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EXPLORING LINGUISTIC IDENTITIES OF PAKISTANI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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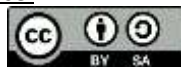
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Abstract

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The study "Exploring Linguistic Identities of Pakistani University Students" investigated the types of linguistic identities prevalent amongst Pakistani university students and how they perceive their new linguistic identities. Five types of linguistic identities were explored in this study, historic, educational, social, cultural, and political linguistic identities. The research delved into gaps in language and its inherent relationship with identity in the Pakistani Higher education context, in a backdrop of English as a second language and the underlying postcolonial mindset of the people and how it contributes to the formation and students' perception of new linguistic identities. The study developed and used a self-reporting questionnaire by following a quantitative research approach. The responses were collected against a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree). The study sample consisted of 400 undergraduate students enrolled in different disciplines in various faculties of four public sector universities. A descriptive analysis of the data was done and percentages and mean scores were tabulated. The findings highlighted the significant impact language has on university students' self-perception and understanding of their environment. English language proficiency is frequently considered a prerequisite for academic achievement and potential employment opportunities in the globalized world. English acquires a symbolic meaning that goes beyond simple communication and becomes a sign of social mobility and future economic success holding promise for a better life. On the contrary, low English competence might cause sentiments of marginalization and isolation in academic and social settings.

Keywords: Linguistic, Identities, Proficiency, Sentiments, Linguistic

Introduction

Universities are vibrant environments where students are exposed to diverse viewpoints, cultures, and most importantly, new languages and the need to form new linguistic identities. This language environment offers Pakistani students pursuing higher education a distinct set of benefits as well as challenges. This paper explores the linguistic identities of Pakistani university students. Students' linguistic identities are defined in this study as encompassing their beliefs about language and language learning, their connection to the languages they speak, and their perceptions of themselves as language learners and users. This definition builds on [Hajar & Mhamed's \(2021, p. 3\)](#) exploration of the idea of "linguistic self-concept" by [Benson et al. \(2013\)](#). This idea is consistent with poststructuralist interpretations of identity, such as [Norton's \(2013\)](#) definition, which describes how people see their place in the world, how that place changes over time, and how they imagine their future selves. When it comes to students' linguistic identity construction, English, which is frequently the predominant Medium of Instruction (MOI) in Pakistani universities presents them with both opportunities and challenges. This research goes beyond a basic competency evaluation ([Aslam, Khan, et. al. 2023](#)). It explores the types of linguistic identities prevalent among Pakistani university students. In the university, the intersection of Urdu, regional languages, and English serves as a melting pot where students create new linguistic identities that represent their changing social and academic identities.

Research problem

Research on the complex interaction between identity formation and acquiring a second language (L2) has been abundant. As they negotiate their changing identities and relationships within their social spheres, language learners actively shape their

discourse and communication skills. A considerable number of studies have been devoted to the experiences of English language learners in environments where English is the primary language. ([Amna, Mubasher, Hafza, 2024](#)), Our knowledge of how L2 acquisition affects identity in non-native circumstances, however, is lacking. This is especially true in postcolonial nations where English is widely used in education but is neither the primary language nor the original tongue. There are several significant gaps in the existing research on language and identity that call for more study on the topic of linguistic identities in the Pakistani context.

Research Objectives

- 1.To comprehend the nature and composition of students' prior linguistic identities in university.
- 2.To explore students' new linguistic experiences in the university.
- 3.To examine students' perceptions of the creation of new linguistic identities in the university.

Literature review

Over the past 20 years, identity has drawn attention from the fields of applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and language education. Identity has been central to linguistic anthropology ([Bucholtz & Hall, 2004](#)) and has just lately become "one of the main trends" ([de Bot, 2015, p. 78](#)) in linguistic research. Within the broad subject of applied linguistics, several academics have attempted to investigate the relationship between language and identity (e.g., [Bhat, 2017](#); [Block, 2010](#); [Blommaert, 2008](#); [Bucholtz & Hall, 2008](#); [Darvin & Norton, 2015](#); [Khan et al., 2021](#)). This focus on the relationship between language and identity has its origins in the 1970s applied linguistics movement known as the "social turn" ([Block, 2003](#); [Khan et al., 2021](#)). Before now, language acquisition was thought to be influenced by internal variables present in language learners' psyche ([Morgan, 2007](#)). Our knowledge of the social context of language

