Perspectives of University Academics on Language Attitudes and Beliefs: A Mix Method Approach

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate the language attitudes and linguistic beliefs among private University academics in Lahore. It delves into the intricate interplay between Pakistan's national and its official language, investigating their influence on the perspectives of private University teachers' language attitudes and beliefs in Lahore. Employing Spolsky's national language policy theory (2004), the study focuses on female English academics working in private Universities. Based on the observation that the majority of the faculty members of the English department are females, the research sample includes 50 female English academics working in eight private Universities in Lahore. Considering the complexity of the field of language beliefs and the linguistic diversity in Lahore, a mixed-method research (MMR) approach has been employed. The research uses an explanatory sequential approach; the quantitative data collection through an online survey was followed by short interviews of 10 randomly selected participants. A descriptive approach has been used to analyze the quantitative and the qualitative data side-by-side; the quantitative data has been analyzed using bar graphs that were obtained from Google Forms, whereas the qualitative data has been analyzed by manual thematic analysis. The findings of the study reveal slight signs of linguistic biases towards the three prevalent languages in Lahore i.e.: Urdu, English, and Punjabi. Future researchers can benefit from this research to study the language attitudes and language beliefs among either Urdu or English academics working in government Universities. Comparative analysis between the current and future research endeavors promises to enrich this field further.

Keywords: Language Beliefs, Language Attitudes, English Academics, Language Policy.

Introduction

In the contemporary context of Lahore, Urdu, despite being the national language of Pakistan and the native language of the majority of the Pakistani people, is restricted to personal domain only, and English, besides being the official language of the country, is regarded as the language of higher education. Although the medium of instruction in elementary, middle, and secondary levels of education has undergone several changes throughout the years, the use of English, as the language of instruction, has maintained its place in higher education in Pakistan for more than seventy years (Mahboob, 2017). While taking the emerging necessities of the contemporary world into account, many European and non-English speaking nations have adopted English

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medium of instruction for higher education. However, a "historical process rather than a conscious decision" led Pakistan to choose English as the medium of instruction for higher education (Mahboob, 2017; Siddiqui, 2022). As a legacy of the British colonizers, English is regarded as the language of power and prestige in Pakistan (Abbas & Iqbal, 2018), as it is prevalent in education, technology, international business, and the legal and judicial systems. But, according to the linguist Tom McArthur, English is used as a second language by 2.25% of the total population of Pakistan (Nordquist, 2020), while Urdu serves as the lingua franca of the majority of the people in Pakistan and represents their national identity (Manan & David, 2014). In addition to Urdu and English language, the majority of the people of Lahore frequently use the Punjabi language, thus making its speakers the largest linguistic community in Pakistan (Abbas et al., 2016). In this context, this study explores the language attitudes and linguistic beliefs of the private University academics in Lahore towards the three languages of Lahore.

The study of perspectives of university academics on their language attitudes and beliefs holds significant value in several key areas. First and foremost, it provides insights into linguistic ideologies that shape academic environments, influencing both teaching methodologies and student experiences. Understanding these attitudes can help in identifying biases that may exist within academic institutions, particularly those that may disadvantage non-native speakers or those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. By shedding light on implicit and explicit beliefs held by academics, the study can inform policies aimed at promoting linguistic diversity and inclusivity. Additionally, this research contributes to the broader field of sociolinguistics by exploring how language attitudes among academics align with or diverge from societal norms and expectations. It examines the role of language in the construction of professional identity and authority within academia, offering a nuanced understanding of how language use and preferences are tied to perceptions of competence and credibility. This is particularly relevant in a globalized educational landscape where multilingualism and cross-cultural communication are increasingly important.

Research Questions

Based on the above-mentioned background of the study, three research questions have been formulated:

1. How do the private university academics in Lahore view Pakistan's national and official languages?
2. How do the private university academics perceive the Punjabi language and the speakers of other local languages in Lahore?
3. Are there any signs of linguistic biases among private university academics in Lahore?

