

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

<https://llrjournal.com/index.php/11>

An Analysis of Perceived Benefits of Learning English and other Foreign Languages in Pakistan



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Abstract

English is ranked as the third most spoken language of the world. It is the most widely spoken language in the world, thus it is not surprising that English is the first language in 104 nations. However, English is a foreign language for learners of Pakistan. Every year, English becomes more essential. Learning English provides benefits in all aspects of our lives, yet some people are still unaware of them. Therefore, to know the importance of English in Pakistani society according to the point of view of undergraduate students, this research on the topic of learning English and other languages in Pakistan is conducted. To conduct this study, we have chosen quantitative method as per the requirement of the topic close-ended questionnaire has been used as a tool. Descriptive analysis is used to analyze the data as per to find out the mean value of every section of questionnaire. The undergraduate students of the University of Lahore are the population of this study. By using purposive sampling technique, the data of this research is collected. In Pakistan there is a rising trend of learning Chinese and Arabic now a days. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan carried out the English Language Teaching Reforms (ELTR) project to improve language learning outcomes, particularly at the tertiary level. Pakistan's diverse linguistic, educational, and cultural backgrounds, combined with the country's past and current use of English, make language teaching reform problematic.

Keywords: Learning English, Pakistani society, perceived benefits, dominating country, ELTR project

Introduction

Learning a second language is highly beneficial for our education and professional lives. It also positively impacts our minds, sharpening our memory and helping us understand the world more effectively. This process involves learning the social and cultural practices of a community, where language and linguistics play integral roles. Language learning shapes the learner's multiple identities and serves as an investment in forging a national identity. This research examines the perceived benefits of second language learning, particularly regarding the trend of learning English in Pakistan alongside other languages. There are numerous advantages to learning a second language. In this context, Cummins (1981) states that foreign language study enhances children's understanding of how language functions. It also boosts

their ability to use words to think critically and solve problems. Conversely, foreign language study allows average students to excel. The benefits for self-image, self-esteem, and satisfaction with the educational experience are substantial. Evidence from multiple studies demonstrates that language learners possess a significantly higher self-concept than non-language learners (Masciantonio, 1977).

As a third-world country, Pakistan is significantly influenced by Europe and its native languages. English is the most widely spoken language in the world, with at least one person knowing how to speak it or at least understanding it. It serves as the language for various fields, such as science, economics, and tourism. If people find yourself in a country where people don't know the local language, English can be people's savior. Learning English can help people secure a better job or expand people's business internationally. It also aids in understanding other cultures. According to Rajathurai (2018), it is widely accepted that learning English is easier compared to other foreign languages. Its vocabulary is simple to grasp and derived from various languages, which is why the basics are easy to learn. Non-native English speakers often comment on the myriad ways to express something; this demonstrates the flexibility of the language. Countries like Singapore embrace this and have created a unique form of English called 'Singlish.' Learning English helps people to socialize globally. Recently, the concept of education for all, along with the increasing use of English in the global economy, has imparted a universal aspect to the role of English teaching and learning. It benefits those in positions of power, in offices, and in educational environments.

In Pakistan, acquiring foreign languages, particularly English, is regarded as highly beneficial across various domains, including education, employment, and social mobility (Haidar, 2021; Irfan, 2021). English is often used as the medium of instruction in educational institutions and is widely spoken among young individuals, highlighting its critical significance (DAWAR & Yumru, 2020). Nevertheless, despite the growing number of English speakers in Pakistan, many students continue to face challenges in mastering essential language skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Dar & Khan, 2015). The emphasis on achieving proficiency in English is fundamentally rooted in its significant historical role in education during the British colonial period in Pakistan (Mukhtar et al., 2021). This historical context has rendered English a prestigious language, opening avenues for better educational and career opportunities. The widespread use of English in higher education, international exchanges, government administration, the judiciary, legislation, and

commerce underscores its essential role in Pakistani society (Irfan, 2020). Curriculum developers and policymakers should prioritise the teaching of English as a second language, thereby equipping students with the necessary skills for academic and professional success (Jadoon et al., 2020). Mastering English and other global languages provide numerous advantages for individuals and contributes to Pakistan's overall development, facilitating global integration and promoting economic progress (Quyyum, 2021).