use and learning, particularly in connection to identity construction and development, has greatly benefited from poststructuralist study. (Syed, Samina, Ishrat, 2023), Humans constantly construct and manage their identities on several levels, individual, societal, and institutional, because of their interactions with other people (Chandrasahsan, 2015). In layman's words, Rovira (2008) defined it as an individual's identity, uniqueness, and the particular circumstances that contribute to that identity. Different fields of knowledge have different implications for identity. While identities or positions are frequently given by social structures or ascribed by others, poststructuralist theorists like Mikhail Bakhtin, Pierre Bourdieu, Stuart Hall, and Christine Weedon contend that identities are contingent, transient, and context-dependent and that agents who wish to position themselves can also negotiate them (De Costa & Norton, 2016; Norton & McKinney, 2011). Identity is the concept of how people see themselves or picture themselves in the world, and it can affect how happy they are and the relationships they have with various social networks (Hajar & Mhamed, 2021). Identity formation is greatly influenced by language (Djité, 2006). Language is regarded as a construct through which other people attribute the speakers' identity since it is a flexible and observable means of communication for expressing identity, allowing people to demonstrate who they are and which group they choose to be associated with (Zenker, 2018). Burke (2003) defined identity as "what it means to be who one is" (p.1). It is the way that a person and/or community views themselves according to what they consider to be differences or similarities (Furmuzachi, 2007; Riley, 2007). Language is one of the main tools for communication, but speakers also frequently choose it to express a particular sense of self or group identity (Cleveland et al., 2015; Joseph, 2004; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Liddicoat &

Taylor-Leech, 2014). Accordingly, language serves as a method for them to express who they are and the organizations they choose to identify with (Marzban et al., 2021; Nusranti & Adriyanti, 2021). Weedon's (1987) poststructuralist feminism has attempted to incorporate language, personal experience, and social power into a subjectivity theory that is intimately related to identity (Marzban et al., 2021). Weedon (1987) described language as the medium through which social organization, both real and potential, as well as the social and political ramifications that these forms are expected to have, are defined and fought. As such, language is seen in poststructuralist literature as both a tool for forming one's own identity and a means of comprehending how others construct their identities (Carter, 2013). Scholars such as Cleveland et al. (2015), Crawshaw et al. (2001), Rezaei et al. (2014), Ros I Solé (2004), & Shi (2024) have posited that language is both the site of identity formation and its outcome. Language both creates and is produced by identity (Khokhar et al., 2016). Since language is the most adaptable, durable, and comprehensive symbolic resource for the formation of identity, the position that linguistic research takes in examining the idea of identity is relevant to this study's aim.

Research Methodology

This study developed and used a self-reporting questionnaire by following a quantitative research approach. The data thus collected from the diverse respondents made it easier to assess the overall picture of students' perceptions of linguistic identities. Since these could be readily distributed to a large sample of students, questionnaires appeared to be a suitable choice for this kind of data collection. This allowed for a more diverse and comprehensive understanding of linguistic identities. The questionnaire consisted of 54 items, designed to measure and capture learners' perceptions of five types of linguistic identities, namely the historical,

educational, social, cultural, and political linguistic identities. The categories of historical, social, and cultural-linguistic identity each comprised ten items, while the categories of political and educational linguistic identity each had twelve items. The respondents were required to score the items on a five-point Likert scale (1 being strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 being neutral, 4 being agree, and 5 being strongly agree). The questionnaire respondents were 400 randomly selected students enrolled in Bachelor’s programs at four public sector universities, in faculties including the arts, humanities, social sciences, and sciences. The questionnaire responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results

The results of the five linguistic identities are presented in Tables 1 through 5 under the five sections below.

Historic linguistic identity

It is impossible to dispute the historical significance of students’ linguistic identities. Ten statements about historic linguistic identity were included in the first category of the questionnaire, which examined university students’ perceptions of the historical context of language use. The two main languages of interest in this questionnaire were English and Urdu.

