

LANGUAGE SHIFT IN MULTILINGUAL PAKISTAN: EXAMINING PUNJABI'S ETHNOLINGUISTIC VITALITY THROUGH FISHMAN'S DOMAIN THEORY

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Abstract

The present study aims to identify the factors responsible for the language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English. The research focuses on social, political, economic, demographic, technological, and attitudinal factors that compel speakers' language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English. Moreover, it also aims to investigate whether this shift is positive or negative and highlight the young generation's attitudes towards the Punjabi language. The study instrument was a five-point Likert scale questionnaire adopted from two relevant studies (Gillani et al., 2014 & Nazir et al., 2013), primarily designed by Gardner's Attitudinal Motivation Test Battery (ATMB), containing 24 statements and one open-ended question. The research population was undergraduates and postgraduates of the University of Sargodha (UOS). A random sample of 88 participants was taken, and data were analyzed through IBM SPSS software. Domain theory by Joshua A. Fishman (1972) and Ethnolinguistics Vitality Theory (EVT) by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) are applied as a theoretical and analytical framework to determine the role of sociocultural features that affect the strength of language choices in a multilingual context, and help to find the language shift and language preservation. Findings show that low prestige, linguistic shame, lack of technological advancements, and lack of governmental and institutional support are reasons behind the Punjabi language shift, and respondents saw the shift as positive, having no emotional attachment. The research provides empirical evidence of the Punjabi shift and helps to preserve Pakistan's cultural and linguistic diversity of the indigenous languages.

Keywords: Language shift, Multilingualism, Ethnolinguistic Vitality, Domain Loss, Intergenerational Transmission, Linguistic Diversity, Code-Switching

1. Introduction

Language shift is a phenomenon that occurs when multilingual speakers start preferring other languages over their mother tongue, as that language ensures some economic and social gains. Moreover, Language shift can be defined as a process in which "the habitual use of one language is being replaced by the habitual use of another" in "bilingual towns, villages, or neighborhoods" (Gal 1979: 1). Sometimes this shift is voluntary, while most of the time this is involuntary, people are compelled to make a shift towards a second language. Language change is inevitable as language is a dynamic phenomenon; sometimes this change is positive when the language

becomes more advanced and flourishes, while other times it is adverse when language is continuously replaced by some other language due to a lack of advancement in its content. In the case of the Punjabi language, this shift is dangerous as it is continuously neglected in many areas due to its low prestige, as no social, technological, or economic benefits are attached to it. Punjabi language is a member of the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family and is the native language of around 125 million people around the world. The Punjabi language is spoken in many countries of the world, and two major groups use the Punjabi language as their mother tongue: the Sikhs of East Punjab in India and the Punjabis living in the western part of the Punjab province in Pakistan (Farrukh, Chohan, Ahmed, et al., 2016). In the Punjab province of Pakistan, the majority of people are native speakers of the Punjabi language, as the Census of 2017 shows that all over the country, almost 38.78% of the population speaks the Punjabi language, while 7.08 % of the population speaks the Urdu language, despite the dominance of the Punjabi language, it is passing through a continuous language shift. People have developed wrong perceptions about language, as they thought that being speakers of the Punjabi language would be a matter of shame for them. Therefore, they feel proud while speaking Urdu or English. The shift would ultimately cause the loss of identity, as stated by Hoffmann (2009, p.21), the loss of language also causes the loss of other culturally significant practices dependent on the language. Michael (2011, p. 136) reports that language shift may cause losses of cultural knowledge, especially detailed information about cultural practices, literature, folklore, and resources. According to Zaidi (1990), only 2% of people could read and write the actual script of Punjabi. The study is significant in identifying the factors responsible for this gradual shift from Punjabi to Urdu. Some social determinants are the cause of language shift. Similarly, Gal (1979) and Macky (1980) noted that sociopolitical and socioeconomic factors predominate in most language shifts. Buccheit (1998) & Fishman (1966) emphasized that education is a highly impactful factor in facilitating language maintenance, but in some cases, it also plays a dominant role in language shift. Here, in the case of Punjabi, the role of education is seen as maintaining both Urdu and English in educational institutes, but not the Punjabi language, even though there is no Newspaper publication in the Punjabi language. Furthermore, parents are not willing to transfer the Punjabi language to the next generation; they scorn children when they speak Punjabi, but appreciate speaking in Urdu or English because they consider Punjabi does not ensure any economic and technological advancement. This study aims to identify language changes and shifts from Punjabi to Urdu and English and explores whether this shift in language is positive or negative. Furthermore, this study also tries to define the status of the Punjabi language; is it considered a tolerated language because it is neither fully supported nor discouraged?

1.1 Research Objectives

The research addresses the following objectives:

1. To investigate the factors responsible for the language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English, and to see whether Punjabi is a prestigious, neglected, or tolerated language.
2. To determine the attitude and preference of young Punjabi-speaking generations towards Urdu and English compared to their mother tongue, and to explore how the graduates and postgraduates of the University of Sargodha perceive this shift.
3. To assess the cross-generational transfer sequences of Punjabi within the household context, whether the language is being opted for transfer to younger generations or not.
4. To explore the domains of language use at home, education, workplace, religion, media, and social interactions, where Punjabi is gradually being replaced by Urdu and English.
5. To find the Sociolinguistic factors like rank, recognition, prestige, institutional assistance, social approval, urbanization, and employment that contribute to the language shift

1.2 Research Questions

The research addresses the following questions:

1. Which aspects aid the language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English? Is Punjabi a celebrated, marginalized, or tolerated language?
2. What is the language perception and inclination of young Punjabi-speaking heirs, about Urdu and English, compared to their mother tongue?

3. What are the cross-generational transfer sequences of Punjabi within the household context, whether language is being opted for transfer to younger generations or not? To what degree do home settings, pedagogy, work location, online, and social engagement affect the language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English?
4. What are the sociolinguistic factors of the language shift, like rank, recognition, prestige, institutional assistance, social approval, urbanization, and employment?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study embodies the language shift over generations and assists in understanding the long-term survival of Punjabi as an indigenous language. Language choice depicts the prestige, social construct, and cultural beliefs associated with any language, and this research is important to understanding the sociocultural attitudes of Pakistanis that are influencing the shift of Punjabi and the rise of Urdu and English. The study will help researchers, policymakers, educators, and linguists frame mechanisms to support indigenous Punjabi, while aligning the need for Urdu at the regional level and English for global communication. Punjabi is a rich language and hosts diverse cultural traditions such as folklore and literature. Comprehending the contributing factors in its shift will help to make more rational decisions towards its preservation, documentation, and promotion. This research provides empirical evidence of the Punjabi language shift and helps to preserve Pakistan's cultural and linguistic diversity of the indigenous languages. The study contributes to the current knowledge and provides comprehension for further investigation.

