

**A STUDY OF THE PREVALENT PRACTICES OF LINGUISTIC HOSTILITY AND TERRORISM
IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF PAKISTAN**Dr. Uzma Sadiq¹, Dr. Nazia Suleman^{*2}, Muhammad Naeem³**Original Article**

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Abstract

The study explains the ongoing practices of linguistic hostility and terrorism in educational institutions of Pakistan. In the country, English enjoys the status of an official language and Urdu as a national language. However, many indigenous languages are also in use. The educational system necessitates the proficiency in English language, therefore, the teachers expect the students to use English with no traces of their mother tongues. This may give rise to linguistic hostility and terrorism. Anzaldua's (1987) idea of "linguistic terrorism" has been employed as a theoretical framework for the research. The data is collected from 110 students of different varsities of Punjab, Pakistan through survey. It came out that the speakers of indigenous languages are embarrassed when their mother tongues influence the use of English in the classrooms. The study has significantly contributed towards language teaching and language planning in the context of Pakistan.

Keywords: linguistic terrorism, linguistic identity, role of teacher, indigenous languages

Introduction

Language is no less than a treasure transferred from a generation to the next. This is true so far the indigenous languages of a nation are concerned but sometimes a new language is enforced on the people for broader economic and global perspectives. Pakistan is a country where people have to experience the colors of various languages. The constitution of Pakistan declares Urdu as the national language and English as the official language of the country till the arrangements are made to replace English by Urdu as an official language. Interesting enough is the fact that these arrangements have not been made yet. Norton and Kamal (2003) are of the view that competence in English language is taken as token to technical advancement and highly desirable and beneficial by the young learners in Pakistan. In institutions, particularly in universities of Southern Punjab, the ratio of the students belonging to the rural areas is relatively high. Once they are admitted to the universities, they have to face challenges like demanding syllabus, new environment and continuous assessment in the semester system. Simultaneously, they have to cope with linguistic challenges as well. As they are not well versed in English language at this stage, so they commit mistakes in comprehending, speaking and writing English. The problem gets worse when the accent of their mother tongues influences the target language.

The result is that they avoid speaking English and turn into silent learners. They are consciously or unconsciously discouraged by the teachers for not speaking "correct" English. This may produce hostile effects on the behaviors of students as they develop negative attitudes that ultimately destruct their personalities.

Literature Review

Crystal (1990) believes that the end of the World War-II initiated a new era when the nations turned to the propagation and teaching of English language in their respective countries. Kachru (1985) is of the view that in south Asian countries, English is not only the language of trade and communication but a source of national unity as well.

Chomsky (1979) believes, "*questions of language are basically questions of power*" (p. 191). It is a fact that English is a key to success and the students aspire to have proficiency in it so as to pave their way for better job prospects. Ideally, this seems good but in practice, they cannot develop native-like proficiency in speaking English. Therefore, they are stuck in a critical situation. Reagan (2002) refers to the same paradox in American institutions where the educational system demands students to shun their native languages in favor of English but, on the other hand, the native speakers of English are encouraged to learn and use other languages as well. He is of the view that foreign language classrooms can play dual roles. On the one hand, these classrooms can bring out negative language attitudes but on the other hand, they also enable students to consider the social roles of a language.

When the students are required to use English with least impact of their native languages they may find themselves as discriminated ones. Though for educational purposes, they have to learn English but the impact of their mother tongues is easily noticeable when they speak English. At the initial stage, the accuracy and fluency both are not possible at the optimal level. With the passage of time, they will willingly try to improve their pronunciation and show least impact of their mother tongues. If the teacher does not value the linguistic identity of the learners, it may bring out disastrous effects on teaching and learning environment thus giving rise to linguistic terrorism (Anzaldúa, 1987).

In the context of African immigrants learning English language in Canada, Awad & Ibrahim (1999) talked about the role of teachers in recognizing the sites where students exhibit their wishes and various identities. Carlile (2007) takes terrorism as the use of such methods by the persons in power that may establish their dominance. To Rubin (1990), terrorism is an extensive use of violence to attain political, religious and ideological gains. So far as language is concerned, if a dominant language or the speakers of that language are establishing their hegemony and causing a threat to a language of some minority group and making its speakers lose their linguistic identity, it may be termed as linguistic terrorism. Anzaldúa (1987) talked about linguistic terrorism in words '*So, if you really want to hurt me, talk badly about my language*' (p.39). She believed that when persons move to some new environment they try to risk their own cultural practices in order to accept and imitate the practices of the new society. One of these practices is linguistic practice. People abandon their mother tongues when they are criticized directly or indirectly for their different accents "stigmatize particular linguistic practices perceived as deviating from prescriptive norms" (Rosa, 2016, p. 161).

