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The implications of trends in Punjabi: As a covert and/or an overt Prestige in Pakistan

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Abstract

The present study focuses on the status of the Punjabi language in Pakistan using the conceptual framework of Labov (2006). The researchers intended to find out if Punjabi is used covertly or overtly among its speakers in different contexts. The population comprised 100 participants from 10 randomly selected cities of Punjab, Pakistan. The people, belonged to different professions, were observed for a month and later their opinions were obtained through a well-constructed questionnaire. The findings revealed that Punjabi language is being used covertly amongst Punjabi speakers in Punjab, Pakistan. People are hesitant to use Punjabi in formal settings, whereas they prefer to use Urdu and English in formal situations. The outcomes also explained that under such circumstances where the language is losing its impact on its speakers, rather losing its speakers the language can lose its identity and can become obsolete as time passes.

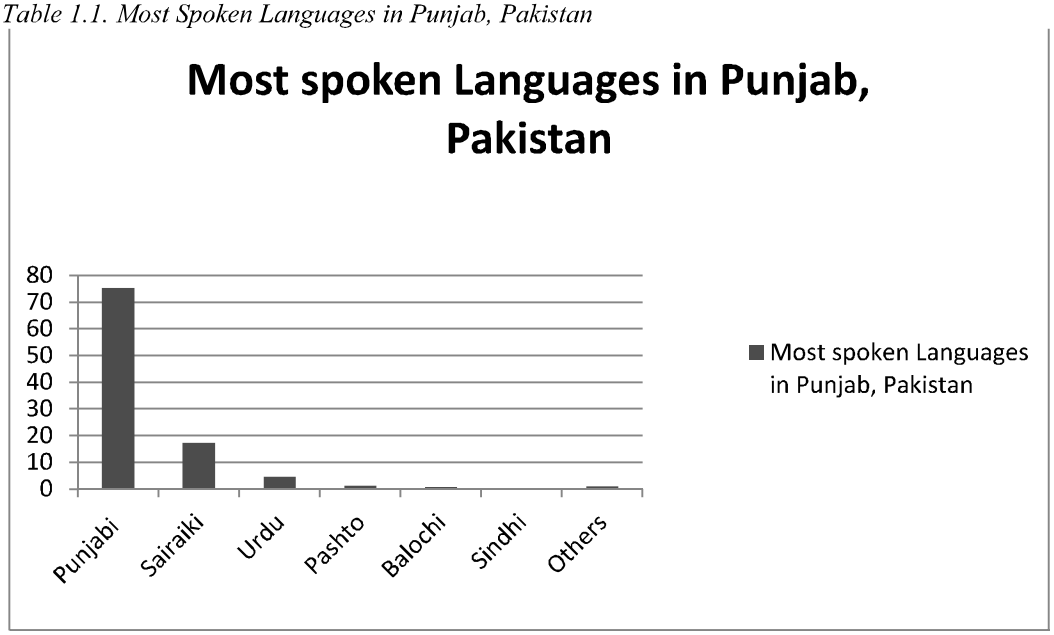
Keywords: Language status, Punjabi, Covert and Overt Prestige, Pakistani context

1. Introduction

Punjabi language has two different and important divisions named as Shahmukhi and Gurmukhi (Bauer, 2007). Both types are important components of Punjabi. This language belongs to Indian and Aryan background which is spoken by more than 100 million people all around the world (Kachru, Kachru& Sridhar, 2008). According to Nationalencyklopedin (2010), Punjabi language is in the 11th position when it comes to the number of speakers around the globe. Punjabi language is used mostly by the people of India and Pakistan. The Indian Punjab and Pakistani Punjab were united before independence in 1947 but after independence it was divided. However, the Punjabi language, culture, norms, values and rituals still prevail amongst both the provinces of Punjab. The only difference between them is the religion.

If we look at Pakistani Punjab, we can see that Punjabi language dominates. Here according to the census held in the year 1998 the most influential and widely spoken language all over Punjab is the Punjabi language

Table 1.1. Most Spoken Languages in Punjab, Pakistan



Source: Census Table 1998

Having viewed these statistics, the researchers are keen to investigate about the status of Punjabi language in Pakistani Punjab. The central point of the current research is to understand and relate if these figures and statistics really relate to the level of prestige or one can say that Punjabi is a widely spoken language with low prestige in domestic and unofficial settings. To address this issue, following objectives have been framed:

1.1. Objectives

a) To explore covert prestige as well as the overt prestige of Punjabi.
b) To investigate whether Punjabi language is heading towards extinction.
c) To identify the perceptions of the people towards status of the Punjabi.