Various studies highlight the benefits of studying English as a second language. Similarly, one study investigates whether children of different races, those from economically disadvantaged households, and English Language Learners benefit most proportionally from foreign language education. Early foreign language study is less dependent on past verbal learning than most other aspects of the elementary school curriculum, allowing some youngsters to excel who would otherwise struggle in school (Curtain, 2004). English is equally significant in Pakistan, a multilingual country where people communicate in multiple languages. The symbolic significance of English stems from its association with the political elite and pro-elite (Haque, 1938), which has established it as a distinguished language, particularly in Pakistan. Jalal (2004), a former education minister, acknowledges that the future of Pakistan is connected to the rise of IT, implying that English is necessary. Such observations indicate that English plays an important role in the growth of Pakistan's education system.

Nowadays, in Pakistan, there is a growing trend of learning languages other than English, with the Chinese language serving as a prime example. As we all know, the China-Pakistan friendship has been strong from the very beginning, with China supporting Pakistan in various forms and situations. Additionally, China is taking steps to promote Urdu within its own borders. Raza (2020) says that one of these attempts is to integrate Urdu into education through major and minor courses taught primarily by Urdu-speaking Pakistani instructors at numerous Chinese universities. To increase the number of Urdu speakers in China, multiple works have been translated from Urdu to Mandarin, and Urdu language classes are now being offered at various universities. During COVID-19, there was significant interest in learning Chinese as a second language. Researchers claim that due to COVID-19 and China's response to it, along with general feelings of hospitality towards China, the people of Pakistan have been inclined to learn Chinese. Moreover, the launch of CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) has resulted in numerous job opportunities. Since CPEC attracts a large

number of Chinese businessmen and workers, Pakistani students view it as a chance to gain employment as bilingual translators, interpreters, lawyers, and supervisors.

Another example is Arabic as a second language in Pakistan. Arabic is spoken by 360 million people and is the fifth most spoken language. Historically, Arabic played a significant role even before the Mughal era, as it was utilized by educated individuals.

Most poetry from that era was derived from the Arabic language. In the Mughal period, Arabic experienced some decline, as Akbar (1556-1605) turned against Islamic traditions; however, Arabic regained its significance. During British rule, they incorporated Arabic into their broader initiatives to alter the global perception of Indian Muslims. Pakistan is a Muslim country, with over 70% of its population being Muslim. Because it is a Muslim nation, the people of Pakistan feel an emotional connection to Arabic, as it is the language of the Quran. Arabic, regarded as an Islamic language, was proposed as the official language of Pakistan in October 1971. Muslims believe that Arabic is the mother of all languages in the world. Learning Arabic facilitates communication, especially as nearly 100,000 people travel to Saudi Arabia each year for hajj. This knowledge would enable them to communicate effectively during their religious practices. Additionally, Arabic can open doors to employment opportunities in various industries and countries, such as oil, energy, translation, travel, and more.

The Statement of the Problem

Pakistan is a multilingual country where many languages are spoken, yet people are eagerly learning other international languages such as English, Arabic, and Chinese. English is the most widely used international language in Pakistan, as many people are keen to learn it. Numerous studies conducted over the years have indicated the impact of English on different societies, with each society experiencing its unique effects in Pakistan. This study aims to explore why the people of Pakistan learn English and other languages in addition to their native tongue.

Research Objectives

1. To understand the perceived benefits of learning English for Pakistani undergraduate students
2. To understand the trend of learning other languages in Pakistan.

Research Questions

1. Is learning English as a second language beneficial for Pakistani undergraduate students?

2. Why do people tend to learn other languages nowadays in Pakistan?

The Significance of the Study

Study on the benefits of learning L2 has been a very wide topic. Numerous ponders have been conducted to know the usefulness of learning English. All those researches majorly talked about the benefits only and researchers have neglected the reasons or causes for learning English and other languages. What makes people to acquire a new language? What they think about their first language? This study hopefully will discuss these points and will find answers regarding the basic reasons. More over these types of studies are majorly conducted outside Pakistan and we apply their results on us. As in Pakistan other than English people are eager to learn other languages like Arabic and Chinese and this study will focus on the benefits of learning English and other languages. This study would be conducted among the students of The University of Lahore's English department to know what are the effects on them or they notices by learning an entirely new language.

