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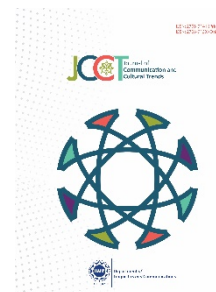
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Shift or Maintenance: Effects of Gender on Language Use among Transplanted Khowar Speakers in Karachi, Pakistan

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Abstract

Pakistan is a multiethnic country with different cultures and languages. There are approximately 74 languages spoken in the country (Siddiqui, 2019), year). However, different communities tend to migrate from their hometowns or rural areas to cities due to geographical, social, and economic mobility. In cities, these communities tend to adopt a new identity, culture, and language to sustain themselves. Karachi is the provincial capital and a hub of various speech communities facing various issues. The current study focused on an inter-provincial migrated Khowar community and their language usage at home, neighborhood, educational institutions, and workplace domains in Karachi. It investigated their patterns of language use with a specific focus on male and female Khowar speakers who have different roles and exposures in the society. A qualitative case study was undertaken using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The data for linguistic choices was taken from 20 young male and female Khowar speakers enrolled in a public sector university through semi-structured interviews. The interviews were then transcribed and underwent thematic analysis. The findings revealed differences in patterns of language use across gender. Female Khowar speakers preserve their language in their homes, neighborhoods, and educational institutions. While, the male speakers shift to Urdu and English in educational and social domains. However, language practices for both male and female speakers change within the workplace domain since Urdu is used as a common lingua franca for wider communication. Although, the patterns of language use have begun to change; still, the male and female Khowar speakers maintain a strong ethnolinguistic identity and affiliation with their community.

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Government, community members, and policymakers must be made aware of shifting language use among Khowar and other ethnic communities.

Keyword: gender, Khowar, Karachi, language shift, language maintenance, language use

Introduction

Pakistan is a multicultural country with approximately 74 spoken languages.. Out of these 74 languages, only 66 are indigenous, while 8 are non-indigenous (Siddiqui, 2019). The indigenous communities reside in different geographical parts of the country (Jabeen, 2020; Eberhard et al., 2020). These speech communities have their own unique identity, traditions, language, and customs. However, Urdu is used as the lingua franca among different communities in Pakistan (Ali, 2015).

According to the official language policy of Pakistan as enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan of 1973 and education policies, Urdu is the national language, while English is to be used for official purposes (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017). Besides, Urdu is projected as the language of the Muslim nation among Pakistanis (Shamim, 2008; Mahboob, 2002). English is the language of power elite, and an identity marker of being educated in society (Abbas & Biden, 2022; Siddiqui, 2016). Every province has its own language policy. For instance, Sindh has declared Sindhi as the official language as per the provincial language policy and it is followed in public schools, however, private schools do not follow it (Siddiqui, 2016). While Urdu and English are institutionalized and are adopted as the medium of instruction and familiarity in mass media. Similarly, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa follows a multilingual model; where four languages are included in mainstream educational institutes located in seven districts. In Punjab, Urdu and English occupy an institutional status in the provincial language policy. Simultaneously, the Balochistan province has not assigned any importance to Balochi language (Abbas & Biden, 2022). Hence, provinces have recognized the status of dominant, official, and national languages, while no importance has been given to indigenous languages in Pakistan. Due to a lack of official recognition, marginalized status and less exposure to mainstream society's minority/regional languages in each province faces negative attitudes from dominant languages (Jabeen, 2020). Resultantly, these speakers acquire the dominant language in the province, lingua franca (Urdu) or global language (English) at the expense of their mother tongue.

Hence, the language policy and planning in Pakistan reflects power and marginalization through its explicit and implicit ideologies (Canese, 2018).

The marginalized linguistic and social position of indigenous languages in each district of the province resulted in mass migration from rural areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, southern Punjab, and rural Sindh to developed towns and cities, such as Peshawar, Lahore, and Karachi. (Kiani et al., 2019). This migration took place in search of better economic, business, and educational opportunities (Mahmud et al., 2010). Due to the large influx of population from different provinces, Sindh has become the most urbanized province with 68% of the population living in the three big cities Karachi, Hyderabad, and Sukkur (Rana, 2017). Hence, migration from homeland to Karachi city and within Sindh from underdeveloped areas to cities (Karachi, Jamshoro & Sukkur) has affected the demography and linguistic scenario in cities (Hasan, 2016).