2. Review of Previous Studies

2.1. Language Prestige and Attitudes

Language prestige as mentioned in the introduction refers to the value people give to any particular language. Language prestige determines if any language is a variety of a language or it is being considered as a dialect. The pivotal aspect in the realm of language is the value people give to it which in sociolinguistics is called prestige. Prestige deals with the assigned social values of language which may be negative or positive and later they are also applicable on the speaker. It has been observed that the nonstandard types of dialects are potently taken as low prestige. Though there are some dialects, which are disgraced by the educated system of people, are enjoyed by the working class (Leith, 1997). These types of circumstances reflect that the speaker intends to gain attention and recognition, solidarity with a particular and non-esteemed bunch of persons, else it can be possible that the speaker wants to show his identification and belonging to

the specific group (Chambers&Trudgill, 1998).Colman (2009) says that the term prestige can be described as acrolect and basilect, acrolect is the high standard variety and basilect is the low standard variety having low prestige. Both types of prestige relate to the attitude people have towards language. Crystal (1997, p. 215) states that language attitudes refer to "[t] he feelings people have about their own language or the languages of others." Bradac (1990) says that the people do have the attitudes to the languages which can be specifically prominent, in the initial phase of communications.

Appel and Muysken (2005) contend that languages are primarily objective in nature and they are a natural and balanced type of social tool for spreading the meaning, but it is a fact that they are connected to the personalities and identities of some social bunch of people which has a strong consequential and evaluative effect on the use of language. Fasold (1990) explains that the attitudes can be monitored by viewing the replies people make under some particular social circumstances. Ryan and Giles (1982) state that language, attitude can be an influential behavioral and cognitive directory which can monitor the reactions of people towards varieties of different languages. Davies (1995, p. 23) maintains that "attitudes are generally assumed to contribute towards an explanation of patterns of linguistic variation."

2.1.1 Covert Prestige

Labov (2006) initiated this idea of covert prestige and he carried out a study which shows the nonstandard variety that speakers perceive their dialect as low and inferior. In his study, conducted in 1998 amongst the community men of college in the USA, he found that the college community men are using "-in" as substitute of "-ing,". Labov concluded that using "-in" is a way to explain what they observe as the working-class trait. Hence this creates a particular identification mark for them. Similarly, Trudgill (1972) while exploring the patterns of speech in the British English found out that the women of the working class are speaking more standard dialect of English as compared to men.

2.1.1 Overt Prestige

Preston (1996) says that the overt prestige types are those types which are rated highly in the society, usually this type of form is considered as a perfect and correct. Logically speaking, the overt type of varieties does not display components, which reflect any superiority effectiveness, but they are the types of varieties of language which belong to high-status and class.

Talking about USA where the people speak different languages believe that the most high class and valuable dialect of the language is a single and standard dialect of the English which is spoken by the people belonging to higher class (Warburger, 2006).

2.2 Punjabi in Pakistan

After independence Punjabi was an important language as a lot of people migrated from India to Pakistan having Punjabi as their mother tongue. As Urdu became the national language so Punjabi could not get the status of an official language of the country, however, it was and is the most spoken language in the country.

The key statistics mentioned in a census 1998 about Punjabi in Pakistan is as under

a) Punjabi is the most widely spoken language in Pakistan.
b) Punjabi is the provincial language in the Punjab Province of Pakistan.

c) Punjabi is spoken as a native language by over 44.15% of Pakistanis.
d) About 70.0% of the people of Pakistan speak Punjabi as either their first or second language, and for some as their third language.
e) Lahore, the capital of the Punjab Province of Pakistan, is the largest Punjabi-speaking city in the world.
f) 86% of the total population of Lahore are native Punjabi
g) Faisalabad where 98.2% are native
h) Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, has 72% native Punjabis
i) In KP 21% people speak Punjabi
j) In Sindh the percentage is 10
k) Whereas overall Punjab is 92.6%
l) In Baluchistan it is 2.52%

Despite having popularity and having huge recognition amongst masses, especially in Punjab, Punjabi has never been the language use in schools, colleges, universities, offices, hospitals, business centers, restaurants, shopping malls and other important places. Even officially Punjabi is not considered to be used outside the home overtly by the people living in Pakistan. Despite so much richness of the Punjabi language, its use is getting limited day by day.