Literature Review

The second language is the language of a person that is not his/her native one but learned. It could be any foreign or local language, which we can acquire for so many reasons. Research in second language acquisition (SLA) unfolds many factors and truths regarding different factors of linguistics. In this light, the study on the perceived benefits of learning English and other foreign languages in Pakistan gives us a bundle of information. With the help of literature review, learner utilizes the prior work of researchers to know what they have done or what they have missed in a particular topic. After knowing the previous work, researcher can understand which point or points need attention. In this respect, Morales (2013) claims that regardless of age, being bilingual can enhance memory and recall more information as compared to monolinguals. This research tested children on memory task, in these children were asked to remember number of pictures and then recall them in the correct order. Participants were 56 five-year-old children and 69 seven-year old children. Few were bilingual and few were monolinguals. The result of this study shows that bilingual children remember more pictures with the right order. The study regarding Cerbel Cortex indicates that bilinguals can focus more properly on given task, which leads to enhanced performance. The human brain consists of different parts and each part is responsible for its function. This study tested the whether high proficient bilinguals and monolinguals show different parts of brain. The researchers observed the difference in structures of both groups.

The status of the English language in Pakistan is profoundly intertwined with its colonial history, during which it was initially introduced to replace local languages in educational settings. Even after gaining independence, English continues to exert a significant influence, shaping language ideologies and pedagogical methods (Haidar & Fang, 2019). It remains a crucial language for communication and practical application, particularly in contexts where establishing a common language such as Urdu or Bengali proves to be challenging (Golam & Kusakabe, 2018). In light of the effects of globalization and the advancement of communication technologies, the function of English is evolving, necessitating revisions in the policies and philosophies that govern English language instruction, especially as English serves as a lingua franca (Haidar & Fang, 2019).

In a study on passive English, Rothman (2016) discovered that children who speak a second language outperformed their monolingual peers on an exam. However, the concept of "earlier is better" remains controversial. According to Unsworth (2014), 2L1 and eL2 exhibited similar behaviour regarding gender assignment consistency and agreement. The author was able to analyze both the length of exposure and the age of onset, discovering that the length of exposure, rather than the age of the participants, controlled it. Alban (2015), in a Swedish study on military recruits, notes that interpreting language is one of the most challenging tasks that human minds perform. Her review of neurological data revealed that learning a foreign language can increase the size of the brain's language center and the hippocampus, which is responsible for producing, storing, and retrieving information or memories. A survey of 13,200 third and fifth graders in Louisiana public schools found that, independent of race, gender, or academic level, children who took foreign language classes scored higher on the English component of the Louisiana Basic Skills Test than those who did not. There is a substantial positive link between foreign language study and better reading scores for children with average or below-average intellect (Garfinkel & Tabor, 1991). Here are some more broadly acknowledged benefits of learning a second language:

Bilingualism and General Cognition

In regard of advantages or disadvantages, Bilingual vs monolingual has been the hot topic. Other than any pros and cons of any one point, this debate has a vast and different point of views. Some analysts believe that, being bilingual is a barrier between person and the fluency of L2. It does not make any person to get complete command on target language because learner keeps switching between his own language and the other language and it affects the

general cognition of human mind. On the other hand, comparatively large group of authors believes that bilingualism is a complete help. According to studies, bilingual youngsters may experience difficulties at school. Later studies argued that bilingualism had advantages. According to a study by Bialystok (2017), bilingual students outperform monolingual students in nonverbal computational topics such as mathematics, chemistry, and physics. This study adjusted for socioeconomic characteristics. The study included 68 Dutch Turkish bilingual youngsters and 58 monolingual children. Children were asked to memorize and recall the number and position of dots displayed on a screen. The results demonstrated that bilingualism can compensate for the impacts of social background and improve working memory (Blom, 2014). According to bilingualism theory, learning a second language in adulthood can delay cognitive decline by about 4.5 years (Bialystok, 2007-2016). Several studies on the subject show that people who learn a second language are more creative and better at solving complicated problems than those who do not (Bamford and Mizokawa 1991).

