

The Impact of Language Diversity Appreciation on Social Inclusion through Communicative Confidence and Cultural Sensitivity in the Public Service Sector: Evidence from a Developing Country

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to discuss how language diversity appreciation (LDA) influences social inclusion (SI) with reference to the mediating factors of communicative confidence (CC) and cultural sensitivity (CS) between the users of the public services in Jordan. A survey of 314 people who have encountered public service institutions in Jordan in the last 1 year was carried out. The relationships among LDA, CC, CS and SI were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) that utilized the AMOS v.26 program. The results show that LDA has no significant direct effect on SI. Nevertheless, LDA plays a major role in CC and CS, which are significant mediators in the correlation between LDA and SI. Although this study contributes to the current knowledge of the language diversity in the context of the developing country, the use of structured questionnaires could potentially reduce the potential to gain deeper insights into the lived experiences of the individuals. In practice, the findings pinpoint the significance of promoting CC and CS to promote inclusive public service environments. This study offers a new perspective on the mediating role of CC and CS in the relationship between LDA and SI. By focusing on these socio-cultural mediators, the study extends existing knowledge on how language appreciation shapes inclusive interactions. The results contribute to a deeper understanding of the indirect pathways through which LDA influences SI and provide actionable insights for policymakers and administrators in the public service sector.

Keywords: Language Diversity Appreciation, Communicative Confidence, Cultural Sensitivity, Social Inclusion, Public Service Sector

JEL Classifications: Z13, M1

1. INTRODUCTION

SI has become one of the core issues of modern systems of the provision of the population of the state, and especially in the developing countries, a language diversity intersects with socio-cultural disparities and the access to the necessary services. Public service institutions, which have an increasing heterogeneous population, are experiencing communication as a pivotal factor of providing equitable service delivery. In this regard, LDA expresses the acknowledgement, respect and positive appreciation of various languages in the context of institutional and social

relations. Although previous studies have already noted the significance of linguistic inclusion in improving service access and social cohesion (Akbar et al., 2025; Du and Reynolds, 2025), there is still a limited amount of empirical knowledge regarding how this appreciation can be translated into larger SI, especially through socio-psychological processes. A good context on which I have explored this investigation is the public service sector in the developing countries like Jordan. Jordan has a linguistically and culturally diverse population that includes refugees, migrant workers, and minority communities, which daily interact with state institutions. Recent estimates indicate that more than 30%

of service users of urban public institutions have a linguistically diverse background, and this spurs a need to adopt a more inclusive communication practice (Simões, 2021).

Although there are continuous reforms to enhance the equity of services, there are still challenges, including language barriers, miscommunication, and perceived exclusion (Zhang and Zhang, 2026). These circumstances indicate a crucial gap between the intent of the institutions and user experience, which explains why it is necessary to investigate how LDA can be used to achieve more inclusive results in this sector. In this study, it is hypothesized that the correlation between LDA and SI does not exist but follows through two main mediating variables, CC and CS). CC is how an individual perceives their own capability and readiness to participate successfully in cross-linguistic interactions (Bibi et al., 2024). It is especially applicable in the public service context whereby a person usually deals with unknown or formal communication contexts. In its turn, CS reflects how well people are aware, respect, and adapt to cultural differences in communication (Chen et al., 2023). Both variables are soft and relational constructs that are deeply entrenched in human interaction, and thus should be very suitable in humanities and social sciences research. The choice of these variables is pegged on the fact that appreciating linguistic diversity by itself is not enough unless it increases the confidence of the individuals to communicate and their sensitivity to the cultural setting of others. Current literature has some disjointed information about these relationships but does not contain a coherent structure. Research has indicated that language barriers could considerably diminish the access to public services and the trust in the institutions (Yu and Chauhan, 2025; Fangni, 2025). On the same note, studies on intercultural communication indicate that confidence and sensitivity are vital in successful interaction within diverse environments (Emenike, 2025; Paraschiv et al., 2021). Nevertheless, such studies tend to study variables separately and do not study the combined mediating effects of LDA and SI on variables.

Furthermore, the previous studies have highly been concentrated on Western settings, leaving a significant gap in learning these dynamics within the developing world (Szyszka et al., 2026; Nanda et al., 2021). Other studies have focused on the structural factors including policy frameworks and institutional design (Akbar et al., 2025; Zhang and Zhang, 2026), but have not focused on the micro-level psychological and interaction processes which influence the outcome of inclusion. Additional gaps materialize in the lack of focus on the lived experiences of the users of the public services, as most of the studies are based on the institutional standpoint (Chen et al., 2023; Perera et al., 2020). Moreover, the aspect of the CC as the means of helping individuals to overcome linguistic insecurity is under researched (Lin et al., 2025). CS has been extensively debated in the context of education and healthcare (Ashikali et al., 2021), but little is known about its integration with language appreciation in the study of the field of public administration. Taken together, these gaps in at least eleven streams of research highlight the necessity of a comprehensive, empirically based model, which links LDA, CC, CS, and SI in a developing country context. In this respect,

the main objectives of this research are: (1) to explore the effects of LDA on SI; (2) to assess the mediating role of CC in this relationship; (3) to evaluate the mediating role of CS; and (4) to develop an integrated framework, which explains how linguistic appreciation translates into inclusive social outcomes within the public service sector.

By covering these goals, the study able to add both theoretical and practical contributions. The value of this study is that it is interdisciplinary that incorporates sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, and public administration. On the theoretical side, it goes a step further to understand that, the macro-level appreciation of diversity is connected to the mechanisms of interaction that occur at the micro-level. In practice, it provides policy-makers and service providers with practical advice about how to design more inclusive communications strategies. The relevance of the scope of the study is especially related to the growing global migration and multiculturalism, which are redefining the landscapes of the public services across the world (Badu-Baiden et al., 2025).

