Language Identity of Tertiary ESL Learners:
Understanding Urdu and English Language Identities

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Abstract

Language affiliation and use are important in constructing language identity and motivating individuals towards their language maintenance and vitality efforts. In a multilingual context, these processes are actively promoting or hampering individuals in constructing and demonstrating their linguistic identities. In Pakistan, Urdu is constitutionally recognized as the national language, a marker of national identity and also opted as a medium for integration for different ethno-linguistic communities comprising Pakistani society. English language enjoys the status of official language and pervades all domains of society and is an integral part of the education system right from elementary education owing to the attached instrumental value. English language teachers have often complained of students' perceptions, attitudes, motivational issues; as factors rendering years of English language teaching-learning ineffective. Inadequate language identities are often at the root of this complex situation arising out of linguistic affiliations. The present study attempts to capture university students'L1 (Urdu) and L2 (English) identities and studying them from attachment and preferences with heritage and second languages and their learning. Quantitative data collected from 316 undergraduate students at a public university confirm the measures required to reinforce Urdu language and construction of language identity as part of language maintenance and vitality efforts, and language identity construction as the gap in English language learning efforts owing to the observed dichotomy in their language attachment and use. The findings reveal moderate level of language identity and learners' affiliation with their national language but a contradiction in their preference for its use in everyday living. Consequently, the divergence in attachment and precedence is significant in language policy and planning and teaching-learning of languages.

Keywords: language identity, national language, language learners, language policy, discursive practice

Introduction and Background

Since its creation, despite being spoken by less than only 8% of the population of Pakistan as a mother tongue (Lewis, 2009), Urdu was declared as national language. Mansoor, (2004) avowed that Urdu was benefited as national language as it was

positioned as insignia for national identity and national integration. As Urdu possess North Indian linguistic elements (Jabeen, Mahmood, & Rasheed,2011) and historically attached from the period of Mughal emperors, it was proclaimed as national language to maintain neutrality and to resist ethnicity (Rahman, 1999, 2004b) within such an extremely, linguistically rich country. Mansoor, (2004) asserted that the official policy after 1947 aimed to promote Urdu 'to help avoid regional autonomy and separation' (p.335). However, Urdu is also used as 'lingua franca' (Ahmed, 2011; Shamim, 2011) mostly in urban areas, most preferred language of inscription in Pakistan and most widespread language among ordinary people connected for business or transportation reasons (Rahman, 2011), used as a common medium of instruction in Government schools (Mahboob, 2007).

On the other hand; English is said to be 'anchored' in Pakistan (Mahboob, 2007, p.9) perforce continued to be official language (Haque, 1993, p.14) and was supposed to continue as the official language of Pakistan until the time that the arrangements should be made in national language to replace it (Rahman, 1999; Durrani, 2012). It was believed to be replaced by national language but the date came and went and the status of English language is as firmly entrenched in the domains of power since it was at the time of independence (Rahman, 2010). In comparison with Urdu, the national language, and other regional languages, English is the language of Power in Pakistan (Rasool & Mansoor, 2009) , commonly called second language (Rahman, 2001) and also considered as a gate-way of success for the expansion of economic future and information technology in Pakistan stressed by Jalal (2004) a former education minister. Shamim (2011) in her report *English as the language for development in Pakistan* endorsed that people of Pakistan considers English language as a 'passport to success and upward social mobility' and 'the key to national progress' (p. 2). Moreover, English language is also supported by university students in comparison of Urdu as they considered it as a language for 'economic progress and vitality' (Mahboob, 2007, p.22).

Besides, English is not considered only for the progress and development in national perspective but the Pakistani people discerned this language as an amplifier, prospecting to education, work and life (Dar, Zaki & Kazmi, 2010).Individuals seem to be more prosperous having English language skills as Pinon & Haydon (2010) reported that a salaried person having English language skills can earn 25% more in Pakistan compared to one having no English language skills. Moreover, they argued that English language speakers are more affluent in Pakistan and English is used as an everyday language among wealthier social class. The significance and value of this language is even acknowledged by the young Pakistani learners as an important tool for social, economic, and political advancement not only in Pakistan but also in the international community (Norton, 2010).

Language in Education
Powell (2002) argued that Pakistan possess a clear 'socioeconomic' hierarchy of language in which English leads Urdu whereas regional languages stay at bottom (p.

