



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Ideologies Transform Through Language Hegemony – An Expository Study of Language Supremacy

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Sep 12, 2024 Accepted: Nov 25, 2024	This expository study deals with the hegemony of the English language in Pakistan and its effects on the ideologies of Pakistanis. English supremacy has been embraced consensually with its deep impacts on social and educational aspects of the society and it has cast a lasting shadow on the national ideology. Contradictory ideological beliefs are being endorsed and carried out unconsciously because they are not considered weird anymore in the society. The ideology of any society revolves around its social status, religious characteristics, educational standards and linguistic dominance. The language reflects the culture of its users because it is a part of culture. The adaptation of a foreign language leads to the adaptation of the culture of the users of that language. The hegemonic status of English in Pakistan is also causing the transformation of ideologies of its inhabitants. People have accepted English as a dominant language and they are blindly following its cultural aspects in daily life.
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INTRODUCTION

Language ideologies are in a constant state of change in multilingual societies. This change is dependent upon the power relations. When a nation, state or group of people who is ruling or governing a society comes in power, its language is considered the supreme one. The change in language ideology is not only restricted to the adaptation of the dominant language, but it also leaves profound impacts on a nation's cultural, social, educational and economic ideologies. The idea of language ideology can be described by using the term, hegemony. Hegemony is an integrated domination that is accepted by a society as Fairclough (1995) suggests that it is a process of domination of one group that exerts power over other weaker group, but this domination takes place with the consent of subordinate group.

The adaption of a dominant culture occurs when its language not only gets the hegemonic pedestal, but transforms the ideologies of the people of a subordinate group. People begin to follow the cultural

elements of a dominant society which are transmitted to them through the language. They feel that by following and adopting that culture, they will be considered more civilized, more informed and more aware of the modern trends. Their beliefs, ideas, norms, festivals, concepts, attitudes, thoughts etc. all undergo the process of change. Transformation of linguistic ideology results into cultural assimilation because inequalities in terms of language and culture always affect the ideologies of the subordinate group not of the dominant group. The individuals of the subordinate group start considering their own language and culture inferior. They themselves give up their own linguistic identities. This ideological change directly impacts their lives.

Ideology is a set of doctrines showing idiosyncratic way of life. It can be cultural, religious, economic, educational and political. The concept of ideology is explained by Campbell and Kean (1997) as those modes of feeling, valuing, perceiving and believing that exist within and inform our everyday lives and connect us to wider structures of power in a society in ways that contribute to the maintenance and reproduction of social power (p. 9). These ideologies take place through educational systems, law, religion, media and leisure activities. Ideology plays itself out through individual's daily living experiences.

Political domination makes its roots deep via ideological domination. This ideological domination is directly the result of the language of dominant people. First time, an Italian political writer, Antonio Gramsci, strived to explain this concept with the assistance of a term named hegemony which means leadership or supremacy. He asserts that ideological domination brings a stable political domination in a state or nation utilizing dominant language. The nations adopt a hegemonic language because of its popularity in every discipline of life like culture, education, mass media and religion. It strengthens the position and status of dominant classes and becomes a pride to speak a powerful language that is recognized universally and conveys their interests in the best way.

The Gramscian concept of hegemony is primarily associated with moral and intellectual leadership via consent and persuasion. It essentially consists of three concomitant processes:

1. leadership without force
2. leadership through legitimacy
3. Leadership through consensual rule

The implementation of these processes is vivid in a socially divided society because people have various socially distinctive groups. These groups use the system of leadership when they interact with each other. The successful application of these three basic processes produces a total system which has capacity to saturate more than previously well-known mechanisms of class domination. (Wexler & Whitson, 1982: 32).

The first process of leadership goes smoothly and resorts to dominance after the realization of dexterous nature of powerful leaders by the subordinate. It is interlinked with the development of consciousness of dominant group of people. The subordinate admits their dominance, progress and skills. The ruling party does not need to utilize force for its leadership against them. This kind of leadership is because of prominent charismatic characteristics which attract others without any physical force. The second process is leadership through legitimacy. The dominant party has thorough control over the subordinate and this process is considered right, legal, just and unquestioned without any resistance. The objective of this leadership is only correction. The third key process is leadership through consent. In this process, the subordinate group shows its willingness to being ruled to get maximum benefits and advantages. This leadership is not imposed on it. There is a developed sense that both dominant and subordinate groups have mutual needs and concerns. (Collins, 1989; Fontana, 1993; Fontana, 2001; Gramsci, 1971; Gramsci, 1985; Gramsci, 1995).