2. Literature Review

According to John and Singh (2005), language change is necessary and inevitable, but the rate of change varies, based on location; whether the changes are faster or slower, they do happen, and happen for a good cause. Mantiri (2010) also favors language change; change can be positive as it helps people in business trade goods and services, travel, and communication with other nations more effectively. Another view of Lyon (1981) is that language and culture are interdependent, and each provides interpretation for the other. It also means that a change in one becomes the cause for change in the other, and the same is happening with the Punjabi language and culture, as the shift to Urdu and English is becoming a cause of cultural change. The causes of language shift or death can be natural or environmental, political or military, cultural and religious, language policy, and linguistic factors (Clara & Farah). Din & Ghani (2017) explored the noticeable linguistic changes occurring in the Punjabi lexicon due to certain factors, such as social, educational, industrial, and technological advancement, and particularly the spread of electronic media in the Punjabi community in Pakistan. Political factors are also responsible for the language shift; Rehman (2017) states that Pakistan's elite class never supported and liked Punjabi as Pakistan's national language. Even the media plays a critical role in this shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English, as in Pakistani dramas; all the elite class characters, well-mannered persons, and successful people are depicted speaking the Urdu language, while on the other hand, all the laborers, uncivilized or uneducated persons, are depicted using the Punjabi language. The media industry of Pakistan does this injustice to the Punjabi language, as it develops the wrong perception that Urdu and English are prestigious languages, while Punjabi has no social value. Another important factor involved in language shift and maintenance is the attitude of its speakers towards their language (Gardner, 1985 & Holmes and Harlow, 1991). Negative attitude of Punjabi speakers supports language shift. Similarly, according to Shah (2014), Punjabis, despite being in the majority, are showing strange attitudes towards their mother tongue as they support Urdu and English in competition with the Punjabi language, because the Punjabi language does not ensure any economic and political gains. Furthermore, the Punjabi language is continuously neglected in the educational field as it is only taught in higher education programs as an optional subject, not at the school level. This notion is strengthened by a survey regarding language categorization, where students residing in the provincial capital of Punjab placed English in the top hierarchical order, Urdu was put in the middle, and Punjabi was placed on the bottom level, referring to Punjabi as inferior while Urdu and English as superior languages (Mansoor, 1993). The future of the Punjabi language is in acute Danger as the young generation does not consider it necessary to transfer the Punjabi language to the next generation, as the findings of Gillani and Mahmood (2014) show that the young generation is not showing any serious attitude in preserving their mother tongue, as they see no economic gains in this language. Furthermore, gradually increasing vulgarity in theatres of Pakistan has developed a negative perception of the Punjabi language, as Zaidi (2010) pointed out that even native Punjabi speakers consider their language offensive and vulgar. This might be another reason why it never became the medium of instruction at

educational institutes, as students do not consider it a worthy language to be taught (Chishti, 1996). Moreover, Punjabi is not a fully developed language, and upcoming generations are shifting towards other technically and digitally developed languages such as Urdu and English (Arsalan, Mehmood, & Haroon, 2021). According to Abbas, Rana, Ahmad & Kaleem (2020), 'The Punjabi language was adversely affected by the arrival of the British in the subcontinent and their language policies to undermine the indigenous languages. Furthermore, they also explored that due to Punjabis' attachment to the Sikh community, it was also neglected by other communities, and never gained official status nor was allowed to be used as an instructional language in institutes (p.1). A shift in the Punjabi language is because the professional, local, or cultural activities of the Punjabi community are either conducted in national or international languages, such as Urdu and English (Khokhlova, 2014). Another study shows that Punjabi is used to crack jokes and make fun (Zaidi, 2010). Similarly, in the words of Zaidi (2017), the Punjabi language is becoming alien in its land, due to the neglect of its speakers, who do not give it due importance, even though this is the language of the majority. Similarly, Ghufraan (2014) identified that the shift in the Punjabi language is due to economic factors, urbanization, the absence of Punjabi language in educational institutes, and the low prestige associated with this language. Furthermore, Nazir, Aftab & Saeed (2013) identified that the shift from Punjabi is occurring due to prestige, modernity, and social mobility issues; also, most Punjabi speakers do not own it. Sarwat, Kabir, Kayyum, & et al (2021, p.1) observed that 'parents' preference for L2 (English) was to succeed their generation in their academic and social life. They consider their social and economic benefits more important than their ethnic and linguistic identity. In an in-depth reading of relevant material, the researchers found a need to explore factors affecting language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English and fill the gaps by contributing to the existing body of knowledge.

2.1 Research Gap

The earlier researchers did not conduct an in-depth study of the Punjabi language shift compared to the major languages, Urdu and English, in multilingual Pakistan. This research will highlight the mindset of urban Pakistani youth towards their mother tongue, while the previous studies do not specify the youth among whom the language is shifting. The earlier research did not analyze questionnaire data, observations, and interviews using Fishman's domain theory (1972), and Ethnolinguistics Vitality Theory (EVT) proposed by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) as a theoretical framework with quantitative and qualitative analysis. The earlier research focused on status and policy, the education system, and institutional roles; this research shows the lived experience of the youth.

2.2 Theoretical & Analytical Framework

2.2.1 Fishman's Domain Theory

Domain theory was first proposed by Schmidt-Rohr (1932) and later developed by Joshua A. Fishman (1972) in sociolinguistics. They suggested that in multilingual communities, people prefer languages according to the social context. Language performs socially-associated functions in related fields like education, work, religion, media, and friendship, and language shift happens when another language replaces functions of one language domain in more than one domain. Domain is the social setting of a speaker, like home, family, school, workplace, religion, media, and peer groups, in which they perform functions through language. Haberland (2005) elaborates on domain loss, when a language usage in certain domains declines or is replaced by another language in multilingual societies. Language can lose related vocabulary, lexical items, and domain-related linguistic encoding. Domain loss can lead to the gradual or immediate shift of language. Joshua A. Fishman (1972) elaborates the following domains of language:

- The home and family domain is defined as the language spoken by family members, parents, siblings, and grandparents, and depicts private and unchecked life with language.
- Friendship/Peer group domain includes informal talks and colloquial language with your friends, peers, and age fellows.

The Education Domain includes the Language of academics, research, courses, publications, reports, and instruction at educational institutions. Professional/Work Domain Language is chosen in professional settings like offices and workplaces, and is also used on bank transcripts, public transport, electricity suppliers' bills, etc.

- The Religion Domain includes the language used for religious education, sermons, and texts.
- The Media Domain added the language used for newspapers, websites, magazines, television and radio broadcasts, online, and social media platforms.