The originality and inspiration of the study are the fact that it involves soft and human oriented variables and is grounded in empirical evidence in a developing country setting. In contrast to the previous studies where the focus was on the technological or structural determinants, the present study anticipates the human interaction as the major factor of inclusion. Using a mediation framework, it reveals the indirect routes that are frequently ignored but are of the utmost importance. Finally, this study has a significant contribution as it provides a nuanced, context-sensitive, and theoretically sound explanation of how LDA can promote SI via the confounding effects of CC and CS.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical foundation of this study is the social identity theory (SIT) and intercultural communication competence (ICC) Theory which offers a strong and complementary basis in explaining how LDA influences SI via CC and CS. The combination of these two viewpoints can provide a holistic perspective that can bridge the identity-based processes and interactional competencies, thus offering a sound explanation of inclusion processes in the public service domain. SIT (Turner, 1979), assumes that people find a sense of identity and belonging in being members of social groups, including linguistic and cultural groups. As an identity marker that is fundamental, language is a critical factor in developing in-group and out-group-identity (Yu and Chauhan, 2025; Bibi et al., 2024). The value of languages in a linguistically diverse environment can lead to a perceived decrease of intergroup barriers and increased inclusiveness of the social climate (Su, 2021). Previous research has demonstrated that when institutions are actively committed to the importance of linguistic diversity, members of minority groups feel more appreciated and belonging, which increases their social engagement (Akbar et al., 2025; Simões, 2021). Nevertheless, SIT also implies that identity affirmation in and of itself is not sufficient, unless it results in meaningful interactional engagement (Ashikali et al., 2021). This observation explains why such mediating variables as CC and CS

should be included as they operationalize how an identity based appreciation is realized in actual communication contexts. ICC also reinforces this framework by highlighting the skills, attitudes and awareness needed to effectively interact across the cultural and linguistic boundaries (Deardorff, 2006). In this lens, CC is seen as an individual perceived capacity to interact in various communication situations, whereas CS represents openness, respect, and flexibility toward the differences in cultural contexts (Zhang and Zhang, 2026). These constructs are especially helpful in the interactions of public services where the communication process may take place under the conditions of asymmetry and institutional formality. Following empirical findings, more communicative confidence results in greater likelihood of active participation and successful navigation of linguistic challenges (Chen et al., 2023; Fangni, 2025). On the same note, it has been shown that CS is associated with less prejudice, better understanding, and more inclusive social outcomes (Szyszka et al., 2026).

The SIT and ICC Theory selection is excellently explained by the fact that the two are complementary in their explanatory capabilities. Whereas SIT describes the reasons why inclusion is important, namely that identity recognition and belonging are crucial competencies that facilitate inclusive interaction, ICC theory describes the means by which it happens, i.e. that the competencies that enable inclusive interaction are important skills that can be learned. The combination of them offers a coherent set of knowledge of how LDA can influence SI indirectly via CC and CS. This two-theoretical framework combats one of the primary limitations of the previous studies that tend to consider identity and communication as two separate entities instead of interrelated processes (Du and Reynolds, 2025; Gyasi et al., 2023). An increasing body of literature supports the relationships suggested in this research. The studies have proved that positive attitudes towards the linguistic diversity positively affect the social cohesion and cause a decrease in the exclusionary practices (Suhaeni et al., 2025). Research in the context of the public service shows that where language-inclusive environments exist, users are more satisfied and trust the institutions (Emenike, 2025; Constantinou et al., 2022). Moreover, CC has been determined as a critical variable to overcome the linguistic insecurity, and provide the means of participation in institutional settings (Mohammad et al., 2026; Lin et al., 2025). CS, in its turn, has been established to mediate the relationship between the exposure to diversity and the attitudes of inclusivity (Ashikali et al., 2021; Paraschiv et al., 2021). The mediating functions of CC and CS are supported by other empirical studies. As an example, Kaur and Wallace (2024) discovered that intercultural sensitivity is an important predictor of successful communication outcomes, whereas Johnson et al. (2023) found that internal attitudes like respect and openness are central to achieving intercultural competence. Hussain and Ali (2025) also posited that trust in communication decrease anxiety and uncertainty, therefore, permitting more meaningful communications. These competencies are even more vital in multilingual societies where people have to negotiate meaning across linguistic borders on a regular basis (Zhang and Zhang, 2026).

Regardless of these contributions, current studies have focused mainly on these variables individually or in small contexts, providing a gap in the knowledge of the integrated effects of these variables within the system of public services in developing countries (Bibi et al., 2024). This study fills this gap by integrating SIT and ICC Theory, and providing a comprehensive model that captures both identity-based and competence-based dimensions of inclusion. The proposed framework does not only comply with the existing theoretical traditions, but also further develops them by showing how the LDA can be translated into the SI along the two pathways of the CC and the CS. Overall, the theoretical framework of the study is rigorous and contextually relevant, which provided a solid foundation to study the intricate interactions between language, identity, and communication and determine the effect on social inclusion outcomes.