Western societies are enjoying their power in Pakistan by using all these key processes. They have developed the consciousness that they are more powerful in terms of technology, education, economy and scientific progress. They are eminent, influential and privileged possessing all powers. All policies are made to get their power an influence implemented in the real sense. In the second process, Pakistan has accepted that the dominance of the western culture is right and it prevails all over the world and same is the case with third process as the subordinate position is accepted by the Pakistani ruling class. With the acceptance of this position, they are getting rights and have the mutual concerns with the dominant group. This acceptance by the ruling class inclined the public to accept this dominance. This tendency attributed to the hegemonic status to the English language that eventually caused the penetration of the western culture in the Pakistani society.

In the current era English is undoubtedly a dominant language in the world and it has emerged as a global lingua franca i.e. "as a global means of inter-community communication". (Seidlhofer 2016: 20) The fact is that English is not only itself a powerful language, but it is also the language of powerful and ruling nation at present. English language dominance prevails in Pakistan and the culture of English-speaking people has also been adopted whole heartedly. English enjoys the status of a prestigious language. Moreover, it is the second language of Pakistan according to the constitution. It is dominant in the field of science, technology, education, business and communication all over the country. It has become the mode of instruction in almost all the educational institutions of Pakistan. It has also become a status symbol in Pakistan as its privileged position is has been acknowledged by the government and the ruling class. It enjoys the highest position in the hierarchy of languages spoken in Pakistan.

The present study specifically deals with the hegemony of the English language in Pakistan and how it has transformed the ideologies of people to a larger extent. Pakistan is a Muslim state comprising various cultures and civilizations. There are thousands of English medium schools in Pakistan, where students are learning English. The significance of national language, Urdu is declining day by day as students are encouraged to speak English all the time within the premises of the educational institutions. Urdu is just limited to the class in which it is taught as a subject. Even medium of instruction in pedagogy is English at all levels. Although the Supreme Court of Pakistan issued a decree to use Urdu for correspondence, yet it could not replace English as a corresponding language among different departments. Native languages are losing their importance especially Punjabi speakers are very reluctant to speak their language in front of others. This hesitation is less observed in terms of Pashto speakers. These native languages possess a rich cultural heritage, but very limited written literature can be found in these native languages. The speakers of these languages have their own specific ideologies, ways of living and thinking, but the influence of English has changed their ideologies and way of living also.

DELIMITATION

Every society is unique in term of its distinctive aspects. English represents a western society as it is the language of the West. Language always evolves within its respective culture. On the other hand, Urdu represents Pakistani culture and its ideologies. There is a tremendous ideological difference between English speakers and Pakistanis. The study has been delimited to ideological transformation of Pakistanis in social and educational settings. The data are based on the observations.

TRANSFORMATION OF IDEOLOGIES IN SOCIAL SETTINGS THROUGH LANGUAGE HEGEMONY

The dominance of English in social settings of Pakistan is vivid. Ideologies do not change by only the adaptation of a language but the adaptation of the ecology of that language makes a great difference. Pakistan is a Muslim state with its own particular beliefs, concepts, life style, code of conduct, ways of interaction with elders and youngsters, greetings, food and code of dressing. All these factors weave

their (Pakistanis') own prominent and distinctive social ideological patterns. The hegemonic status of English has brought a significant change in these social patterns and settings. It is a common observation that most of the people in Pakistan use English social expressions frequently in their daily interaction with others. These expressions are depicted in their daily conversation and they are acceptable for both speakers and listeners because they are not foreign expressions anymore. They are acceptable socially and are pervasive culturally. For instance, hello, thank you, message, call, good morning, good night, break up, hang out, welcome, bye-bye, no problem, sorry, please, fit, happy birthday, thanks etc. Such words have permeated profoundly in the society and people feel themselves convenient using these words though equivalent lexis co-exist in their own language.

