Language Ownership: An in-depth survey of English majors at a Public University in Karachi at the Tertiary Level
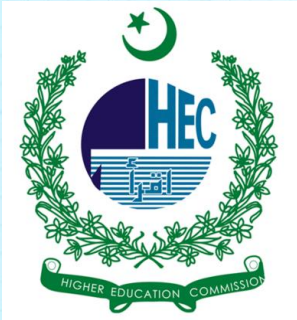
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Abstract

Though English has had a post-colonial impact in Pakistan since its independence time. However, 49% of the overall Pakistani population acquired the English language as a second language. Controversial debates were held about the ownership of the English language but majorly, ownership of the English language has been claimed by native speakers because of their insider knowledge and special control of their language. This qualitative survey research at a public university in Karachi aims to investigate ownership among undergraduate and graduate English majors. 154 undergraduate and graduate students participated in a qualitative study using Google Surveys to respond to open-ended questions and a structured interview technique. On the collected qualitative data, thematic analysis was performed, and codes were created to provide the primary themes. As a result of data analysis, Micro and macro levels of ownership were revealed in the findings, and a standard variety of English language was identified. The earners denied to consider themselves as the legitimate owners of the English language. The study concludes with the implications of this research for the English major teachers of the university to understand the ownership at macro and micro levels and design strategies to develop or assess learners' personalities.

Keywords: Ownership, Micro and Macro Ownership, Ownership as Indigenization, Ownership as Legitimacy, Affiliation, Expertise, and Inheritance in Ownership.

Introduction

English is a worldwide language and is regarded as a lingua franca or an international language (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Nearly 500 million people worldwide speak English as a second language, while more than 350 million people use it as their primary language. Additionally, the globalization process united people from all over the world and established the English language as a common language (Jenkins, 2007, 2015; Seidlhofer 2011). For instance, English is used as a foreign language in close to 160 nations worldwide (Cha & Ham, 2008). As a first, second, or foreign language, English is used for communication, education, commerce, information technology, tourism, and many other purposes all over the world (Lyon, 2017). In the 20th century,

there has been much discussion and analysis about how English has expanded throughout the world (Crystal, 1997, 2003; Graddol, 1999, 2006; Holborow, 1999). Researchers have expressed both support and opposition to the expansion of English (Davies, 2005; Fishman, Cooper, & Conrad, 1975; MacArthur, 1999).

The proponents (Crystal, 1997, 2003, 2007; Graddol, 1999; Galloway & Rose, 2015; Jenkins, 2003; Kachru, 2006; Schneider, 2007; Stockwell, 2002; Widdowson, 1994) discuss the liberating nature of English, the importance of openness, and the provision of unlimited access to knowledge and information along with global opportunities for nearly all the countries. Few academics, in contrast, paint a pejorative view of language expansion (Philipson, 1992; MacArthur, 1999). They contend that strong countries are rising above weak ones due to the huge utilization of the English language. They said that in addition to decreasing the usage of other languages to a less important role, the spread of English led to the loss of cultural and linguistic values too. It eliminated these languages' useful roles by assuming their place and dominating crucial areas like the medium of teaching.

Despite all of this debate, the ownership of the English language originally claimed by native countries was transferred to English speakers in other non-native countries and it has become a known fact now that it is also used by other non-native speakers, whose usage has greatly influenced the many dialects of the language. This caused the emergence of varieties of English Language such as British English, American English, Australian English, Singaporean English, Malaysian English (Migdadi, Yunus, & Garni, 2020), and Pakistani English due to geographical and historical factors. Because there are so many varieties of English, questions about who owns the language may be overwhelming and confusing for both students and teachers. (Widdowson, 2012; Ali, 2014; Jadoon & Ahmad 2022). However, Widdowson (2012) Widdowson shared an optimistic view of the aptitude and opportunity for non-native English speakers to legitimately own the English language.

Status of English in Pakistan

Pakistan is a land of multilingual and multicultural societies where Urdu and English are the official languages and are widely used by almost all the classes or communities of Pakistan along with other regional languages (Haque, 1983: Rahman, 1998, 2002). If Urdu and other regional languages are compared to English, it is

considered a second and more powerful language (Rassool & Mansoor 2009). Haque (1983) and Rahman (1998 & 2002) related the present prestigious position of English with the historical post-colonial association with the elite class. The status of English is not only declared officially but also all the legal and documental work is being processed in the English language. In contrast, the education policy of Pakistan has a dichotomous position and the educational system of Pakistan has been classified into two streams i.e. English medium and Urdu medium, and in majority public sector offers Urdu medium, and the private sector gives English medium education (Shamim, 2007, 2008).

Acknowledging the importance of the English language, the Government of Pakistan (2009) has made potential efforts to incorporate the English language at the beginning of primary from class 1 to higher level A few of the problems mentioned by Shamim (2017) include a dearth of systematic analysis, discussions and debates about English language requirements, and the fact that English is only being learned at the micro level, through career development opportunities. Other problems include a lack of educational resources, programs that develop English, uneven input and output, inappropriate assessments, failed policies, low-quality content, and achievement standards.

