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Retracted

ANALYZING LINGUISTIC HEGEMONY IN THE SOCIETY: ATTITUDES OF FUNCTIONAL NATIVE LEARNERS TOWARDS ENGLISH

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Abstract

Learning English as to whether hegemony of English is reflected by learners' attitudes towards English and their Mother Language (ML- Sindhi). The study also focused the way such linguistic hegemony was expressed by learners. The study was inspired by linguistically privileged and cursed? American university students and the global hegemony of English (Heinrich, 2010). Semi-structured, open-ended questionnaires were distributed among 20 students of Institute of English Language and Literature (IELL), University of Sindh, Jamshoro. 4 participants were male and 16 were female. They belonged to different linguistic and academic backgrounds but majority of them were Sindhi speakers. 5 questions were asked to ascertain the attitudes, which were analyzed qualitatively using the Gramscian perspective of co-optive hegemony as the basic theoretical construct. The responses were put into three: cultural, instrumental, and emotive for analysis. The attitudes reflected hegemony of English and showed negative attitudes towards Sindhi and MLs. Most of the arguments were cultural and instrumental; a few counter-hegemonic attitudes were also found which were underpinned by cultural and emotive arguments.

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Key words: *Hegemony, FNLs, Attitudes, Colonialism, Language*

Introduction

Pakistan is a country which came into being after a long period of colonialism by British Empire. There are five provinces in this country: Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan. Each of these provinces has its own language, besides there are other languages also spoken in the country like Seraiki, Brahvi, Balti, etc. But the national language of Pakistan is Urdu. Following are the statistics of population of Pakistan by mother tongue:

Urdu	Punjabi	Sindhi	Pashto	Balouchi	Seraiki	Others
7.57%	44.15%	14.1%	15.42%	3.57%	10.53%	4.66%

(Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan)

However, English being the official language of Pakistan is dominant language. It is used in the domains of power, media, judiciary, and education. Hence, it is a very influential language in this country. Besides, Urdu is the national language of Pakistan and despite Pakistan being a multilingual and multinational country, the other languages like Sindhi are not given the status of national languages and are entitled as 'regional languages'.

This research took place in Sindh which is one of the five provinces of Pakistan. Following are the statistics about population of Sindh by mother tongue:

Urdu	Punjabi	Sindhi	Pashto	Balouchi	Seraiki	Others
21.05%	6.99	59.73	4.19	2.11	1.00	4.93

(Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan)

English Language Teaching in Universities in Sindh

English is the medium of instruction in almost all the universities in Sindh. Except language departments in universities, syllabus of all the disciplines is in English. Besides, most of the universities offer English language as a compulsory subject during the initial years of undergraduate and master courses.

Functional Native Learners (FNLs)

There has been a considerable debate over the issue regarding who the native and/or non-native speakers of English are. Canagarajah (1999) suggests that linguists like Noam Chomsky assert that only genetically native speakers of English (GNS) can speak it perfectly and that they are the authority over English. Canagarajah discusses that notions like these are Universalist and points out that there are other people too who speak English as their native language but are not English or American in blood, they are often referred to as non-native speakers of English.

The term Functional Native Learners (FNLs) is used here for those people in Sindh who are genetically Sindhi but learn English as their second language for functional purposes.

Focus of the Study

The focus of this study was to analyze the attitudes of the FNLs towards English language. The study tried to analyze that whether or not there is any hegemony of English in Sindhi language and it also took in account, at later stage, that what the relationship between English and Sindhi is, and the way these two languages coexist in Sindh.

The Rationale

Linguistic change is a constant process; be it constructive or destructive. There have been many issues regarding the threats posed to different languages all over the world by English through linguistic imperialism since mid-20th century. Works of Robert Phillipson, Paulo Friere, Henry Giroux, Antonio Gramsci, and Norman Fairclough inspired the researchers to take on the issue of linguistic hegemony for this study as they feel that their language-Sindhi-suffers from linguistic hegemony.