This is an alarming situation; more alarming are the figures of census below

Table 2.1. Census (1972-1998)

Year of Census	Pakistan's Population	No of Punjabi Speakers	Percentage%
1) 1972	65309340	43176004	56.11
2) 1981	84253644	40584980	48.11
3) 1998	132352279	58433431	44,15

The above figures show that gradually the number of Punjabi speakers is decreasing in Pakistan which can gradually lead to language death. Dressler (1988) says that a language dies because of the uncertain and imbalanced speech communities which are either multilingual or bilingual. In these circumstances there is a huge shift from the weaker language to the most influential and stronger one.

According to Campbell and Muntzel (1989), there are four major stages of death of any language.

a) **Sudden language death:** Sudden language death occurs when a language abruptly disappears because its speakers die or are killed.
b) **Radical language death:** It is a process which is identical to the sudden death of language, but the distinctive point is that it's more of a language shift rather than complete wipe out of language speakers.
c) **Gradual language death:** It is the common, yet important type of the death of any language in which a language slowly loses its speakers and in the end there is no native speaker of that language. Sasse (1992) says that "the gradual shift to the dominant language in a contact situation"
d) **Bottom-to-top language death:** It is a process in which a contraction of language according to situation takes place, i.e. a dying type of language can be retained in informal situations while not using it in formal settings

Having observed the above situation and statistics the researchers aimed at finding out the reason of not using Punjabi at public places by the people of Pakistan. It is a fact that there are a lot of Punjabi speakers present in Pakistan, but officially Punjabi is not spoken. It can be used domestically on frequent bases, but it is not officially used in schools and colleges for communicative purposes. Therefore, the researchers took interest to look at the reasons, so that the problem can be found and solutions in the form of recommendations can be given. This study will lso help to decide what status Punjabi actually enjoys in Pakistan.

3. Research Questions

Following research questions have been framed

a) Is Punjabi language in Pakistan a covert prestige or an overt prestige?

b) Is Punjabi gradually moving towards language extinction?

3.1 Delimitations of the Study

This study has been delimited to the idea of looking at Punjabi language as a covert prestige or overt prestige, and whether the current scenario is taking the Punjabi language to the stage of language death. Regarding data collection, this study is narrowed down to only Punjab province in Pakistan. To make it effective, 10 cities of the whole Punjab province were taken. Only 20 participants, who were bilingual speakers, i.e. know Urdu and Punjabi, were taken into account. It is also important to mention here that all the population was the native Punjabi speakers.

3.2 Research Method

The research design, chosen for this study, comprises observation and a survey.Marshall and Rossman(1989, p.79) state that "the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study." Observations enable the researcher to describe existing situations using the five senses. After observation, survey was used to collect data. Pinsonneault and Kraemer (1993) explain that the survey is a method for collecting the information related to the actions, characteristics, opinions of the relatively large crowd. Shaughnessy, Zechmeisterand Zechmeister (2011) are of the view that survey method is utilized to measure the thoughts, opinions and feelings of the individuals.

In the second phase after observations the researcher used questionnaire as a tool to gather the opinion of people. The population remains the same as of the observation. The researchers have tried to justify the use of the research design as well as tools of research by giving pertinent definitions which show the importance of all these features of research. The questionnaire is a well-known tool which is used to eliciting information from the participants on any type of past and present behavior, social characteristics, benchmarks of the attitudes and the beliefs of the participants in line with some specific topic and area which is investigated by the researchers (Bulmer, 2004).

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of this research includes 10 cities of Punjab i.e. Lahore, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Multan, Bahawalpur Sargodha, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sahiwal and Okara. From these cities, 20 participants each were randomly selected. The respondents were initially chosen for observation and later for asking questions in order to administer the questionnaire.

3.4 Instrumentation

The researchers observed 100 participants from 10 cities in Punjab. Each participant's observation time was 3 hours 15 minutes for 7 days, which means 45 minutes each day both in formal and informal situations. There was no fixed time and the observation was done in a natural environment without making the participants aware of the aim of the observation. It took a month to collect the data from the aforementioned cities of Punjab. The additional tool was recordings which has helped in calculating the number of sentences later. The second phase of collecting data deals with administering a questionnaire which was distributed to the same people who were observed by the researchers. The data obtained through the questionnaire using 5-point Likert-scale. According to Bertram (2014) the use of Likert scale has certain benefits like

a) It is quite easy to make.
b) Its production of results is highly reliable.
c) It is convenient for the participants to comprehend and complete it.

