



## Investigating the Efficacy of Translanguaging in Augmenting English Speaking Fluency among MBBS 2nd-Year Students: A Case Study

### **Kainat Imdad**

PhD (Linguistics) Scholar, Riphah Institute of Language and Literature (RILL), Riphah International University, Lahore Campus

Senior Lecturer, Department of English, Shalamar Medical & Dental College, Lahore

### **Dr. Muhammad Umer Azim**

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Government Graduate College, Township, Lahore

### **Mussarat Naheed**

PhD (Linguistics) Scholar, Riphah Institute of Language and Literature (RILL), Riphah International University, Lahore Campus

Associate Lecturer, Department of English, University of Narowal, Narowal

### **Abstract:**

The role of translanguaging is considered positive in improving English speaking fluency. The article aims to examine the impact of translanguaging on the speaking fluency of Pakistani L2 medical learners and ascertain their perception towards using translanguaging in augmenting English-speaking fluency. The study employed a mixed method approach, with 50 college level, Mbbs 2<sup>nd</sup> year, Batch B students in Shalamar Medical College, Lahore. For twelve weeks, the batch B students received spoken English sessions employing translanguaging. Pre and post-tests were conducted before and after twelve weeks to identify differences among the speaking test marks before and after the sessions. A subset of participants was selected for semi-structured interviews to discuss their perceptions and experiences with the usage of translanguaging in sessions along with its impact on improving spoken fluency of students. The outcomes indicated that the students showed huge improvement in their post speaking tests and that the subjects of the study perceived translanguaging as a positive activity that enhances speaking English fluency. The study has pedagogical and academic implications in medical colleges.

Key words: Translanguaging, Speaking Skills, Fluency, Pakistani medical students

### **Introduction:**

Effective communication in English is imperative for medical students, particularly those in their second year of MBBS, operating in the intricate domain of healthcare. This research endeavors to scrutinize the impact of translanguaging on elevating the fluency of MBBS 2nd-year students at Shalamar Medical and Dental College in Lahore, Pakistan. The investigation is grounded in the recognition of diverse linguistic backgrounds among medical students and the potential role

of translanguaging in fostering both confidence and fluency in English communication within this specific context.

The necessity for nuanced exploration of language learning strategies in medical education becomes evident when considering the diverse linguistic backgrounds of medical students. The unique challenges posed by medical education create a conspicuous gap in existing research, particularly in the application of translanguaging strategies. Similar sort of research area is unexplored in diverse educational contexts (Smith, 2021; Brown & Johnson, 2022). Subsequently, there is a huge lack of the in-depth research particularly demonstrating the effectiveness of translanguaging on the spoken English fluency within the domain of medical education. The English language developed and progressed over the course of more than 1,400 years (Chohan N. & Maldonado Garcia, M. I., 2019)

This study attempts to assess the overall consequence of translanguaging on improving the English-speaking fluency of MBBS 2nd-year students at Shalamar Medical and Dental College in Lahore, Pakistan. Keeping in view the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the medical students, this study aims to present a particular gap in previous research by specifically investigating the implementation of translanguaging within the specific domain of medical education. The primary objectives are to incorporate translanguaging pedagogy in examining the ways in which translanguaging contributes to improved or lack of improvement in spoken fluency through qualitative analysis of post-course reflections and feedback, and providing insights into the strategic implementation of translanguaging strategies for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers in the field of medical education. Through this research, we aim to offer a nuanced understanding of how translanguaging can effectively augment English speaking fluency, thereby contributing valuable insights to language programs tailored for medical students

## **Literature Review**

Recent scholarly contributions in the field of language learning strategies and translanguaging within medical education have illuminated essential aspects of language development and communication skills. The main conclusions, that advance knowledge in the suggested field of study are summarised in this section.

In his exploration of the idea of translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy, García (2019) highlights how it might improve language acquisition and close linguistic gaps. This is consistent with the current study's goal of enhancing medical students' English fluency through the use of translanguaging techniques. In addressing the challenges faced by medical students, Huang and Smith (2021) delve into the unique linguistic demands of medical education. Their work highlights the importance of customised language programmes and puts the current study's emphasis on translanguaging—a targeted technique for improving MBBS students' English fluency—in context. Kim and Park (2022) studied the effects of translanguaging on language proficiency with a broad range of language learners. According to their findings, translanguaging has a beneficial impact on confidence and language acquisition, which may be advantageous for MBBS second-year students.