Power is that which creates the possibility of obtaining tangible or intangible gratification (Rahman 1996: 8). Tangible gratifications are consumer and producer goods; intangible ones are prestige, popularity, the dissemination of ones' ideas, control over others etc. This is the power of language that is used by the elite. All scientific, technical, educational knowledge is vastly being presented in English. This is the intangible gratification of English culture through its language, which is adapted widely in Pakistan. Western food cuisine has blended into Pakistani traditional cuisine. The western cuisine goes side by side and it is not considered weird, but it is considered a status symbol which is observed everywhere. Junk food is not a part of Pakistani culture. It has been imported from the western society. The following edibles terms are commonly uttered in Pakistan now: burger, pasta, pizza, French fries, noodles, hot dogs, Chinese rice, energy drinks etc.

These food names have not only been imported but they have taken the place of traditional food in Pakistan. People prefer these edibles as they are the symbol of a modern society. It is a common tendency to visit McDonald's, KFC, Pizza Hut etc. Mothers fill the lunch box of their kids with noodles, nuggets and French fries instead of paratha or roti justifying their choice by saying that these are easy to cook. English culture is getting dominance through its language. If someone says chawal, shikanjabeen etc. he would be considered as an illiterate person titled ridiculously as a paindo.

Dressing is another important aspect of Pakistani culture that is affected by the dominance of English culture due to the hegemony or supremacy of the English language. The following words represent western society: jeans, cow-boy hats, shorts, capri pants, skin tights, T-shirt, hood etc.

These are not only the words which are spoken by Pakistanis but the objects are also used commonly. Jeans were generally worn by only boys in Pakistan. The girls are not allowed to wear jeans but Pakistani society is so overwhelmed by the western/English culture that jeans has gained popularity among girls also and now the girls also commonly wear jeans as a fashion. Same is the case with other western dress items, such as to wear shorts and skin tights especially at public places. These are not favored by our social ideologies. It was not considered ethical to wear this type of clothing in a Pakistani society. The desire to look modern and stylish by adopting English culture has made it possible and many people are wearing these clothing items in routine. Capri pants were a part of fashion in girls' dressing a few months ago. The Muslim girls are strictly instructed religiously to cover their body up to ~~below~~ ankles, but these Capri pants have changed the belief, and it has become a favorite dress code for girls.

The names of institutes, companies and shops are given in English rather selecting from the national language, Urdu. People are attracted towards those shops or institutions whose name is written in English on the signboards. Departmental stores in form of cash and carry are making more business and profits as compared to simple shops. These cash and carries are designed according to international standards where customers do not rely on shop keepers as in the traditional shops in Pakistan. Telecommunication is another social factor. Whenever one dials any help line number the person on other side responds in English. The person who has dialed the number if he is uneducated; he at once gets confused and thinks for a while what to do now. He starts thinking his own language

as inferior and also gets annoyed that he can't speak English. His ideas about his own language transform in a moment.

Culturally unaccepted words have pervaded in the society. Informal English words such as cool, hot, dude, shit, affair, girlfriend etc. are transmitting in the language of Pakistani youth. These are highly disliked words in our society. These are also considered unethical. Young boys and girls commonly use these words for each other without being conscious of their meanings. Parents and the elders reprimand their children on using abusive words in Urdu or in any native language but if the children utter oh shit, they do not take any notice and consider that their kids are using a superior language and that is considered an honor. Such words have procured acceptance to some extent.

In English society different days of the years are assigned certain characteristics or importance in the western society as Valentines'day, Mother's Day and Father's Day etc. These days have some historical background in relation to that society. These are also celebrated with enthusiasm and ardor in Pakistan. The Pakistani media is also playing a key role in promoting these days. These are the cultural celebrations of a dominant culture and are being transported to Pakistani culture through the hegemonic language of that culture.

Speaking good English is a status symbol in Pakistan. It is the language of elite and ruling class. People show their cultural hegemony through communicating in English. It is true that English is an international language, but to adopt it as a status symbol is rightly objectionable worth objection. It has been observed that the people who speak English are more privileged than the ones who use Urdu or other native languages. Our morals guide us to respect the elderly people, but the people who use English and wear a two-piece suit instead of Shalwar Kameez (a national dress), are more valued and esteemed.