Table 1

Items	SDA	SD	N	A	SA	Mean
1.1 I feel English has always been considered the most prestigious language in Pakistan	1.9	6.2	17.3	28.8	45.8	4.11
1.2 I feel English as a language has always been given more importance in education than Urdu language	4.3	5.1	8.6	24.8	57.1	4.25
1.3 In my opinion Urdu medium education has been given less value than English medium education in Pakistan since its independence in 1947	3.8	6.5	16.7	27.8	45.3	4.04
1.4 I feel people (grandparents and parents) who themselves got an education in Urdu want their children to have English medium education	3.0	1.3	14.0	25.3	56.3	4.31
1.5 I feel students fluent in English have always had a better future	5.1	8.9	21.0	29.4	35.6	3.81
1.6 I feel that to be successful in work life in Pakistan one needs to have good command of English	2.7	6.5	14.6	32.3	43.9	4.08
1.7 I feel that knowing Urdu alone cannot ensure an individual's economic stability in Pakistan	7.5	10.0	20.2	29.9	32.3	3.7
1.8 I feel that the majority of the Bachelor (undergraduate) students in Pakistan have always preferred to learn English over Urdu	2.4	4.6	14.0	27.5	51.5	4.21
1.9 In my opinion Pakistanis have always felt national pride in using Urdu for wider communication within the country	5.4	13.5	24.5	26.1	30.5	3.63
1.10 I feel Bachelor’ (undergraduate) students in Pakistan think that learning a provincial/regional language (Punjabi, Saraiki, etc.) is not important	7.8	12.7	18.3	24.3	36.9	3.7

Note: SDA = Strongly Disagree (1); DA = Disagree (2); N = Neutral (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 1 shows that the respondents place a higher value on English language competency than Urdu language proficiency when it comes to success and stability in the economy. Urdu language is still vital to the nation’s pride and identity, nonetheless.

Educational linguistic identity

The efficiency of the learning process is largely dependent on the language used in the training. The learning process and the overall educational identity of students are directly impacted by the MOI. Their former and current linguistic identities may have been significantly shaped by their educational experiences. In this study, the educational component of the students’ linguistic identity was explored in the second sub-category of the questionnaire. Table 2 presents the tabulated findings of the items under the educational linguistic identity section.

Table 2

Items	SDA	SD	N	A	SA	Mean
2.1 I do not have any problem with studying all subjects in English at the university	4.6	10.5	12.7	27.2	45.0	3.98
2.2 I need to spend extra time studying since the course material and the academic tasks are in English at university	10.8	16.7	19.7	25.1	27.8	3.42
2.3 I can fully comprehend the teacher’s lecture completely in English	4.0	11.6	24.5	28.3	31.5	3.72
2.4 I would prefer it if my teacher uses both English and Urdu to explain concepts during the lecture	2.7	3.5	10.8	20.5	62.5	4.37
2.5 I can speak English fluently while giving oral presentations in the class	5.7	13.5	28.6	34.0	18.3	3.46
2.6 I do not find any difficulty in attempting written tasks in English	3.0	9.4	18.9	33.4	35.3	3.89
2.7 I can confidently ask questions in English during a lecture for clarification	5.4	15.6	29.1	28.3	21.6	3.45
2.8 I can attempt exams in English with ease	2.7	5.7	17.5	34.5	39.6	4.03
2.9 I faced no difficulty in adapting to English as a medium of instruction in the university	1.9	9.7	20.8	33.2	34.5	3.89
2.10 I need to take extra help (tuition/coaching) because the education is imparted in the English language at Bachelors (undergraduate) level	22.9	21.6	21.8	17.3	16.4	2.83
2.11 I need to think in Urdu and then translate in English for communication in English in the class	8.9	11.3	24.3	31.3	24.3	3.51
2.12 I feel students with better English skills are able to perform better academically	2.7	4.9	12.1	28.0	52.3	4.22

Note: SDA = Strongly Disagree (1); DA = Disagree (2); N = Neutral (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 2 presents insights into the educational linguistic identities of Pakistani university students and elucidates their associations with the languages they encounter inside their educational environments. The information outlines views and assessments of their learning abilities in connection to linguistic identities. The results show that, when it comes to written English, a far higher percentage of

students felt at ease than when they spoke English in class (items 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8). The respondents believed that Urdu is less effective in educational settings than English, which is necessary for a quality education, job, and international mobility.