All in all, the influential position of English in Pakistan has been determined by the codification of the constitution and law in English (Bacha et al., 2021). Likewise, in other varieties of English, Pakistani English was also acknowledged internationally, and several Writers were nominated for international awards such as Mohsin Hamid (2002,2007) Kamila Shamsie, (2002,2014) Uzma Aslam Khan (2003), and many others.

In contrast, with the efforts of writers, many researchers as Hansen Edward"s (2017) and Higgins (2003) found in their studies that Asian English language speakers do not claim ownership of language as natives. This issue has been addressed in the current study. It further explores their position in NS-NNS dichotomy i.e. their claim on English language ownership as discussed by some linguists (Brutt-Griffer&Samimy, 1999, 2001; Davies, 1991; Lin, 1999; Liu, 1999; Mufwene, 2001; Nayar, 1997; Norton, 2013; Pennycook, 1994, 2001; Wee, 2002; Widdowson, 1994) who declared that NNS could be the owners of English language and English

language can be modified as per their need (Norton, 1997; Peirce, 1995). The responses against these inquiries lead the researcher to inquire about the research question:

1.   What are the language ownership patterns of the tertiary level students of English major at a public university?

Literature review

World Englishes and Kachru's (1982) Model: Historical View

The term, World Englishes (WE), coined by Kachru (1982, 1990, 1997), refers to the fact that the English language has been used as a global means of communication in numerous countries worldwide. We refer to the "localized forms of English" that are used across the world (Xiao 2009, p.421) and deal with the codification and identification of national varieties of English (Crystal, 1997). Consequently, English speakers around the world are categorized into three groups: English as a Native Language (ENL) speakers, English as a Second Language (ESL) speakers, and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speakers. Based on this categorization, they are placed in the inner-circle, the outer-circle and the expanding-circle respectively.

The inner-circle comprises those traditionally based English countries where the English language has its cultural and linguistic base and where it is a primary language spoken as a mother tongue (White, 1997). USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are included in this circle with the English varieties termed as 'norm providing'. Whereas, the outer circle defines the initial phases of the spread of English in non-native settings, where English plays an integral role as a second language in multilingual contexts (Rajadurai, 2005) and owns the major position in the country's chief institutions such as Pakistan, Singapore, Bangladesh, India, and Malawi.

The varieties of English used in these countries are categorized as „norm-developing". These countries practice conflicted variety because of the difference between linguistic norms and linguistic behavior. Such varieties are endo-normative i.e. viewed internally and confide on regional forms and customs as well as exo-normative i.e. viewed externally and based on standard forms and customs. The expanding-circle, on the other hand, consists of the countries where English has been acknowledged and learned as a Foreign Language. These countries do not have any

colonialized history by any of the inner-circle countries. White (1997) ascribed that in expanding countries English is being used as the most powerful source to communicate internationally. The 'norm-dependent' variety of the English language is used in the expanding circle of countries such as Japan, China, Greece, and Poland (Crystal, 1997). Graddol (1997) and Jenkins (2009, 2015) further discussed that, at the beginning of the 21st century, these three circles of English started to overlap and decentralized with the shift of the English language towards non-native speakers (L2) which outnumbered native speakers (L1).

Ownership of English in Non-Native Circles

With the spread of English and globalization, indigenization, and the growth of varieties of English, the claim of ownership of language with the native or non-native is still controversial for scholars (Davies, 2004; Widdowson, 1994). The speakers of English "users" have no set criterion for identifying them as native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) which is a great dilemma as there was no single standardized norm considered to be left for Standard English at a global level (Brutt-Griffer & Samimy, 1999, 2001; Davies, 1991; Widdowson, 1994).

Furthermore, Davies (1991) defined native speakers (NSs) as individuals who have "special control over a language and an insider knowledge about „their‟ language" (p.1). He argues that being a native speaker is just enough to have the best control over language. However, Brutt-Griffer & Samimy (2001) indicated that people are not able to endorse self-ascribed linguistic identities. Self-ascribed NSs are not categorized on this criterion since the classification of NS and NNS is often based on social attributes instead of linguistic competence. Similarly, Widdowson (1994) claimed that language ownership belongs to those individuals who can speak it to the extent of comprehension. He and Chisanga & Kamwangamalu (1997), likewise, argued that the speakers in the postcolonial world also own English and they can modify the English grammatical level for their use to serve their local purposes.

With this view, the inner-circle countries‟ language norms became ineffective for the periphery countries in outer-circle discussed by Kachru (1997). This new concept of ownership is derived from the theoretical stance of Norton (1997) who defined ownership as the legitimacy of a speaker and how he owns this legitimacy. She shared that the way we perceive the meaning of spoken language depends greatly

on the tone of speech. Furthermore, the concept of ownership was declared suitable in the description of proficiency of English speakers because it completely overlooks the uniform concept of dualities that the inner-outer circle, or NS-NNS, constructed. Norton (1997) and Peirce (1995) argued that the division of NSs and NNS speakers into two categories intercepts learners from owning English because this dichotomy isolates them from becoming authorized speakers of English.