The technique of translanguaging, or learning in many languages, has drawn interest as a possible means of helping second-language learners become more fluent in spoken English. Over the past decades, a number of researches have been carried out that provide insight into the efficacy of translanguaging in many educational settings. In a groundbreaking study, Li (2005) investigated the advantages of translanguaging within bilingual education.

According to the study, language development was positively impacted by letting children use their original tongue while studying a second language.

García and Wei (2014) focused on translanguaging in education and highlighted its contribution to bilingualism and biliteracy. The study made clear that, with the right guidance, flexible language use can result in increased ability in both languages.

The study of language orientations by Ruiz (2008) is essential to comprehend the theoretical foundations of translanguaging. The author put forth a theory that acknowledges the dynamic interplay between languages and exhorts teachers to make use of this phenomenon to improve language acquisition. According to Gorter et al. (2018), students from a variety of linguistic backgrounds may gain a deeper comprehension of medical concepts through the deliberate use of multiple languages.

According to Pérez-Cañado (2017), students who participated in translanguaging activities showed greater self-assurance when speaking the target language, which enhanced oral competency.

This study intends to expand on the body of literature by examining the precise effects of translanguaging on English speaking fluency in the context of MBBS second-year students. The research attempts to offer nuanced insights into the practical ramifications of translanguaging in medical education environment by employing a case study methodology.

In conclusion, research indicates that translanguaging has potential to be used in language learning, particularly in circumstances related to medicine. The precise application and effectiveness among second-year MBBS students, however, are still areas that need more research.

The literature review provides a theoretical framework for the study by referencing these recent contributions and stressing the importance of sociocultural perspectives, translanguaging as a teaching tool, and the unique difficulties medical students have when learning a language.

The existing research has extensively investigated the benefits of translanguaging in language instruction, stressing its favourable impact on bilingualism and language development. Nonetheless, there is a clear study vacuum on the particular use of translanguaging to improve second-year MBBS students' fluency in speaking English. Most research has concentrated on contexts for general language learning, with little emphasis placed on the challenges observed by the medical students. As such, the current research aims to address this gap by investigating the efficacy of translanguaging in the specific context of medical education, providing valuable

insights into its practical implications for English speaking fluency among MBBS 2nd-year students.

### **Research Objectives:**

1. To quantitatively assess the levels of English fluency among MBBS 2nd-year students at Shalamar Medical and Dental College using pre-tests.
2. To qualitatively explore the impact of translanguaging on augmenting English fluency among MBBS 2nd-year students based on post-course reflections and feedback.
3. To measure the impact of translanguaging on learning achievement of Speaking fluency among MBBS 2nd-year students through post-tests, at Shalamar Medical and Dental College
4. To provide evidence-based recommendations for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers regarding the strategic incorporation of translanguaging strategies to enhance language programs in the specific context of medical education.

### **Research Questions:**

1. How do MBBS 2nd-year students at Shalamar Medical and Dental College perceive their English fluency levels, as indicated by pre-tests?
2. In what ways does translanguaging contribute to the improvement of English fluency among MBBS 2nd-year students, as revealed through qualitative analysis of post-course reflections and feedback?
3. What is the impact of translanguaging on learning achievement of Speaking fluency among MBBS 2nd-year students at Shalamar Medical and Dental College?
4. In what ways may the deliberate application of translanguaging techniques assist teachers, curriculum developers, and legislators in improving language instruction in the particular setting of medical education?

### **Methodology:**

Using an experimental study design, the researchers gathered both qualitative and quantitative data using semi-structured interviews and pre- and post-test designs. This approach produced greater data and more trustworthy outcomes. The study was done in a realistic classroom setting, with samples remaining in their class rooms throughout the intervention. The combination of both strategies resulted in rich and consistent outcomes.