3.5 Ethical Concerns

Following the ethical rules of research, the participants were informed prior to the recording process and after getting their consent it was recorded made part of this study.

4. Data Analysis

The statistical detail of language use in different context has been presented in the form of tables. There are six columns in a table (3) which show the serial number, city name, presentation of two languages: Urdu and Punjabi and their usage at domestic as well as formal levels.

Table 4.1. Observation Sheet: Use of Urdu and Punjabi at Formal and Informal Level

Sr. No.	City	No of Punjabi sentences uttered Domestically/informally	No of Urdu sentences uttered Domestically /informally	No of Punjabi sentences uttered formally/outside home	No of Urdu sentences uttered formally/ outside home
1	Lahore	300	40	30	350
2	Lahore	420	59	45	444
3	Lahore	516	36	55	432
4	Lahore	400	46	54	354
5	Lahore	350	45	65	465
6	Lahore	450	65	76	513
7	Lahore	500	78	78	521
8	Lahore	376	26	98	487
9	Lahore	381	45	67	387
10	Lahore	465	66	89	377
11	Faisalabad	440	76	87	432
12	Faisalabad	450	87	54	445
13	Faisalabad	442	41	45	535
14	Faisalabad	478	56	67	524
15	Faisalabad	567	67	87	543
16	Faisalabad	532	76	65	399
17	Faisalabad	511	45	79	416
18	Faisalabad	326	65	80	483
19	Faisalabad	410	54	78	467
20	Faisalabad	355	34	56	443

21	Rawalpindi	377	33	76	500
22	Rawalpindi	410	45	78	422
23	Rawalpindi	523	78	98	387
24	Rawalpindi	459	87	87	543
25	Rawalpindi	478	98	61	398
26	Rawalpindi	440	76	53	423
27	Rawalpindi	444	81	45	487
28	Rawalpindi	456	82	67	477
29	Rawalpindi	541	54	87	488
30	Rawalpindi	398	65	44	465
31	Multan	518	76	56	478
32	Multan	488	78	61	487
33	Multan	437	71	69	461
34	Multan	487	73	79	543
35	Multan	432	72	81	532
36	Multan	379	75	52	411
37	Multan	367	56	54	381
38	Multan	498	65	49	475
39	Multan	533	78	63	483
40	Multan	467	66	75	494
41	Bahawalpur	522	78	69	499
42	Bahawalpur	451	45	48	447
43	Bahawalpur	533	54	77	387
44	Bahawalpur	478	56	84	366
45	Bahawalpur	387	57	73	499
46	Bahawalpur	398	76	85	518
37	Bahawalpur	447	78	89	472
48	Bahawalpur	485	65	99	466
49	Bahawalpur	472	62	93	512
50	Bahawalpur	466	67	95	495
51	Sargodha	521	76	70	367
52	Sargodha	522	78	61	533
53	Sargodha	488	98	56	467
54	Sargodha	374	54	68	483
55	Sargodha	493	89	73	389
56	Sargodha	465	77	68	510
57	Sargodha	487	67	72	444
58	Sargodha	422	79	87	463
59	Sargodha	511	87	83	478
60	Sargodha	481	89	74	488
61	Gujranwala	381	86	71	444
62	Gujranwala	461	78	69	424
63	Gujranwala	492	69	60	477
64	Gujranwala	537	89	50	376
65	Gujranwala	510	91	53	532
66	Gujranwala	494	69	44	538
67	Gujranwala	428	77	67	415
68	Gujranwala	436	81	64	381
69	Gujranwala	466	79	49	343
70	Gujranwala	501	61	58	451
71	Sialkot	444	51	55	444
72	Sialkot	474	43	69	424

