

Mother Tongue or the Other Tongue? The Case of Dhatki-Speaking Urban Youth

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Abstract

Languages are the main pillars of the society. Within the Sindh province, many indigenous languages are spoken, however within the urban domain i.e. Karachi, the majority languages (English and Urdu) are institutionalized and less exposure is given to the minority languages. With the advent of foreign language (Chinese) in the educational sector, maintaining the mother tongue is really a challenging task. As a result, the native mother tongue speakers are learning and acquiring the dominant languages to fit in the society and serve various purposes. The present study explores the language choice patterns, reasons of language choice and status of language shift and maintenance from the mother tongue to the other tongue in various domains. So far the studies have been conducted in urban domain on minority language groups belonging to the northern areas of Pakistan and mainly after a shift have been noted by the community leaders. The case of Dhatki language is unique, as the language has not been studied before and therefore a qualitative case study have been conducted to know about the language phenomena of the native speakers residing in the urban domain, as they are the actual stakeholders. The research site selected for this study was one of the Public Sector Universities of Karachi and the target population is native Dhatki language speakers. The initial data for the study was gathered using sociolinguistic profile from 30 undergraduate Dhatki-speaking urban youth using purposive sampling; finding the native speakers was not a problem as many of them are enrolled in the university. However for comprehensive data, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted from 06 participants using purposive and snowball sampling, to gather accurate results, the data was transcribed for thematic analysis. The present study provides an insight of such a situation where indigenous speakers are exposed to multiple languages in different domains and are acquiring majority language for academic and social needs, while adopting minority language at the same time due to close affiliation and frequent language contact. Hence the speakers are losing the essence in their native mother tongue. The findings provide an interesting data for language policy makers and mother tongue speakers who can shape future action about mother tongue using this comprehensive data. However, a large scale study can be conducted to know more about the Dhatki language for language documentation.

Key terms: domain, mother tongue, language maintenance, language shift

1. Introduction

Indigenous languages form the core elements within a society as these languages add more diversity in the nation's cultural outlook. South Asian states are the true representative of such a philosophy where in each corner; there is a distinct culture which is represented by its linguistic diversity. Pakistan appears to be a true representative of this ideology, as 74 languages are spoken in this land (Siddiqui, 2019). Urdu is its national language while English is the co-official language. However, this multilingualism feature has several drawbacks within each province in Pakistan; despite the fact that each province enjoys linguistic plurality; preference is given to majority language. The scenario within the urban domains in each province was more conflicting; as indigenous language speakers migrate to the urban areas for better economic and social facilities; hence they also acquired the dominant language within the urban centers for various purposes (Abbasi and Zaki, 2019; Ivengar 2013). Such a scenario possesses great threat to the indigenous languages within Pakistan as Siddiqui (2019) observed that many languages were at the language loss stage. Hence, the younger generation has an influential role in this

scenario; but the youth was shifting towards the dominant language due to various needs (Wadho, 2018).

Karachi is one of the biggest metropolitan cities of Pakistan where different communities reside. These communities speak different languages like Memoni, Gujarati, Sindhi, Marwari, Kutchi, Balochi, Pashto, Punjabi, Saraki, Brushaski, Balti and Shina. Table 1 shows the linguistic data of the province of Sindh according to the Census 2017 data where only six major languages are shown while Kashmiri, Brahvi and Hindko are not included.

S. No	Language	Population	Percentage
1.	Sindhi	2,94,87,297	61.60
2.	Urdu	87,12,215	18.20
3.	Pashto	26,13,664	5.46
4.	Punabi	25,42,860	5.32
5.	Balochi	9,57,386	2
6.	Saraiki	10,67,485	2.31
7.	Other	24,89,204	5.2
	Total	4,87,69,314	100

Source: *Daily Pahnjakhbar 2019*

Hence, within Pakistan there is no accurate data for the indigenous languages other than the regional languages included in the linguistic survey in Census 2017. Therefore, over the years researchers have started exploring the indigenous languages and communities within Karachi in particular. In this regard, Ali (2017) conducted an ethnographic study on the Memon community to explore the language shift and maintenance phenomena among *Memoni* language and a similar study was conducted by Ali (2015) on the four indigenous communities from northern areas but migrated to the urban center Karachi. Also, researchers have started exploring the majority languages within the urban setting as well, David, Ali and Baloch (2017) explored Sindhi language across the province of Sindh but, the languages with few number of speakers are yet to be explored; as the exact status of the language is not known. The present study explores the Dhatki-speaking community residing in Karachi originally from the desert area of Tharparkar and Umerkot in Sindh; the community has not been explored before and is considered as a dialect of Sindhi language (Joyo, 2009; Phuloo, 2017). However, Dhatki is a separate language and is not a dialect or variety of Sindhi language. (Rahman, 2002)

