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### **I. All manuscripts in English should follow the following format:**

The first page should contain title; author(s)'s name(s), affiliation, E-mail address; and abstract of 150-350 words, followed by three to five key words, main text, acknowledgment, endnotes, and references in subsequent pages. Key words should be given in italics.

### **II. Manuscripts in English should use the following style for headings and subheadings:**

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- 1.1
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The main heading should be written bold in font size 14. All other headings should be written bold in font size 12. DONOT underline any headings at all.

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Use Letter size paper with Times New Roman writing style font size 12 for the main text with line spacing 1.5 and 10 for the abstract with 1.15 line spacing. Left margin should be 3.5 but all other margins should be 2.5 mm. Tables and figures should not be split on two pages.

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Give one paragraph introduction of all authors in five to seven sentences (for each author) describing their educational background and research achievements in a separate file. But do not use hyperlinks.

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# Problems in acquisition of allophones of an L2

Nasir Abbas Syed, Firdos Atta & Asma Shahid Kazi

**ABSTRACT:** The study is based on an experiment with two groups of participants. One group comprised of Pakistanis who speak Punjabi and the other comprised of Indian who speak Hindi as the L1. Both groups were living in and around London at the time of experiment. They had started getting input from native speakers of English after puberty. The participants read a list of English words carrying stops on onset position. VOT of stops was calculated to know if the participants could maintain aspiration contrast in their speech. To find out effect of adjacent vowel on VOT of stops was also one of the objectives of the study. The results show that there was no significant difference in the performance of Pakistan and Indian learners. Both had produced English voiced stops with pre-voicing and both could not maintain aspiration contrast on labial and coronal stops. In velar stops, they had acquired aspiration contrast. The effect of vowel was partially significant on VOT of the preceding voiceless stops. The results confirm that for speakers of voicing language acquisition of voiced stops are very significant. The findings also demonstrate that acquisition of a new language is acquisition of the whole grammar not only that of phonemes of the target language.

**Key words:** *consonant, perception, pre-voicing, production, VOT*

## 1. Introduction and background literature

English is a legacy of British colonialism in Pakistan and India. Both countries got independence from the British rule at the same time. Most of the indigenous languages of Pakistan and India also belong to the same families. After independence, English developed in Pakistan and India without any native speaker model. In these circumstances it is hypothesized that speakers of similar Pakistani and Indian languages may experience similar kind of learning difficulties in acquisition of English. The current study is an attempt to test this hypothesis.

After independence, native speakers of English left the Sub-continent. But English remained an official language of this area. In the absence of native speakers, learners of English in Pakistan developed a variety of English which is called Pakistani English (Rahman, 1990). Pakistani English has linguistic characteristics which are the same as those described about Indian English (Gargesh, 2004). In the same line, it is expected that Pakistani and Indian learners who speak similar languages face similar perception and production difficulties in learning English.

Previous studies show that Pakistani learners face difficulty in discrimination of [v w] consonants of English (Rahman, 1991). They also cannot accurately perceive and produce English dental fricatives [θ ð] (Syed, 2013c). Another difficulty that Pakistani learners face is in perception and production of alveo-palatal fricative of English [ʒ] (Syed, 2013b). Pakistani learners also produce English voiced stops with pre-voicing (Syed, 2013a, 2014b). An interesting phenomenon in Pakistani English is that Pakistani learners normally do not maintain aspiration contrast in English plosives (Syed, 2014a). This is not a result of L1 influence because most of Pakistani languages maintain aspiration contrast in plosives (Cardona & Jain, 2007). The aim of this study is to see if Indian languages also undergo similar difficulties and problem acquisition of English. For this purpose, a group of 8 adult Indian learners of English who speak Hindi as L1 and 8 adult Pakistani learners of English who speak Punjabi as L1 were selected for a production experiment. The target sounds in this study are English plosives. The detail of participants and data collection techniques are given in the following section.

The literature on second language acquisition demonstrates that L1 interferes in L2 acquisition (Best, 1994, 1995; Eckman, 1977, 1991; Lado, 1957). There is also a vast literature available on innate human ability to acquire a language during a specific period of life called critical period for language acquisition, the time period after which the same innate ability to acquire a language declines, diminishes or thoroughly terminates. The idea is called critical period hypothesis (CPH) (Patkowski, 1990; Scovel, 1988). Feature model (FM) addresses the question whether problems in adult L2 acquisition are due to inaccessibility of learners to Universal Grammar or it is because of interference of L1? The feature model was developed by Brown (2000). The model explains with empirical evidence the way L1 feature geometry influences L2.

Children are born with innate ability to acquire language. For the FM, UG is actually the innate ability of learners to perceive and acquire a language. A major difference between L1 and L2 acquisition is that L1 is acquired when the ability of learners to perceive phonetic material is at its peak whereas with the passage of initial some months that natural ability to perceive sounds universally, diminishes because learners have acquired phonology of L1 by this time. Thus, after the age of approximately nine months, the universal ability of babies to perceive phonetic nature of sounds diminishes

but at the same time, their ability to perceive sounds phonologically increases. Thus, after acquisition of L1, all linguistic material is filtered through the funnel of L1. For Brown (2000), it is the L1 feature geometry which filters new L2 sounds.

## **2. Role of allophony, contrast and complimentary distribution in acquisition**

Zampini studied acquisition of allophonic variance in voiced stops of Spanish by English learners. In Spanish /b d g/ are spirantized to [β ð γ] when they occur between two vowels. However, they are produced as stops when they occur in word-initial position or after [n] in a phrase. Thus the words *Vamos* 'let us go', *Damel* 'give it to me' and the second word of the phrase *un gato* are produced with [b], [d] and [g] word-initially but the words like *aldea* (*village*) and *algo* (*something*) are produced with [ð] and [γ] respectively, in the word-medial positions. On the other hand, English does not have such allophonic variance. Normally, in Standard English pronunciation, voiced stops are not spirantized to fricatives. However, coronal fricative [ð] exists in English as a separate phoneme. In this way, [d ð] contrast is phonemic in English but the same is allophonic in Spanish. The fricatives [β γ] are new consonants for English learners. Zampini attempted to study interference L1 phonemic contrast of English in acquisition of allophonic variance of Spanish obstruents.

A group of 32 student learners of Spanish who speak English as L1, were asked to participate in this experiment. 17 of them were students of second semester and 15 of fourth semester in an intensive Spanish course. They were asked to participate in a formal reading and an informal question-answer session. To determine the effect of formal and informal learning context on acquisition was also one of the objectives of this study. The productions of the participants included voiced stops in different variants.

The results show there is no significant difference in the performance of two groups of learners which means the difference of level on learning of these sounds is not significant. This also indicates learning difficulty for all English students at all levels in acquisition of Spanish variants of voiced stops. The results show that the learners have an excellent performance in production of voiced stops in the context where they occur as stops in Spanish. But in the context where they occur as fricatives in Spanish, the

performance of the participants was poor. The difference in the performance of the participants for [β ð γ] was also significant. They produced [β ð γ] sounds accurately in 21.02%, 5.78% and 22.03% of the trials. These results show that allophonic variance of voiced stops of Spanish is difficult for English learners. It also shows that if the sounds which are phonemes in the L1 but allophones in the L2 are more difficult to acquire than those allophones of L2 which do not exist in the L1. This is because, in the words of Zampini, in English substitution of [d] with [ð] implies a change in meaning of words. English learners transfer this phenomenon in L2 Spanish from the L1 English; therefore they avoid such a substitution. On the other hand, the new allophones [β γ] though overall difficult are relatively easier.

Goad (2008) attempt to know how English and French speakers perceive Thai aspirated, plain and voiced plosives. The feature [spread glottis] is not active in English because aspirated and unaspirated sounds are at complimentary distribution in English and aspiration split is allophonic, not phonemic in English. Similarly, French also does not have phonemic aspiration. Thus the study aimed to investigate how adult speakers perceive a non-contrastive non-native feature. According to the author, listeners mostly posit L1 abstract phonemic contrast in perception of L2 sounds in adult L2 acquisition, but at some stage gradient phonetic cues also have a very significant contribution in L2 perception. The results of the study by show that although the feature [spread glottis] is not active in English and French but rather feature [voice] is a major phonemic factor which is expected to determine perception of VOT stops by English and French listeners, aspiration also seems to have a very effective role in perception of Thai stops which has three-way distinction. In the opinion of at some stage of development of an L2, learners start exploiting phonetic perceptual cues which are not active in their L1 grammar. While saying this, Goad (2008, p.336) disagrees with it or rather extends the idea of given in feature model (Brown, 1997, 1998, 2000) that only those L1 features may be exploited by learners which are active in their L1. On the contrary, claims that those features which are not active or contrastive in the L1 of listeners may also be exploited if the acoustic cues of the relevant sounds are very prominent as is the case of aspiration in stops. The findings of experiments by Curtin, Goad, and Pater (1998) and Pater (2003) also substantiate this idea.

Boomershine, Hall, and Hume (2008) studied the impact of allophony versus contrast on speech perception. In English the sounds [d] and [r] are allophones of /d/ as used in the words 'dell' [del] and 'better' [berr]. But the sounds [d] and [ð] are two different phonemes which are used contrastively. On the other hand, in Spanish, [d] and [ð] are allophones of the same phoneme /d/ but [ð] and [r] are two different phonemes. Boomershine et al. (2008) conducted four experiments to test discrimination of [d r], [d ð] and [ð r] pairs by Spanish and English speakers. According to their findings, [d r] pair which is based on non-contrastive sounds in English and [d ð] pair which is non-contrastive in Spanish is more similar by English and Spanish listeners respectively. In the same line [ð r] was perceived as different sounds by speakers of both languages because these consonants are contrastive in L1 of both groups. The authors conclude that those L2 sounds which are contrastive in L1 are perceived as different with ease and those sounds which are non-contrastive in L1 are perceived as different by listeners. The current study looks at a mirror image situation of how adult learners will react to a pair of sounds which are non-contrastive in L2 but contrastive in L1. English aspirated and non-aspirated stops are at complimentary distribution with each other but the same sounds are contrastive in Punjabi and Hindi. The current study aims to test acquisition of English plosives by adult Punjabi and Hindi learners.

### 3. Research Methodology

Two groups of 16 participants living in and around London were selected for this study. Half of them were from Pakistan and half were from India (Delhi). Pakistan-based learners speak Punjabi as their L1. Indian learners speak Hindi as their mother tongue. In this study, Pakistani group is called group A and Indian group is called Group B. The details of the participants are given in the following table.

Table 1: Participants' details

Factors	Group A	Group B
Age of Arrival in UK (years)	31.50 (3.51)	22.50 (1.41)
Age (years)	34.25 (4.43)	23.75 (1.49)
Length of Residence in UK (months)	27.75 (9.74)	11.62 (9.84)
Speaking English hours/day	04.63 (2.97)	06.13 (0.99)
Listening English hours/day	05.63 (3.076)	06.88 (1.36)

For stimuli, a list of written words carrying 'peak, speak, teach, steal, key, ski, pool, spoon, tool, stool, cool, school, park, spark, tall, stall, call, scarf, beak, bark, boot, deal, do, dark, geese, gall, goose' was given to the participants. They were asked to produce these words in accurate English. Each word was written six times on the list. Thus, we got three recordings for each of the target English plosives spoken by each of the sixteen participants. VOTs of the plosives were taken using Praat software (Boersma & Weenink, 2012).

### 3. Presentation and discussion

In this section, results are presented. Voice onset time was considered relevant acoustic correlate for analysis. The details of VOTs of English voiced stops produced by the participants are given in section 3.1 and those of voiceless English plosives are described in section 3.2.

#### 3.1. Pre-Voicing of voiced stops

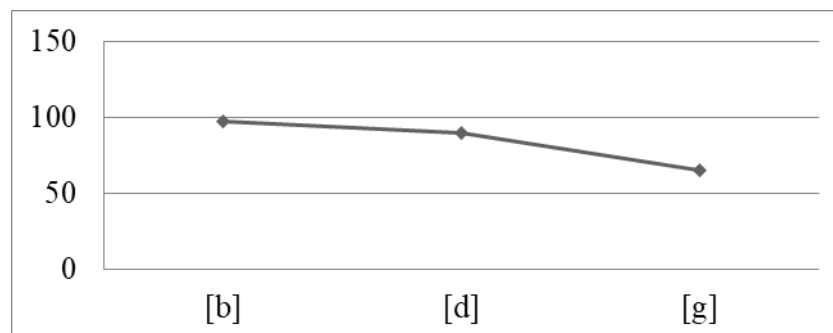
A repeated measures ANOVA were applied on the VOTs with place of articulation and adjacent vowels as repeated measures and group variance with between group factor which confirm that there is no significant difference between the VOTs of voiced stops produced by both groups of participants ( $F=0.053$ ,  $p=.821$ ). The overall effect of vowel was also non-significant ( $F=1.487$ ,  $p=0.243$ ) on VOTs of the adjacent plosives. However, the effect of place of articulation is significant ( $F=9.824$ ,  $p=.007$ ) on VOTs. A quadratic three-way interaction was significant ( $F=16.911$ ,  $p=.001$ ) but no two-way interaction was found significant ( $p>.1$ ). This shows that significant three-way interaction is only because of place of articulation effect. Since the effect of vowels on the VOTs of adjacent stops and group variance are not significantly different, the VOTs of six repetitions by all participants were averaged. Table 3 shows the mean VOTs of all participants regardless of grouping. It is based on averaged VOTs of 144 (3 repetitions\*3 vowels\*16 participants) tokens.

Table 3: Voice onset time for voiced plosives

Sound	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
[b]	16	-147.00	-41.00	-97.17	36.35
[d]	16	-173.67	-18.67	-89.52	45.42
[g]	16	-134.00	47.00	-65.27	57.21

Table 3 shows that the participants have maximum pre-voicing duration for voiced labial stop and minimum pre-voicing duration for voiced velar stop of English. Table 3 shows that the direction of decrease of pre-voicing duration is from labial to velar position. The following figure reflects a trend of decreasing pre-voicing duration from labial to velar place of articulation in the L2 phonemic inventory of participants.

Figure 1: Pre-voicing time



It is already established that distance between vocal fold and place of articulation of a plosive is in inverse proportion of VOT of the plosive (Lisker & Abramson, 1964, 1967). Thus, velar stops being closest to the vocal folds have been found to have the biggest VOTs and labial stops being the remotest in place from vocal folds have been found to have the shortest VOTs (Cho & Ladefoged, 1999; Docherty, 1992; Foulkes, Docherty, & Jones, 2010). The current study confirms that the distance between place of articulation and vocal folds is in proportion to pre-voicing duration. The decrease in distance between place of articulation and vocal fold causes decrease in pre-voicing duration of voiced stops in the speech of Pakistani and Indian learners. That is why voiced velar stops have shortest pre-voicing duration and voiced labial stops being most distant from vocal folds have the biggest pre-voicing duration. The reason for this is, as pointed out by Xu (personal communication), a shorter distance between point of articulation and vocal folds develops higher pressure which cannot be sustained for a longer time but a longer distance between point of articulation and vocal folds creates a longer tube which develops relatively lower pressure which can be sustained for a longer time. That is why [b] which is produced at the longest distance from vocal folds has a longer time for pre-voicing but [g] which is produced very closer to vocal folds has the shortest pre-voicing duration.



### 3.2.2. VOTs of voiceless stops

A repeated measures analysis of variance confirmed that there is no significant difference between Hindi and Punjabi speakers ( $F=1.837$ ,  $p=0.197$ ). There was a linear increase in the VOTs of plosives produced at different place of articulations ( $F=61.79$ ,  $p<.0001$ ). The linear effect of the adjacent vowels is also strongly significant ( $F=23.624$ ,  $p<.0001$ ). All three-way and two-way interactions are non-significant. The following table shows the average results. A separate test applied on the groups of sounds separately shows the following effect of vowels on adjacent sounds.

Table 4: Effect of vowel on VOT of voiceless plosives

Sound	F	P
[p <sup>h</sup> ]	2.132	0.165
[t <sup>h</sup> ]	.186	0.673
[k <sup>h</sup> ]	<b>12.492</b>	<b>0.003</b>
[p]	<b>11.817</b>	<b>0.004</b>
[t]	.023	0.882
[k]	1.485	0.242

The results show that although overall effect of adjacent vowels on VOTs of stops was significant but in individual analysis it was significant only for aspirated dorsal and unaspirated labial stop. The following table shows the VOTs of these sounds.

Table 5: Effect of adjacent vowels on VOTs<sup>1</sup>

Consonant	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
[pi]	16	13.00	106.00	26.50	23.00
[pu]	16	.00	105.00	33.19	32.27
[pa]	16	.00	89.00	15.75	21.67
[k <sup>h</sup> i]	16	42.00	102.00	66.25	21.81
[k <sup>h</sup> u]	16	22.00	97.00	60.50	22.65
[k <sup>h</sup> a]	16	22.00	117.00	50.19	26.76

<sup>1</sup> Since the effect of adjacent vowel on VOT of coronal stops is non-significant, they are not included in the table.

The above results show that the effect of [a] is stronger than other vowels on these sounds. Individual pair-wise comparisons show that only the VOT of unaspirated stops followed [a] and [u] are significantly different from each other ( $t=2.435$ ,  $p=0.028$ ). The difference between the VOTs of dorsal stops after [a] and [u] are marginally non-significant ( $t=1.805$ ,  $p=0.091$ ). These analyses confirm that only the effect of [a] and [u] on labial stops are effective in that [u] increases the VOTs of [p] and [a] decreases that of [p] and [k<sup>h</sup>]. The effect of vowels on other sounds is non-significant. Since the effect of adjacent vowel in most of the cases is non-significant, therefore, the VOTs obtained in the context of different vowels were all averaged for ease of further analysis. The following table shows the averaged VOTs.

Table 6: Averaged VOTs of stops

Sounds	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
[p <sup>h</sup> ]	16	4.67	57.00	27.25	14.03
[p]	16	6.33	91.33	25.15	21.04
[t <sup>h</sup> ]	16	16.00	80.33	36.81	20.05
[t]	16	18.00	67.67	33.06	12.03
[k <sup>h</sup> ]	16	35.00	103.00	58.98	20.80
[k]	16	30.33	72.00	44.83	14.49

In the repeated measures analysis of variance, overall aspiration contrast was found significant. However, individual pair-wise comparisons show that the aspiration contrast is significant only on dorsal place ( $t=3.665$ ,  $p=.002$ ) but non-significant for other two places ( $p>.1$ ). An individual comparison shows that the aspiration contrast for only velars is significant in the VOTs of both groups. For other sounds, aspiration contrast is non-significant in the VOTs of both groups of participants ( $p>.1$ ).

#### 4. Analysis and discussion

Starting from VOT of voiced stops, the results show that all voiced stops of English were produced with pre-voicing by all participants. It is already known that most of the languages of Indo-Aryan family are voicing languages. Voicing languages are those languages which have truly voiced stops produced with pre-voicing (Harris, 1994). On the other hand, English is an aspiration language (Honeybone, 2005). The major difference between aspiration and voicing languages is that the former differentiate

between stops on the basis of the feature [spread glottis] whereas the latter uses feature [voice] to differentiate between stops on the basis of laryngeal specification. It is already observed that acquisition of aspiration contrast is very difficult for speakers of voicing languages (Syed, 2012, 2014b). The speakers of Punjabi and Hindi have pre-voiced stops in their L1. For English they also transfer the same negative VOT values. It is a kind of equivalence classification between L1 and L2 voiced stops that these participants have developed for these sounds; and in the words of Flege (1995), establishment of a new phonetic category for new L2 sounds is not possible if adult learners develop an equivalence classification between the new L2 and the corresponding L1 sounds. The results of the current study are quite in accordance with the predictions of Flege (1995).

A possible difficulty in acquisition of English voiced stops with positive VOT is that if these learners produce English voiced stops with post-burst short-lag VOT like native speakers of English, they will confuse voiced stops with voiceless unaspirated stops of English because Pak-Indian speakers produce English unaspirated stops with short-lag post-burst VOT. To maintain the difference between these two groups of plosives, Pak-Indian learners produce voice stops with pre-voicing and voiceless unaspirated stops with positive VOT. English native speakers produce both these stops with positive VOT but they have a complimentary distribution between voiced and unaspirated stops on onset position because of which they can maintain the difference between these two types of stops. Since there is a no such complimentary distribution for voiced and unaspirated stops in Hindi and Punjabi languages, the participants cannot develop native-like VOT ranges for these stops. These findings demonstrate that acquisition a second language is not only acquisition of phonemic inventory of that language only. We cannot concatenate phonemes of an L2 and produce words of the L2 without acquiring phonotactics involved in the grammar of that language.

An acoustic analysis of productions of voiceless stops show that the participants have developed two significant ranges of VOTs for aspirated and unaspirated velar stops. But they could not develop two separate VOT ranges for labial and coronal stops. According to Brown (2000), if a feature which differentiates between two sounds of L2 is active in the L1 of a group of learners, the learners will acquire such a contrast. From this point of view these participants should acquire aspiration contrast on all three places.

However, they could only acquire this contrast on velar place. Thus the prediction of the feature model is partially verified. There may be a possible objection against this conclusion may be that according to Brown (2000), acquisition of an allophonic variance may be equal to acquisition of phonemic contrast or phonological feature. However, Archibald (personal communication) considers that acquisition of allophonic variance also implies acquisition of the relevant feature because a) acquisition of allophonic variance is more difficult than that of a phonemic contrast; thus acquisition of allophonic contrast implies acquisition of phonemic contrast and b) acquisition of allophones also means development of two different categories of sounds although at a different level of representation. However, the participants' ability to acquire English aspiration contrast on velar position but their failure to acquire the same contrast on labial and coronal position indicates that there are some other factors also involved in acquisition of new contrast. In the current context, there are some aerodynamic factors which are involved in proper acquisition. Place of contact between active and passive articulator and distance between vocal folds and point of contact in production of a sound has direct relation with VOT. A bigger place of contact between active and passive articulator gives a bigger VOT and vice versa. Similarly, a shorter distance between point of articulation of a stop and vocal folds yields bigger VOT. From both angles velar stops are more amenable for a bigger VOT (Docherty, 1992; Foulkes et al., 2010; Lisker & Abramson, 1964, 1967). It is already known that both Pakistani and Indian learners produce both aspirated and unaspirated allophones of English plosives with shorter VOT. In other words, they have to learn how to produce a stop with bigger VOT for which velar stops are by default amenable. Thus, the participants could acquire aspiration contrast in English velar stops. These findings demonstrate that it is not only relevant phonological feature which matters in adult L2 acquisition. Other phonetic factors also have equally significant role in adult language acquisition.

Finally, acquisition of new allophones of English velar stops at least partially rejects the critical period hypothesis. The information given in table 1 shows that all participants started learning British English at adult age which indicates that they acquired aspiration contrast on velar place of articulation. It means, contrary to the CPH claim, a new sound contrast can be acquired in adult age.

Lastly, we shall have a comment on influence of adjacent vowel on L2 acquisition. The results of statistical tests show that the effect of vowel on /k/ and /p/ is significant. This indicates that because of flexibility of tongue, coronal /t/ does not get influence of the adjacent vowel. Detailed results in table 5 show that [p] adjacent to [u] has bigger VOT values because both have similar place of articulation. On the other hand, velar aspirated was produced with strong aspiration when it occurred before [i]. [u] and [a] caused a decrease in VOT of aspirated velar stops. It means that the same place of articulation though helpful for labial was an impediment in production of aspiration after /k/ which is closer to the vocal folds. In other words, closer to the vocal folds, a common place of articulation of a plosive and the adjacent vowel is an impediment in VOT but as the distance between place of articulation and vocal folds increases, the common place of articulation causes increase of VOT. This interaction of VOT, place of articulation and nature of adjacent vowel requires further research. Apparently, [u] caused a decrease in VOT because of lip rounding. But the issue needs further investigation and is a topic of future research.

## **5. Conclusion**

The current study was based on an acoustic analysis of production of voiced and voiceless stops of English by adult Pakistani and Indian learners. VOT was taken as acoustic cue for phonetic analysis. The results show that the Pak-Indian learners cannot produce English voiced stops with positive VOT in native-like manner. This implies that speakers of voicing languages cannot acquire voiced stops of aspiration languages. The participants also could not acquire aspiration contrast on labial and coronal place. However, they could acquire the same contrast on velar contrast which challenges the predictions of the CPH. However, these findings also indicate that acquisition of a second language is actually acquisition of a whole system along with its phonotactics. The findings of this study also indicate that besides phonological factors, phonetic factors also play a vitally important role in L2 acquisition. The role of adjacent vowel on acquisition of VOT of plosives in adult L2 could not be thoroughly explained. It will be a question for future investigation.