2.2.2 Ethnolinguistics Vitality Theory (EVT)

Ethnolinguistics Vitality Theory (EVT) was proposed by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) as a theoretical framework for determining the role of sociocultural features that affect the strength of language choices in a multilingual context, and helps to find the language shift and language preservation. The theory explains reasons why some languages flourish while others decline and shift. A language with high vitality will survive, and a language with low vitality will shift or be lost. Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) define vitality as a strength and power of a society or community that rebels and resists against their language change or shift. They explain the following three main vitalities that resist language shift:

- The community with high status vitality, like social prestige, economic stability, political standing, and high cultural value, will resist the language shift.
- The demographic vitality determines the size of the community of a particular language, its distribution among urban and rural areas, migration, cross-cultural marriages, and birth rates.
- Institutional Support vitality describes that a language will flourish and alter its decline if it gets support from culture, media, education, religion, law, and government institutions.

3. Research Methodology

The research was completed using quantitative and qualitative methods, a questionnaire, and open-ended questions. A questionnaire was adopted with a few modifications according to the aim of the research from a relevant study by Gillani & Mahmood (2014) and Nazir, Aftab, & Saeed (2013), primarily designed by Gardner's (1985) Attitudinal Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The questionnaire was a five-point Likert scale and also contained multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section contained four questions about participants' information, name, gender, age, place of residence, and mother tongue. The second section contained twelve multiple-choice questions, with four options: (a) Punjabi language, (b) Urdu language, (c) English language, and (d) any other. The third section contained twelve questions of the Likert scale with five options: (a) Strongly agree, (b) Agree, (c) Neutral, (d) Disagree, and (e) Strongly disagree. The fourth section contained one open-ended question, where participants were unrestricted and had the freedom to describe their opinion regarding the factors of the Punjabi language shift. The survey was administered in a friendly manner, where the participants were made to feel relaxed and comfortable before filling out the questionnaire. Joshua A. Fishman's (1972) Domain Theory and Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor's (1977) Ethnolinguistics Vitality Theory (EVT) are used as the theoretical and analytical frameworks, respectively, for research and to analyze and interpret the data.

3.1 Data Collection

The research population consisted of undergraduates and post-graduates aged 18-25 from the University of Sargodha (UOS). The data was collected using purposive sampling techniques, and undergraduates and post-graduates aged 18-25 from the University of Sargodha (UOS). Researchers took a random sample of 88 participants from different educational backgrounds. Among 88 participants, 44 were male respondents, representing 50% of the sample, and 44 were female respondents, also

representing 50% of the sample. Male and female respondents are analysed together. **Table 3.1: Data about the participants' gender.**

| | | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|--------|-----------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Male | 44.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | Female | 44.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 88.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

All the data from the questionnaire were analysed through IBM SPSS Statistics 23 Software. Names of participants were kept confidential; instead of names, participants were given numbers like 1,2,3,4, ..., etc. Similarly, in place of residence, the rural area was denoted with number 1, the urban area was denoted with number 2, and the suburban area was denoted with number 3. In the case of mother tongue, Urdu was denoted with 1, Punjabi with 2, and any other language with 3. Following the same order, Likert scale options of statements were given mathematical numbers. (Strongly agree=1, Agree=2, Neutral=3, Disagree=4, strongly Disagree=5). A total of six Bar graphs are used to describe the percentage of the participants' responses to the questionnaire; moreover, the open-ended question at the end is analysed quantitatively.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

The consent of participants has been taken by informing them about the purpose, nature, and use of the research. Personal details of the participants, like name, contact number, and department, are not disclosed. Interview participants and their remarks remain anonymous and cannot be traced, and participants' responses related to culture and language are treated respectfully. The analysis of the Punjabi shift is based on the data of the questionnaire and interview-based open-ended questions from the participants, not on the personal opinion or judgment of researchers. Language is tied with culture and identity, so care has been taken not to present any language as superior or inferior. The research follows academic honesty by citing proper references, avoiding plagiarism, misinterpretation, and manipulation, and acknowledging theoretical frameworks and cited literature.

4. Data Analysis

The section deals with the questionnaire and the open-ended question to represent the complete data analysis of the Punjabi language shift. The questionnaire percentage analysis is completed using SPSS Software. Six bar graphs are displayed to interpret the participants' responses to the questionnaire. The percentage analysis of the questionnaire is given below. Figure 1 represents the usage of the Punjabi language in a different social context by students, graduates, and post-graduates at the University of Sargodha (UOS).

Figure 4.1 represents how the Punjabi language is shifting towards Urdu and English. Most of the participants speak Urdu with their friends and within the markets. Punjabi is spoken at home, but participants prefer Urdu and English in professional settings. Most participants believe the Urdu language is easier for them than the Punjabi language. According to the Domain Theory of Joshua A. Fishman (1972), Language performs socially-associated functions in related fields like education, work, religion, media, and friendship. The data clearly show that Punjabi is shifting and losing domains dominated by Urdu and English. Across social and professional domains, participants are inclined towards Urdu and English while rejecting Punjabi. The participants with Punjabi mother tongue chose Punjabi at home, with friends and peers, and at the market, but not at the institutes. In social life, 73.9% of participants use the Urdu language, while

only 18.2% of participants use the Punjabi language. In professional life, 63.63% of participants use Urdu, 34.09% use English, and only 1.1% use Punjabi. The participants consider Urdu and English sophisticated; therefore, these languages are used in professional lives. While proficient in Punjabi, speakers will probably not be able to get a higher-status job in Pakistan. Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor's (1977) Ethnolinguistics Vitality Theory (EVT) also suggests that the willingness and prestige, and power attached to any community to help the language survive, whereas Punjabi speakers don't take pride in their language, Punjab has low vitality; therefore, Punjabi is struggling with language shift.