Dhatki is a South-Asian language belonging to Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family. It is spoken in Barmer districts of Rajasthan, western parts of Jasilamer (India) and eastern part of Sindh (Pakistan). Within the regions of Sindh, it is mostly spoken in Sanghar, Umarkot and Tharparker region with 65% percent Hindu, 30% Muslims and 5% of desert religion speakers. (Phuloo, 2017). Therefore, Dhatki is a diverse language of the Sindh province that is spoken by people of different religions. The exact population is not known about the Dhatki speakers in Sindh; as the Census-2017 included it in the 'other languages' category.

Dhatki language has implosive consonants and its phonological system is quite much similar to the other Indo-Aryan languages (Phullo 2017). However, the language does not have any written script and it only exists in the speaking and oral folks. Dhatki language is quite different from Sindhi language and its dialects but as no extensive literature is available therefore research scholars considered it as a variety of Sindhi language (Rahman, 2002). The present study explores the preference and perceptions of Dhatki-speaking urban youth in the context of Karachi; where these language speakers are enrolled in various Public-Sector Universities for achieving higher education.

2. Rationale of the Study

Dhatki speakers living in the remote areas of Sindh mostly migrate to the urban setting like Hyderabad, Sukkur and Karachi for better economic life and to meet their educational needs. Usually, the young generation shift to the urban setting mainly for business and education purposes as within their areas; the basic facilities are not sufficient for a better life. When these Dhatki-speakers move to the urban settings; they have to acquire the majority language like Urdu and English in the academic institutes and these days foreign language Chinese as well in the institutes. Also, due to close affiliation with other regional languages, they acquire the minority languages as well like Sindhi, Marwari and Gujarati for interpersonal communication. Hence, Dhatki speakers acquire multiple languages in the urban settings. Consequently, the mother tongue faces great threat in the urban setting; where language change is quite common in each domain of language use. Wadhi (2018); Ali (2017) and (Ali 2015) believed that in the province of Sindh particularly in the urban domains of Karachi there are many indigenous languages spoken, and the sociolinguistic behavior of these indigenous languages has not been studied as mostly the focus is towards measuring perceptions and attitude towards English language. Therefore the present study fills the research gap identified and aims to explore the following objectives in this study:

- To explore the language preferences of Dhatki speakers in different domains of language use.
- To determine the reasons for using the Dhatki language or other languages among Dhatki speaking urban youth
- To investigate the current status of mother tongue among Dhatki speaking urban youth

3. Research Questions

- i. What are the language preferences of Dhatki speakers in different domains of language use?
- ii. What are the possible factors for using other languages among Dhatki speaking urban youth?
- iii. What is the status of mother tongue usage among Dhatki speaking urban youth?

4. Literature Review

Language shift is a phenomenon in which speakers belonging from one community having their own language adopt another language prevalent in the society due to various, political, social, economic and psychological reasons. Research in this area has mostly focused the micro and macro factors prevalent in the society. However, the present study approaches this concept in the light of Fishman word's (1991); who referred to it as 'the non-use of a language in the favor of another language'. Hence, the view that Fishman takes is broadly seen in the number of domains a language is used. As the number of domains of a language reduces from its common use; language change is taking place. A similar stance was taken by Umrani and Memon (2016) who defined this process in terms of language contact philosophy. Therefore, the present study also seeks to analyze the language use in different settings where Dhatki is used frequently.