Linguistic terrorism is a form of intellectual terrorism as there is no bloodshed, no killing of the people but even then it is more dangerous than the bomb blasts and military acts as it may kill the souls of people, mar their opinions and may threaten their identity even. When the teacher

does not encourage the students, they may feel endangered and humiliated. Usually this results in silence on the part of the students. They avoid taking part in classroom activities (Duff, 2012).

Norton (2000) believes that a student can be highly motivated to learn a language but may not be satisfied with the language practices of the classroom. The responsibility now lies on the shoulders of the teacher. The teacher can facilitate the learners in the classes. In Mexico, the longitudinal study of preservice teachers by Clement and Higgins (2008) found that these teachers tried to get proficiency in English but not at the cost of their local linguistic (Mexican) and cultural identities.

Theoretical Framework

Hostility and terrorism are used interchangeably. Hostility also refers to the development of negative and aggressive behaviors of the people (Semenuk.1996). Anzaldua's (1987) concept of linguistic terrorism has been used as theoretical framework for the study. She addresses the issue of discriminating a person for his or her accent as it may lead to the loss of identity and may even bring disastrous effects in personalities of those who are leaving their mother tongues to conform to the target language in order to survive. She narrated her own experience when she was repeatedly discouraged by the teachers for not having an American accent. She once noted, *'Repeated attacks on our native language diminish our sense of self'* (1987.p.80). She terms this phenomenon as *"linguistic terrorism": "[I]f you want to really hurt me, talk badly about my language.... I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself". (p. 59)*

Research Methodology

This study documented and investigated the prevalent practices of linguistic hostility and terrorism in higher education institutions of South Punjab, Pakistan. The study was descriptive in nature and aimed to investigate whether the speakers of indigenous languages take their mother tongues as a matter of pride and identity or feel embarrassed when the target language (English) is affected by their native languages. The data was collected from students of those universities that located in less privileged areas of Punjab like Ghazi University Dera Ghazi Khan, COMSATS University Vehari Campus, and University of Education Lahore, Dera Ghazi Khan Campus. Sample of the study comprises of 110 respondents from the aforementioned institutions selected randomly. The number of respondents is representative enough and they are selected from study programs where English is taught as a minor subject only. The research participants were selected from the first and second semester that is the very initial stage of their degree program. Based on the postulations of research, a more appropriate methodology has been adopted for the collection of candid data to address the research questions.

Research Questions

1. Do the speakers of indigenous languages take their mother tongues as a matter of pride and identity?
2. How do they feel when their mother tongue influences the use of English language in classrooms?
3. How do the teachers behave when they find students speaking 'incorrect' English?

Data Analysis

As already stated, responses of 110 students of BS IT Program (Bachelor of Science in Information Technology) and BSCS (Bachelor of Science in Computer Science) were taken for the study to find out the influence of mother tongues on English language and resulting discouraging behaviors in the classrooms. To carry out the research, the speakers of three languages particularly Punjabi, Balochi and Saraiki were selected. The data collected has been elicited in the form of tables to show the frequencies which demonstrate the results after analysis.

Table.1- Mother Tongue: A source of communication at home

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	9.3	41.9	14.0	2.3	11.6
Punjabi	5.0	42.5	10.0	2.5	0
Balochi	14.3	42.9	0	14.3	0
Anyother	11.1	27.8	5.6	0	5.6

The aim of the questionnaire is to figure out the role of mother tongue as a matter of identity in the institutes. The results as shown in table.1 revealed the fact that mother tongue is a source of communication for these speakers at home. The Balochi respondents exhibited the highest response as 57.2 % people agreed to the fact that mother tongue is a source of communication at home. Mother tongue as communicated by Anzaldúa (1987) shapes the personality and identity of the people as they believe that they are what their language is.

Table. 2 - Mother tongue is endeared

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	39.5	32.6	14.0	4.7	9.3
Punjabi	40.0	50.0	7.5	0	2.5
Balochi	57.1	28.6	0	14.3	0
Anyother	38.9	44.4	5.6	5.6	5.6

In the table 2, the results are supporting the fact that Punjabi speaking students are in greater affiliation to their mother tongue and 90% responded in the favor that their mother tongue is close to their heart which is quite contradictory to the fact that their use of mother tongue at home is comparatively less. The results of Balochi speakers declare that 85.7% of the selected population supports the fact that Balochi is endeared to them. The Saraiki speakers are at the least figure as only 72% of the respondents acknowledged the fact that their mother tongue is dearest to them.

