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Translanguaging and Learning Motivation: Influence on the academic achievement among English language learners at Public Higher Education Institutions in Sulu

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the influence of translanguaging practices and motivational levels on the academic performance of English Language Learners (ELLs) enrolled in public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Sulu during the academic year 2024–2025. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were gathered from 200 purposively selected participants. The analysis involved the use of weighted means, standard deviations, independent samples t-tests, one-way ANOVAs, and Pearson's correlation coefficients to identify patterns and relationships among the variables. Key demographic findings revealed that the majority of participants were female and aged 20 years and above, with balanced representation from the first, second, and third-year levels. Most participants' parents had attained only elementary-level education, and the majority reported monthly household incomes of ₱5,000 or below. Results showed that ELLs in Sulu's public HEIs exhibit high usage of translanguaging strategies in English language learning and display correspondingly high levels of motivation. In terms of academic performance, the learners achieved very satisfactory ratings. Furthermore, significant differences in translanguaging use were observed based on academic year and parental income, while motivation levels and academic achievement were both significantly associated only with the students' academic year. A positive correlation was found between translanguaging use and motivation, indicating that students who employed more flexible language practices tended to be more motivated. Overall, the findings support Marrero-Colón's Translanguaging Theory, emphasizing that dynamic and integrative language practices help transcend rigid linguistic boundaries by utilizing students' full linguistic repertoires and multimodal resources to enhance learning outcomes.

Keywords: Bilingualism; Mother Tongue; Language Diversity

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1. Introduction

Fluency in English has become essential for academic and professional success, especially in multilingual societies where students often navigate multiple languages. Bilingual children are commonplace across the globe, often growing up in households where multiple languages are spoken. As these children transition from their home environments to school, they encounter new linguistic practices, sometimes picking up additional languages and "languaging" techniques [1].

Research demonstrates that instruction in a child's native language promotes effective learning. Language is closely tied to identity and culture, and tapping into a student's full linguistic repertoire supports their development. Furthermore, additional language acquisition builds upon existing linguistic foundations, suggesting stronger home language proficiency facilitates subsequent language learning. This interconnectedness implies that all language skills contribute to a shared resource pool, enabling students to construct meaning more effectively.

Translanguaging theory posits that individuals dynamically utilize language resources in real-life communication, blending languages based on context and knowledge. This approach rejects the notion of linguistic competition; instead, it emphasizes the strategic selection of linguistic tools for optimal communication across diverse contexts. An individual's entire linguistic repertoire constitutes a unified system, reflecting their approach to language and literacy development, irrespective of classroom setting (bilingual or ESL). Crucially, in ESL contexts, the communicative needs of students drive their use of all available linguistic resources [2]. Even within an English-medium classroom, teachers can leverage students' home languages to enhance comprehension of new linguistic material.

Classroom implementation of translanguaging mobilizes students' complete linguistic skillset. Effective translanguaging supports engagement with complex content, fosters development of academic language, and validates students' bilingual/multilingual perspectives [3]. It helps students understand task directions and academic content by activating their prior knowledge and establishing context. Translanguaging respects and validates students' native tongues and cultures, fostering metalinguistic awareness and critical thinking abilities while allowing for cross-linguistic transfer. In EFL settings, translanguaging mitigates anxiety, fostering greater student participation and improved learning outcomes.

This study aims to examine the relationship between translanguaging practices, motivation, and academic achievement among public higher education students learning English in Sulu. Specifically, it will explore the demographic characteristics of the students, investigate how often they use translanguaging for different academic purposes, assess their motivation levels, and analyze their academic performance through their Grade Point Average (GPA). Furthermore, the study will look at how factors such as age, gender, academic year, household income, and parental education influence the use of translanguaging and academic achievement, as well as explore correlations between translanguaging practices, motivation, and performance.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Translanguaging in Multilingual Classrooms

Translanguaging has gained significant attention in multilingual education settings for its potential to bridge the gap between learners' multiple languages and enhance academic achievement. In multilingual classrooms, especially in regions like Sulu, students navigate multiple languages daily, making the integration of their linguistic resources a powerful pedagogical tool [4]. Translanguaging differs from traditional code- switching in that it views a bilingual speaker's linguistic repertoire as dynamic and fluid, rather than separated into distinct languages [5–7]. This challenges traditional conceptions of bilingualism as two separate systems and recognizes the holistic nature of multilingualism [8,9].

The debate surrounding dual correspondence theory vs. unitary language system theory is central to understanding how bilinguals manage their linguistic resources. The dual correspondence theory posits that each language spoken by an individual maintains separate grammatical systems, with clear internal distinctions [7,10]. For example, a multilingual speaker like Jean, who speaks English, French, and Portuguese, would possess three separate

language systems, each with distinct rules. In contrast, the unitary language system theory suggests that multilinguals draw from a unified linguistic repertoire that is guided by the social context, rather than by strict grammar rules of individual languages [11]. Furthermore, the Integrated Multilingual Model combines these perspectives, proposing that multilinguals have both shared and distinct grammatical resources, which they utilize based on social context and communicative needs [10].

This theoretical engagement clarifies the fundamental nature of translanguaging as an integrated pedagogical approach that draws on the totality of learners' linguistic competencies, which is particularly relevant in multilingual educational settings.

2.2. Language and Identity in Higher Education

Language plays a crucial role in the formation of identity, particularly for students from multilingual backgrounds who often juggle multiple cultural and linguistic identities. In higher education, the integration of students' linguistic identities into the learning process can enhance their engagement and academic success. Blommaert & Rampton (2020) argue that when educational systems acknowledge the multilingual identities of students, they foster a greater sense of belonging and support their academic growth [12].

