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Western Michigan University, hasan.aamir@gmail.com

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LANGUAGE – LIBERATION – LEADERSHIP  
THE IDENTITY RECONSTRUCTION AND LIVED EXPERIENCES  
OF SUBALTERN (NON-ELITE) LEARNERS OF ENGLISH IN PAKISTAN

by

Aamir Hasan

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
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Doctoral Committee:

Brett Geier, Ph.D., Chair  
Sue Poppink, Ph.D.  
Todd Kuchta, Ph.D.

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LANGUAGE – LIBERATION – LEADERSHIP  
THE IDENTITY RECONSTRUCTION AND LIVED EXPERIENCES  
OF SUBALTERN (NON-ELITE) LEARNERS OF ENGLISH IN PAKISTAN

Aamir Hasan, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University, 2020

English enjoys an unassailable position of dominance in the world today, especially as the language of leadership. In most of the developing world, fluency in English is a must for meaningful employment and leadership opportunities. Yet English is the preserve of a tiny elite class, who use it as a first language. For the vast majority, the prospects for learning English are bleak. However, some individuals not hailing from the elite classes acquire the language through personal effort and perseverance. Yet, researchers have not studied this population.

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of non-elite Pakistanis in educational leadership positions concerning how they: (a) learned English through self-initiation, (b) reconstructed their identities as a result thereof, (c) changed their view of themselves as educational leaders, and (d) changed their behaviors as educational leaders. This research carries out foundational work to understand the intersectionality of English acquisition and leadership emergence among non-elite learners in a postcolonial society.

I used a qualitative approach to study a sample of people from non-elite backgrounds in Pakistan who became leaders on the basis of their ability to speak English effectively and fluently. These individuals were educated in public or non-elite private schools in which English was not used across the curriculum. In addition, their parents spoke little or no English. I

interviewed twelve people from a mix of ages, genders, qualifications and locations. The semi-structured interviews encouraged participants to discuss their changes in consciousness and behaviors as they became progressively more familiar with English. Participants were asked how knowing English helped them develop leadership. Interviews were conducted in English to validate their command over the language.

I argue that English has become a basic Human Right in the present global reality, without which the possibility to reach one's potential is constrained. Non-elites are only taken seriously when they speak in English—*are listened to*—in Pakistan, is the most significant finding of this study. I found that without English, an educated identity, and a leadership identity is impossible in Pakistan. English creates the space where elites and non-elites can meet as equals. English often creates leadership possibilities and always enhances those possibilities. English is more important than almost any qualification, and the ability to speak English has become enmeshed in people's self-esteem. The knowledge of English can even enhance greater respect of the Urdu language, when leaders use English to advocate for Urdu. I suggest new terminology, “deliverance motivation” or “liberative motivation” to encapsulate desires among non-elites to acquire English as a means to their own mental liberation.

This research is about English as a path towards fulfilling the human need for dignity and self-respect. It answers Spivak's (1993) seminal question by evincing, that when the subaltern speaks *in* English, she *is heard*. English acquisition has become a powerful element in the development of leadership consciousness and behaviors for non-elites in many postcolonial societies. I present evidence that marginalized people can leverage the global lingua franca to self-actualize as fully functioning human beings, and as leaders.

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

GOD – Who guided me and who, even in my darkest moments, did not abandon me.

Muhammad, Jesus, Gautama, Lao-Tzu & all the Prophets-who preached the equality of mankind.

Socrates, Thomas More, MalcolmX & Husain - who taught me what it means to have conviction.

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Haleem Siddiqui, Tariq Ragoonwala, Sami Mustafa, Sajid bhai, etal who made Harvard possible.

Sabiha – who was more daughter to mom & sister to me than a real daughter/sister could ever be.

My father Hasan Ahmed Razi - who showed me ethical conduct has nothing to do with religion.

My mother Onaiza Razi - I miss you Ami. Till we meet in *Gardens watered by running streams*.

My aunt Prof Zakia Khatoon aka Molly (Phupiyama) - who taught me the meaning of selflessness.

My aunt Rabia Khatoon aka Dollyama – I could never repay all the affection you showed me.

My children Hador, Sheeba & Zahra-*you were the inspiration*. I love you. I will always love you.

The Working Class - whose toil makes society function; yet are unrecognized, unacknowledged.

....and to all those who believe that a better and more humane world is possible.

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*Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression of their society.*

— (Edward Sapir, 1929)

*The English language is travelling fast towards the fulfillment of its destiny . . . running forward towards its ultimate mission of eating up, like Aaron's rod, all other languages.*

— (Thomas de Quincey, 1862)

*The purpose of influence is to speak up for those who have no influence.*

— (Rick Warren, 2006)

In January 1980 my father became deaf; a tragedy that was to dictate 31 years of my life, and was subsequently betrayed by his business partner. This meant that throughout my undergrad in the Bay Area, where I excelled—was called whizz kid—and where a lucrative career in accounting awaited, I remained conscious of the imperative to return and be with him. It was a hard choice. I was living the California dream but the desire to do the right thing, irrespective of consequences, was always strong in me. I arrived back in Pakistan in August 1984.

Growing up privileged, one is never really prepared for reality, especially the reality of a complex society like Pakistan, and the egalitarian values I was raised on did not help at all. I played with the hand I had been dealt, being my father's 'ears' on the one hand while trying to keep his logistics company afloat on the other. But how does one survive in the world of commerce without a killer instinct. Despite my best efforts, Eastern Shipping Company started unravelling in 1996.

For a decade or so I was in the wilderness and I learnt what a merciless place the world is. The hardest part was seeing my children being denied the affluence and ease I had enjoyed as a child. My attempt to escape away from these challenges, to Canada in 1999, ended in disaster in a dystopian post 9/11 reality. That I had to choose between staying in Canada with my family and returning to fulfill my duty to my parents was the hardest test I have been put to.

My fall from grace reached its nadir when part of the house I had grown up in had to be sold in 2007 to meet our financial needs, and seeing the divider wall being raised is etched in the deepest recesses of my consciousness. Dad by this time was bedridden and suffering from dementia so was spared the heartbreak but despite her stoicism this was a heavy cross for Mom to bear. This house was built on the land she had received as dowry. This however was the lowest point. Later that same year I got employed at the elite Karachi Grammar School as a teacher of English and God, in His infinite Mercy, set me off on the path towards redemption.

As I reflect on my trials, the first person who comes to mind is my dear Mr. Mazhar Lari, who again and again rescued me from disaster with his advice and legal help countless times. If he were ever to bill me it would be in the millions, but not once did he or has he, ever, raised the issue directly or indirectly. As they say, it's not what you do, it's how you do it. I could never repay his favors and I am aware that I am just one among countless others whose lives have been touched by his magnanimity. He has been my guardian angel. Thank you Mazhar sahib.

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My dear friend Inam (Dr. Inam Pal) is another person who nurtured my dignity when I was down and out. I will never ever forget his kindness in 2005 when he operated to remove my appendix at the best hospital in Karachi; a procedure for which I never receive a bill. At his place I was always welcomed (for which a big thanks to his wife, my friend Sadia, as well) and had a run of his beautiful hut at Sandspit Beach whenever I wanted. You know your friends when you are down they say; a great truth. Thank you Inam.