Social linguistic identity

The English language is now ingrained in Pakistani society. English language use has an impact on students’ social lives in addition to their linguistic identities because it is the language of instruction at the university level. The results of the third sub-section of the questionnaire about social linguistic identity are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Items	SDA	SD	N	A	SA	Mean
3.1 I communicate with my friends in English frequently at the university	9.4	23.7	34.0	23.5	9.4	3.0
3.2 I can speak in English fluently with my peers in and outside the university	5.9	21.8	30.7	28.0	13.5	3.21
3.3 I feel shy while communicating in English	10.8	20.2	22.9	28.3	17.8	3.22
3.4 I feel isolated on campus because I cannot speak English fluently	28.3	25.6	19.7	15.9	10.5	2.55
3.5 I like to participate in extra-curricular activities (clubs and societies) where I have to communicate in English	6.7	15.9	26.1	29.9	21.3	3.43
3.6 The language that I use for communication on the campus plays an important role in the way people view me in the university	3.0	7.0	19.4	39.9	30.7	3.88
3.7 I feel that students fluent in English adapt easily to the social life on campus	4.3	13.2	22.9	30.5	29.1	3.67
3.8 In my university students frequently prefer to communicate in Urdu	4.3	6.7	21.0	27.5	40.4	3.93
3.9 In my university students rarely communicate in any provincial language (Punjabi, Saraiki etc.)	8.6	15.9	18.1	26.1	31.3	3.56
3.10 In my opinion students who use any other language than English to communicate are considered backward in my university	16.2	21.3	25.1	21.6	15.9	3.0

Note: SDA = Strongly Disagree (1); DA = Disagree (2); N = Neutral (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

Table 3 presents the social aspect of the respondents’ linguistic identities by examining how they interacted with friends and peers both on and off campus. The findings show that the respondents had a variety of language preferences and that not all of them were fluent or at ease in speaking English. In their previous schooling, almost all Pakistani university students in this study had encountered the English language to some degree. English is also taught to students in Pakistani institutions and schools that use Urdu as an MOI. The respondents’ incapacity to communicate in English did not cause them to feel discriminated against. The student’s communication language on campus has a big impact on how other students see them at the

university. Most of the respondents concurred that the language they use perpetuates certain preconceptions, which, depending on the language used and how it is perceived in society, may be either positive or harmful. On campus, speaking in regional or local tongues is uncommon, and speaking in these languages is not encouraged in the academic setting. The results demonstrated the range of viewpoints on the usage of the English language and related identities.

Cultural linguistic identity

Culture and language are entwined. Pakistan has more than 70 ethnolinguistic groupings, placing it high on the linguistic variety scale. However, the choice of the English language as MOI is primarily because of its political consensus and practical applicability. This questionnaire sub-category mostly focused on the linguistic cultures of the institutions that are being observed right now, while also providing some insight into the linguistic cultures of the students in the past. Table 4 below is a tabulation of the results for the cultural-linguistic identity category.

Table 4

Items	SDA	SD	N	A	SA	Mean
4.1 I feel there is no difference between the linguistic culture of university and college	13.5	24.8	25.1	23.2	13.5	2.98
4.2 I feel having a good command on English helps to adapt to university academic culture	1.9	7.0	21.0	38.3	31.8	3.91
4.3 In my opinion students having good command of English can have effective interaction with teachers	2.2	7.8	18.1	34.0	38.0	3.98
4.4 It is important to know English to communicate with the university administration (Registrar office, treasurer office and Exam branch, etc.)	10.2	19.9	23.2	25.1	21.6	3.28
4.5 In my opinion applications written in English are given priority in the university offices	3.8	8.9	22.6	26.7	38.0	3.86
4.6 I feel that I can successfully perform my day-to-day tasks on the university campus without using the English language	7.3	14.6	28.8	28.3	21.0	3.41
4.7 Urdu is widely used for communication outside the classroom (corridors, cafeteria, sports field, library, and hostel) in the university	1.3	6.7	15.9	22.1	53.9	4.2
4.8 University life has helped me in improving my English language skills	4.9	7.0	18.3	29.9	39.9	3.93
4.9 Ever since I joined university, I have been using English more than any other language I know	9.4	17.3	25.1	24.0	24.3	3.36
4.10 I feel that English is the most common language used on the campus	12.7	20.8	28.6	22.1	15.9	3.08

Note: SDA = Strongly Disagree (1); DA = Disagree (2); N = Neutral (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

The results in Table 4 present how students’ linguistic identities are shaped by their cultures. Pakistani institutions and colleges have a diverse language culture. Depending on the kind of institution they attended, public or private, elite or non-elite, English or Urdu medium, run by an NGO, madrasa, etc., students in this study encountered a variety of

language cultures in their colleges and schools. The results imply that Urdu and English are widely used on public sector university campuses due to their shared language tradition.

