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Toward a New Understanding of Identity Construction: Insights from Cultuling Analysis

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Abstract This article introduces a diagnostic framework, the Cultuling-Based Identity Profiling Model (CIPM), for understanding identity construction through the analysis of cultural linguistic markers embedded in everyday language. While existing scholarship acknowledges the centrality of language in identity formation, previous approaches have not offered an integrated, multilevel procedure for tracing how individual linguistic choices aggregate into identity patterns and cultural orientations. The CIPM addresses this gap by specifying cultulings (linguistic units carrying cultural information), as the foundational units of identity analysis, and by providing a replicable procedure that operates across three interconnected levels: micro level identity markers, meso level identity patterns, and macro level cultural models. The model incorporates emotional engagement and power as constitutive dimensions of identity construction, and positions euculturing, the reflective cultivation of adaptive identity practices with explicit ethical safeguards, as a transformative goal. The CIPM offers researchers, educators, and policymakers a replicable heuristic for tracing the linguistic vehicles through which identity is constructed, negotiated, and potentially transformed.

Keywords: *Identity construction, Cultuling analysis, Cultural-linguistic markers, Euculturing, Multilevel framework*

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1. Introduction

Identity lies at the core of human experience, shaping how individuals perceive themselves and navigate their social worlds. From educational attainment and mental health to social belonging and political participation, identity construction is an ongoing, dynamic process that has attracted interdisciplinary attention across psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, and linguistics. Within this landscape, language has long been recognized as a primary vehicle for identity construction. Foundational work in sociolinguistics and discourse analysis has established that speakers use linguistic resources, accents, lexical choices, discourse strategies, and style shifting to signal group membership, social status, and personal stance (Eckert, 2000; Gumperz, 1982; Labov, 2006).

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More recent frameworks have emphasized that identity is not a static attribute but an emergent, interactional achievement negotiated in real time through linguistic practice (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2020). Identity has been conceptualized as multiple, fluid, fragmented, and a site of struggle, constructed through discourse and positioned within relations of power (Norton, 2013). Positioning theory has demonstrated that identity is accomplished through interactive positioning involving both self-positioning and being positioned by others (Bamberg, 2011; Davies & Harré, 1990). Investment theory has shown that individuals invest in identity practices to acquire symbolic and material resources, thereby increasing their social power and cultural capital (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 2013). These approaches have collectively established that identity is fundamentally accomplished through linguistic practice rather than being a pre-existing attribute that language merely reflects. Despite these contributions, a critical gap persists: the vast majority of identity research remains descriptive rather than diagnostic. Scholars can demonstrate that language reflects identity and how it does so in specific contexts, but the field lacks replicable methodologies for evaluating the health or quality of the identities being constructed. Can we identify when an individual is enacting a negative identity characterized by self-handicapping, fatalism, or internalized oppression? And crucially, can we intervene linguistically to cultivate healthier identity practices? Current frameworks offer few answers, and this is the gap the present paper addresses. Previous approaches have not offered an integrated, multi-level procedure for tracing how individual linguistic choices aggregate into identity patterns and cultural orientations.

The methodological gap is threefold. First, while frameworks such as Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) sociocultural linguistic approach, Bamberg's (2011) positioning theory, and Norton's (2013) investment theory have advanced our understanding of identity, they do not specify the precise linguistic units through which identity is enacted. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2025) focuses on macro-level ideology and power structures but lacks micro-level analytical tools for identifying specific identity markers. Narrative analysis (Bamberg, 2011; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2020) examines storytelling and self-positioning but does not provide a systematic procedure for analyzing individual linguistic choices. Interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz, 1982; Tannen, 2005) attends to micro-level conversational features but does not connect these to broader cultural models. Second, existing frameworks lack an evaluative dimension that distinguishes between positive identity, which is empowering, agentic, and conducive to well-being and social contribution, and negative identity, which is constraining, self-defeating, or oppressive (Goffman, 1963; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Third, and perhaps most significantly, the field lacks frameworks that move beyond description to diagnosis and intervention. The question of how to linguistically intervene to cultivate healthier identity practices has not been systematically addressed. These three gaps, the absence of specified analytical units, the lack of an evaluative dimension, and the absence of an intervention-oriented design, constitute the problem space that this article addresses.

To address these gaps, this article introduces the Cultuling-Based Identity Profiling Model (CIPM), a diagnostic framework for understanding identity construction through the analysis of cultural-linguistic markers embedded in everyday language. The model is built on the concept of cultuling, linguistic units that carry cultural information, originally proposed by Pishghadam (2013) within the field of culturology of language. Just as genes transmit biological information across generations, cultulings transmit cultural information, including collective beliefs, values, and behavioral scripts that shape individual and group identity (Pishghadam, Ebrahimi, et al., 2020). Critically, some cultulings carry positive valences, such as hope, resilience, agency, and solidarity, while others carry negative valences, such as helplessness, self-doubt, resignation, and fatalism. The cumulative effect of regularly deploying positive versus negative cultulings is the construction of correspondingly positive or negative identities. The CIPM provides an analytical procedure for identity diagnosis across three interconnected levels: micro-level identity markers (individual cultulings), meso-level identity patterns (clusters of interrelated cultulings forming meta-cultulings), and macro-level identity orientations (deep cultural models organizing identity construction). The model incorporates emotional engagement, measured through the Emotioncy Scale (Pishghadam, 2015), and power dynamics as constitutive dimensions of identity construction. It also introduces cultuling competence as a key individual difference variable in identity formation, defined as the capacity to recognize, interpret, and consciously deploy cultulings to

construct healthy, agentic identities (Makiabadi et al., 2025). Finally, the model positions euculturing, the reflective cultivation of adaptive identity practices with explicit ethical safeguards, as a transformative goal. The CIPM offers researchers, educators, and policymakers a replicable heuristic for tracing the linguistic vehicles through which identity is constructed, negotiated, and potentially transformed.

2. Language, Culture, and Identity Construction

The relationship between language, culture, and identity has been a central concern across disciplines. Language is not a neutral conduit for transmitting pre-existing identity but is itself constitutive of identity, actively shaping how speakers experience, interpret, and respond to their social worlds (Agar, 1994; Kramsch, 1998). Language provides symbolic resources through which individuals construct their sense of self, negotiate social positions, and express affiliations with communities. As poststructuralists have argued, identity is constructed through multiple overlapping language games, making language the very site of production and negotiation (Block, 2007; Foucault, 1982; Weedon, 1987). Bucholtz and Hall (2005) proposed five principles for analyzing identity in discourse, emphasizing that identity is emergent, positional, and indexical.

Culture provides the broader context within which identity construction occurs. It encompasses shared values, beliefs, practices, and symbolic systems that organize social life and provide frameworks for self-understanding (Hall & Du Gay, 1996; Holland et al., 1998). Culture has been defined as a complex, dynamic social system created by collective human activity for adaptation to natural and social environments, transmitted as social heritage from generation to generation, and encompassing spiritual and intellectual characteristics, beliefs, customs, behaviours, and systems of symbols (Kalashi, 2016). As Schein and Schein (2016) observed, culture operates at multiple levels, from visible artifacts and espoused values to deeply embedded basic assumptions that often remain unconscious. This multi-layered nature of culture has direct implications for identity construction, as individuals internalize these cultural assumptions through linguistic practice.

