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English language Attitude: A Survey of University Students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Muhammad Umair Khan

M.Phil. scholar Department of English, Faculty of Social Sciences
Air University, Islamabad. Email: umair.ia20@gmail.com

Dr. Naveed-Ur-Rehman Khattak

Associate Professor

Department of English, Faculty of Social Sciences

Air University Islamabad

E-mail: naveed.khattak@au.edu.pk

Abstract

English, as an associated official language and the language of regulatory and instrumental functions, is considered prestigious in Pakistan. The prestige it has influenced the attitude of its users, thus affecting the local languages in Pakistan. This research has explored the attitude attached to English by Pashto speakers and identified the role of the English language in the daily lives of people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. By adopting a quantitative research method, data for the study was collected through an online closed ended questionnaire based on a 5 point Likert scale. The obtained responses of all questions were analyzed through SPSS. The findings of the study have revealed that Pashto speakers have adopted a positive attitude towards the English language, thus find it attractive to use the English language in society because it makes an individual sophisticated and a member of a high social status. A person is seen as educated when he uses the English language in Pashto society because English is associated with education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Key words: Language attitude, Pashto Speakers, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Quantitative Research

1. Introduction

Language attitude is broadly defined as “any affective, cognitive or behavioral index of evaluative reactions towards different varieties and their speakers—or, more inclusively, their users” (Kircher et al., 2022). The study of language attitudes typically stems from the mentalist approach, which treats attitudes as internal, unobservable constructs that must be inferred from introspective or elicited responses (Giles et al., 1983). In recent decades, the English language has attained the status of a global lingua franca, playing a central role in communication, academia, and commerce across nations (Jenkins, 2014).

Beyond its communicative utility, English occupies multifaceted roles globally: it functions as *lingua economica* in business and corporate discourse, *lingua emotiva* in entertainment media, *lingua academica* in higher education and research, and *lingua cultura* through its embeddedness in the cultural fabric of English-speaking societies (Rahman, 2020). Its dominance is further reinforced by historical factors such as British and American imperialism, which established English as the administrative and institutional language in many parts of the world. Jenkins (2014) asserts that English provides a neutral means of



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communication across diverse ethnic groups and underpins the functioning of national institutions such as parliaments, courts, and civil services.

In the Pakistani context, English has deeply permeated the linguistic landscape. It is visibly present in advertisements, place names, street signage, educational institutions, and official communication. As Shamim (2011) observes, English plays a pivotal role in national development by influencing employability, international collaboration, academic mobility, and access to global research. The pursuit of English has come to symbolize prosperity, advancement, and prestige, transcending socio-economic class and linguistic identity (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017). It is often preferred in place of native terms, such as "barbershop" instead of *nai ki dukan*, (Rahman, 2020), reflecting a tendency to associate English with higher status. However, this preference has also resulted in sociolinguistic stratification, with English-medium speakers often occupying privileged positions in society, while vernacular-medium speakers face limited opportunities (Mahboob, 2002). This linguistic hierarchy is also evident in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where English is considered a marker of social status and upward mobility, particularly among Pashto speakers. English has increasingly influenced day-to-day communication, often replacing Pashto equivalents. As Khattak (2022) point out, English has become a form of linguistic capital, shaping attitudes and behaviors while simultaneously marginalizing regional languages. This dominance is evident in communicative events where English lexical items are preferred, leading to an observable shift: many native Pashto speakers are losing familiarity with equivalent terms in their mother tongue. Such a transformation suggests not only a functional dependency on English but also an underlying shift in language ideology and identity.

Despite this evident shift, limited empirical research has focused on the specific attitudes of Pashto speakers toward English, particularly from a positive perspective. Therefore, the **objective** of this study is to **identify the language attitude of Pashto speakers towards the English language**, with a focus on the benefits and perceived advantages of developing a favorable orientation toward English. Understanding this phenomenon is crucial not only for documenting sociolinguistic realities but also for informing language education policies in multilingual settings like Pakistan. Positive attitudes towards English are often driven by its instrumental value, academic success, professional opportunities, and global connectivity, yet such attitudes may also indirectly contribute to language shift and identity transformation. By exploring these attitudes among Pashto speakers, this study contributes to the broader scholarship on language attitudes, multilingualism, and the socio-cultural dynamics of English in postcolonial contexts. It also highlights the need to recognize English as a valuable tool while advocating for a more balanced approach that supports the preservation of indigenous linguistic heritage.