Figure 4.1: Use of the Punjabi Language in different Social Contexts (Male and Female participants)

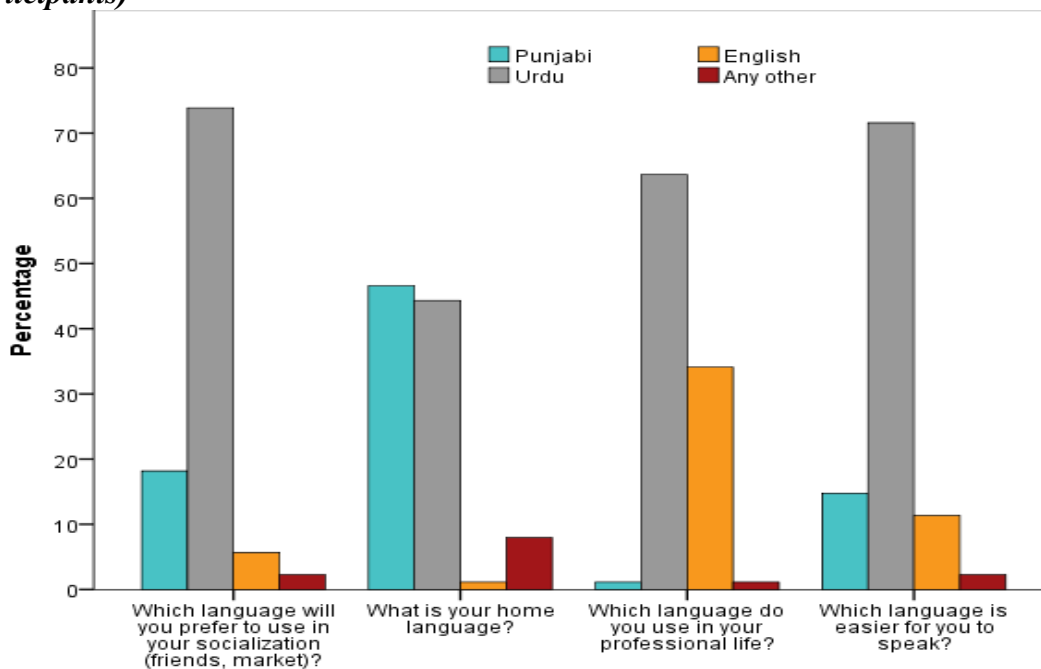


Figure 4.2 represents the language of educational institutions in Pakistan. The education domain of the Domain theory by Joshua A. Fishman (1972) elaborates that if any language is used as the medium of instruction in educational institutes, textbooks, and research is conducted, that language survives; if the weak language is replaced by the dominant language in the educational domain, the shift of language increases. The Punjab is not preferred at educational institutions of the province; rather, students and teachers feel ashamed and hesitant to speak Punjabi in the classroom. As the data shows, Punjabi is not the medium of instruction; Urdu is the medium of instruction, and students take pride in using it. English is another major language used in educational institutions. In Pakistan, educational institutions advocate Urdu and English, and do not prefer Punjabi; Punjabi is discouraged. Punjabi is a regional language of Punjab, but not even Punjab's educational institutions choose the Punjabi language. Only 4.5% of the participants' educational institutions selected Punjabi as a medium of instruction at their schools and colleges, 51.1% of the participants' educational institutions use Urdu as a medium of instruction at school, and 43.2% of the participants' educational institutions use the English language as their medium of instruction at school. Mostly, participants use Urdu within and outside the classroom, and teachers discourage using Punjabi inside the classrooms, and encourage the students to speak

English and Urdu. The Ethnolinguistics theory by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) explains that the support of any language from institutions helps to avoid its shift, and the Punjabi language has minimal support from educational institutions. Punjabi shift is imminent because Punjabi has low vitality compared to Urdu and English, which are dominant and replacing it, and Punjabi is struggling with a language shift.

Figure 4.2: Use of Punjabi Language in Educational Institutions of Pakistan (Male and Female participants)

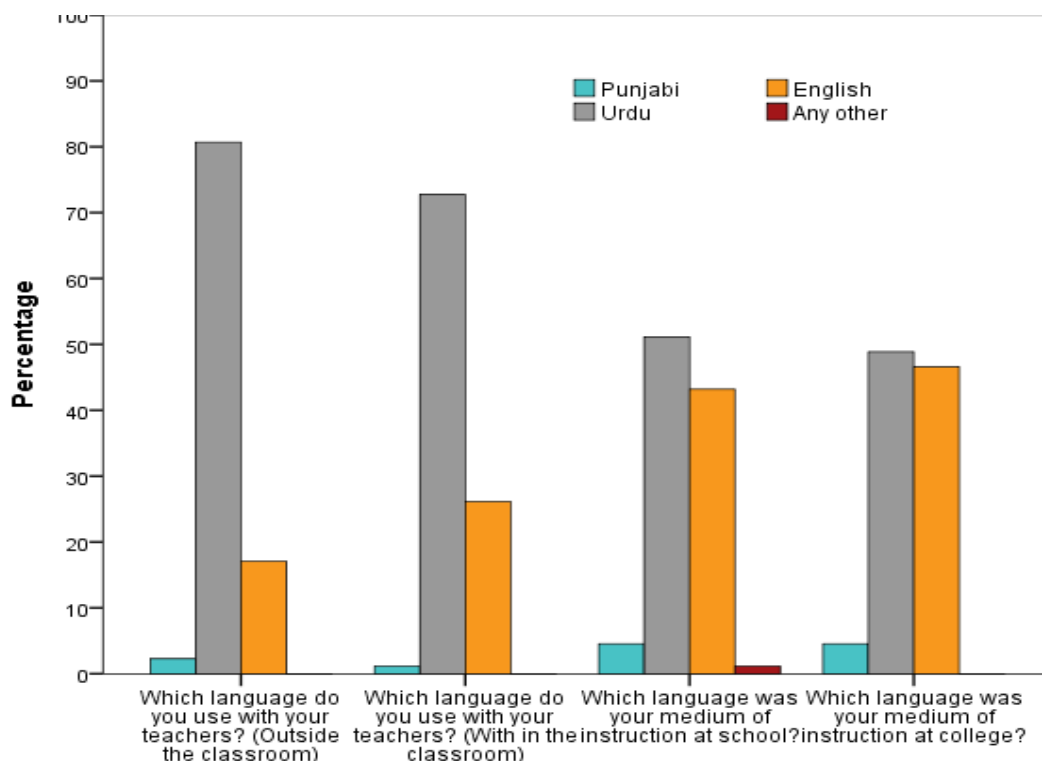


Figure 4.3 shows participants' views on the status of Punjabi and how it is passed down to future generations. Participants see Urdu as a language that brings economic benefits. According to them, Punjabi does not offer prestige or commercial advantages; instead, Punjabi speakers are discouraged from pursuing higher-status jobs, and in the job market, speakers of English and Urdu are preferred. The Ethnolinguistics theory by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) elaborates that the Punjabi language needs support from different institutions, while it is not receiving any support from the media; therefore, it has low vitality compared with Urdu and English. Urdu has local media support because it's the national language of Pakistan, and English is the lingua franca; it has local and international support. English is also Pakistan's institutional language; therefore, it is flourishing and overshadowing the Punjabi language. Parents take pride when their child speaks in English and Urdu due to the economic benefits and prestige attached to it; it's the people's home language, but not the educational and social language, so it is leading towards a shift. Most participants want to become fluent in English, with 46.6% expressing this desire, and 44.3% wanting to be fluent in Urdu. The majority prefer Urdu and English for the next generation rather than Punjabi. Furthermore, 62.5% of participants want to pass Urdu to their

children, 25.0% want to pass English, and only 8.0% want to pass Punjabi. Language transfer is vital for preservation, but Punjabi speakers do not take pride in speaking it and do not want to pass it on, indicating an uncertain future for Punjabi. Most mainstream TV channels in Pakistan are in Urdu, and very few are in Punjabi. Participants prefer watching Urdu and English channels over Punjabi ones. According to Joshua A. Fishman's (1972) Domain Theory, if a language is dominant in media flourishes, a language starts shifting if the media industry does not own it; Punjabi is not a dominant language in media; there are hardly any channels in Punjabi, and younger generations don't prefer to watch those channels.