The relationship between language and culture is one of mutual constitution. Language is not merely a part of the intricate network of culture but its very foundation (Lado, 1999). Kramsch (1998) argued that language and culture are inseparable: language expresses, embodies, and symbolizes cultural reality. This interconnection is evident in how cultural-linguistic markers serve as vehicles for collective memory, transmitting culturally significant historical narratives, figures, and events across generations, thereby anchoring individual identity in shared social representations (Halbwachs, 1992; Wertsch, 2002). For example, the expression *"the Blitz spirit"* in British English encodes collective memory of resilience during World War II and continues to be invoked in political discourse to construct a specifically British identity of stoicism and endurance (Smith, 2005). Similarly, the phrase *"the land of the free"* in American English encodes historical narratives of liberty and independence, anchoring national identity in foundational myths (Hart, 2020). The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has been particularly influential in understanding the language-culture-thought nexus. While linguistic determinism, the strong claim that language determines thought, is no longer widely accepted, linguistic relativism, the proposition that linguistic patterns shape cognitive habits and worldviews, has gained considerable empirical support (Sapir, 1929; Whorf, 1956). Vygotsky's (1978; 1986) sociocultural theory further elaborated this relationship, arguing that thought is mediated by language and that higher mental functions develop through social interaction. As Pishghadam (2013) synthesized these perspectives, language initially drives the development of technology and simultaneously shapes culture. This culture subsequently produces specific discourse in society, which explains the manner of reasoning. This view positions language as both a product and producer of cultural patterns, making it a primary site for investigating identity. The construction of identity occurs through the ongoing negotiation of linguistic expressions employed in everyday communication. Each time an individual uses a particular expression, they are not merely communicating information but also performing identity, positioning themselves within social relationships, and affiliating with communities. This process is fundamentally social and interactive, involving both self-positioning and being positioned by others (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Davies & Harré, 1990). Bamberg (2011) further elaborated how positioning operates across multiple levels: positioning in the story, positioning in the interaction, and positioning vis-à-vis dominant discourses, which aligns with the multi-level approach adopted in this article.

Power and social inequality are crucial considerations in any analysis of identity because they operate through language and culture to shape who can construct which identities and how those identities are received. Language is not a neutral medium; it is a site where power relations are enacted, contested, and reproduced (Fairclough, 2013; Bourdieu, 1991). Culture, similarly, is not a neutral backdrop but a field of struggle in which certain identities are valorized while others are marginalized (Hall & Du Gay, 1996; Holland et al., 1998). Access to positive identity markers is unevenly distributed; marginalized communities may have restricted access to them, while dominant groups control which linguistic expressions are valued (Eckert, 2000; Labov, 2006). For example, in academic contexts, the phrase "publish or perish" reflects institutional power dynamics that marginalize scholars from non-English-speaking backgrounds who may struggle to publish in high-impact English-language journals (Lillis & Curry, 2010). This phrase functions as a cultuling that constructs an identity of academic success tied to English-language publication, while simultaneously marginalizing those who do not have access to the linguistic resources required to meet this expectation. Similarly, in corporate contexts, the use of technical jargon can serve as a gatekeeping mechanism that excludes those without access to elite education (Bourdieu, 1991). Such jargon functions as a cultuling that constructs a professional identity tied to specific forms of cultural capital, while simultaneously excluding those who do not possess that capital. These examples illustrate that power and inequality are not external to language, culture, and identity construction but are constitutive of them. The linguistic expressions available to individuals, the cultural values attached to those expressions, and the identities they enable or constrain are all shaped by power relations. A comprehensive framework for understanding identity construction through language and culture must therefore attend to these power dynamics explicitly, rather than treating them as optional social variables. The CIPM addresses this by incorporating power as a cross-cutting dimension that operates at all three analytical levels: micro-level power asymmetries shape who can deploy which cultulings in conversation; meso-level power structures determine which meta-cultulings are institutionally valorized; and macro-level power relations shape the cultural models that organize identity construction.

3. Cultuling

The concept of cultuling (a portmanteau of culture and language) was first introduced by Pishghadam (2013) as part of a broader initiative to establish a new field of inquiry termed culturology of language. The term was coined to denote linguistic structures and expressions that embody and mirror the culture of a speech community. In its most fundamental sense, a cultuling is a linguistic unit, a word, phrase, or expression, that carries culturally significant information. Pishghadam (2013) postulated that investigating and identifying the cultulings of each society not only paves the way for the faster detection of culturally appropriate and inappropriate behaviours but also facilitates cultural reforms that lead to euculturing. The theoretical foundations of cultuling draw upon multiple intellectual traditions. Dawkins' (1976) meme theory posits that cultural information replicates and evolves through transmission. Halliday's (1978; 1994) systemic functional linguistics inherits the recognition that language is fundamentally social and constitutive of meaning. Vygotsky's (1978; 1986) sociocultural theory holds that language mediates thought and is shaped by social interaction. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis takes seriously the proposition that linguistic patterns shape cognitive habits (Sapir, 1929; Whorf, 1956). These strands converge in the proposition that cultural content embedded in linguistic expressions offers a window into speakers' cognitive and social worlds. Cultulings are not isolated phenomena; they are organised hierarchically. Pishghadam (2013) introduced the concept of meta-cultuling to describe a larger category under which interrelated cultulings are subsumed. Each meta-cultuling encompasses a set of deeper-linked cultulings that share a common cultural thread. For example, a meta-cultuling of *"collectivism"* might encompass individual cultulings such as indirectness, formality, family orientation, and group loyalty. A meta-cultuling of *"religious devotion"* might encompass individual cultulings such as prayer, religious references, and ritual language. This hierarchical structure, cultulings clustered into meta-cultulings, provides the foundation for the multi-level analytical procedure adopted in the CIPM.

To analyze cultulings, Pishghadam, Ebrahimi, et al. (2020) proposed the Conceptual Model of Cultuling Analysis that combines three complementary models. Each model addresses a distinct dimension of cultuling analysis, and together they provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how

