

## The Influence of English Language Learning on Students' Identity: A Survey Conducted among PEF Schools Students in Bahawalpur

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### Abstract

English Language has an important role in the development of identity. The aim of this research study is to identify construction of English language learners in Punjab Education Foundation schools. It investigates the influence of English language on PEF students' identity. Punjab Education is trying to promote English language and quality of education to the poor children. As many as 100 ESL learners were selected. These participants were speaking Urdu as 1<sup>st</sup> language and learning English for their compulsory subject as a second language. 50 ESP learners were from Ahmad Public School Bahawalpur, and 50 ESP learners were from Holly Flower School Bahawalpur. This study was quantitative in its nature and a questionnaire as a study tool was used for students (native speakers of Urdu) to investigate the influence of English language on their identities. After the collection of data through questionnaire, the same data was analyzed through SPSS (version 14). Data was analyzed and interpreted in tabulated form. Findings revealed that students are using code-mixing, code-switching, blending, borrowing and clipping English words in their 1<sup>st</sup> language and losing their own language identity. English language has influenced the learner's

communication. Findings revealed that the influence of English Language has changed the real identity of the students. Results showed that English language influences Urdu language.

**Keywords:** English Language Learning, Students' Identity, PEF Schools, syntax.

## Introduction

English as a second language learning and identity construction is an essential part of study (Giri, 2002). Language is used as a tool by the learners to shape their communication, but side by side, they negotiate their sense of who they are and how they have their relationships with other people who live in the same community (Kaplan, R., 1966). Identity is fluid and changing. Educators and policy makers need to develop such policies which could enhance students' identity to let students identify themselves as good Muslims, good Pakistanis and a peaceful member of global community (Anbreen, T., 2015).

Many researchers have been conducted to illustrate the influence of English language on PEF students and identity construction in a native language speaking context in Pakistan. But there are insufficient studies to investigate the influence of ESL on non-native context, especially in Pakistani cultural. Here English is neither native language, nor it is taught by the native speakers. In Punjab Educational Foundation schools English is taught as a compulsory subject in a formal way. The main purpose of this study is to discover the influence of English language on PEF school student's identity in Bahawalpur.

The Communication of English language in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent dates before the creation of Pakistan. The impact of English language on PEF students in a non-native context needs to be explored. It is very influencing in post-colonial cultures where English is taught as a second language (ESL). English as a second language learning and identity construction is an essential part of study (Ting-Toomey, S., 2005). English language learners use English at the expense of their traditional languages. Second language acquisition influences one's cultural identity. Research evidence suggests that globalization of English is detrimental to the cultural identity of the given group (Alfarhan, I., 2016).

Language is used as a tool by the learners to shape their communication, but, side by side, they negotiate their sense of who they are and how they have their relationships with other people who live in the same community (Kurous, M, &kashimura, K., 1995). Many researchers have been conducted to illustrate the

influence of English language on PEF students and identity construction in a native language speaking context in Pakistan (Alexander R., 2008). Furthermore, researchers have found that English language learning does not have a negative influence on the education process. Instead, certain virtues such as respect, self-confidence, cooperation, teamwork, diligence, and decency are inculcated in the students' self-identity during the English language learning process (Hassan, I., 2020).

There are insufficient studies to investigate the influence of ESL on non-native context, especially in Pakistani cultural here English is neither native language, nor it is taught by the native speakers. In Punjab Educational Foundation schools English is taught as a compulsory subject in a formal way. The main purpose of this study is to discover the influence of English language on PEF school student's identity in Bahawalpur.

In 16th century English was introduced in Indo-Pakistan subcontinent by the British who ruled over 100 years in subcontinent during their rule English gained official, political and social status. In Indo-Pakistan people learned English as a formal way of education and for economic and social flexibility. After the creation of Pakistan English language has been an important place in official, economic and educational fields whereas Urdu is the 1st language of Pakistan.

The Punjab Education Foundation was established under the Punjab Education Foundation Act of 1991 as an autonomous statutory body to encourage and promote education on non-commercial basis. Since then, it has come a long way to arrange free quality education for the deserving students at their doorsteps. Urdu is an official language as English is. English and Urdu both are the languages of literacy in Pakistan. PEF students use Urdu features in English language.

This study investigates the influence of English language learning on multicultural and multilingual students of Punjab Education Foundation Schools at Bahawalpur. It was observed that PEF school students are implying themes that are taught in the class, which may shape their identities. Students take admission from local areas where local languages are being spoken.

PEF schools are playing their important role in establishing identities. School based relationships among students existed initially. Students' identities were influenced from native language to English language in the schools and this shift has a great impact on their English learning. It is fact that when a person changes

language, his/her identity construction is also changed. To understand it this is necessary to distinguish between Urdu and English such as, Urdu is regarded as native or the 1<sup>st</sup> language and English is regarded as non-native language.

