

Investigating the status of English language after judicial verdict of declaring Urdu as the national language of Pakistan

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to check out the status of English language after the decision of Supreme Court of Pakistan about Urdu language to be declared as official language of Pakistan in 2015. Urdu language being national language of Pakistan has been facing threats of extinction due to over emphasis being given to the English language which is being used as official language of Pakistan for last many decades. A self-report questionnaire was used to check out the status of English language with perspective of the opinion and observations of the common masses. The study was survey based research and adopted mixed method approach to gather and interpret data. 423 males and 177 females were selected as a sample through using multi-staged sampling technique. In first stage systematic and then convenient sampling techniques used to get information from the respondents. The maximum 56.33 percent of the respondents were strongly agree that English is the leading language of science and technology. The maximum 75.67 percent of the respondents were strongly agree that English language is necessary for the usage of internet and computer. However on the other hand, a maximum 75.16 percent of the respondents were strongly agree that people feel difficulty to exchange ideas in English language. It was found that people from different fields of life acknowledge the importance of English language at personal or official level, however they were in favor of giving due importance and credit to the Urdu language as well.

Keywords: language policy of Pakistan, English as international language, native language, foreign language

1. Introduction

English is a West Germanic language that was first spoken in early medieval England and is now the most widely used language in the world. It is spoken as a first language by the majority populations of several sovereign states, including the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and a number of Caribbean nations. It is the third-most-common native language in the world, after Mandarin Chinese and Spanish. It is widely learned as a second language and is an official language of the European Union, many Commonwealth countries and the United Nations, as well as in many world organisations. English arose in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of England and what is now southeast Scotland. Following the extensive influence of Great Britain and the United Kingdom from the 17th century to the mid-20th century, through the British Empire, and also of the United States since the mid-20th century, it has been widely propagated around the world, becoming the leading language of international discourse and the *lingua franca* in many regions.

Historically, English originated from the fusion of closely related dialects, now collectively termed Old English, which were brought to the eastern coast of Great Britain by Germanic settlers (Anglo-Saxons) by the 5th century – with the word *English* being derived from the name of the Angles, and ultimately from their ancestral region of Angeln (in what is now Schleswig-Holstein). A significant number of English words are constructed on the basis of roots from Latin, because Latin in some form was the *lingua franca* of the Christian Church and of European intellectual life. The language was further

influenced by the Old Norse language because of Viking invasions in the 8th and 9th centuries. The Norman conquest of England in the 11th century gave rise to heavy borrowings from Norman-French, and vocabulary and spelling conventions began to give the appearance of a close relationship with Romance languages to what had then become Middle English. The Great Vowel Shift that began in the south of England in the 15th century is one of the historical events that mark the emergence of Modern English from Middle English.

Pakistan came into being on 14th August, 1947. Before its independence, Pakistan was a part of British India. Present-day Pakistan has five provinces, each with a provincial language, which are Sindhi, Baluchi, Pashto, Balti and Punjabi. The official language of Pakistan is English which is used in important seats of government, the judiciary, the armed forces, commerce and higher education. The Constitution of Pakistan is codified in English. The Constitution relates Urdu and Pakistan on the basis of nationalism, and thus Urdu is the national language of Pakistan. It is a multilingual country where bilingualism (multilingualism) is a habitual affair even in the life of an average student.

Today, communication across the cultures and nations is more important than ever before. Language is the best medium of communication and is therefore essential for human interaction. In this globalized world, many people speak more than one language. Besides many other languages being taught in Pakistan, the English language is widely recognized for personal and professional use. It is considered as a *lingua franca* in all types of communication. The acquisition and use

of a second language is essential to the everyday lives of people around the world. The trend for acquisition of second language affects the careers and life styles of people. English enjoys a status of second language in Pakistan as it is used extensively for many purposes in society. After the 1950s there has been great advancement in communication as a result of which world has become global village. This gave birth to need of common language which was English. These days English is called language of economic system, international tourism, electronic information and higher education. Over 80 percent international organizations in the field of international relations make official use of English.