Table.3- Mother Tongue: A source of pride

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Saraiki	25.6	37.2	14.0	16.3	7.0
Punjabi	17.5	52.5	15.0	00	15.0
Balochi	42.9	42.9	14.3	0	00
Anyother	44.4	33.33	11.1	5.6	5.6

Table.3 represents that the mother tongue is a matter of pride for the local speakers. 85 Among the Balochi speakers, 85% of the respondents took their language as a matter of pride and then 70% Punjabi speaking students took it as a matter of pride. However, the ratio of students speaking Saraiki language is less as compared to other speakers as it is 62.7% only.

Table.4- Mother Tongue: A source of identity

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	20.9	51.2	11.6	7.00	9.3
Punjabi	22.5	42.5	5.0	00	30.0
Balochi	14.3	00	00	00	00
Anyother	33.3	38.9	5.6	22.2	00

This table depicts the fact that the Balochi speakers do feel that their language is not a matter of identity for them as only 14% agreed to the statement. However, only 65% Punjabi speaking students considered mother tongue as a matter of identity. Saraiki speakers are at the top with maximum response of 72% to consider mother tongue as a source of identity.

Table.5- English: a medium of teaching and learning at university level

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Saraiki	32.6	41.9	9.3	14.0	2.3
Punjabi	12.5	67.5	12.5	5.0	2.5
Balochi	14.3	28.6	28.6	14.3	28.6
Anyother	22.2	27.8	22.2	11.1	00

The table 5 demonstrates the fact that English Language is a medium of instruction at university level. Among Punjabi speakers 80% students supported that English language should be a medium of instruction at university level while only 42% Balochi speakers favored the statement.

Table.6- Committing mistakes in English language, a source of shame.

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	4.7	23.3	7.0	44.2	20.9
Punjabi	5.0	10.00	22.5	40.0	22.5
Balochi	00	14.3	28.6	42.9	14.3
Anyother	11.1	27.8	22.2	27.8	11.1

The statement that committing mistakes in English language entails shame is supported by Saraiki speakers to the extent of 28%. Among 15% by Punjabi speakers 15% and 14% by Balochi speaking students supported the view. Majority of the respondents remained neutral positive feedback was not received.

Table.7- Influence of mother tongue on speaking English language

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	16.3	39.5	16.3	18.6	9.3
Punjabi	5.0	40.0	27.5	22.5	5.0
Balochi	28.6	28.6	00	42.9	0
Anyother	11.1	44.4	22.2	22.2	0

Influence of the mother tongue while speaking English is observed mostly in 57% Balochi speakers. The speakers of “any other” languages gave the feedback of 55%. The ratio of Saraiki speaking students was 53% and 45% Punjabi speakers among the respondents supported the idea that their mother tongues have a strong influence on the target language.

Table.8- Fear of committing mistakes in English language

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	16.3	37.2	14.0	30.2	16.3
Punjabi	12.5	55.0	20.0	27.5	5.0
Balochi	42.9	28.6	14.3	14.3	00
Anyother	11.1	55.6	11.1	11.1	5.6

Balochi speakers are the most fearful of speaking English as 71% of them agreed to the statement. They are less encouraged by the teachers to speak and their mother tongue influences the accent so they avoid speaking in English in classrooms. They also have more association with their mother tongue as compared to other speakers of local languages in the study.

Table.9 Fear of less grading

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	4.7	46.5	9.3	25.6	14.0
Punjabi	7.5	40.00	27.5	20.0	5.0
Balochi	28.6	14.3	42.9	14.3	00
Anyother	11.1	55.6	11.1	22.2	00

Siraiki speakers are more fearful of getting less grades because of low proficiency in English language. But the difference among the speakers of these three languages is quite minimal having no drastic difference. Therefore, it can be inferred that approximately all the local language speakers are afraid of receiving less grades.

Table.10 - Less use of mother tongue to improve English language proficinecy

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	2.3	37.2	18.6	25.6	16.3
Punjabi	2.5	52.5	12.5	32.5	00
Balochi	00	57.1	00	42.9	00
Anyother	5.6	44.4	16.7	27.8	5.6

The extensive use of mother tongue may prove a hindrance in getting proficiency in English language. In order to be proficient in English, many students minimized the use of their mother tongues as depicted in table 10, 57% Balochi speakers tried to shun their mother tongue. The Balochi and Punjabi speaking students made it clear that in order to avoid mistakes while speaking in English, they have minimized the use of their mother tongue. This scenario ultimately leads to language loss. So the situation gets worse as the target language is putting the first language in danger.