In multilingual classrooms, students' identities are shaped by their interaction with various languages, and the ways they use these languages in different social contexts can influence both their academic and social experiences [13]. Translanguaging pedagogy, by allowing students to access their full linguistic repertoire, not only facilitates language learning but also affirms their cultural identity. This is particularly significant in the context of the Philippines, where multilingualism is a core aspect of the cultural and educational landscape [14]. However, the challenge remains that many educational systems still prioritize monolingual norms, which may marginalize students whose linguistic practices do not align with these norms [12].

Thus, there is a critical need for further research on how translanguaging affects the identity formation of students, particularly in higher education, and how these linguistic practices shape their academic outcomes.

2.3. Motivation and Academic Achievement

Motivation is a key factor influencing academic achievement, and it is especially important in the context of multilingual students. Research has shown that when students feel their linguistic and cultural identities are valued in the learning process, their motivation to engage with the curriculum and achieve academically increases [13]. The integration of students' first languages (L1) into second language (L2) acquisition through translanguaging has been linked to improved language skills and greater academic success [15].

In the Philippine context, the introduction of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) has aimed to provide students with a more equitable and accessible learning experience by integrating local languages into the curriculum [14]. Studies have shown that this approach can enhance motivation, as it allows students to make connections between their home language and the academic content being taught. In Sulu, for example, where multiple languages are spoken, translanguaging has proven to be a useful pedagogical strategy for bridging the gap between students' first languages and English, thus improving both language skills and academic performance [16].

However, while translanguaging has shown positive effects in promoting motivation and academic achievement, challenges persist. The dominance of English in education, along with policy constraints, often hinders the broader application of translanguaging practices [17]. Moreover, there is limited research examining the long-term effects of translanguaging on academic achievement, especially in regions where multilingualism is the norm rather than the exception.

The reviewed literature highlights the potential of translanguaging to foster academic success by improving language skills, enhancing motivation, and validating multilingual identities. The theoretical frameworks surrounding translanguaging—ranging from dual correspondence theory to the unitary language system theory and the Integrated Multilingual Model—emphasize the importance of viewing multilingualism as a dynamic and integrated system, rather than as separate linguistic entities. These frameworks align with the growing recognition that multilingual students ' full linguistic repertoires should be val-

ued and utilized in educational settings.

Despite these advancements, significant gaps remain in the literature, particularly regarding the long-term impacts of translanguaging on academic achievement and the ways in which it supports identity development in higher education. This study aims to address these gaps by exploring the role of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms in Sulu, focusing on how it influences motivation and academic achievement.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

A descriptive survey approach was adopted for this study, utilizing observation as the primary data collection method. Descriptive studies describe the distribution of variables without addressing causal hypotheses [18,19]. Observation can take many forms depending on the type of information pursued. One of its forms is the survey questionnaire given to the respondents where they answered specific questions and select statements based on their personal experiences. Qualitative questionnaires can yield rich findings when developed using rigorous design processes and prioritizing qualitative research values [20,21]. The data from the survey questionnaire were gathered and analyzed to yield answers to the research questions.

3.2. Participants and Sampling

The study employed purposive sampling to select 200 English language learners from public higher education institutions in Sulu for the 2024–2025 academic year (**Table 1**). Purposive sampling, a non-probability technique, was chosen to target participants with relevant characteristics [22,23]. This method is useful when randomization is not feasible due to limited resources or time, or when the research is focused on specific groups [24,25]. While purposive sampling provided valuable insights into this specific context, it should be noted that the sample may not be fully representative of the broader population, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research could consider probability sampling to improve representativeness.

3.3. Instruments

The survey questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Cadiz-Gabejan (2021) [26], Reyla (2022) [27], and Anderson and Lightfoot (2018) [28]. It assessed translanguaging in content-oriented contexts, classroom participation, multilingual thinking, meaning-making, and knowledge expansion; learning motivation (comprehension, communication, classroom discussion engagement, self-confidence, critical thinking); and academic achievement (GPA). The questionnaire had four parts: Part one gathered demographic data (gender, age, academic year, parental income, parental education). Part two assessed classroom translanguaging frequency (Often, Always, Seldom, Rarely, Never). Part three evaluated English learning motivation using the same frequency scale. Part four collected respondents' GPAs.

Reliability verifies the consistency of the survey results, while validity ensures the dependability of the survey questionnaire [29]. Given that the research instrument was previously utilized in the studies by Cadiz-Gabejan (2021) [26], Reyla (2022) [27], and Anderson and Lightfoot (2018) [28], its reliability and validity were already established. Therefore, the current researcher did not need to conduct additional reliability and validity testing. Nonetheless, the Graduate Studies panel of critics reviewed the instrument for its appropriateness in the present research setting.

Table 1. Distribution of English Language Learners by Academic Year and Public Higher Education Institution in Sulu (2024–2025).

Public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)	**Frequency Per Academic Year**				
	1st	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**Total**
Mindanao State University-Sulu	22	17	22	10	71
Sulu State College	20	15	15	9	59
Hadji Butu School of Arts and Trade	10	10	10	5	35
Siasi Agricultural School	10	10	10	5	35
Total	*62*	*52*	57	*29*	*200*

3.4. Data Procedure

Researchers collected data via questionnaires. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained necessary permissions from the Graduate School Dean's office and the participating institutions' principals or heads. The questionnaire was then administered to the target respondents. Following data collection, the raw data were tallied, analyzed, and interpreted.

3.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis employed descriptive and inferential statistical methods [30]. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentage, means, and standard deviations) were used to characterize the demographic profile and the levels of translanguaging, English learning motivation, and academic achievement. Inferential statistics (independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVAs) were used to compare translanguaging use, motivation, and academic achievement across different groups based on gender, age, academic year, parental income, and parental education. Pearson correlation coefficients determined significant correlations among translanguaging use, motivation, and academic achievement.