I want to acknowledge my friend Maliha Bhimjee who has been kind and generous. She and her husband Munir, invite me to the best places and always welcome me like an honored guest at their home. Time and again she has paid for the education and vocational training of people I recommended, all of whom now have meaningful lives and professions. Many of these people were very dear to me, like my beloved Sarwar, who served my parents till their dying day. A gentle, sophisticated, soft-spoken person who has changed countless lives with her large heartedness. Thank you Maliha.

A word of thanks is due to my childhood friend Mustu (Mustafa) who paid for my airline ticket when I went to Harvard and who has been a continuous source of encouragement. He has attended to numerous matters for me in Pakistan during my PhD and has graciously been taking care of Ami's framed embroideries which he knows are very dear to me. We grew up together

and he has a special place in his heart for my parents as I have for his. Thank you my friend from the best days; halcyon days of innocence.

This list of friends would be incomplete if I did not acknowledge Ismail, my friend in Berkeley, whose house is an abode where I am always welcome. He is generous to a fault and he and his lovely wife Christine have time and again gone out of their way to make me feel special. He has never let me pay for any of the many lovely meals we had had together. His car is always available to me. He has a heart of gold. Thank you Ismail.

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Finally, I want to thank my parents who are no more in this world and yet not a day passes when I do not feel their presence. During my wanderings and trials I at times felt that they hardly prepared me for this world, but I know now that the principles they tried to imbue in me and my brothers were the right values. As Steve Jobs said, you can only connect the dots backwards. Thank you Dad, rather Abu. And thank you Mom, rather Ami, for everything you tried to do for me and did. You sold half of our family residence to help me. In my mind's eye, I can still clearly see you singing the lullaby "Aaja ray nindiya" to put me to sleep.

Aamir Hasan

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In many developing countries, English is the lingua franca of choice; and knowledge of English, or lack thereof, has an enormous impact on people's lives. Mahboob (2002), a writer from South Asia, sums it up well in his article "No English, No Future!" Nowhere is this more evident than in a country like Pakistan, which faces a myriad of socioeconomic and ethno-linguistic issues and where "the national intelligentsia is now rooted much more decisively in English than in any of the indigenous languages" (Ahmad, 1992, p. 76). There are whole regions of the world in which people are marginalized because they are not fluent in English. There is nothing in Pakistani society that would support non-elite learners to acquire English; not the culture, history, economics, education system, government, or any other social system such as their families. The learning of English can make or break a person's life.

In this study I have attempted to problematize, or at least understand, the consequences of this reality, and when the reality shifts, from the point of view of the non-elite; being used here in the same sense as the term *subaltern* (Gramsci, 1971; Spivak, 1993) is used in postcolonial (Said, 1979) and subaltern studies (Guha, 2009). Subaltern refers to people who are without political and economic agency—people cut off from the lines of social mobility (Spivak, 2008). The term subaltern is in oppositional relation to the term elite.

It may be hard for native English speakers to understand just how dominant English is as a language, particularly as a language of leadership. Though far and few between, some non-elites acquire fluency in English, and become leaders. These people have everything going against them including institutionalized discrimination. Their context suggests that it would be highly unlikely that they learn English, and which may, and very often does, preclude them from

becoming leaders. Fluency in English liberates non-elite Pakistanis out of their restrictive class-based academic, professional, and social spaces that they are mostly confined to and gives them agency. English gives *voice* to the “the small voice of history” (Guha, 2009). Spivak (1993), in her seminal essay asks, “Can the subaltern speak?” This study shows that when the subaltern speaks, *in English, she is heard!*

English has by far the largest vocabulary of any language (Bryson, 1990, Crystal, 2004) and is the current universal lingua franca for all populations (Quirk, 1990; Lee, 2003; Mauranen & Ranta, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2011). It is increasingly the gate keeper of scientific discourse and this “collapse into monolingualism” (Gordin, 2015, p. 2) means that more than three-quarters of scientific papers being published today are in English (Deng, 2015)—in the natural sciences, it is more than 90% (Di Bitetti & Ferreras, 2016). Hence, without a strong knowledge of English, one has almost no opportunity to participate in academic and intellectual discourse at the global, and in most cases, even at the national level.

So what happens when unusually motivated subalterns learn English and take leadership positions, even though nothing in their context would enable them to do so? The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of non-elite Pakistanis in educational leadership positions concerning how they: (a) learned English through self-initiation, (b) reconstructed their identities as a result thereof, (c) changed their view of themselves as educational leaders, and (d) changed their behaviors as educational leaders.

## **Background**

In presenting the background to this study, I discuss four issues. These are:

1. The historical context of how English came to India (including present day Pakistan).
2. Language issues in Pakistan.

3. Language policy in Pakistan.
4. English as a leadership language in Pakistan.

### **Historical Background of English in South Asia**

The British came to India in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the initial 150-year period, known as the Orientalist phase, was marked by a desire to understand and integrate with Indian culture (Viswanathan, 1989). However, after the Pitt's India Act of 1784, the idea to "civilize" Indian society by way of Anglicism and proselytization acquired importance. Macaulay's *Minute on Indian Education* (Macaulay, 1835) posited that the Oriental system, which imparted education in Sanskrit and Arabic, was inappropriate for the teaching of the sciences. Lord William Bentinck, Governor General of India at the time, made English the official language of communications and his educational policy, the Indian Education Act of 1835, called for the study of English by Indians. The act also required that instruction at state-funded colleges be given only through the medium of English. As a result, two discrete language education systems at the school level ran side-by-side and, rather than Anglicism (teaching in English) replacing the Orientalist mode (teaching in the vernacular), both systems continued on their separate paths (Pennycook, 1994). This meant that while education was provided in local vernaculars to the vast majority of people, English education was provided to relatively few, ostensibly students from elite backgrounds. English thus became "a line of demarcation, a cultural boundary between privilege and dispossession" (Ahmad, 1992, p. 212).

Macaulay in his *Minute* acknowledged that the intent was to create a small group sympathetic to colonial rule and wrote, "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect (paragraph 34)". The

bifurcation of language access along class lines created the “non-elites” of my study, who may also be referred to as *subalterns*. The term subaltern stands in an oppositional relationship to the term elite (Spivak, 2008). It is a position of disempowerment, a position without social or political agency; *a position without identity* (Chattopadhyay, 2017).

### **Contextual Background of Language Issues in Pakistan**

After the end of British rule and independence in 1947, India and the newly created state of Pakistan both adopted the administration machinery as shaped by the British, and English remained the language of the federal and provincial bureaucracies, as well as the superior courts and even of the armed forces (Abbas, 1993). More importantly, the colonial system of education, with its dichotomy of English for the elites and vernacular for the masses, was also adopted. In many ways English became the “identity marker” (Rahman, 2016, p. 26) of the well-heeled.