Study Context and Participant Information

University of Sindh, Jamshoro was the area of study where most of the pupils hail either from middle class or the lower class. The participants of the study were the undergraduate students of Institute of English Language and Literature (IELL). The participants of this study were both male and female students. Further strata

were formed on the basis of academic background of the participants (Private or government sector schools and colleges from which they obtained education) and whether they were from rural or urban areas.

Research Questions

1. Is there linguistic hegemony of English in Sindh?
2. Do the attitudes of Sindhi speakers reflect hegemony of English in Sindhi?

2. Literature Review

Attitudes

There can either be additive attitudes of learners towards any language or they can be subtractive. Lambert (1983) describes additive bilingualism/learning as when people learn a second language, and subsequently get exposed to a new culture, and those new entities become unlikely to replace learner's own language and culture. The learners do not have any fear of losing their language rather they acquire additional skills. Luckett (1993) explains the process of additive learning as the gain of competence in the second language while maintaining the importance of first language as foremost. Subtractive attitude and learning, on the other hand, are in total contrast where second language is learnt at the expense of the mother tongue. (Lambert, 1980; Thiongo, 1993)

Hegemony

Hegemony as defined by Gramsci is the ideological domination; a certain way of explaining the world and ideologically constructing the worldview by state (Villanueva, 1993). It is reinforced by two forms of the state: political society and the civil society. (Gramsci, 1973).

According to Fontana (Suarez, 2002, p. 513), for hegemony to be radical, it is important that state must secure willingness and consent from the minority group the tools to secure which is often "manufacturing of mass consent" through consistent propagation of those ideas by media and other institutions like educational system, religion etc. The dominant ideology is so much propagated that the social order begins to appear natural and correct to the public.

Gramscian Perspective of Hegemony

Gramscian concept of hegemony has been used as the predominant construct to analyze the attitudes of FNLs towards English. Gramsci (1973) explained hegemony as when a state or any other dominant group directs or dictates some ways and rules to the masses; the latter accept it willingly. And the role of education is central to the Gramscian concept of hegemony (Mayo, 2010). The key positions in our country are open to those who hold mastery over English as Pennycook (2000) presents the role of English analogous to a doorkeeper who allows and stops people from entering a certain place; in this case, English performs that role by letting in only those in the world of wealth and prestige who are hoarded with English. In our country, if someone wants to be a successful professional, a bureaucrat, or one who aspires to be the part of ruling minority then he/she has to learn English accompanied by the adaptation of colonial mentality.

Gramsci has mentioned two faces of state i.e. 'political society' or the crude/real face of state and 'civil society', the softer image of state (1973, p.13). Civil society comprises of intellectuals whose work is to extend and propagate the agenda of the state (ibid).

Linguistic Hegemony

According to Gramsci, hegemony spreads even more rapidly through language as it happens to be one of the media of conveying ideas. Our common discourse is constructed by interactions in society and they are molded by the dominant ideologies of any given time. They become entrenched in the social fabric and they become common sensual entities, ways of thinking.

Post-Colonial Bent of Mind

Thiongo(1986), in his book "Decolonizing the Mind", talks about one's alienation from one's own language with the acquisition of a new one. Same has been seen here. While learning English, people have been seen alienating themselves from their mother tongue(s).

The private school system which has English as the medium of instruction here does the same. The children studying in such schools show 'western' behavior in their life style. Their minds are 'Eurocentric'. It is manifested in their life style.

The history and culture, the real essence of the nation carried through Sindhi language and its literature is mostly unknown to them. As Thiongo (1993) says that the colonial powers discarded the books which contained history of third world in their own languages, like a piece of trash and threw them into the abyss of ignorance to rot and perish.

Preference for English Language

This preference for English instead of native languages can be traced back to Lord Macaulay Minute on Education (1835) in which he opposed the group of Orientalists or Classicists who were of the idea that under the British Parliament Act 43, which made East India Company responsible to revitalize and revert the indigenous literature and introduce the western knowledge of science and other subjects to Indians in their local languages Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic (Rahman, 2004).

