



UMT Education Review (UER)

Volume 4 Issue 2, Fall 2021

ISSN(P): 2616-9738 ISSN(E): 2616-9746

Journal DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32350/uer>

Issue DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32350/uer.42>

Homepage: <https://journals.ugt.edu.pk/index.php/uer>

Article: **Impact of the Language Policy of English Medium Elite Schools of Gujrat, Pakistan on the Language Practices of their Students**


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Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32350/uer.42.03>

Article History: Received: September 7, 2021
Revised: December 22, 2021
Accepted: December 22, 2021
Available: December 31, 2021

Citation: Jamshaid, S., & Naqvi, S. (2021). Impact of the language policy of English medium Elite Schools of Gujrat, Pakistan on the language practices of their students. *UMT Education Review*, 4(2), 43–73.

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A publication of the
Department of Education, School of Social Sciences and Humanities,
University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan

Impact of the Language Policy of English Medium Elite Schools of Gujrat, Pakistan on the Language Practices of their Students

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Abstract

In Pakistan, people can often speak three languages (Urdu, English, and a regional language). The de jure policy of the country encourages vernacular languages, but the de facto policy encourages the use of English and Urdu. No attention is paid towards the vernacular languages, especially Punjabi. Elite schools serve as instruments for the promotion of English. For this reason, Urdu and Punjabi languages are ignored by these schools. Consequently, the young generation is no more interested in speaking these languages. Keeping in view this situation, the current research investigates how the national language policy is being interpreted in elite schools regarding the use and non-use of language(s) in educational settings. It also pays attention towards the effect of school policy on the linguistic choices of stakeholders. For this purpose, data was collected from the branches of two elite schools (Beacon House and Lahore Grammar Schools) operating in Gujrat. The study adopted a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) approach for data collection. For qualitative data collection an interview protocol was developed while the quantitative data was collected from (principals, teachers, students, and parents) through questionnaire. The responses to the questionnaire were analyzed descriptively through Statistical Package for Social Sciences, while a qualitative data analysis approach was applied for the analysis of the data collected from the interviews. The findings revealed that elite schools have their own policies. These schools have their own language policy and pay no heed to the government policy. This indicates that the language policy of elite schools plays a significant role in subtractive bilingualism. Due to the English only policy, the students are not interested in their mother and national languages. Furthermore, these languages serve as identity markers for

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students; however, in practice they feel ashamed of speaking these languages.

Keywords: elite schools, language planning and policy, learner's identity, school language

Introduction

Language is an important tool, an identity marker and a source of survival for every nation. Besides a national language there are different regional or vernacular languages in every country which are the part of its cultural heritage and a sign of identity of the people of that specific region. Like all other countries Pakistan has her own national language, that is, Urdu. In Pakistan various policies have been adopted since 1947 regarding the school and trade language.

Since the birth of Pakistan, English has been used as an official language of the state. It owes its background from the British Raj where the official language was English. After the independence it was stated in the article 251 that English will be the state language only for fifteen years and then Urdu will become the official language. Even after the 75 years of independence, English is the official/trade language of Pakistan and has become the covert language of Pakistan.

English language being the language of power and status has become the most dominant language in the country. In the Elite schools it is used as the only medium of instruction. Urdu and other vernacular languages are strictly restricted in the Elite schools. It is an alarming situation. Furthermore, the Elite schools do not follow the government language policy and have their own policy for education which is only English. Owing to excessive use of English language the national and regional languages are being ignored. The young generation does not like to speak the mother tongue, especially Punjabi. They feel ashamed in the use of their mother tongue or national language. The researchers have done a lot of work on the role of language planning in education and so on but no heed is paid to how these policies are interpreted and are followed that affect adversely the linguistic identities of the learners. So keeping in view this drawback the present research aims at finding out how these Elite schools interpret the government language policy for the use/nonuse of language(s).

The study also aims at investigating the effect of these language policies on the linguistic identities of the learners.

Literature Review

Pakistan is a multilingual country where educated and learned people mostly speak three languages *i.e.*, English, Urdu (the national language) and a regional vernacular (Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, etc.). Contrary to state's official policy, the de facto language policy prefers English and Urdu and ignores regional languages in education. Punjabi does not enjoy a good status among young generation and they feel ashamed of speaking this language. This is an alarming situation. According to Brenzingeretal., (2003) "A language becomes endangered when it is no more spoken by its speakers, or even if they use, they use it in such a way that it seems enormously reduced in number of communicative domains, and it stops passing on from one generation to another. It means that no new users of it are there *i.e.*, grownups or kids." (p.2)

Zaidi (2010) opines, "The people residing in the Punjab province believe that Punjabi is an "impolite" or "uncouth" language. Some of them hold that this is due to Punjabi accent that such impolite and offensive expressions are observed in this language, or because of the reason that Punjabi is the language used by the uneducated and the uncivilized or because there are unlimited swear expressions and double intenders in Punjabi" (p. 8).