73	Sialkot	514	91	61	488
74	Sialkot	533	78	63	479
75	Sialkot	457	91	78	398
76	Sialkot	461	79	79	541
77	Sialkot	471	80	66	435
78	Sialkot	363	76	69	414
79	Sialkot	382	62	70	513
80	Sialkot	511	76	89	486
81	Sahiwal	413	54	91	444
82	Sahiwal	457	60	62	456
83	Sahiwal	498	70	54	378
84	Sahiwal	523	89	67	401
85	Sahiwal	377	90	76	503
86	Sahiwal	474	81	70	542
87	Sahiwal	439	71	71	518
88	Sahiwal	427	77	88	487
89	Sahiwal	499	61	83	425
90	Sahiwal	515	69	90	515
91	Okara	533	55	81	389
92	Okara	537	70	89	397
93	Okara	453	99	55	528
94	Okara	465	91	71	519
95	Okara	369	83	69	527
96	Okara	466	90	84	496
97	Okara	481	81	91	488
98	Okara	448	63	44	481
99	Okara	503	79	78	476
100	Okara	522	90	45	401

Table 4.1 presents data from ten cities chosen for this study. Each individual from each city has been given a separate place in the table. The value of each individual has been recorded separately so against each person there are four tables which show the figures explicitly. The total utterances of Punjabi and Urdu used at home/ domestic level/ informal situations, and Punjabi and Urdu used in formal situations has been clearly presented. The graph vividly reflects that two percentages are on the higher side.

a) Frequent use of Punjabi at home
b) Regular use of Urdu outside home

Apart from these two columns, one can view that the other two columns show low percentages. Having viewed the table minutely one can see vividly the use of different languages according to the context. The table suggests that people of Punjab, who are the native speakers of Punjabi, are reluctant to use Punjabi outside the home. They love to talk in Punjabi when they are home or when they are sitting in an informal situation, but in formal situations they prefer to use Urdu instead of Punjabi. 10 cities and people living in these cities show relatively same numbers which give an overall impression that Punjabi speakers in Pakistan are hesitant to use Punjabi overtly (i.e. informal setting) and love to use it covertly (i.e. informal setting).

For this purpose, a questionnaire was administered to find out the reasons of using Punjabi in informal situations and to find out what makes people differentiate or chose between both the

languages in different contexts. The questionnaire comprises10 questions, which are close-ended statements constructed on a Likert scale. The responses recorded to each statement are analysed in the following

Table 4.2. Speaking Punjabi is not appreciated amongst my peers.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Disagree	30	30.0	30.0	70.0
	Neutral	10	10.0	10.0	80.0
	Agree	10	10.0	10.0	90.0
	Strongly Agree	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.2 shows that speaking Punjabi is not appreciated amongst peers. The table shows values against each response of the participants. The data were administered to 100 participants all over Punjab using a Likert scale questionnaire, it can be viewed that 40% people strongly disagree to the statement of the question, 30% disagree, 10 % are neutral and percentage of agree and strongly agree is 10 and 10 percent respectively.

Table 4.3. Being a native Punjabi speaker, I feel shy and reluctant while using Punjabi in my house

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	35	35.0	35.0	35.0
	Disagree	35	35.0	35.0	70.0
	Neutral	15	15.0	15.0	85.0
	Agree	7	7.0	7.0	92.0
	Strongly Agree	8	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.3 presents the question that's being a native Punjabi speaker I feel shy and reluctant while using Punjabi in my house. Here each segment is representing each value. The frequencies have been recorded according to the choices offered on a Likert scale. The values show that 35% people strongly disagree whereas 35% disagree, only 15% remain neutral. However, there is a small percentage recorded for the choices agree and strongly agree which is 7% and 8% respectively.

Table 4.4. Using Punjabi language gives a sense of uneducated entity amongst friends and family

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	40	40.00	40.0	40.0
	Disagree	38	38.00	38.0	78.0
	Neutral	06	6.00	6.0	84.0
	Agree	08	8.00	8.0	92.0
	Strongly Agree	08	8.00	8.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.4 presents the values about the question that using Punjabi language gives a sense of uneducated entity amongst friends and family. The value against each section is mentioned accordingly. The frequencies are recorded according to the respective choices in the questionnaire. The values in the table reflect that 40% people strongly disagree, 38% people disagree, and 6 % are neutral. Only 8% people disagree and 8 % strongly disagree with the statement of the questions.

Table 4.5. Conversing in Punjabi informally makes me conscious and less confident

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	10.0
	Neutral	5	5.0	5.0	15.0
	Agree	35	35.0	35.0	50.0
	Strongly Agree	50	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.5 presents the responses regarding the question; using Punjabi language in informal settings makes me conscious and less confident. It can be seen here that only 3% people strongly disagree, 7% disagree, only 5% are neutral, 35% people agree and 50% strongly agree. The highest number (50%) of the people strongly agrees with the statement.