According to Lord Macaulay (1835), people of India must be taught through English language as it had vast resources of knowledge as he himself stated 'Poetry of Milton, Metaphysics of Locke, and the Physics of Newton' and that the Indian languages did not possess any knowledge other than 'sacred books of the Hindoos' which contained 'all the uses of cusa-grass and all the mysteries of absorption into Deity.'

English and French languages were, according to him, the 'chief keys' to unlock 'all the sciences'. And the languages of India seemed to him the "chanting in the Cathedrals"; so useless that he requested the "Lord-ship" that one lac rupees that the Parliament had granted for the implementation of Act 43 must not be spent on encouraging Sanskrit and Persian. He added that this decision of abandoning local languages must be taken in the same way as one that was previously taken to 'kill the tigers of Mysore'.

On the question of knowledge in native languages he did not deem it fit to compare the entire Indian and Oriental literature to be compared with even one book shelf that contained Western books.

It is very common notion in our motherland that if someone does not know English s/he cannot be considered properly educated. English language is usually taken as synonymous to knowledge and to competence. The question is why is it so? What reasons make up such attitude?

The roots are again to be found in the beginning of the era of colonialism. Before it, India was considered one of the most prosperous regions in the world. It was famous for its culture, wealth, education and commerce; all of that was based on self-sufficient economy of sub-continent. But from the very beginning of colonial era, the British shattered the economic system of India and imposed, on the one hand, themselves as the self-claimed rulers of India and, on the other hand, they imposed the parasites and social evils like money-lenders, tax-collectors, and landlords who sucked almost all the blood from the poor bodies of peasants and workers who formed the majority of population of India. As discussed earlier, the English introduced capital-based, industrial-based economy as they were scientifically very advanced.

After the physical subjugation of people of India, the British initiated their more dangerous form of subjugation i.e. the mental subjugation through their 'educational program' which they often called 'indirect rule'. They made it compulsory to learn English and discouraged the learning of indigenous languages. Indians were told that like their cultural, economic and 'civilizational' backwardness, the languages of India were also backward and 'mere chanting in the cathedrals' (Macaulay, 1835). On the other hand, they asserted that English being the language of 'civilized' people/nation was prestigious and containing huge resources of knowledge. The Indians were never told that English had just got a little importance in Europe when its economy and socio-political system had changed and became a little stable; that they themselves were living in a country where there were 'civilized' poor who were as humiliated and miserable as poor of India under the rule of British Raj. Throughout the colonial era and even in post-colonial era, this mode of thought and ideology has been carried on. English was an official language in colonial era and it still remains so in Pakistan. The medium of instruction and the language of text books in colleges and universities are almost entirely English. This has had some very serious repercussions.

Many of youth here are denied jobs at different institutes, firms, offices etc. just because they are not good in English; it is still taken as substitute for knowledge and competence. The writers of English books and columnists/editors/journalists of English dailies and magazines are surely given more importance than the ones writing/working for native languages.

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study was qualitative and exploratory. The basic construct of the study which was used to analyze the attitudes of FNLs towards English was Gramsci's concept of hegemony (1973). Hegemony is defined by Gramsci as securing the general consent from the public on different issues which are in harmony with the interest of the state. He mentioned two forms of hegemony: coercion and co-option. Researchers have focused on the later form of hegemony to analyze the attitudes.

3.2 Research Instrument

Semi-structured and open-ended questionnaire was distributed to collect the data.

- The questionnaire focused on probing into following:
- Objectives of FNL's behind learning English or the dominant ideology working as the motivation.
- The preference of FNL's towards English or their mother tongue.
- Their perceptions of English and mother tongue as the medium of instruction at the primary level.
- Their preferred language of expression.
- The extent of code-mixing which manifests the extent of hegemony entrenched in social fabric.

Participants Information, Context and Procedure of Data Collection

The participants of the study were the undergraduate students of Institute of English Language and Literature (IELL), University of Sindh, Jamshoro. They were chosen randomly.