Political linguistic identity

Language-related perceptions of status, power, and influence are all part of the political linguistic identity. Table 5 below presents the findings from the sub-category of political linguistic identity.

Table 5

Items	SDA	SD	N	A	SA	Mean
5.1 In my opinion students who are fluent in English are more valued by the teachers	3.5	10.2	19.9	32.3	34.0	3.83
5.2 In my opinion students who are proficient in English are respected among their fellow students	5.7	12.1	15.9	32.3	34.0	3.77
5.3 Students who are good in English dominate in classroom activities	3.0	8.6	19.4	31.0	38.0	3.92
5.4 Students who have a good command of English have more chance of being selected as representatives in the student council	4.3	8.4	14.3	33.2	39.9	3.96
5.5 Students who are good in English are more confident to voice their issues with the Head of the Department and university authorities	3.0	8.6	14.6	29.6	44.2	4.04
5.6 In my opinion students who are able to speak English fluently succeed in getting better jobs even if they were not very good academically	3.5	8.4	23.2	30.5	34.5	3.84
5.7 I think the medium of instruction throughout education (school, college and university) years should be Urdu	11.9	17.8	31.3	20.8	18.3	3.16
5.8 I am satisfied that the medium of instruction at the Bachelors (undergraduate) level is English	4.0	6.5	23.7	29.6	36.1	3.87
5.9 I think gaining higher education in English will enable me to avail of greater career opportunities.	1.6	6.2	20.5	30.7	41.0	4.03
5.10 I feel satisfied with English being the official language of Pakistan.	17.8	12.1	25.1	22.6	22.4	3.2
5.11 I think people who are proficient in English are respected more in the Pakistani society compared to those who do not know English.	4.0	7.0	17.8	32.6	38.5	3.95
5.12 I feel English is the most powerful language in Pakistan.	5.7	12.4	18.6	29.9	33.4	3.73

Note: SDA = Strongly Disagree (1); DA = Disagree (2); N = Neutral (3); A = Agree (4); SA = Strongly Agree (5)

According to the results shown in Table 5, the students perceived that learning English exclusively in college or university could either exacerbate or prevent social and economic injustices when it comes to student's ability to advance in their careers and get hired in competitive job markets. Power relations based on linguistic disparities are implemented in the classrooms, where linguistically inadequate pupils are denied the opportunity to succeed and are instead given precedence to engage in class activities by those who are already skilled in the language used as the MOI. Being able to communicate in English is a symbolic advantage that increases students' value in the eyes of the authority. Students from mixed- or English-medium backgrounds have an edge and can use

language skills to gain influence in society or politics.

Discussion

Non-essentialists view identity as more of a process and a shifting perspective, whereas essentialists describe or rather understand identity as something tied to an individual's self; something which is singular and stable. According to Hall (1996) and Woodward (1997), identity is viewed as cyclical, never-ending, fluid, diversified, and always changing throughout time, space, and linguistic interactions (spoken and written). Most contemporary scholars approach identity from a non-essentialist stance (Virkkula & Nikula, 2010). As per these definitions, an individual's identity is formed through their interactions with the social environment, and this is particularly important in the Pakistani context where relationships with family, friends, and co-workers hold cultural significance and influence an individual's identity. Forming one's identity is a lifelong process that is continuously changing based on experiences and influences from people in society (Andersen, 2009). English thus becomes the main MOI as students transfer from college to university. As a result, their identity is ultimately greatly impacted by the denser nature of English language practice, usage, and learning. Consequently, individuals begin to progressively alter the identity they had during their earlier school and college years. The findings of this study support the claims made by Manan & David (2019), who contend that because English has historically been associated with all significant spheres of power, it is associated with prestige and privilege in Pakistan. In Pakistan, "English remains a language of prestige, which is used by the elite, bureaucracy, military, higher judiciary, higher education, and all other important official discourse", according to Tamim (2013, p. 2), who endorsed a similar position. The bonds that students develop with the languages that make up their linguistic