cultulings function in identity construction. The Cultural Model addresses the question of what cultural content cultulings carry. It examines the broader cultural patterns and environmental factors, including region, ethnicity, age, social status, and gender, that shape which cultulings are available, valued, and deployed in a given context. Drawing on established cultural dimensions such as those proposed by Hofstede (2001) and Schwartz (1994), this model reveals why certain expressions resonate more strongly in particular cultural settings and how cultural values are encoded in linguistic choices. The Emotioncy Model addresses the question of why some cultulings carry greater identity-constituting weight than others. Introduced by Pishghadam (2015), this model examines individuals' emotional and sensory engagement with linguistic stimuli and assesses the degree of affective investment in particular expressions. Emotioncy ranges from exvolvement (low emotional engagement, such as merely hearing a word) through involvement (moderate engagement, such as seeing and touching the referent) to metavolvement (high emotional engagement, such as having deep personal experience with the referent). Cultulings with high emotioncy are more deeply embedded in individuals' identity because they are tied to sensory and emotional experience. The SPEAKING Model addresses the question of how cultulings function within specific interactional contexts. Adapted from Hymes (1967), this model provides a framework for analyzing the communicative context in which cultulings occur, considering Setting, Participants, Ends (purposes), Act sequence, Key (tone), Instrumentalities, Norms, and Genre. This model reveals how identity is performed differently across social situations and how the same cultuling may carry different identity implications depending on the context of its use. These three models are not independent but mutually reinforcing. The Cultural Model identifies the culturally available repertoire of cultulings; the Emotioncy Model reveals which of these cultulings carry the greatest affective weight for individuals; and the SPEAKING Model shows how these cultulings are deployed in specific interactional contexts to perform identity. Together, they enable a multi-dimensional analysis that moves from identifying individual cultulings to understanding their cultural grounding, affective investment, and contextual function. The amalgamation of these models, together with underlying environmental factors, can delineate people's specific behaviours and cultulings, ultimately culminating in euculturing, the reflective cultivation of healthier identity practices through linguistic awareness. Distinguishing cultuling from related constructs is essential for understanding its distinctive contribution. Cultural linguistics (Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2021; Sharifian, 2011) provides a general framework for understanding the language-culture nexus and explores how cultural schemas, categories, and metaphors are encoded in language. However, it does not offer a precisely defined unit of analysis for examining how cultural content is instantiated in individual linguistic expressions. In contrast, cultuling provides such a unit and incorporates specific analytical tools, the cultural, emotioncy, and SPEAKING models, that are not inherently part of cultural linguistics. Wierzbicka's (1997) culturally loaded words (e.g., *"shame"*) are semantically complex and culture-specific, but they function primarily as descriptors of states rather than as performances of identity. In contrast, a cultuling like *"losing face"* in East Asian contexts not only carries cultural meaning but also performs identity by positioning the speaker within a shame-oriented cultural framework (Benedict, 2005; Leung & Cohen, 2011). Unlike culturally loaded words, cultulings are not limited to single lexical items; they can include phrases, formulaic expressions, and even larger discursive structures. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) "conceptual metaphors" (e.g., *"argument is war"*) operate at a cognitive level and structure thought across many cultures, but they do not inherently involve identity performance. Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) "identity indexes" include any linguistic feature that signals social identity, but they do not require the feature to carry explicit cultural content; a particular pronunciation may index regional identity without carrying any cultural meaning beyond its phonetic features. Cultulings, by definition, carry cultural content that goes beyond mere indexicality. Cultural competence and cultural intelligence (CQ) refer to the ability to interact effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds. These constructs focus on individual skills and attributes for navigating cultural diversity. In contrast, cultuling is a feature of language itself, a linguistic unit that carries cultural information, rather than an individual attribute. Moreover, the construct of cultuling competence has been developed to measure individuals' ability to identify and appropriately respond to cultulings in different cultural contexts (Makiabadi et al., 2025). While stereotypes may also carry cultural content, they differ from cultulings in significant ways. Stereotypes are generalized, often reductionist beliefs about social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). A statement such as *"all politicians are corrupt"* expresses a stereotype. In contrast, a cultuling like *"Washington insider"* indexes political identity and carries cultural connotations of power and

privilege without necessarily being reductionist. Cultulings are broader linguistic expressions that may or may not involve stereotyping.

The relevance of cultulings to identity construction lies in their dual function as both reflections and performances of identity. Cultulings are not rare or specialized expressions; they are high-frequency linguistic markers that often operate below the level of conscious awareness. They are the expressions that people use repeatedly, often without reflection, and precisely because of their frequency and taken-for-grantedness, they can reveal deep-seated cultural patterns, including patterns that speakers themselves may not consciously recognize. For example, the frequent use of *"sorry"* in British English, even when no apology is required, functions as a cultuling that reveals cultural patterns of politeness, indirectness, and a desire to avoid social friction (Fairclough, 2013). In Persian culture, the frequent use of expressions invoking *"ghayrat"* (a complex concept encompassing honour, protectiveness, and moral integrity) reveals deeply embedded cultural values related to family honour and social reputation (Pishghadam, Derakhshan, et al., 2021). Similarly, the prevalence of swearing, cursing, or invoking divine punishment in everyday speech reveals cultural attitudes toward fate, morality, and social transgression. These high-frequency expressions function as cultulings that index collective identity orientations. The CIPM builds upon this foundation by providing a systematic procedure for analyzing how cultulings function as identity markers at multiple levels.

The empirical scope of cultuling analysis has been considerably extended through a growing body of research examining specific cultulings across diverse contexts. For instance, Pishghadam and Attaran (2013) examined the cultuling of swearing in Persian and English films, revealing that swearing in Persian reflects cultural patterns of distrust and the need to establish credibility through religious oaths, whereas English speakers tend to rely on direct profanity. Similarly, Pishghadam and Vahidnia (2016) investigated the cultuling of praying in Persian and English movies, finding that prayers are twice as frequent in Persian contexts, indicating a culture of gratitude and religious devotion embedded in everyday interactions. Other studies have explored more subtle cultulings. Pishghadam and Firooziyan Pour Esfahani (2017) examined the discourse functions of "*I don't know*" in Persian, identifying five primary functions: face-saving, avoiding contradiction, indirectness, expressing uncertainty, and avoiding commitment. Pishghadam et al. (2018) analyzed the cultuling of "*nāz*" (a complex term encompassing coquetry, pride, and affectation) in Persian, demonstrating its high frequency across various contexts, from proverbs to poetry, and interpreting it as a marker of collectivist culture where individuals seek recognition through indirect self-expression. Pishghadam, Firooziyan Pour Esfahani, et al. (2020) identified a cultuling of "*death-oriented thinking and cheerlessness*" in 673 natural contexts, revealing underlying cultural patterns of fatalism, melancholy, and avoidance of joy in Iranian society. In a comparative diachronic study, Pishghadam, Derakhshan, et al. (2020) traced the cultulings of patriarchy and matriarchy in Iranian cinema across two decades, finding a gradual cultural shift from patriarchal to matriarchal patterns. Pishghadam, Firooziyan Pour Esfahani, et al. (2021) compared shame-oriented versus guilt-oriented cultulings in Iranian culture, analysing 856 instances of shame-related expressions. They found that shame-oriented expressions significantly outnumbered guilt-oriented ones, confirming the collectivist and shame-based nature of Iranian culture. More recent research has extended cultuling analysis to educational and social contexts. Maghsoodi (2021) analyzed the cultuling of respect in Iranian culture, showing that respect expressions are used for purposes such as admiration, invitation, modesty, and flattery, reflecting collectivist and hierarchical cultural patterns. Pishghadam, Ebrahimi, et al. (2022) examined the cultuling of using English loanwords in everyday Persian conversations, revealing that Iranians deploy English terms to index social status, educational attainment, and cosmopolitan identity, often operating through patterns of indirectness and power distance. Jajarmi (2023) examined teacher concern cultulings, revealing cultural patterns of collectivism, honour-orientation, and long-term orientation in educational contexts. Ebrahimi and Mohammadi Malekabadi (2024) investigated the cultuling of female silence in Iranian culture, analyzing 480 linguistic instances and identifying cultural patterns of high power distance, collectivism, and male dominance. Ghadamyari and Jajarmi (2024) conducted a comparative analysis of "*stroking behaviour*" cultulings in Persian and English films, uncovering deeper cultural patterns of collectivism, indirectness, high context, and low trust in Persian culture. Pishghadam and Ebrahimi (2025) examined the cultuling of concern for others across four levels: apathy, sympathy, empathy, and metapathy, revealing a cultural

shift from collectivism toward individualism. Pishghadam and Ebrahimi (2026b) explored the cultuling of "*magnitude thinking*" in Iranian culture, analysing linguistic manifestations of scale, impact, complexity, holism, and precision across everyday discourse, poetry, and proverbs, revealing a cultural duality between rich analytical traditions and tendencies toward simplification and emotional reaction.