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# Building Knowledge through Textbooks: An SFL Perspective on Developing Reading Skills at School Level

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper aims at introducing the specific linguistic features students are exposed through textbooks and illuminates how particular grammatical choices and layout construe meanings. Systemic Functional Linguistics-SFL suggests that a linguistic feature analysis such as register variables, nominalizations, lexical cohesion and genre-based pedagogy offers a tremendous reading activity in which a discourse unfolds. So, to effectively help students develop knowledge, the teachers need to expand the language resources to highlight how social meanings are construed through lexicogrammatical patterns. Drawing on experimental research paradigm, the study was carried out in a private elite school in Pakistan. The two classes, (O' levels, final year), balanced both in sex and English proficiency, were taken as the experimental and the control group, and the average English test scores before the experiment were fairly equal but the final test scores showed a fairly large difference. Therefore, the research shows that the linguistic resources and genre based approach can help students to build knowledge about the language and improve significantly their understating of the content. The students' reading skills depend mainly on their language proficiency so the implications support better teaching methodology at schools.

**Keywords:** *reading skill, lexicogrammatical patterns, genre pedagogy, linguistic resources, experimental research*

## 1. Introduction

This paper emphasizes the importance of reading skills for the understanding of text. Today's schools are turning out students ill-prepared to do any type of reading. (Purcell-Gates, Duke & Martineau, 2007). However, when it comes to teaching reading across the curriculum, grammar is no longer an adequate means in exploration of the patterns of meaning in texts (Rose et al 2007). Hence, it is observed that students face philosophical issues for consideration when given the chance to read and reread the text (Francis & Hallam 2000). In order to achieve a dramatic change in students' reading ability, students are exposed to a huge number of literacy interventions which boost learners' reading accuracy and fluency (Lee, 2009)

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Amongst the four essential language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, reading is highly necessary to be accepted to make an efficient language learner (Yildirim, 2013). However, among these four skills of language learning, reading is sadly the most ignored one. The simple idea that the acquisition of reading comprehension denotes to ability of learning to understand writing (Perfetti, Landi & Oakhill, 2005) which is a multi-featured process, including the interaction between text and the reader with the help of cognitive system to decode the written symbols in order to derive meanings. Report of the Commission on Reading (Anderson et. al, 1985) stated that reading is a complex process to identify printed words, to skim them for required information and to evaluate meanings from them. It allows readers for deep exploration and interpretation of texts produced in different contexts. So, reading is important in context of writing because students can write successful texts using discourse patterns they have learnt from reading different texts (Rose, 2006).

Genre theory, as such, has been employed to explore the relationship between language, social structure and culture (Martin & Rose, 2008). Genres are not simply skin texture of texts, but are the mediating structures between texts, makers and interpreters. Fowler argues that 'genre makes possible the communication of content' (Fowler, 1989). Genres compartmentalize complex linguistic processes as things. Genre based literacy pedagogy has been developed over twenty-five years, in what has become known as the Sydney School (Green & Lee 1994, Martin, 2000). A new generation of literacy pedagogy is now focusing on teaching reading, since it is the basis of academic learning, and further learning to write flows from learning to read (Martin & Rose, 2005). Therefore, in new reading pedagogy, genre based learning focuses to explore the meanings of the text.

Text may either be literary or non-literary, depending upon its genre. A text is;

*[A term] used in linguistics to refer to any passage-spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole [...] A text is a unit of language in use. It is not a grammatical unit, like a clause or a sentence; and it is not defined by its size [...] A text is best regarded as a semantic unit; a unit not of form but of meanings.*

*(Cohesion in English, Halliday and Hasan, 1976. P. 1-2)*

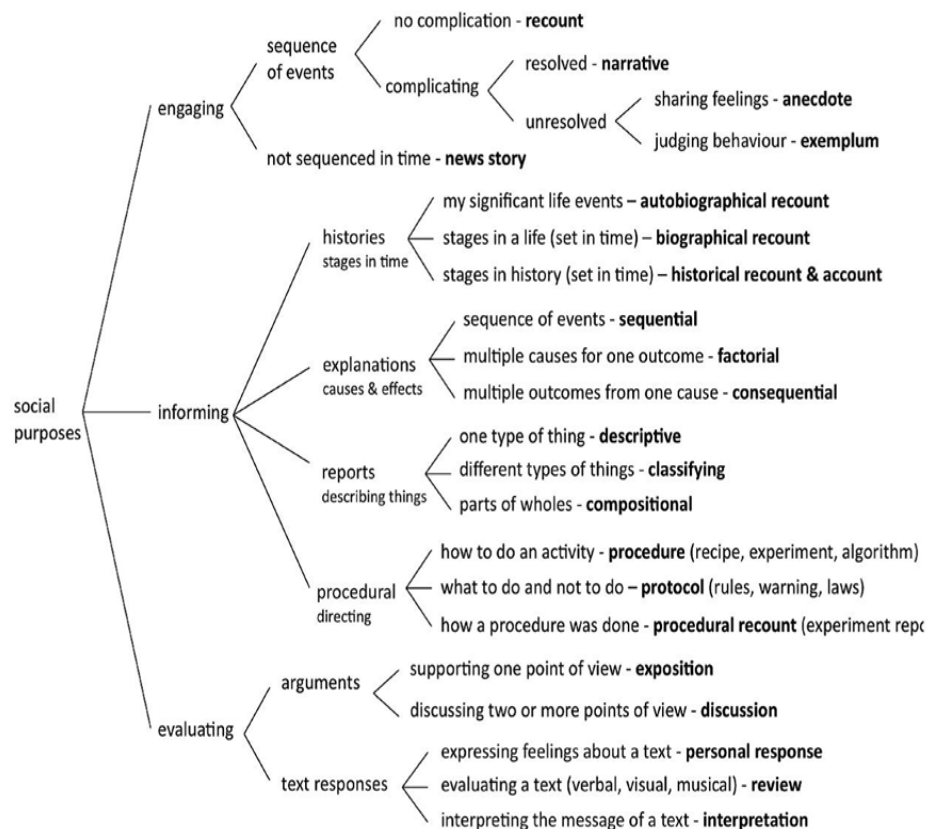
As far as the academic text is concerned, an academic text is exclusively written either for the use of teachers and students, or it is a text that is recommended by teachers because of its effectiveness. Generally, critical reading is considered the base for extracting the main idea of the given text. Academic texts require a critical reading that is careful, deep, complete, and full of thought. Therefore, it would be justified to say that reading is a process shaped partly by the text, partly by the reader's background, and partly by the situation in which reading occurs (Hyland, 2004). These texts always have a central point or theme set in a context that requires interpretation. Hence, readers negotiate the meaning of the text with the author by applying their prior knowledge related to the text. For wider and distinctive interpretations of the students, it is mandatory to have an in-depth study of academic texts. Without it, they would not be able to fabricate the English language in their verbal expressions accordingly.

For exploring genre based learning strategy for improving reading an experimental was conducted on two classes of O' levels (final year) having a Cambridge system of education. Applying experimental research design, difference or variance was measured through the conduct of a pre-test and a post-test which showed remarkably large differences in control and experimental groups. An insight was also drawn from related research articles on genres and reading habits in the digital age. Test papers were distributed among students to evaluate their test scores with SPSS to ensure highly valid results. Thus, we have figured out i) complications encountered by the students in reading academic text, ii) inadequacies in teaching methodologies and iii) complexity in unfolding register variables. This experimental study on reading habits of students sheds light on complications in reading academic texts, the reasons behind these complications and practicable ways to amend these complications.

## **2. Relevant Research Background**

Academic texts, which are designed to be used for the purpose of fulfilling a particular need or solve a problem, are multi-featured texts that are different from other texts as in novels, magazines etc. Such texts, when analyzed critically, tend to have two domains, what we read (content and style) and how we read (what the reader is expected to do). Academic texts involve concepts and ideas that are related to a subject and different

types of genre. One text may contain one genre or many genres depending on the characteristics and contexts in which text is embedded. A single text may have combination of more than one genre and breaches the convention of a genre. The genre may be internal to the text or external to it. While talking about academic genres, these may include textbooks, scholarly articles, and thesis and encyclopedia articles. 1980s, research on genre in the Sydney School (Martin, 2000) was designed to propose a model for teachers to teach students to write effective text. Initially, a small set of written genres was identified which included recounts, narratives, procedures, reports, explanations and expositions (Martin & Painter, 1986). Following two decades, these genres were re-contextualized with social purposes, staging and having lexicogrammatical features. This work was expanded in the 1990s-research project ‘*Write it Right*’. The work was briefly discussed in Martin & Rose (2006). A summarized form of this work is provided in a figure given below, adapted from Martin and Rose (2006).



As per the social theory of language, every text is embedded in its social context in which it is created and used and this social context is shaped by people using the language in interpreting a text, its context and involved genre type play a complementary role in making meaning. According to Martin & Rose,

*“Patterns of social organization in a culture (genre) are realized as patterns of social interaction in each context of situation (register), which in turn are realized as patterns of language (discourse) in each text” (2008: 10).*

Every text involves one or another genre type in which genre consists of meaning and meaning construes the genre. By realizing the relationship between genre and text (See Figure B), language features are made clear and identified to students. Genre based approaches adopt different categories, divided into rank or scale for the realization of the given text. Genre splits a text into phases which are defined broadly as waves of information flow carrying pulses of field and tenor. The relation between genres, stages, phases and messages is not simply compositional but also realizational. Genre is realized by its stages, stages by their phases, and phases by their messages.(Rose, 2006)

While doing critical analysis, readers are expected to extract the main idea or purpose of the text by using different techniques and adopting a particular view. Just like teaching methodologies, reading theories have shifts and transitions namely traditional view, cognitive view and meta-cognitive view. Dole et al (1991) supported the traditional view by stating that readers acquire skills to interpret the text and they reproduce meaning from the meaning residing in the text. Traditional view actually focused on the printed form of the text. Nunan (1991) stated that reading is a system of decoding written symbols in order to create meaning to get the sense of the text. He called this view as ‘*bottom-up*’ view of the reading. McCarthy (1999) remarked that meaning resides in the printed page and its reader’s function is to interpret that meaning. He called this process as ‘*outside-in processing*’.

The cognitive view of reading supports the background knowledge of the reader for comprehending the text. It supports ‘*top-down*’ model that is in opposition to the

*'bottom-up'* model. Goodman (1967 cited in Chodkiewicz) opined that reader is the central figure in cognitive view. Readers sample the text, read it, make hypothesis, reject or confirm them depending on their background knowledge. Rumelhart (1977) supported the schema theory. He described schemata as 'building blocks of cognition' which are used in processing data, retrieving data, categorizing goals and making possible the flow of information. If our schemata are incomplete, it will not be able to interpret the data coming from the text thus affecting our processing of the text. Cognitive view of reading puts focus on interactive nature of reading and constructive nature of comprehension. Critical analysis of different types of text promotes cognitive development to identify different types of genre within a single text. Schema theory of reading states that the major intellectual function provided by each literary genre can be examined by this theory. Schema theorists presuppose that there are organized concepts in our mind which form understandable networks, understandable to an individual.

According to Block (1992), there is no more need to debate on 'whether reading is a bottom-up, language-based process or a top-down, knowledge-based process.' Further researches have proved that readers wield control to execute their ability to interpret a text. Block (1992) called this control as meta-cognition. Meta-cognitive view involves point that what one does while reading. Klein (1991) pointed out that strategic readers identify the purpose of the text before reading it, observe the form of the text, try to trace out particular genre and extract the main idea.

Contrastive speech making and genre theory explain why there occur certain mismatches between actual experience and anticipation of the reader. Anticipation about the text goes with the cultural differences in speechifying while actual experiences are based on patterns, features and conventions of the text thus serving as an identity for the text. Both these theories contribute an elementary concept for the reading theory- representation of the text. These theories, shifts, conventions and models provided a collective idea about reading and comprehending a text. No one theory can alone serve as a base model in construing an inclusive study for different types of text encompassing different genres, to contribute in language proficiency.

### 3. Literature Review

This paper deals with the importance of reading in linguistic resources and genre based pedagogy. The reading pedagogy focuses on smaller phases of meaning within each stage that are more variable, and sensitive to register variations such as a text (Rose, 2006). It is evident that reading and writing are interconnected processes (Hyland, 2006) because learning to write flows from learning to read (Martin & Rose, 2005). Therefore, reading is a complex process (Hyland, 2006). Grabe (1991) believes that reading comprehension is a combination of both identification and interpretation skills. So, students not only learn English through the micro skills of the four language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, writing), but also through various genres and their generic characteristics (Rozimela, 2014) including knowledge, experience and a particular purpose of reading which influences the derivation of meanings from a text (Rice, 2013). SFL theory believes that language is a meaning making resource. SFL views language as a social semiotic (Halliday, 1978 cited in Valli & Lucas, 2002), in which language is a social phenomenon of making meanings through linguistic choices from the language system in specific contexts. From this theory there originated the concept of genre which was further developed in the last two decades. FL uses the notion of linguistic register to realize a relationship between language and context. A register outlines the lexicogrammatical features that help to realize a particular situational context (Halliday & Hasan, 1989 cited in Iinuma, 2016). Features of the social context include what is talked about (field), the relationship between the interactants (tenor), and how a text is organized (mode), (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). Reading through the SFL perspective in which a discourse unfolds helps to scaffold learners into recognizing lexicogrammatical patterns such as:

**Field**            the overall subject matter or what is talked about

**Tenor**            the relationship between the interactants

**Mode**            how a text is organized (written or spoken)

(Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014)

Texts can be better understood from the metafunctional perspectives of construing, enacting and organizing a text. Such discourse patterns in the reading pedagogy help students to rapidly learn to read and write texts at the level of complexity.

Genres are defined as social processes that are goal-oriented in which speakers engage as members of one culture and it has been twenty-five years now that the genre based pedagogy has evolved (Martin & Thompson, 2005). A new generation of literacy pedagogy is now focusing on teaching reading, since reading is the basis of academic learning, and learning to write flows from learning to read (Martin & Rose 2005). Therefore, by the rhetorical characteristic of the genre, students are expected to assimilate into becoming competent members of a discourse community (Bhatia, 1999b; Bhatia and Candlin, 2001). Genre studies introduced in applied linguistics serve the communicative purpose (Francis & Hallam, 2000). The pedagogic focus of genre based writing approaches on text staging and grammar has proven successful for many students because it focuses their attention on recognizing meaningful patterns at different scales of discourse that they can then use in their writing. Genre based approaches thus include logico-semantic categories that are the categories of expansion and projection. They are distinguished from each other firstly on whether they expand the activity sequence or are projected by it, secondly whether the type of expansion is enhancing or elaborating, and thirdly whether the type of enhancement is time or consequence (Rose, 2006).

Genre is a term for joining text together. It represents how writers conventionally use language to respond to recurrent situations (Hyland, 2004). Genres are social practices that have evolved to enable us achieve our goals (Martin and Painter, 2001). Genres present a series of choices. They instruct and inform about things or events that are complicating. With the expansion of genre and its recontextualization, genre based pedagogy has gained prominence for learners at schools. Pedagogy is commonly considered to be the art and study of teaching and learning (Knowles, 1973 cited in Juskan 2018). The idea of pedagogy expresses the norms of those who shape and present it (Kingelo & Berry, 2004). Watkins and Mortimer (1999 cited in Rosemary 2006) define pedagogy as ‘any conscious activity by one person designed to enhance the learning of another’.



Genre based pedagogy has been successfully employed by the teachers to provide solutions to students' learning difficulties. The approach suggests different strategies for training teachers in scaffolding reading and writing across curriculum. In genre-based approaches the focus is on the creation of meaning at the level of the whole text. Rather than dealing with discrete aspects of language, there is a view that meaning groups and evolves over a stretch of text. Genre approaches seem to offer the most useful means for learners to both access and critique cultural and linguistic resources (Hasan & Williams, 1996). The pedagogic attention of genre based writing approaches on text staging and grammar has been advantageous for learners since it focuses their attention on identifying meaningful flow of information at different stages of discourse, which they can employ in their writing afterwards. Teaching reading is a tough skill to master and most students are found to be deficient in this all-important skill. It requires a focus on in-between patterns of textual flow, between text phases and clause grammar. It is so as learners are unable to grasp a text as a thread of clauses, or as a sequence of words, or a word as a series of letters. On account of these aspects a deep focus of the reading pedagogy is on strings of discourse that are refer termed here as phases.

Genre embodies culture with a definite goal to achieve. Genre based pedagogy scaffolds learning and hence improves their reading proficiency by facilitating the students to identify structures purposefully and gather information success.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

In order to test the hypothesis, 54 students from O' level (Form3) were selected in the school. The given number of the students makes a good sample to carry out the experimental study comprising of two groups-experimental and control. All the selected students were chosen necessarily keeping certain characteristics like they were non-native speakers of English, 14-16 year old, and having equal representation of both genders (male and female). The groups were formed keeping in view the English language comprehension and proficiency scores which were measured through a pre-test which ensured equal distribution of high, average and the low achievers in two groups.

After the five-week teaching (30 hours in total: 06 hours a week and 90 minutes a day) the students of the two groups, both control and experimental, were tested again under

the given instructions and the test scores were analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Sciences) software to ensure zero error in the findings.

Reading of academic texts is very different from leisure reading because it is more than words on the page. Students use different techniques to comprehend the text, some of commonly used are listed in Table 1:

**Table 1: Commonly used techniques for reading**

<b>Skimming</b>	It's not a comprehensive reading. It helps to go through keywords, initial or final sentences or any other important concepts. It looks for particulars and concepts in a hasten way.
<b>Scanning</b>	It's a technique of reading a text more watchfully and with slow speed. Students need to scan for explicit information – for example a quote or sustaining truth in an argument. Recognize topic sentence and authentication in each segment.
<b>Pre-viewing</b>	It's a technique to take a little bit of additional time to start in a different way--five to ten minutes for an essay, or twenty to sixty minutes for a book.

#### **4.1. Experimental design**

Regarding the research objectives of this study, following experimental design has been followed. On the whole, the testing was designed to accurately but simply analyze the language resources. The criteria were derived from the SFL model of text-in-context. At the level of genre, evaluation focuses on the social purpose, stages and phases of the text. At the level of register, the focus was on the text's field, tenor and mode. At the level of discourse, lexical cohesion, conjunction and reference resources were identified.

#### **4.2. Pre-test**

The pre-test was designed to draw results for the English language comprehension and proficiency between control and experimental group in reading English texts. The test paper which consists of five sections is taken from the prescribed text book of English. Students were supposed to attempt and complete the test in half an hour. Keeping in view the results drawn from pre-test for control and experimental group, a comparison was drawn on the basis of scores achieved by both groups in terms of average and

standard deviation. A comparison of both groups in pre-test does not show any remarkable difference in respect of language proficiency. It is evident from the result that in pre-test, both control and experimental groups are at equal level in reading proficiency and showed quite equal results with a small difference in scores. Table 1 shows test scores before the experiment analyzed by the statistic software SPSS:

**Table 2: Test scores before the experiment**

<i>Test</i>	<i>Scores achieved by experimental group</i>	<i>Scores achieved by control group</i>
Average	3.83	3.27
Standard deviation	2.39	2.13

In pre-test, both experimental and control group showed fairly equal results, with a little difference in points. After the pre-test, the treatment was given to experimental group for drawing results in post-test to check any significant change worth-noting in respect of language proficiency.

## **5. Teaching**

After analyzing the results in pre-test, experimental group was provided with specific treatment of five-week teaching (30 hours in total: 06 hours a week and 90 minutes a day). The proposed training to experimental group pertained to reading different types of texts involving different genre types and lexicogrammatical structures. The purpose of this treatment was to enhance receptive skills (listening and reading) of the students and to assess language proficiency in reading comprehensions afterwards. The experimental group was taught to unfold the different cultural meanings embedded in a text. They were introduced to register variables, lexical choices, cohesive devices and patterns of grammatical choices to derive meanings from a text. Techniques were taught which could enhance their achievement and proficiency in reading texts. Meanwhile, the control group received traditional teaching for reading academic texts or the methods which they like to read a text. Both groups were trained in specific ways which contributed to draw results for post-test of the experiment. A post-test analysis of the experiment showed a remarkable difference in achieved scores by both experimental and control groups when analyzed.

## 5.1. Lexical Features Based Pedagogy

The underlying purpose of genre based pedagogy is to provide learners with explicit knowledge about language. Genre based approaches include linguistic feature analysis viz register variables (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014), nominalizations (Halliday and Martin, 1993), lexical cohesion (Halliday and Hasan, 1976) and genre-based pedagogy (Martin and Rose, 2008) that are based on the premise that reading at school plays a pivotal role in shaping students' lives and equipping them with the skills to play particular roles in a society. Genre theory adheres to the notion that language use is always socially and culturally contested. From early primary years to late primary school, from middle level to high school level, and then to college, the learners must involve themselves in advanced literacy activities in which language is presented in ways which condense information through lexicogrammatical choices. School-based texts realize particular purposes in schooling by construing the kinds of experience and interpersonal relationships which itself has specific cultural purposes. By identifying how different linguistic choices function construing experience, presenting one's point of view and constructing particular kinds of texts, we spotlight the role of language as a social semiotic system.

### 5.1.1. Cohesion in a Text

SFL theory uses the concept of linguistic register to realize a relationship between language and context. A register outlines the lexicogrammatical categories that realize a situational context (Halliday and Hasan, 1989). Cohesion is an important linguistic resource of genre based approaches. Halliday & Hasan (1976) distinguish five cohesive devices: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. The first four are grammatical devices, and the last, lexical cohesion refers to a number of semantically related words occurring in a text.

*“Once upon time birds were invited to a feast. The great day came and at last the party arrived and the hosts were happy to see them. Birds gathered around to eat. The birds look cheerful. Tortoise stood to thank them. [...] Eloquent indeed that all the birds were happy to have brought him. The last word ended in a joy and, in the evening all birds wrapped themselves in woollen nests but only until the next morning” (Jones, 1987)*

From early primary years to late primary school, from middle to high school, and then to college, students need to engage in advanced literacy tasks in which language is presented in ways which condense information through lexicogrammatical choices.

### 5.1.2. Nominalisation in a Text

The idea of grammatical metaphor was introduced into linguistic studies by Halliday, and it is being increasingly recognized that this is a basic strategy by which the meaning making resources in a text can be largely expanded (see, for example, Ravelli 1988, Martin 1993, Halliday and Martin 1993, and Thompson, 2013) but the identification of nominalizations is not always straightforward. One formal criterion for identifying a nominalization is that the nominal form is derived from a verb; but this is only the first step. With nominals derived from verbs, there is a cline from most ‘noun-like’ to most ‘verb-like’. For instance, a noun like *administration* is derived from the verb *administer*, but there is a clear difference between examples such as (2) and (3)

- (2) At the same time, the *administration* has failed to take decisive action
- (3) One week was left between the last teaching session and the *administration* of the questionnaire.

The grammatical metaphor in (3) which shows the act of administering is of my focus in this study that serves the purpose.

Further, nominalization packs information. Packing the content of clause into noun groups is known as nominalization (Locke, 1996 cited in Martin 1996).

By applying nominalization resource, processes that are represented by verbs, and quality which is represented by adjective are turned metaphorically into nouns.

“In your *examination*, you are likely to be given a *comprehension* exercise with *procedures* for the *administration* of the *practice* test and *comments* on the *effectiveness* of the exercise. You must give *evidence* from the *passage* on particular *impression*. *Freedom* to attempt freely under the *description* will be provided. Such *attempts* motivate, and the *motivations* are facilitated. Finally, *facilitations* help learning a language” (Jones, 1987 p. 178).

### 5.1.3. Genre Based Pedagogy

Genre Pedagogy focuses on literacy education, language teaching and the content meaning, all at the same time (Martin & Rose, 2005). Hyland (2003:18) stated that genre-based pedagogies postulated the ways “language functions in social context” in a systematic and explicit way. Genre pedagogies assure very advantages for students as they bring together language, content, and contexts, while offering instructors a means of presenting learners with explicit and systematic explanations of the ways writing works to communicate (see Christie & Martin, 1997). In Genre Pedagogy the intent is on the language learning, the literacy teaching and the curriculum content – all at the same time. Genre Pedagogy involves teaching strategies that are based on scaffolding measures to assist learners in their search for meaning.

*“In deciding whether nuclear power stations should replace fossil fuel power stations, a number of arguments for and against were examined [thesis]. The key issue includes safety [argument to follow]. Safety issues continue concern the world [main point]. As far as there is no radioactive issue they are not health risk [supportive]. Although, those accidents are rare yet the consequences are far-reaching [contrast]. In addition, environmental issues are grave. Resultantly, acid rain contaminates and destructs forests [linked]. On the other hand, those affect weather patterns good for crops [supportive]. To sum up, such power stations have their advantages and disadvantages and decision should carefully be made [conclusion]” (from Step Ahead 3, p.210).*

Overall, the testing was designed to accurately but simply analyze the language resources. The criteria were derived from the SFL model of text-in-context. At the level of genre, evaluation focuses on the social purpose, stages and phases of the text. At the level of register, the focus was on the text’s field, tenor and mode. At the level of discourse, lexical cohesion, conjunction and reference resources were identified.

