025; Shah et al., 2025). Although these studies have made valuable contributions to understanding the

social and communicative functions of code-switching, their attention has largely remained on structural patterns, identity construction, pragmatic functions, and media discourse. As a result, the emotional aspects of code-switching have received limited attention, especially how multilingual speakers utilize code-switching to express, intensify, or negotiate emotions in the Pakistani multilingual context. The present study addresses this gap by examining emotional expression through Urdu-English and Punjabi-English code-switching using an integrated analytical framework.

Theoretical Framework

To examine emotional expression through code-switching, the study adopts an integrated analytical framework that combines Gumperz's Interactional Sociolinguistics (1982), Martin and White's Appraisal Theory (2005), and Pavlenko's (2005, 2012) bilingual emotion research. Gumperz's framework explains the interactional functions of code-switching, Appraisal theory shows how speakers express and evaluate emotions through language, Pavlenko's perspective helps explain the relationship between multilingualism and emotional experience. Together, these complementary perspectives offer a comprehensive way of analysing how multilingual speakers strategically utilize code-switching to express and regulate emotions in naturally occurring spoken conversations.

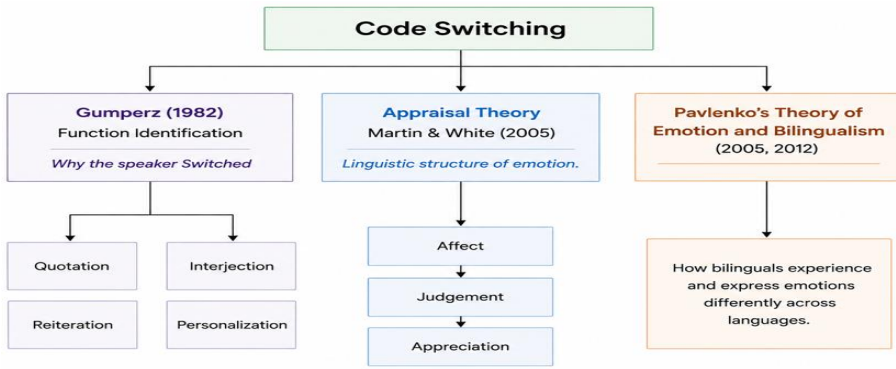

Figure 1: Integrated Theoretical Framework of the Study

3. Research Methodology

The study follows a qualitative and exploratory research design to examine how code-switching is utilized by Pakistani multilingual speakers to express and manage emotions in naturally occurring conversations. A qualitative approach is appropriate because it helps in the exploration of communicative practices and contextual meanings constructed by speakers through language use (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The data for this study was collected from the selected YouTube videos, including podcasts, interviews, and talk shows. These platforms are chosen because they provide naturally occurring spoken conversations in which multilingual speakers communicate spontaneously about different personal, cultural, and social experiences. To ensure that the selected data aligns with the objectives of the study purposive sampling is utilized (Patton, 2002). This sampling technique is commonly used in qualitative research because it enables researchers to select data that is information-rich and effectively address the research problem (Etikan et al., 2016).

From YouTube, relevant videos were identified through targeted keyword searches such as:

- Emotional discussion podcast
- Multilingual conversation podcast
- Pakistani emotional interviews
- Heated podcast discussion Pakistan
- Personal interview Urdu-English or Punjabi English
- Pakistani emotional talk show discussion
- From these videos, 5-7 minutes clips were extracted based on the presence of:
- Urdu-English and Punjabi-English code-switching

- Emotional Expression (happiness, anger, humor, affection, frustration etc.)
- Interactive conversational structure

After the selection of video clips, the researcher carefully observes and manually transcribe these clips. The manual transcriptions were further refined using the Jefferson Transcription System, which is commonly used in conversation analysis to represent features such as pauses, overlaps, stress, and intonation (Jefferson, 2004). To further ensure the quality and relevance of the data, a simple inclusion checklist was developed by the researcher. Segments satisfying all inclusion criteria were selected for detailed analysis. Using this system helps in producing a more detailed and systematic analysis of naturally occurring multilingual conversations. The selected segments were then analyzed through a theoretically driven coding framework developed for this study. The framework is based on Gumperz's Interactional Sociolinguistics, Martin and White's Appraisal Theory, and Pavlenko's bilingual emotion research. After coding, the data was reviewed and organized by the researcher to identify recurring patterns and themes across the dataset. Similar instances were grouped together using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis process to enable a systematic interpretation of emotional code-switching in multilingual discourse. Finally, the analyzed data was interpreted in relation to the research questions and relevant literature. This step ensures that the findings provide meaningful insights, maintain coherence.