2.1. Language Diversity Appreciation and Social Inclusion

The diversity in language in the context of the public institution has been increasingly viewed as a key determinant in the development of inclusive social spaces, especially in multicultural and multilingual societies. When linguistic differences are recognized and honored in the institutional and societal contexts, individuals are likely to feel that they are treated fairly, recognized and felt as part of the interactions (Yu and Chauhan, 2025). According to SIT, people form part of their self-concept through group membership which language is a powerful marker of such identity formation which influences dynamics of inclusion or exclusion (Su, 2021; Fangni, 2025). Symbolic recognition of linguistic identity is associated with a reduction in social distance and perceived legitimacy of institutions in the environment where multiple languages are valued (Paraschiv et al., 2021; Nanda et al., 2021). Sociolinguistic studies also indicate that inclusive language practices can help to enhance social integration by authenticating the identities of minorities and decreasing marginalization (Badu-Baiden et al., 2025). Simões (2021) discovered that recognition of linguistic diversity is positively related to trust and cohesion in heterogeneous society, and Emenike (2025) highlight that multilingual inclusivity increases accessibility and equitable participation in public services. Su (2021) argue that the language recognition policies are very important in lessening structural exclusion where institutional practices are involved. But other researchers point out that symbolic recognition is not necessarily translated into lived experiences of inclusion without supporting communicative processes (Chen et al., 2023; Akbar et al., 2025). Similar to Perera et al. (2020) and Hussain and Ali (2025) are also in agreement that the super-diverse environment needs more than just policy recognition since everyday interactional dynamics have a very strong influence on the outcomes of inclusion. Du and Reynolds (2025) further contends that the actual access depending on the language practices within the institutions may be more than a formal policy statement. Irrespective of these complexities, empirical evidence has continued to suggest that appreciation of linguistic diversity generates background conditions of inclusion by promoting respect, perceived exclusion, and social participation in a variety of public service settings.

H₁: LDA has a positive impact on SI.

2.2. Language Diversity Appreciation and Communicative Confidence

LDA is essential in developing internal communication experience of individuals, especially in a setting where more than one language is used in communication of people in the public service. The lessening of the psychological barriers during communication is likely to occur in people when the linguistic differences are recognized as something valuable rather than problematic (Gyasi et al., 2023; Hussain and Ali, 2025). This change is tightly connected with ICC, which also states that the effectiveness of interaction in various settings is determined by the perceived safety level and the readiness to adaptively communicate (Brik and Brown, 2024; Lele, 2025). In this regard, the people build greater confidence to participate since the social environment produces signals of acceptance of linguistic variation. According to Kaur and Wallace (2024) the behavior of reducing uncertainty is the focus of communication behavior and an environment that normalizes language diversity helps individuals feel less anxious when communicating across language boundaries. On the same note, Constantinou et al. (2022) point out that willingness to communicate is higher when people feel that there is a lower social risk as well as increased acceptance. This indicates that appreciation of linguistic diversity indirectly enhances communicative assurance by eliminating the fear of misunderstanding or judgment. Lele (2025) also show that positive linguistic environments contribute to positive communicative self-perception, specifically among the participants who work in multilingual environments. In terms of public service, Fangni (2025) and Mohammad et al. (2026) demonstrate that language barriers tend to create reluctance and less interaction, whereas inclusive communication settings enhance confidence in engagement. According to Paraschiv et al. (2021) intercultural effectiveness is greatly dependent on perceived communicative capability that grows as a result of normalization of diversity. Ashikali et al. (2021) who add that adaptive communication behavior changes over time when individuals are exposed to culturally and linguistically open environments. Moreover, Nanda et al. (2021) have discovered that positive attitudes towards linguistic diversity lessen communicative anxiety and enhance expressive confidence in multilingual situations. Zhang and Zhang (2026) also posit, that CC is an emanation of individuals feeling that institutional and social support is in place to support their linguistic identity. Collectively these studies suggest that appreciation of language diversity does not simply affect external inclusion but also internal communicative assurance, which enables individuals to interact in a more comfortable and effective way in socially diverse interactions.

H₂: LDA has a positive impact on CC.

2.3. Communicative Confidence and Social Inclusion

CC is considered to be one of the most important psychological mechanisms allowing people to be successfully involved in socially and linguistically diverse settings. It demonstrates the degree to which people feel able to express themselves, engage in a dialogue, and navigate a communicative environment without being afraid or perceiving any communicative threat

(Bibi et al., 2024; Su, 2021). At ICC, trust in communication is regarded as a prerequisite to consider meaningful involvement in multicultural environments because it directly translates into the quality of interaction and social engagement (Yu and Chauhan, 2025; Fangni 2025). The more communicative assurance possessed by individuals, the more they tend to initiate and maintain contact with members of different social groups, which enhances their feeling of belonging and integration. Akbar et al. (2025) states that when there is less uncertainty in the communication setting, interpersonal effectiveness greater and social coordination smoother. On the same note, Gyasi et al. (2023) highlight the fact that perceived self-assurance is largely the determinant of willingness to communicate in determining the frequency and quality of social engagement. In multilingual and multicultural contexts, Lele (2025) discovered that communicative self-belief has a significant positive impact on social interactions and withdrawal behaviors are reduced. It is especially applicable in the field of the state service when communicating with institutions, it is necessary to be clear, confident, and assertive. Simões (2021) and Kaur and Wallace (2024) note that, communication problems tend to result in being excluded in the provision of critical services and the improved communicative capacity increases accessibility and user satisfaction. Johnson et al. (2023) also state that the intercultural competence is closely associated with the behavioral adaptability that is enhanced with the help of the intercultural competence. Badu-Baiden et al. (2025) further adds that, when people acquire adaptive communication skills, they have a better chance of moving through complex cultural environments that result in better relational integration. According to Perera et al. (2020) communication competence enables a smoother interpersonal communication and mitigates the relational barriers. Also, Du and Reynolds (2025) observe that the confidence levels in multilingual communication decrease anxiety and promote active involvement in different social situations. Brik and Brown (2024) and Szyszka et al. (2026) also note that the capacity to communicate effectively across linguistic boundaries is a key determinant of inclusion in multilingual societies. All of this is to suggest that CC is a relatively effective way to enhance SI by allowing individuals to actively participate, minimizing the effects of interactional barriers, and increasing the sense of belonging within diverse public service environments.

H₃: CC has a positive impact on SI.