Genre based teaching works through lexical features such as register variables, nominalization, lexical cohesion etc. These linguistic resources help to realize

embedded culture and bring out situational context. In a way these resources facilitate learning process in general and reading pedagogy in particular.

## 6. Post-test

After the end of the instruction session of five weeks, both experimental and control groups were tested again under specific conditions relevant to language learning to assess their language proficiency in reading comprehensions. A test paper of English extracted from new resources was provided to both experimental and control groups. Both groups showed a highly remarkable difference in test scores as given in the following table.

*Table 3: Test scores after the experiment*

<i>Test</i>	<i>Scores achieved by experimental group</i>	<i>Scores achieved by the control group</i>
Average	7.53	5.73
Standard deviation	3.47	2.79

## 7. Results

Reading comprehension test results, drawn from the experimental research, show that there is a significant variation between scores of both experimental and control groups when analyzed through SPSS for their average scores and standard deviation. Students in experimental group responded with accuracy and correctness to the questions and completed their test papers in time (Bhatia & Candlin 2001). These students showed a drastic change in their scores as compared to the pre-test results because of the way they were taught to analyze lexico-grammatical structures, genre types and how to unfold register variables to form a coherent discourse. However, students under control group did not complete test papers in the specified period of time and their accuracy rate was much lower as compared to that of experimental group. A comparative analysis of scores of both groups is given in table 3:

**Table 4: Comparative analysis of scores of experimental and control group**

<i>Group</i>	<i>Test</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>After</i>
<b>Experimental</b>	Average	3.83	7.53
	Standard deviation	2.39	3.47
<b>Control</b>	Average	3.27	5.73
	Standard deviation	2.13	2.79

## **8. Findings and Discussion**

The experimental research has both practical and theoretical implications. Theoretical implication lies in the fact that a deep approach to the reading of the text is not only important but also a condition for thorough understanding of it. One must have ability to deal with the involved genre type in text. The genre might be unfamiliar to the reader in any text so that there is a need to read and re-read the text to tackle the embedded meanings. Other than genre types and lexicogrammatical structures, content and style and substance and manner also matter for these aspects of the text determine what a reader reads and what he is expected to do with the text. An adequate understanding of the text is another issue in the context of language learning. In leisure reading, adequacy can be said reader's satisfaction with the text, but in academic context adequacy demands a substantive understanding of texts which underpins to the knowledge of the reader. Authors in academic texts usually deal with ideas such as lifting up conceptual issues, current particulars of text, make use of reasoning to put up their point of view and secure their status. Such authors are conventional to the arrangement of text; they pick their words vigilantly to make text impressive. On the part of the reader, while reading an academic text, readers are expected to do much more than merely comprehend and interpret the text because reading can't be restricted to a single interpretation. Students have to extract the main idea and theme which author presented in the text. Students need to unfold the register variables and genre involved in the text to make embedded cultural meanings explicit. Readers at school or college level are expected to distinguish the writer's objective and feasible preconception, to discriminate between essentials and writer's opinion, to deal with challenging assumption and unverified claim and to incorporate information from corner to corner to numerous sources so that they can make their own claim about any text rather than explaining



what a writer writes in a text. Readers do critical reading for various purposes depending on their intention or purpose.

## **9. Conclusion**

The discussion on scores gained by students for reading skills in both experimental and control group with particular treatment reveals that complexity is an integral part of text and it can be dealt with learning particular strategy. The main findings from this experimental research on automating reading skills in students from SFL perspective conclude that:

- There are differences among students in the degree of reader's substantive understanding of academic texts. Students face difficulty for different parts of the text rather than text as a whole.
- Students' difficulties were attributed to different aspects of text genre that are concerned with the text.
- Drawbacks in educational policies and syllabus design were also reported in the study.
- Students reported that their classrooms are not equipped with modern or multimodal designs.
- Traces of unfinished work and unresolved variations were found in test papers.
- To cover multiple problems in reading academic English text, some applicable and helpful techniques for the students were suggested which help them to go through the text.

Reading skill is central to grasp the text but modern-day schools teach reading through process approaches which are inadequate. Genre based literary pedagogy was introduced by the Australian school more than two decades ago. The approach, which draws on SFL theory, focuses on scaffolding the text and helps in exploring embedded cultural meanings. Genre based pedagogy, by employing lexico-grammatical choices, brought fruitful results for the learners which has been proven from this research paper. The idea developed from this experimental research paper is that students' reading skills can be made better if they are exposed to certain linguistic features which provide them with a substantive understanding to go through the text. Such linguistic features as

cohesive devices, multiple genres which involve embedded cultural meanings and lexico-grammatical patterns help students to develop proficiency in language because reading ability is only a reflection of language proficiency. Advancement on the part of teaching methodology is also an essential aspect. In the higher education system there might be long courses for students, but which contribute to highly overloaded schedules for students. Time spent on teaching nothing tells us about the quality of the study. Inadequate teaching may lead to unwitting pressure on the students to cope with their long courses without a thorough understanding which they sense as an inadequate mental work. By introducing Genre based pedagogy, we can help the students to achieve their learning goals and hence improve the education system.

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An overview of the theories relevant to *Research on the Writing and Reading of Dutch scientific English*; Accessed and Retrieved on July 07, 2017 from <http://www.lotpublications.nl/publish/articles/000131/bookpart.pdf>

# English Language: A Language of Academic domains in Pakistan

Illahi Baksh, Rafique. A. Memon, Shakeela Shah & Afifa Khanam

**ABSTRACT:** This review article indicates the importance of English Language (EL) at tertiary levels in Pakistani institutes with the purpose of highlighting its use in teaching and research. The English language has played a very important role in the socio-cultural development of any country. It has achieved a high status and power over other languages because it has a powerful economy in the world. In Pakistan, English language is an official landmark in academic domains. This review suggests some models of English language which are used internationally. Since, English language has achieved a global status that showcases a great contribution convincingly in professional development of English language instructors. Similarly, this scenario of EL reveals some language programs initiated for professional growth of Pakistani teachers. In this regard, the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan has left no stone unturned in funding and supporting professional programs at universities. In this review paper, we have also highlighted changes made for a better English syllabi that is in line with international standards for students in Pakistan.

**Keywords:** *English language, international and global status, professional development, English language teaching in Pakistan*

## 1. Introduction

English language has high status and exclusive use in the academic world. It is used as an international language. Many researchers have talked about its international use and have divided it into different circles it operates. While the rise of World Englishes as a field of scholarly review realizes the enhanced acknowledgment of numerous variants, it neglects to completely represent the truth of English use as a worldwide language (D'Angelo, 2010; Sargeant, 2005). Since English is being formed and reinforced extensively by its local speakers, but rather by those talking it in non-local settings (Mehrotra, 2000). Honna (1998a) contends that, the spread of English in Asia is not synonymous with transplanting American or British English into the district; rather, it involves a progressive de-Anglo-Americanization that would empower the foundation of new assortments of English that reflect Asian lifestyles.

The use of English language has been divided into three circles, and the focus was laid on historical, regional functions and status of the language (Kachru, 1997, 2006). Further, he names the Inner circle that includes the native English speaking countries; the Outer circle includes former colonies like India, Pakistan and last but not least, the Expanding circle consists of China, Japan and Turkey like countries (Kachru, 2006). These countries in expanding circle are strongly affected by the West and now English

has become the important language of almost all disciplines in general, education, business and technology in particular. The model of world Englishes presented by Kachru was a focus of discussion. There is another point of view about the international use of English language. However, another model is known as multi-dialectal (Crystal, 1995). Kachru's concentric circle model doesn't suffice the reality of international use of the English language. Kachru's model is critiqued and interpreted as "norm producing, norm developing and third norm dependent". The reality is not clearly described in the concentric circles of Kachru. On the other hand, Crystal's (1995) idea that there is not yet a common, standard worldwide variety of English and this is aligned with Kachru's argument. More importantly, an integrated opinion of international use of English language wherein varieties are not excluded into distinct circles. Further, (Crystal, 1995) claimed that:

We are already multi-dialectal and that some form of standard, international spoken English is inevitable as a supplement to the dialects we make use of now: an informal local dialect, a formal intranational dialect and an educated international written dialect. (p. 3)

The multi-dialectal model of Crystal acknowledges changes and developments of innovative variations of English language. Another view of international use of English is suggested in the Modiano's (1999a) modified concentric circles. In other words, this model is referred as a centripetal circles of international English. The circles include; (1) proficient speakers of English as an International Language (EIL), (2) speakers with native or foreign language proficiency, (3) Learners of English /people who do not know English (Burt, 2005). In this model, Modiano (1999a) claimed that the native English speakers are not necessarily "proficient non-native speakers of EIL, rather than the native speakers who are not proficient in EIL, are better equipped to define and develop English as a tool in cross-cultural communication"(p. 25). In contrast, this notion is contradictory to Kachru's model wherein L1 speakers are proficient. English as globally functioned language can longer be limited to any particular place (Modiano, 1999). These models of international use of English language indicate that the importance of English stays prominent and its use is considered worldwide in sciences, business and trade. In the light of discussion, Kilickaya (2009) has described a status of

English as an international language and as a lingua franca. It is mentioned that the use of English is not only associated with expanding Circle, rather it also involves native speakers and people from Outer Circle English. Currently, English is acknowledged as the best option for communication. People from different backgrounds communicate in English. It may be understood that a focus has been globally given to it.

## **2. A global status**

English has emerged as a global language. It has achieved a genuinely global status because it has played a special role that is recognized in the world. There are some views with this emergence of English. If English is used as second or foreign language, people feel motivated to learn it because they know that it will help them to keep in touch with other people. To achieve proficiency in the target language, people should make efforts. When language achieves the global status it has to be spoken by other countries around the world. These countries decide to give special place to that language in their communities. Crystal (2003, p. 4) mentions two reasons for English as a global language. Firstly, language can be made; (a) official language of the country, (b) medium of communication, (c) mastery of language as early as possible, (d) description as a second language, (e) complement to L1.

The role of English as an official language is best highlighted because over seventy countries, such as India, Singapore, Nigeria etc. It has a special kind of status. Secondly, language can be made, (1) priority in teaching without official status (2) children are taught in schools (3) English is widely taught as foreign language over 100 countries such as China, Russia, and Germany. Some reasons discussed above guarantee that English enjoys the status of a language of globalization. Giving favour to one language over other, there may be other reasons such as “historical tradition, political expediency, and the desire for commercial, cultural or technological contact” (Crystal, 2003, p. 5). In language supporting environment, the resources to learn it are devoted to learners who can have access through media, libraries, schools and institutes of higher education. Crystal (2003) has written that what makes language global or of international status is that of its associations between dominating language, powerful economy, cultural influence and technological progress. There is an intimacy between



language, economy, culture and technology. This link seems transparent when the historical perspective of English is reported. In the light of same thought, Crystal (2003) also argues that no language can ever be internationally used as a medium of instruction until its dominance or power base. Additionally, no language exists independently without its people who use it socially. It is present in human brains, mouths ears etc. The people who speak that language succeed, as a result language succeeds and if they fall then language falls (p.07). Moreover, Crystal (2003) explores that inherent structure or grammar of any language doesn't make it of international standard such as he explained:

A language does not become a global language because of its intrinsic structural properties, or because of the size of its vocabulary, or because it has been a vehicle of a great literature in the past, or because it was once associated with a great culture or religion. These are all sources which can motivate someone to learn a language, of course, but none of them alone, or in combination, can ensure a language's world spread. (p. 9)

A language has traditionally become an international language for one chief reason: 'the power of its people' – especially their political and military power. The explanation is the same throughout history. English has the prestige of being a global because of two reasons; "geographical-historical and socio-cultural respectively.

### **3. English Language in Pakistan**

English language has achieved its status and importance in the world in general. It is known worldwide spoken language to some extent. It is also considered a lingua franca. In Pakistan, English was used as an official language and source of communication among the elite class (Shamim, 2008, Gopang, 2016). Before independence, official status of English was associated with the part of colonized subcontinent. Afterwards, it also held the same status. English language was the part of ruling class. And it was also deemed as the language of power and dominance (Shamim, 2008). In contrast, today the use of English language is not limited to only the elite class people, rather it is also used by all literate people and working class in Pakistan. The importance and status of

English has some strong background. In this regard, Bughio (2012) has mentioned that a great importance has been given to English language because of some developments it has made. For example, it has an official status in the country and as a result it ensures standard jobs and brightening future. However, the existing literature also indicates that English has not prevailed in Pakistan without any resistance. Such resistance has been done to check an importance of English in Pakistan. Despite the fact, it has contributed a lot in development of academic institutes of Pakistan. Thus, people from all fields give importance to English as the contributing factor in country's development (Mahboob, 2009). With these researchers, English was introduced to novice people and researchers as a language in demand for academic life and professional growth in the world in general, in Pakistan in particular.

Pakistani students and parents prefer to use English language in their academic and professional life. There is a great need of English in the country. For example, some survey studies on Pakistani students' attitudes towards English were conducted and the results confirmed a demand of English (Mansoor 2005; Rahman, 2002; Mahboob, 2002). The research surveys have provided rich data confirming that English language is in demand in Pakistan. However, some studies suggested that the mother-tongue of any child should be used for basic schooling and English at higher levels (Coleman, 2010). Even so students' parents welcome the use of English as a medium of instruction at all levels. Coleman (2010) suggests that L1 for early schooling of a child is essential. Apart from this, in the opinion of Rahman (2007), it is not surprising to consider English as the marker of elitist social status and the most desired skill for lucrative employment in the country.

Pakistan is the country in which six major languages are spoken and over 59 minor languages exist (Rahman, 2002) indicating a multilingual and a multicultural perspective of the country. According to Mahboob (2004), 6 million people speak English and this may be the reason that it has emerged with a new variety known as SAVE. In South Asia, Muslims' attitude towards English has been classified into three conducts; (1) reject and resist (2) accept and assimilate (3) practical use (Rahman, 2005). Another point of view is incorporated is that of nativization. Now it is the true picture of muslims responses to English (Mahboob, 2004, 2016). The use of English

language in Pakistan has been frequently discussed in research (Pathan, 2012). Some motivational sources; interpersonal, instrumental, integrative, regulative and creative have been highlighted. English has become a pattern of life, and its cultural influence continues to be strong (Haque, 1983, as cited in Channa, 2014). This influence of English was acknowledged three decades ago, in Pakistan, a significance and status of English has increased strongly (Memon, 2012; Mahboob, 2002; Norton, 2010, Pathan, 2012). In 1993s, Abbas (1993) discussed five major functions of English language in Pakistan. It is exclusively used in (1) Civil Administration and the bureaucracy, (2) Legal system of federal and provincial governments, (3) Defence forces (i.e., the Army, Air Force, and Navy), (4) Print and electronic media, (5) In the domain of education following bilingual or trilingual pattern. (p. 148-149). In the same vein, Manan, David and Dumanig (2016) labelled English as a passport to success in professional and personal walks of life in Pakistan. The society is divided into class systems. There has been acute consciousness even in lower class parents who want their children to enrol in English medium schools. A rapid growth and spread of English language has attracted all the strata of society in Pakistan. It is believed that if a child is exposed at early age to English, he/she will learn it quickly. The importance of English language is known through its use in academic and professional walks of life.

English language as a compulsory course in all disciplines is taught at tertiary level in Pakistan. In universities, English is a medium of instruction. Pathan (2012) argues that students who do not master over English or have poor language skills, their survival at the course is not possible. In this context, the importance of English is undeniable because of compulsory subject at undergraduate/ graduate levels (Mansoor, 2005; Malik, 1996). Moreover, according to Mansoor (2005), there is a sad scenario that students who first time get entrance to universities lack English skills and she claimed that their weakness stays same because we recruit untrained and inexperienced language teachers. Mostly teachers have degrees in English literature that basically is problematic with students learning English skills. In the same vein, Bughio and Gopang (2014) have stated that teachers use the same traditional approaches for teaching English language in classroom. The existing knowledge of literature indicates that teachers at tertiary levels are not trained professionally. However, keeping it into account, in 2007, HEC of

Pakistan took initiatives to introduce English language teaching reforms (ELTR) for teachers. The purpose of the projects is to train teachers freely in colleges and universities. With these language programs, a hope was created for change in teaching approaches. Bughio and Gopang (2014) also suggested that long term programs should be introduced to ensure better results for quality of language teaching in Pakistan.

In Panjab, Mansoor (2005) has written that curriculum is followed and designed on the bases of literature (e.g. fiction and non –fiction). Her study reports an example from the University of Punjab wherein the course at graduate level is comprised of two sections; firstly, the paper is designed from book of fiction and non-fiction; while another paper consists of grammatical composition. In contrast, Pathan (2012) has stated that teaching of functional English and communication skills using communicative methods is encouraged in the professional universities such as; Engineering, medical and Business schools in Pakistan. It is understood from different views of teaching English at tertiary level in the country. With controversial views of teaching English at university level, The British Council of Pakistan in collaboration with HEC initiated some courses for undergraduates and graduates of Pakistani universities in 2013. The courses are not designed in the view of traditional way of incorporation of fiction and non-fiction material in assessment of English language. The language books are entitled as:

1. English for Academic Purpose
2. English for Employment
3. English for Specific Purpose

The main purpose of language courses is to develop language skills among the students who enter universities and lack language skills for communication.

#### **4. Teaching of English Language**

In Pakistan, English language teaching scenario indicates that the degree awarding institutes are categorized into (1) English-medium schools (2) Vernacular-medium schools (3) Madrasah (4) English language teaching institutes. In addition, Bughio (2014) has included another institute known as (5) Other English Language Teaching Institutes. The Society of Pakistani English Language Teachers (SPELT) conducted a

survey to check an importance of English language. Results of survey showed that a consensus was developed generally in the country that English is mandatory. Furthermore, majority of teachers preferred the use of English from class 1; while a few teachers showed consent for the use of it from class.

In Pakistan, the translation method is generally used to teach English in government schools. L2 is translated into L1 in schools. To students, grammatical rules are introduced while the oral use of English language is discouraged (Rehman, 2001; Bughio & Gopang, 2014). An effect of such teaching supports the rote learning rather than a creative use of English. As a result, learning is only focused on reading and writing skills while listening and speaking are ignored in Vernacular medium schools. Hardly any focus is given to oral communication skills in so called English medium schools. A scenario of government schools is highlighted as:

The teacher tells the students to open their text books on page 64 and take out their copies (notebooks) to write words meaning. She writes the title of the lesson (a fairly long reading passage in the text book followed by comprehension questions and unrelated grammar exercise questions) on the blackboard. First, a few students are nominated to read the part of the text aloud. Then the teacher reads it out loud, stopping occasionally to explain and/or write the meaning of a difficult word on the blackboard in Urdu (Shamim, 2008, p.240).

Further, she has mentioned that the similar process is carried out till end of a specified period of time. Students stay passive and they note what a teacher has written on the blackboard. No learning takes place in such teaching. Students only focus on noting things throughout. It doesn't end here but the same procedure continues the next day (Shamim, 2008). She also highlights saying that the scenario in the private schools is not different. Classrooms are teacher centred. Teachers invest most of their time in giving lectures and as a result students keep listening to. A passivity on their part makes them weak academically and isolates them from peers in classroom. In such learning environment, they develop cramming and memorizing skills and they badly communicate in English. A real learning should engage them in discussion in which a

creative thinking is created. They feel confident and learn communicative skills with zeal (Shamim, (2008). She has claimed that their creative ability is discouraged and muddled (Shamim, 20008; Bughio & Gopang, 2014).

#### **4. Language policy issue**

However, much has been discussed on the issue of language policy (medium of instruction in schools). Recently, Channa (2014) researched on primary school teachers attitudes towards language policy introduced by the government of Pakistan. This study has revealed positive attitude of teachers about the existing role and impact of English. Dissatisfaction was also found among teachers who believed that they lacked English proficiency skills and they need to be trained for that purpose so that they can better service the purpose. Some teachers believe that when they teach in English as a result they become able to be proficient in it. Channa's study (2014) indicated that teachers associate English language skills with trainings. The teachers acknowledged that the language policy might have worked well if they were trained in professional skills. There is a great need of proficient and trained teachers who have mastery over English and can effectively transfer to their students. At primary level if government wants English language policy work effectively, it may take serious steps to appoint skilful teachers. In this research, teachers showed a very positive attitude towards English medium teaching in case the teachers are appointed trained and professional in English. Similarly, Manan, David and Dumanig (2016) analysed the English medium policy in Pakistani schools. The findings revealed that "early English-medium policy appears counterproductive as most students demonstrate poor English language proficiency. Sources such as unavailability of qualified English teachers, poor pedagogies, sociocultural dynamics, and overall institutional weaknesses contribute to the failure of the policy" (p. 219). It concludes that maximum exposure and greater learning beliefs associated with earlier English teaching are delusional as those beliefs are underpinned neither by theories of bilingual/multilingual education nor by schools and social environment of children. Furthermore, Manan et al., (2016) have acknowledged that the importance of English language cannot be denied, so it is suggested that early English policy should be revised and it has to be replaced with the mother tongue. Across all strata of society, the democratization of English and its equitable distribution is

encouraged and advocated (Manan et al., 2016). It is additionally evaluated an advancement of English language, and the language status arrangement as it influences the tertiary level of direction. While the Educational institutes recognize an importance of language as it needs the country in connection to its worldwide impact through its strategies on enrolment. For example, it neglects to establish a suitable framework that could guarantee that learners are outfitted with the oral abilities they need to impart at national, local, and global levels with different clients of English. This disappointment is somewhat owing to an absence of political will to update language instructional method from the grassroots upwards. In addition, there are additionally unpretentious social issues verging on ethno-culturalism which affect the execution of English language instruction approaches. Ethno-culturalism keeps learners from building up a great disposition to L2, and subsequently, they may not talk such language. It is by testing the social generalizations and offering learners elective worldwide points of view that etymological and social ethnocentrism can be separated. The well-meaning exertion of language policy at internationalizing the learners will stay explanatory until what goes ahead in the L2 classroom mirrors the strategy outlines.

The importance of acquiring knowledge through English as, “the role of education in school is now seen as to provide the generic skills needed to acquire new knowledge and specialist skills in the future: learning how to learn. Literacy in the national language and perhaps the mother tongue where that is different, remains a basic skill, so does numeracy. But information technology – how to use computers and applications such as word processors, spreadsheets and internet browsers – has become just as important in basic education. In globalized economies, English seems to have joined this list of basic skills. Quite simply, its function and place in the curriculum is no longer that of ‘foreign language’ and this is bringing about profound changes in who is learning English, their motives for learning it and their needs as learners. In Pakistan, Bughio and Gopang (2014) have stated that English has been a language of social and educational development. It plays a pivotal role in the social spheres of life in the country. The educational policies discussed and critiqued show the importance of English as a lingua franca.

## 5. English language teaching approaches

English language teaching approaches have been a centre of discussion in second language learning (Gopang et al., 2016). A teaching approach is considered as complex phenomenon because it varies in nature to learning and teaching practices. Linguists and researchers have focused issues related with approach in teaching second/ foreign language. Many approaches and methods have been discussed and suggested for teaching. By approach we mean a “set of correlative assumptions” contrasts with method as an “overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material (Keith & Helen, 1999). So an approach to language teaching and learning represents an outline conception of the way in which it should proceed. In summing up, within one approach there can be many methods. In terms of language teaching in classroom, three perspectives as Keith and Helen (1999) have suggested such as (1) interactional perspective between teacher and learner; (2) instructional effects on language development; (3) different methods may have different effects on language development. This actually suggests that classroom research refers to a range of different practices which are employed for teaching language in the class.

A great concern has been shown to identify the best method for teaching second/foreign language in the world. Interestingly, there has been series of changes and developments in teaching methods, yet no consensus is developed for labelling a particular method as the best one in SLA (Gopang et al., 2016). A term methodology is associated with teaching language proficiency. It includes various methods used in language practices from primary to higher levels of education. Various methods were introduced for the purpose of teaching language including (1) Grammar Translation method, (2) Direct Method, (3) Audio- Lingual Method (4) The Silent Method, (5) Communicative Language Teaching Method. In the context of Pakistan, the case is not different. In schools and colleges, a prime focus is on grammar translation method (GTM). However, a scenario in tertiary level is bit different because a focus is shifted to communicative language teaching method (Pathan 2012; Gopang, 2015).