4. Findings and Discussion

The analysis revealed that code-switching is used by multilingual speakers as a purposeful communicative strategy for the expression and regulation of emotion during naturally occurring spoken conversations. Rather than switching languages randomly, speakers strategically switched between Urdu, English, and Punjabi to communicate emotionally significant experiences, intensify their emotions,

negotiate interpersonal relationships, and regulate emotional expression. The findings also suggest that language choice in multilingual discourse is closely connected with speaker's emotional experiences and interactional goals. The following section discuss the major emotional functions of code-switching identified through the integrated analytical framework.

4.1. Code-switching for Emotional Vulnerability

One of the most prominent functions of code-switching observed in the data was the expression of emotional vulnerability. Speakers frequently switched between Urdu and English while talking about trauma, anxiety, psychological distress, and emotionally painful experiences. These language shifts allowed speakers to express vulnerable emotions more clearly and with greater emotional intensity.

For example, one speaker in a podcast says:

"iss dauran tou mera woh haal tha ke mein clear cut suicidal thi"

This instance illustrates intra-sentential code-switching, as the English phrase "*clear cut suicidal"* is inserted into an Urdu sentence. The speaker chooses English language to express a complex psychological experience, making the emotional disclosure more precise and impactful. In terms of Gumperz's framework (1982), this switch functions as personalization, because it highlights a deeply personal emotional experience. Within Appraisal Theory, it reflects strong negative Affect, while Pavlenko's perspective suggests that the English lexical choice helps the speaker to express a psychologically complex emotional state more clearly.

Similarly, the Guest in the same video expressed:

"mein thi, mein bohat vulnerable thi aur mein koshish kar rahi thi ke mein logon ko vulnerable na lagoon"

This instance also demonstrates intra-sentential code-switching, as the English adjective "*vulnerable"* is inserted into Urdu sentence and repeated for emphasis. The repetition of "*vulnerable"* emphasizes the speaker's emotional state while

also revealing her struggle between acknowledging that vulnerability and keeping it hidden from others. According to Gumperz's (1982), this switch functions as personalization, as it foregrounds a personal emotional experience. From the perspective of Appraisal Theory, this utterance expresses negative Affect, showing the speaker's emotional insecurity and fear of exposing her inner feelings. Through the lens of Pavlenko's perspective, the use of English language word helps the speaker to express this emotional state more precisely. This demonstrates how multilingual speakers strategically utilize code-switching to communicate complex emotional experiences.

Another emotionally intense example was found in the following statement:

"mjhe ab ehsaas hota hai ke shayad woh anxiety attack thay"

This example also illustrates intra-sentential code-switching, where the English noun phrase *anxiety attack* is embedded within Urdu syntax. Here, the English phrase is providing a clear psychological label to the experience. This kind of switching suggests that English is preferred by speakers for describing mental health struggles and emotional conditions.

Another vulnerable and emotional story was expressed by the Guest in the following statement:

"jab se mein paida hui hoon, my mother was a little mentally disturbed jise keh sakte hai, but a wonderful mom, a wonderful mom she was and kuch cheezo se woh zindagi mein guzri jisse she lost the balance in her life"

This example is illustrating frequent intra-sentential switching between Urdu and English. This switch functions as message qualification, allowing the speaker to discuss a sensitive family experience in a more neutral and less emotionally direct way. At the same time, it preserves the seriousness and emotional weight of the disclosure.

Collectively, these instances show that intra-sentential switching is consistently utilized by multilingual speakers when talking about emotionally sensitive experiences. English is frequently chosen by speakers to express psychological states, trauma, and emotional vulnerability in a more precise way. These findings support Pavlenko's (2005, 2012) argument that multilingual speakers strategically use their linguistic resources to communicate emotionally complex experiences. In the Pakistani context, these findings suggest that English functions not only as a language of education and prestige but also used by speakers for expressing emotional vulnerability during naturally occurring conversations.