3.6. Limitation

This study utilized a descriptive quantitative design, relying on structured survey questionnaires to gather data on learners' academic achievement, motivation, and translanguaging practices. While this approach allowed for broad data collection across a sample, it does not fully capture the depth and complexity of language practices and motivational dynamics in real-life classroom settings. Constructs such as translanguaging and identity are highly contextual and are best explored through qualitative methods like interviews, classroom observations, or reflective narratives. As such, we acknowledge the absence of qualitative data as a limitation. Future research is planned to adopt a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative insights to enrich the interpretation of findings and offer a more comprehensive understanding of how translanguaging influences motivation and academic outcomes.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. What Are the Demographic Characteristics of English Learners in Sulu's Public Higher Education Institutions?

4.1.1. Age

As shown in **Table 2**, the majority of respondents (93.5%, n=187) were 20 years old or older. The remaining students were predominantly younger than 20, with only 5.0% (n=10) of the students aged 17 or younger and 1.5% (n=3) between 18–19 years old. The age distribution suggests that the sample primarily comprised students in the typical college-age range.

Table 2. Age Demographic Profile.

Age	Student Count	Percentage
0–17 years	10	5.0%
18–19 years	3	1.5%
20+ years	187	93.5%
Total	200	100%

4.1.2. Gender

Table 3 shows that the sample was predominantly female, with 69.5% (n=139) of the participants identifying as female, compared to 30.5% (n=61) male students. This gender distribution aligns with general trends seen in higher education enrollment in the region.

Table 3. Gender Demographic Profile.

Gender	Student Count	Percentage
Male	61	30.5%
Female	139	69.5%
Total	200	100%

4.1.3. Academic Year

Table 4 details the academic year distribution of the 200 student participants. The sample showed a relatively even spread across first-year (31.0%, n = 62), second-year (26.0%, n = 52), and third-year (28.5%, n = 57) students. Fourth-year students were underrepresented, comprising only 14.5% (n = 29) of the sample.

Table 4. Academic Year Demographic Profile.

Academic Year	Student Count	Percentage
1st	62	31.0%
2nd	52	26.0%
3rd	57	28.5%
4th	29	14.5%
Total	200	100%

4.1.4. Household Monthly Income

Most respondents (71.0%, n=142) reported that their parents' household income was ₱5,000 or less per month (**Table 5**). A smaller proportion of respondents (20.0%, n=40) reported incomes between ₱5,001 and ₱10,000, with 5.5% (n=11) reporting incomes between ₱10,001 and ₱15,000, and 3.5% (n=7) reporting incomes above ₱15,000. This suggests that a substantial portion of the student respondents may experience financial constraints in supporting their education. Ngangi, Mwania, and Cheloti (2023) found that parental income accounted for 53.4% of the variance in student academic performance, highlighting its significant predictive role [31]. This finding supports Omoniyi, Gamede, and Uleanya's (2022) research in South Africa, which demonstrated a negative correlation between poverty and academic achievement [32].

Table 5. Income Demographic Profile.

Household Monthly Income	Student Count	Percentage
5,000 & below	142	71.0%
5,001–10,000	40	20.0%
10,001–15,000	11	5.5%
15,001 & above	7	3.5%
Total	200	100%

4.1.5. Parental Educational Background

Table 6 shows the educational attainment of the respondents' parents. Over half (50.5%, n=101) reported that their parents had completed elementary education or less (elementary: 31.0%, n=62; no formal education: 7.5%, n=15). Other parental educational levels included high school (29.5%, n=59), tertiary education (22.0%, n=44), master's degree (9.5%, n=19), and doctorate degree (0.5%, n=1). This suggests that many students may have limited access to academic support from their parents due to their parents' lower levels of educational attainment. Idris, Hussain, and Ahmad (2020) found a strong positive correlation between parental education levels (both mothers' and fathers') and children's academic achievement, a finding consistent with the current study's results [33].

Table 6. Parental Education Demographic Profile.

Parental Educational Background	Student Count	Percentage
Elementary	62	31.00%
High School	59	29.50%
Tertiary	44	22.00%
Master's degree	19	9.50%
Doctorate	1	0.5%
No formal education	15	7.50%
Total	200	100%

4.2. How Frequently Do English Learners in Sulu's Public Higher Education Institutions Utilize Translanguaging for Various Academic Purposes?

Tables 7–11 summarize the frequency of translanguaging use among public higher education students in Sulu, categorized by communicative and cognitive purposes. The overall high mean (M = 3.78) indicates a consistent trend of students using translanguaging "often," aligning with the broader literature on the effectiveness of translanguaging in multilingual classrooms (**Table 12**). This suggests that when students feel their multilingual resources are recognized and valued, it enhances their ability to engage with and understand academic material [2,14]. Notably, the highest mean was recorded under "Expansion of Knowledge" (M = 3.88), indicating that students most frequently use translanguaging to understand language features and complex ideas.

Table 7. Frequency of Translanguaging Use for Content-Oriented Purposes among Public Higher Education Students in Sulu.

	Content-Oriented Purposes: I Use Translanguaging To:	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Rating**
1	Freely express my ideas in answering questions from the text	3.9100	0.88078	Often
2	Speak without disrupting my flow of sentences	3.3800	0.90537	Often
3	Get the equivalent terms	3.4350	0.92197	Sometimes
4	Assist in second language learning	3.9850	0.79241	Often
5	Explain concepts	3.7300	0.87230	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.6880	0.64711	Often

Legend: (5) 4.50-5.0=Always (A); (4) 3.50–4.49=Often (O); (3) 2.50–3.49=Sometimes (S); (2) 1.50–2.49=Rarely (R); (1) 1.00–1.49=Never (N).