Literature Review

The language beliefs studies determine the future of a particular language: either it thrives (if the speakers have a favorable attitude towards that language) or its future is endangered (if the speakers exhibit or retain a negative attitude about their language). This means that language attitudes are long-term beliefs about a particular language and thus have the potential to strongly influence the language practices of speakers of a specific language. Language attitude refers to an individual's propensity to react favorably or unfavorably to a particular language and its speakers. According to Crystal (2000), language attitude is an individual's disposition toward one's language or about other languages. A study by Mbroi (2008) has explored the relationship between language attitude and language use, according to the findings of which various

languages come in contact in each of the areas of language use in Rwanda. The inclination of speakers towards one language instead of preferring the alternative one is not only marked by their personal feelings about the language but also by how the speakers relate to each other. To study the language attitudes of educated youth in the linguistically complex setting of Pakistan, Abbas & Iqbal (2018) compared the language attitude of the educated young generation of Pakistan towards the three linguistically competitive and co-existing languages of Pakistan (i.e.: Urdu, English and Punjabi), and concluded that Pakistani youth have a derogatory attitude towards Punjabi, while on the other hand, they prefer to communicate in either Urdu or English language. While many attempts have been made to investigate the role of academics in the development of research (Coughlan et al., 2016; Fauzi et al., 2019), and to explore the technological challenges that academics face (Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2016; Islam et al., 2015; Kabilan et al., 2023; Tanczer et al., 2016) working in higher education.

For the success of any organization, it is crucial to have a culture of sharing knowledge, as it not only enhances the organization's chances of growth but also gives insights into the shortcomings of an organization and highlights the problems and issues that need to be addressed (Alshamsi & Ajmal, 2019). Such tremendous culture exists in its best form in educational institutions where academics reciprocate knowledge; in the higher education department, academics use research publications as a knowledge-sharing medium. Fauzi et al. (2019) surveyed 20 public sector and five private sector Universities in Malaysia to assess the factors that contribute to knowledge sharing by academics. The findings revealed that the knowledge-sharing behavior of the academics working in higher learning institutes contributes the most to their research productivity.

As a functional tool for learning that not only benefits the learners in terms of flexibility and time management but also helps the teachers in innovating teaching strategies, the use and necessity of technology in higher education institutions cannot go unnoticed. In the realm of research, where most of the researchers have focused on highlighting the advantages of advanced technology in learning and teaching, some researchers have also attempted to highlight the challenges that the use of technology brings to the field of education. For instance, while discussing online teaching at Middlesex University in London, Islam et al. (2015) investigated the challenges that academics face while using e-learning technology. Based on the findings, the challenges to using e-learning technology were categorized into five types, including cultural limitations, pedagogical challenges, and time constraints. Despite the various limitations and challenges that the use of technology offers in education, its benefits, however, cannot go unnoticed. Kabilan et al. (2023) conducted a study on 97 academics teaching at a research University in Malaysia to explore the academics' practices, purposes, and challenges in integrating gamification while using technology in higher education. The results revealed that technological gamification augments students' creativity and critical thinking; to achieve the desired outcome, academics, however, need to enhance their technology skills and practices of gamification.

Research Methodology
Research Design
Research design can be defined as a systematic plan for the collection and analysis of data (Wyk, 2012). Keeping the research questions in mind and considering the complexity of the field of language policy, a mixed method research (MMR) approach has been employed for this research

to address the complex issues by using the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell & Plano, 2011; Plano, 2017).

Data Collection

The data has been collected from 50 female faculty members of the English (literature, language, and linguistics) departments of private Universities in Lahore using the purposive sampling technique. This sample has been selected to represent the characteristics of the diverse and broad community of English teachers working in the private sector higher education institutes in Lahore. Since both quantitative and qualitative data have been collected, the data collection was spread over two phases. In the first step, more than 200 female faculty members working in the English departments of different private Universities in Lahore were contacted via email. The questionnaire link was attached to the email, and the faculty members were requested to complete the online questionnaire survey. When 50 survey responses were completed, the participants were invited to take part in a short follow-up interview. Most of them expressed their interest in the follow-up interview, and ten participants were randomly selected.

Data Collection Tool

Two data collection tools have been used to collect the quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data has been collected through questionnaires that were shared online to collect responses. After the quantitative data collection, the qualitative data has been collected through structured interviews.

The questionnaire comprised the demographic information of the English academics and their views about their national and official language. The first section following the demographic information comprises four statements, and each participant responded to these statements, stating their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale. The interview comprised ten questions which were based on the questionnaire, and the participants were asked to elaborate on their survey responses. The interviews were conducted individually over the phone, and, with their permission, the interview responses were recorded and then transcribed later. The time of each interview varied but each session was 30-50 minutes long.