### **Literature Review**

The term identity literally refers to sameness. It is expected that identity would be most significant when students are most similar (Sheridan, E,F.,2001).Sometime it is difficult to determine when a group of people should be classified as “alike”, nor is it obvious on what grounds such a classification should be made, given the infinite ways in which students differ from one another and having different languages and cultures( Chen, G, & Starosta, W.,1998).Research indicates that adoption of English as a second language ,it is needed to exceed negative intrinsic and extrinsic factors while taking place the positive factors (Ali, A. M., & Mujiyanto, Y., 2017).

### **Position of English in PEF System of Education**

In PEF Schools students increase their language learning skills. Peer works are good examples for scholarly, social and conduct aptitudes. PEF schools education improves language learning ability and communication and increase incorporation for future life. “Staying awake and creating interest in ESL class can be difficult, but what’s even more difficult for English teacher is being responsible for keeping PEF students awake and interested”.

The main purpose of it is to motivate the PEF students about learning English as a second language with four basic skills speaking, reading, writing and comprehending English. There are many benefits of PEF Education Foundation such as; it has developed meaningful understanding about English as a second language and develops social behavior like, companionship and increases thankfulness and acknowledgement of individual contrasts.

It is fact that English words have become a part of our language. English words have also become part of everyday communication. It is important for being professional and regarded as the sign of success. This authority is clearly observed in Pakistani context (AEPAM, 2005). Actually students are swapping from Urdu languages to English for being prominent in their social context (Choudhury, S., 2005).

### **Influence of English language on identities**

Language is an important way to promote culture. Through language students learn about their personal and cultural identity (Russo, P, & Boor, S., 1993).

Language affects culture in different ways. It helps define reality by restricting thought to available words (Leonardi, P.M., 2002). It shapes behavior in the same manner. English language not only changes students' values and habits, but also affects students' language and behaviors.

Research showed that college students' identities were discursively constructed in and through their English learning experiences. Research study identified the discursive strategies of establishing oppositions and differences that the students adopted in identity construction as they interacted within the specific learning community, the surrounding social environment and an imagined global community (Gu, M. M., 2010).

As for the students' identity, a research study revealed that although the students were more fluent in English, they felt that they were strongly connected to their native language. This study drew the pedagogical implication that the use of English as a medium of instruction can be quite critical, especially for school students, as it may have an impact on the loss of their home language (Lie, A., 2017).

### **Daily use English Words and Sentences with Urdu Translation**

English is not a big deal these days even for those who are not –well educated. These days everyone is using some English sentences when he or she is talking with others (Choe, 2001). Teacher use English sentences with Urdu translation for example, “what are you doing?” “Where are you going?” and “thank you”. There are a lot of sentences that will make students able to use daily use in English sentences (Bano, M., 2008).

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Procedure of the Study**

The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of English language learning on multicultural and multilingual students of PEF schools at Bahawalpur. This study was quantitative in its nature and a questionnaire was used as a study tool to investigate the influence of English language on native students who speak Urdu as 1<sup>st</sup> language. For this experimental study two groups 50 (ESL learners of Ahmad Public school) and 50 (ESL learners of Holly flower school) were selected as participants. Total participants were 50.

A questionnaire bearing 28 statements was responded by English learners including male and female learners. Code-mixing and its types, code-switching

and its types, blending, borrowing and clipping have a great impact on the learners' communication. The both have to participate in 30 minute-long lectures in ESP for 5 days in a week.

### Sample/ Participants of the Study

Two PEF schools where Urdu was spoken as native language were selected for study purpose. There are 50 learners of ESL (group A) from Ahmad Public school Bahawalpur, and 50 learners of ESL (group B) from Holly flower school Bahawalpur. Total 100 students of these schools were selected as participants of the study and were equality divided in two groups.

### Questionnaire as Research Tool

The questionnaire was distributed among the students who study English as a compulsory subject in schools. It was expected that the questionnaire given to these two groups may show interesting result and diversity in the opinion about learning English with the interference of Urdu language.