In case of teaching methods, Gopang (2016) referred Rowlinson (1994) who discussed as:

What is taught and how it is taught is a product of the ideas of the time, as well as of the conditions in which it is to be taught. It is society that determines the content of education, in the light of the dominant philosophy and more recently scientific concept. Many, perhaps most, new approaches are rediscoveries of old methods neglected and left in the shade, now re-illuminated by the light of social need. Language teaching, like all other teaching, reflects the temper of the times. (p.07)

It refers to ideas showing the needs of the time. As it is cited that an overlap of methods continued. Teaching methods have continuously been replaced because one method could not succeed appropriately. In support of a change in instructive approach, Matsuda (2009) requires the re-imagining of instructing practices to mirror a universal way of English, particularly where learners are figuring out how to speak with individuals from various national, dialect and social foundations. Enlisting 99.2% of the AETs from the inward circle nations (Miyagi et al., 2009) simply offers learners just the local speaker point of view of L2, though, a more illustrative catchment region stretching out to the external and growing circles would give L2 variants that are fundamental for worldwide correspondence. The main purpose of teaching methods is either accuracy/fluency, memorization, vocabulary building or grammar rules that students are supposed to have mastery over them. Gopang (2016) suggests that teaching methods applied in Pakistani context are more teacher centered and less learner centered. This factor could create less motivation and high level of anxiety in learners. Furthermore, he recommends that learner autonomy in learning might be prime part of teaching methods used in teaching second/foreign languages in Pakistan.

## **6. English Language programs**

The British Council of Pakistan in collaboration with HEC has initiated language programs known as Transforming English language Skills (TELS) for teachers. HEC basically supports and funds universities to organize such workshops on suggested title ‘‘Professional development for teaching through the medium of English. Many researchers have discussed that English needs to be common language of each

individual in society not only elitist in Pakistan. In Pakistani universities, teachers who graduate in English literature are recruited as English language teachers. It shows that appointed teachers who are teaching English are not certified language teachers. As a result, students lack language proficiency and skills for learning English because of teaching offered from non-qualified tutors in universities. Pathan (2012) has claimed that English language teaching scenario is somewhat different in professional institutes compared to general universities in Pakistan. Recruitment of English teachers is on the basis of their degrees in linguistics and language teaching. At engineering university, a focus is mainly laid on developing communication skills among engineering graduates who contribute to the international community wherein English is frequently spoken.

For educational development, teacher training is mandatory. For developing countries like Pakistan, a demand for teacher trainers was acknowledged by the World Bank (1999) and UNESCO (1998). And a focus was laid in-service training. Farooq (1995), Bughio & Gopang (2014) strongly recommended that teachers' training should be made common because the quality of education depends on trained and professional teachers. Researchers also support such programs for promoting quality education. Without trainings, teachers are faced with some difficulties that might hinder them in designing curriculum, planning syllabi, teaching courses, organizing classrooms and analysing learners' specific needs. In addition, to promote students learning, there is a need to adapt instruction which is likely developed through teacher education programs/trainings (Hammond, 1999a).

In his study on teacher training in Pakistan, Gopang (2016) interviewed participants and one of the interviewee stated in response to questions 'How do you view teacher training in Pakistan?

The true teachers are developed through such trainings. And these programs can increase knowledge of teachers regarding subject matter and general teaching skills. Teachers should be facilitated with these programs not only in Pakistan but also in abroad. Since, HEC has taken steps to promote teacher education. Many short programs are organized jointly by HEC and other countries in order to familiar

teachers with global systematized programs. The purpose is to cascade the effects of such program locally in own context. (p.9)

It is now observed that the focus on quality of English language teaching is seriously taken into consideration in Pakistan. This seriousness on the part of government shows that new graduates have to be successful and get good jobs. Higher Education Commission Pakistan has initiated ELTR projects to facilitate language teachers in university. The objectives of this project are professionally train teachers, develop communications skills and introduce standard teaching strategies to the learners. More importantly, under the project of ELTR, language experts are hired from U.S.A and U.K to render their services and transfer language skills to the teachers in Pakistan. SPELT and TELS programs help learners and teachers to have mastery over it. The proficiency in English language is basic requirement of academic life. Mahboob (2009) states that people from almost all disciplines prefer English to other languages for the development of the country. Furthermore, there is a consensus among researchers that still English needs to be promoted in Pakistani academic institutes. As Bughio (2014) maintains that English can be improved through effective means and he suggests more research on the effectiveness of language teaching. Students from different geographically located areas come to learn English at tertiary levels. They share different experiences from their early life and this study also focus on demographic information of students who are the part of the research (Bughio & Gopang, 2014).

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## **7. Conclusion**

English language as a compulsory subject has been an integral part of syllabi in higher educational institutes of Pakistan. It has achieved a great importance in academic and professional life of people in the country. The use of English language internally and globally stays high. A brief overview of functions of English in Pakistan is also mentioned. In addition to it, teaching approaches are also critically stated. Importantly, the training programs organized by HEC and LID are showcased in order to show that language teachers are supposed to be professionally sound. The quality of teaching is

focused introducing innovative approaches for learning and teaching practices. English language as narrated by Bughio and Gopang (2014), enjoys high status in Pakistan; it is considered as a lingua franca, a common language for communication in the different classes of the society but particularly it is officially used in all walks of professional and academic spheres of life.

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# Monolingual Dictionary Awareness of Pakistani EFL Learners

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**ABSTRACT:** This study attempts to investigate Pakistani EFL learners' awareness of monolingual dictionaries at under graduate level. It evaluates whether the learners necessitate exercising the dictionaries and whether they believe it imperative and feasible to have appropriate instruction in EFL classroom about using a monolingual dictionary efficiently. This study being a quantitative-cum qualitative one uses a hybrid questionnaire engineered relying heavily on Likert and rank order response scaling as a tool for data collection. 100 under graduate apprentices of 13<sup>th</sup> grade with identical percentage of female and male brilliant students from 10 state-run institutions comprise of the sample of this study which is selected through purposive sampling technique (non-probability sampling). Data has been presented and interpreted using descriptive statistics techniques. Evaluating learners' needs, attitudes, habits and problems in terms of dictionary awareness in Pakistani perspective may help researchers, linguists and dictionary compilers to improve and modify the dictionaries accordingly to address the requirements of these learners. The findings show that mass of the learners was unskilled at dictionary awareness and has an inclination to disregard strange lexical items throughout reading. However, the learners necessitate getting suitable teaching of practicing dictionaries and developing dictionary consultation behavior which could facilitate them surmounting the barriers they encounter in learning novel vocabulary items.

**Key Words:** *EFL learners, dictionary awareness, linguistic needs, computational study, Pakistan*

## 1. Introduction

Adam's language learning from Allah makes it public that language learning has been an important assignment. Nature has bestowed us with inquisitiveness to know the things around while linguistic diversity is one of the divine phenomena to be explored. Arbitrariness, linearity and conventionality of language make it a complex phenomenon. Linguistic competence requires proficiency in phonological, grammatical and semantic levels and linguistic performance can help one getting higher studies, elite socialization and lucrative employment. In the age of globalization, acculturation, media, and dictionary consultation are helpful learning a foreign language. Moreover, in the meta-modern age, people are known by the language they listen, read, write and speak. Faulty grammar-cum-pronunciation unveils one socio-economic status and to avoid such outcomes, EFL learners from less affluent regions mainly depend upon dictionaries for linguistic needs.



Dictionary awareness and linguistic skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are interlinked. Monolingual dictionaries may exercise a great deal of influence on learners' performance. A proficient learner prefers using monolingual dictionary to bilingual one as linguists regard consultation of monolingual dictionaries imperative for effectual reading comprehension. The learners must know the use of such dictionaries to work in English language effectively while using the dictionaries can provide the learners comprehensible input too (Bensoussan, Sim & Weiss, 1984 ).

In post-colonial states, English is regarded as L2 as a result of global transfiguring in terms of social, political, cultural and technological revolutions. Students having dissimilar perspectives necessitate finding out vocabulary using dictionaries. To identify innovative language and its meaning, the apprentices require using dictionaries appropriately. Unfortunately, Pakistani learners at public institutions do not appreciate the price of monolingual dictionary while learning L2. English syllabus at undergraduate level and language teacher in Pakistan do not encourage the learners consulting monolingual dictionaries.

### **1.1 Hypothesis**

EFL learners in Pakistan have little propensity towards using dictionaries at undergraduate level as the students at this level do not know how to make use of dictionaries appropriately. They cannot use dictionaries to increase vocabulary as well as to enhance knowledge of English language. The students cannot even distinguish between object and complement. Further, the learners are not encouraged by language teachers to use dictionaries. If the students are directed by the teachers, they are directed to use dictionaries for looking up meanings of the given words. The students have lack of formal training regarding proper use of dictionaries. They are ignorant of the information the dictionaries tender. FL learners at undergraduate level in Pakistan are ignorant of standard monolingual dictionary conventions.

### **1.1.1 Research Questions**

- 1) What are Pakistani EFL learners' habits and attitudes towards various monolingual dictionaries at under graduate level?
- 2) What are problems as well as needs of Pakistani EFL learners at under graduate level in terms of monolingual dictionary awareness?
- 3) When and why do the EFL learners use monolingual dictionaries at under graduate level in Pakistan?

### **1.2 Significance of the Study**

This study is constructive and important in the following ways:

The project will provide detailed information to probe into monolingual dictionary habits of under graduate level students at public colleges in Pakistani perspective. It is also significant in labeling the intricacies that obstruct the under graduate level students using monolingual dictionaries. The conclusion of this research will be supportive in investigating the awareness of dictionary users and their vocabulary attaining stratagem at under graduate level in EFL class room.

## **2. Literature Review**

Dictionary is regarded as a reference book concerning words (Jackson, 2013). It is also regarded a book on the subject of language. Reference books have always been benefited by learners being considered as a teacher that cannot talk. Moreover, the real trainer by whom the students can be trained during their classes, dictionary is believed to be mainly dependable substitute the students can boast. A pupil has little inclination towards using dictionaries to enhance the knowledge in relation to the language they learn. Hitherto, the well-read public uses dictionaries to know merely meanings of certain words.

Cowie (2002) emphasizes, by awareness of the dictionary consumers, the users have concern with meaning in addition to dealing with complex lexical and semantic items. Lots of researchers deem the squat level of dictionary skillfulness the same as the need of methodical schooling in dictionary exercise. While, Hartman & James' (2002) and

Jia's (2006) studies' findings have confirmed the worth to be important for lexicographers to manage the set materials of dictionaries as well as its management for the advantage of dictionary users. Miller (2006) explored that dictionary utilization was discovered to be essential to improve vocabulary whilst writing.

Dictionary consultation, in addition to the practical knowledge of its usage, is known to be the basic requirements for developing vocabulary during EFL proficiency skills attainment (Apresjan, Apresan, & Apresjan, 2000).). EFL learners can adopt certain strategies in coping with complex lexical items during extensive or intensive readings of particular texts. Such learners often tend to disregard unknown lexis and seek to infer their meanings on contextual evidences ignoring dictionary consultation not looking up proper definitions and uses of the important words (Hsueh-Chao & Nation, 2000). However, the learners being in the habit of consulting dictionaries can work better in terms of EFL proficiency skills. They can develop vocabulary and grammatical competence if use dictionaries properly.

The view is now widespread that successful use of a dictionary calls for a special competence which many students do not possess for want of appropriate training (Cowie, 2002). Dictionary has always been considered as providing the norm for language use (Bruton, 2007). He is of the view that lexicography is a professional process in codifying vocabulary, by which dictionaries and other reference fields are produced. (Hartman, 2016).

According to him, there come seven phases in the process of consultation:

- The user grasps a problem needing to be solved.
- The learners think over the quandary language which they have to consult.
- The dictionary users go for the mainly functional reference work.
- The users search for the appropriate headwords.
- By finding the headwords the consumer searches the requisite information in the access.
- The learners have information from the entry accessed.

- The users integrate information through the process.

Many researchers like Gu & Johnson (1996) concluded that dictionary using habits may support L2 learners in vocabulary development. Christianson (1997) affirms that scholars have obscurity while explaining the effectual employment of dictionaries. Scholars like Fan (2000) and Taylor (2004) have opined that the students will be helped from the instruction of dictionary utilization efficiently if imparted. Further, they viewed that students might require guidance in terms of using choosy dictionaries. Particularly students necessitate extensive schooling in looking up new found words. Without proper education in terms of dictionaries the apprentices may have negative effects on their L2 learning.

So, the study explores habits, problems attitudes, and needs of Pakistani EFL learners at under graduate level of Govt. Colleges in Pakistan as no such integrated study has been conducted earlier according to the researchers' knowledge.

### **3. Research Methodology**

This present research is of descriptive-cum-computational nature. The researchers' collected data through a questionnaire has been analyzed as well as interpreted quantitatively and qualitatively. The under graduate level students of Pakistani background are participants of this hybrid research. The competent researcher starts with the total population and works down to the sample (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2002). So, hundred brilliant students have been taken as participants from 13<sup>th</sup> class of boys and girls (under graduate) from Pakistan. Thus, the sample here in the study is 100 students at under graduate level that were taken from the following ten male & female institutions: Govt. Degree College Mian Channu, Govt. Degree College Abdul Hakim, Govt. Degree College Sirai Sidhu, Govt. Degree College Kabirwala and Govt. Degree College Jahanian. Govt. Colleges of Pakistan were the universe for the study. Sample was collected through the above mentioned colleges as these were easily accessible.

For the collection of data, a hybrid questionnaire (open and close ended one) was designed relying heavily on Likert and rank order response scaling to be administered to attract the under graduate level students for this study (Appendix-1). The Researchers

have used Likert scaling (Strongly Agree & Strongly Disagree) for passionate respondents for data collection incorporating demographic variables in the questionnaire.

Questionnaire has been assumed as a favorable instrument in this project. Therefore, in this study the questionnaire is exercised as a key research apparatus for collecting data. The learners' awareness in terms of dictionary and its influence on vocabulary proficiency were made out through the tool of questionnaire as dictionary awareness of EFL learners of Pakistani state- run institutions have been analyzed in the project. The questionnaire was delivered in the students' class rooms. They were asked to fill the delivered questionnaire individually but they had choice to answer the open ended questions with the help of their concerned teacher as well if necessary.

#### **4. Data Analysis**

This section of the project analyzes the data gathered through questionnaire. The questionnaire has been engineered to collect data from Pakistani EFL learners at under graduate level from Government institutions and this questionnaire has been divided into various sections. Section-A is about the personal information of the students. Section-B provides information about the learners' habits. Section-C carries questions about the learners' attitude towards the dictionaries. Sections-D&E have questions focusing on students' needs along with problems. This questionnaire has 28 questions in all.

##### **4.1 Personal Information of the Participants**

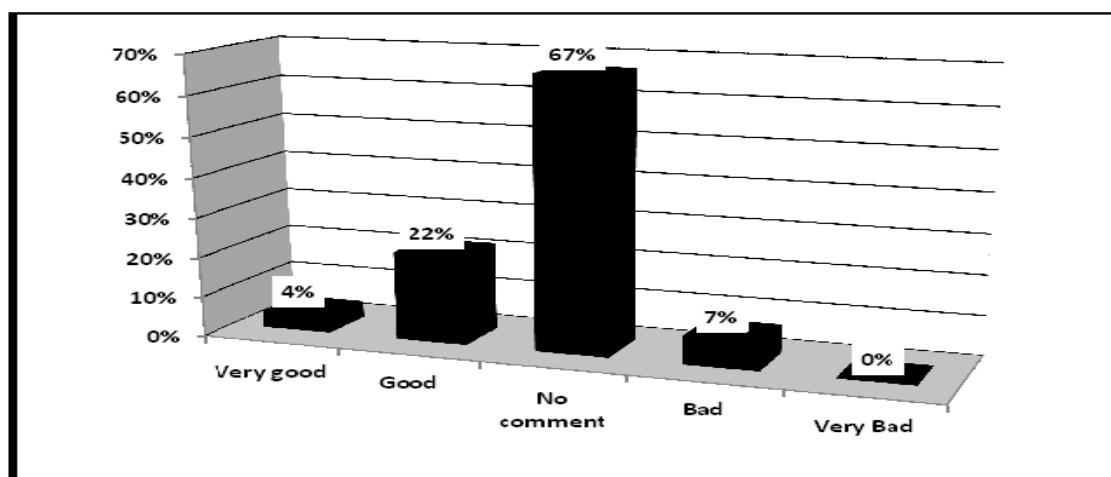
Section-A is about the personal information of the students. As the students selected for the study are of similar level and they belong to identical age group (17-20 years). Fifty male students (50%) and fifty female students (50%) out of 100 ones answered the set questions.

In terms of mother tongue, 04% students are Urdu speaking, 42% are Punjabi speaking 47% are Saraiki speaking and 07% is Pashto speaking.

Question-1, in the questionnaire, was focused on knowing which dictionaries the students possess. Through the learners' ranking, it is found that 27% (N=27) learners possess Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. 07% (N=07) learners have Webster' English Dictionary. 15% (N=15) learners keep The Little Oxford Dictionary. 32% (N= 32) students own Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. 12% (N= 12) learners own Oxford Pocket Dictionary. 03% (N=03) students have Franklin's Electronic Dictionary. 4% (N=04) learners have Chamber's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Dictionary.

The answers of question-2 reveal that (67%+7%) = 74% learners at undergraduate level do not read introductory pages of monolingual dictionaries as the figure demonstrates:

**Figure-1**  
**Reading Introductory Pages of Dictionaries**



It can be said that teachers' lack of interest in dictionary education and poor class room management in terms of dictionaries may be independent variable behind the dependent one of not reading introductory pages. Such attitude may pose problem for the learners for proper dictionary awareness.

Third question was about asking the student to inquire the period of dictionary possession. The students were given five options to be followed. The table no.1 demonstrates the learners' span of time of possessing dictionaries that is from one year to five years.

Window Snip **Table-1**

**Dictionary Ownership Period**

Dictionary Ownership	Period	No. of students	Percentage
	01 Year	57	57%
	02 Years	15	15%
	03 Years	13	13%
	04 Years	10	10%
(Other )	05 Years	05	05%

Majority of the learners have been keeping dictionaries for one year. It shows clearly that the students are not encouraged at elementary and secondary levels to use dictionaries. Fourth question was set to ask the students the rationale behind dictionary ownership. The students were given eight options to be ranked. Table no.4 shows the options, ratio and number of the learners' against each option:

**Table-2**

**Rationale behind Dictionary Ownership**

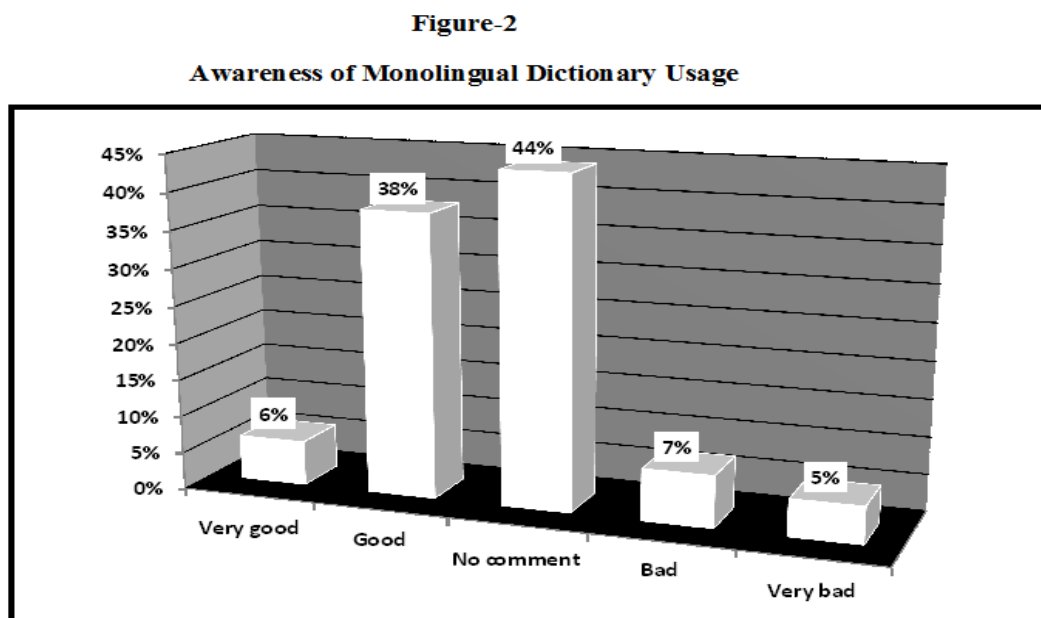
Dictionary Rationale	Choosing	No. of students	Percentage
Bookshop recommendation		05	05%
Parents recommendation		30	30%
Teacher recommendation		40	40%
Friend recommendation		05	05%
It is not costly		07	07%
Gift		06	06%
Good illustrations		03	03%
Easy usage		04	04%

The table clearly depicts that there are two main reasons behind choosing the dictionaries; teacher recommendation and parents' property (40% & 30% each). It is also interesting to note that teacher recommendation option has been liked mainly by the female students.

Fifth question was focused on knowing whether students are trained in dictionary use in their class rooms. 75% (N=75) students ticked the option (No), 15% (N=15) ticked (Not recently) and 10% (N=10) ticked (Yes).

## 4.2 Dictionary Using Habits

Sixth question was about exploring whether the students use monolingual dictionaries. The students were given five options to be ticked (a. very good, b. good, c. No comment, d. bad, e. very bad). The figure below demonstrates the ratio and value:



The figure reveals that the learners are reluctant and not in habit of using monolingual dictionaries.  $44\% + 7\% + 6\% = 56\%$  student are totally ignorant of using dictionaries. Such negative attitude of the learners cannot help them learning foreign language. Seventh question was set to explore the purpose of the dictionary use by the learners at this level. 79% Of the students use dictionaries for meaning consultation, 08% for spelling, 01% for idioms and prepositional phrases, 09% for pronunciation, 01% for illustrations and 02% for grammar purpose.

Eighth question was set to know whether the students discuss dictionaries with their teachers for the categories given below:



**Table-3**

**Teacher-Student Dictionary Consultation Awareness**

Category	Number	Percentage
Spellings of words	11	11%
Pronunciation of words/phrases	30	30%
Class of words	03	03%
Meanings of words/phrases	49	49%
How to use certain dictionaries	02	02%
Symbols used in dictionary	03	03%
Type of dictionary you should use	02	02%

The table depicts clearly the percentage and value gathered through the ranking that how many students consult dictionaries with their teachers at under graduate level in Pakistan for the categories mentioned above. It shows that learners are not trained in terms of dictionaries use. They do not know what dictionary is good for them. They do not know the symbols used in the dictionaries and resultantly they are ignorant of good pronunciation.

#### **4.2.1 Dictionaries Using Habits in Class Rooms**

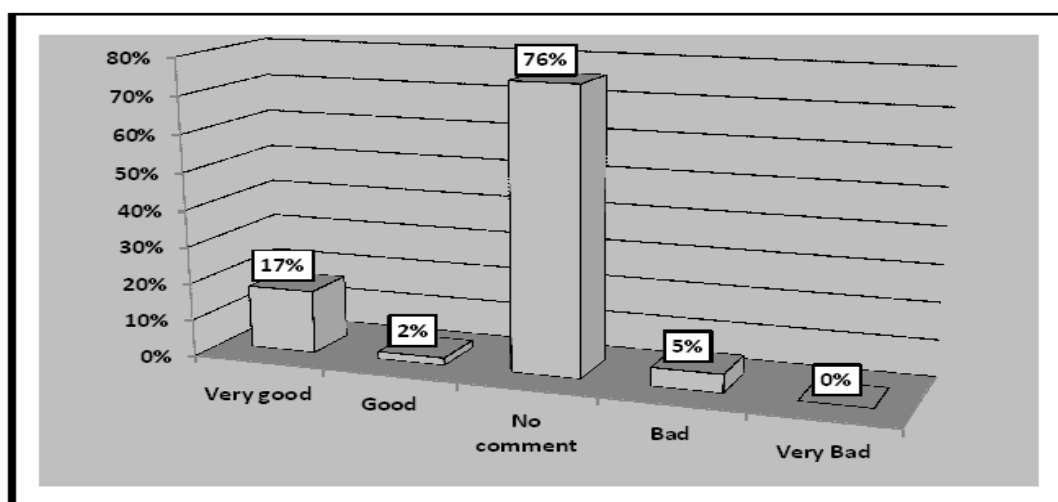
Ninth question addresses the students whether they use dictionaries during classes (English language) in their class rooms. Only 11% learners are aware of dictionary use in English language class rooms. 79% never use dictionaries in their classes while 10% are totally ignorant.

It shows that teachers do not encourage the learners to use dictionaries during their classes. It can also be said that our examination system do demand the learners to use dictionaries as well. If the situation is not changed, good learners cannot be produced.

Question no.10 was designed to know the students' habits regarding their writing meanings of new looked up words on the texts they are taught. Only 17% of the students reported that it is very good to do so but it is being taken with suspicion by the researchers. Further the figure below highlights the number and percentage graphically:

**Figure-3**

**Habits of Writing Meanings of Looked up Words on the Texts**



The figure reveals clearly the EFL learners' awareness in terms monolingual dictionary usage for writing meanings of looked up words on the text is not even satisfactory. They need change their habits otherwise will not good learners in terms of language learning.