The class composition of the new rulers who inherited power from the British was highly elitist (Husain, 1999) and thus incapable and disinterested in upsetting the continuance of colonial policies, and as Ahmad (1992) avers, “the dominant language of society, like the dominant ideology itself, is always the language of the ruling class” (p. 78). Ahmed (1992) wrote these words about India but they could as easily apply to Pakistan: “There has clearly developed, in all cosmopolitan cities of the country, an English based intelligentsia for whom only the literary document produced in English is the *national* document; all else is regional” (p. 75).

‘English’ was the only literary institution which was developed throughout the country, in all its regions, through an enormously powerful grid of educational apparatuses and professional expertise . . . . Not even remotely can the Departments of Hindi (Urdu in the case of Pakistan), for example, supposedly the ‘national’ language, let alone our Departments of Comparative Literature, begin to compete with this power of English in

the reproduction of the literary intelligentsia across the land. (Ahmed, 1992, pp. 277 & 279)

Myers-Scotton (1990) calls this strategy *elite closure*; “a strategy by which those persons in power maintain their powers and privileges via language choices” (p. 25) through enforcement of certain language-in-education policies. This class-based education system thus continues to produce “an out-of-date, British Council-style colonial bourgeoisie” (Spivak, 2013, p. 37) but who firmly hold all reins of power in Pakistan. The “indigenous English-using elite, represent the ‘First World of the Third World’ and keep suppressing the subaltern” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 20).

The newly independent nation-state makes available the fruits of liberation only selectively and unevenly: the dismantling of colonial rule did not automatically bring about changes for the better in the status of women, the working class or the peasantry in most colonised countries. ‘Colonialism’ is not just something that happens from outside a country or a people, not just something that operates with the collusion of forces inside, but a version of it can be duplicated from within. (Loomba, 2005, p. 16)

Pakistan was created as an ideological state and defines its national identity in terms of faith, with Islam and the Urdu language being symbols of national unity (Durrani, 2012; Khan, 2009). Urdu is tied up with Muslim identity in South Asia which Rai (2008) calls a predicament, but adds that “Urdu is, by far, the dominant language of popular culture, as anyone with even a minimal familiarity with public culture in India knows” (ibid. p. 279).

Central to nationalist ideology was the view that Urdu represented a key defining principle of what it means to be a Pakistani and, *ipso facto*, of being a Muslim in Pakistan. In other words, Urdu was central to the state’s view of Pakistani nationhood.

Thus it had potent symbolic significance (Rahman, 2000) representing as it did a cultural variable around which the nation could be constructed. (Rassool & Mansoor, 2007, p. 224 emphasis in original)

However, “the introduction of Urdu as national language serving as a means of securing national integration was politically problematic from the beginning” (Rassool & Mansoor, 2007, p. 225). The notion that a common religion and language could forge national unity was shattered after the breakup of Pakistan in 1971 (Abbas, 1993) since Bengali, “the language, was a symbol of a consolidated Bengali identity in opposition to the West Pakistani identity” (Rahman, 2004, p. 4), and East Pakistan became Bangladesh. Despite having more than sixty different languages and six major tongues (Khalique, 2006; Rahman, 2011), Urdu remains the most widely understood language in present-day Pakistan (erstwhile West Pakistan) and is the extensively used medium of communication in most of the large urban areas of the country (Bashir & Batool, 2017; Shamim, 2008). There are more than 100 million users of Urdu (Grimes, 2000 in Rahman, 2004, p. 1) in Pakistan. It is the *national* language of the country.

Urdu, however, is not the language of power or prestige, and any official “support to Urdu is only at a rhetorical level (Gulzar et al., 2009, p. 5). In fact, the term “Urdu-medium,” as in someone who has had an education in public schools where Urdu is the medium of instruction, has derogatory connotations, and is “heavily loaded with economic and socio-cultural connotations” Shamim, 2011, p. 300). The language of power, prestige and opportunity is English (Shamim, 2008), which even today is available only to a select few through educational policies that have ensured that this remains so. It is the *official* language of the country.

Significantly though, 30 years later the policy goal of transitioning to Urdu within official domains has not yet been achieved. Instead, English has retained, indeed, strengthened its

position as the language of power within official domains. Thus it has been argued generally that English is the *de facto* national language of Pakistan. (Rassool & Mansoor, 2007, p. 223 emphasis in original)

English is a critical barrier that defines and demarcates class in Pakistan, and just as race and class have become enmeshed in America, language and class are enmeshed in South Asia. Rahman (2004) argues that Pakistan's educational institutions designate class along the lines of English proficiency or lack thereof. Hence, the family one is born into determines whether one will have access to the environment and education where English can be acquired. The situation in Pakistan is the same as in India.

Government-run primary (elementary) schools, a free option for all Indian children, are criticized for their poor English-language instruction (Thiyagarajan, 2008). In such schools, English pedagogy is centered on transmitting 'scholastic' English (emphasizing reading and writing) (Gupta, 1997), with the acquisition of communicative skills being secondary goals (Vaish, 2005). Moreover, English acquisition is almost 'entirely dependent on classroom experience' (Gupta, 1997, p. 9) for poorer children, because they have little or no access to the language outside of it. (Bhattacharya, 2013, p. 166)

### **Contextual Background of Education Policy in Pakistan**

The advantages conferred by language have been the focus of much debate ever since Pakistan was created, and the contest between mother tongue and English has had wide-ranging implications on how education policies have evolved in the sub-continent (Mahboob, 2002).

Pakistan, like many other erstwhile colonial states, has been unclear in its approach to choosing the correct medium-of-instruction in education policy specifically, and in dealing with issues of language policy and planning generally (Mustafa, 2015; Rahman, 1996).



Language teaching is the most vital component of any education system. It is the key determinant of quality and is crucial for leading students to ‘the threshold of their mind’, to quote Khalil Gibran. In Pakistan the tug of war between the various languages has been set against the political backdrop of nationalist struggles . . . The class divide in society has also determined the use of languages in various situations and has influenced people’s linguistic preferences. (Mustafa, 2015, p. 37)

According to Canagarajah and Ashraf (2013), Pakistan’s National Education Policy of 2009 attempted “to balance the needs of mother tongues for early foundation, national languages for national identity, and global *linguae francae* such as English for economic development” (p. 260). However, Mahboob and Jain (2016) feel that “Pakistan does not have a documented language policy or a language-in-education policy ... there is no official document that specifically outlines and discusses the national language policy and its implications for education” (p. 2).

The nine national education policies adopted by the Pakistani State between 1947 and 2009 have proved ineffective, as Pakistan remains one of the most illiterate societies on the globe (UNICEF, 2017; UNESCO, 2017). These policies have only paid lip service to the cause of education while maintaining an English-dominated status quo in favor of the ruling classes (Mahboob, 2002); also evinced by the fact that no more than 2% of GDP ever goes towards education in Pakistan (Rahman, 2004). A central tenet of these policies that aim at social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1973), has been the maintenance of English for official purposes and the successive deferment of its replacement by Urdu (Siddiqui, 2016). Siddiqui (2012) correctly posits that language-in education policies have emanated from the short-term political interests of the ruling elite of Pakistan. Khaliq (2006) puts it poignantly when he says: “while the

underprivileged fought over their languages and cultures, the privileged continued to rule in English” (p. 102).