Pakistan is a patriarchal society where men are authoritative figures and are supposed to look after the economic affairs of the family, while women occupy a subordinate position by acting as a manager of the household affairs (Ali et al., 2011). Males are exposed to more economic, vocational, and educational opportunities as compared to females, although women make up nearly 48.8% of the total population in Pakistan (Rana, 2017). Resultantly, men have more educational and job opportunities as compared to women (Gallup, 2022). According to Gallup (2022), equal opportunities are provided to males and females. Approximately, 40% believe that women have fewer opportunities, while 29% believe that women have the same opportunities as men. Therefore, when women have fewer opportunities to work and socialize outside the home domain, this would affect their choice of language as well.

When communities migrate to cities they adopt the majority language in the educational and workplace domains (Abbasi & Aftab, 2019). In the case of Karachi, Urdu, English, and Sindhi language enjoy social, economic, and educational power (Abbasi & Aftab, 2019; Ali, 2015; Haider et al., 2021). Canese (2018) and Cushing (2021) explained that education centers in cities are the centers for the promotion of ideological language beliefs, therefore, the indigenous communities are adopting a new language, that is, Urdu, for wider communication. Therefore, the current study focused on the migration of the Khowar community to Karachi city which is a multiethnic and multilingual city. The city provides many social,

economic, and educational opportunities. This study focused on the language choices of male and female Khowar community speakers residing in different areas of Karachi.

Khowar Community in Karachi

Khowar language, an Indo-Aryan language, is the majority language spoken in Chitral (Khyber Pakhtun Khwa). Almost 85% of the population uses Khowar or Chitrali language (Veesrio, 2021). It is also spoken in Gilgit Baltistan, Swat (KPK), Karachi (Sindh), and other areas of the country (Veesrio, 2021). Khowar speakers migrate from their hometowns in Chitral, Gilgit, and Swat to different cities for economic, social mobility, and educational reasons. Some of the community members shifted to Karachi for better economic and educational opportunities. On the one hand, males play an active role in society by engaging themselves in business, entrepreneurship, and educational opportunities. Whereas, females tend to have restricted access and are limited to the neighborhood and family gatherings and few of them get a chance for primary, secondary, and university education (Shah, 2015).

As per Census-2017 data, there are 7.02% speakers of ‘other languages’ in Karachi besides the nine languages counted in the Census-2017 (Rahman, 2021). Khowar community speakers are also included in this 7.02% population. They live in different parts of the city, especially in the district east which is a linguistically diverse district in Karachi (see Census-2017. PBS, 2021). The current study focused on male and female Khowar speakers; a majority linguistic community of Chitral that migrated to Karachi.

Research Gap

Linguistic communities migrating to cities have started acquiring the dominant language (Ali, 2015). The young generation is learning the dominant language, that is, Urdu, which is used as a lingua franca while residing in cities (Kiani et al., 2019). Previous studies conducted within indigenous communities have already shown these trends. Language and identity shifts are more frequent among the younger generation (Ali et al., 2021; Abbasi & Aftab, 2019). The current research focused to determine the differences between the language use of young male and female transplanted Khowar speakers in Karachi as previous studies focused on youth without comparing gender differences in the use of specific languages

(Abbasi et al., 2020). Moreover, the social position and role of male and female Khowar speakers in the society can affect their choice of dominant language being used keeping in mind the patriarchal society of Pakistan. The exposure of female speakers to domains outside the home can be an important factor that affects the choice of language of a community that has transplanted from their traditional home base to Karachi.

Objectives

The objectives of the current study are as follows:

1. To identify the dominant patterns of language use of young Khowar speakers in their homes, neighborhoods, and educational, social, and workplace domains in Karachi.
2. To explore the differences in the patterns of language use among male and female speakers of Khowar language in different domains in Karachi.

Research Questions

The research questions of the current study are as follows:

1. What are the dominant patterns of language use of young Khowar speakers in their homes, neighborhoods, and educational, social, and workplace domains in Karachi?
2. What are the differences in the patterns of language use among male and female speakers of Khowar language in different domains in Karachi?