Table 4.6. When I communicate in Punjabi, I am ignored and depreciated by people in outside settings

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Disagree	8	8.0	8.0	15.0
	Neutral	5	5.0	5.0	20.0
	Agree	32	32.0	32.0	52.0
	Strongly Agree	48	48.0	48.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.6 shows the varied responses recorded from the selected cities of Punjab about the question, "when I communicate in Punjabi, I am ignored and depreciated by people in outdoor settings." 7% respondents strongly disagree, 8% people disagree, 5% are neutral, 32% agree. The highest value (48%) has been shown to strongly agree.

Table 4.7. My formal use of Punjabi is welcomed by my colleagues

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Disagree	40	40.0	40.0	80.0
	Neutral	10	10.0	10.0	90.0
	Agree	5	5.0	5.0	95.0
	Strongly Agree	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.7 shows the values about the statement; my formal use of Punjabi is welcomed by my colleagues. The frequency of the responses is mentioned according to the replies. The table shows that 40% people strongly disagree, 40% disagree, 10 are neutral, only 5% agree and 5% strongly agree. The highest frequency value in the table is 40% for both strongly disagree and disagree, thus reflecting that in formal settings Punjabi is not liked by the listeners.

Table 4.8. I am confident while using Punjabi outside the home

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Disagree	42	42.0	42.0	82.0
	Neutral	8	8.0	8.0	90.0
	Agree	7	7.0	7.0	97.0
	Strongly Agree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.8 shows data about the statement, I am confident while using Punjabi outside the home. Here the frequencies are recorded in each section according to the variety of responses given by the respondents. It can be viewed here that 40 % people strongly disagree with the statement of the question, 8% are neutral, 7% agree and only 3% strongly agree. The highest percentage (42%) in this table disagrees.

Table 4.9. Speaking Punjabi externally adds value to my social status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	38	38.0	38.0	38.0
	Disagree	48	48.0	48.0	86.0
	Neutral	4	4.0	4.0	90.0
	Agree	5	5.0	5.0	95.0
	Strongly Agree	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.9 reveals the replies of the respondents regarding the question, using Punjabi externally add value to my social status. Here one can clearly view that 38% people strongly disagree, 48 % disagree, 4% are neutral, 5% agree and 5% strongly agree. The highest value (48%) and the clear inclination of the people from different cities of Punjab can be clearly seen while looking at the values against each section.

Table 4.10. I receive gratitude when I use Punjabi in formal settings

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	45	45.0	45.0	45.0
	Disagree	45	45.0	45.0	90.0
	Neutral	5	5.0	5.0	95.0
	Agree	2	2.0	2.0	97.0
	Strongly Agree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.10 reveals the responses to questions; I receive gratitude when I use Punjabi in formal settings. This table shows values against each response of the participants. The data were elicited from 100 participants all over Punjab using Likertscale, it can be viewed that 45% people strongly disagree with the statement and 45% disagree, whereas 5 % are neutral. Only 2% people agree and 3% strongly agree. The highest percentage (45%) strongly disagrees as well as disagrees.

Table 4.11. Punjabi language adds touch of modernity to my personality when I use it outside

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	41	41.0	41.0	41.0
	Disagree	44	44.0	44.0	85.0
	Neutral				
	Agree	8	8.0	8.0	93.0
	Strongly Agree	5	5.0	5.0	98.0
	Total	2	2.0	2.0	100.0

Table 4.11 reveals the responses to the question; Punjabi language adds touch of modernity to my personality when I use it outside. It can be viewed that 41% people strongly disagree with the statement, 44% disagree, 8 are neutral, 8% agree and only 5% strongly agree.

5. Findings

The current investigation was undertaken in order to have the knowledge and understanding regarding the status of Punjabi in Pakistan. This study has focused on getting direct information from the native Punjabi speakers chosen from the randomly selected cities in Punjab, Pakistan. The findings revealed that Punjabi in Pakistan has been a regularly used language in domestic settings. According to Heinz (1996), a lot of dialects and languages are rendered prestige, which is based on factors like the highest gradation of modernization of language, the richness in language