Language Situation

Pakistan falls into the category of culturally plural society on the basis of many instances. In Pakistan there are at least 24 languages and even diverse dialects are spoken. In the Punjab two languages are mostly spoken, *i.e.*, Punjabi and Saraiki. Sindhi is spoken in rural Sindh. In posh and urban areas usually the mob speak Urdu in Sindh and the other language, that is, Gujrati is spoken among the small number of people. A large number of people speak Pashto language because it is language of the greater part of KPK. Despite having the smallest population Hindko is spoken in Hazara Division. The province Baluchistan is gifted with a variety of languages. The top most spoken is undoubtedly Balochi, whereas Pashto, Brahvi and

there are Saraiki and Punjabi languages as well (Haque, [1982](#)). Only 7.57 population of Pakistan is acquainted with Urdu as mother tongue.

In Pakistan a big number of strength perhaps is not governing big number or prominent languages. Despite having a great number of users in Pakistan, it looks strange that the languages spoken in the respective regions are minority languages. Both the languages, *i.e.*, Urdu and English almost govern communication and overpower the other regional languages. These two languages hold the high status and are considered to be specified for public and official use. These two high status languages have not only economic and cultural but also political influence and all regional languages are dictated by these two languages. Quite realistically these two languages are also spoken and used by press and media because of the fact that they are known to be the powerful and dominant languages. Both these languages are also used as MOI in education. Urdu and English are also taught as core courses in the syllabus. As a result, the regional languages are not given a proper status and are considered low in status. Regional languages are minimized to the community and homes.

Urdu as a national language is officially promoted and also the declared policy of the state. Urdu is given national identity in order to avoid any kind of regional dominance and separation. English continues to grow and flourish as the second official language of Pakistan despite the fact that official stance has not been pro-English. Rahman ([1996](#)) opines that this fact is the cause of stimulation of political analysts. The fact remains at the top that supporting Urdu is just at a superficial level and it has been a kind of duality in the policy which has drawn critics' attention to unfold and unveil a paradox. It says that the official policy of Pakistan is to promote Urdu as the national language, whereas the actual policy where the power is maintained is English. The people having power and status in Pakistan all speak and prefer English to show their supremacy and sovereignty. As a result, people belonging to high status circles of the society are fluent in English because of English medium schooling. This is coupled with so many other factors, that is, good fluency and command in English also provide them with good jobs in various fields. English is the language of not only the upper class but also of bureaucracy and non-governmental people.

Status of English in Pakistan

Before the national language replaced English it was given the status of the official language of Pakistan. The important and vital cause for this seems that the ruling elite of Pakistan are working on de-juror and not on the de-facto policy whereas efficiency and modernization are linked with the de- facto policy. Primarily, it was the Civil Service of Pakistan who fashioned themselves in the tradition of the British. Cohen (2002) argues that the officer corps of the armed forces was also Anglicized. According to him it was the British generation which overpowered the army until 1971 because English differentiated itself from the masses. The members belonging to the elite group had their own personal interest in it. Therefore, they inevitably earned an advantage over all those who had a privileged background. It was a type of cultural capital. On the other hand, it is elite schooling that runs parallel to it where the elite have spent a lot of money just to bring in the snob culture where nothing is taught in Urdu except Urdu as one of the subjects. It has given rise to the production of young people who have a direct come up with a concern showing protection and preservation of English at all levels. As a result, these young contenders are entering into the place of all those elites unknowingly. The parents of such students do not feel comfortable in English, even though they also have spent a lot in their children's education which has directly been the reason of seriously lessening the cultural capital of English. Above all, the people in general think of the current day realities which perhaps they might have been critical of at some other level but which presently they might think as having long lasting realities of life. To them all efforts may seem idealistic or doubtfully radical ones. It may very well be opined that for the last century and a half the people of this particular area of the world have reacted to the domination of English very lightly. As a result, there has been a serious increase in the candidates who are appearing for O and A Levels most recently. Also it is seen that the broadcast of the BBC and CNN has also increased and now there are more people of this area who watch both the channels quite regularly. There are also the incidents of the young people migrating at a rapid pace to European countries and they are all armed with English. The demand of English as a language has increased rapidly over the years.