Literature Review

Indigenous communities are shifting to new languages after migrating to cities (Kiani et al., 2019) since they are exposed to English and Urdu and the dominant language in the province. In such a scenario, the mother tongue of indigenous speakers is confronted with endangerment from Urdu, English, and the provincial dominant language, and the linguistic boundaries and cultural identities are redefined (Ali, 2015). Hence, cities with multilingual communities and indigenous speakers are facing language shifts due to the influence of lingua franca, a global language and language within a city/town. Different indigenous community members face the same scenario in Karachi where Sindhi, Urdu, and English languages are a

constant threat to indigenous languages, such as the Khowar language (Abbasi & Aftab, 2019).

Previous studies conducted on indigenous communities in capital cities of Pakistan reported the language practices and cultural identity shift, especially among the younger generation. Ali et al. (2021) focused on the Hindko community in urbanized Peshawar using a quantitative approach. Two groups of participants were part of the study, aged from 16 to 24 and 25 to 40. The findings reported that the younger group aged 16 to 24 started shifting from Hindko to Lingua Franca Urdu due to a lack of linguistic mobilization among community members. The patterns of language use showed that Urdu is the dominant language even in the home domain being used with parents, siblings, neighbors, and friends as compared to the mother tongue and Pashtu (the dominant language in the capital city). Additionally, the speakers tend to use Urdu in most domains, such as market, school, and official conversations, while English is used in education and official letters. However, the second group aged 25 to 40 used Hindko in the home domain with siblings and parents and shifted to Urdu and English in other domains. Despite being the second largest spoken language, Hindko was declining in use in the capital city of Peshawar. The current study focused on the same age group participants, that is, both male and female Khowar language speakers in Karachi.

Similarly, Kiani et al. (2019) focused on two communities namely Hindko and Kashmiri who had migrated from rural areas to the capital city Muzaffarabad. The data was collected using questionnaires and interviews were taken from ten families. The findings showed that Urdu is the preferred language in different domains like market and social gatherings. Moreover, Urdu is also used for communication in text messages, social media, and the workplace. Hence, the younger generation was shifting to the dominant language, while the older generation was maintaining their first language. The younger generation was keen to acquire Urdu since it is used as a lingua franca in Pakistan and offers more social and economic opportunities than Hindko. As a result of these perceptions and the economic power of the Urdu language, Hindko community speakers do not want their children to learn their mother tongue (Hindko)

Abbasi and Aftab (2019) conducted a study on young Dhatki speakers in Karachi. The data was collected using a sociolinguistic profile and through semi-structured interviews with 30 participants. The study explored

the linguistic choices, reasons, and status of the Dhatki language in multilingual settings. The findings showed that the young Dhatki speakers were acquiring Sindhi, Urdu, and English for different academic and social needs at the expense of their mother tongue. It was reported that 50% use Dhatki, 45% use Sindhi, 4% use Urdu, and 1% use English in their home domains. The current study showed that indigenous languages face threats from the national Lingua Franca Urdu, the provincial capital language, Sindhi, and the educational language, English. Similarly, Jhatial and Khan (2021) focused on young Dhatki and Marwari-speaking community members in the city of Hyderabad. The data was collected from 20 participants from educational institutes (10 from Dhatki and 10 from Marwari) using semi-structured interviews. The results showed that Dhatki and Marwari languages were restricted to their home domains only and were not used in educational settings. A similar perspective was obtained from Gujarati and Memoni speakers who were keen to use their mother tongue in the home domain but preferred Urdu and English in other domains (Ali, 2017; Abbasi & Zaki, 2019).

In the same manner, Abbasi et al. (2020) investigated the patterns of language use of young Sindhi speakers using Fishman's domain model (1971). The data was collected from 30 male and female Sindhi speakers through a sociolinguistic profile. The findings reported that 48% of young Sindhi speakers were using 'the other tongue' (Urdu 40% and English 8%) in the home domain. The study reported that young speakers were shifting to the majority language. Since Urdu is the dominating majority language in the current context, most of the speakers were shifting to Urdu in most of the domains, i.e., 84% used it in the neighborhood; 92% used it in social domains and 96% used it in religious domains. Similarly, Urdu is spoken with shopkeepers, colleagues, and friends in the educational sector. Additionally, Urdu is the dominant language for different topics with different interlocutors.

Ali (2015) explored the linguistic journey of four indigenous communities in the multilingual city of Karachi. The study utilized a sociolinguistic profile and semi-structured interviews with 40 participants to determine the patterns of language use of Balti, Buruashki, Khowar, and Shina speakers in a public sector university. Ali (2015) examined the linguistic practices of four communities, however, the current study

investigated the dominant patterns of language use of young male and female Khowar speakers focusing on the differences across gender.