	Number of Participants	Class	Age	L1	Primary Medium of Instruction	Years of Learning English
Male	04	P-1: 00 P-II: 02 P-III: 01 P-IV : 01	17-20: 1 20-24: 03	Sindhi: 01 Urdu: 00 Balochi: 00 Seraiki: 03	Mother Tongue: 04 English: 00	0-5: 01 6-10: 02 11-15: 01 16-20: 00
Female	16	P-1: 04 P-II: 02 P-III: 07 P-IV: 03	17-20: 07 20-24: 09	Sindhi: 10 Urdu: 04 Balochi: 01 Seraiki: 01	Mother Tongue: 06 English: 10	0-5: 04 6-10: 03 11-15: 04 16-20: 05
Total	20	20 P-I: 04 P-II: 04 P-III: 08 P-IV: 04	17-20: 08 20-24: 12	Sindhi: 11 Urdu: 04 Balochi: 01 Seraiki: 04	Mother Tongue: 10 English: 10	0-5: 05 6-10: 05 11-15: 05 16-20: 05

Table 3.1: Participant Information

The distribution of questionnaires was done among those students who did not know the researchers personally. This was done to avoid bias in responses.

All the subjects at IELL are offered through English as the medium of instruction. In addition, almost entire syllabus and material at IELL is Western and not indigenous. This could have some effect on the participants' attitudes towards English language. This study aimed at probing into those attitudes of FNL's

towards English and set object to explore whether linguistic hegemony existed among the participants or not.

Researchers personally conducted the data gathering process but on and off, help was sought from volunteers in this regard. The participants were detailed about the processes and their questions were answered. However, they were suggested to write their responses in some peaceful leisure.

3.3 Data Analysis Method

The data was analyzed keeping in view the research questions of the study and review of related literature. First the responses were divided into two broad categories: Positive and negative. Further they were divided into three sub-categories: Cultural, Instrumental and Emotive.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Analysis of Data through Theoretical Construct

The concept of hegemony presented by Antonio Gramsci was used as the base or the theoretical construct to analyze the attitudes of FNLs towards English language. Gramsci (1973) had discussed two types of hegemony i.e. coercion (political state) and co-optation (civil society). Researchers focused on the later form of hegemony. Co-optive hegemony is socio-political rule of one class over other classes through the consent of the later. Various social institutes such as education, language, media, religion, ideology etc. are used to spread the hegemony in the society. Propaganda is one of the basic tools to hegemonize any people (Chomsky & Herman, 2002). The data was collected from the students of IELL asking them five questions given in the Appendix A, to analyze the FNLs adapted attitudes towards English language through their consent. As said by Rahman (2004) that English language symbolizes the power, it was found out that through the attitudes reflected this ideology as manifested in the discourse of the FNLs. Their responses embodied the perceived economic benefits, prestige, honor, world of opportunities, knowledge, compulsion, necessity and at some instances resistance by some FNLs.

4.2 Data Analysis

50 questionnaires were distributed among the students out of which 25 were returned but 05 of them were not properly filled in, that’s why 20 questionnaires were finalized for the data analysis.

The responses to each question have separately been discussed. The data have been analyzed by dividing the attitudes in two categories i.e. (a) positive (b) negative. Further, the responses were sub-divided into three categories depending upon the reason behind adapted attitudes towards English and mother tongue. Those categories were as follows:

Cultural: When the hegemonic role of English is exercised in society with the consent of the population and English language becomes entrenched in the social and cultural fabric of a nation, then arguments presented by the participants, reflecting the above mentioned ideology, are called cultural arguments. Participants supporting mother tongue may also have cultural arguments.

Instrumental: Participants using English as a necessity to fulfill some needs like educational institutes, offices, hospitals, etc. And those who use English as a compulsion give this type of argument. The same goes for mother tongue too.

Emotive: When the participants are emotionally attached with a language than arguments given in support of such motives are called emotive.

4.3 Findings and Discussion

The positive attitudes indicate the defiance to learn English as to substitute it with the mother language and culture, and the negative attitudes are in contrast to that.