Schools in Pakistan “function as sorting machines caught up in forms of regulation that reproduce existing relations of inequality” (Simon, 1979). They promote high quality private education for a small group, where English is the medium of instruction, and poor-quality public education, where Urdu and other vernaculars are the medium of instruction, for the masses (Durrani, 2012, Rahman, 2004) which I call a “faux-democratic ideal of basic” (Rai, 2008, p. 279) education. Although the Supreme Court of Pakistan in 2015 directed the government to replace English by Urdu for official purposes, as enshrined in Article 251 of the Constitution of Pakistan (1973), the effect of the order has been minimal on how the state and society function in practical reality, especially given the importance people attach to English (Abbas et al. 2019). If vernacular education in public schools had been of decent quality, it would have raised the literacy level in Pakistan. The education system as it has evolved in Pakistan, consists of a few, mostly private, expensive, elite schools that impart quality education (that too in English), and a great many public and non-elite private schools that deliver poor quality education (that too in the vernacular). Good quality education *in the vernacular* helped achieve high levels of literacy in China, Vietnam, Thailand, Iran and Korea to name just a few (UNICEF, 2017; UNESCO, 2017).

### **English as a Leadership Language in Pakistan**

Norton, Ueltschy, and Baucus (2014) state that, other than heredity and coups, there are three paths to leadership: election, appointment and emergence. They add that while election and appointment are widely understood phenomena with support in the literature, emergence is a messier construct. According to Schneider and Goktepe (1983), emergent leaders possess no

formal authority, yet exert noteworthy influence on other group members. It is the emergence of leadership cognition and practices in a specific context that is the subject of this study.

History shows that leadership and power have at times gone hand in hand and at times one has been bereft of the other. Burns (1978) puts it poignantly when he says that “all leaders are actual and potential power holders but not all power holders are leaders” (p. 18). Burns (1978) presented the concepts of transactional and transformational leadership with the former often lacking moral legitimacy. It is a difference that moves people toward higher purpose, and while transactional leadership needs authority, transformational leadership needs none. In this study of Pakistani non-elites who developed leadership cognition and traits as a result of their acquisition of the English language, their transformational impact on their environment was a factor that emerged in my research.

Palus and Drath (1995) distinguished between training programs that impart new skills, and development programs that stretch the ways one makes sense of oneself. Myatt (2012) calls leadership *training* a transactional exercise, while he terms leadership *development* a transformational one. The impact of leadership development, as elucidated by Myatt (2012) and presented in detail in Chapter II, may be compared to the impact that the learning of English has on the cognition and practices of Pakistani non-elites as they acquire the language. Hence the learning of English can be considered a significant element of leadership development in Pakistan which this study provides further evidence for. The above presentation of the background leads us to the statement of the researchable problem.

## **Problem Statement**

### **Researchable Problem**

English is the preserve of an elite class in Pakistan (Rahman, 2004), and it is hard for

someone who does not come from the privileged classes to gain access to the schooling and environment necessary for acquiring English fluency (Mahboob, 2002). Conversely, those who become proficient in English enjoy advantages in Pakistani and other post-colonial societies on several dimensions. For example, they are accorded higher degrees of respect, enjoy wider social access, as well as greater levels of income (Lee, 2003). English is the language of power and prestige, and dramatically impacts society (Azam, Chin and Prakash, 2013). Being able to speak English fluently may be more powerful in the context of South Asia than having higher levels of education, which this study provides evidence for.

The personal costs may be the greatest, and least talked about, for people from non-elite backgrounds, who risk facing the significant consequences of not knowing English, which “remains a passport for entry to high governmental, bureaucratic, military and social positions” (Mahboob, 2002, p. 18). These risks are compounded by the fact that English is also the international language of science (Gordin, 2015), as well as the current lingua franca of the world and the internet (Lee, 2003; Mauranen & Ranta, 2009).

The phenomenon I have explored in my dissertation is how some non-elites, despite the odds, acquired English, reconstructed their identities, and developed as leaders in both their ways of thinking and practices. This resulted in successful outcomes in every aspect of their lives: social, professional and personal.

### **Deficiency Statement**

Despite the sizable literature that has explored the topic of the teaching and learning of English in South Asia, particularly in the Pakistani context, the critical issue of leadership development and its relationship to the learning of English by people not hailing from the elite classes, does not appear to have been explored. Even studies and research done by the British

Council (Coleman, 2010; Coleman & Capstick, 2012) seem to skirt the issue, or perhaps are not aware of the influence that the learning of English has on the development of leadership cognition and practices among people from under-privileged backgrounds. This may be because of the lack of contact between average people and Pakistani researchers, who are mostly from the upper class.

As Azam, Chin and Prakash (2013) suggest, the impact on social outcomes of knowing or not knowing English in South Asia (i.e. its effect beyond the labor market) is a topic on which not much research appears to have been conducted and is an area that needs to be explored. Many people who come from non-elite backgrounds and acquired English have emerged as leaders in society (i.e., developed leadership cognition and practices) which is a phenomenon that receives attention in this study.

In addition, studies that have researched motivation as it relates to English language learning in Pakistan (Ahmed, Aftab, & Yaqoob, 2015; Islam, Lamb, & Chambers, 2013; Khan, Sani, & Shaikh-Abdullah, 2016; Wadho, Memon, & Memon, 2016) have been mostly quantitative and have not used a critical frame. The topic has been barely looked at through a qualitative lens. My study is qualitative in nature, and hence, allowed for a deeper, more critically framed, exploration of the lived experience—including motivation to learn English and the development of leadership cognition and practices—of non-elite Pakistanis who, despite monumental odds, were able to acquire the language.

### **Significance**

The implications of this research are significant as policy makers in Pakistan, and perhaps in most post-colonial countries, focus on the topic of language mainly from economic, nationalistic, and ideological perspectives. Issues of esteem and leadership, which have a huge

impact on how people conduct themselves in society, and how they construct their reality, have not found their way into the policy briefs of legislators.

Any language planning policy that fails to take into account the stake-holders' views is unlikely to yield fruitful results. The ineffective language and education policy of some multilingual countries, including Pakistan, bears testimony to this claim, as the policy makers do not even bother to find out the stakeholders' perspective. (Ali, 2018, p. 11)

Policy makers need to become more cognizant of the wide-ranging implications that the proper teaching of English in public schools, and through after-school programs, can have on society at large. Describing the journey of individuals who successfully acquired English, which this study does, and making sense of their experiences, in their thinking and practices, provides many powerful insights for policy makers who are invested in the success and development of society. Moreover, lessons learned from the impact of English on the lives of people from non-elite backgrounds, and their successes, will help educational institutions and corporations make better and more informed decisions with regards to investment in personnel improvement and enrichment programs.

### **Purpose Statement and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of non-elite Pakistanis in educational leadership positions concerning how they: (a) learned English through self-initiation, (b) reconstructed their identities as a result thereof, (c) changed their view of themselves as educational leaders, and (d) changed their behaviors as educational leaders.

Research Question 1: What is the motivation to learn English of non-elite leaders in educational settings?