Language Vitality in Pakistan

It has been noted that the small and less spoken languages are greatly and terribly affected by the people speaking dominant languages. In Pakistan the people belonging to a very mediocre background or having a little status make the preference in language choices as English, Urdu, and local languages. With the exception of two provinces, *i.e.*, in the KPK and Sindh, it is observed that Pashto and Sindhi are spoken informally and are known to be the identity markers. Unfortunately, there is somewhat a pervasive culture-shame about speaking Punjabi in the Punjab (Mansoor, [1993](#)). It was amazingly shocking to note that in all of the leading and elite English medium schools the author visited and observed that there were such policies as emphasizing and also to some extent discouraging students not to speak Punjabi. It is focused to the extent that the student who is found speaking Punjabi, he or she was first of all made fun of and quite painfully he was also named *Paindu* ‘rustic, village yokel’ that directly resulted in as having done some kind of serious offense. It is also observed that the educated parents belonging to the educated background also prefer speaking Urdu with their children even at homes and they also discourage their children from speaking Punjabi openly. Not only this it was also a disappointing experience to note that the children getting education from these English medium schools were reluctant to read books even in Urdu rather they found Urdu literature very boring. More pinching is the fact that they consider it a kind of pride that they lack competence in Urdu and also that they get low grades in this subject. The literature they study is mostly based on English books.

Theoretical Perspective

The predominant analytical attitude in the socio-anthropological study of Language Planning and Policy (LPP) was to scrutinize language practices in contrast with the policy documents. It was recommended by (Spolsky, [2004](#); Spolsky, [2007](#)) that practices themselves constitute policy. As Spolsky observes, ‘they [practices] formulate a policy to the amount that they are regular and probable, elaborating them is known to be the sociolinguistic study’ (Spolsky, [2007](#); Spolsky, [2004](#) & Spolsky, [2009](#)) gives forth a model in order to study practices that take into consideration the “explicit and observable effort by someone or some group named as

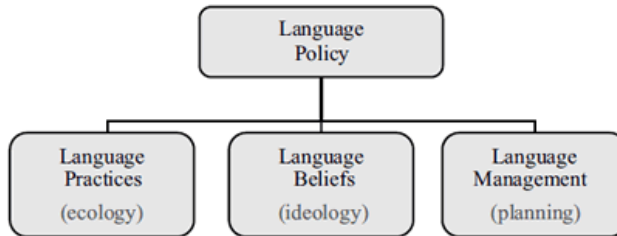
‘managers’” as well as the practices of individuals. As Spolsky observes, ‘language policy is threefold, i.e., practice, beliefs, and management’. His model draws on Fishman’s (1972) generalizations of the domain and proposes three interrelated but independently describable components of LPP: practice, beliefs (or ideology) and management. Spolsky, (2004); Spolsky, (2007); and Spolsky, (2009) informs us that there are two main underlying assumptions behind the model: A) policy is essentially a social phenomenon; B) language policy has three interrelated but independently described components: practices, beliefs and management.

Spolsky (2007) gives a key argument which states that a particular domain has its own policy and all of its features are controlled internally. It further states that all these domains are governed by others under the influence or control of external forces and are determined by his understanding and according to the domain of the language choices. In Spolsky’s (2007) view the strongest of the three components is the language practices because without this there is no available model of language to learn. Resultantly, we see that the obsession with the study of language practices takes primacy in recent LPP activities. Spolsky (2004) brings forth a wider and broader idea of language policy, the idea that combines all three components, that is, ideology, ecology and management. He maintains that a complex connection among all the mentioned constituents exists and in doing so he gives us a complete and comprehensive and more exhaustive understanding of the language policy and how it works. To conclude we may infer that all the language practices describe how languages are used actually. Ideologies are related with what people and specifically policy makers think about language and management about how language is set to operation.

The idea of language policy was further elaborated by (Schiffman, 2012). He distinguished language policy by drawing the difference between overt and covert policies. According to him overt policies are known as explicit, formalized, *de jure*. On the other hand he states that covert policies belong to language policies that are implicit, informal, indirect, unstated, *de facto*, grass-roots and hidden. He holds that covert kind of language policies is usually unnoticed.

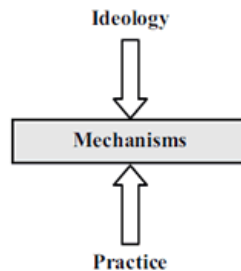
Figure 1

Language Policy According to Spolsky (2004)



It can be said that language policy requires to be taken in a wider prospect and it should not be limited to ideological, management and practice perspective. It should also be understood by focusing on devices that can change the policies. Here it is important to observe that policies can at times be overt and covert, some are implicit and others explicit. These tools are used to promulgate language behaviors according to particular agendas. It is believed that by adopting these agendas ideologies or language policies are formulated and also imposed. We can also understand that by adopting this mechanism, language policies are disseminated and conveyed to all the stakeholders.

Shohamy (2000) gives her arguments about mechanism of “test” that through the mechanism of “test” the ideologies can be practiced as well as they can be rejected. These tests can be figured out in which ideologies can be practiced specially in a very high stake tests where the students prepare the material given by their teachers in the class which directly influences both the teaching and learning.