2. Literature Review

English is a global language and has dominated the world due to its use in most domains of life. It is used in the field of education, business, and political administration. It is the primary choice among people due to its global nature and instrumental use. Due to the wider range of applications in daily life, the majority of people have developed a positive attitude towards it. Lázaro & Martínez (2024) have examined the role of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) and



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how it affects the young learners' motivation in Basque immersion schools. They found that CLIL students significantly appreciated English more than they significantly appreciated non-CLIL students, particularly in terms of the language and its aesthetics. Another study that shows the dominance of English is carried out by Moratinos-Johnston (2019) on multilingual university students in the Balearic Island, in which one group had Catalan language as their L1 while the other group had Spanish as L1. The findings revealed Spanish L1 speakers had a positive attitude and motivation towards English as compared to the Catalan L1 speakers, because English has a role in the tourist industry and provides better job opportunities. English language also brings equality in a multi-cultural society. People adopt this language to shield themselves from the potential bias caused by talking in their native language. A study by Ramamoorthy and Mishra (2024) finds how Dalit students and teachers in Tamil Nadu employ English in their discourse to shield themselves from caste dominance. It means that Dalit students have developed a positive attitude towards English, which benefits them.

The overall attitude towards the English language in Pakistan is largely positive, shaped by its association with social mobility, academic success, and professional advancement. English is often seen as a symbol of prestige and a gateway to socioeconomic development. Khan (2024) emphasizes that English proficiency is tied to social status, especially within elite and middle-class circles, as students view it as essential for academic and career progression. Similarly, Rana et al. (2020) reveal that Punjabi students associate English with better job opportunities and upward mobility, preferring the American variety due to its global prestige. While this linguistic preference sometimes creates a social divide, many educational stakeholders adopt a pragmatic approach. Saeed and Khan (2023) highlight the dual nature of English as both symbolic capital and a possible agent of linguistic imperialism. Meanwhile, Babar et al. (2024) provide a hopeful lens, noting that university teachers often balance English with local languages in a professional and inclusive way. However, despite its value, some studies, like Qasim et al. (2022), uncover dissatisfaction with teaching methodologies and a lack of practical instruction in English. These perspectives illustrate a complex yet generally favorable perception of English, underscoring its importance across academic and social domains in Pakistan.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the English language is similarly held in high regard, particularly among students and teachers who recognize its role in modern education and global communication. Multiple studies have shown a growing acknowledgment of English as a tool for empowerment. For instance, Kifayat et al. (2023) find that students at the University of Agriculture Peshawar see English as essential for career success, with female students displaying an even stronger inclination toward the language. Roman et al. (2022) reveal that English teachers at two universities in KP favor British and Pakistani varieties of English, which suggests an emerging localized academic identity. Moreover, Saeed et al. (2022) report that students across gender lines view English positively, although challenges such as limited exposure and outdated teaching methods persist. Ullah et al. (2015) also indicate that while many secondary school teachers value English as a medium of instruction, they struggle due to a lack of training. These findings, while affirming the importance of English, also highlight that current research often overlooks how the influence of English is reshaping Pashto speech patterns. The existing literature in Pakistan, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,



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highlights a generally positive attitude towards English; they often overlook the actual linguistic shift is occurring in local languages like Pashto. Little research has explored how Pashto speakers are integrating English into their speech as a sign of linguistic adaptability and progress. Most studies focus on attitudes alone, without examining the lexical or structural changes that reflect this evolving language use in a positive light.