These empirical studies collectively demonstrate that cultuling analysis is not merely a theoretical construct but a robust, empirically grounded methodology for revealing deep-seated cultural patterns across diverse contexts. They also highlight the diagnostic potential of cultulings for identity research, as each cultuling indexes specific cultural values, power relations, and identity orientations. The CIPM systematizes these insights by providing a multi-level framework for analyzing how such cultulings function as identity markers, patterns, and cultural models.

4. The Cultuling-Based Identity Profiling Model (CIPM)

The CIPM is a diagnostic framework that examines cultural-linguistic markers to understand identity construction. Its contribution lies in specifying cultulings as the foundational units of identity analysis and in providing a replicable, procedurally transparent procedure for tracing how micro-level markers aggregate into meso-level patterns and macro-level cultural models. The CIPM is distinctive in four respects, each responding to a specific limitation in existing scholarship.

First, the CIPM identifies cultulings as the fundamental units of identity analysis. While previous approaches have examined identity through narratives (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2020), discourse structures (Fairclough, 1995), or positioning acts (Davies & Harré, 1990), the CIPM is the model that specifies culturally-laden lexical units as the foundational building blocks of identity construction. This enables a level of granularity that discourse-level analyses cannot provide. For example, in American political discourse, the expression *"American dream"* functions as a cultuling that encapsulates narratives of opportunity, upward mobility, and national exceptionalism (Hochschild, 1995). The CIPM enables researchers to identify such expressions at the micro-level and trace their identity-marking function with precision. Second, the CIPM offers an integrated three-level analytical procedure that connects micro-level markers to meso-level patterns and macro-level cultural models. Previous approaches typically operate at one level: CDA focuses on macro-level ideology and power structures (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2025), narrative analysis examines meso-level storytelling and self-positioning (Bamberg, 2011; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2020), and interactional sociolinguistics attends to micro-level conversational features (Gumperz, 1982; Tannen, 2005). None has integrated all three levels in a procedurally transparent manner. Third, the CIPM integrates affect and power as constitutive dimensions of identity construction. The CIPM incorporates emotional engagement, through emotioncy theory (Pishghadam, 2015), as a constitutive dimension, and treats power not as an optional social variable but as a cross-cutting dimension that shapes access to, and evaluation of, cultulings at all three levels. For example, the cultuling *"I can't breathe"*, used as a protest slogan following the deaths of Eric Garner and George Floyd, carries intense negative emotional valence and functions as a marker of resistance identity that directly challenges state power structures (Lebron, 2017). Fourth, the CIPM adopts an intervention-oriented design with explicit ethical safeguards. Unlike purely descriptive models, the CIPM includes a transformative component called euculturing, the reflective cultivation of identity practices through linguistic awareness, which enables individuals and communities to consciously modify their identity-construction practices. The CIPM addresses ethical concerns through four explicit principles: non-imposition, co-creation, empowerment, and transparency.

Beyond the established dimensions of identity, recent cognitive frameworks have introduced the concept of magnitude thinking, the capacity to assess the scale, impact, and complexity of situations relative to one's self-perception (Pishghadam, 2025). Jajarmi et al. (2025) have shown that magnitude thinking can help individuals reassess their identity perceptions, particularly in migration contexts where cultural adaptation requires recalibrating self-appraisal against new environmental scales. Pishghadam and Ebrahimi (2026a) have proposed Magnitude Psychology as a framework that distinguishes between individual-level (mag) and societal-level (MAG) magnitude across five dimensions: scale, impact, complexity, holism, and precision. This framework is directly relevant to identity construction, as individuals' ability to accurately gauge the magnitude of the challenges and

opportunities they face influences their self-assessment and identity negotiation. In migration contexts, magnitude thinking has been shown to help individuals reassess their perceptions and make more informed identity choices, as they calibrate their self-appraisal against the scale and complexity of new cultural environments (Pishghadam, 2025). This cognitive dimension can be operationalized through cultulings that reflect proportional versus distorted judgment, expressions of self-appraisal that either magnify or minimize challenges relative to one's capacities.

4.1. The Three Analytical Levels

The CIPM operates at three interconnected levels that collectively provide a comprehensive picture of identity construction (Table 1).

Table 1
The Three Analytical Levels of the CIPM

Level	Unit of Analysis	Analytical Focus	Example
Micro-Level	Individual Cultulings	Specific words, phrases, expressions	"American dream," "stakeholder value," "ghayrat," "God curse..."
Meso-Level	Meta-Cultulings	Clusters of interrelated cultulings	Exceptionalism, Responsible Capitalism, Honour-Based Identity
Macro-Level	Cultural Models	Deep cultural logic organizing identity	Individualism, Collectivism, Power Distance, Shame Orientation, Magnitude Orientation

A) Micro-Level (Individual Cultulings as Identity Markers): At the micro-level, individual cultulings, specific words, phrases, or expressions that carry cultural content, are identified and analyzed as discrete markers of identity. These cultulings are typically high-frequency expressions that may be used habitually and often reflect deep-seated cultural patterns. For example, in English-language political discourse, the use of terms like *"freedom," "democracy,"* or *"patriotism"* serves as a marker of national or ideological identity (Hart, 2020). The use of *"we"* and *"they"* distinctions marks in-group vs. out-group identity (Van Dijk, 1998). The use of technical jargon such as "EBITDA" or "synergy" signals professional or educational identity in corporate contexts (Hasanzadeh & Shakeebaee, 2023). In Persian discourse, the frequent invocation of *"ghayrat"* (honour/protectiveness) serves as a cultuling that marks gender identity, family identity, and social values. The communicative context is examined using Hymes' (1967) SPEAKING framework.

b) Meso-Level (Meta-Cultulings and Identity Patterns): At the meso-level, individual cultulings are clustered into meta-cultulings, groups of interrelated cultulings that share a deeper cultural connection. For example, in American political discourse, the meta-cultuling of *"exceptionalism"* encompasses references to freedom, democracy, pioneer spirit, and manifest destiny, all of which cluster together to construct a coherent national identity pattern (Hart, 2020; Hochschild, 1995). In corporate discourse, the meta-cultuling of *"responsible capitalism"* encompasses terms like *"stakeholder value," "sustainability,"* and *"ESG"* (Banerjee, 2008; Hasanzadeh & Shakeebaee, 2023). In Persian culture, a meta-cultuling of *"honour-based identity"* might encompass cultulings related to *"ghayrat,"* family reputation, and shame avoidance.