### 4.3. Learners' Attitude towards Dictionaries

Questions no.11, 12, 13&14 were designed to judge the learners' attitude towards dictionary use. The table below shows the percentage of their responses:

**Table-4**

**Under Graduate Students' Attitude towards Dictionaries**

Topic	Don't Know	Agreed	Disagreed
Is information in the dictionaries always right?	18%	67%	15%
Do all dictionaries have identical information?	13%	82%	05%
Is dictionary using boring?	17%	63%	20%
Should the students be allowed to use dictionaries during target language examination at this level?	37%	49%	14%

The table reveals that EFL Pakistani learners' attitude towards dictionaries is negative. in developing their language skills, the teachers, college administration and parents do not urge on them to change their attitude. One of the causes behind such attitude may be lack training in dictionaries at secondary level.

#### 4.4. Learners' Linguistic Needs

Fifteenth question was designed by the researchers to explore the learners' linguistic needs through their personal responses. The table below helps determining their linguistic needs through the data analyzed:

**Table-5**  
**Students' Linguistic Needs in Terms of Dictionary Information**

Information	Extremely Needed		Needed		No Commet		No Needed		Extremely No Need	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Meaning	50	50%	07	07%	26	26%	17	17%	0	0%
Grammar	25	25%	23	23%	0	0%	32	32%	20	20%
Illustrations	24	24%	21	21%	29	29%	18	18%	08	08%
Spelling	33	33%	38	38%	20	20%	09	09%	0	0%
Pronunciation	41	41%	10	10%	19	19%	27	27%	03	03%
Idioms & Prepositional Phrase	32	32%	17	17%	13	13%	22	22%	16	16%

The table depicts clearly the linguistic needs of Pakistani EFL Learners regarding dictionaries. They face problems in learning English language. Their linguistic needs can be fulfilled if they are properly trained in using dictionaries.

#### 4.5. Problems Faced during Dictionary Use

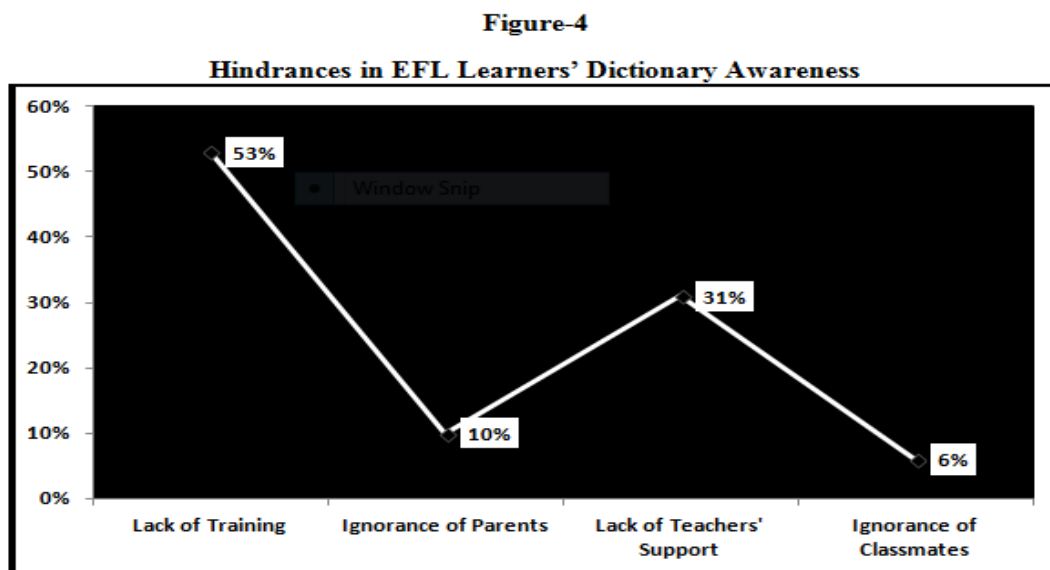
Question no.16, 17, 18, 19 .20 &21 were designed by the researchers to know the problems of under graduate students of Pakistan in terms of dictionary awareness. The table below depicts the percentage and number clearly to be analyzed:

**Table-6**  
**Under Graduate Level Learners' Problems**

Problem	Yes	No
Do you experience dictionary symbol problem?	90%	10%
Do you experience problem of pronunciation?	95%	05%
Do you experience problem regarding synonyms & antonyms?	41%	59%
Do you experience problem of looking meanings of words?	89%	11%
Do you experience problem of grammatical information?	53%	47%
Do you experience problem of phrases& idioms comprehension?	72%	28%

The learners are facing problems while using monolingual dictionaries in the following areas: phonetic symbols, pronunciation, looking up meanings of words, grammar and phrases-cum- idioms comprehensions. It reveals that they lack training in dictionary use during their language classes.

Question no.22, 23, 24& 25 were formatted to discover hindrances the students experience during dictionary use. The figure below shows the value that teachers (31%) and lack of training (53%) are most responsible for the hindrances:



Teachers are responsible for the learners' not using monolingual dictionaries. If there is co-ordination between parents and teachers, college students can be helped in terms of dictionary awareness.

Question No.26 was set to discover the dictionary using situations by the learners. Their responses showed that 4% use dictionary for listening, 8% for speaking, 52% for reading, 33% for writing and 3% reported other while specification column has been left blank. It shows that learners are not trained properly.

#### **4.6 Positive Aspects Of Monolingual Dictionaries**

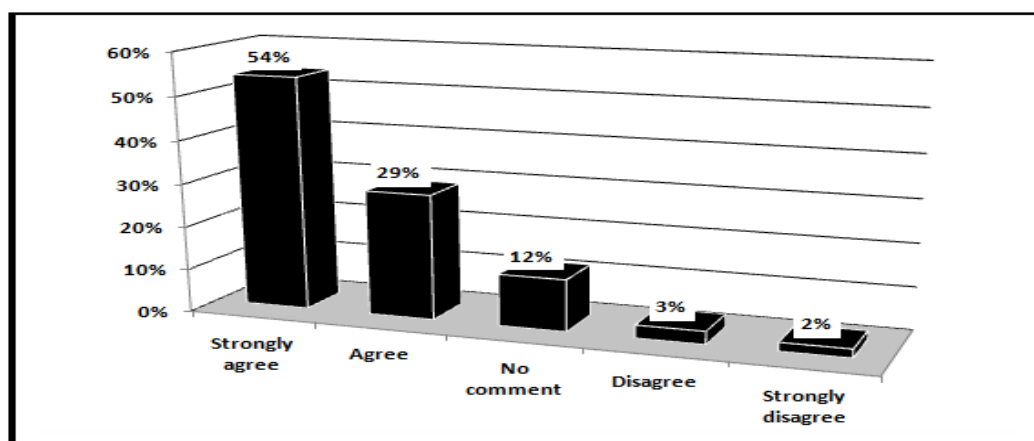
Question No. 27 & 28 was open and closed ended ones in which the students were directed to answer the questions: What are the positive aspects of "Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English" and "Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary".

The learners' responses endorse that Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDCE) has the following positive aspects:

- a. Good illustrations
- b. Introductory pages helpful in convention understanding
- c. Showing American-British English differences
- d. Standard transcription
- e. Demonstrations with examples

The figure below presents frequency of the learners' endorsement graphically:

**Figure-5**  
**EFL Learners' Awareness of Positive Aspects of Monolingual Dictionaries (LDCE)**



The researchers assume that such response of the learners regarding positive aspects of monolingual dictionary is not their one rather it is the response of their teachers as they were allowed to consult with their teachers while responding open ended questions. Moreover, the data analyzed depicted that Pakistani EFL learners were ignorant of dictionary use. It is maintained that use of monolingual dictionary is helpful in learning language.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary has the following positive aspects:

- a. Clear definitions
- b. One word various definitions
- c. Exact pronunciation

Again, the researchers maintain that these responses have not been given purely by the learners. They have been helped by their teacher to produce such responses. The learners must rely upon monolingual dictionaries along with teachers to learn language otherwise desirable results cannot be achieved.

#### **4.7 Findings**

Through this study, the researchers have gathered the following findings.

- 74% learners at under graduate level do not read introductory pages of monolingual dictionaries.(Q.No.2)
- 40% under graduate learners have monolingual dictionaries on teacher's recommendations. 30% possess monolingual dictionaries on parents' recommendations.(Q.No.4)
- Only 01% learners use monolingual dictionary for idiom and prepositional phrases (Q.No.7) but 62% learners need help for this category. It shows that rarity of training poses problems for the learners to use dictionary for this purpose. (Q.No.15).
- 9% learners use monolingual dictionaries for pronunciation (Q.No.7), 95% face problems of pronunciation, so, the gape imply that they need to be helped in pronunciation concerns (Q.No.17).
- 74% undergraduate learners are needful of monolingual dictionary illustrations. (Q.No.15).
- The scarcity of training in terms of monolingual dictionary use is the major hindrance to the good use of such dictionaries. The findings demonstrate that 53% under graduate level students consider that the lack of training is the chief barrier in monolingual dictionary awareness. As the majority of learners are ignorant of monolingual dictionary conventions. (Q.No.22).

#### **5. Concluding Remarks**

The aim of the investigatory study was to analyze the dictionary awareness of under graduate EFL learners at public institutions in Pakistan. Questionnaire was used to gather data from the target students. The researchers started their empirical study with

hypothesis followed by research questions that under graduate level do not exploit the knowledge the monolingual dictionaries offer. If the students use dictionaries, they use them for meaning purposes. Numerous questions were incorporated in the set questionnaire to reveal the grounds and reasons of this sort of behavior. On the basis of the findings, the study proves the hypothesis to be true that EFL learners in Pakistan have little propensity towards using dictionaries at under graduate level as the students at this level do not know how to make use of monolingual dictionaries appropriately. They cannot use the dictionaries to increase vocabulary as well as to enhance knowledge of English language. The students cannot even distinguish between object and complement in terms of grammar. Further, the learners are not encouraged by language teachers to use the dictionaries. If the students are directed by the teachers, they are directed to use the dictionaries for looking up meanings of the given words. The students have lack of formal training regarding proper use of dictionaries. They are unaware of the information the dictionaries provide. The learners are ignorant of standard monolingual dictionary conventions. They necessitate developing linguistic skills. They are ignorant of their linguistic needs. Dictionary consultation is indispensable for the learners to improve their linguistic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Female learners, comparatively, have positive attitude towards dictionaries. Costs of monolingual standard dictionaries, examination system and teachers' indifference towards usage of the dictionaries are some of the factors behind lack of practices of such dictionaries by the learners at public institutions in Pakistan. If standard dictionaries are not benefited, the learners will experience faulty pronunciation and poor of vocabulary. They will have avoidance behavior towards use of prepositions phrasal verbs and idioms. They will not be able to understand culture of the target language properly as idioms are culture bound linguistic idioms. It is a wild goose chase to develop linguistic competence among the learners with such behavior towards the dictionaries.

## 5.1 Recommendations

In the light of the above given findings, the following suggestions are made.

- There should be enough space for sake of introductory pages explaining symbols as well as conventions of monolingual dictionaries clearly.
- Easy and comprehensible definitions should be provided in the dictionaries for headwords.
- Separate portion should be allocated for idioms and phrases in the dictionaries.
- Colored illustrations can work for undergraduate EFL learners' attraction, so, the recommended dictionaries should have this pattern.
- Definitions of headwords should be easy and comprehensible having possible few words for definitions.
- There should be contextualized examples in the dictionaries for the learners to know how to use the words.
- The dictionaries should bear easy transcription having CDs, helping the learners in terms of pronunciation.
- Simple language should be used in the dictionaries for grammar explanations avoiding terminology usage.
- Monolingual dictionary awareness should be developed among the Pakistani learners from elementary/secondary level(s).
- Monolingual dictionary awareness must be part of the syllabus in countries like Pakistan.
- Monolingual dictionary workshop must be conducted by the relevant teachers/Institutions at least once a month.
- Healthy competitions of dictionary usage must be reinforced through rewards among EFL learners.
- The state should provide free of cost standard monolingual dictionaries to the learners.



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## Appendix

### Questionnaire

#### Monolingual Dictionary Awareness of Pakistani

#### EFL Learners

#### PART-A

Name of Student.....

Name of Institution.....

Age Group.....

Gender.....

Mother Language.....

- Write 1 in front of the best dictionary and 2 in the second best and almost immediately.

Dictionary Name	Codes
Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary	
Webster' English Dictionary	
The Little Oxford Dictionary	
Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English	
Oxford Pocket Dictionary	
Franklin's Electronic Dictionary	
Chamber's 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Dictionary	

- Tick the correct answer.

**Reading introductory pages of monolingual dictionaries**

Very good      Good      No Comment      Bad      Very bad

3. For how long you have been keeping the dictionary? [**Tick the correct answer**]  
a) 01 Year    b) 02 Year    c) 03 Year    d) 04 Year    f) Other  
(Please Specify) -----  
4. Write 1 in front of the best option, 2 in the second best and likewise.

**What makes you keep the dictionary?**

**Codes**

- Bookshop recommendation
- Parents recommendation
- Teacher recommendation
- Friend recommendation
- It is not costly
- Gift
- Good illustrations
- Easy usage
- Possessed by parents

5. Tick the correct answer.

**You have dictionary application training during language classes**

Strongly agree    Agree    No comment    Disagree    Strongly disagree

=====

**PART-B**

**DICTIONARY USING HABITS**

6. Tick the relevant

**Use of monolingual dictionary**

Very good      Good      No Comment      Bad      Very bad

of the best option, 2 in front of the second best and likewise.

7.  
Insert  
1 in  
front

**Purpose of using the dictionary** **Codes**

- For Meaning of Words
- For Spelling of Words
- For Idioms and Prepositional Phrases
- For Pronunciation
- For Illustrations
- For Grammar

8. Insert 1 in front of the best option, 2 in front of the second best and likewise.

Consulting dictionaries with teachers for	Codes
Spellings of words	
Pronunciation of words/phrases	
Class of words	
Meanings of words/phrases	
How to use certain dictionaries	
Symbols used in the dictionary	
Type of dictionary you should use	

9. Tick the relevant.

**Using dictionaries during English language class**

- Very good                      Good                      No Comment                      Bad                      Very bad

10. Tick the relevant

**writing meaning of new looked up words on text**

- Very good                      Good                      No Comment                      Bad                      Very bad

=====

**PART-C**

**LEARNERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD DICTIONARIES [Tick the relevant]**

11. Tick the relevant.

**There is always right information in the dictionaries**

- Strongly agree                      Agree                      No comment                      Disagree                      Strongly disagree

12. Tick the relevant.

---

**All dictionaries have identical information.**

Strongly agree      Agree      No comment      Disagree      Strongly disagree

13. Tick the relevant.

**The use of dictionary is boring.**

Strongly agree      Agree      No comment      Disagree      Strongly disagree

14. Tick the relevant.

**The students should be allowed to use dictionaries during target language examination at this level.**

Strongly agree      Agree      No comment      Disagree      Strongly disagree

---

### PART-D

#### LEARNERS' LINGUISTIC NEEDS [Tick the relevant]

15. To what degree do you feel need of the linguistic categories given below

Information	Extremely Needed	No Needed	No Comment	No Needed	Extremely No Needed
-------------	------------------	-----------	------------	-----------	---------------------

Meaning

Grammar

Illustrations

Spelling

Pronunciation

Idioms & Prepositional  
Phrase

---

### PART-E

#### PROBLEMS FACED DURING DICTIONARY USE [Tick the relevant]

Problem & Hindrance in Dictionary Usage	Yes	No
---	-----	----

16. Do you experience problem of dictionary symbols?

17. Do you experience problem of pronunciation?

18. Do you experience problem regarding synonyms & antonyms?
19. Do you experience problem of looking up meanings of words?
20. Do you experience problem of grammatical information?
21. Do you experience problem of phrases& idioms comprehension?
22. Is lack of training a hindrance in dictionary usage?
23. Is parents' ignorance a hindrance in dictionary usage?
24. Does lack of teachers' support affect dictionary usage?
25. Does ignorance of classmates' affect dictionary usage?
26. For what situations do you use dictionaries? [**Tick the relevant**]  
 a. Listening   b. Speaking   c. Reading   d. Writing   e. Other  
 (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## PART-F

### POSITIVE ASPECTS OF MONOLINGUAL DICTIONARIES

[**Tick the Relevant**]

27. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English has the following positive aspects:
  - a. Good illustrations
  - b. Showing American-British English differences
  - c. Standard transcription
  - d. Demonstrations with examples

Strongly agree          Agree          No comment          Disagree          Strongly disagree
28. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary has the following positive aspects:
  - a. Clear definitions
  - b. One word various definitions
  - c. Exact pronunciation

Strongly agree          Agree          No comment          Disagree          Strongly disagree

# Universal Restrictions on Syllable Structure: Evidence from Sindhi

Saeed Ahmed, Zahid Ali & Shabana Sartaj

**ABSTRACT:** Across the world, natural languages prefer onset with large sonority distances to those with smaller distances (e.g., bw-bd--lb). And certain preferences are extended even to those languages which lack initial CC clusters. Are Sindhi speakers sensitive to onset sonority hierarchy? Does voicing difference play any role in perception and production of speakers? To approach these questions, here, we move to Sindhi, a cluster poor language. The reason was given by us that, in case, Sindhi native speakers were found sensitive to onset sonority hierarchy, then ill-formed onsets should be repaired into well-formed ones (e.g., lbif →lebif), the worse-formed the onset, the more likely its repair, henceforth, its misidentification. To scrutinize these questions, the current study presents a corpus of data from Sindhi language illustrating the universal restrictions or language universals and typological range of variation among certain kinds of consonant clusters in syllable- initial position for instance, “bl” in block. The case study consists of two experiments: first experiment short or long judgment task (participants were directed to notify each stimulus as ‘short’ or ‘long’) and second experiment identity judgment task (participants were directed to judge the item whether it is “identical” or “non-identical”) are followed. Auditory stimuli were recorded by a Pashto speaker. In Pashto language all types of onset clusters are attested. Participants were 20 native-Sindhi speakers and 20 Pashto students from Lasbela University in Pakistan. Results were coherent with the hypothesis, the current study displays universally dispreferred onset clusters are more frequently misperceived than universally preferred ones. The current findings suggest that the Sindhi speakers were found sensitive to onset sonority hierarchy and voicing remained significant in perception but insignificant in production.

**Keywords:** *ill-formed, clusters, misperception, onset, sonority, dispreferred*

## 1. Introduction

World languages have inclination to follow their mechanism naturally, for instance syllables like blif are more regular as compare to lbif (Berent et al. 2017; Greenberg 1978). In this scenario, a group of global restraints is shared on syllables structure by all languages (Prince and Smolensky, 2004). Syllables like blif are illicit-formed, therefore; they are disliked by people and underrepresented across languages. In contrast, the restraints on syllable structure arise merely from the sources other than linguistics. In fact, syllables such as blif are considered more common or effortless to utter and comprehend (Blevins 2004). Might be persons’ priorities not mirrored by global linguistic restraints but rather their shared experience, acoustic and articulatory pressures (Liberman et al. 1967). Sonority is illustrated by linguistic account as a speculative phonological characteristic of segments that relate with acoustic intensity (Clements 1990). Universal preference of sonority is as: Stops ( $\Delta s = 1$ ), fricatives ( $\Delta s = 2$ ), nasals ( $\Delta s = 3$ ), liquids ( $\Delta s = 4$ ) and glides finally ( $\Delta s = 5$ ). Syllables like blif are

given priorities across languages over illicit syllables *lbif* is because of the emanation from global linguistic restraints on sonority distance ( $\Delta s$ ) (Greenberg, 1978; for farther relevant investigation view). It is predicted by the study that there should be activeness of restraints in all persons regardless of syllables' presence or absence in their language (Prince and Smolensky, 2004). Similarly, our former finding shares that sensitivity has been found among the speakers of distinctive languages on initial clusters that are never ever have been heard by them previously.

## **1.2. Misidentification of Ill-Formed Clusters: Phonological or Phonetic**

It is a matter of worth value that what are the possible reasons that certain clusters are hierarchically under-represented and perceived inaccurately by the speakers of language? One of the very common possibilities is that it is because of grammatical ill-formedness. However, a contrary illustration, merely acoustic characteristics are mirrored by the certain clusters. For instance, onsets like *lbif* may be ambiguous with *lebif* for the reason that the acoustic clues for the sonorous *l* (in *lbif*) are ambiguous with those of the pretonic vowel *e* in *lebif*. A completely contrary argument on a plainly auditory illustration for this anomaly has been given by the Berent et al. (2017). According to their views, speech words are encoded in two forms: a phonological form and a phonetic form. The misidentification of illicit onsets is not because of a failure to encode their phonetic characteristics from the auditory clues but misidentification of illicit formed onsets gives the reflection of their phonological repairing by the grammar. This opinion is supported by the two arguments. First, when task requires boost participators to appear to phonetic detail (especially, to the existence of the pretonic vowel in the auditory input), persons have an ability to recognize extremely illicit-formed *lbif* sort of clusters exactly- as exactly as they recognized their well-formed *bdif* sort of counterparts. In accordance with, the typical misidentification of illicit-formed onsets could not be merely because of a failure to encode their phonetic characteristics from the auditory clues but misidentification of illicit formed onsets gives the reflection of their phonological repairing by the grammar such as the repairing of *lbif* into *lebif*). Illicit-formed onsets are generally recognized inaccurately by the persons because phonological representations are typically based by their reposes. Whereas, phonetic encoding is boosted by the conditions could impact a switch from the

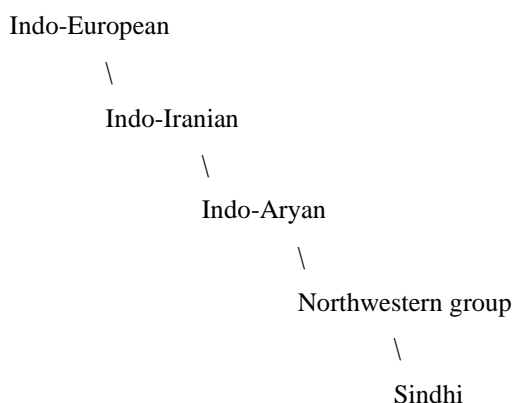


fault dependence on phonological representation to the examination of the phonetic format. By discovering that certain conditions support alike correctness in the process of better-formed and illicit-formed clusters proposes that it is not inevitably that the illicit-formed onsets have wrong phonetic representation. However, a second argument totally contrary on a plainly phonetic failure is offered by studies proposing that the processing of disyllabic counterparts is affected by hatred to illicit-formed onsets. When it was enquired to judge whether input have two or one syllable, the participators were found considerably more accurate with *lebif* as compare to *benif*.

### 1.3. Sindhi language

“Sindhi is an Indo-Aryan language with its roots in the Lower Indus River Valley. It is widely communicated in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh.

Many researchers such as Grierson (1919: 01) classified Sindhi as belonging to a northwestern sub-group of Indo-Aryan, under the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European family.



It was an estimated that roundabout 30-40 million people (projected from 1981 census data) communicate Sindhi worldwide (<http://www.outreach.uiuc.edu>). Moreover, a great number of Balochistan. Even, a considerable population of Sindhi-speaking people in Iranian Balochistan adjoining to the northwestern border of Pakistan with Iran.

### 1.4. Dialects of Sindhi Language

There are total six dialects of Sindhi language. The Vicholi (middlemost) a standard dialect of Sindh, Thareli, Lasi, Lari, Kachchi and Siraiki.

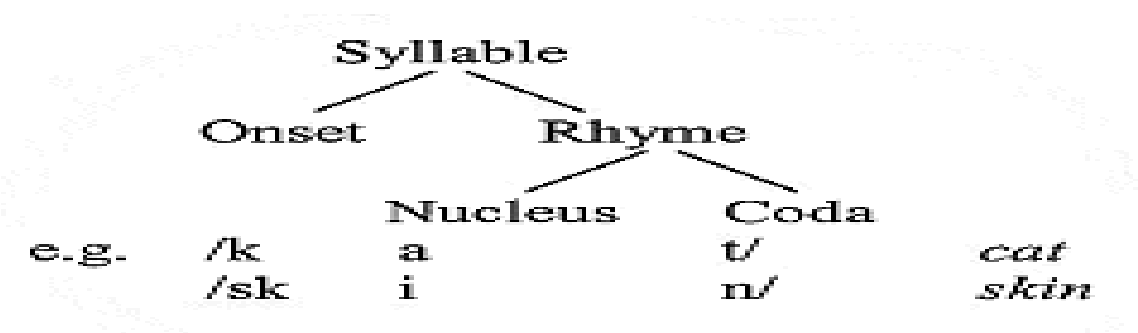
## 1.5. Research Questions

1. Are Sindhi speakers sensitive to onset sonority hierarchy?
2. Do Sindhi speakers misperceive generally infrequent onset clusters as compare to universally more-frequent ones?
3. Does voicing difference play any role in perception and production of speakers?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Syllable Structure

A syllable maximally consists of three parts: onset, nucleus and coda. The syllable holds two branches attached by Onset (O) and Rhyme (R). Further, Rhyme (R) branches into Nucleus (N) and Coda (Co). The onset (O) and coda (Co) are consonants, which are occupied at the starting and final position of the syllable. The core of the syllable is formed by the nucleus. Let us have a look at “cat”, rhymed is formed by [at]. The



example of syllable structure has been demonstrated through tree diagram below:

**Figure 2.1: Syllable Structure via tree diagram**

For instance, in the word “cat” [c] is the syllable onset, [a] is the nucleus and [t] is the coda. It is not necessary that a syllable must have an onset or coda. It depends upon language; however, the presence of nucleus is necessary. If a coda is present in a syllable, then a single unit is formed by the nucleus and the coda which is known as a rhyme; otherwise the rhyme is made up by nucleus itself.