In this study the researchers investigated the status of English language after the decision of Supreme Court of Pakistan to implementation of Urdu language in all federal and provinces institutions. Many languages are spoken in Pakistan. Six major and 57 languages are being spoken in Pakistan. On 8 September 2015 chief justice of Pakistan Jawwad S. Khawaja gave historic decision and ordered that in all institutions of Pakistan rather they are under federal government or under provincially government will use Urdu language. Mostly people in Pakistan cannot understand English language. After this decision of Supreme Court of Pakistan about the implementation of Urdu language researcher investigated the status of English language.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Historical Perspective of English Language

English language is a West Germanic language that was first used in early medieval England and now English language is worldwide language and the most widely used language in the whole world. English language is spoken by majority of the people of United States, New Zealand, Ireland, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada etc. English language is the third most common language which is spoken in the world after Chinese language and Spanish language. In the world English language is learned as a second language and it is also an official language of many commonwealth countries, European countries and United Nation etc. English language started in the time of Anglo Saxon in fifth century. It is called old English. In 11th century Middle English started When the Norman Conquest of England. Modern English started with the introduction of the printing press to London in 15th century. In 17th to mid-20th century English language spread around the world. Now English has become an international language. English is regarded as the first language of the world. English is the language in the world which is mostly use in newspapers publishing and IC (international telecommunication). English has also took place of the Germanic language as the dominant language of scientific research. Now English is the main worldwide language of diplomacy and IR (international relations).

2.2 Three circles of English-speaking countries

Kachru distinguishes countries where English is spoken with a three circles model. In his model, the "inner circle" countries are countries with large communities of native speakers of English, "outer circle" countries have small communities of native speakers of English but widespread use of English as a second language in education or broadcasting or for local official purposes, and "expanding circle" countries are countries where many learners learn English as a foreign language. Kachru bases his model on the history of how English

spread in different countries, how users acquire English, and the range of uses English has in each country. The three circles change membership over time.

Countries with large communities of native speakers of English (the inner circle) include the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada, Ireland, and New Zealand, where the majority speaks English, and South Africa, where a significant minority speaks English. The countries with the most native English speakers are, in descending order, the United States (at least 231 million), the United Kingdom (60 million), Canada (19 million), Australia (at least 17 million), South Africa (4.8 million), Ireland (4.2 million), and New Zealand (3.7 million). In these countries, children of native speakers learn English from their parents, and local people who speak other languages or new immigrants learn English to communicate in their neighbourhoods and workplaces. The inner-circle countries provide the base from which English spreads to other countries in the world.

In the three-circle model, countries such as Poland, China, Brazil, Germany, Japan, Indonesia, Egypt, and other countries where English is taught as a foreign language make up the "expanding circle". The distinctions between English as a first language, as a second language, and as a foreign language are often debatable and may change in particular countries over time. For example, in some countries of Europe, knowledge of English as a second language is nearly universal, with over 80 percent of the population able to use it, and as such, English is routinely used to communicate with foreigners and often in higher education. In these countries, although English is not used for government business, the widespread use of English in these countries puts them at the boundary between the "outer circle" and "expanding circle". English is unusual among world languages in how many of its users are not native speakers but speakers of English as a second or foreign language. Many users of English in the expanding circle use it to communicate with other people from the expanding circle, so that interaction with native speakers of English plays no part in their decision to use English. Non-native varieties of English are widely used for international communication, and speakers of one such variety often encounter features of other varieties. Very often today a conversation in English anywhere in the world may include no native speakers of English at all, even while including speakers from several different countries.

2.3 English as a global language

English has ceased to be an "English language" in the sense of belonging only to people who are ethnically English. Use of English is growing country-by-country internally and for international communication. Most people learn English for practical rather than ideological reasons. Many speakers of English in Africa have become part of an "Afro-Saxon" language community that unites Africans from different countries.

As decolonisation proceeded throughout the British Empire in the 1950s and 1960s, former colonies often did not reject English but rather continued to use it as independent countries setting their own language policies. For example, the view of the English language among many Indians has gone from associating it with colonialism to associating it with economic progress, and English continues to be an official language of India. English is also widely used in media and literature, and the number of English language books published annually in

India is the third largest in the world after the US and UK. Crystal claimed in 2004 that, combining native and non-native speakers, India now has more people who speak or understand English than any other country in the world, but the number of English speakers in India is very uncertain, with most scholars concluding that the United States still has more speakers of English than India.