242). Like other ex-colonial countries, development of language policy is an upheaval task for young Pakistan. The complexity of the situation reached to its optimum due to the pressure exerted from different language groups for recognition of other languages as national language than Urdu (Mahboob, 2002; 2007). Additionally, Urdu was handicapped due to lack of corpus planning and English was maintained as official language of Pakistan. The three-language formula was adopted by this newly born state: Urdu as National language, English as Official language, and one provincial language for each province, reflected in education however, lacks availability of a comprehensive language policy (Cummins, 2008). Moreover, there is absence of specific official document which illustrates and discusses the national language policy and its implication for education in Pakistan (Mahboob & Jain, 2016). Consequently, Urdu + English language formula is exercised in educational context of Pakistan since its birth (Coleman, 2010) reflects pervasive usage of these languages in educational context other than one's mother tongue.

Problem Statement and Study Aim
Language is an indispensable element of one's identity and the attachment of an individual to its native language and culture can be seen through individuals' discursive practices (Lau, 2016). Contrary to the signified importance given to English Language learners are unable to produce desired outcomes even after learning it for 11 years in the academic settings (Jalaluddin, 2006) also reflects deficiency in English language communication skills (Ahmad & Rao, 2013). Besides, English whether under governments' deliberate act of colonial legacy or effect of globalization had already entrenched in Pakistan, effected the status and 'uniqueness' of Urdu language and its undeniable spread can in turn 'Englishized' the society (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017; p. 61-64). This necessitates adopting precautionary measures to safeguard learners' language identity; however it is unaddressed area in Pakistan.

Hence, this study aimed to fill the existing gap by exploring language identity and its degree of ESL learners for Urdu (L1) and English (L2) in order to provide remedial solutions for helpful English language learning and planning a comprehensive language policy for education.

Research Question
The study aims to identify the language identity construction with respect to Urdu (L1) and English (L2) languages of university students in ESL context ESL Learners. The study raises the following question:

What is the language identity of tertiary ESL learners for Urdu *(L1)* and English *(L2)* languages?

Review of Related Literature

Language and its practice

Language was traditionally defined as a set of systems and in terms of its syntactical or grammatical features probing language through structuralists' lens. It conceives language as 'signs, having idealized meanings..... a neutral medium of communication' whereas post-structuralists define language in terms of social meanings and signifying the society practice as a 'site of struggle' (Norton, 2010, p.350). She further explicates that linguistic communities are not homogenous as taken in account traditionally rather heterogeneous and conflicted site of power and truth. Post-structuralists theorize language from social perspective instead defining it from syntactic and psycholinguistic aspects; define language 'as an array of discourses imbued with meanings', a site of identity construction where all languages and discourses are not equal in the linguistic marketplace (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 283). Pierre Bourdieu, a French anthropologist and social theorist used economic metaphors to define language knowledge and practical competence for linguistic utterances as linguistic capital and market which refers to a 'structured space of positions in which the positions and their interrelations are determined by the distribution of different kind of sources' (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991, p.14). Post-structuralists drew linguistic practices from Bourdieun view where a particular linguistic variety is valued on the basis of its access to gain education of esteemed value, a chosen place on the social mobility ladder or in workforce (Pavlenko, 2002). In this manner, not all languages or discourses are of equal value, thus creates a site of struggle for an individual or community practicing a language to gain economic and social capitals.

Language and Identity

Language use is an act of identity as it demonstrates users' sense of ownership, reflecting their 'loyalty and emotional attachment' through their 'discursive rhetoric' (Rasookha, 2010, p. 24). Identity and language serve the purpose of recognition both for the individual and the community and are inextricable concepts as our use of language reveals our identity which in turn forms our language identity (Rezaei, Khatib, & Baleghizadeh, 2014).Hall (2013) stressed that individual's use of linguistic resources depends on their group membership and the kind of communicative activities in which they are involved. He further argued that our communication depends on our socio-cultural context and realizes our access to particular linguistic resources. Rezaei et al. (2014) expound language identity as relationship of one's sense of self and the language used for communication. Hall (2005) pointed out that individuals' discourses not only enable them to communicate but also translate their identities which constituted at the time these utterances were produced. Hence, language identity as defined by Block (2009) is a 'relationship between one's sense of self and different means of communication, understood in terms of language, a dialect or sociolect' (p. 43). Khatib & Rezaei, (2013), underscored language identity in six components (Table 1) expressing how language is perceived by its user in connection with the context where it is practiced.

In this vein, within multilingual societies these identities can either appeal or resist individuals towards 'particular languages, varieties and linguistic forms' imposed on them logically maintained through negotiation (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p.3).