Figure 4.3: Status of Punjabi Language and its Transfer to the Next Generations (Male and Female participants)

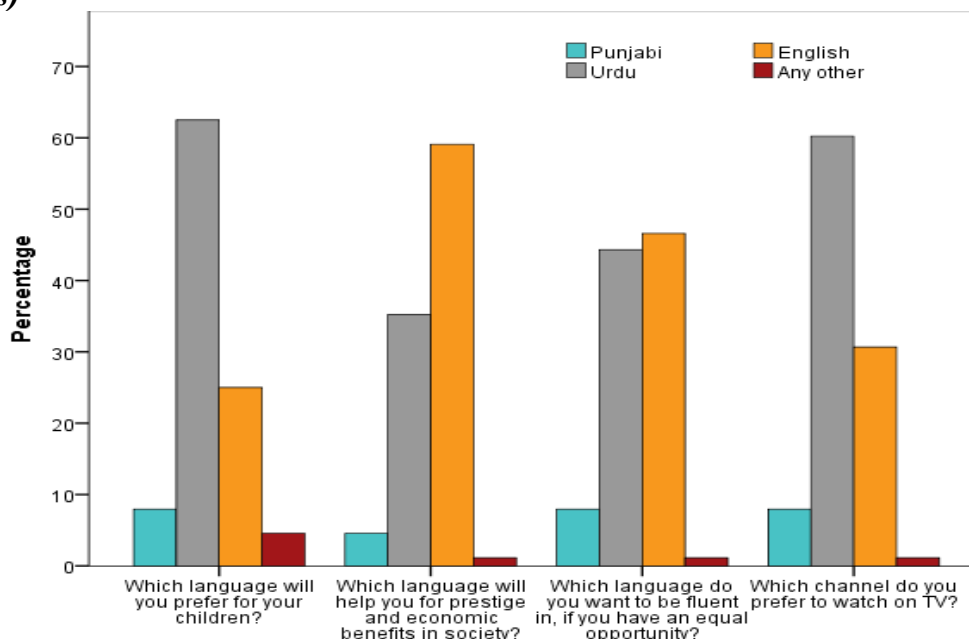


Figure 4.4 represents the analysis of several Likert-scale questions about the knowledge and status of the Punjabi language. According to data, most of the participants are fluent in the spoken language; however, they do not know the script of the Punjabi language, as 36.4% of the participants are fluent in the Punjabi language. Shahmukhi script (Urdu script) is used to write the Punjabi language in Pakistan. Only 17% of the participants strongly agree that they know the script of the Punjabi language. Most participants did not read any material in the Punjabi language, and even if the choice is given, they do not want to read the material in Punjabi. Only 6.8% of participants strongly agree that they want to study all their subjects in the Punjabi language, while 30.7% strongly disagreed to study all subjects in the Punjabi language. Moreover, 34.1% of the participants disagreed with studying all the subjects in the Punjabi language at educational institutes. Fishman's (1972) Domain Theory examines that a language survives and dominates if its speakers take pride, are well aware, and perform functions in different domains. The data shows young and educated Punjabi-speaking generations do not know the original script of the Punjabi language and don't want to be taught in Punjabi. According to the Ethnolinguistics theory by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977), a language flourishes with high prestige and acceptance in its community and the strength of its community. Punjabi is shifting due to limited support from the community, speaking Punjabi at home and avoiding it in educational institutions and social life; therefore, Punjabi has less support from its speakers than Urdu and English.

Figure 4.4: Knowledge of Participants about the Punjabi Language (Male and Female participants)