Figure 2*Mechanisms of Ideology and Practice*

Mechanism

Rules and Regulations

Policy documents refer to different aspects for instance language laws, affirmation about officially declared language, and judgment about a standardized language. It is a common practice in most of the nations that they exercise their own standardize language in different places like media, institutions and public places. It is to be noted that in any country an individual must be adept in national language as well as official language. It has been observed that those declared policies are always designed by the law makers and the politicians are mostly left without implementation especially in case of official implement.

Language Education Policy

Mechanism refers to many aspects. First of all mechanism tells us that how a method in language behavior can be implemented in any institution. Language education policies are associated with the judgment dealing with the languages instructed and acknowledged as MOI. This mechanism also refers to the languages which are used to instruct a lot of individuals like immigrants or native learners. These language policies are designed by political law makers and are always considered as a forceful mechanism in educating others to achieve their purposes. Every individual must have certain goals to fulfill as to serve the immediate authorities. These language policies are assisted and governed by the definite national test that's why these education policies have a very limited conflict in it.

A nation that has a strong ideology can exercise these ideologies successfully by learning language policies. Today everyone wants to learn English and English is considered to be a strong weapon at international level. If a nation adopts English language in the policy it must provide the policy makers with all those materials and data which should be achievable by the participants. But most of the time it has been observed that there is a very minute bonding between the declared educational policies and the authentic achievements because people adopt these policies according to their yearnings, longings and fantasies. In this situation a little portion of people is able to achieve what they desire because for the most people their financial means are not up to their mark

It has been observed that such kinds of policies are usually introduced without any validation and authenticity. These policies are made by the government authorities, law makers, politicians and applied linguists. They design all these policies according to their own will. Teachers are totally excluded from this process of designing these language policies. They can only provide them with input related to their experience from real life so that educational aims can be successful.

Methodology

Research Statement

This research is an investigation of the different interpretations of the government language policy by the Elite schools and the effect of these interpretations on the linguistic identities of the learners.

Aims and Objectives

- 1) To investigate how the national language policy is interpreted by private schools with reference to the use/nonuse of language(s) within the educational settings
- 2) To find out the effect of school policy on the linguistic identity of the stakeholders including learners, parents and teachers as perceived by them

Research Questions

- 1) How is the official national language policy interpreted by private English medium schools with reference to the use/nonuse of language(s) within the educational settings?
- 2) What effect does the school policy have on the linguistic identity of the stakeholders including learners, parents and teachers as perceived by them?

In any research project methodology is considered to be the main part. Without a proper methodology a research cannot be completed. Different methods are used by different researchers according to the needs of their research. As the present study is a case study so a triangular approach means both qualitative and quantitative is applied for the data collection. The data are collected through interviews and questionnaire.

Research Approach

Creswell (2017) states that for the qualitative analysis the interviews prove to be the best method as they provide a deep analysis of the perceptions of the participants, while for getting a holistic over view of the problem questionnaires help a lot. Thus, keeping in view Creswell's position the present research has adopted this mixed method approach.

Research Design

As defined by Bryman (2004) case study can present the true picture of the practices and the phenomenon. Case study is the best approach for finding the interpretation of language policy and its effects on the linguistic identity of the learners.

Data Collection Tools and Procedure

The data were collected through interviews and questionnaire. The main purpose was to get the insight of the different participants' perceptions about one point. The interviews were recorded via cell phone and then transcribed after listening all the interviews one by one.

Interviews of Principals, Teachers, Parents and Students

The interview questions were designed according to the needs of the research. The purpose was to collect maximum information. Both direct and indirect questions were included. The basic purpose of all these questions was to get a clear cut picture. The Principal's and teacher's questions were same but the student's questions were different according to the need of their participation. Furthermore, the parent's questions were also different in nature but the main theme was the same. The questions were open ended questions to find out their view about the school language policy and their perception about the effect of that policy on the linguistic identity of the learners.

Population and Sampling

The data were collected from two Elite schools of Gujrat (Lahore Grammar School and Beacon House). Owing to time constraints both the principals of the schools, two English teachers, two students from 'O' level for interview and ten students to fill the questionnaire from both the schools

were selected for the study. The easily approachable two parents whose children were studying in these schools were also selected.

Coding

The participants were coded as:

- i) Principals = (P1 & P2)
- ii) Teachers = (T1 & T2)
- iii) Students = (S1 & S2)
- iv) Parents = (Par1 & Par2)

Significance of the Study

The study will pave a way for the language planning authorities to pay heed towards the important and crucial issues of indigenous languages. With the non-use of these languages, these will soon become extinct. The new researchers can work more in this perspective for the survival of the indigenous languages.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis of the Questionnaire

The results of the questionnaire were analyzed manually as only ten respondents five from each school were selected due to time constraints. After collecting the responses the data were analyzed through SPSS 0.6 (Statistical analysis tool). The frequencies for each statement were collected along with their descriptive analysis.