Table 1: Language Identity and its components

Component	Definition
Attachment towards native language or L1	People's thinking and feeling about L1 in comparison of L2
Pronunciation attitude	Attitudes towards pronunciation patterns in L1 and L2 and desirable perceived pronunciation
Language and social status	Associating social status to the language which people speak
L1 use or exposure in the society	Use of L1 in comparison to L2 in daily lives of people
Language knowledge	Knowledge about history and literature of one's own language
Script or alphabet	Feelings about alphabet and writing system of one's own language

Source: (Khatib &Rezaei, 2013, p. 695)

Thus, people use languages to express their identity and whenever the language is used the identity is transformed or reshaped (Hall, 2011).Researchers identified strong relationship between identity and language learning process (Pierce, 1995, Block, 2007, Rasookha, 2010), however remained unnoticed in several language classrooms. Phan (2008) suggested that the more languages you speak, the more identities you have, in this way anyone who knows more than one language may possess different identities simultaneously however not aware of their discursive practices and foundations of their cultural and linguistic resources. Rasookha (2010) distinguished this phase as un-examined language identity stage and categorized learners' language identity gone through three developmental stages as shown in Table 2. Language identity at this stage however exists in its 'embryonic' form but need enacted and to be translated through discursive practices. In stage 2, learners are exposed to the experiences of other members having similar language identity to enable learners exploring themselves by an in-depth analysis of others' narrative histories. Finally, learners become aware of the linguistic underpinnings of L1 & L2, consciously shape and monitor their language identity (p. 24-30).

Table 2: Developmental stage of learners' language identity

Stages	Explanation
1. Un-examined language identity	Learners are incognizant of their own communicative behavior, cultural and linguistic underpinnings of L1 & L2
2. Language identity search	Accommodating learners for self-identification by exposing discourses and experience of selected members from similar language identity to create a keen awareness associating themselves to larger linguistic community instead L1 ESL community
3. Language identity achievement	Learners acquired skills to confidently display and monitor their language use adopting analytical approach of own self-recognition and salient attributes of language and its speaker

In this regard the role of educational settings is of much value as this 'institution has the monopoly in the large-scale production of producers and consumers', hence responsible to create a market for social value of a linguistic capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991, p.57). Nevertheless, the adoption of language specifically in educational context thus requires cautiousness, addressing issue of identity in the learning process. Moreover, accentuating post-structuralists paradigm signified research not only in examining learning context but also inculcate learners' voice as an active agent who were taken for granted in the learning process (Pavlenko, 2002). Therefore language policy which is a planned and legislated act of a government for determining language for disseminating knowledge and skills and to use in public context (Owu-Ewie & Eshun, 2015); should be formulated in order to stipulate discretion fortifying the language identity of its user.

Language Identity Instrument
This article is drawn from a large scale research and a validated questionnaire is employed in the study adapted from Khatib and Razaei (2013) language identity questionnaire replacing Persian by Urdu language, comprising 21 items (Table 3) to measure learners' language identity based on six pointlikert scale ranked from 1 to 6 with Strongly Agree at one end of the scale receiving 1 point and strongly disagree with 6 points at other end. The questionnaire was piloted to a similar group of learners as it is an effective way of ensuring reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire (cited by Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p.341). The Cronbach alpha results for measuring the inter-item reliability of questionnaire is 0.9which is considered as highly reliable (see, Cohen. et. al, 2007, p.506).

Table 3: Language Identity Instrument

Components	Items
Attachment to Urdu language	1-3
Pronunciation attitude	4-6
Language and social status	7-8
L1 use and exposure in the society	10-13
Language knowledge	14-17
Script/ Alphabet	18-19
Attitudes towards English	20-21

Methodology

The study adopts quantitative method and exploratory approach, meant to understand the language identity of ESL learners for institutionalized languages as prescribed in the national curriculum i.e. Urdu (L1) and English (L2). It is based on post-positivist paradigm as Adam (2014) argued that it causes problems as certain influential taken for granted aspects in the research and provides new possibilities of interpretation. Thus, the post-positivist paradigm allows researcher to comprehend the language identity of ESL learners. Moreover, as Creswell (2013) stated that post-positivist framework allocates to test, verify and refine the laws or theories by collecting data which either support or refute the theory. It indicates that post-positivist framework allows usage of quantitative methods to establish understanding of unquantifiable terms. The findings are computed and analyzed by utilizing software IBM SPSS Statistics 22.0 version presented through response rate and descriptive statistics.