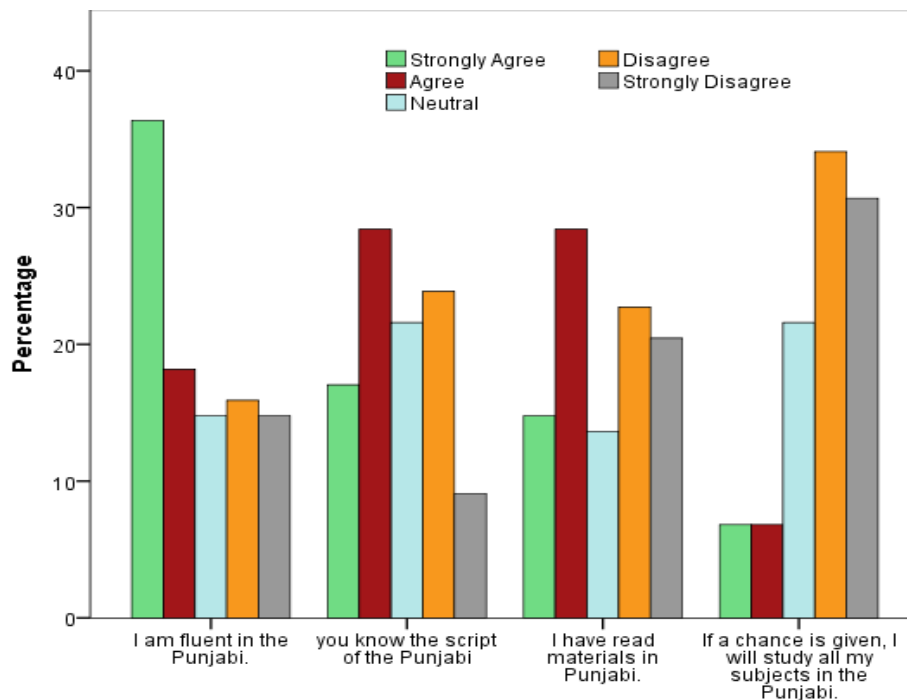


Figure 4.5 represents the sense of pride of participants while speaking the Punjabi language and the transmission of the Punjabi language to the next generation. 22.7% of the participants feel proud while speaking the Punjabi language in any context, and 8.0% strongly disagreed that they feel pleased while speaking the Punjabi language; moreover, 26.1% responded neutrally. Some of the participants want to transfer the Punjabi language to the next generation; only 25% of the participants strongly agreed that parents should transfer the Punjabi language to their kids, and 11.4% of the participants strongly disagreed that parents should transfer the Punjabi language to their kids. 21.6% of the participants responded that they will transfer the Punjabi language to the next generation, and 17.0% strongly disagreed with transferring the Punjabi language to the next generation. The home domain of Fishman's (1972) Domain Theory elaborates that participants speak their mother tongue at home. In the case of Punjabi, people don't take pride in it, and only 25% of the participants agreed that parents should transfer the Punjabi language to the young generations, and 11.4% of the participants disagreed with the transfer of Punjabi. If a language is not transmitted to the next generations and looked down upon, prestige and economic values are not attached to it; its decline is inevitable, and the same is happening with Punjabi. The Ethnolinguistics theory by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) explains that the status of any language, demographic factors, and institutional support help a language to dominate and exist, even though Punjab has a high number of Punjabi speakers in the Punjab province of Pakistan, who don't prefer the Punjabi language due to its low social and economic status. Low prestige is attached to it, and even Punjab politicians, the elite class, don't support the Punjab language; they prefer English due to its high prestige.

Figure 4.5: Transmission of Punjabi Language to the Next Generation (Male and Female participants)

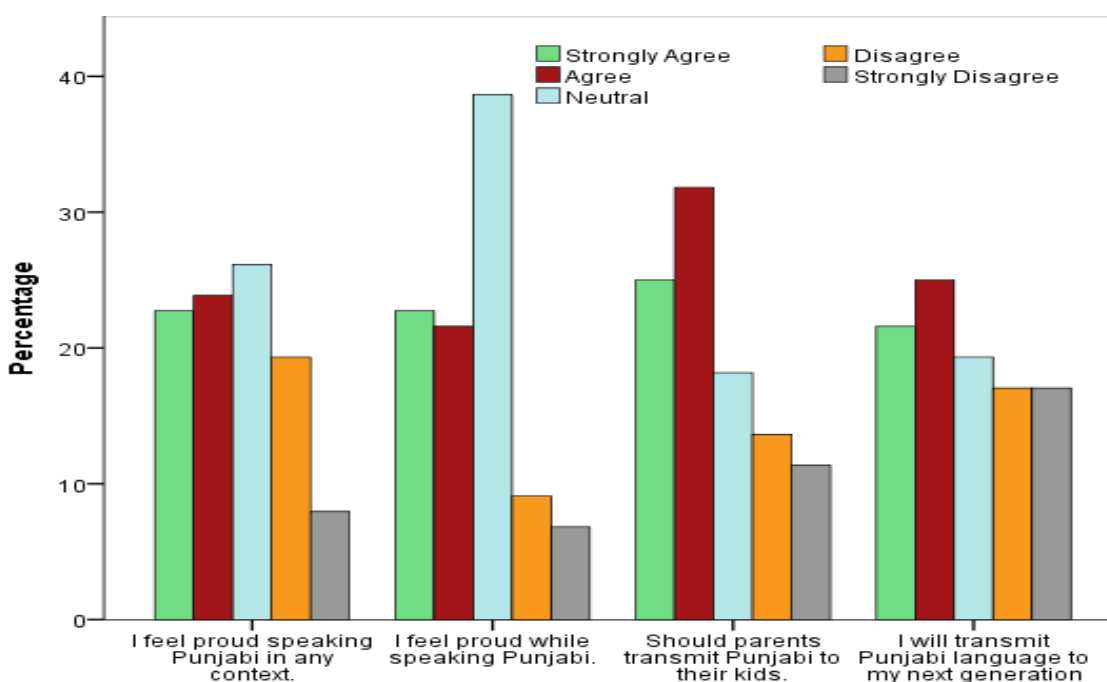
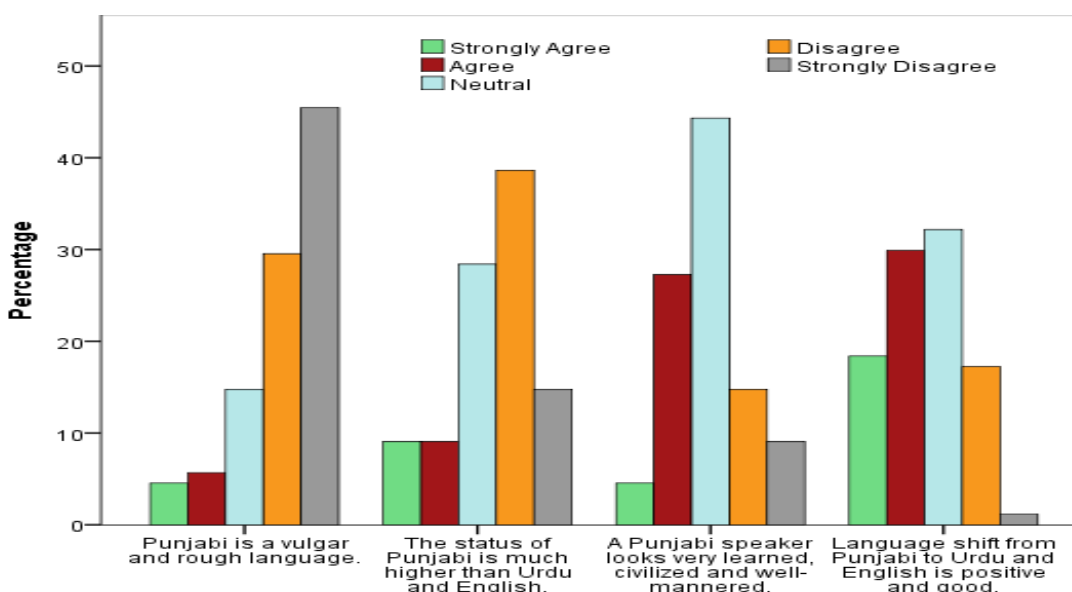


Figure 4.6 represents participants' views about the status of the Punjabi language in Punjab. Participants responded to the questions about linguistic shame, the status of the Punjabi language, and the shift of the Punjabi language towards Urdu and English. According to the Ethnolinguistics theory by Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977), even though Punjabi has high vitality in demographic factors, Punjabi speakers are large in numbers, they are densely populated both in rural and urban areas of Panjab province of Pakistan, and have a high level of intermarriages and birth rate. But due to low social status, prestige, economic benefits, social acceptance, image, and value in society, and low institutional support from education, government, media, religion, culture, and low Promotion through literature and cultural policies, leading towards its decline, participants also consider this shift positive. Most participants do not believe that Punjabi is a rough and vulgar language. The participants agreed that Urdu and the English language have higher economic and prestigious status, and 45.5% of respondents strongly disagreed that Punjabi is a rough and vulgar language. Only 9.1% of the participants agreed that Punjabi has a higher status than Urdu and English, and 38.6% disagreed that the status of the Punjabi language is higher than that of Urdu and English. According to participants, a Punjabi speaker does not look civilized, educated, and well-mannered; therefore, 44.3% of the participants responded neutrally. Most respondents agreed that the language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English is positive and good; only 1.1% of the participants strongly disagreed that the language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English is positive and good. The participants' response raised serious questions about the future of the Punjabi language. According to Fishman's (1972) Domain Theory, if the language has a higher status and is used in all domains, it survives and has no danger of being replaced by dominant languages, while the participants considered Urdu and English have a higher status compared to Punjabi, and speakers of English and Urdu look civilised and well-mannered. Language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English does not bother the speakers of Punjabi, and they are not concerned about the shift; rather, they consider it positive.