Research Question 2: What role has the acquisition of English played in the reconstruction of their identities as educational leaders?

Research Question 3: How has fluency in English changed how non-elites think about themselves as educational leaders?

Research Question 4: How has fluency in English changed how non-elites behave as educational leaders?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The literature around: (a) motivation and self-determination, (b) identity construction, (c) leadership cognition, and (d) leadership practices, as it relates to second language acquisition, informs the conceptual framework of this study. The historical and contextual background of the study encapsulates the research of Abbas (1993), Achebe, (1965); Ahmed (1992); Altbach (2013); Ammon (2012); Anand (1999); Anderson, (2006), Baral (2006); Bhabha (1984), Bokamba (1989), Burnes (2009), Burnett-Hurst, A. R. (1932), Bryson (1990), Butler, (2015), Canagarajah (2005, 2007), Canagarajah and Said (2011), Canagarajah and Ashraf (2013), Chatterji (1983), Chattopadhyay (2017), Chandra (2009), Chavan, (2013), Crystal (2003), Cutts (1953), Dalrymple (2002), Durrani (2012), Evans (2002), Guha (2009), Husain (1999); Kachru (1965, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1992a, 1992b), Khan (2012); Kipling (1929); Kothari (2013); Kothari & Snell (2011); Krishnaswamy and Burde (1998), Lao (2009); Lau & Mendes, (2011); Loomba (2005), Macaulay (1835); Mahboob (2002; 2009), Mahboob and Jain (2016), Metcalf (2003), Moon (1945), Pennycook (1994, 1995), Rahman (1990, 1991, 2004, 2011, 2016), Rai (2008), Said (1979), Shamim (2008), Siddiqui (2016), Spivak (1993, 2008, 2012, 2016), Tomkins (2010), and Viswanathan (1989).

My inquiry on non-elites who managed to acquire the English language is informed by research conducted by Robert Gardner and his collaborators on instrumental and integrative motivation towards second language acquisition (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1959, 1972; Gardner, Lalonde, & Moorcroft, 1985; Gardner, Lalonde, Moorcroft, & Evers, 1987; Gardner, Day, & MacIntyre, 1992).

Research by Deci on intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1971, 1975) and the self-determination theory of Deci and Ryan and their collaborators (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999; Deci & Ryan, 2012; Niemiec, & Ryan, 2009; Oga-Baldwin, Nakata, Parker, & Ryan, 2017; Ryan, 1982, 1995; Ryan, & Connell, 1989; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan, Deci & Grolnick, 1995; Ryan, Kuhl & Deci, 1997) explored the continuum between autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. These theories and constructs have been widely used to study second language (mainly English) acquisition (Carreira, Ozaki, & Maeda, 2013; Geddes, 2016; Liu, 2016; Ngo, Spooner-Lane, & Mergler, 2017; Noels, Pelletier, Clément, & Vallerand, 2003; Oga-Baldwin et al. 2017; Tran, & Baldauf, 2007; Vibulphol, 2016; Wang, Huang, & Hsu, 2015). Findings from these studies are explored in detail in my literature review.

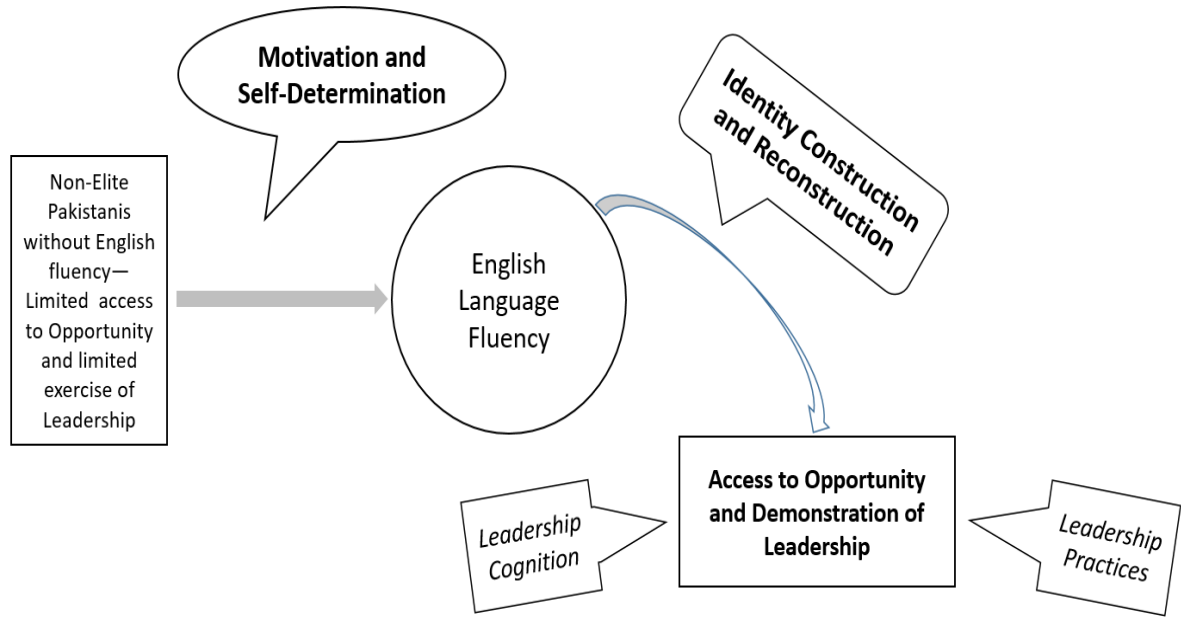
As my study explored the identity construction and reconstruction of English learners and the resultant change in cognition and behavior, it was also informed by the research on identity construction of Baumeister (1986), Baumeister and Leary (1995), Côté (2006), Côté and Levine (2002), Ellemers, and Haslam (2012), MacDonald (2000), Marcia (1966), Reicher, Spears, and Haslam (2010), Vignoles, Schwartz and Luyckx (2011), Sedikides and Brewer (2001), Tajfel (1974, 1982) Vignoles et al. (2006), Waterman (1999), and West (1992).



Research into the intersection of second language learning and identity (Ahmed, Aftab, & Yaqoob, 2015; Bianco, 2009; Block, 2007; Azam, Chin, Prakash, 2013; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Hayes, 2010; Islam, Lamb, & Chambers, 2013; Kandiah, 1984, 2010; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Khan, Sani & Shaikh-Abdullah, 2016; Lee, 2003; Mathews, 2000, 2013; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2013, 2016; Norton & Gao, 2008; Pierce, 1995; Schumann, 1976; Wadho, Memon, & Memon, 2016) also informed my study. Exploring how non-elite English learners reconstructed their identities was fundamental to my doctoral research.

In seeking to conduct research on individuals who had developed leadership cognition and practices, my study was informed by the extensive research carried out by Michael Mumford and his collaborators (1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2015) on leader cognition, as well as the work of Blake and Mouton (1964); Blanchard and Hersey (1970), Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991), Myatt (2012), Northouse (2016), Stogdill (1948, 1974) and Zaccaro (2007, 2013, 2015) on traits that are associated with leadership. I was particularly attentive as to how these leadership practices manifested themselves in the participants of my research since the intersectionality of English acquisition and leadership attitude and behavior were central to this study.