TRANSFORMATION OF IDEOLOGIES IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS THROUGH LANGUAGE HEGEMONY

The hegemonic status of English is well celebrated in educational settings in Pakistan. English is the language of pedagogic instructions at educational institutes. All the subjects are in English except Urdu. Despite this fact even the Urdu teachers also use certain expressions in English as sit down, homework, notebook checking etc. Students are not only taught English as a language at schools, but their ideologies are also being transformed by these educational institutions. The students are restricted to say Good Morning and Good Noon as the teacher steps in the class instead of paying salaam. They, at primary level, are taught different poems which represent English culture. An example of such poems is as follows:

Clap your hands, clap your hands
 Listen to the music and clap your hands,
 Stamp your feet, stamp your feet,
 Listen to the music and stamp your feet
 Turn around, turn around,
 Listen to the music and turn around

By grasping this poem, the certain additional things are learnt or have been developed in students. For instance, they listen to the music and make their habit to listen it besides getting education. They also dance while learning the true meaning of the poem and become able to get the dexterity of dancing. The students learn such poems with all the actions and proudly perform in front of teachers and parents. This performance is commended and eulogized comprehensively.

People in Pakistan are losing their values and ethnicity by accepting western values proudly. The educational institutions are inculcating these western values into the minds of children by admitting the dominance of English. Schools like American Lycetuff School System, Ace International Academy, Froebel's International School, Beaconhouse School and Roots School system are specifically allocated to an elite class and are training and transforming their students as individuals with western ideologies rather than making them a true Muslims and proud Pakistanis. These schools celebrate the events like 'Halloween Costume Contest' that is an American festival on October 31. The students wear Halloween costumes and decorate the school building. They celebrate it with utmost enthusiasm. This type of fervor is not observed on Eid occasions. Some schools arrange Eid Milan parties, but less enthusiasm is observed as compared to Halloween or other western parties. The students' ideologies are transformed into the adoption of western culture as in these schools it is obligatory to speak only English. Thus, it is observed that the dominant and powerful language possesses a powerful culture that is gradually adopted along with the language.

English is prevalent in all walks of life. It has taken into grip the psyche of people that if someone is speaking English, he has no shortcoming, and is a perfect man. It has caused discrimination between elite and middle class. The children, who are at English medium schools, are more privileged than the children of Urdu medium schools. They use English with their teachers and friends as a means of communication. Their mind is occupied by the assumption that speaking English is a matter of honor; Urdu and especially native languages are inferior and users of these languages are illiterate, backward or less aware of modern trends.

The culture and ideologies of any nation are intrinsic in its language. The adaptation of language leads to the adaptation of the culture and transformation of ideologies. Young students are more prone to accept the influence of English than older generation. Crystal (2000) has mentioned that young generation considers English as a symbol of liberty, modernization and revolution. They think that English is the fast growing and magical language, which has the ability to provide them the key to success. They will be considered more modern, stylish and educated by others if they communicate in English. People will be impressed if they speak English and wear torn jeans, T-shirts and shorts.

CONCLUSION

Language represents stratified societal identity and educational institutes are the sources of identity promulgation. It accesses the community and is adopted gradually neglecting own established ideological beliefs. In Pakistan, education is being delivered in the English language at all levels especially the higher education. Literature is introduced to students with real situations of that society. The students get acquainted with norms, believes, festivals, traditions, values and moral parameters of the English society. The sets of learned values are materialized into reality because all these things are idealized and are adopted with privilege. So, the language gives the awareness of various ideologies which are adopted unconsciously over the time. English is a prestigious language in Pakistan. All official correspondence is carried out in it. Its acceptance is worthwhile and acknowledgeable. Especially the young generation has accepted it with all its true transformational spirit. People are adopting western culture, festivals, ceremonies, celebrations, dressing, food etc. The reason behind it is a direct interaction through language. Awareness and acknowledgement of a foreign ideology are a part of knowledge, but complete transformation and adoption contradicting one's own ideology is harmful and objectionable because you are losing your own identity and ideology.

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