Rampton (1990) elaborated on the notion of ownership employing how the speakers perceive themselves about the language. He contended that the meaning of different things varies from person to person. He further discussed in general that when a person declares any language as his or her language then it means that language holds a prominent position in the construction of his or her identity and further to what extent he or she perceives the level of command in that language. Additionally, he addressed ownership as expertise and fidelity where he defined expertise as learned not innate, and loyalty as being born as a native speaker and also having the urge to associate with the language.

Conceptualizations of Ownership

Ownership refers to the authority to utilize, own, or transfer anything. In multilingual cultures, when there are power differentials among language speakers, the question of language ownership is particularly crucial (Derrardja Sahar, & Nadjet, 2023). Peirce (1997), Widdowson (1994), Higgins (2003), and Parmegiani (2010) presented an ideology regarding ownership i.e. Language rights are explicitly referred to as language ownership. The traditional ideology circumscribed that exclusively NS can be regarded as legitimate owners of the English language which was later omitted. In contrast to the old thought, Kachru (1995) presented the conventional notion and argued that the outer circle speakers of English who are NNS of English, could declare ownership of the English language ownership. He said that "even expanding circle speakers from nations such as Korea or Brazil may have high degrees of ownership, particularly those who are educated in private, English-medium schools or those whose socioeconomic status affords them ownership of English" (p.641). So, any individual can claim ownership of language who has had a past or present relationships or background

Micro and Macro Ownership

Parmegiani (2008, 2010) complemented the contribution of Rampton on the ownership of language and contributed the concept of micro and macro perspectives to ownership. The micro perspective means that the speakers perceive a language as their own i.e., he or she adapts the functions of language according to the intended purpose or according to their contextual need, whereas, on the macro-perspective, sociolinguistics groups are viewed as a legitimate language owner in the linguistic domain. The macro-perspective was resisted by the efforts of Kachru (1986), Canagarajah (1999), Brutt-Griffler (2002), and Mazrui (2004) who shared their findings on the question of micro or macro-ownership and suggested that the macro-ownership of English has decentered from its primary focus and has become a challenge. Such as in Africa, Singapore, South Asia, and other countries of the world, several communities exist that have modified the English language and developed their own appropriate English and national standards of English language which are considered legitimate varieties and these varieties in some cases were declared more appropriate than the standard varieties of English, used in the United Kingdom and the United States (Parmegiani, 2008). Similarly, Jenkins (2015) and Galloway and Rose (2015) also supported a similar stance of ownership as explained by the aforementioned linguists.

Schools of Thought Pertaining Ownership

The construct of ownership is further explained with the reference to indigenization or legitimacy (Higgins, 2003). The concept of ownership of English is based on the standards of English language usage and the level of competence among users of the English language (Ikome 1998; Ofori and Albakry 2012; Parmegiani 2010; Saeki 2015) in outer and inner circles as discussed by Kachru (1985, 1997) and, according to them, the ownership of English is not considered to be the sole commodity or asset of inner circle countries i.e. native speakers of English. As a consequence, the ownership ideology departed from geographical and political constraints and merged into the notion of identity. This can be supported by the argument of Davies (2008) which states that "if a speaker identifies him/herself as a native speaker of Singaporean English then that is a sociolinguistic decision... which means, of course, that it is a decision about identity" (p.446). This sociolinguistic decision was also

supported by Edwards (2017) for the NNS who can indigenize the English Language according to their use. He asserted that this decision is equally important for the English speakers of Asia even if English is changed in multiple ways into localized multidimensional varieties

Ownership as Indigenization

Many of the researchers of institutionalized varieties of English (IVEs) (Chisanga & Kamwangamalu,1997; Widdowson,1994; Kachru,1983; Lowenberg,1986; Platt, Weber & Ho,1984; Thumboo, 2001b; Wee, 2002) affirmed the concept of ownership in which the speakers use an appropriate format of English or alter the English language as per their need. Chisanga & Kamwangamalu (1997) in their study in South Africa, described the process of indigenization as borrowing vocabulary, morpho-syntactic transfer, and semantic addition. The aforementioned researchers also argued that NSs no longer have the sole legitimacy over grammatical forms of the English language because the norms and standards of the English language are not only developed by the NS of the English language any longer. Widdowson (1994) stated, "You are proficient in a language to the extent that you possess it, make it your own, bend it to your will, assert yourself through it rather than simply submit to the dictates of its form" (p. 384) and concluded that exo- normative standards do not apply to varieties of English exist globally and they cannot measure the competency level of speakers. According to him, indigenization is a substitute for measuring speakers" language proficiency.