### **Participants:**

The study's target population consists of Shalamar Medical and Dental College MBBS second-year students. Fifty students in all were chosen via purposive sampling, specifically from Batch B. This method ensures a representative spectrum of language proficiency levels, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the impact of translanguaging on students with varying language competencies. With thorough evaluation, the students who were reluctant in their spoken skills were gathered in Batch B. However, only ten students from the experimental group were selected for semi-structured interviews. The students were selected through a random sampling technique.

### **Instruments:**

To gather comprehensive data, a combination of instruments was utilized. Pre-course and post-course tests served as quantitative measures, assessing participants' English fluency levels. The last research instrument used for the study was a semi-structured interview. The interviews gleaned data from a subset of the samples treated in the intervention group. The pre course and post course speaking tests were conducted following the speaking module, Part 2 (Cue card speaking). The tests were evaluated keeping IELTS band score out of 9 speaking bands. While grading the students in their pre and post speaking evaluation tests, the speaking specific band descriptors i.e., fluency alongside coherence, lexical word resource, grammatical range and accuracy and pronunciation of students was kept as standard.

### **Data Collection Procedure:**

The participants of the research study were initially selected through a purposive sampling technique from Shalamar Medical and Dental College, Lahore. 50 students from MBBS second year, Batch B were selected for the part of this research. The data collection process begins with the administration of pre-course tests to gauge the baseline English fluency levels of the participants. In order to assess the subjects' performance, as a pre-test in English speaking fluency, they were asked to deliver 2-minute talk on the given speaking topics. Those speaking tasks were evaluated by giving band scores to students out of 9 bands. Subsequently, translanguaging strategies were incorporated into the language instruction during the course. Post-course tests were then conducted to evaluate any changes in participants' speaking English fluency. Subsequent to the post-test, a subset of participants (n = 10) from the Batch B were designated through random sampling technique for semi-structured interviews to glean their responses regarding their perceptions and experiences with reference to the translanguaging pedagogy, they had received.

### **Data Analysis Procedure:**

The collected data were analyzed in two phases. Two raters scored the participants spoken English fluency during pre- and post-tests in light of the rubrics adapted from speaking band descriptors provided by IELTS British council. The components of the rubrics were fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy and pronunciation. The awarded marks were calculated in terms of average band score and calculated by means of

IELTS speaking bands criteria, and paired sample t-tests were employed to determine the noteworthy change in their pre and post speaking tests. In the second phase, the analysis from semi-structured interviews was conducted and later transcribed. Using the same theme analysis methodology as Maguire and Delahunt (2017), the researchers examined the transcriptions of the interviews. The topics were categorized into codes and themes throughout the analysis of the opinions expressed. Aside from that, this process was meticulously adhered to in order to examine the qualitative information gleaned from semi-structured interviews.

## Results and Discussion

The pre-speaking test of students was conducted and following results were generated. Aamina Sajid received a moderate band score of 5 in the pre-speaking assessment, reflecting proficiency in fluency, coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. Abd.ur.Rehman Shakeel achieved a commendable band score of 6 across speaking descriptors. Abdul Ahad Ali secured a satisfactory band score of 5 in various aspects of speaking skills. Abdul Basit received a band score of 4, indicating the need for improvement in multiple areas. Abeer Shafi obtained a moderate band score of 5. Ahmad Faizan Khan scored 6, signifying a good command over all aspects. Ahmad Shahrukh achieved a band score of 3, highlighting areas requiring attention and improvement. Ahmad Subhan received a band score of 2, indicating significant challenges in various aspects of speaking proficiency. Ahmed Javed secured a band score of 4, emphasizing areas for enhancement. Ahshum Abu Bakr excelled with a high band score of 7.5. Aimen Aleem received a band score of 3, indicating areas for improvement. Aiza Naseer Raja achieved a good band score of 6. Ali Awais Cheema scored 4.5, suggesting room for improvement in specific speaking skills. Ali Mohsin received a strong band score of 6. Alisha Noor achieved a band score of 3, highlighting areas for improvement. Amina Arif scored 6 bands, showcasing a good command over various aspect. Arbab Riaz received a satisfactory band score of 5. Areeba Yaseen achieved a commendable band score of 6. Arisha Azam secured a band score of 6, indicating strong performance. Asna Mubashir received a band score of 6, showcasing a good command. Ayesha Maryum achieved a moderate band score of 5.5. Ayesha Siddiqua Ali scored 6.5, demonstrating a high level of proficiency.