There is enormous amount of literature available on the indigenous languages in different parts of the world. A number of studies has been conducted all over the world to identify the various factors and status of language; some argue that there are both local and global factors for change in language use (Fishman, 1991), while other argue that it is the change in the domains of language use along with the change in identity as a close affiliation with another social group (Fasold, 1984). In this connection many scholars have explored and studied the phenomena of language shift and maintenance and tried to trace why languages replace each other in different

domains in a language contact situation (Aitchson, 1991; Denison, 1997; Dorian, 1980; Gal 1979; Schmidt, 2002; Jagodic, 2011 & Kasatkina, 2011). The macro societal features were explored by most researchers. Fishman (1991) and Crystal (2000) denoted that there were physical, demographic, cultural and immigration as the prime causes of language shift. Similarly, Fasold (1984) contributed that the major reasons for shift were migration, industrialization, language of education, urbanization and prestige. In the same way Romaine (1994) claimed that the numerical strength, social class, religion, ties with family and language policy within a state were the prime causes of language shift.

Gal (1979) was the first sociolinguist to explore the phenomenon of language shift. The study traced the role of German language which was replaced by Hungarian. The findings showed that there were different factors responsible for shift like urbanization, social context, prestige and language used by women. Subsequently research models developed regarding measuring the use of language and researchers started investigating the role of majority languages. Similar findings were reported by David, Naji and Kaur where English and Malay were replacing Punjabi language due to low-socio-economic value the language carries with it. Consequently, Cheng (2003) and Zaid, Mee and Hei (2012) explored language use patterns among mixed communities and reported that mixed marriages and code-switching has enabled the speakers to completely switch the language in many settings. It concluded that language choice depends on the societal factors especially exogamous patterns within family than the individual factors. Comparatively, Kasatkina (2011) explored a different version by studying the psychological phenomenon and role of external factors which were effecting the Russian immigrants' language choice in society and at family level.

However research in the recent past has greatly shifted its attention to the languages spoken in the South Asian region. David (1999; 2000; 2001; 2003) is considered as the pioneer researcher in this area who has explored the indigenous languages by analyzing the different factors working in a society. As the Sindhi community resides in different parts of the world along with the other communities, the heritage language faces great challenges in the society. Also research within the urban domains for studying the language use patterns has begun too (Abbasi & Zaki, 2019; Ali 2015; Ali 2017; David et al 2017; Wadho 2018). A representation of the researches conducted on the indigenous language in various parts on the Sindhi diaspora has been shown in

Table 2.

Research Aim/Question	Research Design & Tools	Finding
David (1999) Is the Malay Sindhi community experiencing a language shift or not?	Mixed Method Questionnaire Interview Observation	Total shift towards English & Malay. Use of Sindhi shrink to private lives and even in that context, a mixture of Sindhi & English Sindhi is being replaced by an International language which is neither the national nor the majority language Language choice and functions varied across generations
David (2000) Sindhi being maintained or marginalized in favor of English in Singapore? Explore language choice in home, intercommunity	Mixed Method Questionnaire for language use in domains Observation Proficiency	Use of English in all domains. Factors: Mixed Marriages & Language choice of older generation is the heritage language while that of younger generation is English Mixed discourse appears to be the language

members & religious domain among family and Sindhi friends		of the community : Older using Sindhi with English Lexical Younger using English with nominal Sindhi lexical item Loss of writing skills
David (2001) Measuring language maintenance of a minority Sindhi speaking community in London Exploring the language choice of the speakers in different domains, range of functions it performs and internal & external factors for shift	Questionnaire (73 items) : Purpose choice of language in Home, business, religious domains ethnic friends language literacy Oral Interviews Language Attitude (self-report data) Language Proficiency (reporting joke in Sindhi) Participant Observation: Range of activities & Speech Events (Transcripts: natural conversations in domains)	Language choice in different domains is English. Resort to Sindhi for maintain privacy. Young generation moving away from their heritage language. Functional Use: Sindhi cuisine, kingship terms and pragmatic use. Mixed Discourse. Parents concern with proficiency in English Loss of language competence is the road mark to Language shift
David (2003)		There are combination of reasons working in tandem over time and working differently for different families, eventually cause a language shift. Elder promote English language as they believe it holds the transactional value.
David et.al (2017) Explored the extent to which the use of Sindhi language has been shifted or maintained by surveying the patterns of language use in domains of home, school, workplace, media, market & professionals	Questionnaire In-depth interviews from Professionals	Sindhi enjoy higher ethnolinguistic vitality than other groups and behold sentimental affiliation.