Ownership as Legitimacy

Ownership has also been defined as legitimacy besides indigenization (Higgings, 2003; Norton, 1997; Peirce, 1995). They explained that it provides a comprehensive framework for identifying the language identity of indigenized varieties of English language speakers. Peirce (1995) criticized the notion of NS-NNS dichotomy by claiming that it creates an obstacle among English language users to claim themselves as legitimate speakers of the English language. Peirce (1995) in her research study explored the ownership of a woman who immigrated to Canada. She analyzed that the distribution or classification among the language learner and TL culture is controversial due to her investment in learning TL due to her need for social identity in connection to society. She further analyzed the interview with one of her

participants and concluded that her investment in TL is due to her basic existence as a caregiver of her family. She needed to negotiate about house rent with her landlord which was one of the reasons she learned the English language. This concludes that the development of social relationships or social identity towards society and surroundings motivated her to become a legitimate owner of English. Consequently, it was deduced that "if learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources" (Peirce, 1995, p. 17). Furthermore, Norton (1997) discussed that the investment in learning the target language eventually drives toward the ownership of language as the speakers confidently participate in societal matters along with all required resources and they achieve a perception of legitimacy to use the language. She figured out that "if learners of English cannot claim ownership of a language, they might not consider themselves legitimate speakers of that language" (p. 422).

Higgins (2003) researched 16 participants of English language speakers who were from both inner- and outer-circle countries. Participants living in the USA were from Malaysia and Singapore with Chinese ethnicity. They were identified to share different degrees of ownership due to multiple historical features. In contrast, the Indian students had greater English language exposure than their younger age groups. However, all the outer-circle speakers depicted lesser degrees of ownership than the inner-circle individuals who were white Americans. Likewise, Seilhamer"s (2015) investigated legitimate ownership among 6 participants through qualitative research. The analysis revealed that all of the participants frequently use the English language and perceive them as legitimate owners. He identified the reasons for legitimate ownership i.e. strong competency, English language teaching experience, language association, and a high intensity of expertise in the language.

Conversely, Edward (2019) examined eighteen respondents in the Asian context and residents of Singapore, Malaysia, India, Taiwan, and the Philippines were interviewed to probe their language past experiences, its" usage and construction of identity as NS of the English language and their mother tongue. He further employed constructs of affiliation, inheritance, and expertise from the study of Rampton (1990) to analyze the participants" definition of a native speaker. The findings revealed that English language speakers in Asia do not claim ownership of language as natives do.

So, in the multilingual context, native speakers were described as being in the localized process of self-reflection. Likewise, Rampton's (1990) perception of micro and macro ownership is also related to the concept of NS-NNS and ownership in an in-depth way that at micro perspective NNS view and use the English language varieties and claim themselves as the owner of the English language whereas, on the other hand at macro perspective, NS are the sociolinguist groups that are thought as legitimate owners of English language in the linguistic world market. Along with this, Aiello (2018) investigated the nature of ownership in the EFL context by mixed method approach among English language learners in Italy. He identified a strong relationship of learners with English and ownership understanding. They co-constructed and negotiated language ownership actively which shifts according to context and interlocutor.

Methodology

Research Approach

The present study adopts the inductive approach to explore the construct of ownership of the English language of tertiary-level English major students. Inductive research includes the search for a design that begins from observation and the improvement of clarifications and theories for those patterns through the arrangement of hypotheses. (Bernard, 2011). Similarly, Goddard & Melville (2004) explained the inductive approach that begins with the observations and at the end of the research process theories. In the current research study, theories related to identity and ownership were incorporated and after the collection of raw data, it was interpreted to derive theories, themes, categories, or a model through interpretations made by a researcher to reach the reality or knowledge.

In the current research study, the qualitative method guided the researcher to explore the ownership of undergraduate and postgraduate students regarding the English language. Moreover, a qualitative method provided an in-depth understanding of views and perceptions. It also gives visions to different problems and helps to develop theories and concepts for research study effectively. It also enables the researcher to look deeper into the research problem and further identify new thoughts and individual perceptions.

Research Design

The research design selected for the current study is a survey research design. Traditionally, in the domain of sociology, the term survey is declared as the study of individuals by observing the behavior of its members, for example, the process of the census has been in practice for ages in the world (Groves et al., 2004). Likewise, Guba and Lincoln (1998) also discussed that the qualitative survey can be performed under constructivist projects. Tenius and Cunnington (1972) in their study illustrated two types of qualitative surveys i.e., open (or inductive) and pre-structured (or deductive) qualitative surveys. Thus, in the present study, a pre-structured qualitative survey was applied as the constructs and dimensions were pre-determined and developed with the help of concepts and theories incorporated in the current study.

Target Population and the Context of the Study

The present research was conducted in a public university familiar with all the disciplines of engineering in which the Department of Social Sciences is also growing. Many respondents from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and languages are enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate English and Applied Linguistics disciplines and want to pursue their career in English (linguistics). Undergraduate and postgraduate students studying in the current academic year 2019 in a public university in Karachi were selected as the target population to collect the data. All the students were pursuing English/Applied linguistics as their major academic discipline. Overall 154 students were counted as the target population. Among them (n=102) were undergraduate (BS) students and (n=52) were postgraduate (MS) students. The whole population was comprised of 5 % males and 95% females.