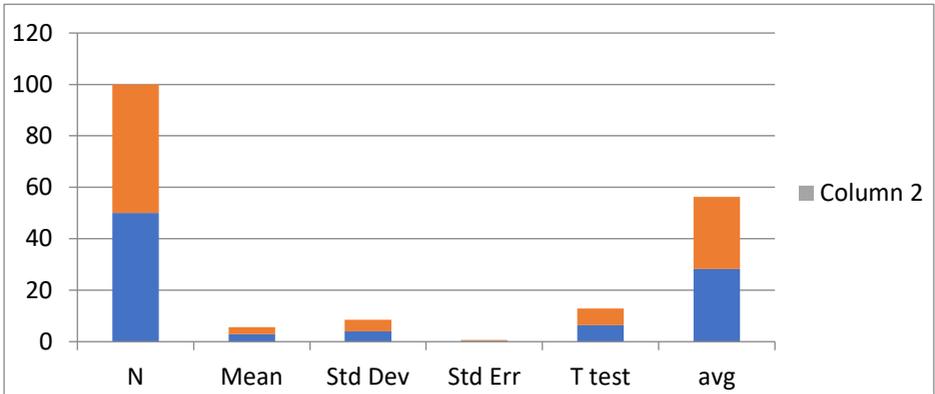
### Data Analysis and Interpretations

After feeding data researcher analyzed it by using sum of total numbers frequency, percentage and mean of the data through (SPSS) version I4.

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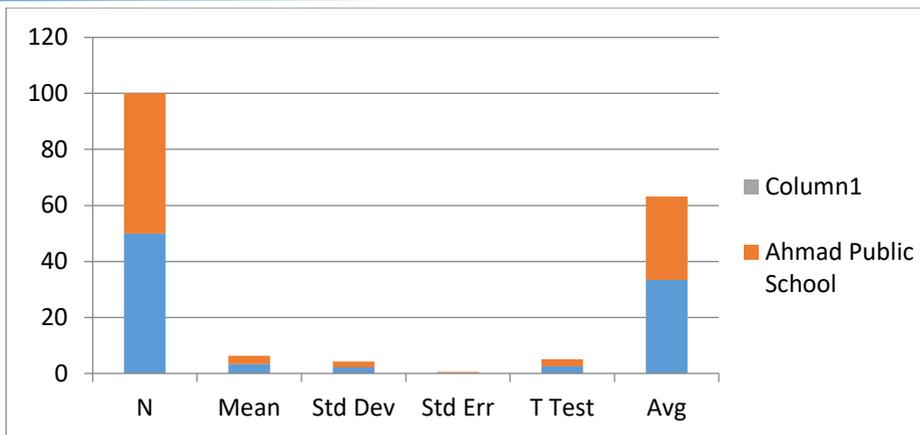
Comparison of PEF Students Opinion that " I learn Urdu/English Words meaning in the class and use them in my daily Routine "	
Group Statistics	T-test statistics

Institute	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Err	T	Avg
Ahmad Public School	PEF (ESL) learners	50	2.83	4	0.298	6.437	28.3
Holly Flower School	PEF (ESL) learners	50	2.80	4.577	0.324	6.435	28.0



The average of this opinion among Ahmad Public School students is 28.3 with standard deviation 4. On the other hand, average of this opinion among Holly Flower School students is 28.0 with standard deviation of 4.577. So, Ahmad Public School learners have a positive opinion about the statement as compare to the Holly flower school. The T-score is 6.437 and p-value is 0.000 represents the difference.

Comparison of PEF Students opinion that” I Listen, Speak, Read and Write English Language in the Class which Influences my Native Language ”							
Group Statistics				T-test statistics			
Institute		N	Mean	Std.dev	Std.Err	T	Avg
Ahmad Public School	PEF (ESL) learners	50	3.34	2.178	0.262	2.53	33.4
Holly Flower School	PEF (ESL) learners	50	2.98	2.05	0.34	2.52	29.8



The opinions of Ahmad Public School students are 33.4 with standard deviation 2.178. On the other hand, the opinion of the Holly Flower school students is 29.8 with standard deviation of 2.05. The opinions of Ahmad Public School students are very positive about the statement as compared to the opinion of Holly Flower School. The T-score is 4.855 and p-value is 0.000 represents the difference is significant.

Comparison of PEF Schools Students opinion that” in class, with friends, teachers and with family I am mixing English words in Urdu ”

Group Statistics

T-test statistics

Institute	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Err	T	Avg
Ahmad Public School	PEF (ESL) learners	50	3.34	4.503	0.218	5.432	33.4
Holly Flower school	PEF (ESL) learners	50	2.98	4.627	0.194	5.465	29.8