3. Methodology

This research falls under the positivist paradigm because it involves the quantitative mode of inquiry for data interpretation and analysis. In this research, an online questionnaire was adapted from the previous questionnaire by Zentella (2009), Hohenthal (2003), and Ager (2001) in the field of language attitude studies. Its reliability was checked using SPSS, and the supervisor and the participants who took part in the current study confirmed the validity. This questionnaire was based on a Likert 5 point scale and was distributed among the graduates and undergraduate students of Fatima Jinnah Women University, Peshawar, University of Malakand, University of Peshawar, Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan, Islamia College University, Peshawar, and City University, Peshawar. The data was analyzed through IBM SPSS 20. A total number of 313 individuals participated in the quantitative mode of inquiry, of which 45.4% were female and 56.6% were male participants with different educational levels, i.e. graduate 39.6% and 60.4% are undergraduates. Of all these participants, 42.8% were from the urban setting while 57.2% were from the rural setting.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

The descriptive statistics of the quantitative data is given in the form of tables and description. Table below shows the number of responses to each question, their level of agreement and disagreement between the different constructs for language attitude.

Table 4.1

The table shows questionnaire items along with responses, mean value, and standard deviation.

Item	Question	S.D	D	N	A	S.A	Mean	Std.D
1.	Whenever I incorporate English vocabulary into my Pashto speech, I experience a sense of happiness	12	27	55	180	39	3.66	0.904
2.	Using English in Pashto speech makes me feel as a member of a good social class.	12	34	50	150	67	3.72	1.039
3.	Using English in my Pashto speech enhances my confidence and raises my chances of securing a good job.	14	22	46	156	75	3.82	1.020
4.	By speaking English in Pashto, I am seen as an	15	21	40	153	84	3.86	1.039



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Item	Question	S.D	D	N	A	S.A	Mean	Std.D
	educated individual in social interactions.							
5.	The Pashtun community regards proficiency in English as an indication of higher intelligence	6	19	43	146	99	4.00	.934
6.	The social status of an individual is enhanced by speaking English in public.	8	14	52	157	82	3.93	.914
7.	Learning English enables me to explore the world more as compared to Pashto.	7	13	35	163	95	4.04	.885
8.	I prefer to speak English when introducing myself at places such as seminars, educational institutes, and official meetings.	8	14	36	164	91	4.01	.904
9.	Learning English is essential for Pashto speakers because it is linked to future prosperity.	8	14	24	163	104	4.09	.901
10.	I am willing to assist my next generation in acquiring a complete grasp of the English language.	5	17	32	166	93	4.04	.873
11.	The English language plays a significant role in economic development in Pakistan due to its usefulness and importance	4	15	32	170	92	4.06	.838
12.	I believe that ability in English can bring me a career and promotion	4	9	24	177	99	4.14	.777
13.	I believe that ability in English can bring me more economic comfort.	4	16	50	180	63	3.90	.820
14.	I believe that ability in English can bring me more academic knowledge	4	2	26	183	98	4.18	.712
15.	I believe that ability in English can bring me better cognitive capability	2	16	44	173	78	3.99	.809

Note. SD=strongly disagree, D=disagree, N=neutral, A=agree, S.A= strongly agree

It can be seen that there is a strong connection between the English language and the measured aspects. The English language has become a permanent part of Pashtun society and is considered crucial for social mobility, social status, and boosting confidence; it is also linked with education. A person is perceived as educated if he is well-versed in English. All of the participants' agreement values



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are either four or greater than four, which indicates a strong instrumental motivation for the language. Pashto speakers are of the view that the English language is important for economic development, career opportunities, and gaining academic knowledge. The items that discuss the economics and academics have a higher level of agreement between the responses with little deviation, which means that Pashto speakers value English more in these domains.

4.1. Solidarity component of Attitude

The questionnaire was designed in a way that could tap into the belief system associated with feelings of solidarity when participants use the English language during their speech. Five questions that are 1,2,4,7, and 10 were designed to highlight the solidarity component of language attitude, and Cronbach's alpha was calculated. The value of Cronbach's alpha is calculated to find out the internal consistency among the selected items for a study. Vaske et al. (2017) state that Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0.65 to 0.80 and is considered suitable for scales used in human dimension studies because its higher value shows the internal consistency among the items. The Cronbach's alpha value calculated for the questionnaire designed for eliciting language attitude among the Pashto speakers was 0.747 for the solidarity component of language attitude.