2.4 English and Subcontinent

British people came for trade in sub-continent. Muslims of sub-continent did not give favor to Britain people while Hindus gave favor to Britain people. Hindus focused on English language and became closed to Britain people due to better communication in English language or due to same medium of communication. But Muslims of sub-continent did not focus on English language due to the hate with English language. This thing was not good because history clears that ignoring the most widely speaking language would show destructive to us. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a great leader of Muslims in sub-continent. He focused to learn English language to communicate in better way with the people of British who were ruling in sub-continent that time. He also told that English language is also a source through which we can get the knowledge of science and technology to compete the Britian people. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan also arranged the newspaper in English and Urdu language to guide Muslims in a better way. He never emphasized to change the culture due to English language. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan only wanted to learn English language for better communication with Britian people. He also told that English language is only a medium of communication through which we can discuss or describe our motto in the ruling time of British.

2.5 History of Pakistan’s language policy

In 1947 Pakistan came into being when India partitioned. At that time new created states were Bengali, Punjabi, Pashtuns, Sindhis and Balochs. Bengali population was near about 50% and it became a separate country in 1971 named Bangladesh. By promoting Urdu as a notional language, language policy in Pakistan will strengthen. The language policy calls to modernize the state through English as an official language. The language is power. Dominant language and aspect of its culture affects the people of other language. Educated people of other culture, who are serving in forces, speak Urdu language with their family members to show power.

When Pakistan came into being on 1947, All Pakistan education conference was arranged which recommended to the constituent assembly that Urdu should be declared as the national language of Pakistan. Urdu must be taught in all over the country as a compulsory subject. After this conference the first governor general Quaid-e-azam and the Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan announced that Pakistan is a Muslim state and this state must have its lingua franca, a language of Muslim nation. They also announced that for a nation, language is very necessary, for Pakistan language can be Urdu, no other language. This statement of Quaid-e-azam and Liaqat Ali Khan instead of cementing, divided the imagined nation when Bangalis stated a language movement against the states language policy. The commission on national education called in 1959 to declare Urdu language as a national language of Pakistan from lingua franca. When Lt. Gen. Ziaul Haq started “Islamization” of laws then it was a need to see a new policy of

language. To fulfill these requirements it decided that Islamiat and Arabic will be taught as compulsory subject all over the country. Urdu was once again privileged over the other languages. From 1947 to 1973 English language was used as an official language. In constitute of 1973 Urdu language declared as a National language of Pakistan. It is also announced that all arrangements shall be made for its being used for an official and other purposes with in fifteen years. But, unluckily more than forty years passed but there is no implementation of Urdu language as an official language Pakistan. On September 8, 2015 Chief Justice of Pakistan ordered to implement Urdu language in all institutions of Pakistan.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The present study was survey based research. Questionnaire was developed and administered to get etic perspective of respondents. The quantitative methodology was adopted during data collection and analysis procedures.

3.2 Population

The authenticity, validity and the generalizability of any research work mainly depends on the selection of its population and way of sampling. The target population of the present study was literate people, businessmen, ESL teachers, students, professionals of 05 cities of Punjab province in Pakistan.

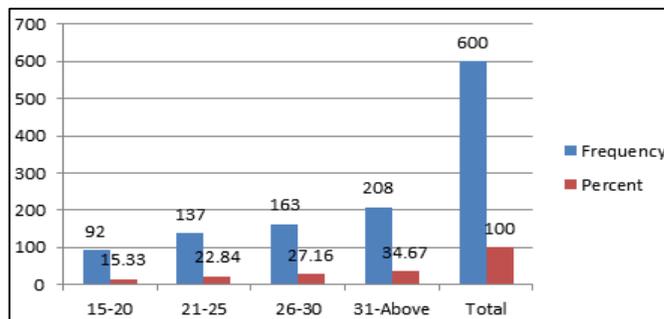
3.3 Sample

Purposive sampling is used to select sample for this study. The population of the present study was literate people, businessmen, ESL teachers, students, professionals of Multan division. 600 people were chosen as a sample. The information gathered from a sample is then applied to a broader population intended to be researched. It can be said that the sample of the current study represent the whole population of the present study. Though the results of this research cannot be applicable to the whole country, however they can be applied to the whole population parameter mentioned earlier.