The role of negative emotions deserves explicit attention. While positive emotional engagement strengthens identity investment, negative emotions such as fear of exclusion, shame, or anger at marginalization can lead individuals to either suppress certain cultulings (accommodative identity) or intensify them as markers of resistance (resistance identity). For instance, in social movements, slogans like *"No justice, no peace"* often emerge from anger at systemic injustice (Bonilla & Rosa, 2015; Lebron, 2017).

c) Macro-Level (Cultural Models and Identity Orientations): At the macro-level, meta-cultulings are examined as manifestations of cultural models, the deep cultural logic organizing identity construction. Examples include individualism vs. collectivism (Triandis, 2018), high vs. low power distance (Hofstede, 2001), and honour vs. dignity cultures (Leung & Cohen, 2011). Cultural models are not deterministic; individuals may employ cultulings to challenge dominant models. For example, in British parliamentary discourse, the cultural model of *"civility"* organizes meta-cultulings of politeness, indirect criticism, and procedural language into a coherent identity orientation (Fairclough, 2013). In Persian

culture, the cultural model of *"shame-orientation"* organizes meta-cultulings related to face-saving, reputation management, and honour, shaping how individuals construct their identities in relation to social evaluation. Additionally, the emerging framework of Magnitude thinking suggests that cultural models may also include a "magnitude orientation", the extent to which a culture encourages proportional versus distorted judgment in self-assessment and decision-making (Pishghadam, 2025).

Power is not a separate cultural model but a cross-cutting dimension that shapes access to, and evaluation of cultulings at all three levels. As Foucault (1982) and subsequent scholars have argued, power relations operate through discourse to categorise individuals, attach them to particular identities, and impose truth-regimes that they must recognise (Pishghadam, Golzar, et al., 2022). Power asymmetries determine which cultulings are stigmatized or valorized, who has the authority to define what counts as a *"respectful"* or *"derogatory"* cultuling, and how identity performances are received by different audiences.

Figure 1

Cultuling-Based Identity Profiling Model (CIPM)

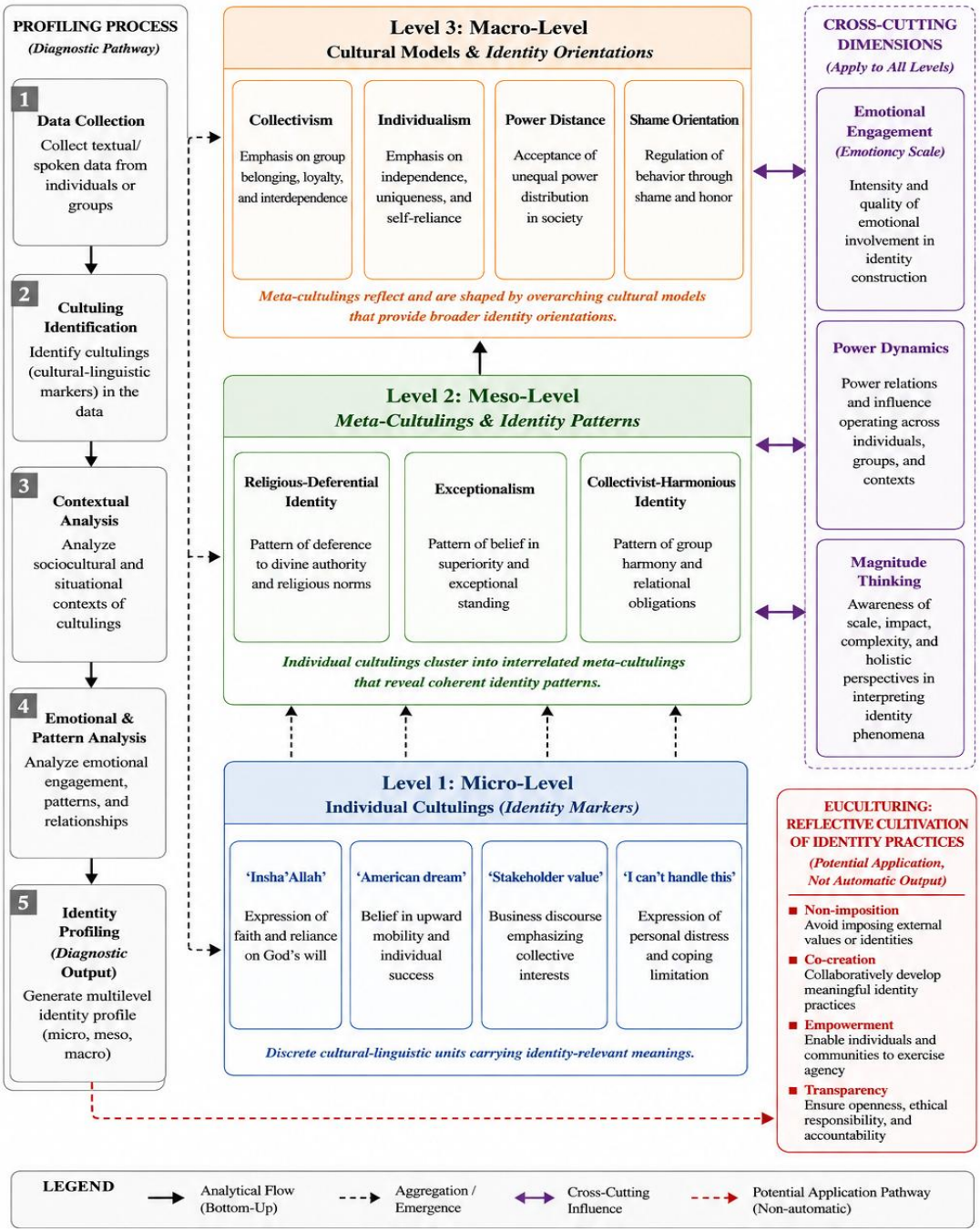

Figure 1 presents the Cultuling-Based Identity Profiling Model (CIPM), a three-level diagnostic framework. At the Micro-Level, individual cultulings (e.g., "*Insha'Allah*," "*American dream*") serve as discrete identity markers. These cluster at the Meso-Level into meta-cultulings, coherent identity patterns such as Religious-Deferential Identity or Solution-Oriented Professional Identity. At the Macro-Level, these patterns reflect broader cultural models (Collectivism, Individualism, Power Distance, Shame Orientation). Three cross-cutting dimensions, Emotional Engagement (Pishghadam, 2015), Power Dynamics (Foucault, 1982; Bourdieu, 1991), and Magnitude Thinking (Pishghadam, 2025), operate across all levels. To illustrate, consider the following exchange between two colleagues in a multinational workplace. This example follows the diagnostic pathway shown in Figure 1, using the identity dimension indicators from Table A1 (Appendix A1).

Ali (Iranian): "I've been thinking about our project timeline. Honestly, I'm not sure we can meet the deadline with the current resources."
Sarah (American): "I appreciate your honesty, but we need to find a solution. Let's brainstorm some options."
Ali: "Insha'Allah, things will work out. But we should probably talk to the manager about extending the deadline."
Sarah: "That's one option. But I'd rather focus on what we can control. What if we redistribute the tasks?"
Ali: "That could work, but I don't want to overburden the team. You know how it is—everyone is already stretched thin."
Sarah: "I hear you. Let's make a list of priorities and see what we can shift."