Table 8. Frequency of Translanguaging Use for Enhanced Classroom Participation among Public Higher Education Students in Sulu.

	Enhanced Classroom Participation: I Use Translanguaging to:	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Rating**
1	Answer teacher's questions	3.8250	0.89351	Often
2	Brainstorm during activities	3.7800	0.93594	Often
3	Provide assistance to my classmates during classroom activities	3.7700	0.93352	Often
4	Discuss ideas in small groups	3.9650	0.82290	Often
5	Discuss topics in the classroom	3.8950	0.85300	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.8470	0.67993	Often

Table 9. Frequency of Translanguaging Use for Thinking in Multiple Languages among Public Higher Education Students in Sulu.

	Thinking in Multiple Languages: I Use Translanguaging to:	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Rating**
1	Mix words and expressions from different languages	3.7350	1.0865	Often
2	Analyse paragraphs	3.7850	0.83803	Often
3	Decipher labels	3.4750	0.95600	Sometimes
4	Put ideas into writing	3.9400	0.83660	Often
5	Recall key points from past lessons	3.8200	0.83732	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.7510	0.63988	Often

Table 10. Frequency of Translanguaging Use for Creating Meaning among Public Higher Education Students in Sulu.

	Creating Meaning: I Use Translanguaging to:	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Rating**
1	Interpret terms in complex sentences	3.8300	0.90842	Often
2	Draw inferences/conclusions	3.4700	0.92920	Sometimes
3	Summarize lecture	3.9700	0.80144	Often
4	Recount events	3.4600	0.97630	Sometimes
5	Try out new ideas	3.9600	0.80725	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.7380	0.67887	Often

Table 11. Frequency of Translanguaging Use for Expansion of Knowledge among Public Higher Education Students in Sulu.

	Expansion of Knowledge: I Use Translanguaging to	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Rating**
1	Expand my understanding of language features	4.0850	0.78796	Often
2	Understand the writer's choice of vocabulary	3.8800	0.83612	Often
3	Comprehend complex messages	3.7900	0.78035	Often
4	Question complex messages	3.7850	0.84993	Often
5	Interact in group discussions	3.8450	0.86876	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.8770	0.63899	Often

Table 12. Overall Weighted Mean of Translanguaging Use Across Academic Purposes among Public Higher Education Students in Sulu.

Total Weighted Mean		
Mean	**S.D.**	**Rating**
3.7802	0.6696	Often

Across all subcategories, weighted means consistently fell between 3.69 and 3.88, reflecting moderate-to-high engagement in translanguaging strategies. However, certain indicators like "decipher labels" (M = 3.48) and "question complex messages" (M = 3.47) fell closer to the "Sometimes" range, indicating variability in specific practices.

While these findings reinforce previous studies highlighting translanguaging's role in improving linguistic access and engagement [34,35], the relatively narrow standard deviations (e.g., SD ≈ 0.64 to 1.08) suggest homogeneity in students' responses. Yet, it is crucial to recognize that these descriptive results do not imply causality. While translanguaging use is high, this cannot be interpreted as directly causing improved performance without longitudinal or experimental data.

The findings align with qualitative evidence from student interviews indicating that translanguaging contributed to a sense of linguistic ease and promoted inclusive participation. However, further research is needed to examine how these perceived benefits translate into measurable language proficiency or academic achievement over time.

4.3. How Motivated Are English Learners in Sulu's Public Higher Education Institutions Across Key Learning Aspects?

Tables 13–17 present the level of English learning motivation among students in five domains. The overall weighted mean was 3.78 (SD = 0.70), suggesting a generally high level of self-reported motivation (**Table 18**). Among the subcategories, students reported the strongest motivation in "Thinking Critically" (M = 3.99), especially in analyzing viewpoints, reflecting on ideas, and connecting concepts. Conversely, "Boosting Self-Confidence" received the lowest subscale mean (M = 3.47), slightly bordering the "Sometimes" category. Notably, taking leadership roles (M = 2.95) was reported less frequently, suggesting hesitation or lower confidence in more autonomous or public-facing tasks.

Table 13. Students' Motivation to Comprehend Academic Materials.

Motivation to Comprehend		**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Rating**
1	I ask questions.	3.8950	0.92099	Often
2	I read dictionaries.	3.6250	1.0439	Often
3	I re-read different texts.	3.7200	0.93594	Often
4	I consult my teacher on our free time.	3.5300	1.0839	Often
5	I listen attentively to teacher's explanations	4.2700	0.67033	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.8080	0.67959	Often

Legend: (5) 4.50–5.0=Always (A); (4) 3.50–4.49=Often (O); (3) 2.50–3.49=Sometimes (S); (2) 1.50–2.49=Rarely (R); (1) 1.00–1.49=Never (N).

Table 14. Students' Motivation to Communicate in English.

Motivation to Communicate		**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Rating**
1	I engage in small talks.	3.9200	0.89308	Often
2	I explain English texts.	3.5950	1.0179	Often
3	I clarify unclear concepts.	3.7850	0.94511	Often
4	I discuss ideas with peers.	3.7900	0.94358	Often
5	I give instructions.	3.6400	0.99769	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.7460	0.72645	Often

Table 15. Students' Motivation to Participate in Classroom Discussions.

	Motivation to Engage in Classroom Discussion	Mean	S.D.	Rating
1	I join discussion of lessons and activities in groups.	4.1850	0.70943	Often
2	I brainstorm with my classmates during class activities.	3.9450	0.83394	Often
3	I respond to the questions of the teacher.	3.7550	0.95369	Often
4	I explain concepts in oral recitations.	3.7400	0.90359	Often
5	I supplement explanations and examples.	3.7950	0.94734	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.8840	0.68475	Often

Table 16. Students' Motivation to Build Self-Confidence in Learning.