Table 4.2

Cronbach's Alpha value of the solidarity component

Subscale	N	Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Solidarity	313	5	.747
Valid N (List-wise)	313		

Note. n=5

The majority of the participants showed a positive response towards the status factor linked with the English language as compared to Pashto. They consider the English language as a symbol of status in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Table 4.3

The table represents the descriptive statistics of the Solidarity component of Language Attitude in percentages.

Question	S.D	D	N	A	S.A	Mean	St.Deviation
Whenever I incorporate English vocabulary into my Pashto speech, I experience a sense of happiness	3.8	8.6	17.6	57.8	12.5	3.66	0.904
Using English in Pashto speech makes me feel as a member of a good social class.	3.8	10.9	16	47.9	21.4	3.72	1.039
By speaking English in Pashto, I am seen as an educated individual in social interactions	4.8	6.7	12.8	48.9	26.8	3.86	1.039
Learning English enables me to explore the world	2.2	4.2	11.2	52.1	30.4	4.04	.885



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more as compared to
Pashto

I am willing to assist the
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acquiring a complete
grasp of the English
language

1.6	5.4	16.2	53	29.7	4.04	.873
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Note. SD=strongly disagree, D=disagree, N=neutral, A=agree, S.A= strongly agree

The English language has deeply penetrated the Pashtun society, and Pashto speakers experience a sense of happiness while incorporating English words during their discourse. The elevated percentage in the questionnaire for the first item, which is “Whenever I incorporate English vocabulary into my Pashto speech, I experience a sense of happiness”, confirms this because 57.8% of the participants agreed with the statement, 12.5% strongly agreed, while 17.6% remained neutral. The high mean value of 3.66 suggests a positive tendency towards using the English language in the Pashto speech, and they feel satisfied by using English words in their speech. These phenomena can be observed in formal and informal settings where Pashto speakers prefer to use English vocabulary instead of Pashto because it not only portrays their image as educated individuals but also present them as members of a high social class in society as 47.9% of participants agreed while 21.4% strongly agreed to the statement that was, using English makes them as members of high social class. The high mean value of 3.72 suggests that social status and the English language are closely linked in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Educational attainment and intelligence are also associated with the English language in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Among the participants, 48.9% agreed with the statement that by speaking English in Pashto, I am seen as an educated individual in social interactions, while 26.8% strongly agreed, which shows that to sound educated in Pashtun society, one ought to use English during their speech. The higher mean value of 3.86 also suggests these findings. English as a medium of Instruction is also responsible for the inclusion of many English terms in Pashto discourse because importance is given to the English language, but the local and the heritage languages are sidelined. All these are the perquisites of the colonial legacy. The increasing number of English speakers is also due to its dynamic role in the Pashtun society. English is an international lingua franca and is used as a medium of communication for people who do not share a common language. The majority of people understand the English language to some extent; therefore, for exploring the world, it is important to learn English as compared to other languages. 52.1% of the participants agreed, while 30.4% strongly agreed with the statement, which states that English provides a good opportunity to explore the world as compared to the Pashto language. This high percentage of agreement and 4.04 confirms these results. This shows that English is important and has a role in different life domains, i.e., tourism. In Pakistan, the generation, when equipped with the English language, can unlock opportunities both locally and internationally. This is the reason why some parents prefer to communicate with their children in English. When the participants were asked if they were willing to assist the next generation in acquiring a complete grasp of the English language, 53% agreed, 29.7% strongly agreed, and 5.4% disagreed with this statement. This shows us the present and future of the English language, its importance, and its



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vitality. The higher mean value of 4.04 also confirms these findings. The English language is valued in Pakistan, and parents prefer its use at home because of its instrumental use in society. This trend is high in the urban settings, while in the rural areas, Pashto language is preferred and is used by parents. One of the reasons behind this is the lack of resources like English medium instructions to the people in the rural areas and the second reason is that people in the villages are mostly religious and the society is conservative therefore they sometimes consider English language a threat to their religious identity, so they discourage English use in homes.