1. Please tell us your purpose behind learning English.

Findings

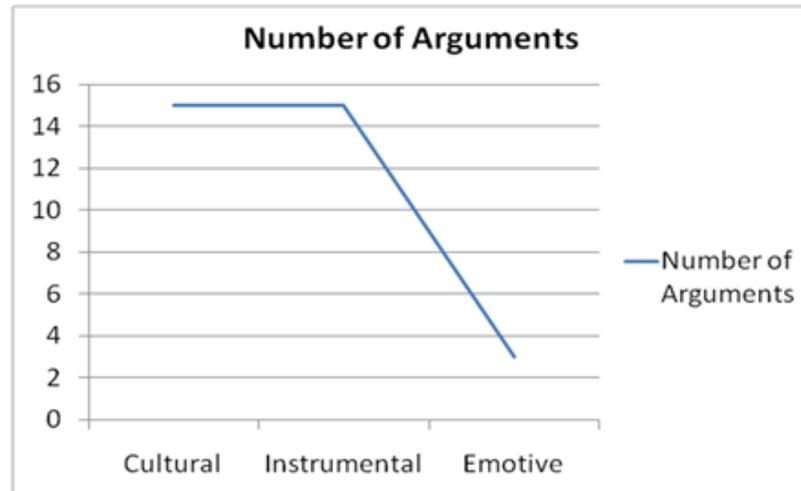
Positive	09
Negative	11

Table 4.1: Attitudes of the participants

Cultural	Instrumental	Emotive
15	15	03

Table 4.2: Arguments

Graph 4.1



Discussion

This question was asked to understand the ideology working as the motive behind learning English language.

Five students said that since English was an ‘international language’ that is why they were opting for it. It is a common perception here that people speak English all over the world. One student said in his response, “people in our country who don’t know English are dumb”!! A participant gave an interesting answer, she said that since some of her relatives who belonged to elite class used English as their medium of communication so in order to talk to them she needed English. One can understand that elite class in Pakistan like any other neo-colonial state is still clinging to the colonial legacy and language (Thiongo, 1993). A few of students said that they wanted to learn English because it would give them respect in society. For example one female participant said, “I think if I know English then I will be considered a sophisticated person in society.” Another participant said that she learned English because it was valued the most in our society.

Some students had instrumental purposes. One participant said in her answer, “it is very difficult for a person to be successful in any field if he doesn’t know English and can’t communicate in it.” Some students wanted to learn English

because it was the source to get jobs and develop career. Some said that they learnt English out of compulsion because it was essential to learn English to be in educational institutes.

Few students had emotive reasons. They did it out of love for learning languages and gaining of knowledge that is available in English.