	Motivation to Boost Self-Confidence	Mean	S.D.	Rating
1	I interact during discussions of lessons.	3.6650	1.03835	Often
2	I welcome challenging questions.	3.6300	1.0040	Often
3	I speak even with unsure ideas.	3.5750	1.0391	Often
4	I accept constructive criticisms.	3.5450	1.0311	Often
5	I take charge of the class when the teacher is out.	2.9500	1.2867	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.4730	0.76590	Often

Table 17. Students' Motivation to Think Critically Across Learning Tasks.

	Motivation to Think Critically	Mean	S.D.	Rating
1	I analyze viewpoints.	3.9850	0.77315	Often
2	I reflect on different ideas.	3.9000	0.82669	Often
3	I listen actively.	4.1800	0.70718	Often
4	I connect different ideas.	4.0100	0.83269	Often
5	I practice solving word-problem.	3.8850	0.84578	Often
	Total Weighted Mean	3.9920	0.63747	Often

Table 18. Overall Weighted Mean of Motivation Across Five Learning Domains.

Total Weighted Mean		
Mean	**S.D.**	**Rating**
3.7806	0.69883	Often

These findings are consistent with Lena et al. (2024) [36], who emphasized the influence of student interest on learning outcomes, and Asanre et al. (2024) [37], who found a positive, albeit modest, correlation between motivation and academic performance. In the current study, although descriptive statistics show high motivation, any correlational findings reported elsewhere in the study must be interpreted cautiously, especially if correlation coefficients are weak (e.g., $r < 0.3$). Such values indicate only a small proportion of shared variance and suggest the presence of other influencing factors.

Furthermore, while students appear motivated across all domains, the standard deviations (ranging from SD ≈ 0.64 to 1.28) point to some variability in motivational intensity. For example, responses regarding interaction and accepting criticism showed wider spread, implying that these areas may benefit from targeted support or intervention. It aligns with Yan (2024) [15], who found that while translanguaging can increase motivation, the outcomes are mediated by classroom dynamics, teacher attitudes, and individual learner differences. In summary, while descriptive data suggest that students are frequently motivated and engaged, these results should not be overextended to suggest strong or direct effects on academic success without more controlled or longitudinal evidence.

4.4. What is the Average Grade Point Average (GPA) of Public Higher Education Students Learning English in Sulu 's Public Higher Education Institutions?

Table 19 presents the academic achievement of public higher education students based on their reported Grade Point Average (GPA). The overall weighted mean GPA was 4.26 (SD = 0. 12), falling under the "Very Satisfactory"

category according to the institution's grading legend. This indicates that, on average, students are performing well in their academic coursework related to English language learning.

Table 19. Academic Achievement, Measured by GPA, of Public Higher Education Students Studying English in Sulu.

Academic Achievement	Mean	S.D.	Rating
Academic achievement in terms of GPA	4.2635	0.12203	Very Satisfactory
Total Weighted Mean	4.2635	0.12203	Very Satisfactory

Legend: (1) Excellent; (2) Very Satisfactory; (3) Satisfactory; (4) 4.4 Passing; and (5) Failure.

While this quantitative finding points to relatively strong academic performance, it should be interpreted with caution. GPA, as a self-reported measure, may be subject to inflation or inconsistency across institutions. Moreover, GPA alone does not capture deeper learning outcomes or language proficiency.

Qasserras et al. (2023) highlight the complexities associated with grading systems [38], noting that an overemphasis on grades can sometimes undermine students' intrinsic motivation. In their study of Moroccan high school students, pressure to attain high marks led to stress and a shift in focus from learning to performance. This insight underscores the importance of viewing GPA as one of multiple indicators of academic achievement, not a standalone measure.

5. Does the Frequency of Classroom Translanguaging Differ by Demographic Characteristics?

5.1. Translanguaging by Age Group

Table 20 demonstrates that there are no statistically significant differences in the frequency of classroom translanguaging across age groups, as indicated by the non-significant p-values (Sig. > 0.05) in all five domains: content-oriented purposes, enhanced classroom participation, thinking in multiple languages, creating meaning, and expansion of knowledge.

5.2. Translanguaging by Gender Group

Table 21 shows independent samples t-test results comparing translanguaging use between genders. No significant differences were found (p > 0.05).

Table 20. Analysis of Translanguaging Patterns Based on Age.

VARIANCE COMPONENTS		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Content-oriented purposes	Between Groups	0.623	2	0.311	0.742	0.478	Not Significant
	Within Groups	82.708	197	0.420			
	Total	83.331	199				
Enhanced classroom participation	Between Groups	1.184	2	0.592	1.285	0.279	Not Significant
	Within Groups	90.814	197	0.461			
	Total	91.998	199				
Thinking in multiple languages	Between Groups	0.093	2	0.047	0.113	0.893	Not Significant
	Within Groups	81.387	197	0.413			
	Total	81.480	199				
Creating meaning	Between Groups	0.019	2	0.009	0.020	0.980	Not Significant
	Within Groups	91.693	197	0.465			
	Total	91.711	199				
Expansion of knowledge	Between Groups	0.536	2	0.268	0.655	0.521	Not Significant
	Within Groups	80.718	197	0.410			
	Total	81.254	199				

* Significant at Alpha 0.05.

Table 21. Analysis of Translanguaging Patterns Based on Gender.