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) of my study shows the shift in consciousness and personal transformation—development of leadership cognition and practices—that takes place in non-elite Pakistanis as they acquire fluency in English through extra personal effort. As such, my study examined as well as explored the experiences of these English language learners. The exploration teased out the myriad of ways in which participants experienced a change in their thought processes and self-view as well as in their practices.



*Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.* The framework explores self-determination and identity construction among non-elite Pakistani English learners and the development of leadership cognition and practices.

The efforts that these learners made are grounded in theories around motivation and second language acquisition (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Gardner, 1985). The motivation to learn English is the extent to which a person strives to acquire it and the satisfaction experienced in this activity (Gardner, 1985). Their identity reconstruction is grounded in the research of Ellemers and Haslam (2012), Tajfel (1974, 1982) Vignoles et al. (2006), and West (1992) as well as research into the intersection of second language learning and identity (Hayes, 2010; Kandiah, 1984, 2010; Lee, 2003; Mathews, 2000, 2013; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 1997, 2000, 2001; Pierce, 1995). This means that learners from non-elite backgrounds negotiated more desirable identities, as respected members of society, through the learning of English (Norton, 2000). The emergence of leadership cognition and practices in these individuals as evidenced by certain traits such as confidence and drive, that developed as a result of learning English, is grounded in the research of Stogdill (1948, 1974), Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991), Zaccaro (2007,

2013, 2015), Myatt (2012), and Northouse (2016). Extensive research carried out by Michael Mumford and his collaborators (1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2015) on leader cognition and performance also informed this study.

### **Methodology Overview**

A broad qualitative approach was used for the study of this phenomenon and the aim was to find something new and not to test something that is already known (Richards, 2015).

According to Toma (2000), qualitative research is holistic and focuses on content rather than outcomes. Qualitative methods surpass other research methods in providing richer and deeper understanding of complex issues (Conklin, 2007), and are increasingly important modes of inquiry for the social sciences and applied fields such as education (Marshall & Rossman, 2015).

The population for this study were people from non-elite backgrounds in Pakistan who had acquired leadership roles within their communities or social groups and who had moved across social strata on the basis of their ability to write and, most importantly, to speak English effectively and fluently. The emphasis was on leadership in educational settings. These were individuals who had been educated in public or non-elite private schools where English was taught as a subject and not as a language, and whose parents could speak little or no English. When they acquired the language was immaterial to the nature of this study, as long as it was acquired through the application of extra personal effort. I interviewed twelve people and strove to have a mix of ages, genders, qualifications and locations, in which I was successful. The sample was not expanded as no substantive new themes emerged after the eighth or ninth participant, and saturation was reached.

This qualitative study design used semi-structured interviews that invited participants to discuss experiences related to the change in their consciousness and self-view as they became

progressively more familiar with English. A semi-structured interview uses a guide or protocol, with more or less structured questions, and the questions were used flexibly, requiring specific data from all respondents (Marriam & Tisdell, 2016). Participants were asked to discuss how that change resulted in their thinking and behaving differently. Specifically, these participants were asked as to how the knowing of English helped them develop leadership practices. Interviews were analyzed for themes in order to understand the role English played in their leadership development.

The interviews were conducted in English as this served to validate participants having acquired command over the language. Doing it otherwise would have been antithetical to the nature of this study. Participants were at least bilingual, if not trilingual or quad-lingual and all of them knew Urdu, which is the national language. Most literate people in Pakistan know Urdu, and the fact that they were fluent in English was a confirmation of their being highly so. Though Urdu is the national language, it is the mother tongue of less than 10% of the population. The most widely spoken vernacular in Pakistan is Punjabi followed by Sindhi, Seraiki, Pashtu, Balochi, and 58 other minor languages (Coleman, 2010).

I ensured the trustworthiness of my research by focusing on credibility (which parallels internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability) and confirmability (objectivity) as suggested by Mertens (2015). For this purpose, I focused on the following techniques (a) memoing, (b) thick description, (c) member checking, and (d) negative case analysis. I recorded my reflections in memos as well as wrote up my study using thick description (i.e., interspersed my findings with quotes from the interviews). I also carried out member checks with participants on my interpretations of the interviews and my findings to

ensure that they represented what the subjects wanted to convey. I also carried out negative case analysis to tease out any disconfirming evidence.

### **Chapter I Closure**

Despite the odds, some non-elite persons in Pakistan are able to acquire English and experience a personal transformation. They gain access to unavailable opportunities, as well as opportunities to practice as well as demonstrate leadership. They emerge as leaders within society, and have a positive impact on their environment. Over and above everything, there is a shift in their perception. It is this shift in their consciousness—the development of leadership cognition and practices—that my study explored and captured the lived experiences of such people.

The research on motivation to learn a second language by Gardner (1985) and the work on self-determination by Deci and Ryan (1985), as well as Pierce's (1995) concept of investment, are lenses through which this study was conducted. Furthermore, research on social identity (Tajfel, 1974), identity motives (Vignoles et al., 2006), identity construction of second language learners (Hayes, 2010; Kandiah, 1984, 2010; Lee, 2003; Norton, 1997, 2000, 2001), and the work on second language self-confidence (MacIntyre et al., 1998) also informed this study. There appears to be a gap in the literature, especially from a qualitative paradigm, on the intersectionality of identity construction, development of leadership, and English learners in Pakistan, which my research attempts to fill. As I studied people who have distinguished themselves, the literature on leadership traits as presented by Stogdill (1948, 1974), Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991), Zaccaro (2007, 2013, 2015), Myatt (2012), and Northouse (2016), and the extensive work of Michael Mumford and his collaborators (1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2015) on leader cognition also informed my research.

I hope that the findings of my study will be helpful to other researchers who are interested in the intersection of identity, leadership, and second language acquisition. I also hope my research will aid policy makers in Pakistan and in South Asia to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of English in the lives of average people in that region. It aims to focus their attention to this important area through a fresh qualitative lens.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* (1912), Professor Higgins conducts an experiment on the unsuspecting Eliza Doolittle, which takes her from a girl selling flowers on the streets of London and turns her into a high class, much-sought-after lady. He does this through the use of linguistics by teaching her to speak in a certain manner and accent. As insensitive as the experiment may seem, the impact on her life is enormous, as it allows her to gain access to opportunities not typically available to people of her social class. As a teacher of English, I have seen a similar impact on the lives of people hailing from underprivileged, non-elite backgrounds in Pakistan once they learn to understand and speak English.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how non-elite Pakistanis, who became fluent in English and gained access to opportunities not typically available to people of their social class, connected these two experiences. I was interested in gaining an understanding of how the process of identity construction and shift in consciousness was experienced by the participants. An overarching goal was to identify how fluency in English enabled them to develop behaviors that are often associated with leadership.