2.4. Language Diversity Appreciation and Cultural Sensitivity

LDA is central to the development of the awareness, interpretation and responsiveness of individuals to cultural differences in socially diverse environments. When linguistic variation is positively recognized both at the institutional and community level, it would encourage people to go beyond monocultural considerations and become increasingly aware of cultural differences (Lele, 2025; Hussain and Ali, 2025). At ICC, exposure of this nature is deemed vital in the development of greater cultural awareness and adaptive interpretive systems in cross-cultural interactions (Suhaeni et al., 2025; Paraschiv et al., 2021). The developmental model of intercultural

sensitivity developed by Johnson et al. (2023) explains that constant exposure to diversity leads to the advancement of ethnocentric orientations of ethnorelative understanding where people become more accepting of the alternative meanings of culture. This change is highly encouraged by the conditions that legitimize linguistic plurality since language is a visible manifestation of cultural identity and difference. Ashikali et al. (2021) also reinforce the idea that intercultural development is directly related to the possibility of an individual to identify and perceive culture cues in the most accurate way possible, which is enhanced through the long-term exposure to diversity. In institutional settings, especially in the public service setting, the acknowledgment of the presence of more than one language leads to increased sensitivity to cultural variation among users of the service. Su (2021) claim that culturally responsive settings are more sensitive as they promote respect to divergent values and communication styles. On the same note, Nanda et al. (2021) discovered that people who are exposed to different linguistic environments exhibit more adaptability and less cultural prejudice in their judgments and interactions. As Zhang and Zhang (2026) emphasize, intercultural competence does not only depend on communication skills, but also on attitudinal openness and sensitivity to difference, which are also reinforced with the help of language diversity appreciation. Bibi et al. (2024) also adds that the lower the uncertainty in intercultural settings, the more people can interpret cultural cues more effectively and enhance the sensitivity and responsiveness. Chen et al. (2023) also imply that positive interactions with linguistic diversity promote more reflective and adaptive interpersonal behavior. Also, Yu and Chauhan (2025) and Emenike (2025) stress that in multilingual communities, language recognition serves as a key to more in-depth cultural knowledge, making diversity more visible and socially acceptable. Collectively, the literature is extremely persuasive in the perspective that appreciation of language diversity is an extremely powerful facilitator of CS in the context of the culturally diverse setting of public service.

H₄: LDA has a significant impact on CS.

2.5. Cultural Sensitivity and Social Inclusion

CS is a key factor that determines how individuals negotiate and have a sense of belonging within the various social and institutional contexts. It is a measure of the capacity to be aware of cultural differences, interpret them without bias, and act in ways that foster respect and understanding (Constantinou et al., 2022; Gyasi et al., 2023). At the level of ICC, CS is regarded as one of the core dimensions that make it possible to participate in heterogeneous societies through reduced ethnocentric interpretations and promoted adaptive social behavior (Johnson et al., 2023; Lin et al., 2025). The higher the levels of CS, the more the individual becomes capable to participate constructively in various interactions, a factor that boosts his or her feeling of acceptance and belonging. According to Mohammad et al. (2026) culturally adaptive people develop ethnorelative views, which enables them to conceive difference as normal, not problematic. Such perception change is crucial to the creation of inclusive experiences, especially in socially complex settings. Szyszka et al. (2026) further establish that intercultural effectiveness is

closely linked with the capacity to comprehend and adequately respond to cultural variation, which has a direct association with relational integration. CS is crucial in the context of public service and the need to provide equitable treatment and minimize the experiences of exclusion. Akbar et al. (2025) point out that a culturally responsive interaction enhances the quality of communication and minimizes misinterpretations between service providers and users. Equally, Du and Reynolds (2025) discovered that people when they are more sensitive to cultural differentiation are more cooperative and less socially biased, which contributes to more open spaces. According to Paraschiv et al. (2021), intercultural competence, especially sensitivity, is beneficial in enhancing relational harmony by promoting respectful interactions among different groups. Badu-Baiden et al. (2025) further propose that when there is less uncertainty in culturally diverse interactions then people feel more secure and included in social systems. Nanda et al. (2021) also reveal that adaptive interpersonal dispositions promote the involvement in various settings, which enhances social integration. Furthermore, Fangni (2025) and Johnson et al. (2023) believe that inclusion in multilingual communities are heavily influenced by how people perceive and react to cultural difference in their daily interactions. Another point that Chen et al. (2023) make is that the experiences of belonging are directly related to the cultural awareness embedded in communication practices. Together, these studies indicate that CS has a significant positive effect on SI, including respectful engagement, bias reduction, and increased interpersonal acceptance in a variety of public service settings.

H₅: CS has a significant impact on SI.

2.6. Mediating Role of Communicative Confidence

The mediated relationship between LDA and SI via CC, can be explained as a psychologically motivated means through which perceived linguistic value is transformed into increased interpersonal participation. Instead of having inclusion produced in a direct manner, appreciation of linguistic diversity initially transforms the dispositions of internal communication, in particular, the perceived capacity of individuals to participate in diversified interactional contexts with confidence (Ashikali et al., 2021). ICC offers a solid basis to this mechanism as it highlights that the key to effective engagement in multicultural environments lies not only in the openness of the environment but also in the internal communicative preparedness (Simões, 2021; Johnson et al., 2023). When the linguistic diversity is normalized and appreciated in a social or institutional context, people are less likely to experience communicative inhibition and more likely to be inclined to express themselves (Lele, 2025). Elaborates that the reduction of uncertainty is one of the main causes of interpersonal interaction, which implies that an inclusive linguistic environment can decrease the perceived risk of interpersonal interaction. Such a decrease in uncertainty increases communicative self-confidence, which becomes a decisive behavioral interface between environmental appreciation and social integration results (Bibi et al., 2024). Emenike (2025) also highlight the importance of willingness to communicate in a close relationship with the confidence levels that determine the level of active involvement in social