Sampling Technique

For this research study, the quota sampling technique is used which is a type of non-probability sampling and is mostly used by qualitative researchers. The quota sampling procedure is based on the selection of categories (strata) that represent critical attributes of the huge population (Cohen et al.,2007,2013; Creswell, 2013). Following the guidelines, the researcher, at the first stage, divided the population into two major strata i.e. BS and MS students. In the next step, students of four years of the BS program and two years of the MS program were selected, from which the sample size was drawn in the same proportion as they are represented in the

population.

Sampling Size

In this study, in the first step, the population (n=154) of students is proportionally allocated based on BS (n=102) and MS (n=52) programs. In the second step, 1st (n=35), 2nd (n=16), 3rd (n=17), and 4th year (n=34) students and currently enrolled 6th (n=25) and 7th batch (n=37) students of the MS program were grouped. In the third step, among all these groups 25% (n=54) of the sample size from each quota was drawn to collect data in an attempt to the truthful representation of the characteristics of the target population (see Figure 3 for class-wise division). Furthermore, the participants were short-listed based on their accessibility.
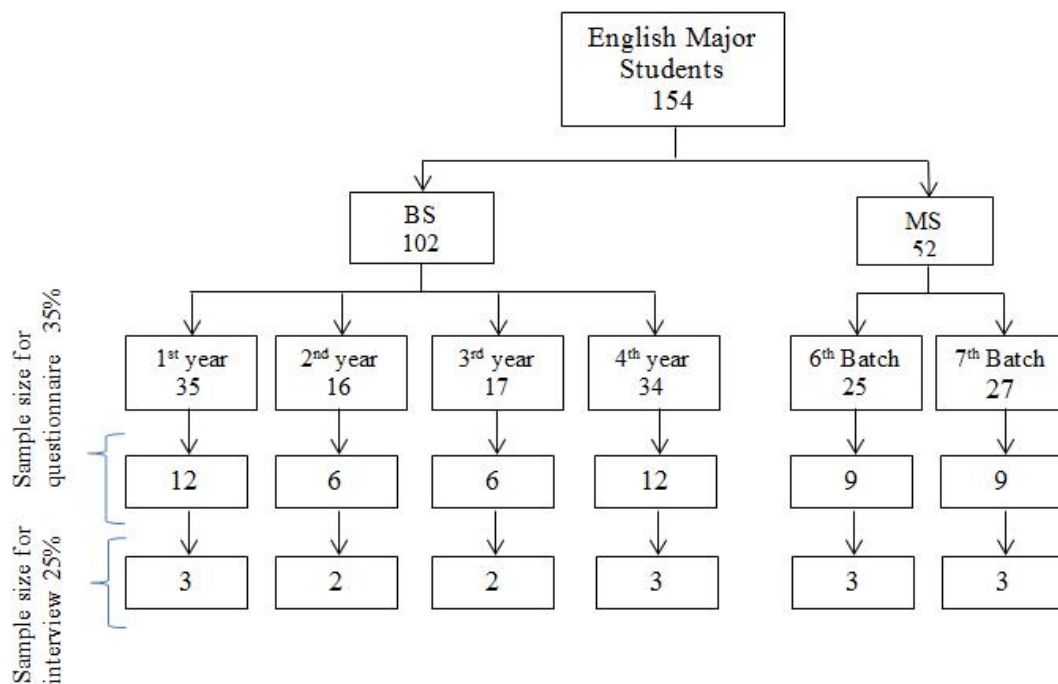

Figure 1 Quota Wise Distribution of the Sample

Data Collection Tools

This study employs a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview to explore the ownership of the participants. The semi-structured questionnaire included a demography section, and 10 questions on ownership to get the responses from 54 participants. There were two sections in the questionnaire. The respondents' name, gender, discipline, current semester, birthplace, upbringing city, current city of residence, ethnicity, mother tongue or first language, other spoken languages, type of

schooling, academic background, parents' education, and preferred language for communication were among the demographic details gathered in Section A. The researcher was able to get participant feedback on the primary construct of ownership with the aid of the second section.

To provide a thorough understanding of the situation or process, semi-structured interviews were also carried out (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Further to triangulate the data obtained from a questionnaire, 16 participants were interviewed using the open-ended questions. A total of 07 question items were related to ownership, after the literature was reviewed, a theoretical framework and a construct (ownership) were chosen. When necessary, additional questions were added during the interview to check participants' answers and gain further clarification regarding their ownership claim to the English language. The purpose of the first part of the interview protocol was to acquaint the participants in general and ensure their comfort. Only participants who had already replied to the questionnaire were specifically asked these questions.

Data Analysis

After the data collection, a thematic analysis of the gathered data was carried out. Thematic analysis is a process that deals with findings and interpretation of textual data regarding themes and patterns (Yin, 2014). For the data analysis of the open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview, NVivo 12 was used. This computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software was implemented to develop, apply, and rectify the categories, trace links between concepts, and make comparisons between cases and events (Yin, 2009). NVivo software speeds up the data analysis process and makes the coding, theming, the process of emerging theories, and research report preparation easier for the researcher. As well as this computer program also helped the researcher to make the data analysis more consistent and organized so that valid and reliable results could be generated. The nodes were generated by sorting similar references or responses of participants. With the help of nodes, codes were developed which were further utilized to generate sub-themes and themes.