The following review of the literature framed various aspects of the trajectories of non-elite Pakistanis who acquired fluency in English and underwent some kind of personal transformation. The first was the aspect of motivation and self-determination that is required to sustain, despite overwhelming odds, the journey to learn the English language for such persons. The second was the construction and/or reconstruction of identities that took place as a result of second language acquisition. The third was the development of leadership cognition and practices as a result of the acquisition of fluency in English. I begin, however, by presenting the

history of how English came to be part of the South Asian polity and the evolution of the term “elite” and by default “non-elite” in that specific context. I will also share the literature around subalternity, orientalism, and other aspects of how society and the education system in South Asia was impacted by colonialism.

### **History of the English Language in South Asia**

The British came to the Indian sub-continent in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century in the form of the East India Company. The initial 150 years after their arrival are marked by Europeans integrating into the social fabric of India which is documented in the book *White Mughals* (Dalrymple, 2002). This earlier period of English presence, when there was a desire to understand and integrate with Indian culture, is known as the Orientalist phase (Viswanathan, 1989)—a time when “Englishmen had real sympathy with Indian beliefs and habits” (Moon, 1945, pp. 107-8) and “it was not uncommon for many early Company men to learn local languages, marry local Indian women, and even convert to local religions” (Durrani, 2012, p. 31). Said’s (1979) assessment of the Orientalists and of “Orientalism” is more critical and comes under discussion later in the section on mother tongue as well.

Most Britons in India lived like Indians at home and in the office, wore Indian dress, and observed Indian customs and religious practices. A large number of them married Indian women, offered *puja* to Indian gods and goddesses, and lived in fear and awe of the magical powers of the Brahmans. The first two governor-generals, renowned for their rapaciousness, were also known for their commitment to things Indian. Under them, the traditional Indian life style dominated the culture of British Indian politics. (Nandy, 1989, p. 5)



In the wake of the collapse of the Mogul dynasty during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century (after the death of Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707), “the Company, though by no means yet master of the whole of India, emerged as the strongest power and was regarded by many as the proper heir to the Mogul Empire” (Moon, 1945, p. 55). There were specific anti-missionary clauses in the charter of the East India Company, but after Pitt’s India Act of 1784, the Company came under the direct control of the British Crown, and the idea to “civilize” Indian society by way of Anglicism (the countermovement to the Orientalist phase) and proselytization gained greater currency.

There had been a tremendous revival of fundamentalist religion namely Methodism in England and this evangelical enthusiasm spread itself into the interest of the empire. It insisted that a standard of Englishness, and in particular the standard of the English Bible be firmly implanted and that the imposition of Englishness on the colonized other be the agenda of colonization. (Fry, 2009, minute 41)

Whether the East India Company’s ascension to power and the move towards proselytization happening simultaneously were mere happenstance, is perhaps debatable. In addition, whether there is a link between the rapidly changing physical and moral landscape of England due to the industrial revolution—average factory size in 1780 was 12 people which by 1839 had risen to 137 (Burnes, 2009, p.14)—and the propagation of Christianity in India, can also be debated.

Ideas of racial and ethnic hierarchies were also beginning to be aired for the first time in the late 1780s and it was the burgeoning mixed-blood Anglo Indian community which felt the brunt of the intolerance. From 1786, under the new Governor General, Lord Cornwallis, a whole raft of legislation was brought in excluding the children of British men who had Indian wives from employment by the company. Cornwallis arrived in

India fresh from his defeat by George Washington at Yorktown. He was determined to make sure that a settled class never emerged in India to undermine British rule as it had done, to his own humiliation, in America (Dalrymple, 2002, p. 39).

The extravagant lifestyles of East India Company officers and the misappropriation of colony resources led to the Charter Act of 1813, which called for “the assumption of British responsibility towards native education” (Viswanathan, 1989, p. 23), an obligation it had not undertaken even in England. Moreover, “twenty continuous years of war with France, when England's empire, if not her existence, often seemed to hang in the balance, had brought a mild evangelical conversion to England's upper and middle classes” (Cutts, 1953, p. 837). The fact that France had returned to the fold of Catholicism under Napoleon may also have played a role in this renewed interest in faith (Butler, 2015). The Pious Clauses in the Act called for the “relaxation of control over missionary activity in India” (Viswanathan, 1989. P. 23), and the civilizing of the natives through proselytization, which has also been referred to as the “white man’s burden” (Kipling, 1899).

The conversion of the upper and middle classes had also stimulated the rise and growth of numerous missionary societies whose aspirations to spread the Gospel in India could not be realized in the face of the East India Company's regulation prohibiting active missionary work in that part of the British Empire (Cutts, 1953, p. 838)

According to Chavan (2013), the directors of the East India Company were of an Orientalist mindset and resisted the mounting pressure from the Anglicists, and in a policy letter of June 3, 1814 wrote:

We have kept in view the peculiar circumstances of our political relation with India which, having necessarily transferred all power and preeminence from native to European

agency, have rendered it incumbent upon us, from motives of policy as well as from a principle of justice, to consult the feelings, and even to yield to the prejudices, of the natives. (Chavan, 2013, p. 198).

“The successful fight to abolish the slave trade had united evangelical forces for future political battles” (Cutts, 1953, p. 838), and with support from evangelicals like William Wilberforce (member of the British parliament and architect of the Abolition of Slavery Act of 1833), the Anglicist position strengthened and prevailed. Thomas Babington Macaulay, who served on the Supreme Council of India, wrote his famous (or, depending on the view one takes, infamous) *Minute on Indian Education* (Macaulay, 1835), wherein he scoffed at the Oriental system that imparted education in Sanskrit and Arabic as being “fruitful of monstrous superstitions” (paragraph 31) and “a dead loss to the cause of truth” (paragraph 21). His declaration that “a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia” (paragraph 10) was unsubstantiated. In his oft-cited *Minute*, Macaulay advocated for the cessation of state funding to such institutions that were imparting education in these languages.

Macaulay’s assessment of Indian education cannot be taken at face value. He had no knowledge of the languages or their literatures that he chose to condemn, and he confesses to his ignorance of both in his *Minute* (paragraph 10). Macaulay can also not be taken at face value given that the *Minute* was the final piece in a long series of articles written over the course of fifty years that were precursors to the Indian Education Act of 1835 (Cutts, 1953). These pieces were published largely under pressure from Anglicizing evangelists who felt that English and the teaching of English would facilitate the successful propagation of Christianity in India.

Cutts (1953) argues that Bentinck used the arguments of people like Rammohun Roy, an influential spokesman of Indians advocating for English language instruction. “In the 1820s,

wealthy Hindus began to make cash endowments for the foundation of schools and colleges in which the instruction would be in the English language and the courses of study drawn chiefly from the European curriculum” (Cutts, 1953, p. 826). Chatterji (1983) on the other hand contends that Rammohan’s concern was not so much about spreading English among his countrymen; rather he wanted “a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry and astronomy with other useful sciences” (in Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 15).