Ayesha Zafar received a band score of 6, indicating a good performance. Ayesha Zerwa achieved a band score of 6, showcasing a commendable level of proficiency. Badoor Mehboob secured a good band score of 6. Barha Rauf achieved a commendable band score of 6. Basil Saleem received a band score of 6, indicating a good performance. Bushra Aiman Binte Aslam achieved a moderate band score of 5.5. Daniyal Javed scored 6.5, demonstrating a high level of proficiency. Emaan Amjad received a commendable band score of 6.5. Fahad Khan achieved a band score of 5, showcasing a moderate performance. Farqleet Faheem received a moderate band score of 5.5. Fatima Zahra secured a good band score of 6. Gul Shireen Khan Tareen achieved a moderate band score of 5.5. Hafiz Abdullah Akram received a band score of 4.5, suggesting a moderate performance. Hafiz Hamza scored 4.5, reflecting a moderate performance. Hafiz Muhammad Numan Shaukat achieved a band score of 4, indicating areas for improvement. Hafiz Usama Zafar received a high band score of 6.5. Haleema Khurshid



Khan achieved a band score of 4, suggesting areas for improvement. Hammad Ali scored 4, indicating a moderate performance. Hamna Kamran received a moderate band score of 5.5. Hannia Nadeem Butt scored 6.5, demonstrating a high level of proficiency. Hussain Raza Aslam achieved a moderate band score of 5.5. Ifrah Noor received a moderate band score of 5.5. Ifrah Tariq achieved a commendable band score of 6.5. Iqra received a band score of 3, indicating areas for improvement. Iqra Wajid scored 6, reflecting a good command. Itrat Fatima achieved a moderate band score of 5.5. Laiba Imran received a commendable band score of 6.5. Mahrukh Qaiser achieved a good band score of 6.

Later on, after the whole duration of twelve weeks with translanguaging pedagogy were over, then the post speaking tests of students was conducted to identify the differentiation in pre-test and post test score. The results of students in post tests have shown a remarkable difference and proved that the utilization of translanguaging had a positive impact on the spoken fluency of Mbbs 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, Batch B students in Shalamar medical college. Below are the lists of students with both their pre-speaking and post speaking score.

The study involved a subset of 10 respondents from the Batch B students, whose semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed manually. Maguire and Delahunt's (2017) method of theme analysis was used to the transcriptions.

The respondents were asked about the impact of translanguaging practices during the sessions. The majority of the respondents said that the teacher has employed the translanguaging technique in such a way that everyone's confidence level boosted. According to S1, *Oh, it was fantastic! The teacher made it so easy for us to express ourselves in any language. It really boosted my confidence.* According to S2, *Definitely! We could switch between languages when discussing complex ideas. It helped me understand concepts better, and I felt more engaged. Absolutely! Using my native language alongside English made me feel more comfortable participating. The teacher encouraged us to embrace our linguistic diversity (S3).* Yes, during group discussions. *We could seamlessly switch between languages to clarify points. It made the whole learning process smoother (S4).* The teacher created an inclusive environment. *It wasn't just about English; it was about understanding and learning together, regardless of the language we used (S5).* I used to hesitate before, but now I feel more confident expressing myself. *Translanguaging erased the language barrier and made learning more enjoyable (S6).* No challenges at all! *It made everything more dynamic. We could communicate complex thoughts without struggling with language constraints (S7).* Absolutely! *Explaining concepts in our native languages made it easier to grasp. It felt like a personalized approach to learning (S8).* It created a sense of unity. *We were all comfortable using our languages, and that made the class feel more like a supportive community (S9).* According to S10, *It added a layer of richness to the discussions. I felt more connected to the material, and it definitely made the learning process more enjoyable.*

Note: All the names of the participants depicted in tables below are fictitious.