heritage, the international value and standing and prestige of people. A strong correlation is there amongst the language, people, culture and prestige as language is embedded in culture (Henry, 1986). So, viewing the situation, the results above reflect that though Punjabi is lexically rich, culturally embedded and socially accepted in Pakistan yet it has a diminishing ratio of speakers presently. There is a trend to use it frequently and normally at their homes and other informal social contexts. On the contrary, it is surprising to know that Punjabi language is not being used in formal settings. While in offices and other professional contexts no one uses Punjabi and people avoid talking in this Punjabi language. The replies of the questionnaire give us a reflection that Punjabi speakers in Pakistan are reluctant to use Punjabi in formal settings. It has been found out that speaking Punjabioutside home gives a sense of low status and uneducated entity amongst local masses. This is a psychological aspect as well as a cultural stigma which has been developed in the Pakistani Punjabi society. The value and prestige given to the Punjabi by Sikhs community in Indian Punjab are much different to the attitude towards the use of Punjabi in Pakistani community. Hymes (1971) says that there are situations where two communities may have similar or different languages in real life situations and on the basis of mutual intelligibility.

Here people are of the view that if they will use Punjabi formally, the other members of society will discourage them and they will be left isolated because of the fact that it is not considered as a language of the elite class. Anthony (1978) says that the community prestige dialect of being different from the non-elite class. Likewise, it is also revealed in the current investigation that people, living in Pakistani Punjab, are discouraging the use of Punjabi outside the home. While at shopping centers, movie halls, market places and other social settings people prefer to use Urdu instead of Punjabi. Punjabi is not enjoying the status of overt prestige, rather it is revealed as a covert prestige. Use of frequent Punjabi at home and a small ratio of words outside home clearly reflects the future of Punjabi in Pakistan. Given this situation, Punjabi is gradually and slowly moving towards language death in Pakistan, during the last 50 years the number of Punjabi speakers is decreasing in each census. If we look at the percentage of Punjabi speakers from 1972 census till 1998, we can see that it has decreased from 56.11% to 44.15% which is an alarming situation.

6. Conclusion

Language has always been a major source of communication in the world. The presence, growth and decay of language are conditioned with the number of speakers in the society. It can be said that language's progress is dependent upon its speakers. Therefore, if the language is with more speakers, definitely the language will get more growth. Language is connected with society and society consists of like-minded individuals. However, it is also a fact that sometimes there are different languages prevailing in the society, but in that case the dominant language is usually one. Further, other existing languages also have a positive and emotional connection with their speakers and most importantly, they are owned by their speakers in a society. The reputation of language is not only dependent upon social, political and cultural factors, but also upon the attitudes of people towards it. Sometimes opposite genders have different perceptions about using any language. John and Sharlene (1981) pointed out a similar notion where they are of the view that even gender differences also matter of prestige of the language. The finding revealed that men were more towards prestige language as compared to female

This study is identical to the study conducted by Gamperz (1958) who explored the dialectal as well as social differences of Hindi (Urdu) language in India. He found out that there is a lot of variation and issue of prestige amongst the Indian and the Muslims; and between the different castes of Hindus as well while using Hindi language. Whenever a language in a society is disliked, rejected and least appreciated or associated with "a cultural stigma" (Akram&Yasmin, 2011; Shah, 2015, p. 75), it can move to language death. Sometimes there are some special circumstances under which people are offended to use a language in a society. The best example of this can be Hindi which is very identical with Urdu but in an Islamic country like Pakistan the religious sentiments offend people while using, appreciating and welcoming Hindi.Whenever the people of any society believe that a certain language code is not welcomed by the people formally, they avoid using it publicly as they want to associate themselves with the society as a member of a society. Which gradually make that particular language as a low prestige language and in such cases the use of that particular language can be either in informal settings or sometimes it can diminish gradually. This situation is pertinent to the use of Punjabi language in Pakistani Punjab, where the native speakers are hesitant to use Punjabi in the public domain due to social and psychological reasons which are pinpointed by Shah (2015) in her recent study. Like Shah, David and Gulzar's (2017) findings, the results suggest that the participants frequently use Punjabi in their homes and also in informal settings. Viewing the entire situation, in Pakistan Punjabi language is not enjoying the status of overt prestige as it is in Indian Punjab but it is being used as covert prestige. Currently, people are discouraged to use Punjabi in formal situations and settings, and they "feel ashamed of it" (Shah, 2015, p. 71). Like other regional languages (Canagarajah& Ashraf, 2013), it is pertinent to mention that Punjabi language is sidelined and gradually losing its speakers in Pakistan despite all its richness and diversity as a language.

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