repertoire are not formed in a vacuum. Students traverse a multitude of situations throughout their lives that have a significant impact on how they perceive themselves and who they are. As contended by [Neinstein et al. \(2016\)](#), these experiences penetrate their social, cognitive, and educational domains. [Nematzadeh & Narafshan \(2020\)](#) postulate that one outcome of these experiences is the cultivation of possible identity alterations while preserving connections to their prior life encounters. The study findings, which portray Pakistani university students' linguistic identities as dynamic, fluid structures that change in response to exposure to a variety of linguistic experiences, lend support to the poststructuralist perspective on identity. The students' linguistic identity is constantly changing, which gives them a chance to grow as individuals and gives them a sense of agency ([Forbes & Rutgers, 2021](#)). English is frequently taught as an L2 in Pakistani schools, and learning it has a significant impact on students' identity-building processes ([Mushtaque & Zaki, 2018](#)). The dynamics of students' linguistic identities are significantly impacted by Pakistan's instructional emphasis on English. English language proficiency emerges as a powerful identity signal for pupils in formal contexts and official communication ([Umrani, 2015](#)). This is consistent with [Bhat's \(2017\) & Javed's \(2016\)](#) research, which highlights the important role that English language instruction plays in shaping students' linguistic identities. Additionally, the findings provide information on parental engagement. The majority of the respondents concurred that their parents and grandparents, who received an Urdu education, aimed for their children to receive an English education, with the expectation of a better future and financial ambitions. The respondents thought that their elders did not favor them in obtaining instruction in Urdu. The elders' unfavorable experiences with the national language as MOI may be the basis for this. The parents and

grandparents believe that English is a more valuable language for future success than Urdu and want their children to be better prepared for life in the real world. Similar results were obtained from a study carried out in two English-medium schools in the northwest of Pakistan by [Ajmal \(2013\)](#).

Conclusion

The findings showed the complex nature of this process, and the significant impact language has on university students' self-perception and understanding of their environment. One potent indicator of identity is the predominance of English as the major MOI in Pakistani universities. English language proficiency is frequently seen as a prerequisite for academic achievement and potential employment opportunities in the globalized world. Because of this connection, English has acquired symbolic meaning that goes beyond simple communication and has become a sign of social mobility and future economic success. On the other hand, low English competence might cause sentiments of marginalization and isolation in the academic setting. This study also highlighted how university students continue to negotiate their identities in an increasingly globalized society. University students struggle to balance the need to fit in with the perceived linguistic expectations of the contemporary academic setting with their local linguistic background. This emphasizes how important it is for educational institutions to create a more welcoming language environment that values diversity and gives students the tools they need to succeed in a globalized society. This research has illuminated the crucial role universities play in fostering healthy linguistic identities for Pakistani students and preparing them for current competitive times. It is recommended to the policymakers and educators that to bridge the gap between theory and practice, there is the need to embrace bilingual teaching materials; prioritize practical application over rote learning, empower students through

presentations; foster intercultural competence; promote language learning communities; provide targeted support; and improve English language instruction at primary levels. By implementing these recommendations, Pakistani universities can empower students to develop healthy linguistic identities that bridge their local heritage with the demands of a globalized world. The potential link to identity construction has not been thoroughly investigated in the Pakistani context which highlights the need to analyze the relationship between English language acquisition and identity through a critical lens, investigating educational policy and practices in social, cultural, historical, and political aspects in future studies.

Innovation/Research Gap

This study primarily focused on the students' linguistic identities. However, the role of English language teachers as facilitators and role models within this process warrants further investigation. Exploring the linguistic identities of these educators and how they navigate the complexities of teaching English in a multilingual environment could offer valuable insights. Pertinent questions such as how their own linguistic identities influence their teaching styles and student interactions alongside the expectations of a globalized curriculum within the local context need to be addressed. Secondly, this research highlighted the challenges students face in reconciling their written and spoken English proficiency. A deeper look into this disconnect could prove highly beneficial. This research has illuminated the crucial role universities play in fostering healthy linguistic identities for Pakistani students in a globalized world. Teachers should embrace bilingual teaching materials incorporating Urdu alongside English in teaching materials whenever feasible. This reinforces the value of Urdu while simultaneously fostering English language development. Utilizing code-switching

strategically to explain complex concepts can help bridge the gap between students' prior linguistic experiences and the demands of academic English and move beyond rote memorization and grammar drills. Universities should offer additional English language support programs for students who enter university with limited English proficiency. Encouraging educators to reflect on their own linguistic identities and how these experiences might shape their interactions with students is valuable. Workshops can provide a platform for teachers to explore their own biases and develop strategies for promoting equity and inclusivity in the classroom. Creating a supportive environment where teachers feel comfortable discussing challenges and sharing best practices in fostering healthy student linguistic identities is essential.

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