Data Analysis and Findings

Demographic Information of Participants

The participants' demographic information includes factors like their gender, age

groups, current degree status, native tongue, affiliation with educational sectors, and language usage(see Table 1)

Table 1: Demographic information of participants

Categories	Male	Female	BS Students	MS Students
Population	19%	81%	67%	33%
Age Groups	15-20	21-25	26-30	Above 31
	33%	39%	19%	10%
Mother Tongues	Urdu	Sindhi	Punjabi	Others
	78%	4%	3%	15%
Association	Public	Private	Cadet	Missionary
	79%	17%	2%	2%
Languages	Monolingual	Bilingual	Trilingual	Multilingual
	2%	59%	26%	13%

Ownership Patterns

Micro and Macro ownership

This theme of the study illuminates the perception of participants regarding the English language i.e. micro and macro level ownership and the factors that influence these levels. A greater number of participants shared that the English language carries greater values and standards. It contains massive information regarding technology, business, professional possibilities, education, and other domains. It is a mode of communication globally and declared as an elitist, lingua franca and "an international language" (B1F_3), (B2F_3),(B4F_8), and also "a language of communication throughout the world" (M6M_1). Some of the participants declared English as a

language of social status, power, and prestige. One of the participants showed bias and declared that "English would not be the ruling language at all."(B3F_3).

In addition, participants also discussed the factors related to a micro level which facilitated the respondents during the learning journey of the English Language. The majority of the participants emphasized academic factors. They indicated educational institutes, courses, "teachers" (M6F_1), (M6F_7), (M6M_1) including books and authentic material also "prior linguistic knowledge, motivation and, teaching strategies, etc." (B4F_6), (M7M_), (M7F_3), and (M6F_8) are important.

the respondents of the interview agreed that the English language has greater values and standards and should be recommended to others or new learners. They valued the language because it is the language of knowledge, power, prestige, and "the language of communication" (B2F_2), (B4F_3]), (M6M_3) in the global world and because of "its importance, knowledge recognition, value and its power" (B1F_2), (M6F_2),(M7F_1).

It was also found through interviews that for learning, language culture has its' own role. Following these findings from the questionnaire, the interview participants considered that culture is necessary for language learning as every language contains some culture.

Ownership as Indigenization

The responses related to this theme of the study shed light on the ownership of the English Language and its" reasons. In response to the questionnaire, the majority of the participants disowned the English language because of their ownership of their native language or mother tongue. They mentioned that the English language is "not their own language" (B1F_2), (B4F_6), (B4F_3), (M6F_2).

Along with, claiming their native language ownership the participants also contributed their perception towards new regional varieties of the English language. Most of the participants perceived a positive attitude towards the regional varieties of the English language due to its" comprehensibility, acceptability, accepted accent, ease in learning and use, specifically for new learners.

Ownership as Legitimacy

The majority of the participants discussed that they use a "standard variety of English" (M7F_5), (B1F_10]) language "to some extent" (B4F_9), (B3F_3). (B7F_9), (M7F_8)

due to reasons such as childhood practice, wishes to become proficient users, for enhancing vocabulary, its value as a global language, to adopt native accent and pronunciation along with its capability to assign a new identity to its" users and "to speak like a native" (B1F_3) and for informal use also. Only a few respondents shared to use of native variety up to a great extent because of their interest in speaking.

The participants of the interview were asked to share their feelings of empowerment while using the English language. In contrast to the responses of the questionnaire majority of respondents shared that they "do feel empowered" (B1F_2), (M6F_2), (M7F_2), (M6F_1) while using the English Language, and people are usually considered more knowledgeable if they speak English.

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Ownership as Expertise, Inheritance, and Affiliation

majority of the participants declared in the responses to the questionnaire that they are average users of the English language as they only "use the English language in University" (B1F_2), (B3F_3), (B4F_10), (M6F_1). Few shared that they "Quite often" (B1F_6), (B3F_5), (B4F_9), (B4F_10), (B1F_3) use the English language in their conversation and to express emotions. Participants focused more on English for economic gain or financial support.

For the element of inheritance concerning ownership, the majority of the participants in the responses to the questionnaire gave preference and importance to their mother tongue. They thought it to be best and "they do not feel the same about English" (B1F_5), (B1F_5), (B1F_8). Participants stated that Urdu is their identity and they respect it. Furthermore, participants also discussed that English is secondary and different from the Urdu language. They shared that English is not a

comprehendible language for everyone in society and it is difficult to express feelings in the English language. Only some of the participants highlighted that they own the English language and "feel more attached and emotionally connected to English" [B2F_2], (B4F_2) due to its" own flexible nature, status, and global acceptability. They discussed that the English language provides freedom of speech to its" speakers and gives the same respect and value as other languages give. Very few participants shared the same consent regarding the English language and their mother tongue as they were comfortable in both and they own and consider "both languages" (B2F_1), (B3F_6), (B4F_8), (M6F_3), (M7F_7), (M7F_8) important.