The actual populations of the study to which the findings may be generalized are undergraduate students pursuing four and five –year study programmes under different disciplines at a major public university in Karachi. These students are ESL learners who have to study compulsory English courses as prescribed in the national curriculum by HEC. Of this population 400 students were included in the study using quota sampling as it strives to give "proportional weighting to selected strata" on the basis of proportion found in the wider population (Cohen, et. al., 2007: 114). It is important to mention that this sample size constituted 5% of the overall undergraduate student population and 20% of the student population who were enrolled or just completed English courses. Percentage for each degree programme is calculated according to the number of seats allocated for each discipline. On the basis of these percentages, study participants from each discipline are taken. Table 4 captures briefly information about the study population, research site, and the sample. The population is proportionally allocated on the basis of gender and disciplines.

The participants were accessed through their respective teachers after obtaining institutional and individual informed consent. Students who volunteered to participate in the study were handed out questionnaires personally by the principal investigator who

explained the instructions on filling out the forms. Students were allowed to fill out the form and return right there or the next day. However, of the 400 forms only 316 questionnaires were completed which makes 79% response rate to the questionnaire. The remaining questionnaires were either not retuned or they were not completed.

Table 4: Description of Research Site, Population and Sample

Research population Research Site	8020 learners pursuing 28 different undergraduate degree programmes in different disciplines at a public university in Karachi. Of these 2005 students who were enrolled or completed a compulsory English course Male female ratio of the university is 60:40.
Targeted Sample	400 students were included in the study and the male and female student- ratio was male students 260 (65% of sample) and Female students 140 (35% of sample)
Sample [N]	316 Students [185 male; 131 Female]

Data Analysis and Findings

The data collected through Language Identity instrument containing 21 items responded on 6 point likert scale were coded and analyzed to describe the language learners' identity in Urdu and English languages which are recognized as their LI and L2 respectively. The data across different constructs of the language identity questionnaire and its findings are presented here.

Table 5: Learners' attachment to Urdu language

Items	Responses					
	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Slightly Agree*	*Slightly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
I wish all my courses at school/University were taught in English rather than Urdu	32.6%	20.6%	20.6%	9.8%	8.9%	7.6%
I like to attend Urdu Classes more than English classes	8.2%	15.5%	22.2%	21.5%	24.4%	8.2%
I love Urdu language more than English	20.3%	24.4%	20.6%	16.1%	11.4%	7.3%

Table 5 represents the items probing language identity seeks information about learners' attachment towards Urdu language, pronunciation attitude, language and social status, L1 exposure in the society, language knowledge, feelings towards alphabet or

writing system, and attitude towards English. The findings about learners' attachment towards Urdu language revealed that they strongly prefer English language to be used for teaching them courses in their academic settings showing 32.6% for strongly agree followed by 20.6% for both agree and slightly agree. In response of item if they like to attend Urdu classes more than English classes, 24.4% learners shows that they disagree and 21.5% learners shown slight disagreement with the statement. However, learners' have shown a cumulative percent of 65.3%, showing they love Urdu language more than English language.

Table 6: Language and social status

Items	Responses					
	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Slightly Agree*	*Slightly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
I believe a person who can speak English very well has a better social status and respect in the society	19.6%	25.9%	24.4%	12.3%	9.8%	7.9%
I believe knowing English brings more respect than Urdu in the Pakistani society	21.5%	31.6%	21.8%	7.6%	10.4%	7.0%

The responses taken for seeking information about language and social status, learners' were asked to reflect their beliefs about English language. 25.9% learners' agree for they believe a person who can speak English very well has a better social status and respect in the society followed by 24.4% for slightly agree and 19.6% for strongly agree. Moreover, 31.6% learners agree for believing that knowing English brings more respect than Urdu in the Pakistani society, followed by 21.8% and 21.5% for slightly agrees and strongly agree respectively as shown in Table 6.