Table 1

Language Spoken at Home

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	4	40%
Punjabi	6	60%
English	0	0%
Total	10	100%

According to the table given in 1 most of the respondent speak Punjabi at home so Punjabi carries 60% percentage. Urdu gets the second place with 40% percentage and English scores 0% percentage.

Table 2*Language Spoken at School*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	10	100%
Total	10	100%

As per the table no 2, English gets the highest score, *i.e.*, 100%, while Urdu and Punjabi get 0% percentage as these are not allowed to be spoken at schools.

Table 3*Language Used for Interaction with Teachers/Principal*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	10	100%
Total	10	100%

Again in table 3, English gets the highest score, *i.e.*, 100%, while other two languages get 0% percentage.

Table 4*Language Policy of the School*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	10	100%
Total	10	100%

As per the policy of the school only English is allowed for communication and not Urdu or Punjabi, so English is again at the top with 100% percentage.

Table 5*Language Policy of the School*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	10	100%
Total	10	100%

According to the teaching policy of the school the mode of teaching is English, so again English seems dominant in the table 5 given above with 100% percentage.

Table 6*Language against the Religious Beliefs*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	0	0%
Total	10	100%

The table 6 shows that no language is against the religious beliefs.

Table 7*Language that is not a Part of our Society*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	10	100%
Total	10	100%

According to the response given in table given in 7, English is known as a foreign language with 100% percentage, while Urdu and Punjabi are the national and native languages.

Table 8*The Preferred Language of Parents*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	3	30%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	7	70%
Total	10	100%

As per the table no. 8 most of the parents prefer their children to speak English as the percentage is 70% and 30% parents are in the favor of Urdu while none of them let their children speak Punjabi.

Table 9*Language against Cultural Values*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	10	100%
Total	10	100%

Every language has its own cultural norms and English like Urdu and Punjabi has its own norms and culture that is different from the other two languages, so as per the responses shown in table 9 English is considered to be a language against our cultural values with 100% percentage.

Table 10*Key of Success Language in Pakistan*

Language	Responses	Frequencies
Urdu	1	10%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	9	90%
Total	10	100%

English is considered to be a key to success in the world and this thing is very much clear from the table 10 given above. English has the highest

frequency as a key to success with 90% percentage. Urdu is 1% and Punjabi is 0%.

Table 11

Learning Helpful to get Closer to Modern World

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	10	100%
Total	10	100%

In the modern world one who speaks English is considered to be modern. This seems very true from the responses given in table 11. The frequency of English is 100% while Urdu and Punjabi show 0% frequencies.

Table 12

Language as a Source of Development

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	1	10%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	9	90%
Total	10	100%

English being the language of trade and business again gets the highest percentage that is 90%, whereas Urdu has 10% and Punjabi is nowhere with 0%.

Table 13

Language Showing Respect for Other Cultures

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	4	40%
Punjabi	4	40%
English	2	20%
Total	10	100%

As compared to English, Urdu and Punjabi show respect to other cultures. In the table 13 given above Urdu and Punjabi share the same percentage that is $40\%+40\% = 80\%$ while English has 20% weightage.

Table 14*Language as a Source of Punishment at School*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	2	20%
Punjabi	8	80%
English	0	0%
Total	10	100%

In elite schools speaking Urdu and Punjabi is a source of Punishment for the students. As compared to Urdu, Punjabi is strictly prohibited as it carries 80% score being a source of punishment. Whereas, English shows 0% which means that only speaking in English is allowed in the schools.

Table 15*Language as a Symbol of Status*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	0	0%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	10	100%
Total	10	100%

Table 15 above shows English is a status symbol with 100% positive responses and rest of the two languages are considered lower status languages.

Table 16*Language as a Source of Pride*

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	4	40%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	6	60%
Total	10	100%

In the Table 16, Urdu as a language of pride carries 40% weightage and English carries 60% responses which shows that is speaking English is considered a source of pride.

Table 17

Fluent in Speaking the Language

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	6	60%
Punjabi	3	30%
English	1	10%
Total	10	100%

The students are most fluent in speaking Urdu as compared to Punjabi and English. Urdu is 60%, Punjabi 30% and English 10%.

Table 18

Language as a Source of Confidence

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	4	40%
Punjabi	0	0%
English	6	60%
Total	10	100%

As per the table 18 English is considered to be the source of confidence with 60%, Urdu is on the second number with 40% percentage and Punjabi gets 0% percentage.