1. Do you think we cannot be considered properly educated without being proficient in English language?

Findings

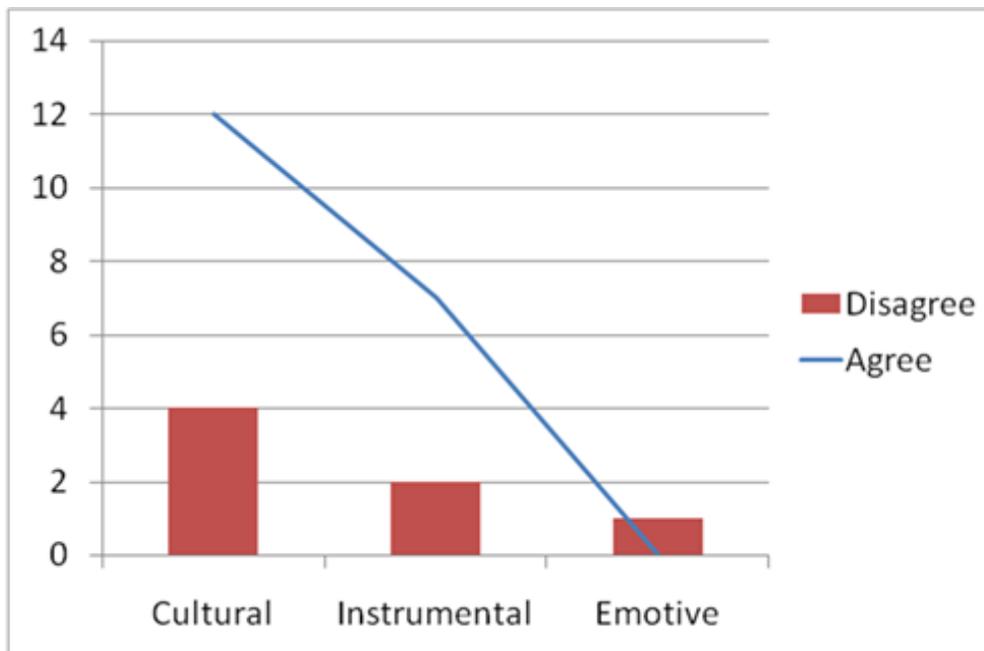
Positive	06
Negative	14

Table 4.3: Attitudes of the participants

	Cultural	Instrumental	Emotive
Agree	12	07	--
Disagree	04	02	03

Table 4.4: Arguments

Graph 4.2



Discussion

Most of the participants argued that none can be considered properly educated without proficiency in English. They used terms like prestige, honor, value, educated, respect, admiration, appreciation and power which they attached with English and they said they will not get them if they do not get educated in English. They said these same things were absent from native language. These arguments were cultural in their nature. Alatas (2000) has said that it is common notion in Asia that real knowledge lays in English and not in local languages. This was manifested through responses of the participants. One participant gave a shocking response: "They (students) get more knowledge through English and knowledge is more important than language." Another student said, "English contains the real education." A participant said, "English is the language of educated people, if one wants to be successful in that community he must learn it."

Some students reacted passively and said that it was society which gave higher place to education in English that is why they learnt it because it will make them successful. This was the instrumental argument.

Few students denied this statement and said, giving the cultural argument, that English could not be a symbol of being educated for them. One participant gave this response, "I don't think that people speaking English are superior because they speak it fluently. This attitude is nothing but a bad comedy. They want to live English and die English, but one's intellect, wisdom and competence are in no way dependent on one's language." One participant gave example of China and said that people there do not know English yet they are educated and successful. Another participant said that one is known for his/her intellect and wisdom not because of English. One student had this to say, "If we go through the history, we will find a number of great people, with their amazing creations and many of them set bases of many subjects we are studying now, among them were physicians, then don't we consider them as well-educated? (They didn't know English of course)."

Others gave importance to mother tongue because it will make their mind prepared for the learning of a new language. This argument was instrumental.

They said being educated through one’s first language makes him/her understand ideas very easily which help him/her all of his/her life.

Others who presented emotive argument said that they wanted mother tongue as primary medium of communication because one is emotionally attached to his/her mother tongue.

1. What language would you prefer to express yourself in? Mother tongue or English?

Findings

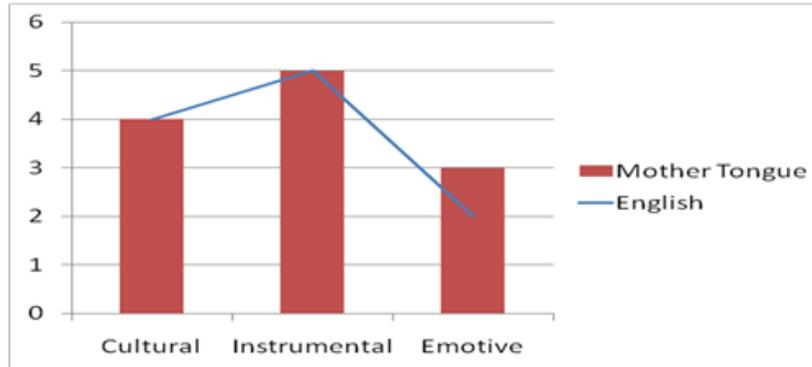
Positive	14
Negative	06

Table 4.5: Attitudes of the participants

	Cultural	Instrumental	Emotive
English	04	05	02
Mother Tongue	04	05	08

Table 4.6: Arguments

Graph 4.3



Discussion

This group of participants said that they would like to use English for expressing themselves as it was ‘convenient’ and they would be considered ‘educated’

people and it would add to their personality. This cultural argument was made by some students.