interactions. Su (2021) emphasize that positive linguistic environments enhance perceived communication competence especially in multilingual settings where there is a higher complexity in interactions. They also show that, with better communication confidence barriers to accessing public services are reduced, which in turn indirectly facilitates increased social participation. Gyasi et al. (2023) and Hussain and Ali (2025) show both. Zhang and Zhang (2026) hold that communicative competence acts as a dynamic capability that can make people navigate various social environments more efficiently and thus enhance integration. Chen et al. (2023) further complements this by stating that adaptive interactional behavior is developed when the individuals feel that their language has been validated, which makes them confident in expressing their identity across the cultural borders. Szyszka et al. (2026) also observe that communication competence is a skill, as well as a psychological orientation that defines the quality of engagement in various settings. Perera et al. (2020) also contributes to the argument that the lesser the linguistic anxiety, the greater the communicative engagement, particularly where there is multilingualism. Together, these results suggest that CC is a critical mediating factor through which linguistic appreciation of language diversity can be translated into enhanced SI, by turning positive linguistic conditions into active participation and significant social interaction.

H₆: CC mediates the relationship between LDA and SI.

2.7. Mediating Role of Cultural Sensitivity

The mediation of CS in the relationship between LDA and SI can be described with the help of the gradual process of cognitive and attitudinal transformation that predetermines the way people interpret and respond to social diversity. Instead of the straightforward production of inclusion, the appreciation of linguistic diversity trigger deeper perceptual changes that lead to increased awareness, respect, and adaptive understanding of cultural differences, which subsequently translate into more inclusive social experiences (Akbar et al., 2025; Yu and Chauhan, 2025). ICC offers a solid basis to such a mechanism in that it stresses how effective interaction in different settings is based on internalized cultural awareness and adaptability of behavior (Constantinou et al., 2022; Fangni, 2025). As soon as the linguistic diversity is positively identified, people start reconsidering the cultural differences as something meaningful instead of problematic, which increases their ability to understand cultural differences empathetically (Lele, 2025). According to Johnson et al. (2023) exposure to diversity helps to lead to a shift towards ethnorelative thinking, in which difference is perceived as a normal and valuable feature of social life. Such change in thinking is critical in building CS, which serves as an interpretive tool in the environmental appreciation and social inclusion behavior. Mohammad et al. (2026) further argue that the ability to interpret cultural cues accurately and modify behavior based on that behavior, allows intercultural development to occur. Szyszka et al. (2026) note that culturally responsive orientations enhance interpersonal interactions in various service settings by decreasing misunderstandings and increasing respectful interactions. Equally, Chen et al. (2023)

show that individuals with higher CS have less bias and more openness in cross-cultural interactions and this directly leads to inclusive social outcomes. According to Paraschiv et al. (2021), sensitivity to cultural variation improves relational harmony in facilitating adaptive patterns of communication in heterogeneous environments. Gyasi et al. (2023) further notes that the less uncertainty the intercultural contexts have, the more comfortable individuals will be to engage with difference, which support inclusive attitudes. According to Bibi et al. (2024) and Su (2021) and Lin et al. (2025) positive intercultural exposure encourages reflective adjustment to social behavior, whilst inclusion in multilingual societies is grossly influenced by how individuals understand cultural plurality in their daily interaction. Du and Reynolds (2025) go on to argue that the visibility of language diversity enhances cultural awareness, which is critical to inclusive participation. Overall, the literature support the idea that CS is an essential psychological process through which LDA is translated into SI, by creating a respectful understanding, minimizing cultural bias, and facilitating adaptive engagement in diverse public service settings.

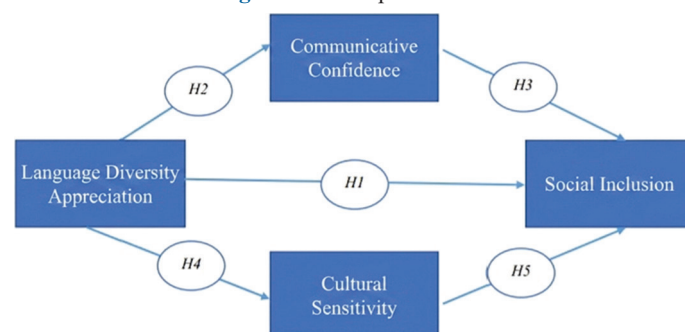
H₇: CS mediates the relationship between LDA and SI.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

This study used a quantitative approach to analyze the hypothesized relationships shown in Figure 1. The primary data were gathered with the help of a convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire was developed on Google Forms and sent via different online platforms, such as WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Gmail, Facebook and Instagram. People who recently received the services of the institutions of the sphere of public services were called to take part in the survey. The questionnaire was developed in two parts namely A and B, whereby part A, captured the data regarding the public service institutions that the respondents most frequently interacted with and knew well. Section B consisted of items that referred to the four major constructs that were under investigation in this study; LDA, CC, CS and SI, which were modified to suit the study. The introduction letter gave guidelines on how the survey should be completed, and was clear that the survey was voluntary and anonymous. There were no right or wrong answers. The questionnaires returned were 337 in total, out of which 314 were the ones who returned the questionnaire to the researcher.