Cummins and Swain (1986) proposed the Dual Threshold paradigm for multilingual proficiency. According to this concept, those with low ability in any language are more likely to suffer cognitive deficits. People with average proficiency in one or more languages are considered average. Finally, those with high proficiency have superior cognitive abilities. Many research found that bilinguals have cognitive advantages over monolinguals. For example, Bialystok (2001) contends that bilinguals outperform monolinguals in particular metalinguistic tasks. According to D. Oller and Eilers (2002), the authors of this study discovered that learning more than one language improves cognitive and metalinguistic abilities. Monolinguals excelled in oral, grammatical, and formal storytelling skills, but not in literacy or abstract narrative features. Some abilities are not transferable across languages because some types of knowledge are coded within an individual in one language but not in another. Bilingual students have more language space to search in their memories than monolinguals. Acquisition patterns vary depending on context for both monolinguals and bilinguals, although the volume of input accounts for the majority of variances. Kroll (2001) states that the authors conducted a study on adult learners to investigate their cognitive processes. They discovered that just exposing adult language learners to a second language does not result in the development of new conceptual processing techniques. During the early phases of L2 acquisition, kids may rely more on L1 to obtain meaning, until they can recover L2 concepts more directly and fluently. The authors argue that language learning is more than

just establishing representations for L2 to get meaning; it also involves increasing control mechanisms to activate L1, as seen by reported individual disparities in L2 performance. The researchers conclude that proficiency in L2 necessitates not only appropriate representation of L2, but also the acquisition of control skills that allow the relative activation of the two languages to be varied.

The Status And Significance Of English In Pakistan

Background

Aside from American capitalism and technical advancement in the twentieth century, British colonialism was unquestionably the primary driver of the spread of English around the world Boampong (2005).¹⁶ This is likewise true of Pakistan. Even after independence, Pakistan faced political pressure from the United Kingdom and the United States, which may have contributed to the growth of English in the newly independent country. Scholars and academics have identified a variety of variables, including the actions of Christian missionaries and traders, particularly those from the East India Company (Hickey, 2004; Boampong 2005). According to Boampong (2005), English became a tool for control during British rule. The goal of encouraging English was to produce a class of indigenous who were "Indian in blood and color but English in taste, opinions, morals, and intellect" (Hickey 2004, p. 540). Following this policy, English was adopted as a medium of teaching in a number of renowned educational institutions. The policy of flying colors resulted in a "English-based subculture" and privileged social class in United India (Boampong, 2005). Later, English became more widely used in independent countries' educational and social circles (Kachru 2005). According to Rahman (2016), Pakistan's elite used English to modernize the country and empower themselves.

In Contemporary World

In the beginning it is true that Pakistan was politically not stable and there were so many things that needed the attention. In such scenario, when everything was uncertain, political pressure of developed and strong countries was the reason of growth of English. But unfortunately, till this date, we are fully depending on English language.

Pakistan's powerful people primarily use English in the civil administration, military, business, media, and education sectors. (Rahman, 2002–2011). The Pakistani English-speaking community employs this language for formal and casual events (Rahman, 2007).¹⁷ English is employed as an official language in both private and public organizations and

institutes (Hafeez, 2004; Naqvi, 2009). It is also widely used in print and electronic media, with over 20 English-language newspapers and journals published throughout Pakistan. It accounts for around 10% of all newspapers issued in Pakistan (Rahman, 2007). Currently, understanding the relevance and responsibilities of English in Pakistan may be incomplete without considering its global spread as the dominant lingua franca in the modern world (Rahman, 2007; Shamim, 2008). According to studies, educated Pakistani youth comprehend the global functions and importance of the English language and regard it as a fundamental ability when considering work or migrating overseas (Jilani, 2009; Capstick, 2011). Some analysts believed that English was a symbol of modernization and liberalism that may reduce religious and political extremism by encouraging sociopolitical tolerance among its users, particularly young (Mansoor, 2004; Rahman, 2007, 2002). Mansoor (2004) suggests that a western, liberal-humanist, and cosmopolitan worldview can assist regulate Islamic fanaticism in the country. According to this viewpoint, Pakistan's English-language press is more liberal and moderate than Urdu or regional language media (Rahman, 2007).