At the micro-level, Ali's "*Insha'Allah*" marks Religious Identity, while Sarah's "*Let's brainstorm*" indexes Educational/Professional Identity. Ali's "*You know how it is*" and "*I don't want to overburden*" signal Collectivist Identity, whereas Sarah's directness reflects Individualist orientation. The SPEAKING framework (Hymes, 1967) contextualizes these choices: the setting is a workplace, the participants are colleagues of different cultural backgrounds, and the purposes range from deference to solution-seeking. At the meso-level, Ali's "*Insha'Allah*," "*we should probably*," and "*I don't want to*" cluster into a meta-cultuling of Religious-Deferential Identity, revealing indirect, harmony-seeking communication. Sarah's "*Let's brainstorm*," "*redistribute the tasks*," and "*make a list*" cluster into Solution-Oriented Professional Identity, revealing direct, proactive communication. At the macro-level, Ali's cultulings reflect a high-context, collectivist, shame-oriented cultural model (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 2018), while Sarah's reflect a low-context, individualist, guilt-oriented model. Power dynamics are evident: Ali's deferential language positions him as subordinate; Sarah's directive language positions her as authoritative. This example demonstrates how the CIPM systematically traces identity from individual linguistic choices to broader cultural orientations.

4.2. Identity Dimensions and Their Cultuling Markers

Identity construction manifests across multiple, intersecting dimensions. Drawing on established typologies in the literature (e.g., Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton, 2013; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), we identify the nineteen dimensions as particularly relevant for cultuling analysis. Table A1 (Appendix) provides an overview of these dimensions, their cultuling markers, diagnostic indicators, cultural examples, and intersecting dimensions. The column "Intersecting Dimensions" highlights the fact that a single cultuling often indexes multiple identity facets, for instance, the cultuling "*American dream*" simultaneously signals national identity (American exceptionalism), class identity (aspirational upward mobility), and generational identity (its resonance varies across age cohorts). During profiling, analysts should explicitly code for these intersections rather than assigning a cultuling to a single category, as identity is inherently multifaceted and context-sensitive.

The nineteen identity dimensions and their illustrative cultuling markers (Table A1) are derived from a synthesis of four complementary sources: (1) empirical cultuling studies that have identified specific expressions functioning as identity markers across diverse contexts (Ebrahimi & Mohammadi Malekabadi, 2024; Jajarmi, 2023; Pishghadam et al., 2018; Pishghadam et al., 2021; Pishghadam & Attaran, 2013; Pishghadam & Vahidinia, 2016); (2) established theoretical frameworks on identity that have proposed dimensions and indicators for analyzing identity construction (Bamberg, 2011; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton, 2013; Tajfel & Turner, 1986); (3) cultural dimensions frameworks that have

identified cross-cultural variation in value orientations and communication patterns (Hofstede, 2001; Leung & Cohen, 2011; Schwartz, 1994; Triandis, 2018); and (4) discourse analytic and sociolinguistic studies that have examined how specific linguistic features index social identities (Eckert, 2000; Fairclough, 2013; Gumperz, 1982; ; Hart, 2020; Van Dijk, 1998). The markers listed for each dimension are illustrative examples, not exhaustive inventories, and researchers are encouraged to identify additional markers and refine the typology according to their specific cultural and linguistic contexts. The column "Intersecting Dimensions" reflects the principle that identity is rarely unidimensional; a single cultuling may simultaneously index multiple identity facets.

The typology covers nineteen identity dimensions: National (e.g., "*American dream*," "*Blitz spirit*"), Religious (e.g., "*blessed*," "*inshallah*"), Gender (e.g., "*chairman*" vs. "*chairperson*"), Generational (e.g., "*groovy*" vs. "*slay*"), Educational (e.g., *Latin phrases in academic English*), Political (e.g., "*Democrat*," "*Tory*"), Regional/Local (e.g., "*y'all*," "*Geordie*"), Linguistic (e.g., *code-switching patterns*), Familial (e.g., "*family values*"), Occupational/Professional (e.g., *medical jargon*), Class (e.g., "*public school*" as a class marker), Positive (e.g., *honorifics*), Negative (e.g., *slurs*), Shame-Oriented (e.g., "*losing face*"), Collectivist (e.g., "*we*" vs. "*I*"), Individualist (e.g., "*I*" vs. "*we*"), Disability/Ability (e.g., "*neurodivergent*"), and Racial/Ethnic (e.g., "*Black Lives Matter*").

The emerging framework of Magnitude Thinking (Pishghadam, 2025) suggests an additional dimension, magnitude-based identity, which concerns how individuals assess the scale, impact, complexity, and context of situations they face in relation to their sense of self. This dimension captures the cognitive-linguistic calibration of proportional versus distorted judgment. For instance, expressions such as "*I can't handle this*" may reflect a magnitude distortion where an individual magnifies a challenge beyond their actual capacity, whereas "*This is manageable*" reflects a proportional assessment. In migration contexts, magnitude thinking has been shown to influence how individuals perceive their identity and make choices, as they calibrate their self-assessment against the scale and complexity of new cultural environments (Pishghadam & Ebrahimi, 2026a).

Crucially, magnitude thinking is operationalized through the same analytical units as all other identity dimensions in the CIPM: cultulings. Expressions such as "*I can't handle this*," "*This is too much for me*," or "*I've got this*" function as cultulings because they carry cultural information about how individuals assess challenges relative to their capacities. Just as cultulings such as "*Insha'Allah*" reveal religious identity and "American dream" reveals national identity, these expressions reveal magnitude-based identity by indicating whether an individual employs proportional or distorted judgment in self-assessment. At the micro-level, these cultulings are identified as discrete markers of magnitude-based identity. At the meso-level, they cluster into meta-cultulings of proportional versus distorted judgment, revealing patterns of how individuals calibrate their self-perception against challenges. At the macro-level, these patterns reflect broader cultural models of magnitude orientation, whether a culture encourages proportional or distorted judgment in self-assessment and decision-making (Pishghadam & Ebrahimi, 2026a). In this way, magnitude thinking is not an external addition to the CIPM but an integral identity dimension that is identified and analyzed through the same cultuling-based procedure applied to all other dimensions. The inclusion of this dimension enriches the CIPM by acknowledging that identity construction is not only shaped by cultural and social factors but also by cognitive assessments of magnitude and proportionality. This dimension can be operationalized through cultulings that reflect proportional versus distorted judgment, such as expressions of self-appraisal that either magnify or minimize challenges relative to one's capacities.

Each dimension in the typology serves a specific diagnostic function. The diagnostic indicators column provides researchers with observable linguistic and behavioural cues for identifying the presence and intensity of each identity dimension. For example, in the National dimension, the prominence and emotional resonance of national references indicate the strength of national identity; in the Shame-Oriented dimension, the frequency of face-saving expressions reveals the extent of shame-based cultural orientation. The cultural examples column offers concrete linguistic instantiations, making the abstract dimensions tangible for analysis. The intersecting dimensions column alerts researchers to the fact that identity is rarely unidimensional; for instance, a religious cultuling may also carry generational or political connotations, and failing to account for such intersections would result in reductive

profiling. The typology is not intended to be exhaustive; rather, it serves as a heuristic starting point for researchers applying the CIPM. Depending on the research context and the specific linguistic corpus under investigation, analysts may identify additional dimensions or refine existing ones. The key methodological principle is systematicity: cultulings should be coded consistently according to explicit criteria, and intersections should be documented to capture the complexity of identity construction. This approach ensures that the profiling process remains replicable and transparent, distinguishing the CIPM from more impressionistic interpretive frameworks.