Figure 4.6: Opinion of Participants about the Status of the Punjabi Language (Male and Female participants)



4.1 Participant's comments

To get valid results, there was one open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire, in which participants were asked to write their opinion about a question: "What are some reasons for the Punjabi language shift towards Urdu and English?". Most respondents replied that Urdu is our national language, used in educational institutions, and sponsored by Pakistan's Government. One of the respondents commented that the number of students in the Punjabi department of the universities is much less than in the Urdu and English departments. Participants consider Punjabi a regional language spoken in Punjab, while Urdu is a national language, and English is the international language. People want to interact with the global community; therefore, they give more importance to the English language. Most respondents believe that Punjabi speakers have an "inferiority complex" because Punjabi speakers are considered ill-mannered. Some participants also commented that People prefer Urdu and the English language to look civilized, educated, modern, and well-mannered. The most common response was: to get a better education and job opportunity, one needs to learn the English language. One of the respondents commented, "Language shift from Punjabi towards Urdu and English is the need of the hour". Some respondents answered that our education system is the reason for this language shift. Other respondents said, "I used the Urdu language for a routine life, and English language for a professional life, Punjabi is an informal way of speaking, Urdu is a polite way of speaking and English is a professional way of speaking". Another participant wrote, "I will prefer my language as it is very sweet". One of the participants said that we do not value our mother tongue because we have internalized the superiority of the English language. One of the respondents wrote, "the Punjabi language has different accents which do not show any rhythm and unity while speaking Urdu I feel unity". One of the participants said that the Punjabi language is shifting because Urdu has been given more importance. Further, he says our media industry uses the Urdu language, and mostly dramas are produced in the Urdu language, and the characters who speak Punjabi are portrayed as ignorant and uneducated. One respondent said Punjabi is a language like Urdu and English, and people should not feel ashamed of speaking Punjabi. One of the participants said that "if somebody shifts the mother-tongue is the same as betraying his tribe or pride". All these comments of the young generation show that they consider the language shift from Punjabi to

Urdu and English inevitable, good, and positive. As the Fishman's (1972) Domain Theory explains, the language has different domains, and a language flourishes and is dominant when it performs functions in all the domains, like home, family, peer groups, profession, media, education, and religion. Decline of language in any of its domains leads to a language shift. The same has happened with Punjabi when it started declining in media, education, religion, and professional domains; it started shifting. The participants' response also indicates that they don't pick Punjabi at social, commercial, and educational levels because no benefit is attached to Punjabi. Howard Giles, Richard Bourhis, and Donald Taylor's Ethnolinguistics Vitality theory (1977) explains that if a language has higher status, institutional and demographic support, that language has high vitality, which helps grow and avoid its decline. The Punjabi language has strong demographic support but low status and institutional support, leading to its decline.

4.2 Results & Findings

Punjabi is the mother tongue of a great number of people from the province of Punjab in Pakistan and India. It's the local language of the Punjabi speakers from Punjab, but now seeing a shift towards Urdu and English. The dominant languages, like Urdu and English, are substituting for Punjabi due to their higher economic and social status. English is a lingua franca, has international significance, and is the official language of Pakistan, while Urdu is the Pakistanis' national language and is understood across Pakistan. Fishman's (1972) Domain Theory explains that Specific functions are attached to a language in different domains, like home and family, peer groups, profession, media, education, and religion, and language flourishes and dominates when it performs functions in all the domains. The shift of the language starts when a dominant language replaces any domain. The same has happened with Punjabi; when it started to decline in media, education, religion, and professional domains, it started to shift. Punjabi speakers use Punjabi at home, but don't prefer it at educational institutions, formal gatherings, and in social settings because they consider it a vulgar and unrefined language. Participants stated that those who speak Punjabi look less civilized, uneducated, and ill-mannered compared to those who speak Urdu and English. Punjabi speakers don't want to transfer the language to their younger generations, and don't consider that the Punjabi language will enable them to get any economic benefits or a job. Punjabi has very low support from educational institutions, the government, and the media. Punjabi has no high social status, no educational content is produced, and participants feel ashamed and hesitant to speak Punjabi in classroom settings; all these factors are responsible for language shift. Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor's Ethnolinguistics vitality theory (1977) explains that if a language has higher status, has a higher institutional and demographic support, that language has high vitality, which helps a language to grow and avoid its decline. The Punjabi language has strong demographic values but low social status and institutional support, leading to its decline. Punjabi people exist in large numbers, especially in Punjab and across Punjab. So, it has great demographic support and high vitality, but low in terms of status and prestige. Punjabi speakers do not consider Punjabi a language of higher prestige and great importance; therefore, they don't put any effort into restoring or preserving the language to avoid its shift. Punjabi has lower support from the government, educational institutions, and media houses; all these factors are responsible for the language shift. And if the shift continues, it can lead to major concerns about the Punjabi language and its culture. English and Urdu are the medium of instruction at educational institutions. Parents prefer their children to be educated in English and Urdu because they are associated with better job opportunities, career, and social status. Punjabi has no value in the education curriculum, which reduces exposure of younger generations to the Punjabi language. English and Urdu are considered symbols of modernity, progress, manners, and civilization, and are refined and prestigious for social communication. Punjabi is associated with perceived inferiority, and the people who speak are considered rural, lower class, less educated, and 'Paindu' (uncivilized) in urban settings. Urdu is the

national language of Pakistan, and English is the official language used in administration, law, and business; Punjabi has no official recognition at the provisional or national level. Governments' few efforts to promote Punjabi are also limiting its use. In major cities of Pakistan like Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi, and Faisalabad, the Urdu language dominates the workplace, schools, and social places. Urdu is also a lingua franca of Pakistan, and people from different provinces with different mother tongues use Urdu as a medium of communication, which reduces Punjabi use. All digital media communication, TV channels, and newspapers preferred the Urdu language, which pushes Punjabi out of use. Many Punjabi-speaking parents deliberately speak Urdu and English with their children, believing it will help them succeed academically and socially. When it reduces its use at the home level, it will disappear from family use. English is essential for global communication, higher education, research, international employment, and exposure to international media, which helps it dominate the local Punjabi language. Urdu is closely associated with Islamic literature and religious education, and has high prestige compared to Punjabi. Urdu is seen as a unifying language across Pakistan, while Punjabi is seen as a regional identity maker, which is the reason for the Punjabi shift. Punjabi has a stereotypical basis associated with rural, rustic, rough, vulgar, aggressive, and less cultured; therefore, Punjabi speakers hesitate to identify as Punjabi speakers due to fear of being labeled as less cultured or uneducated.