## 2.2. Sonority

Sonority and the syllable are interconnected to each other. A syllable is a phonological unit of sonority. Phonetically, a strong disagreement has been observed among the researchers' opinions whether sonority should be defined through a single phonetic parameter such as loudness of a specific sound or perceptual salience (Ladefoged, 1993); or the volume of airflow resonance chamber (Bloch et.al.1942, Goldsmith 1995); or whether its interpretation should be made through multiple phonetic parameters (Ohala et.al.1984; Ohala 1990). Phonologically, issue rotates, instead, upon whether sonority should be a phonological primitive in the form of a multi-valued feature (Foley 1972; Selkirk 1984), or whether it should be derivable from the more fundamental binary features of phonological theory (Clements 1990). Furthermore, scales are formed on the basis of the observed typology of syllable scheme in a language particular way (Steriade1982; Davis, 1990).

## 2.3. Sonority scale

Most sonorous	5 Vowels	*		
	4 Approximants	*		
	3 Nasals			
	2 Fricatives		*	
Least sonorous	1 Stops	*		*
k	l	a	s	p

### Figure: 2.2: Sonority scale

Sonority is the loudness of a sound having relation to other sounds. Sonority of a sound is shown in relation to other sounds by a sonority scale. Broadly, there is only a single universal sonority scale which is general to all world languages (Selkirk 1984; Clements 1990); or world languages individually have their particular sonority scales and certain degrees of freedom are possessed by the languages in the task of sonority values to their segments (Steriade 1982). Very interesting differences are taken among segments through sonority-independent frameworks, i.e. voicing, coronality etc. A universal sonority scale has been given by Clements, here non-syllabic segments solely comprised

on the four major natural classes of sounds which are: obstruents, nasals, liquids and glides) ranged from minimum sonority to maximum sonority, as mentioned below:

$$1. O < N < L < G$$

However, Butt also gave sonority scale which is distinctive from Clements's sonority scale. In Butt's sonority scale distinctive values have been assigned to the voiced and voiceless obstruents. Here is a Butt's universal sonority scale:

$$2. \text{Voiceless } O < \text{Voiced } O < N < L < G < V$$

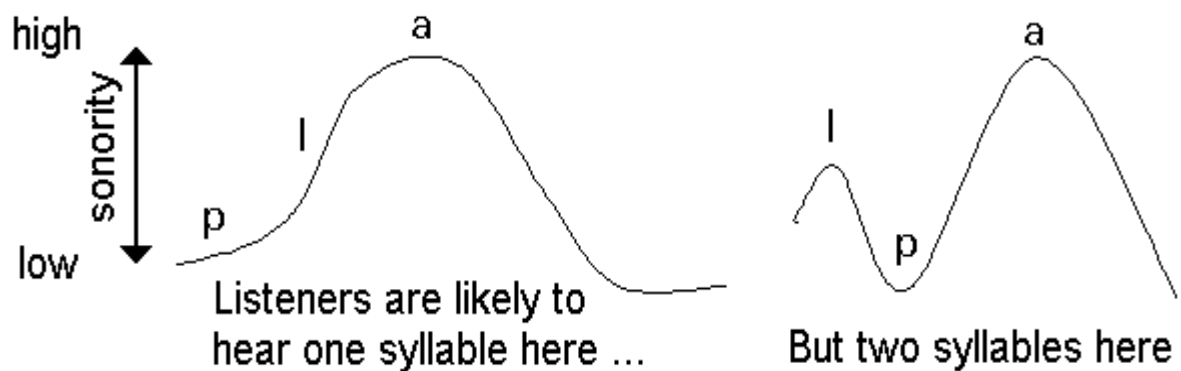
Moreover, some differences were also observed among the obstruents by and a different universal sonority scale for non-syllabic segments was given by him.

$$3. p, t, k < b, d, g < f, \eta < v, z, ' < s < m, n < l < r$$

It is observed by Steriade (1982), that the issue with Selkirk's opinion is that distinctive language appear to exhibit conflicting values to the identical entries on the scale.

#### **2.4. Sonority Sequencing Principle**

Briefly, Sonority Sequencing Principle (SSP) is a kind of rule that forms sounds within a syllable in accordance with a set order. The order is led by the sonority, a phonological as well as phonotactical term meaning loudness of sound. Few sounds are less sonorous than others, and the series of sounds are ordered by the sequence of sonority in a syllable. For instance, let us consider the syllable /**pla**/, an ordinary, not only in English but also in several world languages. It is well known that /**a**/ is a vowel, obviously highly sonorous, and it is informed by the SSP that as /**l**/ is closer towards the vowel/**a**/ as compare to consonant /**p**/, hence, /**l**/ is more sonorous as compare to /**p**/; as a matter of fact, it is an obvious case. However, an alternative syllable /**lpa**/ is neither occupied in English nor in most (or even any) languages, here SSP is violated by ill-formed syllable/**lpa**/. It is not just as that /**p**/ should have to come prior to /**l**/, but instead of /**l**/ should be closer to the vowel. The syllable /**alp**/ is very regular, whereas, /**apl**/ is less regular, due to SSP. Sonority rises towards vowel peak and later declines far, as it has been shown below:



**Figure: 2.3: Sonority Sequencing Principle**

### 2.6. Previous studies on Universal Restrictions on Syllable Structure

Generally, why do persons pronounce and perceive successfully the initial consonant clusters such as *'drink'* and *'drive'* as compare to *'rdink'* and *'rdrive'*? It is stated by the present study that certain typologies could mirrored abstract phonological framework that is actively present in the brains of all communicators. This assumption is further strengthen by the statement that very similar convergence of phonological priority (*e.g., dra over rda*) has been observed among the human race in spite of the absence of certain clusters (*e.g., dra, rda*) in their natural languages, moreover, certain behavior is unexplainable merely on the basis of familiarity with the identical syllables and the system of sensorimotor. Apart from these supporting statements and hypothesis, even more supporting claim is there, on the first, the difference between the sensorimotor system and phonology is demonstrated by their dissociation in dyslexia, and, on the second, the transformation of phonological information from aural to vision. The functional framework of typical mind, genuine cause of speech and pattern less language, and phonological system can be explained by a comprehensive interpretation. (Berent, 2017).

Furthermore, another comprehensive study has wonderful findings regarding the hierarchy of universal restraints on the syllable structure from Mandarin Chinese by Xu Zhao and Iris Berent. It is ascertained by the current study that whether sensitivity to the initial syllables is available among Mandarin speakers? Or in other words, are Mandarin Speakers Sensitive to the Onset Hierarchy? Next, is sensitivity of complex onset present

among Mandarin speakers? The 16 native Mandarin, college students, participated in both experiments. 16 English-speaking students of Northeastern University served as controls. In the nut shell, the findings were remained stable with the hypothesis of the study. It is recommended by the current study's findings that a vast phonological restraint might be shared by the speakers; however, phonetic factors play a key role in their detection. Now, it is a question of worth attempt that whether the linguistic restraints are the primary cause of the onset hierarchy; or those restraints are really universal, pending for farther studies (Zhao, Berent et al. 2015).

### **3.5. Conclusion: Hypothesis for the Current Research Paper**

Several studies have been conducted on the sonority hierarchy and universal restraints among the speakers of different languages. Our case study will be a worth attempt to ascertain, demonstrate and analyze scientifically similar kind of language phenomena among Sindhi speakers whose language deficits beginning CC clusters from stops to nasals altogether. This study is unique of its type based on fundamentally sonority distance on initial consonant sequences, onset clusters. The findings of the study will assist linguists in the world of search and research. The main hypothetical questions of the current study are following:

1. Are Sindhi speakers sensitive to the entire sonority hierarchy?
2. Do Sindhi speakers misperceive generally infrequent onset clusters as compare to universally more-frequent ones?
3. Does voicing difference play any role in perception and production of speakers?

### **3. Research Methodology**

The study used Praat (Boersma & Weeninck, 2017) and Prosodypro (Xu, 2017) softwares to achieve Degree of freedom, and syllable duration in the participants' speech. The present research is statistical and analytical in its type that deals its analysis and findings in a quantitative manner. For the accurate research methodology, assistance has been taken from the previous related research methodologies which were adopted by various researchers in their research such as Berent et al. (2007) and Berent et al. (2008). The targeted languages are Sindhi and Pashto. However, there were total

forty native speakers in study who were (twenty) native speakers of Sindhi and (twenty) Pashto languages. Two different experiments:

### **3.1. Data collection**

The experiment 1 examined the linguistic priorities of Sindhi and Pashto speakers using a syllable judgment task. First of all, it was found out by the researcher that the illegitimate onset consonant clusters (*bl, sw, ʃw, zw, fr, kl, ʃr, xrsr, xw*) of Sindhi language and then we picked out some legitimate consonant clusters of Sindhi (*pt, pr, tr*) and Pashto (*bl, sw, ʃw, zw, fr, kl, ʃr, xr, tr, pt, sr, xw, pr*) languages. Moreover, the illegitimate consonant clusters which were taken by the researchers have level of sonority in the Sindhi language. Through these consonant clusters, thirteen mono (*blif, swap, ʃwek, zwig, frep, klaf, ʃrep, xrum, trig, pɾet, sret, xwar, prem*) and thirteen disyllabic (*belif, sewap, ʃewek, zewig, ferep, kelaf, ʃerep, xerum, terig, peɾet, seret, xewar, perem*) non-words were made by us by inserting schwa /e/ in monosyllabic non-words.

The experiment one was a “Short or long judgment task”—a proxy for the syllable count procedure which was used in past research in English (e.g., does *lbif* have one syllable or two; Berent et al. 2007). And finally, the experiment 2 was an identity judgment task. All non-words were recorded by a male native speaker of Pashto. Pashto allows all syllable types studied in our experiments and those non-words could be produced accurately by a Pashto native speaker. Two lists of non-words were recorded in a single session in a silent room. Twenty six best recorded non-words were selected by a phonologist for both experiments. A set of mini loud speaker was also used while conducting the experiment two: An Identity judgment Task in our methodology of research.

### **3.2. Experiment 1 Short or long Judgment Task**

#### **3.2.1 Participants**

Twenty male native-Sindhi speakers and twenty male native Pashto speakers, students from Lasbela University of Agriculture Water and Marine Sciences Uthal, Balochistan, Pakistan. The age of the participants was 21.57 (2.11).

### 3.2.2. Materials

The materials were corresponded to monosyllabic non-words (*blif*) and thirteen disyllabic non-words (*belif*). Onset clusters were three types in respect of place of articulation: Labial, Coronal, and finally Velar, for example (*blif*, *swap*, *xrum*) respectively, that may be seen in Appendices). As the syllable becomes worse in sonority, it is expected errors should increase (e.g., more errors to “*lbif*” relative to “*blif*”). Each stimuli of both list (list 1 mono and list 2 disyllabic non-words) was recorded thrice (per stimulus  $1 \times 3$  times repetition  $\times 13$  stimuli  $\times 2$  types of stimuli = 78 stimuli in total) for accurate finding of the research. The recording of the mono and disyllabic non words was done through Data Recording Device Sony Company, made by China. We were unaware that whether our factitious monosyllables for example (*xrum*) will be represented as two syllables by Sindhi native speakers explicitly or not. There would be shorter form of these stimuli as compare to their disyllabic ones (*xerum*). Accordingly, the participants were directed effectively to notify each and every stimulus as ‘short’ or ‘long’. Our chief focus was that, whether the category of these monosyllables is affected by onset scheme or not. If Sindhi speakers change the onset scheme (*blif* > *swap* > *xrum*), then as sonority space becomes less, the likeliness of repairing should grow; therefore, “long” responses should be elicited likely at a greater degree by monosyllables.

### 3.2.3. Procedure

Before commencing the trial, participants were directed about research goals and its targets thoroughly. Participants seated on chairs in a silent room. There were total two lists of monosyllabic (*blif*) and disyllabic (*belif*) non-words. The recording of native speakers of Sindhi and Pashto were made individually by the researcher. Each stimulus recorded once. An effective practice session comprising on fourteen items in English for example *sport-support* was provided to the participants prior to experiment conduction and proper respond was given on their exactness (accurate and inaccurate reply). Trial order was not randomized.



### 3.3. Experiment 2: An Identity Judgment Task

#### 3.3.1. Materials

In Experiment 2, the materials were corresponded to the previously mentioned similar items from Experiment 1. However, here the items were randomized systematically into pairs: Half were alike (mono and disyllabic), and half were repair-related for instance (blif-blif; belif-belif); or epenthetically related (blif-belif; belif-blif). Participants heard two items—either identical tokens or non-identical and were directed to classify whether the two components are exactly alike or not. As pair members share alike beginning consonant, and they were presented in very near proximity, their opposite phonological hierarchical order might now become more salient to participants. If talkers are sensitive to onset hierarchical order, then worse formed monosyllables should exhibit greater inclination to be recorded as their disyllabic counterparts (blif→belif). Resultantly, the degree of misidentification should high as sonority distance becomes low. The material was arranged in one list and that contained identity stimuli i.e., Large Rise > Small Rise (blif > *swap*), (e.g., CCVC *blif-blif, swap-swap, xrum-xrum*; CəCVC *belif-belif, sewap-sewap, xerum-xerum* and the list also contained non-identity stimuli i.e., Large Rise > Small Rise (e.g., CCVC-CəCVC *blif-belif, swap-sewap, xrum-xerum*; CəCVC-CCVC *belif-blif, sewap-swap, xerum-xrum*). Both items such as identical and non-identical were appeared simultaneously.

#### 3.3.2. Procedure

An identity judgment task was used. Participants seated near a laptop computer and a mini set of loudspeaker. In a trial, participants were offered with two auditory stimuli and their task was to judge the item whether it is “identical” or “non-identical” by writing their responses on the given pages clearly. Alike experiment 1, intentionally, it would be very difficult to demonstrate the given task with Sindhi words.

#### 3.4. Analysis of data

Praat software (Boersma et.al.2017) and Prosodypro (Xu, 2017) were used to get Degree of freedom and duration of syllables from recordings. Later, the recordings were moved to MS Excel from the Prosodypro output files. For farther analysis, the data were moved to SPSS files. Degree of freedom (F) and mean syllable duration of onset consonant clusters of Sindhi and Pashto native speakers were compared to see if there is

any significant difference or not. The results have been presented and analyzed in subsequent section.

#### **4. Presentation and Analysis of Data**

The current study interprets and analyses the Language Universals and Misidentification by Sindhi and Pashto native speakers only on initial onset consonant clusters of their languages. In this respect, degree of freedom and mean syllable duration in the speech of forty native speakers (Sindhi and Pashto) were taken by using advanced computer software.

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied on the selected data to confirm significance of difference between the initial onset consonant clusters of Sindhi and Pashto native speakers' in production and perception. The tests were applied according to the research questions of the study. The main objectives of the study were to focus the universal confinement on beginning consonant order, onset clusters on Sindhi and Pashto languages and whether native Sindhi speakers are sensitive to the entire sonority hierarchy or not.

##### **4.1. Presentation of Data**

The results of these tests will be displayed together with those of the parametric analyses in relation to the research questions in the below sub-sections.

##### **4.1.1 Comparison of Initial Onset Consonant Clusters through Perception and Production in terms of Voice**

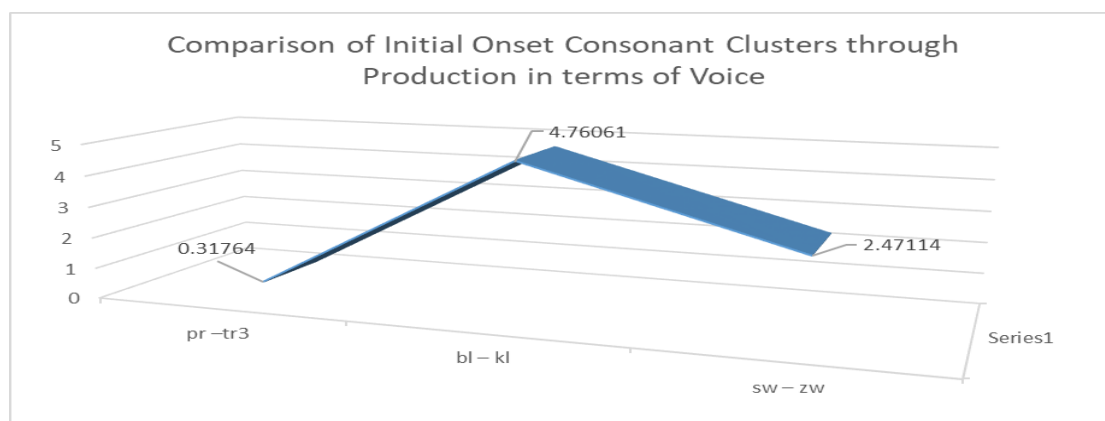
Do Sindhi and Pashto speakers of Balochistan misperceive generally infrequent onset clusters as compare to universally more-frequent ones? To get the answer of our research question some tests were conducted by using two types of onset clusters such as mono and disyllabic non-words in respect of place of articulation, voice and group respectively.

##### **4.2. Comparison of Initial Onset Consonant Clusters through Production in terms of Voice**

##### **(Experiment 1- Short or long Judgment Task)**

**Table 4.1: Comparison of Initial Onset Consonant Clusters through Production in terms of Voice**

Production	Dependent Variables	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean
Pair 1	pr – tr	.065	39	.948	.31764
Pair 2	bl – kl	.954	39	.346	4.76061
Pair 3	sw – zw	.506	39	.616	2.47114



**Figure 4.1: Comparison of Initial Onset Consonant Clusters through Production in terms of Voice**

The above graph presents a visual picture about the comparison of initial consonant clusters in respect of voicing through production. The graph shows that no any statistically significant difference exists of initial onset consonant clusters in the values of above mentioned pairs.

In Table 4.1, the comparison of initial consonant clusters has been done in respect of voicing through perception. Evidently, no any significant effect of initial onset consonant clusters has been observed in the values of above mentioned pairs statistically. It means voice feature contrast has no any effect of the initial consonant clusters in respect of perception. The findings of perception and production share totally deviate results from each other in terms of voice feature. The fundamental reason of

these deviate results is intrinsic restrictions of the short or long syllable judgment task in Production (in Experiment 1) and an identity judgment task in Perception (in Experiment 2). This justification was considered improbable by us because the previous findings share rich proofs and demonstrations that the syllable judgment task is very sensitive to the onset mechanism (Berent et al. 2015). And the results of native English speakers also reinforce the current assertion (Zhao, X et al. 2015). Distinctive findings state that syllable priorities are induced from experience, as phonotactic learning models can show the onset hierarchical order in spite of having no inherent restraints on syllable structure (Hayes, 2011). However, there are a few proofs that a part of the initial hierarchal order is abided by Mandarin speakers (bllb), this examination of hierarchal order is incomplete and no differences have been found between phonological or phonetic causes for this priority (Berent 2014; Zhao, X. et. al. 2015). A remarkable challenge was faced through short or long syllable judgment task to the Mandarin participants because it evoked the judgment of unusual stimuli which were offered in isolation or in other words, certain phonetic equivocations could have been evoked in the syllable judgment task because unusual monosyllabic non words were offered in isolation. Thus, our results are also in line with the studies of the syllable judgment task (short or long judgment task) has strong effect that can be masked by the native speakers' heightened sensitivity to phonetic properties and it might exhibits considerable phonetic obstructions to the native speakers of Sindhi and Pashto languages.

#### **4.4. Comparison of Initial Onset Consonant Clusters through Perception in terms of Voice (Experiment 2- An Identity Judgment Task)**

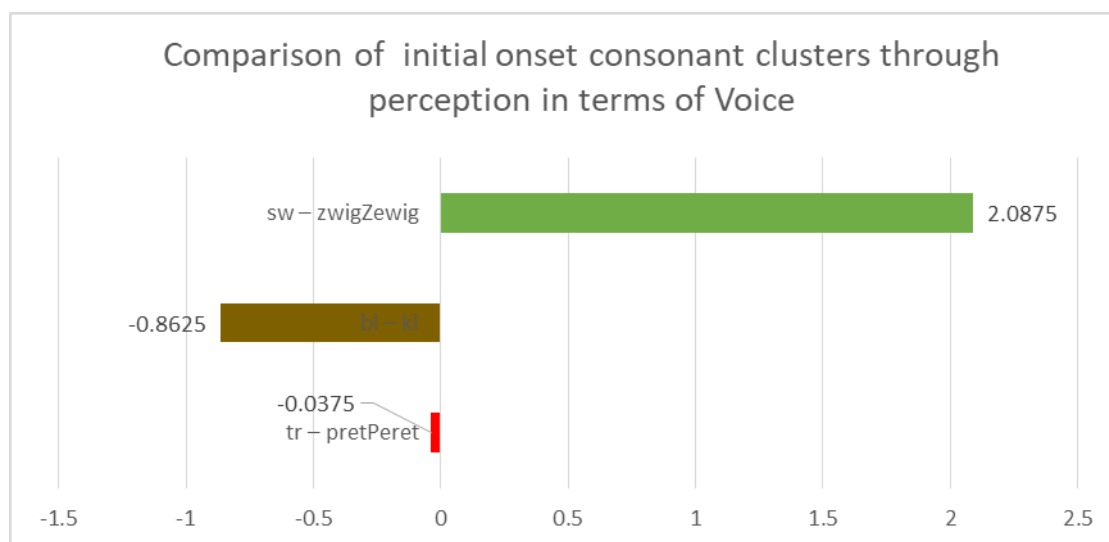
**Table 4.2: Comparison of Initial Onset Consonant Clusters through Perception in terms of Voice**

PoA	Dependent Variables	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean
Pair 1	tr – pretPeret	-.274	39	.785	-.03750
Pair 2	bl – kl	-5.718	39	.000	-.86250
Pair 3	sw – zwigZewig	13.385	39	.000	2.08750

In Table 4.2; the comparison of initial consonant clusters has been done in respect of voice feature through perception. Evidently, no any effect has been observed between

the values of first consonant clusters pair (*tr-pr*,  $p = -.03750$ ). However, we found highly strong significant effect of the initial consonant clusters of the remaining pair of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> statistically (*bl-kl*,  $p = .000$  and *sw-zw*,  $p = .000$ ) respectively.

By demonstrating and analyzing the values in respect of voice feature, we observe significant variances in the above paired values. There, no any effect of consonant clusters was found between the first pair (*pr-tr*) due to identical voice feature. The feature [p] is [- voice] similarly, the feature [t] is also [- voice]. Therefore, the first pair of consonant clusters has no significant impact. The second pair (*bl-kl*) and third pair (*sw-zw*) share highly significant effect. It is because of voicing contrast or in other words it is due to non-identical voice feature. Both of the pairs share initial consonant clusters in contrast of voicing such as the first pair has the combination of voiced and voiceless consonant clusters. Illustration in terms of feature is hereby: [b] is [+ voice] while [k] is [- voice]. Because of voice feature contrast there values are strongly significant. Similarly, the third pair (*sw-zw*) also shares significant values. Obviously, it is because of the voicing confliction between the pairs. The initial consonant cluster [s] has [- voice] feature while [z] has [+ voice] feature respectively. Hence, the pairs which have voice feature contrast between their initial consonant clusters share significant impact in their values statistically while the pairs which do not share identical voice feature have no any significant effect statistically.



#### **Figure 4.4: Comparison of Initial Consonant Clusters through Perception in terms of Voice**

The above graph depicts the visual picture of Comparison of initial onset consonant clusters through perception in terms of Voice. Because of identical voice features there no any significant effect of consonant clusters was found between the first pair (pr-tr). The second pair difference of consonant clusters (bl-kl) is found to be statistically significant and third pair (sw-zw) share highly significant effect.