VARIABLES	Grouping	Mean	S. D.	Mean Difference	*t*	Sig.	Description
Content-oriented purposes	Male	3.7410	0.65964	0.07383	0.737	0.462	Not Significant
	Female	3.6672	0.64684				
Enhanced classroom participation	Male	3.9705	0.67413	0.16319	1.579	0.116	Not Significant
	Female	3.8073	0.67012				
Thinking in multiple languages	Male	3.6656	0.62367	−0.14319	−1.513	0.132	Not Significant
	Female	3.8088	0.61063				
Creating meaning	Male	3.7115	0.69140	−0.05057	−0.497	0.620	Not Significant
	Female	3.7620	0.64741				
Expansion of knowledge	Male	3.9311	0.59653	0.07859	0.802	0.423	Not Significant
	Female	3.8526	0.65317				

* Significant at alpha 0.05.

5.3. Translanguaging by Academic Year Group

Table 22 presents one-way ANOVA results showing significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in Translanguaging use across academic years, except for "Enhanced Classroom Participation" and "Expansion of Knowledge." This suggests academic year influences perceptions of translanguaging use. This aligns with Vogel and García's (2017) notion that language use is dynamically influenced by context and user experience [11]. For instance, lower-year students may depend more on translanguaging for foundational comprehension, while upper-year students, having developed greater English proficiency, may shift toward more target-language dominant strategies. However, as MacSwan (2017) argues [10], the flexibility of the multilingual repertoire persists across proficiency levels, suggesting that translanguaging may remain a valuable tool for meaning-making even in advanced academic contexts. These findings imply that instructors might consider differentiated scaffolding, with increased L1 integration in early years and more nuanced bilingual tasks in higher years to match students' evolving competencies.

Post hoc Tukey tests (**Table 23**) revealed significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in translanguaging practices ("Content-Oriented Purposes," "Thinking in Multiple Languages," "Creating Meaning") across year levels. Second-year students demonstrated significantly lower scores than first-year students on "Content-Oriented Purposes" and "Creating Meaning," while third-year students scored significantly higher than second-year students on "Thinking in Multiple Languages."

Table 22. Analysis of Translanguaging Patterns Based on Academic Year.

VARIANCE COMPONENTS		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Content-oriented purposes	Between Groups	3.728	3	1.243	3.060*	0.029	Significant
	Within Groups	79.603	196	0.406			
	Total	83.331	199				
Enhanced classroom participation	Between Groups	2.479	3	0.826	1.809	0.147	Not Significant
	Within Groups	89.519	196	0.457			
	Total	91.998	199				
Thinking in multiple languages	Between Groups	4.321	3	1.440	3.659*	0.013	Significant
	Within Groups	77.158	196	0.394			
	Total	81.480	199				
Creating meaning	Between Groups	5.501	3	1.834	4. 169*	0.007	Significant
	Within Groups	86.210	196	0.440			
	Total	91.711	199				
Expansion of knowledge	Between Groups	2.926	3	0.975	2.441	0.066	Not Significant
	Within Groups	78.328	196	0.400			
	Total	81.254	199				

Table 23. Post Hoc Comparisons of Translanguaging Use by Academic Year in Sulu HEIs.

Variables	(I) Grouping by Academic year	(J) Grouping by Academic year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Content-oriented purposes	1st	2nd	−0.32444*	0.11984	0.037
		3rd	−0.26378	0.11694	0.112
		4th	−0.28532	0.14337	0.195
Thinking in multiple languages	2nd	1st	0.30360	0.11798	0.052
		3rd	0.32126*	0.12032	0.041
		4th	0.03886	0.14541	0.993
Creating meaning	1st	2nd	−0.34280*	0.12471	0.033
		3rd	0.04012	0.12170	0.988
		4th	−0.26018	0.14920	0.304

* Significance level: $p < 0.05$.

5.4. Translanguaging by Household Monthly Income Group

Table 24 presents one-way ANOVA results showing significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in translanguaging use across parental income levels, except for "Enhanced Classroom Participation" and "Expansion of Knowledge." This indicates parental income influences perceptions of translanguaging.

Post hoc Tukey tests (**Table 25**) were conducted to further analyze significant differences in translanguaging perceptions based on parental income. Significant differences ($p < 0.05$) were found for "Content- Oriented Purposes," "Thinking in Multiple Languages," and "Creating Meaning." For "Content-Oriented Purposes," respondents from families with monthly incomes of ₱10,001–₱15,000 had significantly lower mean scores than those from families with incomes of ₱5,000 or less. For "Thinking in Multiple Languages," respondents from families with incomes over ₱15,000 had significantly higher mean scores than those from families with incomes of ₱10,001–₱15,000. Finally, for "Creating Meaning," respondents from families with monthly incomes of ₱10,001– ₱15,000 again had significantly lower mean scores than those from families with incomes of ₱5,000 or less. These results suggest a relationship between parental income and specific aspects of students' perceptions regarding translanguaging use.

5.5. Translanguaging by Parental Educational Background Group

Table 26 presents one-way ANOVA results examining translanguaging use across parental education levels. No significant differences were found ($p > 0.05$).

Table 24. Analysis of Translanguaging Patterns Based on Parental Income.

VARIANCE COMPONENTS		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Content-oriented purposes	Between Groups	3.541	3	1.180	2.899*	0.036	Significant
	Within Groups	79.791	196	0.407			
	Total	83.331	199				
Enhanced classroom participation	Between Groups	2.310	3	0.770	1.683	0.172	Not Significant
	Within Groups	89.688	196	0.458			
	Total	91.998	199				
Thinking in multiple languages	Between Groups	3.684	3	1.228	3.094*	0.028	Significant
	Within Groups	77.796	196	0.397			
	Total	81.480	199				
Creating meaning	Between Groups	3.615	3	1.205	2.681*	0.048	Significant
	Within Groups	88.096	196	0.449			
	Total	91.711	199				
Expansion of knowledge	Between Groups	0.362	3	0. 121	0.292	0.831	Not Significant
	Within Groups	80.892	196	0.413			
	Total	81.254	199				

Table 25. Post Hoc Comparisons of Translanguaging Use by Parental Income in Sulu HEIs.