Table 19

Language as a Source of Embarrassment

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	2	20%
Punjabi	7	70%
English	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Punjabi is considered to be the source of embarrassment with highest percentage, i.e., 70%. Urdu is at the second position with 20% and English is the last one with 10% percentage.

Table 20

Clear and Expressive Language

Language	Observed N	Frequencies
Urdu	7	70%
Punjabi	2	20%
English	1	10%
Total	10	100%

The above table shows that 70% of responses give preference to Urdu to communicate in a clear and expressive way. 20% feel easy to express clearly in Punjabi and 10% feel easy to be more expressive in English.

After having a collective analysis of all the tables given above it is revealed that from all the three languages (English, Urdu and Punjabi) English is the mostly used language in Punjab. While Urdu and Punjabi which are the identity markers are not appreciated. People have negative attitude towards Punjabi and consider it foul and a vulgar language. It causes shame for the respondents and even the Elite school authorities do not allow their learners to speak Punjabi. They have their own language policy which is strictly followed by the stakeholders. Owing to the excessive use of English at school the young ones have become so habitual that they do not like to speak their mother tongues.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Flinders ([1996](#)) opines that the qualitative research interview attempts “to understand the world from the subjects’ points of view, to unfold the meaning of people [sic] experiences, to uncover their lived world”. He further defines that qualitative research interviews enable a researcher to “see the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee. Significantly, interviewing is a particularly efficient means of collecting data when the research design involves an analysis of people’s motivations and opinions (Keats, [1999](#)), as was the case in the present study.

Analysis of the Interviews of Principals and Teachers

Educational Background of Principals

The principal interviewees, who were foreign qualified (UK), were proficient in communicating in Urdu and English and had been working in their respective institutions for five to six years. They explained that in line with the school educational policy, the language they spoke with their students and teachers was English, except for if learners struggled to comprehend a specific piece of information. According to the interviewees, the English only language policy was implemented strictly and learners were allowed to use Urdu to clarify anything they could not understand completely, although the emphasis was on using English under all other circumstances.

Both the teachers who participated in the interview were master degree holders and had a sufficient teaching experience in the relevant field. They had been serving their institutions for the last six to ten years. They had the special trainings regarding school education. While talking about the school language policy they told that the school management has only English speaking policy. They are not allowed to speak any other language especially Punjabi. The Principal makes frequent visits to the classes to monitor that which language is being used in the class rooms. Only in Urdu and Islamic Studies class Urdu is allowed but no Punjabi at all.

Government Language Policy versus School Language Policy

Both the principals expressed that their schools are part of the British education chain system. They have their own policies which the schools follow. These policies are not in written form they are tactfully understood by the stake-holders when they come to the institution. The head office gives them the instructions which they follow. The basic policy of the schools is the use of English with the aim of promoting English language. The government policy encourages the indigenous languages as well but the schools do not allow any other language except than English. The teachers are bound to speak only English in the school premises.

While talking about the school language policy the teachers said that the school has well defined language policy. They have to sign an agreement

before joining the school in which all the rules and regulation are mentioned. They have to follow those rules strictly especially the rules regarding language policy. The school's policy is totally different from the government policy. The schools have their head offices in UK and all the policies are drawn from there and are implemented here. The process of implementation of language policies smells imperialism.

Linguistic Identities of the Students

The interviewees (principals) expressed that they do not restrict the students to speak only English from the very first day. They train them to speak English. The majority of the students belong to Urdu/Punjabi speaking communities so it becomes difficult for them. As most of the time in the school they speak English so they lack in vocabulary of Urdu/Punjabi and take the help of English to convey their meaning. Speaking English is not having any bad effect on their linguistic identity.

The respondents (teachers) expressed that the main aim of the institution is the promotion of English language to make the students equal to the international learners. If they speak other languages too they cannot be fluent in English and will not pay head towards their goal. The school authorities want them to think in English as well to get fluency in English. The use of other language restricts their proficiency, so they are not allowed to speak other languages. The excessive use of English certainly affects their linguistic identities. They feel easy in communicating in English rather than any other language. Although they speak Urdu/Punjabi at home, yet they take a lot of help from English for communication. This is a reflection of colonial structure which made the people to hate their languages and lose their identities. They became the mimic men who had no identity of their own (Bhabha, [2012](#)).

Implementation of School Policy

While answering the questions regarding the implementation of school language policy, the principals and teachers said that the teachers are bound to deliver their lectures only in English. They have to speak English with the colleagues and the students. The frequent visits made by the Principal also keep them conscious in the use of language. If a child speaks Urdu s/he is guided to speak in English. The school curriculum is in English and

everything is well planned. The teachers guide and encourage the students to speak English. Different workshops are arranged to provide new insights to the teachers for better implementation of these policies. Such practices of promoting English are undoubtedly the colonial practices.