Figure 1: Conceptual model



3.2. Measures

The questionnaire used in this study was composed of four tools; LDA, CC, CS and SI. A five-item measure based on previous sociolinguistic and diversity-related research was used to measure LDA (Emenike, 2025; Lin et al., 2025). One of the examples of an item is: I appreciate the fact that there are lots of languages in the interactions of the public service. The coefficient of reliability Cronbachs alpha was found to be = 0.91. Five items based on the literature on communication competence were used to measure CC (Brik and Brown, 2024; Nanda et al., 2021). An exemplary question is: I am not afraid of communicating with people of other languages. The reliability coefficient Cronbachs alpha was calculated to be: =0.88. Four items based on intercultural sensitivity scales were used to assess CS (Yu and Chauhan, 2025; Simões, 2021). One of the examples would be: I admire cultural differences when communicating to other people in the society. The coefficient of reliability of Cronbachs alpha is = 0.92. Five items based on social inclusion and participation studies were used to assess SI (Akbar et al., 2025; Fangni, 2025). An example question is: I feel accepted and belong when I make use of the social services. The reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha was determined to be α = 0.90. Each of the constructs was measured with the help of a five-point Likert scale. In relation to the public service sector, various service domains were offered to the respondents, such as healthcare services, educational institutions, municipal offices, legal services and social welfare departments, the most frequently accessed services in this sector. The frequency of interaction, accessibility, communication clarity and overall experience with these services were asked to the respondents. In the last part of the questionnaire, demographic information about the respondents was collected, such as age, gender, education, profession, sector of employment and monthly income.

3.3. Model Estimation

A two-stage approach was used to analyze the data. To evaluate reliability and validity of the scales, initially, there was confirmation of a factor analysis (CFA). Second, SEM was done to test the hypothesized model. Table 1 shows the results of the CFA. All the standardized loadings are above 0.70, and the t-values are significant at the 0.01 level. All constructs have a composite reliability (CR) value of above 0.70, reflecting high reliability. Besides, all the values of the average variance extracted (AVE) are >0.50, which supports convergent validity of the constructs. Moreover, the fit indices of the following $\chi^2 = 2.64$, CFI = 0.96, NFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.95, SRMR = 0.05 and RMSEA = 0.06 indicate a strong overall fit of the data to the hypothesized model, suggesting a robust fit.

4. RESULTS

Table 2 shows the demographic information of the participants. The percentage of male respondents (41.4%) was lower in comparison to the percentage of female respondents (58.6%). Most of the respondents were aged between 31 and 40 years (40.8%), followed by 21-30 years (34.1%), and a smaller proportion (7.3%) was aged above 50 years. Almost 45.2% of the respondents reported that the family income was 500 JOD

Table 1: Psychometric properties of the constructs

Constructs	Items	Standard loadings	t-value	CR	AVE
Language diversity appreciation		0.91		0.91	0.69
	LDA1	0.82	15.72**		
	LDA2	0.85	17.11**		
	LDA3	0.88	17.85**		
	LDA4	0.86	18.04**		
Communicative confidence	LDA5	0.80	Fixed		
		0.88		0.88	0.65
	CC1	0.80	14.38**		
	CC2	0.83	14.96**		
	CC3	0.81	15.27**		
Cultural sensitivity	CC4	0.79	13.88**		
	CC5	0.77	Fixed		
		0.92		0.92	0.74
	CS1	0.86	19.42**		
	CS2	0.84	18.67**		
Social inclusion	CS3	0.83	18.15**		
	CS4	0.87	Fixed		
		0.90		0.90	0.67
	SI1	0.87	14.21**		
	SI2	0.86	14.39**		
	SI3	0.85	14.08**		
	SI4	0.76	18.54**		
	SI5	0.72	Fixed		

P<0.01. Source: Authors' own work

Table 2: Demographic data of the sample (n=314)

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	130	41.4
	Female	184	58.6
Age	Under 20	13	4.1
	21-30	107	34.1
	31-40	128	40.8
	41-50	43	13.7
	50+	23	7.3
Education	High school or less	41	13.1
	Bachelor	56	17.8
	Master or higher	217	69.1
Employment	Employed full-time	229	72.9
	Part-time	24	7.6
	Self-employed	34	10.8
	Students	21	6.7
Monthly income	Unemployed	6	2.0
	<200 JOD	31	9.9
	200-500 JOD	142	45.2
	501-800 JOD	96	30.6
	801-1,100 JOD	25	8.0
	>1,100 JOD	20	6.3

or less, each month. Table 3 reveals that the most commonly accessed area of the government public services is healthcare. Educational services were rated highest in perceived quality with an additional correlation with more perceived costs or effort. The municipal services scored the highest on the accessibility index, whereas legal services were the least used services. The lowest perceived quality and accessibility was associated with social welfare services, and the lowest perceived efficiency was related to administrative services.

Table 4 presents correlations and descriptive statistics for all variables. The results indicated a significant positive relationship between LDA and CC, CS, and SI.

Table 3: Service interaction frequency and perception across public service domains

Public service domains	Interaction frequency	Accessibility mean	Communication clarity mean	Overall experience mean
Healthcare services	3.08	3.22	3.41	3.55
Educational services	2.36	2.68	2.91	2.85
Administrative services	2.01	2.33	2.54	2.42
Municipal services	2.75	2.97	3.18	3.20
Social welfare services	2.18	2.24	2.39	2.47
Legal services	1.79	2.61	3.05	2.58

Table 4: Correlations among constructs

Constructs	Mean	SD	LDA	CC	CS	SI
LDA	3.52	1.08	1			
CC	3.77	0.91	0.56**	1		
CS	3.85	0.88	0.64**	0.71**	1	
SI	3.69	0.95	0.62**	0.78**	0.76**	1