4. Demographic Analysis of the Participants

Table 1: Age of Respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent
15-20	92	15.33
21-25	137	22.84
26-30	163	27.16
31-Above	208	34.67
Total	600	100.0

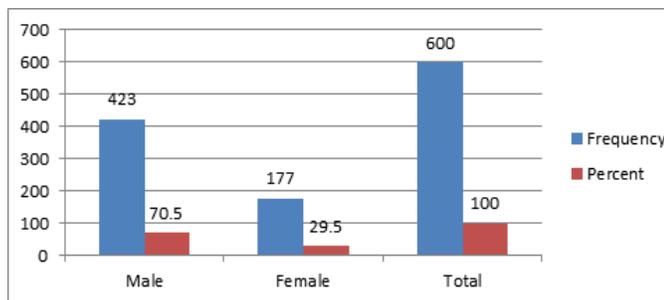


In table no.1 we can see that the respondents who respond for this research belonged to different categories of age. 15.33

percent out of 600 respondents belonged to 15 to 20 years old. 22.84 percent out of 600 respondents belonged to 21 to 25 years old. 27.16 percent out of 600 respondents belonged to 26 to 30 years old. 34.67 percent out of 600 respondents belonged to 31 to above years old. Mostly respondents belonged to 31 to above years old. 34.67 respondents belonged to 31 to above years of age.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Male	423	70.5
Female	177	29.5
Total	600	100.0



In table no. 2, gender of the participants is described who respond for this research. . We see that 70.5 percent out of 600 respondents were male. 29.5 percent out of 600 respondents were female. Mostly respondents were male. 70.5 percent out of 600 respondents were male.

Table 3: Respondents Education

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Primary	37	6.16
Middle	64	10.67
Matric	113	18.84
Intermediate	130	21.67
Graduation	121	20.16
Master	102	17
M.Phil	29	4.84
P.hd	04	0.66
Total	600	100.0

Table no.3 represents respondent’s education background. Respondents belonged to different categories of education like primary, middle, matric, intermediate, graduation, master, M.Phil and P.hd. 6.16 percent out of 600 respondent’s qualification was primary. 10.67 percent out of 600 respondent’s qualification was middle. 18.84 percent out of 600 respondent’s qualification was matric. 21.67 percent out of 600 respondent’s qualification was till intermediate. 20.16 percent out of 600 respondent’s qualification was till graduation level. 17 percent out of 600 respondent’s qualification was master. 4.84 percent out of 600 respondent’s qualification was M.Phil. 0.66 percent out of 600 respondent’s qualification was P.hd. Mostly respondents were educated till intermediate level. 21.67 percent out of 600 respondents were educated till intermediate level.

5. Summary of the Findings

The maximum 56.33 percent of the respondents were strongly agree that English is the leading language of science and technology. The maximum 75.67 percent of the respondents

were strongly agree that English language is necessary for the usage of internet and computer. The maximum 75.16 percent of the respondents were strongly agree that people feel difficulty to exchange ideas in English language. The findings of the study address following research questions in the light of data obtained and its subsequent analysis.

5.1 What is the importance of English language in economic gains of Pakistan?

English is an international language. English language is very necessary for international business. If a person has grip on English language then he/she can do business at international level. English language is also very important to get desire able job because mostly companies conduct job interviews in English language. Urdu is the national language of Pakistan. English language is used as an official language in Pakistan. So, all officially communication is conduct in English language in Pakistan. Constitution of Pakistan is also written in English language and its laws are also in English language. , and even the constitution of Pakistan and its laws are written in English. Private schools, colleges and universities are working for the development of English language. They are conducting English language classes for the improvement of English language. Because they think that bright future of students is linked with English language. English language is the key to future success. Mostly private schools and companies select the candidates on the basis of English language speaking. English language is very important for business and to get good or desirable job. The summative remarks regarding the question stated above are as under:

English is necessary to get an attractive job.
English language is necessary for an international business.
English language is the key to the national progress.
English is the leading language of science and technology.
English language is the tool for individual success.
English language is the tool for national success.
English language increases the earning power.
English language is the source to communicate with foreign companies.