Analysis of Parents and Students' Interviews

Students and Parents' Vision about School Policy

The students and parents interviewees appreciate the school's policy and are fully satisfied. They are of the view that as the main aim of getting education from these institutions is to have a better future and for better future English is very compulsory. For getting a foreign degree the expertise in English is very compulsory. The schools are trying their best to promote English for the betterment of Pakistan and its youth.

The expression above is a presentation of students and parents conception above English language. According to them English has become the sociolinguistic need of the present time. Thus, for survival it is very compulsory to be expert in English. Such approach unveils the mental hegemony of English in the lives of the people. The colonized minds are still under the influence of English language and try to be more English than the English (Bhabha, [2012](#)).

Vision about the Mother Tongue

The overall responses from the interviewees (students & teachers) clear the picture that although the students and parents own their mother tongue (Punjabi) as their identity but they do not like to speak it. They take it as a foul language and the language of illiterates (Mansoor, [1993](#)). The parents, no doubt, speak Punjabi but they do not allow their kids to speak. On the other hand the students consider it as a difficult language and their lacks in vocabulary are due to the excessive use of English. The Punjabi language is considered old language and cannot help in making the future bright.

Vision about the English Language

The students and parents have a very positive response towards the English language. They are of the view that it is only English which can give them the assurance of their bright future. With the knowledge of English they can get good job. English being the lingua-franca facilitates

them in having global interactions. For keeping a pace with the modern world it is very compulsory. The views of the participants are the reflection of their understanding about the importance of English. They are well aware that the English language not only gives them advantages in their country in the other countries as well.

Discussion

The discussion is the answer of the questions which are the very basis of the research. With the help of adequate evidence reported through data analysis it proves that the elite schools enjoy substantial autonomy in the spheres of curriculum, particularly in medium of instruction and the teaching of language(s) as subject. The unchallenged power of private schools is also confirmed by the National Education Policy report by Government of Pakistan, 2009. English is given huge importance as the schools have to cater to the needs and expectations of their elite and affluent clients. To that end, they generally adhere to the total immersion approach (Fortune & Tedick, 2008) of language teaching in which the role of local languages is minimized through strict measures. Although Urdu is taught as a subject under the obligation of official LPP, its use other than in the Urdu subject class is discouraged. The situation of small regional languages like Punjabi is even worse as they are not only excluded as a subject, their use in and outside the classroom domains is declared punishable.

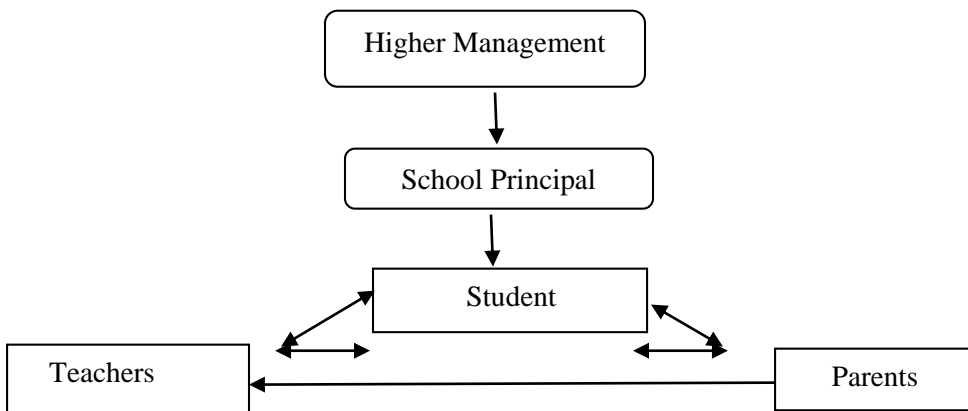
In terms of authority in language planning, the school principal, who represents the school administration and governing body, is at the forefront. Parents and students also hold influence and their voice is taken seriously in language and academic matters. Teachers' authority is very limited as they are supposed to implement rigorously the language policy, be it the pedagogical or the medium of instruction aspect of the curriculum, as directed by the school authorities. Several teachers were found to have been influenced by the school language policy and expressed similar views about foreign language teaching as those held by the schools.

Fishman (1991) has argued that schools can extinguish the endangered languages within a few generations. Although the present research did not investigate or determine whether to what extent Punjabi is an endangered language (as that is outside the scope of this study), there is no doubt that

Punjabi (like other minority/regional languages) has been seriously neglected in the domain of education, government offices and media. The impact of such a policy on the individuals' attitudes, beliefs and practices of their native language cannot be ruled out. Deriving guidance and inspiration from Spolsky (2009) that language policy not only includes explicit aspects such as language policy statements but also implicit aspects like the practices and beliefs of the community.