Participants giving instrumental arguments said that by using English at the workplaces, educational institutes etc. would give them success easily. One participant said that if one wants to survive in the world of educated people he must express himself in English.

A few emotive arguments were also given by some participants. One participant said that she used English because it gave her ‘charm’.

Participants giving cultural argument said that they wanted to express themselves through their mother tongue because it was their identity and they did not want their identity to be lost.

Some participants giving instrumental argument said that they wanted to express themselves in mother tongue because it was easy to convey ideas in mother tongue. But this could not possibly be as simple as that because this must be kept in mind that most people in Sindh don’t know English and those participants cannot speak English to majority of population. Their low level of proficiency in English might also keep participants from expressing themselves in English.

This is remarkable to note that even though the participants liked English but expressed themselves in their mother language. One participant said, “My mother tongue touches my soul”. Two participants said that their mother tongue was their identity and they did not want to lose it by using English language to express themselves. These arguments, of course, were emotive.

1. Do you mix English words while you speak your mother tongue? How often do you do that?

Findings

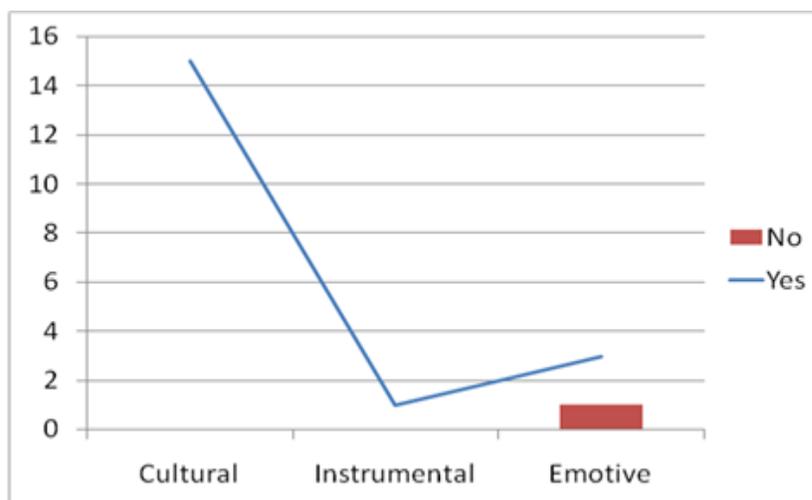
Positive	01
Negative	19

Table 4.7: Attitudes of the participants

	Cultural	Instrumental	Emotive
Yes	15	01	03
No	--	--	01

Table 4.8: Arguments

Graph 4.4



Discussion

Almost all of the participants said that they did the code-mixing. Some said that it was a ‘force of habit’ for them others said that they did it sub-consciously. English language has entrenched so much in the cultural fabric that many of the people here use English words in their everyday communication. This is done by even those who have never attended any school.

A very few participants did it for instrumental reasons. As one of the participants said that he used English words in order to impress others. Another participant had this to say, “I use English words to beautify my Sindhi language”.

Only one student said that he does not use English words while speaking Sindhi, but when one of the researchers interacted with him, he also used some English words though he himself was not aware of it.