In continuity with the above discussion, the participants" affiliation with language was also identified through their agreement on adapting to new culture, values, and beliefs. In their responses to the interview majority of participants claimed to have gained new beliefs, new ideology, and culture. They shared that with time, they become aware of the new culture which is quite different from their native culture and now they have developed a sense of acceptability towards it. They shared that they have adopted a new culture and believed that it brought some kind of high and lead culture. Few of the participants stated that the English language "changed their thinking" (B2F_2), (B2F_1), (M7F_1). Some participants also discussed their contemporary view regarding the past which has developed much now and they feel more confident with new values it also gave new perspectives and changes your way of looking at life along with "confidence and acceptance" (B4F_2),([M6F_1).

Similarly, participants further shared that there is an influence in their surroundings that strengthened and modified the negative perception of people towards the English language. Now people started to look with a positive perception and respectful attitude towards them. In addition, few of them thought the Urdu language and culture were superior and different from English language culture so they refused any development in their ideologies as stated that "my values are till what my culture and religion taught me (B2F_1) and they have learned English for the sake of learning. In conclusion, the majority of participants experienced a positive change in their identities as compared to the past as stated more confident and empowered. A few numbers of respondents valued their mother tongue and confirmed that they are more rigid about their own native identity with their mother tongue usage.

On the other hand, the findings of the interview protocol regarding ownership as inheritance elucidated similar findings as mentioned in the results of the questionnaire. The findings demonstrated that the majority of respondents showed no sense of belonging to the English language and they own their mother tongue. Participants compared both languages and stated that the English language is developing but the participants are not indulged in it. The respondents gave multiple statements such as "belong to Urdu" (B2F_1). They "never feel the same sense of belonging to the English language. Because English is a foreign language (M7F_1). Only a few of the participants claimed the ownership Of English language. Overall findings of the questionnaire and interview protocol clarified that participants do not have expertise in the English language and have a sense of affiliation with English but regarding inheritance, they tend more towards their native language Urdu.

Discussion

Ownership patterns

Most of the students in the present study shared a positive perception of the English language. The reason behind their positivity was the language itself which contains values, standards, information, and status. Therefore, participants preferred the standard form of English to be better in all educational and social forms. This finding was similar to the findings of Mehboob (2013) who found that the use of RP i.e. Received Pronunciation is dominant in Pakistani culture and all the higher educational institutes follow the same ideology. They further shared some of the motivating factors that develop their positive attitude towards language i.e. academic, social, globally oriented, and some other media of learning.

Furthermore, they preferred to recommend the English language to other learners due to the academic and professional opportunities it provides. It is the language of law and politics worldwide, it brings power, financial support, status, and knowledge and now it has become the need of the modern world. Participants also shared some challenges they faced during the learning journey. They majorly highlighted linguistic complexities including syntax, semantics, lexicons, vocabulary, pronunciation, accent, fluency and comprehension, less communicative environment, inappropriate teaching, and negative behavior of people. Besides, difficulties students also mentioned that the culture of a target language is very important to feel attached

to that community as it brings values, norms beliefs of the target language.

The positive perception of participants showed a great level of ownership among them, hence their preference for the standard English language showed their belief in Macro-ownership. Parmagiani (2010) referred to macro ownership as the sociolinguistics groups of native societies and they are the true owners of the English language. However, Macro ownership is no longer practiced and observed in the time of globalization, and learners can mold and adapt the language as per need and context. This statement is supported by many linguists (Davies,2005; Jenkins,2015; Parmegiani 2010; Norton,1997; Widdowson, 1994). Similar findings were discussed by Canagarajah and Said (2010). They cited Adrian Holliday (2003) in their study and discussed that we have moved from the use of us/them, NS/NNS, inner-circle/ rest of the world to a position of "we" where all the English speaking societies have to negotiate their norm equally on the same pace. We need to see these communities through the lens of reality rather than a professional or standard approach and should design norms suitable to their context and needs. Consequently, there is no concept of macro-ownership as found in the findings of the present study.

On the other hand, among most of the learners, the ownership of language was not found among many participants. These findings were contradictory as the participants showed a great level of affiliation, motivation, and investment toward English language learning but they were found to be more concerned about their native language i.e. Urdu. The findings of this study are in line with the findings of the study of Mushtaq and Zaki (2019). As a result, quantitative study findings revealed a higher level of attachment to the Urdu language, and learners were not motivated to invest in their L1 and L2. Similarly, the findings of a study by Edward (2017) conducted on multilingual participants displayed that English language speakers in Asia do not claim ownership of language as natives. Additionally, these findings were also relevant to the findings of Higgins's (2003) study on 16 English speakers who were from both inner- and outer-circle countries. The outer-circle countries' participants depicted a lesser degree of ownership as compared to inner-circle participants. In this study, the participants were from Pakistan which exists in outer-circle countries and they shared the same perception towards ownership of Language.