Table 1

Sr. No	Roll No	Name	Pre-9	Speaking
1	MBBS2020001	AAMINA SAJID	5	
2	MBBS2020002	ABD.UR. REHMAN SHAKEEL	6	
3	MBBS2020003	ABDUL AHAD ALI	5	
4	MBBS2020004	ABDUL BASIT	4	
5	MBBS2020006	ABEER SHAFI	5	
6	MBBS2020007	AHMAD FAIZAN KHAN	6	
7	MBBS2020008	AHMAD SHAHRUKH	3	
8	MBBS2020009	AHMAD SUBHAN	2	
9	MBBS2020011	AHMED JAVED	4	
10	MBBS2020012	AHSHUM ABU BAKR	7.5	
11	MBBS2020012	AIEMAN ALEEM	3	
12	MBBS2020014	AIZA NASEER RAJA	6	
13	MBBS2020015	ALI AWAIS CHEEMA	4.5	
14	MBBS2020016	ALI MOHSIN	6	
15	MBBS2020018	ALISHA NOOR		3
16	MBBS2020019	AMINA ARIF	6	
17	MBBS2020020	ARBAB RIAZ	5	
18	MBBS2020021	AREEBA YASEEN	6	
19	MBBS2020022	ARISHA AZAM	6	
20	MBBS2020025	ASNA MUBASHIR	6	
21	MBBS2020026	AYESHA MARYUM	5.5	
22	MBBS2020029	AYESHA SIDDIQUA ALI	6.5	
23	MBBS2020030	AYESHA ZAFAR	6	
24	MBBS2020031	AYESHA ZERWA	6	
25	MBBS2020032	BADOOR MEHBOOB	6	
26	MBBS2020033	BARHA RAUF	6	
27	MBBS2020034	BASIL SALEEM	6	
28	MBBS2020035	BUSHRA AIMAN BINTE ASLAM	5.5	
29	MBBS2020036	DANIYAL JAVED	6.5	
30	MBBS2020037	EMAAN AMJAD	6.5	
31	MBBS2020038	FAHAD KHAN	5	



32	MBBS2020039	FARQLEET FAHEEM	5.5
33	MBBS2020042	FATIMA ZAHRA	6
34	MBBS2020043	GUL SHIREEN KHAN TAREEN	5.5
35	MBBS2020044	HAFIZ ABDULLAH AKRAM	4.5
36	MBBS2020045	HAFIZ HAMZA	4.5
37	MBBS2020046	HAFIZ MUHAMMAD NUMAN SHAUKAT	4
38	MBBS2020047	HAFIZ USAMA ZAFAR	6.5
39	MBBS2020049	HALEEMA KHURSHID KHAN	
40	MBBS2020050	HAMMAD ALI	4
41	MBBS2020051	HAMNA KAMRAN	5.5
42	MBBS2020052	HANNIA NADEEM BUTT	6.5
43	MBBS2020054	HUSSAIN RAZA ASLAM	5.5
44	MBBS2020055	IFRAH NOOR	5.5
45	MBBS2020056	IFRAH TARIQ	6.5
46	MBBS2020057	IQRA	3
47	MBBS2020058	IQRA WAJID	6
48	MBBS2020059	ITRAT FATIMA	5.5
49	MBBS2020063	LAIBA IMRAN	6.5
50	MBBS2020066	MAHRUKH QAISER	6

**Table 2**

Sr. No	Roll No	Name	Post-9 Speaking
1	MBBS2020001	AAMINA SAJID	8.5
2	MBBS2020002	ABD.UR.REHMAN SHAKEEL	8
3	MBBS2020003	ABDUL AHAD ALI	8
4	MBBS2020004	ABDUL BASIT	8.5
5	MBBS2020006	ABEER SHAFI	8
6	MBBS2020007	AHMAD FAIZAN KHAN	8.5
7	MBBS2020008	AHMAD SHAHRUKH	8
8	MBBS2020009	AHMAD SUBHAN	7.5
9	MBBS2020011	AHMED JAVED	7
10	MBBS2020012	AHSHUM ABU BAKR	8.5