1. Should English be the basic medium of instruction or mother tongue?

Findings

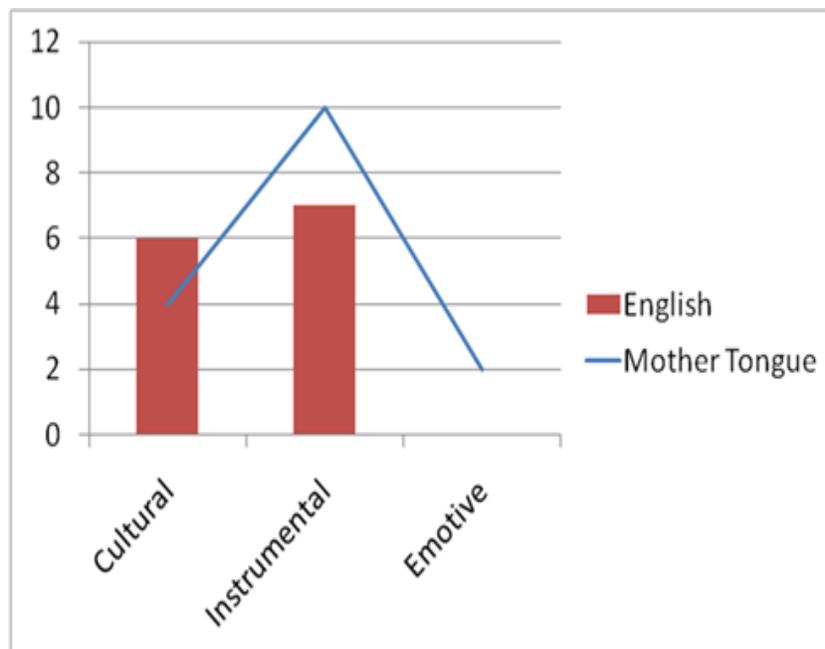
Mother Tongue	11
English	09

Table 4.9: Attitudes of the participants

	Cultural	Instrumental	Emotive
English	06	07	--
Mother Tongue	04	10	02

Table 4.10: Arguments

Graph 4.5

**Discussion**

Most of the participants supporting English as the primary medium of instruction presented cultural and instrumental arguments that it must be so because English was an 'international' language; it was economically strong; the later education is in English so the students should be taught English right from the initial stage of

their academic life; it will help reduce difficulties of children in their coming life. One of the participant's responses was completely astonishing, he said, "If we don't know English, we cannot be considered as human beings!!!!" None of the participants gave emotive arguments.

A few students showed their concerns that if students were not educated through their mother tongue then they will lose their identity and culture, as one of them said, "We must not forget who we are." One student said that this process of using English as the primary medium of instruction may lead to language death and many of the phrases and words have vanished from Sindhi language because of English.

Most of the students preferred mother tongue as the medium of instruction in primary education of a child. It was because, as many of them said giving instrumental arguments, ideas and concepts can be best understood through one's native language rather than a foreign language. Some of them, however, said that primary education in native language helps acquire second language easily.

CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion on the key findings

This study was directed to analyze the attitudes of FNLs towards English using as the primary theoretical construct Gramsci's concept of co-optive hegemony.

It was analyzed through the responses given by FNLs in their questionnaires that English has a widespread hegemonic character in the educational system in proper, and in social structure in general. As teaching is not apolitical and it always carries with it the hidden ideology and propaganda of the ruling class to maintain its status quo (Canagarajah, 2003), so the responses from the participants clearly showed that without having conscious knowledge of any ideology they were following it, that is, the politics of ELT and hegemony of English language. Participants often attached attributes like prestige, power, value, sophistication, success to the learning of English language. On the other hand, most of them found their native language(s) devoid of those attitudes and posed English as the second name for knowledge. This attitude manifests the continuation of legacy of British colonial rule in which the educational and social system were based on the

belief that English possessed all the knowledge and periphery languages did not have anything valuable to offer (Macaulay 1835, Thiongo 1993, Alatas 2000).

But students or participants are not to be blamed for everything as state of Pakistan contributes mainly to the hegemony of English language. The jobs and career opportunities are open for anyone who holds proficiency over English language. This is one of the reasons why students preferred English as the primary medium of instruction. The policies of the state towards English and so-called regional languages are constituted on discriminating lines. State has always promoted the former but has consciously degraded and deprived of basic linguistic human rights the regional languages. Urdu is an exception. This attitude by the state resulted into the famous Fall of Dhaka in 1971 and nationalist and secessionist movements still remain in Pakistan in which this discrimination of linguistic rights contributes in one or the other way.

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