Symbolic Importance Of Other Foreign Languages In Pakistan

Arabic

Arabic has been one of our most popular languages. It is a popular language since it can help people advance in a government profession while also providing several options in business and international relations. It ranks among the top five most widely spoken languages in the world. Learning Arabic as a second language will help people understand the Arabic culture and religion. It not only allows people to grow people 's network but also provides excellent travel options. According to Mahmood (2017), the importance of the Arabic language in Pakistan may be seen in a variety of ways. The majority of Pakistanis are Muslims, and Islam is the country's official religion, hence Arabic is highly regarded and revered. Although the majority of pupils do not speak this language, a large number of them are learning it. It is well known that the Arabic prayer call Adhan is the first thing Muslims speak into the ear of a newborn baby. After that, the child learns how to read the Quran. Such activities create a deep bond between Muslims and the Arabic language. The Arabic language bill, passed last year, made Arabic language instruction compulsory in Islamabad's elementary and secondary institutions. All these studies and facts tells us about the symbolic importance of this language in our country. We are linked with this language from the very first day because of religious activities. And that's why the Arabic language is studied in Pakistan.

Chinese

According to Shen Yahsin (2015), the relationship between Pakistan and China is the closest and warmest of any of China's neighbors. Both countries established diplomatic relations in 1951. Since then, the two countries have remained staunch allies. During the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971, China supported Pakistan against India. China also encouraged Pakistan to become a nuclear power in 1998. Pakistan played an important role in the ice-breaking visit of the United States National Security Advisor to China in 1971 (Chi-Hsin Chang, 2015). A research study was conducted to investigate the elements that contributed to Pakistanis' increased interest in learning Chinese during Covid-19. Using the Likert scale, the learners' attitudes toward the status and extent of the Chinese language demonstrated their eagerness to study it. Despite the pandemic, there is widespread animosity towards Chinese people, their language, and culture. In Pakistan, interest in the Chinese language grew as China became synonymous with everything that is ill. In May 2013, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang visited Pakistan and proposed the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), marking a new phase in China-Pakistan ties. This proposal was finalized in April 2015.

According to Niazi (2019), the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a 3,218-kilometer network of roads, trains, and dry ports stretching from Gwadar Port to Kashgar that will benefit around 3 billion people in the region. China offered \$46 billion, which has since increased to \$58 billion, more than tripling Pakistan's cumulative FDI in the last decade. As a result, Pakistan now has expediency through the CPEC, as its FDI is declining. It has now grown to account for roughly 17% of their GDP. The initiative is expected to directly create 700,000 jobs by 2030 and greatly boost GDP growth. Pakistan is coping with a serious energy crisis. The country's total power generation capacity is 23,538 MW, with a shortage of between 40,000 and 60,000 MW. If all goes as planned, by 2017, these projects will contribute 10,400 MW to the national grid. Chinese banks are eager to finance students who start learning Chinese, which will benefit the Pakistani industry. It will provide more export and job opportunities. The necessity of One Belt One Road and its associated project, CPEC, is to begin studying Chinese.

Literacy

Transferring skills from Spanish to English: A study of young learners. This article describes an extensive project that assessed the transfer of English literacy abilities from native Spanish speakers to English over the course of several years. The study groups changed depending on

when English instruction was introduced into the curriculum. Earlier immersion improved performance on English literacy examinations. Spanish natives learning English outperformed an English monolingual control group on lexical cognates but showed negative transfer of phono-orthographic knowledge. The authors contend that a shared foundational strength in linguistic and literacy abilities aided skill transfer. This study implies that bilinguals can benefit from literacy transfer effects, which will improve their L1 while also resulting in competence in their second language. The study suggests that early literacy training be delivered in the child's first language because these skills are transferable to the second language and can be introduced later in the child's academic career (August & Carlo 2002).

Language Politics

Language politics refers to how language and linguistic distinctions between individuals are addressed in politics. This could include government acknowledgment and how language is handled in official capacities (Robert, 1992).

Language planning and policy

Language planning refers to intentional attempts to affect how and why languages are used in a society. It typically involves

1. Status planning.
2. Corpus planning.
3. Acquisition planning.

Colonialism

Colonialism is a major environment in which language prejudice occurs. When territories were colonized for the goal of constructing settlements, indigenous languages became critically endangered because native speaker groups were either exterminated by battle and illness or had undergone a partial linguistic shift to speak their master's language (Gibson, 2006).

Linguistic Imperial

IT refers to the domination of one language over another at the national (and occasionally worldwide) level as a result of language policy and strategy. It is a subset of linguisticism that is implemented through institutional changes and language attitudes, resulting in unequal treatment of non-dominant language groups. On a national administrative level, this type of prejudice operates similarly to racism, sexism, and classism (Edward, 1996).