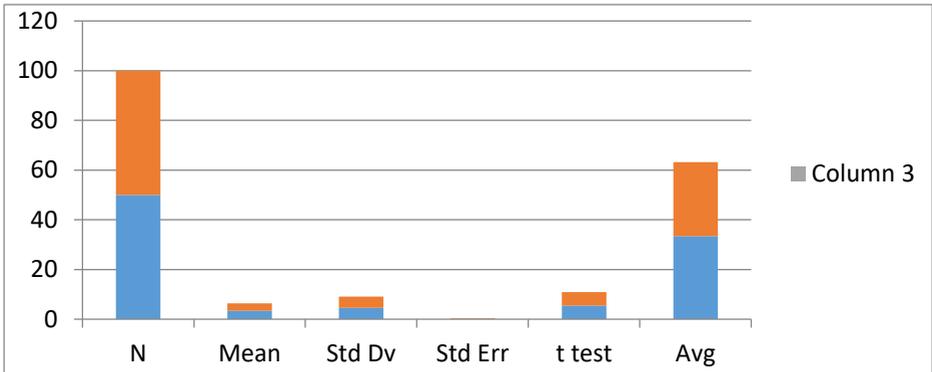
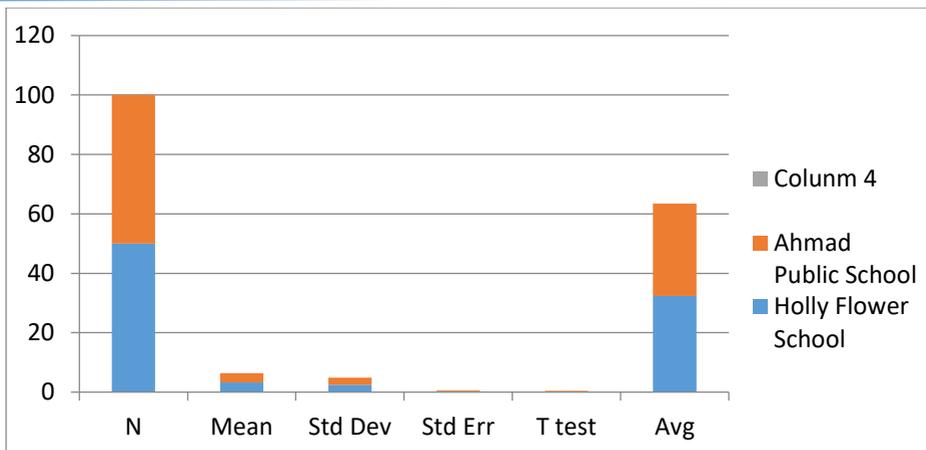


Table 3 represents the “Comparison of PEF Schools Students opinion that “In c lass, with friends, teachers and with family I am mixing English words in Urdu Language. The average response of Ahmad Public Schools students is 33.4 with standard deviation 4.503. On the other hand, the opinion of Holly Flower school students is 29.8 with standard deviation of 4.627. It reveals that Ahmad Public School (ESL) learner’s positive opinion as compared to the Holly Flower school students. The T-score is 5.432 and p-value is 0.000 represents the difference is significant.

Comparison of PEF Schools Students Opinion that” I feel that I am losing my Native Language Identity due to the English Language Practice in the Class”	
Group Statistics	T-test statistics

Institute	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Err	T	Avg
Ahmad Public School	PEF (ESL)learners	50	3.34	2.453	0.315	0.157	32.4
Holly Flower School	PEF (ESL)learners	50	3.10	2.425	0.313	0.251	31.0



The average response of Ahmad Public School students are 32.4 with standard deviation 2.453. On the other hand, the opinion of the Holly Flower School students is 31.0 with standard deviation of 2.425. It represents Ahmad public school ESL learner’s positive response as compares to the Holly flower school ESP learners. The T-score is 0.157 and p-value is 0.000 represents the difference is significant.

### Findings

Analysis showed that 28.3% of the Ahmad public school (ESL) learners agreed with this opinion that “I learn Urdu/English words meaning in the class and use them in my daily routine”. This difference of opinion is shown statistically highly significant. As per findings, 33.4% of the Ahmad public school (ESL) learners agreed with the opinion that “I listen, speak, read and write English language which influences my native language”.

This difference of opinion is shown statistically highly significant. Result depict that 33.4% of the Ahmad public school (ESL) learners agreed with the opinion that “In the class, with friends, teachers and with family, I am mixing English words in Urdu Language”. This difference of opinion is shown statistically highly significant. Finally, 32.4% of the Ahmad public school (ESL) learners agreed with the opinion that “I feel that I am losing my native language identity due to the English language practice in the class”. This difference of opinion is shown statistically highly significant.

## Conclusion

This study investigates the influence of English language on PEF schools students' identity. Findings revealed that students are code-mixing, code-switching, blending, borrowing and clipping English words in their 1<sup>st</sup> language and losing their language identity. There were linguistic aspects of English and Urdu as grammar, different structures of sentences that can influence communication. The opinions of the both Ahmad public school and Holy flower school ESL learners showed that English language influences Urdu language.

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