Figure 2 Research Conducted on Sindhi Diaspora (Dr. Maya 1999; 2000; 2001b; 2003; 2017)

The research conducted by Ali (2015) focused on the sociolinguistic behavior of Brushaki, Balti, Shina and Khowar languages that were away from their native environment using Perceived Benefit Model developed by Karan and Stadler (2001). The study using sociolinguistic profile and semi-structured interviews explored the language choice and factors responsible for it. It was reported that the speakers of the indigenous language used dominant language like Urdu in the home domain. The study reported several reasons for shift in the language frequently conveyed by the participants was the distance from the hometown and individual choices to fit in the society were the major constraints in the maintenance of their native language and the language has been merely reduced to a identity marker for the community. The economic factor was also one of the major factors for language shift among the four languages explored.

The present study draws its foundation from the study conducted by Ali (2015) and explores the sociolinguistic behavior of another indigenous community in the urban settings who have migrated from their home town. However, the study is innovative as it explores a community which has not been explored by researchers, as it has few numbers of speakers. Also, it has been associated with the Sindhi language, which is the majority language in the Sindh province and minority language in the urban centers and Karachi more prominently. Therefore, the present study is distinct as it explores the language use, reasons for language use and status of an unexplored Dhatki community.

5. Theoretical consideration

The theoretical model selected for the study is the Perceived Benefit Model of Language shift and Stability developed by Karan and Stadler (2000). The model studies the role motivation plays in the decision of making a language choice in each domain. It is asserted that people's choices are derived from some internal motive and benefit and the basic pillars of this motive are derived from the societal needs, economic and political stability in the society; hence speakers are encouraged to use the language in different domains; according to the purpose it serves in each situation for them. Therefore, the individual's role in the speech community became highly effective. Hence, this model focuses on the individual who selects from their linguistic repertoire the language variety that best serves his interest in particular speech environment or domain. For the present study the model is adopted for studying the language usage patterns and the different factors responsible for it, to know about the status of the Dhatki language among the urban youth.

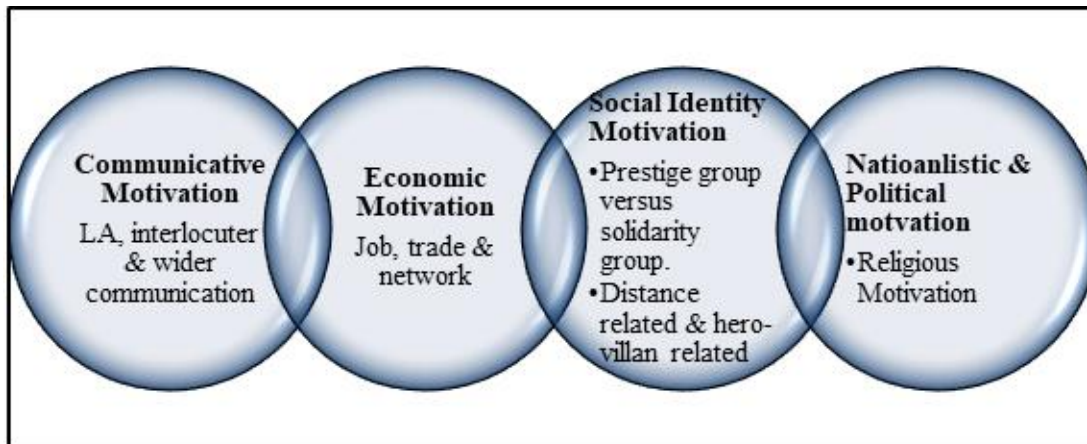


Figure 2 Language Choice Decisions (Perceived Benefit Model, 2000)

6. Methodology

This section briefs about the participants and context of the present study with the addition of details about research tools used to collect data for the study.

6.1.Context and research methodology

Dhatki-speakers after completing their secondary education usually migrate to the cities; where they get enrolled in different public and private sector universities. For the present study, the research site includes a Public Sector University of Karachi where the Dhatki-speakers are enrolled in different departments. Since the Dhatki-speakers are not in great majority in the university and they only get enrolled after securing admission through reserve seats for Mirpur Khas Board and Dinshaw quota. Therefore, the present study was qualitative case study; as it has provided a comprehensive data. As, the speakers are in minority in the university, therefore maximum number of students available were targeted to be part of the study. Hence, multiple

case studies have been conducted; as it provides a detailed and reliable data from the participants about their behavior and attitude. Case studies are known to be significant in providing detailed information relative to target unit of analysis (Creswell, 2015). Henceforth, case study is selected as the most appropriate research method since it provides the real world perspective from an individualistic view.