Participants

The population includes 50 female faculty members of the English (linguistics, language, and literature) departments of eight private Universities in Lahore; the details are given in table 1. These academics are highly qualified and thus have been serving the higher education department in the private sector Universities for many years. The demographic information of the sample included their age, qualification, total number of service years, their current academic rank, the level of students that they teach, their birthplaces, and their first and second languages. Based on their demographic data, the participants (n=50) in the sample represented various aspects of the population. With at least one year of teaching experience, the participants of the study fall between the age group of 25-55 years.

Table 1: Sample size and its University distribution

Sr. No.	Name of University	No. of participants	Per cent
1.	University of Management and Technology	20	40
2.	University of Central Punjab	11	22
3.	University of Lahore	9	18
4.	FAST National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Lahore Campus	3	6
5.	Riphah International University, Lahore Campus	2	4
6.	Forman Christian College University	2	4
7.	Minhaj University	2	4
8.	Information Technology University	1	2
	Total	50	100

Data Analysis

For the quantitative data analysis, pie charts and bar graphs have been used, which were obtained from the 'responses' section in Google Forms. For the qualitative data, a step-by-step approach has been used to analyze the data through manual thematic analysis.

Theoretical Framework

Considering the complex linguistic landscape of Pakistan, Spolsky's national language policy theory (2004) has been used which proposes that the national language policy of any country is driven by four interconnected factors that include the nation's ethnic identity, the role of the English language as the international lingua franca, the sociolinguistic landscape of the country, and the linguistic rights of the minorities in the country.

The nation's ethnic identity refers to the implicit language ideologies or beliefs associated with a language variety in the country. Spolsky (2004) illustrates national ideology by reflecting on the northern African countries where the status of Arabic during colonial Arabisation was attributed to the primacy of the Quran in the cultural and national identity.

The role of English as the language of global communication is another factor that Spolsky (2004) believes affects the national language policy. The use of the English language as the medium of instruction in the educational setting as well as its status in the country detrimentally affects the language policy at the national level.

Spolsky (2004) describes the sociolinguistic situation of the country as 'the number and kinds of languages, the number and kinds of speakers of each, the communicative value of each language both inside and outside the community being studied'(p. 219). This pertains not just to the objective sociolinguistic context but also to the subjective judgments regarding the relative significance of individual languages.

The right of linguistic minorities is another underlying force that Spolsky (2004) claims to determine the country's language policy.

Findings

The research findings have been divided into three main sections: (i) the English academics' views about the national and the official language, (ii) their attitudes towards other local languages of Lahore, and, (iii) their attitudes towards the other language speakers in Lahore.

Views about National and Official Language

The section begins with the views and opinions of the female academics serving the English department at different private Universities in Lahore about Pakistan's national and official languages. Examining the private University teachers' perceptions of the Urdu language, this section further explores their views about the medium of instruction in higher education and their attitudes towards the use of Urdu and English language in their interactions. Based on their opinions and perceptions, this section also sheds light on the future of the Urdu language. The participants' responses, thus, have been divided into four sections: (i) Status of Urdu language, (ii) Urdu language and education, (iii) Language and communication, and (iv) Future of Urdu language.

According to Shohamy (2006), the national ideology or identity significantly influences a country's language policy. Therefore, to gain an understanding of how the participants view the national language of Pakistan, the interview participants (n=10) were asked, "Kindly share five distinct concepts, ideas, or associations that immediately come to your mind when you hear the word 'Urdu'". Table 2 shows different themes that the participants affiliated to the word 'Urdu'.

Table 2: Themes related to the word 'Urdu'

Themes related to the word 'Urdu'	No. of participants
1. Urdu is our national language.	7
2. Urdu is my identity.	3
3. Urdu is my mother tongue/native language.	4
4. Urdu is the lingua franca in Pakistan.	3
5. Urdu gives me a sense of comfort.	2
6. Urdu gives me a sense of pride.	1
7. Urdu is difficult to learn.	2
8. I can express myself better in Urdu.	1
9. Urdu grammar and vocabulary	3
10. Urdu dictionary	1
11. Urdu keyboard	1
12. Language endangerment	4
13. Language shift	2
14. Pakistan	4
15. School education	2