From the data in the table, it can be said that there is a consistent positive attitude towards English, and people associate it with social status, education, and access to the global world. English is also socially important because it is not only considered a language but a symbol of an individual's education and higher social class. Although the data shows a positive attitude towards the English language, heavy code-switching between Pashto and English may lead to a language shift in Pashto. The findings also predict that one needs to maintain one's own native language (Pashto) along with adopting the global language (English).

4.2. Status Component of Language Attitude

Questions number 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9 in the questionnaire were designed in a way that could tap into the belief system related with higher status when participants use English language during their speech. The Cronbach's alpha value for the status component is 0.739, which means that the items are internally consistent.

Table 4.4

Cronbach's Alpha value of the status component of language Attitude

Subscale	N	Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Solidarity	313	5	.739
Valid N (List-wise)	313		

Note. n=5

The English language is considered a symbol of higher social status in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The higher mean values for each construct and a higher percentage of agreement show that English holds prominent importance in Pashtun society.

Table 4.5

The table represents the descriptive statistics of the status component of Language Attitude in percentages.

Question	S.D	D	N	A	S.A	Mean	Std.Deviation
Using English in my Pashto speech enhances my confidence and raises my chances of securing a good job	4.5	7	14.7	49.8	24	3.82	1.020
The Pashtun community regards proficiency in English as an indication of higher intelligence	1.9	6.1	13.7	46.6	31.6	4.00	.934
The social status of an individual is enhanced by	2.6	4.5	16.6	50.2	26.2	3.93	.914



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speaking English in public.

I prefer to speak English when introducing myself at places such as seminars, educational institutes, and official meetings.	2.6	4.5	11.5	52.4	29.1	4.01	.904
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Learning English is essential for Pashto speakers because it is linked to future prosperity.	2.6	4.5	7.7	52.1	33.2	4.09	.901
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Note. SD=strongly disagree, D=disagree, N=neutral, A=agree, S.A= strongly agree

Bright futures and prosperous lives are also linked with the English language, and Pashto speakers think that with English, they can secure high-paying jobs and can talk with confidence in various communicative events. They were asked, "Using English in my Pashto speech enhances my confidence and raises my chances of securing a good job". The mean value for this statement was 3.82, which shows a positive response. A total of 49.8% of the participants agreed with the statement, while 24% strongly agreed. This means that Institutions prefer English-proficient individuals in the job market, therefore, Pashto speakers have a greater tendency to use English in their speech, and it also fuels their confidence. English language proficiency promises a successful career in the job market. This represents the instrumental use of the English language in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Higher intelligence and proficiency in the English language were interlinked in one of the statements to know about the point of view of the individuals, i.e., proficient users of English are the intelligent people, to which 46.6% of the participants agreed, while 31.6% strongly agreed. It means that a person has a good chance of advancement in Pashtun society if he is a good speaker of English because he will be perceived as intelligent by the recruiters. The mean value of 4.0 confirms this result that Pashto speakers consider a good proficient in the English language as intelligent. Most of the participants confirmed the proposition that the social status of an individual is connected to the use of English words during interactions, because 47.9% agreed and 21.4% strongly agreed with the statement that their social status is enhanced when they use English while talking in public gatherings. The mean value for this question was 3.93, which also confirms the findings. This confirms that English is playing an important role in people's lives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where they feel pride when they use English words in their speech. These are the effects of the colonial legacy left behind by British colonizers. In the British Era, English language was used in the business and administration and was the language of the elite group, so it crafted the effect on the users of the local language users who thought that by mimicking the Britishers, they will also be perceived as members of high social class in the society (Bhaba, 1984). The English language has also dominated the formal settings where people love to introduce themselves in seminars and official meetings in the English language, because it fosters effective communication and professionalism in diverse global contexts. When the participants were asked about the language choice they



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adopted when introducing themselves in seminars, official meetings, and educational institutes, 52.4% agreed that they use English, and 29.1% strongly agreed. The mean value for this question was 4.01, which means that the English language is widely used in professional settings. These higher values in the table show the status of the English language in Pashtun society. It is a status symbol and allows the speaker to address a diverse audience from different backgrounds, so English provides a common medium for addressing international participants or professional crowds. It ensures mutual understanding and fosters inclusivity. This is the reason why English has gained so much attention and importance in Pashtun society these days. In the interview, some of the participants showed concerns over the use of the Pashto language in professional settings, as the Pashto language seems awkward in Professional settings. The English language is also viewed as a step towards future prosperity. In the table, it can be seen that 52.1% agreed and 33.2% strongly agreed with the statement, with a mean value of 4.09, which shows the preference for the English language by the youth and its role in employment in the future.