6.2. Participants and Sampling

In case study the researcher is responsible for the selection of unit of analysis. The educational researcher's unit of analysis can comprise a learner, a classroom of learners or an entire learning institution, depending upon the research questions and objectives (Creswell, 2015). In case study research mostly purposive sample is used because the researcher wants to understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned.

Since the target population of the present study is Dhatki-speakers enrolled in different departments in the Public Sector University. Therefore, the data was collected using purposive sampling technique followed by snowball sampling from Dhatki-speakers who are living in the urban setting and have migrated from their hometown for a considerable period of two to three years; it was not difficult to find the speakers; as many of them are enrolled and appointed in the university. However, this study only focuses on the young generation enrolled in different programs. Initially data was collected from thirty participants who filled the sociolinguistic profile; based on the answers and consent of the participants in-depth interview were conducted from eight participants.

6.3. Research tools

Sociolinguistic profile form (adapted from Ali, 2015 & Abbasi & Zaki 2019) and semi-structured interviews were the research tools used for the present study. Data was collected in two phases. During the first phase, sociolinguistic profile was used in order to collect initial information from thirty participants. The profile comprised basic demographic and other relevant information about their language use in each setting and language proficiency through self-rated mechanism. In the second phase of data collection, semi-structured interviews were conducted from eight participants selected after analysis of the profile, to provide comprehensive data on the language choice made by the participants in different domains and the factors responsible for its use. The interviews were audio-recorded with consent of the participants. The participants were given the freedom to respond in any language they are comfortable. Later, the interviews were fully transcribed for thematic analysis.

7. Data Analysis

The sociolinguistic profile was analyzed using descriptive statistics. It provided the initial stimuli to conduct the in-depth study through semi-structured interview. Interview is considered as an essential tool to collect data in in depth case studies. Therefore, the major data for the present study is extracted from semi-structured interviews which lasted for fifty minutes with each participant. The data collected through the interviews was recorded; coded and thematic analysis was done to discover different factors responsible for using the mother tongue or the other tongue. Confidentiality of the participants was maintained, as pseudonyms were given to each participant.

The data collected after descriptive analysis using sociolinguistic profile provides information about the preference of participants in home and other domains. It shows that about 50% of the participants use their mother tongue in the home domain; while 45% of the participants use Sindhi language in the home domain. It reflects that a great number of the population is not even using their mother tongue in their homes; which according to Fishman (1991) is considered as

the most important domain in the language use. It was interesting to note that 4% of the population is using Urdu in their homes and ironically 1% is using English at their home. Hence, this data reflects that the language used in the home domains about the Dhatki-speaking urban youth is changing. A summary of the data collected from the participants is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

<i>Percentage of Language use in Home setting</i>	
Setting	Dhatki/Sindhi/Urdu/English
Use of Dhatki in home setting	50%
Use of Sindhi in home setting	45%
Use of Urdu in home setting	4%
Use of English in home setting	1%

N= Percentage is determined by total no. of Participants

The participants were also asked to report their proficiency in the language through self-reported proficiency as it is considered more appropriate; also because it was not the major research question. The participants reported about their proficiency in Dhatki, Sindhi, Urdu and English language. It was found out that only 1% percent of the participants are highly proficient and rated excellent proficiency in their mother tongue and 49% rated as Good. However, about 10% of the participants reported excellent proficiency in Sindhi and 40% reported very good proficiency in Urdu. It is interesting to know that more than 2% reported to have excellent proficiency in English language. The data provided an interesting data about the proficiency of the participants that can further be explored altogether in a different research using the same data.

Table 3

<i>Self-reported Proficiency in Language</i>					
Language	Poor	Average	Good	V. Good	Excellent
Dhatki		10%	50%	39%	1%
Sindhi			30%	60%	10%
Urdu		30%	30%	40%	
English	1%	40%	40%	17%	2%

While reporting for the domains of language use, the Dhatki speakers reported that they use their mother tongue Dhatki mostly in home domain with parents; while some reported that they also use in the neighborhood, canteen and hostel. However, Sindhi language was predominant in all the situations. And the national language Urdu is used with friends, classroom, media, canteen and lab. It has been observed that Dhatki language has been reduced to home domain only and has been replaced by Sindhi and Urdu in all the other domains. Most importantly; Sindhi has become a language used in all the settings with great frequency. Hence, the participants are using Urdu, English, Chinese and Sindhi in the academia, workplace, friends, market and canteen.

