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**GLOBALIZATION VERSUS ETHNICITY:
THE BASIS OF LANGUAGE IDENTITY AND CHANGE**

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Abstract

This paper is developed on the hypothesis that globalization and not ethnicity, is the basis of language identity and change. This research is based on an article on 'Language, Ethnicity and Racism' by the famous linguist Joshua A. Fishman. The main focus will be on the segment that deals with the relationship of Language and Ethnicity. The view of some other linguists will also be discussed. The scope of this study will encircle Pakistan, a community with different ethnic backgrounds but aspiring to form a 'one language community' with the rest of the world due to globalization. Two major aspects of globalization namely; The Post colonial Influence and the American influence will be studied with reference to the collective ethnic inclination of a nation towards a partial language shift to English, and the individuals' stance to have preserved it as an official language since independence. Examples will be picked up from the language or lyrics in the local music industry. A contrast will be made between the samples of the time before globalization had set in and the samples from the post-globalization modern music. This study will lead to a better understanding for linguists, of how language functions and is changing under the influence of globalization. Findings showed that global trends are more powerful as compared to the ethnic background of English language speakers. The Post-colonial Influence overridden by the American influence seems to have encouraged the initiation and sustenance of American English in the region contributing as a crucial factor towards language identity and change.

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1. Introduction

Linguistic evolution does account for the relationship between Language and Ethnicity but it gives no specific explanation of how language is related to and affected by some of the overlooked social variables like the ever-evolving universal trends. This paper is developed on the hypothesis that globalization and not ethnicity is the basis of language identity and change. This research is based on an article on ‘Language, Ethnicity and Racism’ by the famous linguist Joshua A. Fishman. The view of some other linguists will also be discussed. Some of the major points he discussed in his paper will be exposed so that contradicting views presented in this paper become clear in contrast. The main focus will be on the segment that deals with the relationship of Language and Ethnicity. Social scientists and social theorists have neither reconstructed nor developed with respect to ethnicity (nor, indeed, with respect to language and ethnicity) either a sociology of the phenomenon per se or a sociology of knowledge concerning it (Fishman 1977). An ethnic group or ethnicity is a category of people who identify with each other based on similarities such as common ancestral, language, social, cultural or national experiences (Oxford Dictionary 2016). The scope of this study will encircle Pakistan, a community with different ethnic backgrounds but aspiring to form a ‘one language community’ with the rest of the world due to globalization. Two major aspects of globalization namely; The Post colonial Influence and the American influence will be studied with reference to the collective ethnic inclination of a nation towards a partial language shift to English, and the individuals’ stance to have preserved it as an official language since independence. Examples will be picked up from the language from popular lyrics in the local music industry. A contrast will be made between the samples of the time before globalization had set in and the samples from the post-globalization modern music. This study will lead to a better understanding for linguists, of how language functions and changes under the influence of globalization. Findings showed that global trends are more powerful as compared to the ethnic background of English language speakers. The Post-colonial Influence overridden by the American influence seems to have encouraged the initiation and sustenance of American English in the region contributing as a crucial factor towards language identity and change. Hence English language, a by-product of globalization, not ethnicity, is now a part of Pakistani culture and society. In spite of a waning influence of colonization it will still thrive as a means for conformity with the global community. It not only works for Pakistanis for internal interaction but also for global communication and exchange of ideas via virtual social networks for communication and business all around the world. This study will lead to a better understanding for linguists, of how language functions and changes under the influence of globalization.

1.1. Base Article: ‘Language, Ethnicity And Racism’

Summarizing some of the excerpts from the base article; Joshua A. Fishman traced the relationship between history and language from the early classical ‘Hebrew and Greek times’ through to recent times, ‘including the rebirth of Ethnicity in many Western locals during the past decade’. He remarks;

‘In the process we must attend to the Roman Empire, both in west and in the East; to the early church and the church fathers; to Islam as a Euro- Mediterranean presence, to medieval and renaissance life and thought throughout Europe; to the reformation...and finally to the rise of modern intellectual schools and social

movements. In this last [sic] we must particularly examine the capitalist-Marxist clash, and the Marxist-Herdian-Weberian differences in the sociological and anthropological thought...'(330)

He asserts that ethnicity prevails on all 'social sensings, doings and knowings [sic]' and provides authenticity to the language discourse of a specific ethnic group. Elaborating on Myth-cultures of Greece, Africa, Asia and Native America he comments in his segment on 'The Theme of Fundamental Essence;

'...having a finite number of ethnicities with characteristic and fundamental biological essence and, therefore, histories or missions of their own This essence is transcendental and ultimately of a superhuman origin, and language is naturally a co occurring part of the essential blood, bones or tears. Thus the view that the deity (or deities necessarily speak(s) to each ethnicity in their own language and could not conceivably do otherwise...'(331)

Although this is a controversial view, according to Fishman it still holds strong as the most widely accepted one. In the following segment on 'Metamorphosis' (transformation) he suggests that 'new or higher levels of ethnic integration can be arrived at including the level of terminal de-ethnicization i.e. of no ethnicity at all'. The point to be contended in this paper is developed from the idea of 'de-ethnicization'. This term refers to multiple ethnicities or the absence of ethnicity in their process of religious evolution. This paper will deconstruct the term to act as a synonym for language evolution; evolution that is not based on ethnicity/religion (as Fishman views in his paper), but is a by product of globalization instead.