Euculturing operates as a framework for reflective practice rather than a prescriptive intervention. The process begins with the diagnostic profiling of an individual's or community's cultuling use, which generates awareness of their identity patterns and orientations. This awareness creates a reflective space in which individuals can consciously evaluate their cultuling choices. The mechanism is metacognitive awareness: by reflecting on their cultuling use, individuals gain agency to select which identity markers to employ and which to modify. Euculturing does not prescribe specific identity outcomes; rather, it provides a structured process through which individuals or communities can examine their cultuling repertoires, identify patterns they wish to sustain or transform, and make informed choices about their identity practices. This process is guided by the four ethical principles outlined below: non-imposition, co-creation, empowerment, and transparency. As shown in Figure 1, euculturing is presented as a potential application of the diagnostic process

4.3. The Profiling Process

The CIPM proposes a profiling process that proceeds through five stages, moving from data collection to comprehensive identity diagnosis (Table 2). Each stage builds upon the previous one, providing an increasingly comprehensive understanding of identity construction.

- *Stage 1 (Data Collection):* Collect natural linguistic data (spoken conversations, written texts, social media, etc.) with ethical documentation of consent, privacy, and representation.
- *Stage 2 (Cultuling Identification):* Identify cultulings using the following criteria: (a) cultural salience, the expression refers to a culturally shared concept, figure, practice, or value (e.g., *"Founding Fathers"* in American English); (b) frequency threshold, the expression occurs with notable frequency in the corpus; and (c) identity-marking function, the expression, in context, indexes a social category, group affiliation, or value orientation (e.g., use of *"we"* in political speeches indexes in-group identity). A coding scheme is developed, and inter-rater reliability is established.
- *Stage 3 (Contextual Analysis):* Examine cultulings using Hymes' (1967) SPEAKING framework. Contextual interpretations should be triangulated with participant feedback where feasible.
- *Stage 4 (Emotional and Pattern Analysis):* Assess emotional engagement using the Emotioncy Scale (Pishghadam, 2015). Identify clusters of interrelated cultulings (meta-cultulings) through qualitative thematic analysis or computational clustering methods.
- *Stage 5 (Identity Profiling):* Identify cultural models that organize the meta-cultulings. Produce a comprehensive identity profile that acknowledges the provisional, context-bound nature of findings. The profile should also note intersecting identity dimensions and power dynamics.

Table 2
The Profiling Process of the CIPM

Stage	Procedure	Analytical Focus	Key Tools
1	Data Collection	Natural linguistic expressions	Ethnography, recording, corpus compilation
2	Cultuling Identification	Cultural-linguistic markers	Coding scheme, inter-rater reliability
3	Contextual Analysis	Communicative context	Hymes' (1967) SPEAKING framework
4	Emotional & Pattern Analysis	Emotions and meta-cultulings	Emotioncy Scale, thematic clustering
5	Identity Profiling	Cultural models	Pattern recognition, cultural model mapping

This typology serves as a practical heuristic for researchers applying the CIPM. By systematically coding cultulings according to these dimensions and their intersections, analysts can move beyond impressionistic interpretations and generate replicable identity profiles. The intersecting nature of these dimensions also cautions against reductive categorization; for example, the cultuling "*American dream*" simultaneously indexes national identity, class identity (aspirational mobility), and generational identity (its usage varies across age groups). Such intersections are not exceptions but the norm, and the profiling process should capture this complexity.

The CIPM positions euculturing, the reflective cultivation of identity practices through linguistic awareness, as a potential application of the diagnostic process (Pishghadam, 2013; Pishghadam, Ebrahimi, et al., 2020), as illustrated in Figure 1. The mechanism is metacognitive awareness: by reflecting on their cultuling use, individuals gain agency to choose which markers to employ. For example, a student who habitually uses "*I'm not a math person*" can, through guided reflection, recognize this as a self-limiting cultuling and choose to adopt "I'm still developing my math skills" instead (Dweck, 2006). Similarly, a speaker who frequently uses imprecations or derogatory language may, through guided reflection, become aware of how such cultulings construct a negative identity and choose to adopt more constructive alternatives. Crucially, euculturing raises significant ethical concerns that must be addressed proactively. We propose four ethical safeguards, which are also reflected in Figure 1. First, the Principle of Non-Imposition requires that practices expand the individual's or community's repertoire of cultulings, not eliminate or devalue heritage cultulings. Second, the Principle of Co-Creation requires that practices be developed in active collaboration with the communities they are intended to serve. Third, the Principle of Empowerment, Not Correction requires that euculturing be framed as a tool for empowerment, enhancing individuals' awareness and choice, rather than as a corrective treatment. Fourth, the Principle of Transparency and Evaluation requires that practitioners document goals, methods, and unintended consequences, and evaluate programmes empirically.

5. Concluding Remarks

The CIPM introduced in this article offers a replicable approach to understanding identity construction through cultural-linguistic markers. By integrating three analytical levels, micro, meso, and macro, and providing explicit operational criteria, the CIPM addresses a methodological gap that no previous framework has filled. Its distinctive contributions are fourfold: specifying cultulings as the foundational units of identity analysis; offering an integrated three-level procedure that connects micro, meso, and macro levels in a single replicable heuristic; integrating emotional engagement and power as constitutive dimensions of identity construction; and incorporating an application-oriented component (euculturing) with explicit ethical safeguards.

Compared to CDA, the CIPM offers a more granular focus on culturally-marked lexical units and a replicable procedure for moving from individual markers to cultural models. CDA typically operates at the macro-level of ideology and discourse structures, without specifying the micro-level units through which ideologies are enacted. Compared to positioning theory (Bamberg, 2011; Davies & Harré, 1990), the CIPM specifies the linguistic resources through which positioning is enacted. Positioning theory focuses on interactive positioning but does not provide tools for analyzing the specific lexical choices that enable positioning. Compared to investment theory (Norton, 2013), the CIPM identifies the concrete linguistic objects in which identity investment is encoded. Investment theory explains why individuals invest in identity practices, but does not specify how this investment is linguistically instantiated. A comprehensive framework must also account for the role of capital (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic), which shapes access to identity resources and influences the investments individuals make in their identity practices (Pishghadam, Golzar, et al., 2022). Compared to Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) sociocultural linguistic approach, the CIPM provides a replicable procedure for tracing the emergence of identity across three levels, rather than leaving the analytical process primarily to the researcher's interpretive skill.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the CIPM focuses on the linguistic dimension; it does not capture visual, behavioural, or material aspects of identity (Jewitt, 2014; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Future research should integrate multimodal approaches (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2020;

Wodak & Meyer, 2025). Second, the model requires expertise in cultural-linguistic analysis and local cultural knowledge; tools and training programs are needed to enhance accessibility. The Cultuling Competence Test (Makiabadi et al., 2025) represents a step in this direction. Third, rigorous empirical studies, especially longitudinal and experimental, are needed to evaluate euculturing practices, including potential unintended consequences such as resistance or identity confusion. Fourth, while social media data are included in the data collection stage, the analysis of multimodality, ephemeral digital genres, and the rapid evolution of online cultulings presents additional challenges. Future adaptations may incorporate computational tools (e.g., natural language processing, sentiment analysis) with appropriate ethical safeguards (Baker, 2023; Biber, 2011). However, computational approaches introduce additional ethical concerns, including algorithmic bias, data privacy, and the risk of decontextualized interpretation, that must be addressed through rigorous validation, transparency, and human-in-the-loop oversight.