5.2 What is the role of English language in educational development of Pakistan?

Educational system of any country plays a vital role in the progress of country. In Pakistan different types of institutes are there like English medium, Urdu medium etc. It’s a time of science and technology and mostly developed countries have English language as a national language or due to global language English language is very necessary for an educational system to get more knowledge about science and technology. It is also very necessary to deal or to communicate with international or English countries. . Every type of educational institutes are working in Pakistan so, the people who belonged to upper class send their children to English medium school because they can afford or pay the fees of English medium institutes. People who belonged to lower class or middle class send their children to Urdu medium school because they cannot afford the fees of English medium schools or institutes. The summative remarks regarding the question stated above are as under:

English is a modern language of knowledge.
People must learn English language to be an educated person.

English language is facilitating the international students.
English language is necessary to understand English books.
English language is important for higher studies.
English language is a tool for educational development.
English language is compulsory to teach international students.
English language is necessary for the usage of internet and computer.

5.3 What is the role of English language in social development in Pakistan?

Because English language is an international language therefore we can say that English language is a language of power. So, English Language is very necessary to take part in international debates. English Language is taking place of other languages in the world. So, English Language is very important to stand in the world of competition. English Language is an international language. Through English Language we can communicate with foreigners or with those people who only can speak or understand English Language. In Pakistan middle or upper class families speak English Language. They also send their children to English medium institutes. English Language is very important for communication at an international level or with upper class of world. The summative remarks regarding the question stated above are as under:

English is the language of advancement.
English language is displacing other languages in the world.
English language is a source to communicate with foreigners.
English language is a symbol of status in overall society.
English language is necessary to stand out in the world of competition.
English language is necessary to take a part in international debates.
English is the language of power.
English language is a source to develop your social relations.

5.4 How do the people perceive the declaration of Urdu as the national language?

Supreme Court of Pakistan declared to implement Urdu language in all institutes of Pakistan. This decision may be good for the unity among people of Pakistan. It can be also helpful for the progress of Urdu language as the national language of Pakistan. This declaration of Supreme Court of Pakistan may be helpful for the students to learn difficult points. The summative remarks regarding the question stated above are as under:

The decision is good for the progress of Urdu language.
The decision is beneficial for promoting national unity.
The decision will be helpful to decrease prejudice among nation.
After declaration of Urdu as the national language, other countries will respect our national language.
This decision of Urdu as a national language will get high favor among public.
People of upper class will not welcome the decision of Supreme Court of Pakistan about Urdu language.

5.5 What problems are being faced by people regarding English as an official language?

In the last question of this study some problems which are faced by people of Pakistan about English language are discussed. Grammatical problem, pronunciation problems, vocabulary problems are main problems which are faced by people of Pakistan while speaking an English language. Mostly people feel hesitation while speaking English. The summative remarks regarding the question stated above are as under:

People face pronunciation problems while speaking English language.
People face confront problems while speaking English language.
People face vocabulary problems While speaking English language.
People feel hesitation while speaking English language.
People feel shy while speaking English language.
People show the lack of confidence while speaking English language.
People do spelling mistake while writing English language.
Mostly people do not understand English language.
People feel difficulty to exchange ideas in English language.

6. Conclusion

The key conclusion made in the light of statistical analysis and interpretation of the survey results. To conclude this study it can be said that mostly people are in the favor of English language to be sustained as the official language of Pakistan because it has obtained the status of international language today. It is also evident that the importance of English language cannot be ignored because it is the language of science and technology. However, it is also an admitted fact that importance of Urdu language cannot be denied on the cost of over emphasizing the role of English language in Pakistan. To show the results of this study it can be also conclude that the decision of Supreme Court of Pakistan about Urdu language will be helpful for the unity of nation. It is the responsibility of all concerned to maintain balance between English language and Urdu language at personal and official levels in the country. The role and status of native languages must be made prominent while introducing and inculcating any guest language in any nation.

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