Variables	(I) Grouping by Household Monthly Income	(J) Grouping by Household Monthly Income	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Content-oriented purposes	5,000 & below	5,001–10,000	−0.10415	0. 11421	0.799
		10,001–15,000	−0.55915*	0.19969	0.029
		15,001 & above	0.12656	0.24703	0.956
Thinking in multiple language	10,001–15,000	5,000 & below	0.49142	0.19718	0.064
		5,001–10,000	0.43818	0.21449	0.176
		15,001 & above	0.87532*	0.30461	0.023
Creating meaning	5,000 & below	5,001–10,000	−0.11986	0.12001	0.750
		10,001–15,000	−0.54622*	0.20982	0.048
		15,001 & above	0.17586	0.25957	0.906

* Significance level: $p < 0.05$.

Table 26. Translanguaging Use in Relation to Parental Educational Background.

VARIANCE COMPONENTS		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Content-oriented purposes	Between Groups Within Groups Total	3.412 79.919 83.331	5 194 199	0.682 0.412	1.657	0.147	Not Significant
Enhanced classroom participation	Between Groups Within Groups	2.077 89.921	5 194	0.415 0.464	0.896	0.485	Not Significant
	Total	91.998	199				
Thinking in multiple languages	Between Groups Within Groups Total	1.327 80.153 81.480	5 194 199	0.265 0.413	0.642	0.668	Not Significant
Creating meaning	Between Groups Within Groups Total	2.155 89.556 91.711	5 194 199	0.431 0.462	0.934	0.460	Not Significant
Expansion of knowledge	Between Groups Within Groups Total	1.650 79.604 81.254	5 194 199	0.330 0.410	0.804	0.548	Not Significant

* Significant at Alpha 0.05.

6. Is There a Significant Difference in Academic Achievement Based on Demographic Factors?

6.1. Academic Achievement by Age Group

Table 27 presents the findings from a one-way ANOVA assessing differences in academic achievement (GPA) among public higher education students learning English categorized by age. The analysis yielded a non- significant F-ratio and p-value ($p > 0.05$), indicating that age does not significantly impact academic achievement. Akpan et al. (2020) investigated the link between age and academic performance in lower basic education, revealing a significant achievement gap of 10.23 points favoring younger students in both English and Mathematics [39].

This trend was consistent across genders: younger female students scored, on average, 8.00 points higher than older females, while younger male students outperformed older males by 11.99 points. These results indicate a positive correlation between being younger and achieving higher academic results in this population.

6.2. Academic Achievement by Gender Group

Table 28 presents an independent samples t-test comparing the GPAs of male and female English language learners in public higher education. The analysis revealed a non-significant mean difference ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that gender does not significantly influence academic achievement. Cheek and Cheek (2023) investigated the relationship between gender, STEM academic performance, and student confidence [40], finding no significant correlation between achievement and confidence levels for either male or female students. This lack of significance persisted even when analyzing math and science grades separately.

6.3. Academic Achievement by Academic year Group

Post-hoc Tukey tests (**Table 29**) identified significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in GPA between first-year and second-year students, where second-year students had higher GPAs than first-year counterparts. A longitudinal study by Sakiz, Ozdas, and Ekinci (2021) indicated that high GPAs, positive instructional perceptions, and supportive psychosocial environments during the second year predicted ongoing success into the fourth year [41]. Students in such environments exhibited positive attitudes, strong academic skills, effective assignment completion, and ultimately, higher academic achievement levels. These findings underscore the importance of a supportive campus climate in fostering self-confidence, emotional resilience, and the capacity to overcome challenges.

Table 27. Analysis of Academic Achievement Based on Age.

VARIANCE COMPONENTS		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Academic Achievement (GPA)	Between Groups	0.000	2	0.000	0.005	0.995	Not Significant
	Within Groups	2.963	197	0.015			
	Total	2.964	199				

* Significant at Alpha 0.05.

Table 28. Analysis of Academic Achievement Based on Gender Group.

VARIABLES	Grouping	Mean	S. D.	Mean Difference	*T*	Sig.	Description
Academic Achievement (GPA)	Male	4.2574	0.1765	−0.00905	−0.479	0.633	Not Significant
	Female	4.2664	0.08934				

* Significant at alpha 0.05.

Table 29. Post-Hoc Comparisons of Academic Achievement Across Academic years in Sulu Higher Education.

Variables	(I) Grouping by Academic Year	(J) Grouping by Academic Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Academic achievement	1st	2nd	0.09262*	0.02163	0.000
		3rd	0.05102	0.02111	0.077
		4th	−0.02575	0.02588	0.752

* Significance level: $p < 0.05$.

Table 30 shows that academic year significantly affects academic achievement ($F(3 , 196) = 9.327$, $p < 0.05$), with higher-year students achieving better GPAs than those in lower years. This trend likely reflects the cumulative impact of language development, academic socialization, and increased exposure to disciplinary content. According to Garil (2024) and Asanre et al. (2024) [13,37], motivation intensifies when learners perceive academic relevance and gain confidence—factors more prevalent among senior students. This finding may also align with changes in translanguaging strategies across academic years, as observed in **Table 22**, suggesting that more strategic or reduced translanguaging use coincides with academic growth. As Cummins (2019) posits [3], leveraging students' full linguistic repertoires in early stages can scaffold complex learning, leading to more proficient academic language use over time. These results suggest that language-supportive pedagogy may be most critical in early years, gradually transitioning to higher expectations for independent academic performance in later stages.