Methodology

The purpose of the present study was to figure out the perceived benefits of learning English and other foreign languages in Pakistan. In this chapter, we focused on developing the basic framework of our study, the approach and method, how and why we chose a type of research, what is our target population and what would be the sample for data collection. Then we elaborated our instrument and the procedure of data collection. Lastly, we talked about the procedure of data analysis.

Research Design

A quantitative approach was selected for this research. Quantitative research is viewed as a means of thinking about the world. It comprises a wide range of methodologies for conducting systematic investigations of social issues utilizing statistical or numerical data (Watson, 2015). The aim of this study is to see the perceived benefits of learning English and other foreign languages in Pakistan. Using survey methodology with a pragmatist paradigm for the present study, the research method and source of the data were decided. Survey methodology offers two methods to collect empirical data: questionnaire and interview schedule (Neuman, 2014). As the purpose of the study was to see the perceived benefits and causes of learning English and other foreign languages in Pakistan, it required numerical data and for collecting quantitative data, a closed questionnaire was selected as the data collection method.

Population and Sampling

A population is a whole group from whom people seek to draw conclusions. A sample is a specified group of people from whom the researcher collects the data. The sample is always smaller than the total population. The main focus of this study is to check the perceived benefits and causes of learning English and other foreign languages, that's why our target population was the students of The University of Lahore and the accessible population was the students of English department. From this accessible population, we did convenience sampling and took 100 responses. Convenience sampling is a sort of non-probability sampling that involves the sample being selected from that section of the population that is easy to deal. We choose this strategy owing to a shortage of time for our investigation.

Instrument of the Study

According to the requirements of our study, we choose a close-ended questionnaire as it is an easy tool to collect data. A questionnaire is a research tool composed of a series of questions

designed to elicit information from respondents. The researcher took one hundred responses from the target audience and the number of items was thirty. The questionnaire of the study consists of four parts. The first section of the questionnaire is about the demographic information of the respondent. The remaining three parts have the same scale which is the Likert Scale. The second part contains 15 questions and they all are about the basic perceived benefits of learning English as a second language. After that, the third part is about the causes of learning English and other foreign languages. The last part of the questionnaire is majorly about knowing and understanding the trends of learning different foreign languages in Pakistan.

The Procedure Of Data Collection

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on certain variables inside an established system. It is an important research component in all study fields. The researcher chose a questionnaire as a tool for collecting a quantitative form of data. Every respondent was provided one questionnaire and they have to mark answers according to their opinion.

The Procedure Of Data Analysis

Data analysis is the systematic use of statistical and logical tools to explain, illustrate, and evaluate data. In this step, the researcher coded and entered the filled questionnaires into the computer for analysis with SPSS (version 15.0). After entering the data, it was checked for any entry mistakes. The missing information was detected and excluded from any subsequent calculation. The researcher firstly checked the reliability of the collected data. After that, the researcher applied the descriptive test. This test is applied to find the value of N, standard deviation, minimum and maximum value, and the mean of the data.

The Limitations Of Study

The study's limitations are those design or technique aspects that affected or influenced the interpretation of present research findings. In this study the major limitation was lack of time. A limitation of the study is that because of lack of time the researcher has to take limited responses of the questions. This is a quantitative research followed by questionnaire which is considered to be the less reliable source than interviews. There is a point where the people are not willing to give the responses at that time. So if this research follows qualitative approach then the results will definitely be different.

Data Analysis

To see the perceived benefits of learning English along with the causes and trends of other languages in Pakistan, the researcher first of all, took the reliability test. After this initial test, the descriptive test of the collected data was applied. In the below tabulation, the first 14 statements are related to the Advantages of Learning English for Pakistani undergraduate students. Then 15 to 19 statements are about the trends of learning other languages in Pakistan.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Data Analysis for Benefits of Learning English

Sr.no	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
1	English improves employment opportunities.	100	5.00	1.00	2.95	.9885
2	Knowledge of English can help to explore the world with confidence.	100	5.00	1.00	3.33	1.255
3	English can improve people's communication skills.	100	5.00	1.00	3.08	1.098
4	By knowing English, people can start a life in an English-speaking country easily.	100	5.00	1.00	4.00	.9320
5	English can be a help to access world class education system.	100	5.00	1.00	2.88	1.281
6	By knowing English, people can experience different cultures.	100	5.00	1.00	2.81	1.169
7	With the help of English, people can learn other languages.	100	5.00	1.00	2.35	1.028
8	Learning English as a second language is useful in email and internet.	100	5.00	1.00	2.86	1.128
9	Learning English helps in building business.	100	5.00	1.00	2.75	1.104