The descriptive analysis was used as an initial stimulus for the study; in order to know about the domains of language use, proficiency and demographic data. However, the major data is extracted from in-depth interviews using thematic analysis.

7.1. Stereotypes

One of the common factors that most the participants informed that the speakers of other tongue who are in greater majority tend to make fun of their language. They are being named as *maro* ~, *saie*~ or *dhati* (DMT07) because most of the community members belong to rural setting and other tongue speakers believe that they are uneducated and low-class people as DMT22 says *humein kehte ha kya kro ge parh kr, tmhara koi future nahe ha* and DTM16 says ‘*they think we belong to loewer-midle class so we donot have any rights*’. DTM02 narrated that because of their

skin-color, they are harassed and often neglected as part of the society when they communicate in their mother tongue as DTM22 said '*bus ahewe asan khe pasand na kenda ahen*'. Hence, they gradually acquire new languages to fit in the society.

7.2. Academic need

The participants narrated that the urban lifestyle demands more from minority speakers and in order to fit in the society they have to adopt society's norms and most importantly its language to be recognized as the member of the larger academic community. As DTM22 says '*we are unconsciously forced to use Urdu and English and there is little opportunity to use Dhatki*'. The respondents in response to the question of why do they acquire the dominant language, responded that 'learning Urdu and English because these languages hold institutional prestige' (. DTM22, DTM07 and DTM02). Respondents believes if they speak Dhatki in academic institutes then they would not speak Urdu or English fluently. And it will affect their proficiency as well as their coming generation would be effected as well, as DTM07 says that '*hamare bachon ko bhe hum Urdu seekhei~ ge*'

7.3. Prestige

The research participant's major emphasis was laid on the fact that Sindhi is the language of prestige and power, DTM22 and DTM02 said that '*Sindhi ek institutional bole ha aur yahan Sindhi buhat ha jo humein hamare ghar walon ke yaad dilate ha; esleye hum Sindhi seekhte aur bolte ha*'. Therefore, they have acquire Sindhi language as it is the most populist language in the province of Sindh and also because of the fact that the provincial government is of Sindhi elite class. As one of the respondent said, "*We speak Sindhi language to be in the majority and to gain access to people.*" (DTM07). As DTM 01 said '*being a Sindhi speaker is more favorable than a Dhatki speaker*'.

7.4. Sense of association

The participants believe Sindhi is close to Dhatki language so it makes the intercultural communication easy with Sindhi friends and community members. However, the other reported that Dhatki is a more complex language than Sindhi and the Sindhi speakers are not able to understand their language so we speak Sindhi language. Hence, they adopt another language for removing the language barrier. However, ultimately they are affecting their mother tongue; as the numbers of domains are reduced.

7.5. Social acceptance

Dhatki speakers believe they do not have acceptance in the society as they associate themselves as Sindhi's because the society and professionals are unaware of Dhatki language. It may be due to the fact that Dhatki language has no written script and mostly Sindhi script is followed. Only upon recognition from the person, mostly Sindhi speaker they disclose their identity and that is when they feel it is safe to disclose it and they won't be judged on it. There is an unusual fear in their mind. It is mostly due to their professional field. As most of the speakers in the research site are clerks and also due to religious factor as well.

7.6. Economic Factor

According to the respondents majority of the community members are migrating from native land to metropolitan cities like Karachi in search of job opportunities. However, most of them are running their own business as well. DTM22 said that '*yahan hamara apna karobar ha and kuch Dhatki speakers Karachi mein karobar he krne aate ha*'. And in the competent market area, they mostly communicate in Urdu and in some cases Sindhi. Dhatki is rarely being used in the market place or workplace.

7.7. Perceptions about language learning

One of the most interesting finding is the inclination of Dhatki speakers towards learning Chinese language; '*we want to learn Chinese, as it is a language of opportunity and interest for future*' (DTM22, DTM02, DTM07). On the other hand they show no interest towards learning or even improving their mother tongue and English language.

7.8. Language Contact with their Community

Most of the respondents are living as bachelors or in small speech communities away from their home town. Majority of them are habitual of living in urbanized areas. Consequently, they avoid travelling back to their hometowns due to underdevelopment in their respective areas. It was also noted that they don't listen to their local folk songs as well.