The interview participants held varied associations with the Urdu language. The most prevalent concept related to Urdu was its official status in Pakistan. 70% of the participants claimed that they thought of the national language of Pakistan when they heard the word 'Urdu'. Despite the national prominence of Urdu and its role as a lingua franca, only three (30%) participants claimed to associate the concept of "identity" with it. While two participants expressed a sense of comfort and ease associated with 'Urdu', only one (10%) of them reported being able to express herself better in the Urdu language or having a sense of ethnic pride affiliated with it. For two participants, the word 'Urdu' triggered recollections of their school-level education, specifically, the challenges of learning the language. Additionally, three participants associated Urdu with aspects like Urdu grammar, vocabulary, and diacritics. Likewise, one of the participants reported thinking of the 'Urdu keyboard' and 'Urdu dictionary' upon hearing the word 'Urdu'. On the one hand, four (40%) participants considered Urdu as their mother tongue or native language, while

an equal number of participants associated it with the idea of Pakistan and its heritage and culture. While on the other hand, two participants related Urdu with the language shift in Punjab; one of the participants explained it in the following words:

P9: "As a linguist residing in Lahore, I've observed a language shift in Punjab. Nowadays, Urdu has become the first language of people of Punjab, and there is a shift from Punjabi to Urdu".

Among the same population, four (40%) participants reported having related the idea of language endangerment with Urdu and that it evoked concern for national language preservation in them. To compare the English teachers' perception of the Urdu language with their views on the official language of Pakistan, the interview participants (n=10) were asked, "Kindly share five distinct concepts, ideas, or associations that immediately come to your mind when you hear the word 'English'". Table 3 illustrates various themes that the participants associated with the word 'English':

Table 3: Themes related to the word 'English'

Themes related to the word 'English'	No. of participants
1. English is the official language of Pakistan.	3
2. English is the international lingua franca.	6
3. English is a second language in Pakistan.	7
4. English is used in formal settings.	5
5. English is the language of power.	2
6. English is the language of success.	3
7. English is a status symbol in Pakistan.	2
8. English is the need of the hour.	4
9. English is the language of the colonizers.	1
10. English is our medium of instruction.	5
11. We make mistakes while speaking English.	1
12. It gives me a sense of superiority.	1
13. Second language learning	2
14. English is difficult to learn.	2

The interview participants (n=10) reported common themes associated with the word 'English'. However, only three participants acknowledged the official status of English in Pakistan. More than half (6) of the sample population responded that they thought of English as the global lingua franca, while seven of them considered it a second language in the Pakistani context. Furthermore, half (5) of the population sample claimed to use English in their formal settings only; one of the participants described it as follows:

P3: "When I hear the word 'English', I can imagine all the formal scenarios, like office, boss, class, meeting, etc."

Despite acknowledging the international significance of the English language, only two participants (20%) related ideas of power and status to English. Three participants reported viewing English as the language of success, while four claimed to have believed that English is the need of today's world. Half (5) of the participants reported associating the idea of a medium of instruction in higher education with the word 'English'. Some participants also shared unique perspectives, with one perceiving English, as the language of the colonizer, leading to apprehension about making mistakes when speaking it; the following quote from her interview response explains two of her associated ideas with the word 'English':

P2: I think that English is the language of the colonizer. Secondly, no matter how competent I am, I can never acquire native-like competency in this language, so I think of English as a language where I can commit mistakes.

Conversely, a minority (20%) of participants associated English with second language learning. Two participants reported associating the idea of difficulty with 'English', whereas one participant claimed to have a sense of superiority upon hearing the word 'English'.

Status of Urdu Language

Spolsky (2009) states, that the social and economic benefits of a language's speakers determine its status. In Pakistan, Urdu holds the status of the national language, whereas English is regarded as the official language. Figure 1 illustrates the responses of the survey participants (n=50) to the statement: "Urdu should be the official language of Pakistan". The results reveal that ten (20%) strongly disagreed with this proposition, while sixteen (32%) strongly agreed. An equal number of participants (12%) agreed and disagreed, while twelve (24%) indicated a neutral response to the statement.