The integration of Magnitude thinking and Magnitude Psychology into the CIPM framework opens new avenues for future research. The diagnostic tools proposed by Pishghadam and Ebrahimi (2026a) for identifying magnitude distortions in judgment could be applied to the analysis of cultulings, revealing how linguistic expressions reflect proportional versus distorted self-assessment across different cultural contexts. In migration contexts, the intersection of magnitude thinking, identity, and language has already shown promise in helping individuals reassess their perceptions and make more informed choices (Pishghadam, 2025). Extending this line of inquiry to cultuling analysis could provide valuable insights into how individuals construct their identities through linguistic markers of scale, impact, and complexity. Based on these considerations, future research should develop validated instruments for each component of the CIPM, conduct longitudinal studies of cultuling change across the lifespan, test cross-cultural applicability through comparative case studies, examine the role of power and inequality in cultuling access, develop accessible training programs for researchers and practitioners, and explore computational adaptations for digital discourse analysis with appropriate ethical safeguards. Additionally, investigating the alignment between individual, social, political, and psychometric identity definitions within a society could reveal how mismatches contribute to identity conflicts and social tensions (Jajarmi et al., 2025).

The practical implications of the CIPM span education, intercultural communication, and policy. For researchers, the model provides a replicable heuristic for analyzing identity in any linguistic corpus, enabling cross-study comparisons and cumulative knowledge building. For educators, the CIPM offers a framework for designing culturally responsive pedagogy that raises learners' awareness of cultulings and their identity implications. The Cultuling Competence Test (Makiabadi et al., 2025), which measures individuals' ability to identify and respond to cultulings across different cultural contexts, can be used within this framework to assess learners' awareness and to evaluate the effectiveness of pedagogical interventions. For professionals in international business and diplomacy, the CIPM provides a diagnostic tool for identifying cultural misunderstandings rooted in different cultuling preferences. For policymakers, the CIPM offers a heuristic for analyzing public discourse, identifying identity-related tensions, and designing culturally responsive interventions. Across all these domains, the CIPM positions cultuling analysis not only as a descriptive tool but as a resource for informed, ethical practice and transformative change. In sum, the CIPM provides a distinctive and replicable heuristic for researchers, educators, and policymakers by offering an integrated, multi-level framework for tracing the linguistic vehicles through which identity is constructed, negotiated, and potentially transformed. The model's emphasis on reflective practice with strong ethical safeguards positions it as a tool not only for analysis but also for empowerment. While the model focuses on the linguistic dimension and requires further empirical validation across cultures, its multi-level approach opens new avenues for understanding the intricate relationship between language, culture, and identity. We invite scholars to test the propositions across diverse contexts and to refine the model through collaborative, community-engaged, and cross-cultural research.

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Ethics Declaration

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Appendix

Table A1

Identity Dimensions, Cultuling Markers, and Intersections

Identity Dimension	Cultuling Markers	Diagnostic Indicators	Cultural Examples	Intersecting Dimensions
1. National	Literary quotes, historical figures, and patriotic terms	Prominence and emotional resonance of national references	American: "founding fathers," "American dream"; British: "Blitz spirit"; Australian: "ANZAC spirit"	Religious, Generational, Class
2. Religious	Sacred texts, religious figures, and devotional language	Frequency and type of religious referents	Christian: "blessed," "amen"; Islamic: "inshallah," "peace be upon him"; Jewish: "Shabbat shalom"	National, Generational, Gender
3. Gender	Gendered address, role expressions	Use of gender-specific forms; reinforcement or challenge of gender norms	English: "chairman" vs. "chairperson"; "fireman" vs. "firefighter"; "guys" as a generic term	Religious, Class, Positive/ Negative
4. Generational	Traditional proverbs vs. slang; age-marked expressions	Distribution across age groups; attitudes toward tradition	Boomer: "groovy," "peace out"; Gen X: "whatever"; Gen Z: "slay," "no cap," "bet"	National, Educational, Class
5. Educational	Foreign terms, technical jargon	Use of specialized vocabulary; engagement with global knowledge	English loanwords in non-English contexts; Latin phrases in academic English ("et cetera," "i.e.")	Class, National, Generational
6. Political	References to parties, ideologies, and politicians	Frequency of political references; partisan/oppositional tone	American: "Democrat," "Republican," "the resistance"; British: "Tory," "Labour"	National, Generational, Class
7. Regional/Local	Local terms, dialects, and place references	Use of vernacular vocabulary; reference to local identity	American South: "y'all," "bless your heart"; British: "Geordie," "Scouse"	National, Generational, Class
8. Linguistic	Use of foreign languages, code-switching	Frequency of non-native vocabulary; code-switching patterns	English loanwords, "Spanglish," "Franglais," and code-switching	Educational, Class, National
9. Familial	References to family roles, family values	Frequency of family references; tone of respect/intimacy	"family values," "blood is thicker than water," "honour your father and mother"	Religious, Generational, Class
10. Occupational/ Professional	Job titles, bureaucratic terms, specialized jargon	Use of professional terminology; hierarchical language	Medical: "stat," "code blue"; Legal: "objection," "sustained"; Corporate: "CEO," "synergy"	Class, Educational, Positive
11. Class	Status markers, wealth references	Socioeconomic indexing through vocabulary	British: "public school" (elite), "estate" (class signifier); American: "the Hamptons," "country club"	Educational, National, Gender

12. 1Positive	Respect, praise, and appreciation	Use of honorifics; affirmative language	English: "Sir," "Ma'am," "Dr."; Japanese "-san," "-sama"; American "folks," "y'all"	All dimensions
113. Negative	Derogation, insults, self-deprecation	Presence of devaluing language; critical or dismissive tone	Slurs, dismissive terms ("amateur," "unprofessional"); microaggressions	All dimensions
4. Shame-Oriented	Face-saving, reputation language	References to honour, shame, and social evaluation	East Asian: "losing face"; Mediterranean: "honour"; British: "keeping up appearances"	National, Religious, Gender
15. Collectivist	"We" vs. "I"; indirectness	Pronoun preference; indirect communication patterns	East Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American; use of "we" in corporate contexts	National, Religious, Generational
16. Individualist	"I" vs. "We"; directness	Pronoun preference; direct communication	North American, Western European; use of "I" in personal statements	National, Educational, Generational
17. Disability/Ability	References to disability, empowering terms	Frequency of references; empowering/exclusionary language	"differently abled," "neurodivergent," "accessible," "disability rights"	Class, Educational, Positive/ Negative
18. Racial/Ethnic	References to racial groups, lived experiences	Frequency of racial/ethnic references; inclusion/exclusion language	"Black Lives Matter," "Latinx," "Asian American," "White privilege"	Political, Class, Gender
19. Magnitude-Based Identity	References to scale, impact, complexity, and context in decision-making; expressions of proportional vs. distorted self-assessment	Use of proportional vs. distorted judgment language; awareness of magnitude in self-assessment; calibration of challenge to capacity	"I can't handle this" (magnitude distortion), "This is manageable" (proportional judgment), "It's too much for me" (magnification), "I've got this" (proportional assessment); migrant self-appraisal language	Educational, Class, Linguistic, National