2. Problem Statement

Linguistic evolution does account for the relationship between Language and Ethnicity but it gives no specific explanation of how language is related to and affected by some of the overlooked social variables like the ever-evolving universal trends. This paper is developed on the hypothesis that globalization and not ethnicity is the basis of language identity and change. This research is based on an article on 'Language, Ethnicity and Racism' by the famous linguist, Joshua A. Fishman. Some of the major points he discussed in his paper will be exposed so that contradicting views presented in this paper become clear in contrast.

To understand how Globalization, and not Ethnicity is the Basis of Language Identity and Change, and to move forward with this research the exact meaning of the word 'globalization' and 'ethnicity' needs to be considered. The Webster's Dictionary describes it as 'worldwide or comprehensive'. 'Ethnic' is described as 'of race or large groups of people classed according to common traits and customs'. Fishman specifically uses the word 'ethnicity to denote a religiously unified group using the same language. Studying the relationship of 'language and globalization' versus 'language and ethnicity'; English and globalization have spread hand in hand through the world and may be taken as synonymous to each other as Seth Mydans quotes Warschauer in his article, 'Across Cultures, English is the Word, "Having a global language has assisted globalization, and globalization has consolidated the global language". Religion and Ethnicity no longer act as guiding and controlling forces in the shift, maintenance and death of a language.

2.1. Globalization or Ethnicity

English has become the second language of everybody (Warschauer, 1995). The argument this paper deals with is opposed to Fishman's view that ethnicity/religion is the reason behind the fact that a certain group of people following a certain religion use a specific language for communication; merely the popularity of a language can be the reason for its mass usage. English today can be viewed as one such language, and perhaps the only such language. David Crystal (1997) in his paper on 'English as a Global Language' remarked that the history of the spread of English could be traced back to the British Empire and the Industrial Revolution. He related the success of English to the Cultural legacy that strengthens the present dominance of English. He asserted that its use in diplomacy, international communication, education, the internet and media changed its status to a global language. He suggested that within the United States it coexists with regional dialects and some form of 'World Standard Spoken English'. He further contended;

'This is the first time we actually have a language spoken genuinely globally by every country in the world... There are no precedents to help us see what will happen....

We may be approaching a critical moment in human linguistic history, it is possible that a global language will emerge only once.' (Crystal, 1997)

Seth Mydans in his article 'Across Cultures, English is the Word' writes, that the Global dominance of English commenced with the supremacy of two successive English-speaking empires, British and American, and continues with the new virtual empire of the internet today (Mydans, 2007). Ethnicity however plays no part in the usage of English in Pakistan. Pakistan has now become a diagglossic community comprising of Shia, Sunnis, Christians, Hindus, Chinese and a variety of foreign nationals from diverse nations all using English as the official language in the country. Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Baluchi, Pushto, Saraiki and myriads of other languages with varied dialects survive side by side to English in daily discourse.

3. Research Questions

[Thus the main focus will be on the segment that deals with the relationship of Language and Ethnicity. The scope of this study will encircle Pakistan, a community with different ethnic backgrounds but aspiring to form a 'one-language community' with the rest of the world due to globalization. Two major aspects of globalization namely; The Post-colonial Influence and the American influence will be studied with reference to the collective ethnic inclination of a nation towards a partial language shift to English, and the individuals' stance to preserve it as an official and academic language since independence.

Q: Does language identity and change depend on ethnicity or globalization? |

4. Purpose of the Study

[This study will lead to a better understanding of language development and evolution for linguists, and of how language functions and changes under the influence of global trends and not solely because of linguistic evolution itself.]

5. Research Methods

Examples were up fro selected from the language or lyrics in the local music industry. A contrast was made between the samples of the time before globalization had set in and the samples from the post-globalization modern music.