Table 7: Use of Urdu Language and exposure in the society

Items	Responses					
	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Slightly Agree*	*Slightly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
I speak English a lot in my daily life	7.6%	13.6%	31%	21.5%	21.5%	4.7%
I use English words a lot when I speak Urdu	15.2%	32.6%	28.2%	13%	7.6%	3.5%

I like to speak English rather than Urdu with my friends who know English	15.8%	25.3%	24.4%	14.9%	14.9%	4.7%
I read English texts more than Urdu ones	25.3%	31%	19.6%	11.4%	9.2%	3.5%

Table 7 presents information about use of Urdu language and its exposure in the society, only 7.6% learners strongly agree for speaking English a lot in their daily lives, whereas, 31% slightly agree, and 13.6% agree for it. When they were asked about using English words more while speaking Urdu, 32.6% learners agree for it followed by 28.2% learners who slightly agree with the statement. Learners' responses for their likelihood for speaking English with their friends who know English rather than Urdu 25.3% agree for it following 24.4% for slightly agree and 15.8% strongly agree for it. Learners were inclined for reading English text more than Urdu showing 31% responses for agrees whereas 25.3% strongly agree for it.

Table 8: Knowledge of Urdu Language

Items	**Responses**					
	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Slightly Agree*	*Slightly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
I like to know more about the history of Urdu language than English	18.7%	20.9%	19%	20.9%	12%	8.5%
I like to know more about Urdu poets and writers than English ones	19.6%	19.9%	22.8%	17.4%	13.9%	6.3%
I read poetry and stories in Urdu a lot	20.3%	15.5%	19.3%	14.2%	17.1%	13.6%

For measuring learners' language identity, information about their knowledge for L1 i.e. Urdu language was also obtained as shown in Table 8. Learners have shown more likelihood for knowing about the history of Urdu language in comparison of English language showing a cumulative percentage of 58.6 in agreement. Learners have shown positive response towards gaining knowledge about Urdu poets and writers than English ones. However, only 20.3% learners show strong inclination for reading Urdu poetry and stories a lot and agree for it.

Table 9: Feeling towards alphabet/writing system of language

Items	Responses					
	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Slightly Agree*	*Slightly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
I send text-messages and e-mails in English	29.7%	31%	21.2%	11.4%	4.4%	2.2%
I like Urdu alphabets more than English ones	8.5%	13.3%	19.6%	29.1%	18%	11.4%
I wish we wrote Urdu in (Roman) Latin alphabets	11.4%	14.9%	19%	16.1%	18.7%	19.9%

Learners' responses were taken for what they feel about language script or writing system can be seen in Table 9. 31% respondents agree for sending their text-messages and emails in English language following 29.7% responses for strongly agree and 21.2% for slightly agree represent their vigorous fondness for using English writing system. In response of I like Urdu alphabets more than English ones, learners have shown disagreement with the statement and only 8.5% learners have shown acute likelihood for Urdu language. Learners reflected a blended sentiment in response of writing Urdu in (Roman) Latin alphabets comprising a cumulative percentage of 45.3 in agreement and 54.7 in disagreement.

Table 10: Attitude towards learning English language

Items	Responses					
	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Slightly Agree*	*Slightly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
It is important to learn English as a compulsory language	40.8%	32.3%	15.5%	4.7%	5.1%	1.6%
English learning has a negative influence on Urdu language	10.1%	17.1%	19.3%	15.8%	20.9%	16.8%

Table 10 provides information about learners' attitude for English language learning. A strenuous inclination is obtained showing 40.8% learners' strong agreement for considering English important to learn as a compulsory language followed by 32.3% response who agrees for it. Moreover they possess an assorted view point that learning English can negatively influence Urdu language reflecting their lack of awareness for language and identity.

Table 11: Mean and standard deviation for Language Identity

Construct	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Language identity	316	66.9114	10.76525

Learners' level of language identity (L1 and L2), is measured by computing the data collected through instrument developed for measuring these constructs. Findings are obtained by performing descriptive statistical analysis on SPSS. Respondent's scores for language identity fluctuate from a minimum score of 21 and maximum of 126 points for the 21 items depicted for measuring language identity ranked from 1 to 6 points on likert scale. The cut off points for categorizing scores into 'low', 'moderate', and 'high' level, statistical measures were employed. Computation of mean and standard deviation of scores were done for specifying cut off points. Hence, the scores placed above one standard deviation and below the mean correspondingly taken as high and low scores. Furthermore, score positioned between the specified values were taken in moderate group. The computed mean and standard deviation acquired by scores of surveyed instrument for language identity is 66.91 and 10.76 respectively presented in Table 11. Hence, the scores positioned between 56.15 and 77.67 were taken as 'moderate level' whereas, scores lesser and greater than 56.15 and 77.67 demonstrates high and low language identity. Furthermore, lesser scores obtained through questionnaire illustrate participants' higher attachment towards their L1 (i.e. Urdu language). Result of the study reflects that 69% learners studying in public engineering university possessed 'moderate level' of language identity. 15% learners have shown higher scores showing 'low level' of attachment and only 16% possessed 'high level' of attachment for their L1 (i.e. Urdu).