Figure 3

Hierarchal Representation of the Implementation of LPP in Elite Schools



The arrows suggest the influence of one authority over the other. It is found that the authorities are at number one in powers and at the second place the principal is the most powerful actor who formulates and implements the policy. While the principal's authority mainly influences parents by encouraging them and their children to speak English and handing down punishment (money and letters) for violating the school rules, it is also influenced by parents who, due to their own background, awareness and attitudes, are more conscious about the English proficiency of their children. Parents also encourage their children to speak English as they want to get their investment returned in the form of a successful career, which in most cases is guaranteed by improved proficiency in English. The major influence on students, however, comes from their teachers, especially in the early years of their schooling. When they reach the college level, by virtue of their proficiency in English and their realization of the prestige

value of English they themselves choose their language(s). The school teachers in this system are under pressure from both the parents, with whom they regularly meet at the end of terms and who expect results in the form of their children's fluency in spoken English and the principal, who observes the teachers to make sure they adhere to the English-only policy in and outside the class.

English has emerged as the dominant language of the schools mainly due to the curriculum and strict English-only policy. Students use English habitually, and under the influence of peer-group culture. Urdu was reported as the second most dominant language at school. Mother tongue, Punjabi, turned out to be the restricted language. There was sound evidence in the data to suggest the influence of the school education language policy and language practices on language choice at home. According to Spolsky (2009), language management may "influence speakers to modify their practices". In terms of academic proficiency, both the quantitative and qualitative data proved that the students are the most proficient in English, followed by Urdu and only minimally proficient in Punjabi. There was consensus among the participants that the students' overall weakness in mother tongue was due to its exclusion from education.

Conclusion

This study illuminates the complexity of the language policy of English language elite schools as well as the complexity of the language policy of the Government of Pakistan. Elite schools adhere to a rigid and unchallenged English-only policy. Although Urdu is taught as a subject as mandated by the constitution, the exclusion of mother tongue from these school means that the language teaching approach is replicative-immersion and assimilation oriented. As shown in this study, this approach to language teaching causes negative attitudes among students towards their mother tongue, domain shrinkage of mother tongue in terms of its use and its attrition/loss in certain contexts, where they are forced to switch to either English or Urdu. This study also shows that the government's official Language Planning and Policy (LPP), which is influenced by social, political, ideological, and global forces, trickles down to and has a deep imprint on the attitudes and practices of the actors at the grassroots level, both individual and institutional.

This is a novel study which offers ample food for thought for all stakeholders—the government, the ministry and allied departments of education, the parents, students, and language activists—to reflect on their beliefs and practices with regard to the role of language in education. A multitude of scholars have highlighted the grave consequences of language policies, whereby the hegemony of dominant languages (global, national) poses serious threats to indigenous (minority, ethnic, and indigenous) languages. At the same time, extant literature emphasizes the significance of indigenous languages as personal and societal resources, markers of identity, sources of self-esteem as well as personal and group empowerment, which is essential not only for basic literacy but also for balanced bilingualism. To all these endeavors, UNESCO, 2003 extends complete support through various conventions and declarations.

Due to the prevailing LPP situation in Pakistan, indigenous languages, with the exception of Sindhi, remain highly neglected and disadvantaged. Owing to the low prestige and low pragmatic values of indigenous languages, their speakers develop negative attitudes towards them. Consequently, the educated, affluent, and elite sections of the society, especially in urban centers, are gradually and unnoticeably shifting from their native languages to English and Urdu to achieve and express power, wealth, and prestige (Abbas, 1993; Rahman, 1966). This means that in the current LPP system, languages are used by the dominant social groups to establish and maintain social hierarchies (Tollefson, 2003). It is for this reason that Ricento (2006) calls for understanding language shift as a manifestation of asymmetrical power relations based on social structures and ideologies that position groups – and their languages – hierarchically within a society. English medium schools of the elite category serve both as centers of acquisition planning for English and as symbols of status for the affluent class. At the same time, they are the sites where the policies practiced and the attitudes nurtured are potently averse to the students' native languages. As such, no investigation of LPP or language maintenance and shift in a multilingual situation, such as the one focused in this study, can afford to ignore the English medium schools.

Despite the overall grim situation for indigenous languages, there are also glimmers of hope. Slowly but surely, Pakistanis are realizing the

gravity of the situation. Discussions around the issues faced by the indigenous languages often surface in the media and parliament. This study hopefully serves as a useful contribution to all those efforts. Finally, language policies and the fate of indigenous languages hinge on the political decisions and ideological stances of people in power; hence, it has to be the grassroots actors, people, schools, groups, and communities who need to make prudent decisions with regard to their native languages.

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