4.2. Code-switching for Emotional Assertion

Emotional assertion emerged as another important function of code-switching in the selected interactions. Speakers often switched between Urdu and English when responding to criticism, defending personal decisions, and expressing confidence in their identities. In most instances, intra-sentential switching was utilized by speakers to reinforce determination, emotional resilience, and affirm their sense of self-worth.

For example, a Guest in a podcast stated:

"but it's okay, mein dikhane ko tayyar hoon. I love to be vulnerable. Mjhe hota hai kya bigaad loge mera? I am what I am."

This excerpt shows both intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. The English expressions "*I love to be vulnerable"* and *"I am what I am"* function as personalization, because these highlight the speaker's acceptance of identity. From the perspective of Appraisal Theory, this utterance is expressing strong positive Affect and confidence, while the English expressions strengthen the speaker's self-assertion.

Similarly, the Guest states:

"Aur mjhe abhi tak ghussa ata hai, aur abhi tak yeh cheezain sunnay mein aati hai mein kehti hoon yaar to hell with them"

This instance demonstrates intra-sentential switching as the English the English phrase "*to hell with them"* is inserted into Urdu discourse to convey stronger emotional reaction. The switch functions as interjection, expressing anger and dismissing criticism. By choosing English, the speaker intensifies emotional impact of the statement and clearly asserts a refusal to let others' opinions influence her.

Emotional Assertion can be further seen in the following statement:

"And they hate me because they think I have something going on with Hamza. Sab se pehli baat tou yeh ke mere saath nahi hai lekin agar mere saath nahi hai tou bibi aap logo ka bhi chance koi khaas nahi hai. Tou jalna chhod dena please."

This instance demonstrates both intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching. This switch functions as an interjection, adding a sarcastic tone and reinforcing the speaker's confident response to public speculation. The English word *"please"* at the end of the statement acts as a tag-like softener and also carries an ironic and emotional tone.

Emotional independence is also conveyed by a talk show Guest in the following statement:

"I feel like explanation denay ka matlab hai you are guilty. I'm not. I really don't care what people think, except for the people who are close to me."

This excerpt contains both intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching. This switch functions as personalization, enabling the speaker to express confidence, certainty, and emotional independence. In terms of Appraisal Theory, the instance conveys a positive Judgment of the self while rejecting external criticism.

These excerpts show that code-switching functions as a meaningful resource utilized by speakers to express confidence, resisting social judgment and protecting personal identity. Unlike the previous theme, where English was associated with emotional vulnerability, the present findings show that English is also used by speakers to express assertion, emotional strength, and self-assurance. These findings support Gumperz's (1982) view that language choice is shaped by speaker's interactional goals. In the Pakistani context, the findings reflect that English is not only used for expressing emotions precisely but also helps speakers to show assertion, independence, and defend their identities when dealing with emotionally challenging situations.

4.3. Code-switching for Emotional Frustration

Another notable pattern identified in the data was the use of code-switching for emotional frustration. Speakers switch between languages when discussing disappointment, resentment, and dissatisfaction with personal and societal realities.

For example, a host in a podcast stated:

"hum logo ko hypocrisy day one se, ek kism se baby feed ki jati hai aur yeh psychologically hota hai, yeh aapko bhi pata nahi hota ke yeh aapke saath ho raha hai and you realize when it's too late"

This excerpt shows intra-sentential switching because the English words and clauses are inserted within Urdu discourse. The switch functions as message qualification, strengthening the speaker's criticism of deeply rooted social behaviors. From the perspective of Appraisal Theory, the utterance conveys negative judgment by evaluating society as dishonest and emotionally harmful. Here, code-switching is strategically used by the speaker for emotional critique and commentary on social behavior.

Similarly, the host stated:

"In our culture and society hypocrisy is actually taken over to the point where agar aap chori kar rahe ho tou aap jail mein ho, lekin aap badi chori kar rahe ho tou aap government mein ho"

This instance shows intra-sentential switching, where English language is used to introduce and frame the speaker's argument before shifting to Urdu. Here, the language switch strengthens frustration by highlighting the contrast between expected moral values and actual social realities, making the criticism more impactful and persuasive.