Furthermore, among respondents of the current study, high acceptability and usage of local or regional varieties of the English language were found. The reasons for it were the greater level of flexibility, ease, and comprehension it provides to its users in daily life communication. These findings are relevant to the findings of a study by Monfared and Khatib (2018). They investigated the attitudes of 260 teachers from Iran and India as members of the outer and expanding circle of Kachru (1992). The findings revealed that outer circle participants preferred the native variety and liked American English whereas the expanding circle teachers from India valued local varieties of English but emphasized British English. The participants also viewed the modification in the English language positively and the need for time i.e. globalization but they said it to be context-dependent. This variation in the English language was supported by the findings of Clark et al. (2015) who shared that the English language is spreading and modifying to a greater extent due to globalization.

It has also been observed that most of the students in the current study named British English as the standard language because of its" acceptability in academia, HEC recognized educational institutes, research area demand, its" attributes, becoming more native, new identity, etc. participants also shared sense of empowerment while using the English language. Conversely, most of the participants did not share a sense of belonging to the target community. They share various reasons for this detachment such as stark differences in the culture of the native and target culture, Considering themselves NNS and different from NS, lack of fluency and speaking skills, and more attachment to their own native language or national language. Participants did not perceive themselves as legitimate owners of the English language.

The findings of this study were contradictory to the findings of Aiello's (2018) study. In the EFL context, he investigated the nature of ownership among English language learners in Italy. His mixed method study displayed the findings that learners constructed a strong relationship with English and ownership understanding. Their language ownership agentively negotiated, and co-constructed and was able to shift continuously according to context, setting, and interlocutors. Regarding findings of theme, ownership as Expertise, inheritance, and affiliation, a greater number of the students in this study disclosed themselves as the average user of the English language i.e. lack of proficiency. The purpose behind their usage was mostly their

academic or professional engagement, communication, economic need, and social media. Similarly, De Costa (2010) in his research study, examined a Chinese learner and found that he was acquiring English language proficiency to gain a competent student‟s identity in the academic context. The same was the case in the present study. The participants selected multiple purposes to share and reconstruct their identities. Additionally, Participants shared a higher degree of ownership towards Urdu as compared to the English language. They highlight different reasons for this as it is the language of the society and is used by the majority of people in Pakistan. They can become more expressive while using their language. Since 1947 Urdu has been declared the national language (Mansoor, 2004). These findings were supported by Ahmed (2011) and Shamim (2011). They claimed that Urdu has a dominant place in Pakistan. A few of the reasons they mentioned were; its‟ common usage among people belonging to common communities, business purposes and educational public institutes. All these aforementioned reasons built an ideology and connectedness of participants to the Urdu language They did acknowledge the importance of the English language but shared more inclination towards their mother tongue.

In relevance to the findings of the current study, Khatib and Rezaei (2013) also mentioned some important factors. As a result of their research, more attachment and ownership of participants towards their mother tongue (L1) was identified. In addition, pronunciation attitude, language, social status, Use of L1 in comparison to L2 in daily life routines, language knowledge, scripts, or alphabets were the salient factors that modified learners‟ identity. So, participants modified themselves. Moreover, they do not show ownership of the English language. In support of the findings of this study, Canagrajah (1999) in his study analyzed that the Tamil community had rejected English dominancy by strengthening their nationalism and use of their native language in their daily routines. His findings were the same as the findings in this theme and favored the notion of heterogeny.

In addition, Rahman (1999) and Siddiqui (2007) suggested in their study that in Pakistan, there are strong links between an individuals‟ mother tongue and their ethnicity. Furthermore, the findings of this study can relate to the findings of Seilhamer‟s (2015) study. He conducted qualitative research to find legitimate ownership among six participants of the study. The findings affirmed that all of the

participants were frequent users of the English language and they positioned themselves as legitimate owners due to strong competency, teaching experience of the English language, affective association with English, and high intensity of expertise in the language.

Conclusion

The findings unfolded the ownership patterns of the learners. The participants shared a positive attitude toward English language learning. Besides, this attitude, expertise, affiliation, and investment the participants shared a higher degree of ownership toward their L1 and C1. It was contradictory to their preference, investment, and practice. Participants shared great ownership towards the native language commonly Urdu but were interested in investing more in the English language. Likewise, the findings of the study also represented the participants' motivation and ownership due to their urge to get degrees, Social status, financial upgradation, prestige, and good scores which were studied by Crystal (2012) at a micro level. Along with the micro level of Crystal (2012) macro level of ownership was also found which speaks about learning the language for international contact and an authoritative position. The participants shared their consent to the RP as standard variety but emphasized practicing local or regional varieties of English which were found easy and comprehendible to use for the learners. However, participants did not consider themselves legitimate owners of the English language. They perceived themselves as NNS. In addition, the language was found as symbolic capital due to its status, prestige, and recognition identified in the findings.

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