The high mean values range from 3.82 to 4.09, and a higher percentage of agreement across all items shows that the English language has attained a prestigious and higher position within the fabric of Pashtoon society. These perceptions influence language use, learning motivations, and broader attitudes towards English and Pashto use.

4.3. The Vitality component of language Attitude

Questions numbers 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 were linked with the vitality component language attitude. Before the analysis, the Cronbach's alpha value was calculated for the vitality component of language attitude which was The Cronbach's alpha value calculated for the vitality component is 0.795, which confirms the internal consistency among the items.

Table 4.6

Cronbach's Alpha value of the vitality component

Subscale	N	Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Solidarity	313	5	.795
Valid N (List-wise)	313		

Note. n=5

English also plays a role in providing economic opportunities in KPK. It promises career opportunities, economic comfort, and access to a vast amount of academic knowledge. Majority of the participants showed a positive attitude towards the questionnaire items as can be seen in the table below.

Table 4.7

The table represents the descriptive statistics of the vitality component of Language Attitude in percentages.

Question	S.D	D	N	A	S.A	Mean	Std.Deviation
The English language plays a significant role in economic development in Pakistan due to its	1.3	4.8	10.2	53.4	29.4	4.06	.838



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usefulness and importance.								
I believe that my ability in English can bring me a career and promotion.	1.3	2.9	7.7	56.5	31.6	4.14	.777	
I believe that my ability in English can bring me more economic comfort.	1.3	5.1	16	57.5	20.1	3.90	.820	
I believe that my ability in English can bring me more academic knowledge	1.3	0.6	8.3	58.5	31.3	4.18	.712	
I believe that my ability in English can bring me better cognitive capability	24.9	5.1	14.1	55.3	24.9	3.99	.809	

Note. SD=strongly disagree, D=disagree, N=neutral, A=agree, S.A= strongly agree

The higher percentage and mean values in the above table suggest that English is crucial in providing opportunities and resource access and has a role in the economic development in Pakistan. Among all other languages spoken in Pakistan, English is the main pillar in this regard, and English proficiency is considered a gateway to economic opportunities. When the participants were asked about the role of the English language in economic development in Pakistan, 53.4% agreed that the English language is crucial for economic growth, 29.4% strongly agreed with the statements, and 4.8% disagreed. The mean value of 4.06 shows parallel views of the respondents regarding its role in economic development. In Pakistan, people are increasingly recognizing the importance of the English language, especially in Pashtun society, where it is viewed as a tool for personal growth and success. The belief that English can enhance academic knowledge, cognitive abilities, career prospects, and economic comfort is widespread and influential in shaping attitudes toward language learning. In the questionnaire, 56.5% agreed that English is important for their career and promotion, while 31.6% strongly agreed with the statement. The higher mean value of 4.14 represents the belief system that connects English language skills and career success. The mean value is higher because English language proficiency is a key to higher roles in the private sector in Pakistan.

The English language has deeply penetrated the Pashtun society, and Pashto speakers experience a sense of happiness while incorporating English words during their discourse. The elevated percentage in the questionnaire for the first item, which is "Whenever I incorporate English vocabulary into my Pashto speech, I experience a sense of happiness", confirms this because 57.5% of the participants agreed with the statement, 12.5% strongly agreed, while 17% remained neutral. These phenomena can be observed in formal and informal settings where Pashto speakers prefer to use English vocabulary instead of Pashto because it not only portrays their image as educated individuals but also present them as members of



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a high social class in society as 47.9% of participants agreed while 21.4% strongly agreed to the statement that was, Using English makes them as members of high social class.