A Guest in a podcast expressed frustration toward moral values and public behavior in the following statement:

"As long as you've fame and money and you're a bad person, aap izzat ke laiq hai"

This excerpt contains inter-sentential switching, as the speakers begins with a complete English clause and then returns to Urdu. The English clause highlights the speaker's emotional dissatisfaction with societal values, especially the perception that status and wealth are often valued more than moral character.

Anger and frustration are expressed by a podcast Guest in the following statement:

"bohat cheezain hamaray beech mein unsaid reh gai because of people, because of the family, because of the stupid society"

This excerpt shows intra-sentential code-switching, with the repeated English phrase used to intensify the speaker's frustration with external social pressures. The repetition shift responsibility from the individuals to family expectations and societal norms, emphasizing the emotional burden created by these social pressures.

Overall, the findings in this theme show that code-switching is not only used for expressing frustration but also utilized by speakers as a rhetorical strategy to challenge behavior and beliefs they consider unfair or unjust. This pattern suggests

the emotional frustration in multilingual discourse is influenced not only by personal experiences but also by broader social realities. In these contexts, language choice reinforces the emotional impact of the speakers' evaluations.

4.4. Code-switching for Emotional Negotiation

The analysis also revealed emotional negotiation as another important function of code-switching. Speakers often shift between Urdu, English and Punjabi while discussing religious identity, personal values, cultural expectations, and generational differences. Instead of showing fixed identities, speakers utilized code-switching to balance different emotions related to family, culture, and belonging.

For instance, a Guest in a podcast expressed:

"mein ne kaha yeh generation kaise survive karegi? Agar larke ne kaha, mein nahi karunga, tou kudi tou samaan chhuk ke chali jaye gi. Phir? So we need to be realistic"

This excerpt shows both inter-sentential and intra-sentential switching along with Punjabi lexical insertion. The speaker starts in Urdu to discuss generational attitudes, briefly switches to Punjabi "*kudi tou samaan chhuk ke chali jaye gi"* to evoke a culturally familiar and emotionally relatable situation, and then ends the utterance in English with "*So we need to be realistic".* The English phrase "*So we need to be realistic"* functions as message qualification, providing a reflective evaluation that strengthens the speaker's argument. By switching between three languages, the speaker is able to negotiate an emotionally sensitive social issue by balancing personal emotions and practical reasoning.

Another Guest in an interview expressed:

"ab meray ghar waale, they're a bit conservative Christian and we are Catholics tou unhon ne kaha, yeh kaise ho sakta hai?"

This instance illustrates intra-sentential code-switching because the English clause "*they're a bit conservative Christian"* is inserted in Urdu sentence. This switch functions as message qualification, helping the speaker in describing the religious beliefs of her family more precisely. The utterance is reflecting emotional negotiation as the speaker balances personal choices with religious expectations.

Another Guest in a podcast stated:

"yeah, it was not easy kyun ke Hunza se kabhi koi larki iss tarah se aayi nahi aur obviously ke woh aisa culture hai ke mein kahu gi conservative hai bhi aur nahi bhi"

This instance contains intra-sentential switching, as the English adjective "*conservative"* is used within Urdu discourse to evaluate cultural practices. Instead of fully accepting or rejecting these values, the speaker takes a balanced position by acknowledging both benefits and limitations of the cultural environment.

All these instances suggests that code-switching helps multilingual speakers to negotiate emotionally sensitive situations where personal beliefs intersect with cultural norms, religious traditions, and changing social expectations. Instead of portraying identity as fixed, the speakers move between different viewpoints. English is often used by speakers to explain, evaluate, or justify their experiences, while Urdu and Punjabi provides emotional and cultural grounding. These findings suggest the code-switching is not a language choice but a communicative strategy for managing conflict and developing balanced identities in multilingual interaction.

4.5. Code-switching in Interpersonal Relationships

Code-switching also plays an important role in the expression of emotions within interpersonal relationships. Speakers frequently switched between Urdu, English, and Punjabi when talking about parental influence, family support, and marital

relationships. These language shifts help speakers to express affection, trust, admiration, and emotional closeness, showing that Pakistani multilingual speakers strategically use different languages to communicate positive relational experiences.