Studies showed that the younger generation in a multilingual city tends to adopt the dominant language of the province's capital cities because of educational, social, and economic reasons (Ali, 2015; Jhatial & Khan, 2021, Kiani et al., 2019).

Methodology

The current study aimed to identify the linguistic and gender differences between young male and female Khowar speakers through an in-depth investigation. Therefore, the qualitative methodology was selected as it explores the problem in-depth (Creswell, 2015). The current study focused on multiple cases. Hence, a multiple-case study design was undertaken. Multiple case studies provided a comprehensive, detailed, and contrastive view of different participants (Duff, 2008). The objectives of the study were exploratory, therefore, the data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Consequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted which focused on finding detailed responses regarding language use. The semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis generating codes and themes from the raw data.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling as the study focused on Khowar speakers. Therefore, those studying in a public sector university were selected based on their accessibility, convenience, and voluntary participation. It was not easy to get access to many male and female Khowar speakers as they possessed similar skin complexion similar to Burushaki community members. Therefore, through snowball sampling other male and female Khowar speakers became part of the study with the help and support of initial participants who convinced Khowar speakers using their social network to be part of the study.

Before the beginning of this study, a formal consent form was signed by all the participants who were informed that the data is collected for research purposes and that their identity would not be disclosed. Purposive and snowball sampling enabled the researcher to collect data from ten male (10) and female (10) Khowar speakers. Since the participants started giving similar responses after 20 sample size, therefore no additional participants were made part of the study as the sample reached the saturation point (Saunders et al., 2017). A pilot study was conducted with two participants

to finalize the interview questions. The pilot study's questions during the interviews provided feedback on the interview protocol, questions, and ease of the participants during the interview.

Findings

Khovar Language Use Patterns

The first objective of the current study was to investigate the language used in the homes, neighborhoods, educational institutes, social events, and workplace domains of male and female Khovar speakers. Table 01 represents the use of the Khovar language among male and female speakers in different domains.

Table 1

Khovar Language Use

Domains and Language	Male	Female
Home (Khovar)	80%	100%
Home (Urdu)	20%	-
Neighborhood (Khovar)	100%	80%
Neighborhood (Urdu)	-	20%
Social Events (Khovar)	100%	90%
Social Events (Urdu)	-	10%
Education (Khovar)	-	-
Education (Bilingual)	-	80%
Education (Urdu)	90%	10%
Education (English)	10%	10%
Workplace (Khovar)	-	-
Workplace (Urdu)	100%	100%
Workplace (English)	-	-

Home Domain

All the female participants, 10 out of 10, narrated that they speak the Khovar language in their home domains. One of the female participants said, “we use it most often in our home; as we spent more time at home”. In comparison, 8 out of 10 male Khovar speakers said that they use the Khovar language in their home domains, while two shifted to Urdu. One of the eight male participants said that, “we use the Khovar language in our home domains”. Similarly, “Khovar is our most preferred language in the home settings”; said a male Khovar participant. Hence, both male and

female young Khowar speakers use their mother tongue in their home domains.

Neighborhood Domain

While narrating about the language used in the neighborhood, all 10 male participants agreed that they use the Urdu language most often. This can be summarized in the words of a male respondent who said, “because of the low social status of the Khowar language, Urdu is the preferred language in business dealings and market”. However, female participants had a contrastive view as 8 out of 10 reported that they tend to use “Khowar language in the neighborhood, especially with local shopkeepers in the community”. A female participant said, “we live in small communities and colonies; therefore we interact using our mother tongue”. Another female participant said, “we have shopkeepers in our colonies; the owners of these shops are mostly Khowar speakers, therefore we communicate in our mother tongue”.

Social Domain

Similarly, 9 out of 10 female participants reported that they use their mother tongue in social domains which include weddings and festivals in Karachi. A female participant said that, “weddings provide us a chance to interact with our elders, relatives, and cousins; we like to interact in the Khowar language”. Another female participant provided a similar reason and said “we love to interact about our social customs, practices, and values at weddings in our mother tongue”. “Wedding is a perfect time; to use your home language,” said a female Khowar speaker. However, a Khowar female speaker explained the reason that “females interact most often in Khowar language because of their daily practice, but the choice differs for a male; as they have to interact with other community members with or without the presence of his community member”. As compared to female Khowar speakers, all the 10 male speakers reported that, “they use Urdu in social events, especially in social gatherings and market place with or without Khowar speakers”. A male participant remarked that “Urdu is mostly used in social gatherings to entertain most of the people in a wedding and festival”.