P<0.01

The Table 5 presents the outcome of the hypothesis tests and the analysis was done using 10,000 bootstrap samples. The findings out of the SEM demonstrate that LDA does not have a significant effect on SI per se (0.06, $P > 0.05$), and H_1 is rejected. Nonetheless, LDA demonstrates that it has a significant impact on CC ($\beta = 0.61$, $P < 0.01$), which proves H_2 . Besides, CC is also a significant influence on SI ($\beta = 0.57$, $P < 0.01$), which validates H_3 . LDA has a significant impact on CS ($\beta = 0.74$, $P = 0.01$), which proves H_4 . Moreover, CS has a great impact on SI ($\beta = 0.41$, $P = 0.01$), which corroborates H_5 . Moreover, CC is a strong mediator in the positive correlation between LDA and SI ($\beta = 0.26$, $P = 0.01$), which validates H_6 . In the same manner, CS is a strong mediator in the positive correlating relationship between LDA and SI ($\beta = 0.22$, $P < 0.01$) and this fulfills H_7 . In Figure 2, the SEM model has been visually represented.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study give a complete picture of the effects LDA has on SI in the public service sector of a developing nation through the mediating effects of CC and CS. The findings do not only provide a theoretical enrichment but also empirical validation of the suggested model, as well as an extension of previous studies in the fields of sociolinguistics and intercultural communication. First, it is especially important that LDA does not have a significant direct impact on SI (H_1 rejected). This finding shows that merely having a recognition of linguistic diversity at a societal or institutional level is not enough to elicit a sense of belonging among service users. This is consistent with previous research by Simões, (2021) and Chen et al. (2023) who contended that language policies alone tend to fail to translate to lived experiences of inclusion without underpinning interactional mechanisms. On the same note, Ashikali et al. (2021) and Du and Reynolds (2025) have pointed out that, to be effective, language planning must be accompanied by social and communicative processes. Nonetheless, this result is in contrast to (Brik and Brown, 2024), who indicated that linguistic inclusivity may directly promote social cohesion. The difference could be attributed to differences in contexts, especially in developing countries where structural inequalities and communication barriers are still high (Paraschiv et al., 2021; Emenike, 2025). Second, the fact that the significant positive effect of LDA on CC (H_2 supported) is significant, allows

reinforcing the idea that when people feel that their linguistic diversity is appreciated, they become willing and confident to communicate. This observation is aligned with (Zhang and Zhang, 2026), who pointed out that positive linguistic conditions lessen the anxiety about communication, and (Constantinou et al., 2022), who revealed that communication anxiety is reduced when positive lingo conditions are present.

Badu-Baiden et al. (2025) also discovered that multilingual appreciation can help in reducing linguistic insecurity. But certain studies like Yu and Chauhan (2025) propose that long-term social integration is also a contributor to confidence, so that LDA is not a sole determinant. Third, the fact that CC is significantly correlated with SI (H_3 supported) suggests that CC is a major mechanism of promoting inclusion. This follows the argument by Fangni (2025) and (Akbar et al., 2025), who noted that communication competence is critical in realizing intercultural inclusion. Lin et al. (2025) also established that higher communicative adaptability tendencies will lead to greater chances of social acceptance in individuals. This finding however conflicts somewhat (Mohammad et al., 2026) who argued that institutional structures tend to supersede individual-level CC in influencing the inclusion outcomes. The present research argues that interpersonal communication is more directly involved in the present situation in Jordan in the public service than it was previously thought. Fourth, the high impact of LDA on Cultural Sensitivity (H_4 supported) is also in line with the Gyasi et al. (2023) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity which suggests that exposure to diversity increase cultural awareness and adaptability. This was also affirmed by Suhaeni et al. (2025) and Chen et al. (2023) who further confirmed that diversity appreciation fosters respect and sensitivity towards cultural differences. Equally Bibi et al. (2024) have discovered that culturally sensitive people are more effective in various settings. Nonetheless, the finding contradicts previous arguments that (Kaur and Wallace, 2024) posited that identity boundaries tend to be resistant to change even in the conditions of diversity exposure.

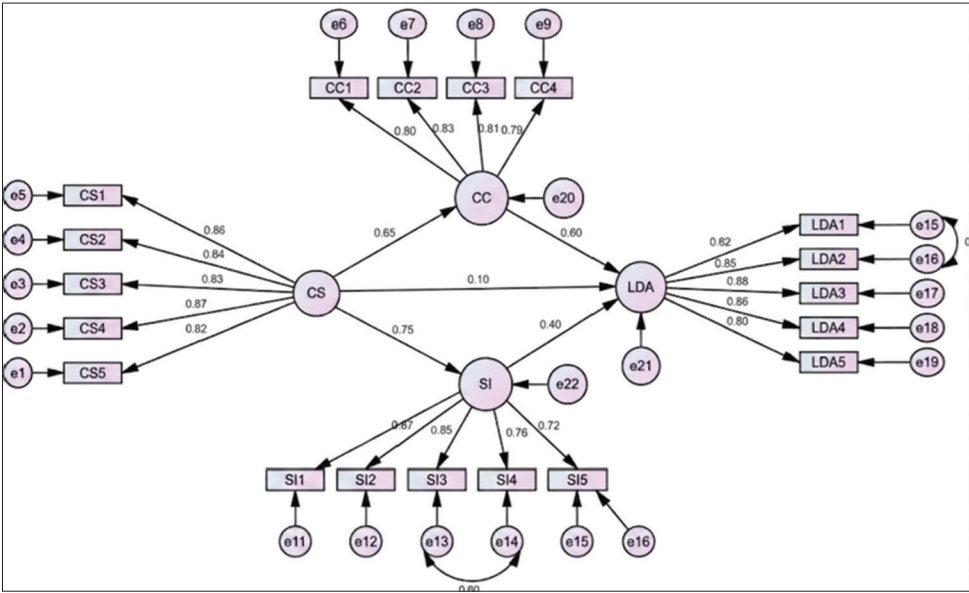
The current findings show that in a service-oriented environment, with a constant exposure to linguistic diversity, a gradual change of the cultural attitudes can happen. Fifth, the large impact of CS on SI (H_5 supported) proves that CS is a strong predictor of inclusive experiences. This is consistent with (Perera et al., 2020), who recognized CS as a fundamental element of intercultural competence, and (Su, 2021), who identified CS as one of the core elements of intercultural competence. In the same light, Szyzaska et al. (2026) discovered that CS increases relational harmony in various interactions. Nevertheless, some research like that of Johnson et al. (2023) reported that structural inequality could be