For example, a Guest in a podcast reflects emotional maturity and self-awareness in relationships in the following excerpt:

"aur yeh na samjhe ke shadi kar lenge aapay hi theek ho jayenge, naa aapay hi nahi theek hote, uskay dil mein regrets rehte hai. Woh pehlay apnay aap ko reconcile kar le, khud tay kar le"

This excerpt contains intra-sentential switching involving Urdu, Punjabi, and English. The English lexical *"regrets"* and *"reconcile"* items perform the function of message qualification, allowing the speaker to express the advice with psychological precision. The speaker begins in Urdu to discuss marriage and emotional well-being, briefly shifts to Punjabi "*aapay hi"* to show the cultural belief that problems do not disappear automatically after marriage. The speaker then uses the English word "reconcile" to describe emotional healing and self-acceptance. Together, these language choices strengthen the speaker's message that lasting relationships require resolving personal and emotional struggles before making a lifelong commitment.

Another Guest in a podcast stated:

"kehnay se kuch nahi hota jab tak woh cheez apni aulaad ke samne khud nahi karenge jab tak aapke bachay woh cheez aapko nahi karte hue dekhenge, they're not going to take your word for it, so my mother was purely action based"

In this instance, the speakers utilized both intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. This switch functions as message qualification, reinforcing the speaker's view that children learn more from actions than from words. According to Appraisal Theory, the speaker expresses positive judgment, by evaluating the

mother's action as a model of effective parenting. Here, code-switching is used by the speaker to sincerity, wisdom, and emotional understanding.

Appreciation and emotional support within marriage is expressed by a Guest in an interview in the following excerpt:

"Hassan, Masha Allah Masha Allah! He's a very good father and he's an excellent husband. Not that ke mein TV pe baithi hoon, aapke samne baithi hoon tou mein tareef kar rahi hoon, lekin waqai Hassan to the rescue he's always there"

Here, the speaker utilized both intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. The repeated switches function as personalization, helping the speaker in expressing gratitude and appreciation for her husband. According to Appraisal Theory, this utterance conveys strong positive judgment, highlighting qualities such as responsibility, care, and emotional support.

Unlike the earlier themes, which focused on emotional struggle and negotiation, these excerpts reflect a different role of code-switching. Code-switching is also used by speakers to express positive emotions such as affection, gratitude, and emotional closeness within interpersonal relationships. Through code-switching, multilingual speakers communicate not only the depth of their emotions but also the significance of the relationships connected to those experiences.

5. Conclusion

This study explored how multilingual speakers strategically utilize code-switching to express and regulate emotions in naturally occurring conversations taken from podcasts, interviews, and talk shows available on YouTube. By integrating Gumperz's Interactional Sociolinguistics, Martin and White's Appraisal Theory, and Pavlenko's perspective on bilingual emotions, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of code-switching as a deliberate communicative strategy rather than a random linguistic practice. The findings show that code-switching performs multiple emotional functions in multilingual discourse. Rather

than switching randomly, speakers strategically switch between Urdu, English, and Punjabi for the expression of emotional vulnerability, communicating frustration, negotiate emotionally sensitive situations, and strengthen interpersonal relationships. English was often chosen by speakers to express psychologically complex experiences, emphasize emotional evaluations, emotional distancing, and assertion. Urdu language provided the narrative and cultural grounding for emotional expression, while Punjabi added emotional intimacy and cultural familiarity. Together, these patterns reflect that multilingual speakers choose their languages carefully according to emotional intensity, cultural meaning, and the interactional demands of communication.

The findings further show that code-switching extends beyond the structural aspects of language alternation. By switching languages, speakers construct meaning, negotiate identities, and manage interpersonal relationships within specific cultural and social contexts. Rather than functioning only as a multilingual communicative practice, code-switching functions as an important communicative resource that help multilingual speakers to express experiences with greater precision and emotional impact that may be difficult to achieve through a single language. The analysis also revealed that intra-sentential code-switching was the dominant type across the selected excerpts, showing that speakers frequently inserted English and Punjabi words and phrases within Urdu discourse for emotional expression.

Furthermore, by focusing on naturally occurring Pakistani multilingual discourse, this study contributes to the expanding literature on multilingual emotions and interactional sociolinguistics. This study extends previous research by showing that emotional expression is closely connected to language choice and that multilingual speakers strategically utilize the emotional and symbolic meanings associated with different languages during conversation. As a result, the

findings provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between multilingualism, code-switching, and emotions in the Pakistani sociolinguistic context.

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