Educatedness and intelligence are also associated with the English language in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Among the participants, 48.9% agreed with the statement that by speaking English in Pashto, I am seen as an educated individual in social interactions, while 26.8% strongly agreed, which shows that to sound educated in Pashtun society, one ought to use English during their speech. English as a medium of Instruction is also responsible for the inclusion of many English terms in Pashto discourse because importance is given to the English language, but the local and the heritage languages are sidelined. All these are the perks of the colonial legacy.

The increasing number of English speakers is also due to its dynamic role in the Pashtun society. English is an international lingua franca and is used as a medium of communication for people who do not share a common language. The English language is understood to some extent by the majority of people, therefore, for exploring the world, it is important to learn English as compared to other languages. 52.1% of the participants agreed, while 30.4% strongly agreed with the statement, which states that English provides a good opportunity to explore the world as compared to the Pashto language. This shows that English is important and has a role in different life domains, i.e., tourism.

In Pakistan, the future generation, when equipped with the English language, can unlock opportunities both locally and internationally. This is the reason why some parents prefer to communicate with their children in English. When the participants were asked if they were willing to assist the next generation in acquiring a complete grasp of the English language, 53% agreed, 29.7% strongly agreed, and 5.4% disagreed with this statement. This shows us the present and future of the English language, its importance, and its vitality. The English language is valued in Pakistan, and parents prefer its use at home because of its instrumental use in society. This trend is high in the urban settings, while in the rural areas, Pashto language is preferred and is used by parents. One of the reasons behind this is the lack of resources like English medium instructions to the people in the rural areas and the second reason is that people in the villages are mostly religious and the society is conservative therefore they sometimes consider English language a threat to their religious identity, so they discourage English use in homes. English language proficiency paves the way to a good job in the market, which brings a stable lifestyle and shelter. In terms of participants' preferences, 57.5% agreed and 20.1% strongly agreed that English can provide them with economic comfort. The mean value for this item was 3.90, which shows a high level of agreement among the participants. English is an international lingua franca and is understood by most people around the world. Most of the academic knowledge on the internet is in the English language, so students need to have a full command of it. When the participants were asked whether English could bring them more academic knowledge as compared to Pashto, 58.5% agreed and 31.2% strongly agreed with the statement. The mean value was 4.18, which confirms that the English language can grant access to a large amount of academic knowledge. The English language is considered a mentally tough second language in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and learning it requires mental effort; therefore, sometimes, it is linked with language proficiency and intellectual abilities. The linkage of cognitive



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capabilities and the English language seems to be strong, as 55.3% of the participants agreed and 24.9% strongly agreed to the questionnaire item stating that English can bring them better cognitive capability. The mean score was 3.99 for this item. It can be said that Pashto speakers have associated the English language with cognitive capabilities, and good cognitive capabilities are essential for securing a high-paying job in Pakistan, which ultimately leads to economic comfort. The consistently high mean value, ranging from 3.90 to 4.18, with a higher percentage, suggests that English has occupied all the domains, and there is a strong utilitarian perspective on English in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

5. Conclusion

Findings of the study suggest that the English language has become a permanent part of Pashto, and Pashto speakers have associated prestige with the English language. Pashto speakers have adopted a positive attitude towards the English language, thus find it attractive to use the English language in society because it makes an individual sophisticated and a member of a high social status. A person is seen as educated when he uses the English language in Pashto society because English is associated with education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The English language is preferred by the educated class in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa because it secures a high-paying job and is good for economic stability. Pashto language in the Education and professional settings is being replaced by English language because it is preferred in formal settings, it brings formality and suits the decorum of the settings, while Pashto seems somehow outdated or improper. Also, the English language provides a neutral medium of communication for people with different Pashto dialects because each dialect has its own distinct Pashto vocabulary, which makes it difficult for the Pashtuns to continue communication without relying on the English language. Based on the findings of this research, it can be inferred that the educated people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa do not see English as a threat to the local languages rather as an additional resource to academic and economic advancement.

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