Figure 1: Views about the National Language of Pakistan

Urdu should be the official language of Pakistan

50 responses

| Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
10	6	12	6	16
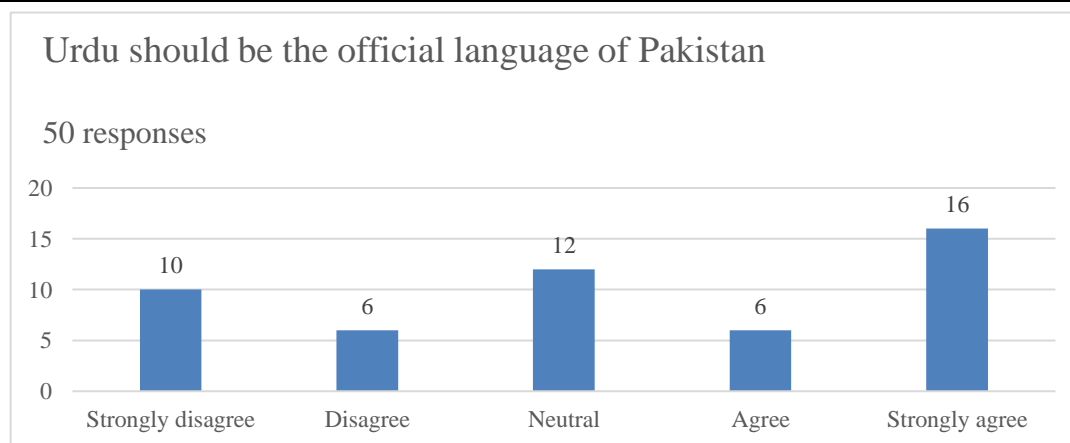
To investigate the underlying reasons for these responses, the interview participants (n=10) were asked, "What do you feel about the status of the Urdu language in Pakistan?" The question yielded various responses, with a prevalent viewpoint that Urdu, in contrast to English, held a compromised status in the country. One of the participants shared her views about the status of Urdu in the following way:

P8: I think, day by day, its roots are vanishing because its use is now only limited to our homes. In our homes, the language we speak is a blend of Hindi and English, because Bollywood and Netflix have influenced our Urdu language so much that what we speak now is not even a language anymore. Urdu has simply lost the essence that it had before the colonization period or even before the arrival of social media and the internet.

Urdu and Education

Among Spolsky's (2004) four motivations, the status of English as the language of international communication has had the most profound impact on the higher education language policy in Pakistan. Figure 2 illustrates the perspectives of the survey participants (n=50) regarding the English medium of instruction policy in Pakistani higher education institutions. Most (28%) of the participants strongly disagreed with the proposition of implementing an Urdu medium of instruction policy in higher education in Pakistan. A smaller number of participants (18%) disagreed, whereas only four (8%) agreed with the idea. A substantial majority of participants (32%) remained neutral, while only seven (14%) of them strongly agreed with the statement.

Figure 2: Views about Urdu medium of instruction
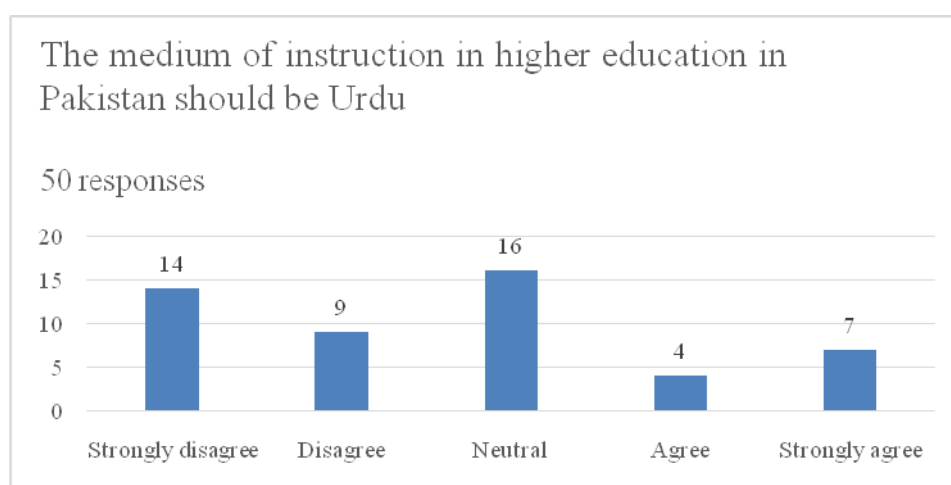
To further explore the views of the private University academics in Lahore about the medium of instruction in higher education in Pakistan, the interview participants (n=10) were asked: "In your opinion, what are the potential advantages and disadvantages of English medium of instruction in higher education?" Each participant shared one advantage and one disadvantage of the English medium of instruction. One of the participants articulated the following response:

P1: When we have students with different linguistic backgrounds, it becomes really difficult to impart certain concepts to such students, for whom even Urdu is a second language, and English for such students is a third language, so there it becomes a barrier. But at times, the English medium of instruction is advantageous, too: students learn an international language when they're exposed to the English language and when they're made to learn it anyway. So there, the English medium of instruction serves as a language learning tool for so many students whose language skills, otherwise, are not that good.