5. Conclusion

Punjabi is the most spoken language in Pakistan. Over time number of Punjabi speakers is declining because dominant languages like Urdu and English pose a threat to the existence of the Punjabi language. The majority of people shifted their loyalties towards Urdu and English. The reasons for the Punjabi language shift are a lack of prestige in society, linguistic shame, a lack of governmental support, no economic benefits, and not being a medium of instruction at educational institutions. People do not feel proud speaking Punjabi; they prefer Urdu and English. Most people use Urdu in socialization, like in markets and with friends. In professional life, youth use Urdu and English due to their higher prestige value. Punjabi speakers have fewer economic gains using Punjabi; moreover, Urdu and English speakers are encouraged at higher professional posts. Urdu and English are the media of instruction at educational institutions, while speakers of the Punjabi language are discouraged. Most people do not prefer the Punjabi language to watch Television (TV), and there are only a few Punjabi channels in Pakistan. Participants consider the lower rank of Punjabi in comparison with Urdu and English. Most people believe that the language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English is positive and for good; they do not have any emotional attachment to the Punjabi language. The younger generation does not want to transmit the Punjabi language to the next generation; rather, they prefer Urdu and English. This study concludes that Punjabi is a tolerated language in Pakistan because it is neither fully discouraged nor fully supported. The young generation's views show that they do not prefer to speak the Punjabi language and do not even want to preserve the language. If Punjabi speakers want to preserve the Punjabi language, it should be promoted through media channels, Radio, and newspapers. Parents must transfer the Punjabi language to the next generation. Schools at the primary and high levels should develop some Punjabi courses for the students to learn the Punjabi language. Punjabi literature should also be encouraged in educational institutions. The government should take preventive measures to save the Punjabi language through proper language planning and policy. Parents should encourage their children to speak Punjabi, which is in danger now. It is not only the language in danger, but the identity of Punjabis and their culture is in danger. The Punjabi language shift is fueled by educational, social, political, and economic pressures, integrated with negative attitudes toward the language and prestige associated with Urdu and English. Over time, this has led to a gradual decline in the intergenerational transmission of Punjabi, especially among urban and educated families.

5.1 Future Recommendations

Established a provisional language board that can incentivise educational institutions to include a provisional curriculum to support local languages. Authorities can introduce Punjabi language modules and training sources for development. Youth-led initiatives should encourage activities like poetry, folklore, and literature to make language attractive to younger generations. Contemporary Punjabi content creation, TV programs, documentaries, short films, and podcasts can help the Punjabi language. Punjabi culture and language should be celebrated. Public campaigns can be run with the modern creativity of culture and identity, not as a rural language. To decline the Punjabi shift, different stakeholders, such as the local government, masses, media houses, and cultural NGOs, should coordinate to diversify the process.

5.2 Limitations of the study

This research study has a small sample size, as it only considers the graduates and post-graduates from the University of Sargodha (UOS); therefore, results cannot be generalized as the sample cannot exemplify the whole population of the Punjabi speakers in Pakistan. In addition, it was hard to find all the factors involved in the language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English because participants' responses were based on the closed-ended questions given in the questionnaire. Some of the students did not respond with proper attention, and some of the students left the open-ended question unanswered. The study finds factors involved in the Punjabi shift; therefore, it cannot be generalized to other languages. This research can be further studied for validity and reliability.

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Appendices I: Questionnaire

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Dear fellows!

This questionnaire aims to collect data to find the factors of language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and English. Please make it authentic by honest participation. Your responses will be kept confidential. Thank you.

Section 1:

Name: -----

| | | | |
|--------------------|-------|---------|----------------------------------|
| Gender | Male | Female | |
| Age | 18-25 | 40-60 | |
| Place of Residence | Rural | Urban | Sub-Urban |
| Mother Tongue | Urdu | Punjabi | Any other (please specify) ----- |

Section 2: Please select one of the options appropriate to your choice.

| Questions | Punjabi | Urdu | English | Any other (Please specify) |
|--|---------|------|---------|----------------------------|
| Which language will you prefer to use in your socialization (friends, market)? | | | | |
| What is your home language? | | | | |
| Which language do you use in your professional life? | | | | |
| Which language do you use with your teachers? (Outside the classroom) | | | | |
| Which language do you use with your teachers? (Within the classroom) | | | | |
| Which language will you prefer for your children? | | | | |
| Which language will help you gain prestige and economic benefits in society? | | | | |
| Which language was your medium of instruction at school? | | | | |
| Which language was your medium of instruction at college? | | | | |
| Which language is easier for you to speak? | | | | |
| Which language do you want to be fluent in if you have an equal opportunity? | | | | |
| Which channel do you prefer to watch on TV? | | | | |

Section 3: Please show the extent of your agreement and disagreement with the following items.

| Strongly Agree= SA | Agree=A | Neutral= N | Disagree= D | Strongly Disagree= SD | |
|--|---------|------------|-------------|-----------------------|----|
| Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| I am fluent in Punjabi. | | | | | |
| I feel proud speaking Punjabi in any context. | | | | | |
| Punjabi is a vulgar and rough language. | | | | | |
| The status of Punjabi is much higher than Urdu and English. | | | | | |
| If a chance is given, I will study all my subjects in Punjabi. | | | | | |
| A Punjabi speaker looks learned, civilized, and well-mannered person. | | | | | |
| Language shift from Punjabi to Urdu and then English is positive and good. | | | | | |
| You know the script of Punjabi. | | | | | |
| I have read materials in Punjabi. | | | | | |
| I feel proud while speaking Punjabi. | | | | | |
| Should parents transmit Punjabi to their kids? | | | | | |
| I will transmit the Punjabi language to my next generation. | | | | | |

Section 4: The research contains one open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire to collect the participants' comments and to observe their perception of language shift. Here is the open-ended question asked by the participants, and their response has been added to the research analysis.

Q.1 What are the reasons for the shift from the Punjabi language to the Urdu and English languages?
Comment.