Table.11- Teachers' Role in encouraging students to speak in English language

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	14.00	32.6	23.3	16.3	14.0
Punjabi	15.0	55.0	10.0	17.5	2.5
Balochi	14.3	14.3	42.9	14.3	14.3
Anyother	5.6	66.7	11.1	16.7	00

It is interesting to note that encouragement on the part of the teachers to speak English is the most obvious in Punjabi speaking community where the response rate is 71.5%, while it is minimal in the Balochi speaking community where it is only 28.6%. Balochi speakers get less encouragement from teachers to speak in English.

Table.12-Penalty while committing mistakes in English language

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	9.3	41.9	23.3	16.3	14.0
Punjabi	5.0	42.5	10.0	17.5	2.5
Balochi	14.3	42.9	42.9	14.3	14.3
Anyother	11.1	27.8	11.1	16.7	00

The ratios do carry not a significant change in the results. The speakers of all local language have agreed to the fact that they are penalized for committing mistakes in English language. All have agreed to the fact that they do commit mistakes in the use of English language. The highest ratio is of Balochi speakers who gave 57.2% results that may link it to the previous results while 47% Punjabis accepted penalization as a part of learning and their association with their mother tongue is comparatively less.

Table.13- A sense of insecurity while committing mistakes in English language

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Siraiki	16.3	23.3	14.0	30.2	16.3
Balochi	28.6	42.9	14.3	14.3	00
Anyother	11.1	61.1	11.1	11.1	5.6

Mistakes in the lingua franca always bring a shame and a gesture of avoidance amongst the community members where local languages and their influence found at peak. 71.5% Balochi speakers supported the statement that they feel embarrassed upon committing mistakes in the

English language. 46% Punjabi speakers are embarrassed when they commit mistakes in English language.

Table.14. The Influence of mother tongue on English

Languages	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Saraiki	7.0	37.2	23.3	25.6	7.0
Punjabi	5.0	30.0	17.5	40.0	7.5
Balochi	14.3	00	28.6	42.9	14.3
Anyother	22.2	27.8	11.1	38.9	00

Mother tongue is not playing a crucial role in influencing English language rather it has an impact on the pronunciation of English language. The students find their mother tongues a hindrance in speaking English particularly the Balochi speakers find no relevance between their mother tongue and English language. They treat the two languages as totally different entities in influence domain.

Table 15: Overall Results of ANOVA Test:

Identity	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Siraiki	3.2990	.56032	1.285	.280
Punjabi	3.4357	.47402		
Balochi	3.5714	.68388		
Anyother	3.5714	.51566		

A one way between group analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of mother tongues on identity and linguistic association. Subjects were into mainly three language groups namely: Saraiki, Punjabi and Balochi. The mean score of Balochi speakers is comparatively higher than Saraiki and Punjabi Speakers. Despite reaching the statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the subject groups is minimal. The significant difference is 280 that is higher than .05 and represents that all local language speakers inducted in the study have given equal preference to their languages and considered that local languages are a hindrance for communicating in English.

Conclusion

The analysis of the data suggests two possible conclusions. First, it appears that students do take their mother language as a matter of pride and identity but they do feel embarrassed at the time when it influences the pronunciation of English language. The ratio is found highest in Balochi speaking students at university level. Linguistic terrorism is harmful to the effect that an individual is at the risk of neglecting their root cultural practices with the aim to accept and assimilate the new norms and culture. Encouragement to speak is equally of worth but the Balochi speaking students are less encouraged by the teachers. The results also supported the fact that if a teacher encourages students to speak English in any way at the initial stage of their learning in university, the influence of mother tongues can be minimized. It is obvious that these students will not be ashamed of their mother tongue and they will strive for educational pursuits in the best possible way. It is therefore recommended that the government and educational policy makers should

address the said issue and encourage the students to learn English as a requirement for educational pursuits. The regional languages and various accents of regional languages should not be stigmatized in institutions. Though bilingual or multilingual education is not possible yet the teachers should be trained to encourage students from various linguistic and ethnic identities so as the students at postgraduate level must not consider themselves as linguistically out cast. If the situation persists, the chances of the dismal and disappointment among students may get high that may result in their involvement in various anti-social and terrorist activities.

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