English and Personal Interactions

According to Spolsky (2004), the widespread use of the English language affects the speakers' attitudes towards their national language. Personal interaction is one of the domains where individuals express themselves freely, and the choice of linguistic code during such interactions signifies the level of formality or informality between the interlocutors. Figure 3 presents the results of the survey participants' (n=50) perceptions of English language usage in personal

interactions. An equal number of participants, fourteen (28%) strongly disagreed and disagreed with the idea that English language usage in interactions bothered them, with thirteen participants (26%) indicating neutral responses to it. Seven (14%) participants agreed, while only two (4%) strongly agreed with the statement that they perceived the use of the English language in interactions as an act of pretense.

**Figure 3: Participants' perceptions of English language usage in personal interactions**
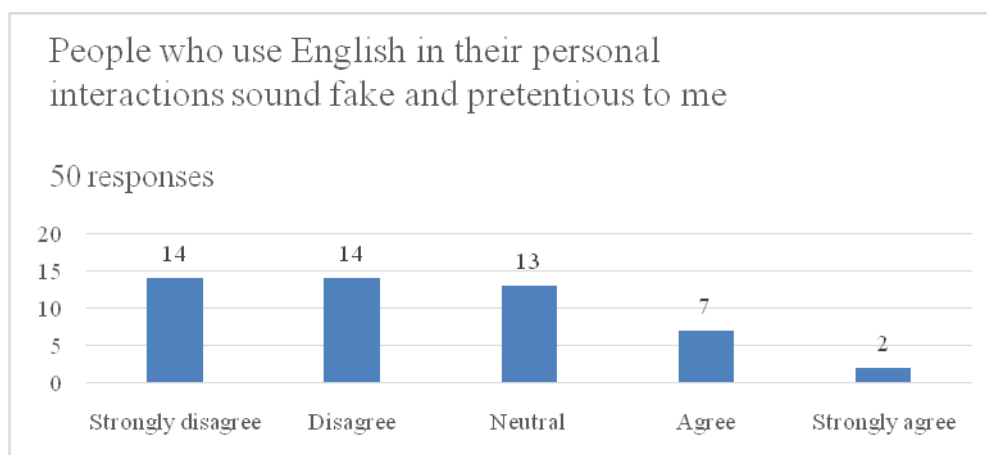
To validate the quantitative responses towards English language usage in personal interactions, the interview participants (n=10) were asked: "How do you perceive the role of English language usage in your interactions and other settings?" The question elicited a variety of responses. For some participants, English served as the language of expression, whereas, for others, it functioned as a tool of power, allowing them to impress others and assert a sense of superiority and dominance over the audience. One of the participants said:

P2: English is spoken for prestige and assimilation, for projecting a superior face. For instance, when women are outside, with their friends, or in their gatherings, they deliberately try to incorporate English into their day-to-day language. And I think this practice stems out of their primitive complex that we were once a colonized country. It is used as a power tool, and I do it, too. Because the moment you start speaking English, you acquire a higher status in a community where the majority doesn't understand English. And even if you speak it among people who can communicate with them, you assimilate with them.

Future of Urdu Language

Spolsky's (2004) model identifies the country's sociolinguistic situation as another determining factor for the national language policy. As discussed earlier, the status of Urdu in Pakistan is intimately linked to its official language status. Similarly, the future of the Urdu language in Pakistan depends upon the current use and future of the English language in Pakistan. Figure 4 presents the participants' views regarding the increasing prevalence of English in Pakistan. Half (50%) of the sample population agreed that Urdu in Pakistan was strongly influenced by the ongoing prevalence of English. Ten (20%) of them strongly agreed, while six (12%) of them strongly disagreed with it. Five (10%) of the participants disagreed, and four participants (8%) indicated a neutral response to the statement.