Table 5: Results of the SEM

Hypotheses test	Standard estimate	Lower bound	Upper bound	P-value	Result
LDA→SI	0.06	-0.09	0.19	0.58	Rejected
LDA→CC	0.61	0.52	0.70	<0.01	Confirmed
CC→SI	0.57	0.39	0.73	<0.01	Confirmed
LDA→CS	0.74	0.66	0.80	<0.01	Confirmed
CS→SI	0.41	0.19	0.62	<0.01	Confirmed
LDA→CC→SI	0.26	0.18	0.36	<0.01	Confirmed
LDA→CS→SI	0.22	0.10	0.34	<0.01	Confirmed

Source: Authors' own work

Figure 2: Direct relationships between variables



a constraint to the effect of individual-level sensitivity, and thus that institutional reforms should be broader. Lastly, the mediation outcomes (H_6 and H_7 passed) demonstrate that both CC and CS completely mediate the relationship between LDA and SI. This is one of the main contributions of the study as it empirically confirms the indirect nature of the pathways through which linguistic appreciation translates into social inclusion. These findings are well supported by (Paraschiv et al., 2021), (Kaur and Wallace, 2024), and (Nanda et al., 2021) who all stated that communication competence and cultural sensitivity are critical mediators of intercultural processes. Equally, Zhang and Zhang (2026) and Constantinou et al. (2022) affirmed that psychological and communicative differences tend to provide a more effective explanation of the results of the inclusion process than structural variables do alone.

Nevertheless, this finding is opposed to that of Fangni (2025), who asserted that policy-level language planning can directly affect inclusion without mediation and the contextual limitation of structural approaches. In general, the results of this study confirm that SI in the context of public service is not a direct consequence of LDA but a complex, mediated process that involves communicative and cultural processes. The combination of SIT and ICC is empirically supported, with identity-based appreciation and interactional competence having a joint influence on the outcomes of inclusion. The study therefore builds on other previous studies by illustrating a process-based,

multilingual model of inclusion that is specifically applicable in the context of multilingual public service environment in developing countries.

5.1. Theoretical Contributions

This work is very theoretical with the combination of SIT and ICC Theory and provides a complete framework of comprehending how LDA affects SI in the context of public service. Under the prism of SIT, the concept of language as a central identity marker that affects group membership, social classification, and perceived inclusion is conceptualized. The results extend SIT to the extent that it establishes that the appreciation of linguistic diversity based on identity is not sufficient to generate inclusion unless it is converted to communicative and cultural mechanisms. The current research contributes to SIT by empirically verifying that identity recognition should occur through the behavioral and psychological channels to produce inclusive results. The incorporation of ICC theory also makes the theoretical framework more solid by describing the interactional process through which the inclusion is attained. CC and CS are placed in the category of core intercultural competencies that mediate between structural appreciation of diversity and lived social experiences. This paper builds on ICC theory by revealing how it can be applied to influence wider SI results in the context of public service systems. The study introduces a dual-layer model, which connects identity recognition and interactional competence, addressing one of the critical gaps in the previous literature (Kaur and Wallace, 2024; Du and Reynolds,

2025), which tends to treat these aspects independently of each other. The research thus adds a more integrated and process based theoretical account of inclusion in multilingual societies.

5.2. Practical Implications

The proposed study has a significant practical implication to the policymakers and the managers of the public services in the developing countries. First, it points out that merely promoting LDA is not enough to guarantee SI. Governments should supplement linguistic policies with initiatives that increase both service providers and users in terms of CC and CS. Second, it is necessary to introduce training programs at the level of public institutions to enhance the level of intercultural communication so that the employees could effectively interact with the linguistically diverse population. Third, the CS training should become an obligatory element of professional development in the sphere of the public service systems in order to minimize the barriers to communication and increase the availability of the services. Fourth, social cohesion can be enhanced by awareness campaigns that foster respect towards linguistic diversity, as well as reduce the perception of exclusion in citizens. Lastly, policy makers must develop inclusive communication systems that enable minority language speakers to actively participate in the policy process and to have fair access to the services of the state. These applied actions can greatly enhance the satisfaction of citizens, the trust of the institutions and the effectiveness of the provided service in the multilingual societies.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper has explored the effect of LDA on SI using CC and CS within the sphere of the public service of a developing nation. Findings show that LDA has no direct effect but rather acts indirectly via CC and CS and the significance of interactional and psychological processes in determining the outcomes of inclusion. The combination of SIT and ICC offers a good explanatory basis to comprehend such relationships. In general, the research makes a significant contribution to the theory by showing how identity-based appreciation of linguistic diversity needs to be translated into CC and cultural awareness in order to achieve meaningful inclusion. In practice, it stresses the necessity of capacity-building programs in the system of the public services to improve the effectiveness of communication and the level of cultural understanding. Nonetheless, this study provides a sound, context-sensitive framework that contributes to knowledge about language diversity and SI in the context of developing countries.

However, notwithstanding its contributions, this study has some limitations. First, the research design used (cross-sectional) does not allow determining the causal relationship between LDA, CC, CS, and SI. In future research, longitudinal designs ought to be embraced in order to project dynamic variations with time. Second, possible social desirability and bias in responses may be due to the reliance on survey data that is self-reported, implying the necessity of mixed-method studies that involve self-reported surveys or interviews. Third, the research is performed in a specific situation of a developing country, which can cause limitations in generalization to other cultural and institutional settings.

Cross-country comparisons are necessary in future research to further increase external validity. Fourth, other mediating or moderating variables like institutional trust, the effectiveness of language policy, or social capital might be included to enrich the model. Lastly, future research might aim to establish sector-specific differences (i.e., healthcare vs. education) to learn more about how linguistic diversity can affect inclusion in various fields of the public service sector.

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