6. Findings

Taking an example from lyrics of a Saraiki song written by the mystic poet from the 12th century, Baba Bulleh Shah, released in 2002, one sees that the language is used on its own as a sufficient tool to cater to the needs of the listening public

Title: Bulleya

Album: Parvaaz

Poet: Baba Bulleh Shah

Singer: Riaz ali Khan

Released: Late 2002

The lyrics are given below:

Bulleya ki janan mein kaun
Na mein momin vich maseetan
Na mein vich kufr dee reet aan
Na mein paakaan vich paleet aan
Na mein Moosa na Firaon
Bulleya ki janan mein kaun
Awwal aakhir aap noon jaanan
Na koi dooja hor pichana
Mein toon vadh na koi sayana
O' Bulleya o' Bulleya
Bulleya ki janan mein kaun
Na mein aabi na mein khaki
Na mein aatish na mein pon
Bulleya ki janan mein kaun

This Saraiki song below called 'Bandeya,' also written by Baba Bulleh Shah, is the sound track of 'Khuda ke liyay'. It was released in late 2007. As compared to the example above it shows a difference in its lyrics and composition. An English couplet is added in the end to include the English speaking Pakistanis into the parameters of its listening public. This is done often in our songs, media and even our daily discourse. Such a practice in all walks of life was not common in the last millennium.

Title: Bandeya

Movie: Khuda ke liyay

Poet: Baba Bulleh Shah

Singers: Khawar Jawad And Faeza Mujahid

Released: Late 2007

Bulley no samjhawan aayan behna te bharjaiaan,
Munlay bullehya sada kehna chad de pala rayaan
Aaale nabi Aulade Ali noo too kyoum leeka laayaan
Jehra sano Syed saday doozakh milan sazayaan
Raaeen Saaeen subhni Thaeen Rab diyan be parwa yan
Sohiyaan pare hataian te kojiah lay Gul layaan
Jay tu Loray Baagh baharan Chakar ho ja raai yan
Bulley shah di zaat ke puchni Shaakar ho Raziaaan
Bandeyaaa hoooo, Bandeya

Face the world with a smile, no one knows what you've hid inside,
They see only happiness; they can't see the tears I've cried

These examples are a couple out of the million others from media, academics, literature and day-to-day life that have experienced language change due to globalization. As compared to natives of other countries influenced by this revolution in language patterns, a Pakistani speaker is more open and vulnerable to accepting English into his discourse because of the aftermath of colonization and the American hegemony being experienced worldwide in the new millennium; the two major aspects supporting globalization.

6.1. The Post colonial Influence and the American Hegemony

The concept of bilingualism and multilingualism is very familiar to colonized nations but monolingualism is a trait only inherent to Imperial nations. Peter Stockwell remarks in his chapter on 'Ethnicity and Multilingualism';

Many English speakers in predominantly monolingual countries such as Britain, the US or Australia, might think that it is an unusual skill to be able to speak more than one language. Indeed English speakers in these countries have a very poor record in learning other languages, partly because the powerful influence of English worldwide makes it seem less necessary to do so. However the ability to speak more than one language is perhaps more common in the world than monolingualism. (8)

The British colonization left a deep scar on not only the culture of the Indo Pak subcontinent but also the on the language of the sub continent. Not only did Urdu absorb English words but it also became socially less important as the time passed and English became the prestige language in Pakistan. Linguists now fear it's the extinction of the national language Urdu if drastic measures are not taken soon to revive and maintain it. According to Swan, as elucidated in his article on 'Language Maintenance, Shift and Death', Economic factors, Demographics factors, Institutional support and Status are mainly responsible for encouraging a group of individuals to change their language or to use an L2 side by side to L1 (254-258). Such a shift does not occur due to a common ethnicity shared with the native speakers of that language, as Fishman asserts in his research. The origin of the ethnicity of the British and the Americans is in no way directly linked to the ethnic background(s) of Pakistani nationals. Stockwell writes about Imperial languages in his chapter on 'Prestige';

‘The histories of the native countries of these languages have largely been ones of suppressing the other indigenous languages, either by official prohibition or by official indifference and lack of support. (82)

7. Conclusion

Findings showed that global trends are a more powerful influence on the language evolution as compared to the ethnic background of the English language speakers. The Post-colonial Influence overridden by the American influence seems to have encouraged the initiation and sustenance of American English in the region contributing as a crucial factor towards language identity and change.

Hence English language, a by-product of globalization, not ethnicity, is now a part of Pakistani culture and society. In spite of the waning influence of colonization it still thrives as a means for conformity with the global community. It not only works for Pakistanis for internal interaction but also for global communication and exchange of ideas via virtual social networks for communication and business all around the world.

Based on personal observation as a researcher, a student of sociolinguistics, the native of a post colonial nation and, the based on the study of views by expert sociolinguists it can be safely concluded that ethnicity may be one of the factors affecting language identity and change but it is by no means the sole factor affecting language assertion in South East Asia or anywhere else in the world. Post-colonial factors and American hegemony has aided globalization, which consequently emerges as the dominant factor acting on language change and identity in Pakistan.

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