Figure 4: Participants' views on the effects of English language usage on Urdu language
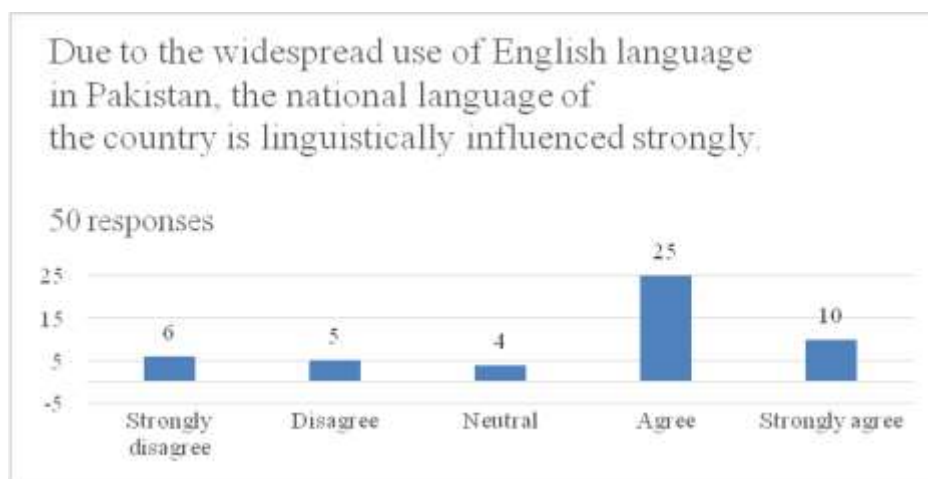
Considering the highest frequency of the participants agreeing with the idea of Urdu being linguistically affected by English language usage, the interview participants (n=10) were asked, "How do see the future of the Urdu language in Pakistan?" Almost all the participants shared similar views that revealed how concerned they were about the future of the national language of Pakistan. One of the participants shared her viewpoint about the future of Urdu language in the following words:

P5: I think in a few years, it's going to vanish from Pakistan as a language because, as the younger generation these days use Roman Urdu while writing, and while speaking, they use a lot of English words, so I think it will be changed a lot, but it'll remain there, not as a pure language maybe but as a blend of English and Urdu words and phrases.

Attitudes towards Other Languages

Language belief studies encompass not only the perceptions speakers hold about their language but also their linguistic attitudes toward other languages used in the same community. According to Spolsky (2004), another pivotal determinant of the national language policy is the rights of linguistic minorities. Since Lahore boasts many languages other than Urdu and English, this section includes the interview participants' attitudes towards other languages spoken in Lahore. Belonging to the diverse linguistic backgrounds, people from all over the country come to study and work in Lahore, thus making it a quintessential case of language contact in Pakistan.

Attitude towards Punjabi Language

Punjabi, the provincial language of Punjab, is one of the three most common languages used in Lahore. To investigate how the highly qualified female faculty members of the private Universities in Lahore view and affiliate with the Punjabi language, the interview participants (n=10) were asked: "How do you view the Punjabi language?" All the interview participants, except one, showed favorable attitudes towards Punjabi claiming that they viewed Punjabi as a sweet and diverse language, owing to its myriad of dialects. One of the participants shared her views about the Punjabi language in the following words:

P7: "Punjabi is a sweet language. It is something that you hear almost everywhere, from your professional settings to the completely informal ones. It helps establish bonds between colleagues and between students and their teachers."

While all the participants acknowledged their pride in being Punjabi speakers and their sense of comfort with the language, only one participant indicated a negative attitude towards Punjabi.

Attitude towards Other Local Languages

To gain an understanding of how the private University English teachers in Lahore view other local languages of Lahore, the interview participants (n=10) were asked: "Is there any local language that you want to learn? Why?" Several participants expressed interest in learning Saraiki due to its similarity to Punjabi. Three participants stated that since they were already proficient in the three most prevalent languages of Lahore, they did not aspire to learn any other local languages. Two participants expressed their interest in learning Pashto, with one of them providing the following rationale:

P6: "Pashto because we have a huge community of Pashto speakers around us, and the fact that they proudly speak it in their homes makes me feel very attracted to the community and their language."

Attitudes towards the Speakers of Other Languages

Another significant aspect explored in this study pertains to the language attitudes of the private University teachers in Lahore towards the speakers of other languages in Lahore. Spolsky (2009) argues that speakers might hold "stigmatized" views toward other linguistic varieties. Given the high qualifications of the private University faculty members, there are chances that they might look down upon the speakers of other languages in Lahore, making it crucial to investigate whether they possess any condescending attitudes in this context.

Positive Attitudes

To confirm, whether there are any signs of linguistic biases among the private University teachers, the interview participants (n=10) were asked: "Which language speakers do you enjoy talking to the most?" The participants' responses included all three major languages of Lahore. Most of the participants reported affinity to Urdu speakers; one of the participants said:

P3: "I feel more comfortable and connected while talking to someone in Urdu."