#### **4.8. Summary of the results**

Going by the analysis of the data and the results obtained, it will be claimed that the activeness of universal confinement on beginning consonant cluster order is active in the native speakers of Sindhi and Pashto regardless of syllables' presence or absence in their language and this statement is also strengthened by past various research findings (Steriade et.al.2007). The native speakers of Sindhi and Pashto languages have been found with significant effects of the initial consonant clusters in voice through perception while they were remained non-significant in voice through production. One of the possible reasons of this non-significant effect of initial consonant cluster on the speakers through production may be short or long judgment task which exhibited strong effect that can be masked by the native speakers' heightened sensitivity to phonetic properties and it might exhibit considerable phonetic obstructions to the native speakers of Sindhi and Pashto languages. Broadly speaking, the native speakers of both languages were found different in perception and alike in the production due to the significant effect of the initial onset consonant clusters. In addition, their goodness in the production may be because of their phonological experience with their languages or other commonly spoken languages surrounded by the speakers. Results were coherent with the hypothesis, the current study displays universally dispreferred onset clusters are more frequently misperceived than universally preferred ones. The current findings suggest that language universals show universal linguistic knowledge is active in all speakers' brains; it is universal phenomenon but not language specific and speakers were also found sensitive to the entire sonority hierarchy.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study focuses on Language Universals and Misidentification by native speakers of Sindhi and Pashto languages. The study used Praat (Boersma et.al.2017) and Prosodypro (Xu, 2017) softwares to achieve Degree of freedom, and syllable duration in the participants' speech. The current study follows the previous related research methodologies such as Berent et al. (2017); Lennertz, T. (2010).The targeted languages are Sindhi and Pashto. However, there were total forty native speakers in the present study; half were Sindhi and half Pashto. They were applied through two different experiments: experiment one was about production and experiment two was about perception. All non-words were recorded by a Pashto native speaker because, Pashto allows all syllable types studied in our experiments. We used eight pairs of stimuli as controlled items. The convenience sampling technique was used by us to select the participants. The recording of the mono and disyllabic non words were done through Data Recording Device. Before commencing the trial, participants were directed about our research goals and its targets thoroughly. In Experiment 1,the materials were corresponded to (13) monosyllabic non-words (*blif, swap, ʃwek, zwig, frep, klaf, ʃrep, xrum, trig, pɽet, sret, xwar, prem*) and thirteen disyllabic non-words (*belif, sewap, ʃewek, zewig, ferep, kelaf, ʃerep, xerum, terig, peɽet, seret, xewar, perem*).The experiment 1 examined the linguistic priorities of Sindhi and Pashto talkers using a syllable judgment task. In Experiment 2, the materials were corresponded to the previously mentioned similar items from Experiment 1. However, here the items were randomized systematically into pairs: Half were alike (mono and disyllabic), and half were repair-related for instance (*blif-blif; belief-belif*); or epenthetically related (*blif-belif; belief-blif*). Participants heard two items—either identical tokens or non-identical and were directed to classify whether the two components are exactly alike or not. Both items such as identical and non-identical were appeared simultaneously. On the behalf of the current results, it is claimed by us that the activeness of universal confinement on beginning consonant cluster order is active in the native speakers of Sindhi and Pashto regardless of syllables' presence or absence in their language and this statement is also strengthen by past various research findings. The native speakers of Sindhi and Pashto languages have been found significant effects of the initial consonant clusters in voice through perception while they were remained non-significant in voice through

production. Broadly speaking, the native speakers of both languages were found different in perception and alike in the production due to the significant effect of the initial onset consonant clusters. In addition, their goodness in the production may be because of their phonological experience with their languages or other commonly spoken languages surrounded by the speakers.

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#### Appendices

##### Appendix A1. Monosyllabic nonwords used in Experiments 1.

Trial No	Monosyllables
1	Blif
2	Swap
3	Shwek
4	Zwig
5	Frep
6	Klaf
7	Shrep
8	Xrum
9	Trig
10	pʁet
11	Sret
12	Xwar
13	Prem

**Appendix A2. Disyllabic nonwords used in Experiments 1.**

<b>Trial No</b>	<b>Monosyllables</b>
1	Belif
2	Sewap
3	Shewek
4	Zewig
5	Ferep
6	Kelaf
7	Sherep
8	Xerum
9	Terig
10	peɾet
11	Seret
12	Xewar
13	Perem

**Appendix B. Randomized pairs of mono and disyllabic nonwords used in Experiments 2.**

<b>Trial no</b>	<b>Syllables</b>
1	blif-belif
2	sewap-swap
3	shwek-shewk
4	zwig-zewig
5	ferep-frep
6	klaf-kelaf
7	sherep-shrep
8	belif-blif
9	swap-sewap
10	rum-xerum
11	terig-trig
12	shrep-sherep

13	sret-seret
14	xewar-xwar
15	pɽet-peɽet
16	trig-terig
17	perem-prem
18	seret-sret
19	pret-peret
20	belif-belif
21	xwar-xewar
22	kelaf-klaf
23	xwar-xwar
24	zwig-zwig
25	sret-sret
26	prem-prem
27	frep-ferep
28	shewek-shewek
29	xerum-xerum
30	blif-blif

# Pronunciation difficulties in the English of Khowar speakers

Samiullah Khan, Hanifa Bensen, Dolat Khan and Aamir Sohail Khan

**ABSTRACT:** Due to the first language influence and phonological traits the English as second language (ESL) learners of English face problems. This study investigated the impact of Khowar languages on ESL learners' pronunciation of consonant sounds in Pakistan. The process of data collection was based on reading six English consonants (/ð/ /θ/ w/ v/ /t/ /d/) inserted in words such as 'Either' 'Ether' 'Vine' 'Wine' 'Seat' and 'Seed' along with the distracters. For this purpose, a total of 15 participants of Khowar took part in this study. The productions were analyzed acoustically through the Praat program. The results showed that English dental fricatives (/ð/ /θ/) with dental stop and /v/ /w/ sounds produced as /v/ and /t/ and /d/ sounds produced as dental stop. The analysis of the findings exhibited the target sounds which are absent in Khowar language but present in the English language, therefore, they appear to be difficult for Khowar speakers to produce.

**Key words:** *Khowar, pronunciation, consonants, Praat, second language*

## 1. Introduction

The use of the English language brought changes in the pronunciation of the learners (Jenkins, 1998). However, due to the rise of variety in the English language the non-native learners around the world were confused with which English (pronunciation) to follow (Rahman, 1990). In this aspect MacArthur (2001) put forth his opinion that it was easy to make an idea that Received Pronunciation (RP) is the standard one to follow in the 1900s because it was the only era of Queen's English. It was the time of British supremacy alone in the world and the non-native speakers had the only one option to adopt British English. After the emergence of America as a super power, it challenged to follow British English. The rise of America which influenced the entire world due to its power, subsequently American English also became inevitable to learn. MacArthur (2011) further narrated that the sign of Received Pronunciation is the variety used in the media, news, dictionaries and grammar. Standard variety is also taught in schools to the non-native speakers. He further stated that RP and American English carry a dominant era and people around the world have had the influence from both varieties therefore, RP and American English (pronunciation) go parallel in demand of the learners.

English is the dominant language throughout the world, therefore, bilingual and monolingual speakers, in their daily conversation, frequently use English words. Pakistan is a multilingual country and languages from three different families; Indo-

Aryan, Iranian and Dravidian, are spoken in Pakistan. Among the other languages Khwar language is spoken in the northern part of Pakistan Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. English is used as a second language (ESL) in Pakistan. This study aims to investigate the pronunciation difficulties of English consonant sounds by Pakistani speakers whose first language (L1) is Khwar. In this regard, the RP will be compared with the Khwar speakers to reveal the similarities and differences within their productions.

To be able to reach the aim this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the pronunciation difficulties of English as a second language of Khwar learners in the production of six English consonant sounds?

## **2. Literature Review**

With the name of trade English people had started ruling on technology, education culture and administration of the India and it is a fact that the people were not willing to accept anything from the English people being the invaders in the country (India) but gradually they came to know the importance of the English language which had become a lingua franca in India. According to Seidlhofer (2005) “English as a lingua franca emerged as way of referring to communication in English between the speakers with different languages” (p. 61). The English language was first introduced by the merchants of an East Indian Company in India to boost trade between the two countries of India and the United Kingdom in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Rahman, 2009).

The people of Pakistan were compelled to learn English (RP) because it became the language of the elite class of the society and speaking English was impertinent to access white-color jobs after the partition from India in 1947. Therefore, the dwellers of the sub- continent realized the socio-economic and political importance of the English language. Rahman (1990) further claimed that English is very much in demand by Pakistani students and their parents and employers.

It was not surprising that English is the marker of elitist social status and the most desired skill for lucrative employment in Pakistan (Rahman, 2007). English is the

official language of Pakistan since the inception whereas Urdu is the national language of Pakistan. However, it is a fact that English enjoys more privileges than Urdu because educational and official correspondence are mostly in English therefore, the waves of importance drifted more towards English than Urdu. The central government of Pakistan, the most provincial government, and institutions of higher education use English (Rahman 2007). English is the medium of instruction in all major institutions such as schools, courts, and higher education institutions. Since then English has been given the status of the official language of the country. English has been given another shape in the form of Pakistani English. It is because non-native teachers and learners do not have access to the native-like accent and the same non-native accent on the part of the teachers, transferred to the new generation (Rahman, 1990). Pakistani English has developed as a variety of English like other varieties, i.e., Indian English, South Asian English and so on. These are known as varieties because these are different from the British and American English in terms of lexical, grammatical and phonological features (Crystal, 2004). Due to the influence of the regional languages dialect of Pakistani English was also formed. Variation in the language occurs very often nowadays in languages. Therefore, such changes in the system go towards the creation of a new variety like Pakistani variety (Shabir, Rafiq, Bila, & Rafiq, 2013).

Because of its wide spreading eminence, Kachru (1982) had divided English into three circles, inner circles, outer circles and expanding circles. The inner circle includes native speaking countries of English such as the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), New Zealand, Canada and Australia. The outer circle includes the colonized countries like India and Pakistan where English was implemented as a second language (ESL) (Anbreen, 2015). In the expanding circle countries like China and Turkey take place where English is used as a foreign language (EFL). All these circles are explained under one umbrella term, i.e., 'world Englishes.' The status of English from English to world Englishes, was declared because of the emergence of its new varieties. For example, south Asian English includes varieties of English of Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and south Asian countries. These circles explain the spreading and adaptation of English in

different cultural context. In these circles, English is used as a foreign, native and second language. Due to the status of English as foreign and second language, the speaker of other languages frequently uses its vocabulary in their daily lives in code-switching (Jenkins, 2003). In other words, using their first language with their second language and /or third forth language in the same discourse (Auer, 2013).

When the English ruler left the sub-continent in 1947, there were no native speakers left for Pakistani learners of English to follow. However, they still had to write and read English for the transaction of official business and for educational purposes because the language of education and official correspondence was English. Therefore, the English as a second language (ESL) learner were completely dependent on the language taught by Pakistani teachers who were non-native speakers of English (Mahboob, 2008). As a result, a specific type of English developed in the country which is currently called Pakistani English, (PE). PE has specific phonological features which is a variety of world Englishes (Rahman, 2014).

## **2.1 Theories Regarding Pakistani English**

There are many theories related to the problem of acquisition of the second language by ESL learners in Pakistan. These theories explain the different aspects of phonological variations in Pakistani ESL learners of English.

The acquisition of L2 phonology indicates the different linguistic factors such as the position of the target sounds, situation the way specific sound produced, the influence of the L1 and marketness (Syed, 2013). There are also some non-linguistic features like age of acquisition, leaning environment, input and motivation. Because such situations language learners face difficulties in the acquisition of the target sounds. Syed (2013) has the view that the difference between L1 and L2 causes errors in acquiring the second language. He considers it the main sources of obstacle to acquire the second language. Eckman (2004) states that relatively less marked elements between L1 and L2 are easier to acquire than the marked. Brown (2000) expresses his idea that exposure does not count if the distinct features of the needed sounds are present in the L1. Flege (1995) maneuvers



the same idea that if the target sound is blocked in corresponding to the L2 sound then less chances of improvement is expected. Syed (2013) claimed that context plays an important role in L2 acquisition when specific consonant sound occurs in the L2. In addition, Archibald (1998) put forth atL2sounds are easier to learn in onset (initial) position than coda (final) as coda position is considering more marked. This idea further substantiates that the sound in the word can be learnt easier in onset position than coda. The position of a word does not create a problem in acquisition but the context also matters in acquiring the sound. The level of accuracy in production may differ the way the sound is produced in sentences (Syed, 2013)

Syed (2013) asserted that “dental stops exists most indigenous Pakistani languages” (p. 59) Which was further discussed by Garesh (2006) that the fricatives /ð/, /θ/ are replaced by stop /th/, and /d/ and /dh/ by Indian learners (2006). Likewise, the results of this study of fricatives /ð/ and /θ/ indicated that Khowar speakers produced it as dental-stop. However, RP speakers produced it as dental-fricative. According to Nasir (2013) “It is an important to point out an interesting fact that the letters for dental fricative consonants (/ð/ /θ/) exist but the sounds themselves do not exist. This is because of the Pakistani languages got their script from Arabic and the sounds (/ð/ /θ/) do exist in Arabic” (p. 62). Syed (2013) further claimed that the space between two vowels did not show any fricative noise which confirms that the target sound was produced as a stop not fricative.

The existing literature pertaining to the voiced and voiceless dental fricative sounds indicated that in the major languages (Sindhi, Panjabi, Urdu, Balochi and Pashto) also mentioned above, the same problems occur in Pakistan.

The aspiration contrast in RP stop is neutralized in English produced by Pakistani speakers. Thus, plosives are produced unaspirated (Mahboob&Ahmar, 2004). For example, /p/ is produced as unaspirated (p) in the words ‘peak’ as well as ‘speak’ in PE whereas native English speakers produce words like ‘peak’ with an aspirated stop (p<sup>h</sup>) and ‘speak’ with unaspirated stop (p). Alveolar stop /t/ and /d/ are retroflex and dental fricatives /ð/ /θ/ is dental stop in PE (ibid). The voiceless dental fricatives of English /θ/

are produced with aspiration in PE. The difference between /v/ and /w/ is not maintained in PE (Mahboob&Ahmar, 2004; Rahman, (1990/1991). Rahman, (2007) mentioned that the Panjabi, Sindhi, Urdu and Saraiki speakers produced the /v/ and /w/ sound as one sound /w/ is which mentioned in the phonemic inventory of Panjabi language. In the phonemic inventory of Khowar the sound /v/ exists and sound /w/ is absent. Therefore, the approximant /w/ is produced as labio dental fricative /v/.

The existing literature on the acquisition of a second language gave us evidence that the position of sounds, context, input and environment play a key role in acquiring a language.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design and Procedures**

This study considers the pronunciation difficulties of English of Khowar speakers employing a survey design. As it was pointed out previously, the main purpose of this research was to investigate the pronunciation difficulties in English of Khowar speakers. To be able to reach the aim, this study employed a quantitative method. According to Shuttleworth (2008) this method is the best way of approving and disapproving hypothesis. This kind of method is used mostly in social sciences for this reason a quantitative method was employed to effectively answer the research questions of this study. To be able to distinguish the pronunciation problems a table of words containing the target sounds was distributed to the participants to read the words and their voices were recorded while reading the given words.

The current study focuses on finding out how these sounds are produced by Khowar speakers. For this purpose six consonants were selected for recording (see Table 1). The consonants inserted words along with other distracters presented for the participants to read.

Table 1  
*Target Sounds with Sound-Carrying Words*

Sound	Word
/ð/	Either
/θ/	Ether
/t/	Seat
/d/	Seed
/v/	Vine
/w/	Wine

### 3.2 Participants and Sampling

The population of the study was comprised of Khowar speakers. The total number of the students who took part in this study are 15 students' of Khowar speakers. Their average age was between 20 to 25 years.

### 3.3 Data Collection

A list containing words called stimuli were employed to collect the related data. The words carrying the target consonants were presented to the participants in words on an A4 sheet of paper written on the computer. The participants were asked to read the stimuli one by one and they were asked to read louder to get their voices recorded. The total Khowar participants were 15 who repeated each word three times that means that each word was produced 45 times by the total number of participants. An Iphone 6 was used to record the sounds of the participants and each recording lasted for about two minutes each, in total 60 minutes. Iphone 6 carries an advanced recording used in m-learning for pedagogical purposes.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Praat is a free software program which is used to analyze the speech sounds acoustically. It can be downloaded from the website [www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat](http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat). Basically, the Praat program was designed and developed by Boersma and Weenink (1995) to be used to generate the waveform on a spectrogram. It is also used to make recordings, editing of sounds and to the extract the recorded sounds for further needful analysis. It provides the information of pulses, formants, intensity and pitch of the

sounds. The program consists of the following properties (Boersma&Heuven, 2001).

However, this study only employed the F3 formant. Praat software was employed to note the required formant value (F3) the formants values of six consonants were taken from Khowar participants. The significant differences between the formant values of English with Khowar speakers were determined through the major number of participants and with percentage. The average value out of the three production sounds of each word was taken to note to determine the values of each participant.

After collecting the data, it was analyzed through Praat to be able to determine the differences between the production of Khowar. The recorded sounds of both languages (Khowar) were put into Praat which analyzed the productions of each sounds produced by each participant.

### 3.5 Ethical Consideration

Keeping into consideration the research ethics, written consent from the Faculty of the languages and literature was obtained. They were informed about the nature of the research and the purposes of the recordings were briefly explained before data collection. The participants were also informed verbally about the aim of the recordings and their names would be kept anonymized and would not be used for any other purposes except his research.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

### 4.1 RP Production of ‘either’ (ð).

The frequency of the sound of RP of the voiced dental fricative sound /ð/ given in the word *either* is given below (see Table 2). The frequencies show the production pattern of the RP speakers.

Table 2

<i>F3 Frequencies of RP for ‘Either’</i>		
Word	Sound	Frequency
Either	/ð/	2745

The sound /ð/ which is given in the word *either* was analyzed three times on the

Praatprogram the Table 2 reveals the frequencies of F3 that shows the production frequency was 2745. The mentioned frequencies for the word *either* were compared with the production frequencies of Khowar speakers. The analysis for the word *either* revealed that there was no space between the production of the vowels and the sound is produced as stop in RP. If the spectrogram shows no space between the vowels then it meant that RP speakers produced the word with friction if the space was created in the spectrogram then the word would have been produced as stop.

#### 4.2 RP Production of ‘ether’ (θ)

In order to see how the RP is produced the voiceless dental fricative sound /θ/ given in the word *ether*. The frequency of the given sound was compared with frequencies with the production frequencies of Khowar speakers. The production frequencies of the word ether produced in RP is illustrated in Table 3

Table 3

<i>F3 Frequencies of RP for ‘Ether’</i>		
Word	Sound	Frequency
Ether	/θ/	2774

Table 3 demonstrates the three production frequencies of the voiceless dental fricative sound /θ/ used in the word *ether* where the production frequency is 2774. The spectrogram shows the production of the word *ether* as dental fricative as demonstrated in the picture of the spectrogram results reveal no burst between the vowels. This indicated that means that the RP the sound /θ/ given in the word *ether* as voiceless dental fricative.

#### 4.3 RP Production of ‘vine’ (v)

The sound /v/ is produced as labio dental fricative by the RP. It is also produced with lip-rounding. The production frequency of the word *Vine* is presented in Table 4 which is as under:

Table 4

<i>F3 Frequencies of RP for 'Vine'</i>		
Word	Sound	Frequency
Either	/v/	2502

The word *vine* produced by RP shows that the production frequency is 2502.

#### 4.4 RP Production of 'wine' (w)

The sound /w/ given in the word *Wine* is labio dental fricative in RP English. In order to analyze the production of RP the word was presented to the Praat program. Table 5 reveals the results of the analysis of the word *wine* produced by the RP speakers.

Table 5

<i>F3 Frequencies of RP for 'Wine'</i>		
Word	Sound	Frequency
Wine	/w/	2974

The results of the production of the word *Wine* which were set into the program presented to the program. The results revealed that the frequency measurement was 2974. The mentioned frequency indicates that the RP speakers produce the sound /w/ given in the word *Wine* as labio dental fricative.

#### 4.5 RP Production of 'seat' (t)

The sound /t/ given in the word *Seat* produced as alveolar stop by RP. For further clarification, the word was put to analysis through the Praat program. Table 6 reveals the production frequencies of the word *Seat*.

Table 6

<i>F3 Frequency of RP for 'Seat'</i>		
Word	Sound	Frequency
Seat	/t/	3285

Table 5 shows the production frequency of the word *Seat*. It was revealed that the frequency of the production of RP speakers is 3285.

#### 4.6 RP Production of 'seed' (d)

The RP produce the sound mentioned in the word *Seed* as alveolar stop. The high frequencies of the production of the word *Seed* confirm the word produced as alveolar stop.

Table 7

<i>F3 Frequency of RP for 'Seed'</i>		
Word	Sound	Frequency
Seed	/d/	3707

Table 7 shows the consistency in the production of the word *Seed* by RP. The frequency of RP speakers was 3707.

All the aforementioned analysis of the target sounds of the RP speaker was presented here in order to compare the same frequencies with Khowar speakers' production frequencies.

#### 5. Conclusion

When the sounds are absent in the phonemic inventory of the first language (L1) then it becomes difficult to produce them. Brown (2000) in the opinion that experience and exposure do not count in the acquisition of the target sound if the distinct feature is active in the L1. There are some obstacles in the way of acquiring the Received Pronunciation (RP) sounds. One of the prime factors was the influence of the L1. The articulatory system of tongue is trained in such a way that it takes time to give shape for a new sound. Secondly, phonemic inventory of Khowar is different from English. The manner of articulation of sounds varies from language to another language. Therefore, such difficulties occurred for Khowar ESL learners of English.

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# Food for Thought: A Linguistic Analysis of the Menus in Karachi's Elite Cafes and Restaurants

Shumaila Shafket Ali

**ABSTRACT:** Language embodies different forms of identity: ethno-linguistic, socio-economic, cultural, national, religious as well as political. Just as language helps project one's identity, food choices perform the same function. A Muslim diner, for instance, is not expected to order pork. Similarly a staunch Hindu diner, is expected to order vegetarian food only. However, in elite restaurants and cafes which seem to be transmitters of globalization, consumers' food choices are controlled by the language used on the menu cards, which can sometimes question their identity in more than one way. Reading the menu cards of such elite restaurants and cafes in major cities of Pakistan, one is likely to receive culture-shock for their menus are dominated by weird names and dishes that are neither aesthetically appealing nor do they seem to appeal to the taste buds of the locals. In fact, the names of some dishes are in sharp contrast to the socio-cultural fabric of Pakistani society. The current study aims to analyze the language used on the menu cards and the weird names assigned to food on the menu of fifty-five elite cafes and restaurants in Karachi, Pakistan. Total 300 names of dishes and beverages have been analyzed using purposive sampling. The linguistic analysis of the menu cards reveals clear signs of socio-cultural metamorphosis which is likely to result in the obliteration of local identity. Moreover, the dominance of foreign cuisine over local Pakistani cuisine in such restaurants and cafes also reflects cultural imperialism. The results of this study can draw attention of the restaurant and cafe industry working in Pakistan to not only rewrite their menus by replacing culturally alien names with those that represent the local Pakistani culture, but also make more space in their menus for Pakistani cuisine, as food is one of the strong symbols of culture.

**Keywords:** *food, culture, cultural imperialism, globalization, identity.*

## 1. Introduction

Food not only performs the function of satisfying one's hunger but is also involved in the construction of different forms of identity including, cultural, ethnic, religious and national. It would not be an exaggeration to state that food is a means to strengthen one's ties with one's culture, which is an integral means to assert one's distinct identity. Emphasizing the importance of culture, Khan (2009) states, "It is culture that makes us distinguish one society or social group from the other." (p.192) and he includes food besides other things in his definition of culture.

Highlighting the relationship between food and culture, Kittler, Sucher, & Nelms (2012) comment: "One way to establish that a person is not a member of a certain cultural group is through diet." (p.5). Food choices and dietary habits are strongly influenced by both religious and cultural beliefs; food that is highly valued by one group may not even be considered acceptable by the other. Take example of the people living

in the Kalash Valley of Chitral in the North of Pakistan, where eating chicken is considered a taboo. Some communities avoid certain food items because of their superstitious beliefs, while others avoid it for religious reasons. The Tibetan Buddhists, for instance, avoid consuming fish because they worship it. Just as fish has religious significance for the Tibetan Buddhists, cow is a sacred animal for the Hindus. Staunch Hindus avoid consuming cow's meat because they worship it. There are numerous other communities across the world where such food taboos exist. Food choices and the taboos associated with certain food items are important means to understand different socio-cultural, ethnic as well as religious groups, as their consumption and/or avoidance of certain food items can reveal useful information about their socio-cultural, ethnic and/or religious beliefs.