6.4. Academic Achievement by Household Monthly Income Group

Table 31 presents the results of a one-way ANOVA assessing differences in academic achievement (GPA) among public higher education students learning English categorized by parental income. The analysis yielded a non-significant F-ratio and p-value ($p > 0.05$), indicating that parental income does not significantly affect academic achievement.

6.5. Academic Achievement by Parental Educational Background Group

Table 32 presents findings from a one-way ANOVA examining differences in academic achievement (GPA) among public higher education students learning English based on parental educational attainment. The results indicated a non-significant F-ratio and p-value ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that parental educational attainment does not significantly influence academic achievement.

Table 30. Analysis of Academic Achievement Based on Academic Year.

VARIANCE COMPONENTS		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Academic Achievement (GPA)	Between Groups	0.370	3	0.123	9.327*	0.000	Significant
	Within Groups	2.593	196	0.013			
	Total	2.964	199				

* Significant at Alpha 0.05.

Table 31. Analysis of Academic Achievement Based on Parental Average Monthly Income.

VARIANCE COMPONENTS		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Academic Achievement (GPA)	Between Groups	0.011	3	0.004	0.234	0.873	Not Significant
	Within Groups	2.948	194	0.015			
	Total	2.958	197				

* Significant at Alpha 0.05.

Table 32. Analysis of Academic Achievement Based on Parental Educational Attainment.

VARIANCE COMPONENTS		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Academic Achievement (GPA)	Between Groups	0.039	5	0.008	0.522	0.759	Not Significant
	Within Groups	2.924	194	0.015			
	Total	2.964	199				

* Significant at Alpha 0.05.

7. Is There a Significant Correlation Between Classroom Translanguaging, English Learning Motivation, and Academic Achievement Among English Learners in Sulu's Public Higher Education Institutions?

Table 33 displays Pearson correlation coefficients among translanguaging, motivation, and academic achievement, revealing significant correlations ($p < 0.05$) among all three [42]. Specifically, a low positive correlation was observed between translanguaging and academic achievement, and between motivation and academic achievement. A strong positive correlation was found between translanguaging and motivation. These findings suggest a moderate overall correlation, indicating that higher levels of translanguaging are associated with greater motivation, which in turn is linked to higher academic achievement. This study highlights the need for further research into effective translanguaging practices in English Language Teaching (ELT). Key pedagogical implications include fostering multilingual awareness among teachers and students, adopting flexible, multilingual instructional approaches, and integrating bilingual/multilingual education. Classroom language choices should be collaboratively negotiated with students to encourage translanguaging, shifting the focus from isolated English instruction to broader communication skill development, including negotiation and accommodation. Systematic and contextualized translanguaging strategies are essential, acknowledging the value of students' first languages (L1) and necessitating institutional discussions regarding language policy. Ultimately, effective pedagogy requires teacher-student and teacher-teacher collaboration, utilizing student feedback (e.g., pre-class questionnaires) to inform translanguaging practices and develop targeted strategies [43].

Table 33. Interrelationship of Translanguaging, Motivation, and Academic Performance in Sulu Higher Education.

Variables		Pearson *r*	Sig	N	Description
Dependent	**Independent**				
Academic Achievement	Translanguaging	−0.243**	0.001	200	Low
	Motivation to learn English	−0. 186**	0.008	200	Low
Translanguaging	Motivation to learn English	0.772**	0.000	200	Very High

* Correlation Coefficient Significance level: $p < 0.05$.

Correlation Coefficient Scales Adopted from Hopkins, Will (2002) [42]: 0.0–0.1=Nearly Zero; 0.1–0.30=Low; 0.3–0.5 =Moderate; 0.5–0.7 = High; 0.7–0.9 = Very High; 0.9–1 = Nearly Perfect.

8. Conclusions

This study provides valuable insights into the use of translanguaging among English language learners (ELLs) in Sulu's higher education institutions. The findings demonstrate a high level of translanguaging usage, significant correlations between translanguaging and motivation, and generally satisfactory academic achievement among students. Notably, academic year and parental income were found to influence perceptions of translanguaging and motivation, indicating the complex interaction between sociolinguistic factors and academic performance. For educators in multilingual settings like Sulu, integrating translanguaging into classroom pedagogy can foster a more inclusive learning environment. Recognizing students' diverse linguistic repertoires as assets, rather than deficits, allows for the development of more effective teaching strategies that enhance comprehension and engagement. English language instructors should consider using translanguaging to bridge language gaps and support academic success. Policymakers are likewise encouraged to develop inclusive language policies that reflect the realities of multilingualism, particularly in underrepresented and linguistically diverse regions.

However, this study has certain limitations. The data rely primarily on self-reported measures, which may be subject to bias. Additionally, the research was limited to public institutions in a single region, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. The lack of longitudinal or qualitative data also limits the ability to assess long-term

impacts and deeper learner perspectives. Future research should address these limitations by incorporating observational or experimental designs and including a broader sample from both public and private institutions. Investigations into teacher attitudes, classroom implementation fidelity, and student outcomes across different disciplines could yield richer insights. Furthermore, longitudinal studies could better capture the long-term academic and cognitive effects of translanguaging practices.

Actionable recommendations include providing professional development for teachers on translanguaging pedagogy, integrating multilingual materials in English instruction, and formally recognizing translanguaging as a legitimate classroom practice in language policy. These steps could help sustain a more equitable and effective learning environment for multilingual students.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

The research involving human participants was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The data underlying this study's findings are not publicly accessible to protect participant confidentiality. However, anonymized data may be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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