One of the participants associated a sense of comfort and connection with the Punjabi language, while two participants claimed to enjoy talking to both English and Urdu speakers, and only one of the participants reported enjoying talking to native English speakers.

Negative Attitudes

In an attempt to investigate if the private University English teachers held negative attitudes towards the speakers of any specific language, the interview participants (n=10) were asked: "Is there any language that you think is associated with the uneducated class? If yes, why?" The question elicited a clear response, with a majority of participants associating Punjabi with the less educated people. One participant elucidated the reason with the following response:

P1: It's Punjabi because it is the language of the majority of our rural population, and those people lack educational facilities, they don't get enough exposure to English or even Urdu language, so when such people speak the Punjabi language, the educated or the elite community of the cities look down upon them and use derogatory terms for them, like 'paindu'.

These respondents, however, were not negatively biased against Punjabi speakers as they identified themselves as Punjabi speakers. However, one participant demonstrated an unfavorable attitude towards the Punjabi language speakers, as evident in the following response: P5: "Punjabi because the native Punjabi speakers, who are monolinguals mostly, are uneducated and uncivilized. And secondly, it's a loud language, like the way you call somebody, like 'way' and 'ni' sounds very disrespectful."

Discussion

The term 'language beliefs' is often synonymously used with related concepts, such as language attitudes, perceptions, and linguistic ideologies. For this reason, the study has undertaken not only the examination of the language beliefs of the participants about the national and official language of the country but has also investigated the participants' perception of other languages of Lahore, as well as their linguistic attitudes towards the speakers of other languages used within Lahore. This has been done using Spolsky's (2004) national language policy model which identifies four forces that determine the language policy of any country. These factors include the nation's linguistic ideology, the country's sociolinguistic situation, the role of English as the international lingua franca, and the rights of linguistic minorities. These factors are intertwined with the participants' linguistic beliefs about Pakistan's national language, which are reflective of its linguistic vitality, as, according to a UNESCO report (2003), language policies on the national and institutional level and the speakers' linguistic attitudes have a significant role in the linguistic vitality. According to Yamamoto et al. (2008), the status and the vitality of a language in a multilingual community become vulnerable when the language of the elite social groups of the society is declared as the national or the official language of the country and the use of other languages is discouraged. This process detrimentally affects the languages within society and fosters negative attitudes among speakers towards their languages. Consequently, Urdu and Punjabi in Lahore hold secondary and tertiary status in the language hierarchy. Nevertheless, the results and responses to each statement and question within the study reveal that the private University academics in Lahore exhibit awareness of the linguistic significance of English, Urdu, and Punjabi, with no discernible signs of linguistic bias toward any of these languages. In this way, linguistic perceptions of a language's speakers and non-speakers determine the vitality of each language in the multilingual society. Despite the objective analysis of participants' perceptions, their responses reflect their attitudes toward various languages used in Lahore. According to Rosstad (2009), the four-tier model explains the formation of linguistic perceptions, four elements, including mental condition (biological and trained), observation of language use, linguistic attitudes and ideologies, and other external social factors, work in both directions to form linguistic perceptions. This framework serves to justify the participants' views about the three languages of Lahore; even though a few responses indicated slight signs of linguistic biases toward English, Urdu, and Punjabi, these biases appeared rooted in participants' linguistic perceptions, which, in turn, were a result of their language beliefs and linguistic ideologies. Similarly, though the participants reported a deep connection with the Urdu language, their observation of the language usage led to subtle variations in their linguistic perceptions. According to the results and responses presented above, most of the participants, being English teachers in the higher education private institutions in Lahore, seemed to have unbiased linguistic beliefs towards the English, Urdu, and Punjabi languages.

Conclusion

The study provides a comprehensive examination of the language beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions among private university academics in Lahore, using Spolsky's national language policy model and Rosstad's four-tier model of linguistic perception. The findings suggest that these academics exhibit an awareness of the linguistic significance of English, Urdu, and Punjabi without showing strong biases towards any particular language. This balanced perspective may be influenced by their professional environment, which values multilingualism. The study highlights the complex interplay of linguistic ideologies, sociolinguistic contexts, and personal experiences in shaping language attitudes. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of the linguistic dynamics in multilingual societies and underscore the importance of fostering inclusive language policies that respect and promote linguistic diversity.

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