However, in today's globalized world where boundaries are disappearing fast, one is likely to run the risk of misjudging people's cultural, ethnic and/or religious identity merely on the basis of their food choices. For not every Muslim immigrant or tourist is conscious of asking for *halaal* food in non-Muslim countries these days. The same holds true for Hindus, as not all of them are vegetarians anymore. Many Hindus have started consuming different forms of meat now. As far as the people belonging to the Kalash community of Chitral are concerned, those who have moved to urban centres of the country, like Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad, have started consuming chicken without any reservation. Eating chicken is no more a taboo for those Kalashi people who have migrated to urban centres.

However, the change in people's life style in general and the food choices in particular, are not just the result of migration, globalization has also played a crucial role in transforming societies. In the contemporary world where globalization has affected distinct identities, the criteria for the selection of food in cafes and restaurants have also changed to a great extent, especially among the elite class. According to Almerico (2014), "food symbolism permeates our social psyche." (p.6). Keeping in mind the psychology of the elite class in general and the youngsters in particular, the menu card writers assign weird and idiosyncratic names to dishes and beverages to increase their sale. Although the food items and beverages on the menu of most of the cafes and restaurants are more or less the same, their names vary and can have a strong impact on

their sale. With the desire to appear modern and different, many people, especially youngsters, order food that sounds different even if they do not like the taste of it, for their major purpose is not to satisfy their hunger but to boast of their socio-economic status, and in doing so they do not mind putting their socio-cultural and even religious identity at stake. Almerico (2014) states that “people will eat or drink something they find unpleasant or distasteful to be part of the world.” (p.7). Being part of the world means being accepted by the society one desires to be a part of even if its norms and values are in sharp contrast to our own. Foreign names and dishes are deliberately made part of the menu of elite cafes and restaurants to mutilate cultural as well as religious identity, which is evident from the inclusion of even those food items on the menu that are not considered *halaal*, like calamari, squid, crab, prawns, to name a few. It cannot be denied that restaurants and cafes serve dual function; they not only offer food to relish people’s appetite but also offer a venue where the chances of socio-cultural metamorphosis are multiplied through the food items and their names on the menu.

### **1.1 Aim of the Study and Research Questions:**

As the name of an item on the menu plays a major role in deciding what to order these days, the current study aims to analyze the language used on the menu cards and the weird names assigned to food on the menu of fifty-five elite cafes and restaurants, including fast food restaurants in Karachi ---the biggest city of Pakistan where the traces of globalization resulting in cultural imperialism are very obvious, especially among the young generation. Although the young generation, irrespective of its socio-economic status, has great admiration for foreign items, youngsters from the elite class seem to have developed an unusual fascination with everything that sounds, looks or tastes foreign, which is indicative of a move away from one’s native culture, which is definitely alarming.

Considering the danger of being swept away by the Tsunami of globalization, the study aims to examine the linguistic markers on the menu cards of elite cafes and restaurants, as they represent culinary culture by providing “a written record of the evolving culinary changes” (Gvion & Trostler, 2008, p. 952). It is true that “menus can enable a study of the interaction between popular attitudes toward ethnic cuisines, social

perceptions of means of acculturation, and the process of dissemination and demystification of ethnic dishes and cuisines” (Gvion & Trostler, 2008, p. 971). A closer look at the linguistic markers on the menus of elite cafes and restaurants in Pakistan shows strong signs of cultural imperialism. It is feared that this cultural imperialism which is the product of linguistic imperialism may lead towards the construction of an ideology that does not harmonize with the socio-cultural ideology of Pakistani society ---- a society which is being modified in a very subtle way through the infiltration of not just foreign cuisine but also eccentric names that carry strange connotations.

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

- i. What kind of language is employed to name dishes and beverages on the menu of elite cafes and restaurants in Karachi?
- ii. How do the names assigned to the dishes and beverages affect the local Pakistani identity?
- iii. Do the menus of elite cafes and restaurants have enough space for the local Pakistani cuisine?

## **2. Literature Review:**

Research on the role of food in the projection of culture and the discourse revolving around food is not new. It focuses on various sub-fields of linguistics, like semantics, onomastics, anthropology, sociolinguistics, as well as pragmatics. With the aim to understand diners’ psychology, research is also conducted to study menus of restaurants from multiple perspectives. Ozdemir and Caliskan (2014) in their article present a comprehensive review of literature on restaurant menu research. Most of the studies reviewed in their article focus on menu structure and engineering. Although there is a vast body of research literature on the structure and design of menus focusing on the presentation of dishes to attract consumers (Kershaw, 2009; Lorenzini, 1992; McVety, Ware, & Ware, 2008; Zwicky & Zwicky, 1980), very few research studies focus on the linguistic analysis of the names of dishes and beverages on the menu cards of restaurants and cafes (Jurafsky, 2014; Wansink, Painter, & Van Ittersum, 2001; Wansink, Van Ittersum, & Painter, 2005).

While discussing the semiotics of food and drink along with their symbolic value indicating socio-economic, ethnic and cultural identity, Lehrer (1991) drew attention towards the linguistic devices employed for naming different dishes and beverages in restaurants. The devices she discussed include compounding, euphemism, narrowing or widening of word meaning, innovative word formation, etc. However, because of focusing too much on the symbolic value of food, the article does not provide enough space for a detailed discussion on the linguistic devices employed to name food and beverages on the menu cards and their impact on diners' psychology.

Gvion & Trostler (2008) in a longitudinal study investigated the changes that occurred in the presentation of ethnic dishes in the restaurant menus in America along with the change in diners' interest from the 1960s to 1990s. The results of the study indicate the emergence of multiethnic cuisine in America --- a proof of its being a multicultural society.

In a large-scale hypothetical study based on Bourdieu's distinction, Jurafsky, Chahuneau, Routledge, & Smith (2016) focus on the language used on menus of 6501 expensive and inexpensive restaurants in 7 major cities of USA. The study is based on four aspects: natural vs. traditional authenticity, educational capital, size of the meal and implicit vs. explicit signalling of quality on menus. The results of this hypothetical study by Jurafsky et al. (2016) show the concept of natural authenticity being associated with expensive while that of traditional authenticity, being associated with inexpensive restaurants. It is also proved through this study that the high-status restaurants not only use morphologically complex words but also foreign vocabulary from French, Italian and Spanish languages, establishing a strong link between educational capital and restaurant status. Besides confirming these two hypotheses, the findings of the study also reinforce Bourdieu's concept of plenty in the working class meal by proving that inexpensive restaurants focus more on portion sizes as compared to expensive restaurants. The results of the study also reveal excessive use of adjectives on the part of inexpensive restaurants proving yet another hypothesis that the high status restaurants avoid using explicit indicators of quality.

Besides focusing on the linguistic analysis of menus, researchers have also studied customers' views on restaurant advertisements (Ehsan, 2012; Haque, Rahman, Ahmad, Yasmin, & Asri; 2011; Wansink, Cheney, & Chan, 2003) and the language used for building brand identity (Condon, 2017; Crystal & Herskovitz, 2010).

Despite being an extensively researched area across the world, there is no significant research on the language of menus of cafes and restaurants in Pakistan. The current study is undertaken to fill in the existing gap by performing a linguistic analysis of the names of dishes and beverages on the menu of elite cafes and restaurants in Karachi, Pakistan. The study's significance lies in establishing a strong connection between language and culture which together constitute the identity of a group.

### **3. Methodology**

This qualitative study is conducted with a focus on the linguistic analysis of the names of dishes and beverages served at the elite cafes and restaurants including fast food restaurants in Karachi. The study being qualitative in nature employed purposive sampling technique by focusing on the menus of fifty-five elite cafes and restaurants located in the posh areas of the city. These cafes and restaurants were selected after reviewing their menu which is available on internet. Some of these cafes and restaurants have their own face book page where complete menu is provided. Another reason for selecting these cafes and restaurants was that they are mostly visited by youngsters, a majority of who belong to the elite class.

Although the selected restaurants and cafes offer a vast range of food items and beverages, only those items were selected for the study that carry weird names having no connection with the local Pakistani culture. Using purposive sampling technique, total 300 names were included in the final analysis for the study. The names have been linguistically analyzed to study the relationship between language and culture, both of which play an important role in the ideological construction or deconstruction.

### **4. Data Analysis**

Most of the names assigned to the dishes and beverages offered in the cafes and restaurants selected for the study are weird and in sharp contrast to the local Pakistani

culture. The weird names of dishes and beverages found on the menu cards of these cafes and restaurants are the result of the menu writers' use of a variety of expressions to promote a distinct cultural identity that does not seem to synchronize with the Pakistani identity--- an identity which seems to be under threat because of the glorification of foreign culture through language. A detailed analysis of the data gathered for the study reveals:

#### **4.1 Use of expressions that connote violence and aggression**

Since young generation is more inclined towards action and violence, capitalizing on the young generation's psychology, the menu writers of some cafes and restaurants assign such terms to certain food items and beverages that can easily attract young diners. There are many cafes and restaurants including fast food restaurants in Karachi which offer food items with names that carry explicit signs of violence, aggression, and disaster, including natural disasters. An example of a smoothie served at *New York Coffee*, an elite cafe in Karachi, is *Berry Blast*. Examples of beverages with such names include, *Bloody Mango*, *Mind Eraser*, and *Hurricane*. Not only are such names assigned to smoothies and different beverages but also to starters, fast food items and desserts. Examples of names, conveying violence, assigned to desserts include: *Mint Chocolate Bomb* and *Death by Chocolate*, whereas examples of such names assigned to other food items include: *Fire Cracker Fish*, *Dynamite Prawns*, *Dynamite Wings*, *Dynamite Chicken*, *Loaded Fries*, *Explosion Chicken Burger*, *Flame Thrower Burger* etc. In some fast food restaurants like *Burger O'Clock*, *Burger Lab*, and *Burger Cage*, for instance, the names assigned to some burgers are such that they do not show any connection with the item itself. Example include: *Fire House*, *Chilli Blast*, and *Jaw Breaker*. By employing words like *fire*, *blast*, *explosion*, *dynamite*, all of which belong to the semantic field representing violence and aggression, the food items are presented as transmitters of disaster, turning the whole experience of dining into a violent activity.

#### **4.2 Use of terms that sound abhorring**

Food should not only look and smell appealing but its name should also sound pleasant to tickle one's taste buds. However, the criteria for judging food through its appearance, aroma and name vary from one culture to another. The food choices in some countries



are so diametrically opposed to each other that when people of these countries visit each other's countries they have to either carry packed food from their own country for survival or rely on fruits, unless they are lucky enough to find a restaurant where the food of their country is available. One example is that of Japanese food which is very different from Pakistani food. While Sushi which is made of raw fish is the most favourite dish of the Japanese, for Pakistanis even the idea of having a dish made of raw fish is enough to cause vomiting because in our culture meat is not eaten in raw form. It has to be cooked well to suit the local taste buds. Not only can food choices become problematic because of the taste but also because of the names assigned to dishes in some restaurants and cafes. I remember while travelling to Colombo by Sri Lankan Airlines in the year 2015, when the airhostess asked me if I would like to have *chick pea salad* or *rattle snake salad*, I was so horrified to hear the name 'rattle snake' that I preferred not to have any food during the flight. Although the salad they served did not contain rattle snake, the name was loathsome enough.

There are quite a few restaurants in Karachi as well where food items and beverages are assigned names that sound abhorring and disgusting. These names may appeal to the foreigners or those locals who idealize and glorify everything that is opposed to the local culture, but for the majority of Pakistanis these names are enough to kill their hunger. Examples include, *Sticky Fingers*, *Mudslide*, *Dragon Roll*, *Messy Meat Burger*; *The Monster*, *Carnivore*. In some restaurants, names of those animals are given to beverages and other food items, which are not even '*halaal*'. One example is that of *Porcupine Prawns* served at ***China Kitchen***. Other examples include: *Blue Wolf*, *Crocodile*, *Gourmet Turtle*, *Bulldog Sauce*, *Spider Roll*, and *Rattle Snake Chicken Pasta*. The first three names are so weird that they do not show any connection with food. While the first two are the names of mocktails, the third one is a dessert.

#### **4.3 Use of brand labels to promote class consciousness**

On one hand, globalization aims at cultural homogenization by focusing on the obliteration of distinct cultural identities in the third world countries, on the other hand, the notion of class-consciousness is promoted in almost every domain, including restaurant and cafe industry. The menu of elite cafes and restaurants promote class-

consciousness not only through the exorbitant price of the food that is served but also through the names of the dishes and beverages served. It is pertinent to mention here that food is not only used to show one's cultural affiliation, the selection of food is also used to judge the socio-economic background of people. This may be one of the reasons why some people deliberately select such food items that carry names associated with the elite class.

It is not uncommon to find brand names assigned to the food items on the menus of elite cafes and restaurants; the use of brand names on the menu of these cafes and restaurants reinforces class-consciousness. Such practice is truly representative of a snobbish society driven by class divide. There are numerous examples of menu items that are sold through their brand name to make them more appealing. *Butler Temptation Cake* served at **Butler's Chocolate Cafe**, *Sizzlers Fire Steak* at **Sizzlerz**, *Casa Villa Signature Platter* at **Casa Villa**, *Gun Smoke Club Sandwich* at **Gun Smoke**, and *Arizona Chicken* served at **Arizona Grill**, are a few examples of food items carrying brand labels.

Moreover, the menu of a restaurant, **Burn Out**, carries a list of mocktails that are assigned the brand names of highly expensive and luxurious cars that only highly affluent people can afford to buy. The names include: *Audi; Buggati; Ferrari; Rolls Royace; Porsche; Lamborgini*.

#### **4.4 Use of sexual imagery**

Sexual imagery is often employed in marketing to attract consumers. International brands like *Armani, Calvin Klein, Gucci, Versace*, etc., particularly employ sexual imagery along with explicitly sexual pictorial images to increase their sale. Employment of sexual imagery, however, is not just confined to luxury brand advertising. Such imagery has also begun to be used on the menu of elite restaurants and cafes for naming dishes and beverages. The names of some of the items on the menu of these cafes and restaurants carry implicit as well as explicit signs of sex. While most of these names are used for desserts, some of them are also used for naming different flavours of pizzas, burgers and steaks. Some examples of desserts that are named by employing sexual imagery include: *Forbidden Pleasure; Dual Pleasures; Sinfully Yours; Chocolate Sin;*

*After Eight; Sinful Sundae, Sweet Temptation*, etc, while examples of pizzas and steaks with names that carry sexual connotations include: *Hot Shot, Hot Stuff, and Hottie*. At *Casa Villa*, a burger is served with the name *Burn and Love Burger*, which also connotes sexuality.

#### **4.5 Use of gender biased language**

Although gender bias is practised in almost every society with varying degrees and is mostly reflected through the language used for referring to the opposite sex, there are various other ways through which this gender bias is manifested. One of the prominent examples of gender bias can be observed on the menu of some elite cafes and restaurants where the dishes and beverages are assigned such names that show clear signs of prejudice against women. For instance, at *Cosmopolitan*, an elite restaurant located in PECHS, Karachi, a beef burger is named *The Juicy Lucy*. The use of the adjective ‘juicy’ with a feminine name implies sexual connotations. Here, a food item is described as an easily accessible woman. The idea of presenting women as a sexual commodity is further strengthened through assigning such names to food items. Another example is from the menu of a fast food restaurant *Howdy*, where one of the burgers is assigned the name *Hot Cowgirl*, while at *Pizza Hut*, one of the flavours of pizza is assigned the name *Sweet Chick*. The word ‘chick’ does not only refer to a young chicken but is also used as a slang to refer to an attractive young woman or a teenage girl. A somewhat similar idea is projected on the menu of yet another elite restaurant where a mocktail is named as *Wonder Woman*.

#### **4.6 Use of adjectives that violate collocational restrictions**

The adjectives used with the food items served in traditional cafes and restaurants are specifically chosen to enhance diners’ appetite. It is very common to find adjectives like ‘scrumptious’, ‘crispy’, ‘tender’, ‘juicy’, etc., attached to the dishes on the menu of traditional restaurants including fast food restaurants. However, in elite cafes and restaurants, such adjectives are rarely employed. Instead of using adjectives that collocate with food, the menu writers of elite cafes and restaurants deliberately use adjectives that do not collocate with food. One example is that of a shake called *Crazy Banana Shake* served at *Pane and Amore*, an elite restaurant in Karachi. Other examples include: *Dancing Chicken; Dancing Fajita; Crazy Maki; Naughty Toffee; The Mad Oreo*, to name a few. Employment of words that do not collocate with food items

has become a trademark of elite cafes and restaurants. Youngsters being carried away by such names order these food items to appear funky.

#### **4.7 Use of personification to glorify evil**

Personification is a linguistic device used in literature for presenting inanimate objects as humans. Advertisers also use this device frequently to attract consumers and menu writers are no exception. The names assigned to some dishes and beverages on the menu of some cafes and restaurants are so different from the items they represent that unless one reads the description of the items one cannot be sure of what they actually are. For example the menu of *Hoagies* offers a steak with the name *Hooligan*. Similarly at *Gelato Affair* a dessert is assigned the name *Dare Devil*. It is quite striking that the items that are personified are assigned terms that belong to the semantic field of crime. Take example of a fast food restaurant *Burger Cage*, where the burgers are assigned names like, *The Gangster*, *The Ripper*, and *Serial Killer*. None of these names can be said to show any direct or indirect connection with food. Using such names for food items imply glorification of crime and criminals.

#### **4.8 Glorification of deviant lifestyle**

It cannot be denied that words have the power to influence people's thoughts. The effective use of words can transform people's perception of certain concepts and things around. Any idea or thing once considered unacceptable and loathsome can become acceptable as well as admirable through manipulation of words and the frequent exposure to those concepts or things they refer to. A few examples of the expressions used for naming certain food items in elite cafes and restaurants can be considered to prove the point. At *Burger Cage*, for instance, a mocktail is given the title *Thug Life*. Similarly, at *Gelato Affair*, a dessert is named *Black Magic*. At another elite restaurant, *Bella Vita*, desserts are given names that occupy negative semantic field. Examples include: *Chocolate Obsession* and *Chocolate Sin*. Neither the word 'obsession' nor 'sin' can be used in a positive sense. Both the terms are highly negative and imply destruction. Despite the negative connotations these words carry, they are used for naming food in elite cafes and restaurants. Employment of such expressions is the latest

trend these days; it is not just a marketing stunt but is a means of changing people's perception of right and wrong by glorifying deviant life style. The glorification of such a life style is achieved through the use of negative expressions.

#### **4.9 Use of the names of foreign fictional and fairy tale characters**

In order to draw attention of children and teenagers, the menu writers of some restaurants and cafes have assigned names of fictional characters to certain food items and beverages. Children order such food items not necessarily because of the taste but because they love those characters whose names are assigned to those items. At *Cafe Zouk*, for instance, a mocktail with the name *Cinderella*, which is a famous fairy tale character, is available. This mocktail is likely to be ordered by girls who fanaticize Cinderella. Another example is found on the menu of *Salt Cave*, where a mocktail with the name of another fairy tale character, *Snow White* is served. Similarly, at *Hoagies*, a fast food chain with three outlets in Karachi, a fried chicken dish is served which is named *Hobbit*, a famous fictional character from J.R. Tolkien's novel *The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings*, while at *Broadway Pizza* one of the flavours of pizza is named *Tarzan Tikka*. Tarzan is yet another fictional character that children, especially male children love.

It is surprising to note that none of the dishes in these cafes and restaurants is named after any local fictional character. Only foreign fictional characters are glorified.

#### **4.10 Use of geographic labels focusing on non-native identity**

As mentioned earlier, the names given to a majority of the dishes and beverages on the menu of the cafes and restaurants analyzed for this study reflect preference for foreign over local cuisine which is manifested through the names assigned to the dishes and beverages. There are quite a few items that carry the names of geographically remote foreign lands making those items sound exotic.

Since everything that sounds foreign is considered prestigious and unique in our society, the menus of elite cafes and restaurants are dominated by the names of foreign rather than local areas. Instead of finding *Lahori charGha*, *Sindhi Biryani*, *Multani halva*,

*Peshaavri qehva*, or *Kashmiri chaae* at such places, one is likely to find *Cantonese Chicken*, *Swiss Chicken*, *Montreal Steak*, *Thai Soup*, *Jamaican Tea* and the like. It is easier to find *Lebanese Snapper* or *Norwegian Salmon* at **Arbor Cafe**, *Mongolian Fish* at **Jade Garden**, *Malaysian Butter Prawns* or *Arabic Mezze Platter* at **The Patio**, *Mexican Burger* or *All American Cheese Burger* at **Casa Villa**, *Italian Omelette* or *California Chicken sandwich* at **Gun Smoke**, *Italian Chicken* at **Tavern Grill**, *Belgian Waffle* at **Bella Vita**, *Seattle Roll* at **Yaki** or *Shanghai Spring Roll* at **Chop Soy**--- restaurants located in the posh areas of Karachi--- but it is unlikely to find any local dish in such cafes and restaurants. It would not be wrong to state that the local dishes and names are avoided as they are considered to lack prestige. Names like *French Connection* and *Caribbean Crush* assigned to the mocktails at **Roasters** and **Cafe Zero Degree** in Karachi further strengthen the point. Similarly desserts like *Mississippi Mud* served at **Gelato Affair** or *American Brownie* at **Salt Cave** are indicative of the same trend. At **Pantry**, an elite restaurant located in Defence which is one of the posh areas in Karachi, there is a long list of food items with foreign association, like *Greek Omelette*, *Mediterranean Chicken*, *Norwegian Crepe*, *French Crepe*, *California Burger*, *English Muffin*, *New York Cheese Cake*, etc. Same holds true for **Maxims**, a restaurant in Clifton, where one can easily find *Mexican*, *Vienna*, *Swedish*, or *Portuguese Steak*, but what is not found is the Pakistani variety of steak.

In some cafes and restaurants, the entire breakfast range that is served is especially associated with foreign identity. For instance, at **Rowtisserie**, the breakfast that is served is named *The Full English*; at **Butlers Chocolate Cafe** it is *Irish Breakfast*, while at **Bella Vita**, the breakfast one finds on the menu is named *American Breakfast*. Somewhat similar trend is observed in case of naming salads. For instance, the salad served at **Salt Cave** is named *Chicken Hawaiian Salad*, the one at **Butlers Chocolate Cafe** is named *Mediterranean Salad*, while at **Pantry**, salads with the names *Greek Salad* and *Thai Salad* are served. The dominance of the names of too many foreign places on the menu may be suggestive of either the menu writers' or the targeted customers' fascination with foreign and exotic places.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

As observed through a careful study of the food items on the menus, it is obvious that the local Pakistani cuisine is found missing on the menu of the cafes and restaurants included in the study. Among the dishes and beverages offered in these cafes and restaurants, there is hardly any local item. Moreover, the linguistic analysis of the names of dishes and beverages served in the elite cafes and restaurants selected for the study indicate dominance of culturally alien terms. Foreign terms and foreign cuisine dominate all 56 menus analyzed.

The absence of Pakistani cuisine on the menu of such cafes and restaurants is highly symbolic and is indicative of cultural imperialism. One justification for the dominance of foreign cuisine could be that people from the elite class, especially the younger lot, consider it below their dignity to order local food. A closer observation of the food choices among the young generation is enough to show that they prefer to have burger over *bunkebab*, pizza over *paraaTha*, Singaporean or Chinese rice over *pulao* or *biryani*, pasta or lasagna over *chapli* or *seekh kebab*, cake or pudding over *kheer* or *halva*, and the list goes on.

However, the preference for foreign cuisine over local Pakistani cuisine on the part of the young generation is the result of the way foreign cuisine is promoted in the cafés and restaurants where food is presented as a symbol of one's socio-economic class. The association of foreign cuisine with high class has led to the association of local cuisine with middle or lower-middle class as a result of which local food and their names have begun to be stigmatized. Invasion of foreign cuisine in the cafes and restaurants in Pakistan, particularly in Karachi, has not only resulted in the replacement of local dishes with foreign cuisine but has also led to the replacement of traditional food terminology with weird and culturally alien terms. There is no harm in introducing diverse cuisine to expose the locals to foreign dishes and promote multiculturalism but weird names need to be modified keeping in mind the local culture. There is nothing wrong with retaining the Italian word 'pizza' but '*Green Devil*' or '*Dare Devil*' can easily be replaced by names that appeal to the taste buds of the Pakistanis in general.

The results of this study can draw attention of the international restaurant and cafe industry working in Pakistan to rewrite their menus by replacing weird and culturally alien names with those that represent the local Pakistani culture. It also draws their attention towards making a room for Pakistani cuisine on their menu, as most of these elite restaurants serve Italian, Mexican, American, Arabic, Moroccan, Chinese and Japanese dishes but one hardly finds any Pakistani dish on their menu. The absence of Pakistani cuisine on the menu of such cafes and restaurants is symbolic and calls for serious attention as one way to promote one's native culture is through promoting the local cuisine along with the local names.

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