7.9. Self-Identity

Most of them do not associate themselves with their identity. As they prefer to be recognized as 'Sindhi Speakers.' Even the Professionals identify themselves as Sindhi Speakers. They do not even wished to disclose their mother tongue in professional forms and their resume. As being associated with Sindhi language offers more perks than being a Dhatki. Hence, the Dhatki speakers are losing their self-identity and they have adopted an economic-oriented identity.

7.10 Intergenerational transmission

Few of the speakers considered their native language as a hindrance in learning English and Urdu language which is the institutional language at all levels. Therefore a lot of a participants reported that they will make their children learn English and Urdu; as one of the participants said 'English is everywhere' and from early education till university level; everything is tested and acquire in English and there seems to be no benefit of having a different mother tongue. Even providing the mother tongue education to their future children seems baseless; as it does not have the institutional or even community acceptance in the urban center.

8. Discussion

The role of language use in different settings has been studied in different setting by scholars to know the status of a language (David, 1999; David, 2000; David 2001; David et al 2017). The findings of the study reported that use of Dhatki in the home domain has been reduced to 50% only as shown in Table 2, while Sindhi, Urdu and English are replacing the mother tongue in the home domain. This similar shift in the home domain was noted by Ali (2015) and Ali (2017) where Urdu language is replacing the four indigenous language of the northern areas and Memoni language in home setting in the urban areas. Wadho (2018) also noted a shift in the attitudes of native speakers and most of the speakers are inclined towards Urdu and English while they have negative attitude for their own mother tongue.

Similarly, the results indicates that the participants have less proficiency in Dhatki language and are more proficient in Sindhi, Urdu and English as shown in Table 3. As, Sindhi is the predominant language while Urdu being preferred in educational settings while Dhatki has been restrained and reduce to home that too among few speakers. The same trend was observed by David (2000) where the language was confined to home only. However, a comparatively different version was put forward by David et al (2017) where 89% are using their mother tongue in the home setting.

Simultaneously, the results show that there are economic, societal, language power and prestige and communicative motivations for language use in a particular setting as mentioned in the theoretical framework by Karan and Stadler (2000). The same factors were reported by Ali (2015) and Abbasi and Zaki (2019) where the societal pressures and economic needs were motivating the native speakers to adopt the dominant language. Hence, in the urban domains

speakers of minority language especially the youth is more inclined towards learning and acquiring new language than their mother tongue (David 2000; 2001; 2003; Ali 2017; Ivengar 2013).

9. Conclusion

The analysis of the data shows that Dhatki speakers are using and speaking Sindhi, Urdu and English languages in different settings; according to the variety of benefit it serves. Most of the speakers associated themselves with Sindhi language due to political and social pressure and economic benefit it provides in the different domains. Their responses revealed that they have negative attitude towards their language and most often they do not identify themselves as Dhatki speakers.

As the Dhatki speakers residing in urban centers have to shift the language in each domain. Ultimately they are acquiring new languages that are dominant in the society, academia and workplace. It is reported that most of the young generation who are residing in different areas of the urban centers have adopted Sindhi and Urdu language, hence a language shift might be taking place but it was reported that some of the participants maintain the language as well; whenever the situations were feasible. However, the exact status of Dhatki-language cannot be accurately defined without any preventive measure to know the actual number of speakers in urban domains and the total population of these speakers as well. Also, language has its deep roots in its literature; therefore the unavailability of it is also a barrier to know the exact status of the language.

It has been analyzed that there are several individual, social, economic & cultural factors responsible for adopting the other tongue. Also the research draws attention of the mother tongue speakers to take immediate measures to transform and maintain their language in urban environment. Therefore, steps should be taken by speakers and researchers to promote and preserve their historical language.

10. Limitations of the study

The study is limited in its context as takes input from few case studies, therefore it cannot be generalized on the whole population as it has analyzed the view of Dhatki-speakers residing in the urban settings only.

11. Recommendations

The study raises the issue of language policy for indigenous minority speakers and steps should be taken for teaching the mother tongue in rural and urban centers of Sindh. Also communities and government should take some measures for Language documentation, cultural promotion and sessions on the indigenous minority languages in future. A further longitudinal study can be conducted to know about the language use, attitudes and the total number of language speakers in Sindh.

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