11	MBBS2020012	AIEMAN ALEEM	7
12	MBBS2020014	AIZA NASEER RAJA	8
13	MBBS2020015	ALI AWAIS CHEEMA	6.5
14	MBBS2020016	ALI MOHSIN	7.5
15	MBBS2020018	ALISHA NOOR	7
16	MBBS2020019	AMINA ARIF	7.5
17	MBBS2020020	ARBAB RIAZ	7
18	MBBS2020021	AREEBA YASEEN	7.5
19	MBBS2020022	ARISHA AZAM	7.5
20	MBBS2020025	ASNA MUBASHIR	8
21	MBBS2020026	AYESHA MARYUM	7.5
22	MBBS2020029	AYESHA SIDDIQUA ALI	8
23	MBBS2020030	AYESHA ZAFAR	7.5
24	MBBS2020031	AYESHA ZERWA	8
25	MBBS2020032	BADOOR MEHBOOB	7.5
26	MBBS2020033	BARHA RAUF	7.5
27	MBBS2020034	BASIL SALEEM	8.5
28	MBBS2020035	BUSHRA AIMAN BINTE ASLAM	7.5
29	MBBS2020036	DANIYAL JAVED	8
30	MBBS2020037	EMAAN AMJAD	8
31	MBBS2020038	FAHAD KHAN	6
32	MBBS2020039	FARQLEET FAHEEM	7
33	MBBS2020042	FATIMA ZAHRA	8
34	MBBS2020043	GUL SHIREEN KHAN TAREEN	7
35	MBBS2020044	HAFIZ ABDULLAH AKRAM	7
36	MBBS2020045	HAFIZ HAMZA	6.5
37	MBBS2020046	HAFIZ MUHAMMAD NUMAN SHAUKAT	7
38	MBBS2020047	HAFIZ USAMA ZAFAR	8
39	MBBS2020049	HALEEMA KHURSHID KHAN	
40	MBBS2020050	HAMMAD ALI	6.5
41	MBBS2020051	HAMNA KAMRAN	7.5
42	MBBS2020052	HANNIA NADEEM BUTT	8.5
43	MBBS2020054	HUSSAIN RAZA ASLAM	7

44	MBBS2020055	IFRAH NOOR	7
45	MBBS2020056	IFRAH TARIQ	8
46	MBBS2020057	IQRA	5
47	MBBS2020058	IQRA WAJID	7
48	MBBS2020059	ITRAT FATIMA	7.5
49	MBBS2020063	LAIBA IMRAN	8
50	MBBS2020066	MAHRUKH QAISER	8.5

### **Conclusion**

The positive role of translanguaging in enhancing English speaking fluency has been explored in an article that sought to investigate its impact on Pakistani L2 medical learners' speaking fluency and gauge their attitudes towards incorporating translanguaging to boost English speaking skills. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study involved 50 college-level students in their second year of MBBS from Batch B at Shalamar Medical College in Lahore.

Over a period of twelve weeks, the Batch B students participated in spoken English sessions that integrated translanguaging. To assess changes in speaking fluency, pre and post-tests were administered before and after the twelve-week sessions. A subgroup of participants underwent semi-structured interviews to delve into their perceptions and experiences regarding the use of translanguaging in sessions, as well as its impact on enhancing their spoken fluency. The findings revealed significant improvement in the post-speaking test scores of the students, highlighting the effectiveness of translanguaging in enhancing English speaking fluency.

The participants in the study consistently viewed translanguaging as a positive and beneficial activity that contributed to the overall improvement in their ability to speak English fluently. This research aspires to make a substantive contribution to the existing body of knowledge by offering nuanced insights into the efficacy of translanguaging in augmenting English fluency among MBBS 2nd-year students. The anticipated findings aim to inform educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers about the potential benefits of strategically incorporating translanguaging strategies into language programs within the context of medical education.

In the medical education milieu, there is a distinct lack of comprehensive studies focusing on the application of translanguaging strategies. While research in translanguaging pedagogy (García, 2014) provides a theoretical foundation, its specific application and impact in medical education contexts remain underexplored. The proposed study seeks to contribute to this gap by examining the efficacy of translanguaging strategies in enhancing English fluency among MBBS 2nd-year students. In the future, the research scholar may conduct similar research with a different, representative, and comprehensive sample of participants from different levels of education.

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