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

10	English can help in developing relations widely.	100	5.00	1.00	3.18	1.113
11	English can help to stand out in society.	100	5.00	1.00	3.35	1.131
12	Knowledge of English can help to pass the competitive exam.	100	5.00	1.00	3.58	1.173
13	Learning English can reduce achievement gaps.	100	5.00	1.00	3.73	.9412
14	Learning English can enhance people 's vocabulary.	100	5.00	1.00	3.57	.8675

The above tabulation shows Descriptive analysis of the first 14 items. These items are related to the benefits of learning English as a second language and all the statements were designed accordingly. In this part the participants of the study assigned highest mean value to item 4 that states that —By knowing English, people can start a life in an English-speaking country easily. and that value of mean is (4.00) and (N= 100). This seems to suggest that students think that learning English can be very fruitful for them in order to set their life in any English speaking society.

Table 2: Data Analysis For Trends Of Learning Other Foreign Languages

Sr. no	Items	N	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Std.Daviation
15	I think learning different languages can Improve memory.	100	5.00	1.00	3.08	1.244
16	I think learning languages can improve listening Skills.	100	5.00	1.00	3.29	1.208
17	I think knowing different languages can Widen people 's knowledge.	99	5.00	1.00	3.28	1.137
18	I think learning different languages can help to improve problem-solving	100	5.00	1.00	3.67	1.239

19	I think learning different languages can introduce people to Different cultures.	100	5.00	1.00	3.48	1.086
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The above tabulation shows Descriptive analysis of the last 5 items. These items are related to the trends of learning other foreign languages in Pakistan and all the statements were designed accordingly. In this part the participants of the study assigned highest mean value to item 29 that states that —I think learning different languages can help to improve problem-solving ability. And that value of mean is (3.67) and (N= 100). This seems to suggest that students are aware of trends of other languages and they think that learning other languages can enhance their problem solving abilities.

Discussion

The main focus of this study was to investigate the perceived benefits of learning English for undergraduate students with possible reasons for doing it and to see the on growing trends of learning other foreign languages in Pakistan. For this, the researcher selected a quantitative data collection method and a close-ended questionnaire as a tool. There were two parts of questionnaire which consist of total 19 statements. The first one is about the benefits of learning English as a second language for Pakistani undergraduate students and the last part is related to the trends of learning other foreign languages in Pakistan. The researcher selected the University of Lahore as a population and the target audience was students of the department of English. The researcher collected 100 responses by doing convenience sampling. On this questionnaire, the researcher applied a reliability test and got Cronbach Alpha value which shows the reliability of collected data. To check the mean value, the researcher applied descriptive analysis to all two sections by computing variables. The highest mean value of the first section is 4.00 and the highest mean value of the last section is 3.67. With all mean values, it was discovered that our target audience was fully aware of the benefits and reasons for learning English as a second language, believed that there are numerous benefits and reasons for learning English, and recognized the trend of learning other foreign languages in Pakistan.

Research question no.1 Is learning English as a second language beneficial for Pakistani undergraduate students?

The data says that many students think that yes learning English as a second language can be

very useful in the Pakistani context. Many respondents agreed with the first section of our questionnaire which is related to the benefits. We discussed the general benefits and the perception of students through it. For example, majorly of the students agreed with the statement that learning English can reduce achievement gaps. Such responses verify the view that regardless of age, being bilingual can enhance memory and recall more information as compared to monolinguals (Morales, 2013).

Research question no. 2 what are the possible reasons of learning English? For this, we found that there are multiple reasons for learning English in Pakistan. For instance, most respondents highly agreed that learning English can be helpful in promoting tourism in Pakistan. This confirms the finding of Barron (2022) that we can connect with foreign countries or with people if we are bilingual.

Research question no.3 why do people tend to learn other languages nowadays in Pakistan? On this aspect, we came to know with our research that audiences accepted that learning other languages can be fruitful in many ways, such as, knowing more languages can improve our problem-solving abilities.