Discussion

Both male and female learners' participated in the study. Despite showing affiliation with Urdu language, learners are not ready to invest in this language however; they reflect love for their L1 and want to know about its history. Likewise, learners consider English for getting distinctive status in society. The data acknowledged that majority of learners love their L1 in comparison of English language, which is in contrast with their investment for L1, reflecting desire for learning all courses through English language and showing moderate level of inclination for attending Urdu classes. Furthermore, learners participated in the study endorsed the privileged status of English in the society comparing to Urdu language. They preferred to use English language more than Urdu in their daily lives, have shown a restrained desire to gain knowledge of Urdu language, and strongly supported to learn English as a compulsory language. Moreover, they encompassed mixed opinion about negative influence of English language learning on Urdu language. Besides, propensity for utilizing L1 script and writing system specifically for digital communication is also alarming as they prefer English and choose Roman/ Latin alphabet for writing Urdu. Furthermore, exhibiting moderate level of language identity indicates un-examined identity phase where learners are unable to invest significantly either in L1 or L2.

The aforementioned situation represents ESL learners' investment towards language for what Pierce (1995) calls 'good return on investment' and stressed that learners evaluate the worth of second language and invest with a hope to 'acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital' (p.17). The findings are in line with Anbreen, (2015) study, conducted to examine identity construction of learners learning English as second language in Pakistani university reveals that learners' identities are hybrid and fluid and needed to be investigated. Hence, the adoption of bilingual approach in education since its creation (Mahboob & Jain, 2016) played fundamental role in shaping the language identity of learners. Accumulating L1 writing and script proclivity, Ahmed (2009) accentuated that despite having Urdu support easily available for communicating digitally, roman script is widely used for writing Urdu text, most notably for informal communication, though it is unofficial standard. Findings stipulate preventive measures seeing that learners are unaware of their communicative behaviors signaled as unexamined status of language identity necessitates creating keen understanding of the significance for both L1 & L2. Learners should learn and invest in L2 but not at the cost of their L1.

Conclusion

Identity has emerged as extensively researched area across the globe varying in terms of methodological tools, method, research design, questionnaire and the philosophical standpoint established for the interpretation of that research. This study aimed at exploring language identity of ESL learners for Urdu (L1) and English (L2) languages and reveals a moderate level of learners' language identity inclined towards national language and for social vitality despite the prestige and privileged status of English language. The findings points to learners' lack of awareness about languages fulfilling different roles a fact necessitating the recognition, construction and maintenance of language identity from grass root levels.

Stake holders must consider the need for recognizing, constructing and maintaining the language identity of ESL learners which has implications in education, social, family and all other domains. The language identity construction in multilingual contexts and among ESL speakers and its understanding, conceptualization and manifestations are sensitive matters which require sensitizing teachers, students to reflect upon it and use it to their advantage,. Moreover, the surrounding environment and cultural context should also harmonize with the implications of multiple and conflicting language identities. ELTs must not consider learners identity as detached entity of language learners rather they should facilitate recognition, construction and maintenance of language identity and encourage learners for self-actualization in language classrooms to be a skillful user of language. Language teachers should create awareness about language in society and in particular clarify concepts like heritage, mother, native, indigenous, national, or contrast among mother tongue, national language, official, co-official, foreign and lingua franca language conceptions and its resulting implications so learners can come to terms with their multilingual identities. This step will also create

harmony in the society which is needed for social cohesions among different ethno linguistic communities to serve as a catalyst for the development and growth of the nation.

Curriculum and syllabus must be designed to elevate the learning process bearing in mind the intertwined relationship of language and culture. Teacher educators and Language teacher education and development initiatives need to take into account the methods and practices more suited to multilingual and ESL context instead of the ones adopted from the ones used in monolingual and English as a native or foreign language setting. Since the world has rapidly been changed and digitized; digital resources and Corpus planning must be done for Urdu language in order to facilitate teachers and learners as well as stabilizing sovereignty of national language.

The study is conducted at a public sector university in urban settings where majority of the learners speak Urdu as their first language and mother tongue. Similar study can be accomplished by taking different language (s) into account. Moreover the study adopts post-structuralist paradigm and quantitative approach and can be accompanied with qualitative method probing language identity in greater depth.

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