Educational Domain

Besides Khowar, Urdu is the most preferred language in educational institutes. However, female Khowar speakers showed a positive attitude

towards their mother tongue. As 8 out of 10 female speakers use their mother tongue in the presence of Khowar or Brushaki interlocutors, while male Khowar speakers (10) use Urdu only. A female participant said, “although we try to use our mother tongue in the educational institute with community members or Brushaki speakers yet we have to switch to Urdu for wider communication”. Another participant remarked that, “Urdu has become the common medium of communication here; therefore within educational institutes we have to use Urdu and English” In the same manner, some of the female participants’ remarked that, “As English is the medium of instruction in universities and used for professional practice, therefore we switch to English in classes and during job interviews for internships and part-time employment”.

Workplace Domain

Similarly, Urdu is the most preferred language in workplace domains, as both males and females, 20 out of 20 reported that we use Urdu “because Urdu is the common lingua franca everyone understands and communicates for daily discourse”. Also, “communicating in Urdu makes business dealings easier”, said a male participant. While discussing female professionals in the field, one of the participants said that, “we have to use Urdu and English outside the home domains”. While, all male Khowar speakers said that, “Since the medium of communication for business dealings and official purpose is English; therefore we try to communicate in English besides Urdu”.

Choice of Language Depends on Interlocutor

Linguistic identity and patterns of language use depend not only on the language used in different domains, however, also on the interlocutor (Abbasi et al., 2020). A female Khowar speaker narrated that they use their mother tongue “every day in their home with their mother and siblings”. Also, a male respondent said that, “they use Khowar language with their parents, siblings, and relatives in Karachi for different purposes”. However, 02 male Khowar speakers who reported using Urdu in their home, “tend to be bilingual with parents”. As one of them reported that, “Urdu is frequently used for communication with siblings often, neighbors, friends, teachers, shopkeepers, and colleagues”

Table 2 shows the patterns of language used among men and women within their home domain for different topics of communication with their Khowar family members.

Table 2

Language Use for Different Topics within the Family

Topic	Male Khowar (Khowar Language)	Male Khowar (Bilingual)	Female Khowar (Khowar Language)	Female Khowar Language (Bilingual)
Family Discussion with (Father)	80%	20%	100%	-
Family Discussion (Mother)	80%	20%	100%	-
Family Discussion (Male Siblings)	80%	20%	100%	-
Family Discussion (Female Siblings)	80%	20%	100%	-

The analysis shows that female Khowar speakers speak the Khowar language in their home domain with their family members. While, 8 of the male speakers do the same as well except for the 02 male Khowar speakers (20%) who shift to Urdu as shown in Table 2.

Similarly, in the workplace and educational domains; “Urdu and English are used simultaneously with friends and colleagues”. All the participants, 20 out of 20 (male and female) reported that, “Urdu is the preferred language with colleagues at the workplace except when communicating with the same community member”. Also, one Khowar participant narrated that, “English is the second most preferred language with friends, classmates, and teachers”. Table 03 shows Urdu and the

English language used for different topics among male and female Khowar speakers in the educational domain as reported by the participants.

Table 3

Language Use for Different Topics in the Education Domain

Topics	Male Khowar		Female Khowar	
	Urdu	English	Urdu	English
Gossip	80%	20%	90%	10%
Academics	70%	30%	50%	50%
Health	80%	20%	60%	40%
Television	80%	20%	70%	30%
Social Media	60%	40%	70%	30%
Food	70%	30%	70%	30%
Traveling	80%	20%	80%	20%

The analysis of Table 3 shows that males tend to use Urdu (gossip, academic, health, television, food, and traveling) in order to discuss different topics of communication as compared to English, which is used for talking about social media (40%). While females had a similar perspective as they used Urdu more as compared to English. Overall, both males and females shift to Urdu and English in the education domain.

While communicating with the local shopkeepers, 8 out of 10 females said that, “Khowar is the preferred language with local shopkeepers in the area” as one of the participants said, “we feel a sense of association and relationship with the shopkeeper from our community”. While, 5 out of ten males explained that they use Urdu with the shopkeepers in the local community.