Conclusion

This study addresses the perceived advantages of acquiring a second language, particularly English. According to the research, individuals in Pakistan are increasingly engaged in learning English. Although the trend towards English language acquisition is not new, there remains a significant enthusiasm among the populace for its study. English is recognized as one of the most influential languages globally, with one in five individuals capable of speaking or at least comprehending it, given its status as the international lingua franca. Many individuals pursue English language education primarily for enhanced job prospects, enabling them to communicate effectively while seeking employment opportunities abroad. Proficiency in English often correlates with access to superior and more diverse job openings. Additionally, individuals opt to learn English or other second languages as it aids in the development of cognitive abilities. The ability to communicate in English also promotes tourism and enhances the tourism sector within Pakistan. Furthermore, it contributes to social differentiation within developing countries such as Pakistan. This study concludes that the citizens of Pakistan believe that learning English is essential for securing better employment and bolstering cognitive capabilities. The inclination towards learning languages has begun to shift towards Arabic and Chinese. The interest in the Chinese language escalated during the

COVID- 19 pandemic, spurred by a growing curiosity among individuals to learn Chinese, particularly due to various projects initiated by China that attract interest in employment opportunities there. As Pakistan is a predominantly Muslim country, many individuals recite the Quran in their daily routines; however, their lack of understanding of Arabic presents a barrier. As a result, there is a burgeoning religious interest in learning Arabic within Pakistan, which has been reflected in the recent addition of Arabic as a compulsory subject in the national curriculum. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has implemented the English Language Teaching Reforms (ELTR) project aimed at enhancing language learning outcomes, particularly at the tertiary level. However, Pakistan' s diverse linguistic, educational, and cultural contexts, coupled with the historical and contemporary use of English, render the reform of language teaching a challenging endeavour.

Findings of the Study

- Numerous students contend that acquiring English language skills significantly enhances their employment prospects, particularly in the global job market.
- Respondents indicated that their proficiency in English has notably improved their communication abilities, thereby facilitating more effective interactions across both professional and personal spheres.
- English is widely recognized as essential for travel and for confidently exploring the world, thereby providing a competitive advantage in non-native English-speaking countries.
- Students acknowledge that mastery of the English language grants them superior access to high-quality educational systems worldwide. A consensus has emerged among students that fluency in English enriches their experiences and deepens their understanding of diverse cultures, thereby fostering global awareness and empathy.
- There is a prevailing belief that studying English enhances cognitive abilities, particularly in areas such as memory, problem-solving, and decision-making. Participants further emphasized that English proficiency enhances business connections and opens new international trade and networking pathways.
- In Pakistan, English is associated with social status, making many students feel it distinguishes them within society. Additionally, there is an increasing interest in acquiring Chinese and Arabic languages.

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

- The growing prominence of Chinese is attributed to the opportunities linked to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), while Arabic is valued for its religious and cultural importance.
- Pursuing English language skills is perceived as a means to bridge achievement gaps, thus enabling students to excel in academic environments, including competitive examinations.

Recommendations

- The government should incorporate multilingual education into Pakistan's formal education system, emphasizing languages such as English, Arabic, and Chinese, which are pivotal for job opportunities.
- Foreign language education should begin early to enhance cognitive and academic development, particularly in primary and secondary schools, rather than being delayed until the university level.
- Educational institutions ought to leverage digital platforms and mobile applications to assist students in acquiring foreign languages, making the experience more interactive and accessible.
- Universities and training centres must offer specialized language courses, particularly in Chinese for roles associated with CPEC and Arabic for professions in Islamic studies or international relations.
- It is essential to encourage international language exchange programs or collaborations with foreign universities to provide students with practical experiences using foreign languages in real-life contexts.

Gap for Future Research

Future research in this field should focus on a longitudinal analysis examining the long-term effects of foreign language learning on students' professional accomplishments and cognitive development. Furthermore, comparative studies are essential to discern the unique advantages that various foreign languages (including Chinese, Arabic, and English) offer across different professional sectors in Pakistan. It is also crucial to conduct qualitative research to gain insights into students' motivations, challenges, and cultural perspectives regarding language learning, particularly their native and foreign languages. Additionally, further research may investigate the impact of e-learning on language acquisition in rural areas, assessing the

effectiveness of digital tools in contrast to traditional classroom teaching methods. Lastly, inquiries into the sociolinguistic ramifications of the growing trend of foreign language acquisition, especially English, are imperative for understanding how these changes influence the preservation and vitality of regional languages in Pakistan.

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Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

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