Similarly, 16 out of twenty (10 males and 6 females) narrated that, “Urdu is the dominant language in the market and shops outside the residential area”. The remaining four females shared that “they tend to be bilingual; ask their males to speak or children who can speak Urdu while interacting with the shopkeepers”. Table 4 shows the language used in domains within the neighborhood.

Table 4
Language Use in Neighborhood

Topics	Male Khowar		Female Khowar	
	Khowar	Urdu	Khowar	Urdu
Local Shopkeepers	50%	50%	80%	20%
Shopkeepers in market	-	100%	40%	60%
Shopkeepers in malls	-	100%	40%	60%

Discussion

The findings showed that males and females have different preferences for communicating in their mother tongue. Due to the social position of women they tend to maintain their mother tongue as they have reduced opportunities of using the ‘other tongue’. Women spend most of their time in the home domain which reduces their interaction with other interlocutors outside their home domains. Comparatively, male Khowar speakers have more opportunities to use and interact with non-Khowar speakers in society. Resultantly, the language choice patterns of men are changing to Urdu and English. However, when opportunities are provided to the females as in the case of those female Khowar speakers who are pursuing education in Higher Education institutes and working in low-wage jobs, are still preferring to maintain their mother tongue and look for opportunities where they can interact with bilingual speakers. While, men prefer to use Urdu in education and workplace with Khowar speakers as well. Hence, the social standing of women, that is, their marginalized role in society is enabling them to maintain their heritage language, while males are exposed to the dominant culture and are shifting to Urdu and English.

The findings were different from the previous studies focusing on the young generation. A study conducted by Kiani et al. (2019) reported that young Hindko and Kashmiri speakers are shifting towards Urdu in the majority of domains. In addition, the study of Ali et al. (2021) showed that the Hindko speakers aged 16 to 24 years are shifting towards Pashto which is the majority language spoken in Peshawar. In the same manner, Abbasi and Aftab (2019) reported that young Dhatki speakers in the city of Karachi are shifting to Sindhi, Urdu, and English in most domains. Similarly, Ali (2015) reported that the four indigenous communities’ mother tongue is gradually being replaced by Urdu. However, it does not seem to be the case for female Khowar speakers in the current study.

The findings of the above-cited literature seem to be true for male Khowar speakers since Khowar is being replaced by Urdu in the other three domains except for home. 04 male respondents narrated that they use the Khowar language in their homes. Similar findings were reported from Dhatki and Marwari young male and female speakers who were using their mother tongue in their home domain only. Ali (2017) and Abbasi and Zaki (2019), who explored male and female perspectives of the young generation, reported similar patterns of language use where the younger generation is keen to use the mother tongue in the home domain but shifts to Urdu and English outside the home. However, in the current study, only male Khowar speakers shifted in social settings and educational institutes, while the women were preserving the Khowar language.

In comparison to Abbasi et al. (2020), linguistic trends study among young Sindhi speakers explored that the Sindhis are shifting to Urdu at home, neighborhood, in social events, and in religious domains. However, the current study reported that both young male and female speakers are maintaining their mother tongue in their home domains. In the case of Sindhis where neighborhood domains are concerned, female Khowar speakers use their mother tongue, while male Khowar speakers used the Urdu language in this study.

The current study put forward a new phenomenon that female community speakers, with low social mobility and less exposure to interact outside the home domains, tend to preserve their historical language as compared to male speakers with more exposure to society daily. This is because women Khowar speakers frequently use their mother tongue in different domains and with interlocutors for communication. In contrast, men accommodate and use the dominant language within society.

Conclusion

The current study attempted to determine the patterns of dominant language use and the differences in language use between male and female Khowar speakers who migrated to Karachi. Overall, the findings showed that female speakers tend to maintain Khowar language in different domains, such as home (10 out of 10), neighborhood (8 out of 10), social events (9 out of 10), and even in the educational domain (8 out of 10). While, male speakers differ in their choices as they reported to use mother tongue in their homes. Eight male speakers reported using it at home, while two

used the Urdu language even in their homes. While for other domains, Urdu remains the dominant language, especially in the neighborhood, social events, and educational institutes. Women tend to choose the Khowar language in most domains of language use. Comparatively, men prefer the Khowar language in the home domain and shift to Urdu within other domains. Therefore, it is concluded that male and female speakers show variation while maintaining their mother tongue in different domains. The reason is that as compared to men, women in this community tend to spend most of their time in their homes and have limited social interaction with others outside their homes.

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