This was very different from what Macaulay formulated. Rammohan, a liberal and enlightened intellectual, and a scholar well versed in Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, in a way, was used by the rulers in Anglicizing urban India as part of the colonial politics. (In Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 15)

Evans (2002) downplays Macaulay’s role in British language-in-education policy and argues that Macaulay arrived in India at a historical moment when, with or without him, the inevitability of these policies was assured. However, the reference to “false religion” (paragraph 31) in the *Minute*, shows Macaulay’s own religious and perhaps even evangelical proclivities. This likely reflects the influence of his father’s friend and neighbor, Charles Grant Sr., who was a member of the British Parliament and a great force behind evangelicalism, as well as the teaching of English in India. Grant, Wilberforce, and Macaulay’s father Zachary were all part of the “Clapham Sect” a group dedicated to the abolition of slavery as well as to the promotion of the Christian Mission in India (Tomkins, 2010). Grant, who served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the East India Company, had lived a profligate life in India as a company officer—an impecunious man who amassed a fortune in India within just four years between 1767 and

1771—but later had a Christian awakening, and worked continuously to undo the anti-missionary clauses in the charter of the East India Company (Cutts, 1953).

Grant's hostility to the British Oriental education program grew in direct ratio to Grant's conversion from a free-spending, heavy-drinking Nabob gambler into a pious, church-attending Anglican evangelical. Grant not only convinced himself that Hinduism was a most "monstrous" evil, but that schools were the primary tools by which this "evil" might be eradicated. English-language instruction in the study of Newtonian science would presently eradicate the gross superstitions of Hinduism. Into the religious vacuum thus created, it would be easy to insert Christianity, since Indians, having learned English, would automatically read the Bible. (Cutts, 1953, p. 834 & 837)

As Bhabha (1984) points out, Charles Grant's "Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain" (1792) was an influential early nineteenth-century account of Indian manners and morals.

Grant's dream of an evangelical system of mission education conducted uncompromisingly in English was partly a belief in political reform along Christian lines and partly an awareness that the expansion of company rule in India required a system of "interpellation"- a reform of manners, as Grant put it, that would provide the colonial with "a sense of personal identity as we know it." (Bhabha, 1984, p. 127).

Grant, Macaulay, and other like-minded moralists saw the teaching of English as a moral imperative that justified imperialism for the sake of propagation of faith (Pennycook, 1994). To them English could "open the gates for the emancipation of souls" (Kachru, 1986, p. 6), which is another "perfect specimen of true justification of imperialism as a civilizing mission" (Spivak, 1993, p. 101). Spivak (1993) posits that the outlawing of widow immolation (sati) projected the

image of the colonial rulers as “white men saving brown women from brown men” (p. 92) and that “imperialism's image as the establisher of the good society is marked by the espousal of the woman as object of protection from her own kind” (p. 94). The timing of the Bengal Sati Regulation in 1829 would suggest it may have been part of the evangelical build up to the Indian Education Act of 1835, discussed later, as both were signed into law by Lord Bentinck.

Many retired East India Company officers were opposed to missionary activity in India including Thomas Twining and J. Scott Waring, as well as the editorial board of the *Edinburgh Review*. These men pointed out that India was an exception to the general rule of non-Christian countries. They argued that people of India were deeply religious with the result that Christian missionary work in India often resulted in bloodshed, and questioned the advisability of evangelists being allowed to make British rule in India unsafe. They asked “was it really desirable that India be converted when none but semi-insane fanatics of every ‘crack-pot’ Christian sect ever went to India?” (Cutts, 1953, p. 843)

Who wishes to see scrofula and atheism cured by a single sermon in Bengal? Who wishes to see the religious hoy riding at anchor in the Hooghly river? or shoals of jumpers [Welsh sect] exhibiting their nimble piety before the learned Brahmins of Benares? This madness is disgusting and dangerous enough at home. Why are we to send out little detachments of maniacs to spread over the far regions of the world the most unjust and contemptible opinion of the Gospel? The wise and rational part of the Christian ministry find enough to do at home to combat with passions unfavorable to human happiness. (Edinburgh Review, XII, 179; in Cutts, 1953, p. 843)

Macaulay wrote the *Minute* for Lord William Bentinck, Governor General of India at the time, "a man of a violent and haughty nature, imbued with English prejudice and regarding the English constitution as the salvation of the human race" (Cutts, 1953, p. 829). Bentinck's

administrative policies and economy measures that required more Indians who could speak English, in order to reduce “the cost of governing India, to the elevation of Indian moral and intellectual standards, to the safety of British rule, and to the successful propagation of Christianity in India” (p. 830), predisposed him to accept Macaulay's argument. Annamalai (2003) succinctly states that “the evangelical and political purposes were not unrelated; they in fact reinforced each other. Both aimed at producing consenting subjects” (p. 179). Bashir and Batool (2017) further add: “The primary motive behind establishing English schools was not to promote literacy, education and science but to strengthen ties with the upper classes who were needed for administrative, bureaucratic and military services as well as for political legitimacy” (p. 15).

Macaulay and Bentinck were creatures of this tide. Their minds were made up for them by half a century of steady propaganda which had succeeded in justifying imperialism in terms of the propagation of Christianity. The work of Charles Grant had further identified English language education of Indians with both evangelical success and with the safeguarding of British rule in India. English-speaking Indians would automatically become English-loving Christians. (Cutts, 1953, p. 853)

The *Minute* thus became the precursor to Bentinck's educational policy, the Indian Education Act of 1835, which called for the study of English by Indian students. It also required that instruction at state-funded colleges be given only through the medium of English, and this became the policy under British rule in India, also euphemistically known as the “Raj.” How students from local vernacular schools would surmount the obstacle of English in order to complete college and be considered “learned natives” (Cutts, 1953, p. 824) was not something that Macaulay and Bentinck seemed overly concerned about. Chandra (2009) calls the Indian

Education Act of 1835 a linguistic “trickle-down” (p. 213) policy suggested by Macaulay, and that “the majority encountered English as a condition that denied them knowledge and power” (p. 202). It was clear that English education “was not to be disseminated liberally and equally” (Chavan, 2013, p. 130). This was perhaps the point of no return at which a linguistic rupture and cataclysm took place, effectively segregating Indian society by those who could speak English and those who could not.

After the passage of the Indian Education Act of 1835, Lord Bentinck made English the official language of communications in India. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, “the British government superseded Persian as the official governing language with English at the highest levels and the vernaculars at the provincial and lower levels. Government patronage, moreover, would be primarily directed at these languages and not at classical languages” (Metcalf, 2003, p. 30) such as Persian, Sanskrit and Arabic. Curiously, Macaulay makes no mention of Persian in his *Minute* (Rahman, 2011) and chooses to only condemn Arabic and Sanskrit, which according to Durrani (2012), perhaps points to Macaulay’s ideological motivations, as these two languages were (and still are) closely associated with Islam and Hinduism respectively and had “indeed come to be important symbols of religion” (Metcalf, 2003, p. 31). Perhaps the “religious sentiment later overtook the educational enterprise” (Viswanathan, 1989, p. 25). Macaulay’s condemnation of languages he had no knowledge of is similar to Lamartine’s “pages on Arabic poetry, about which he discourses with supreme confidence, betray no discomfort at his total ignorance of the language” (Said, 1979, p. 179).

As Pennycook (1994) points out, the new education policy did not replace the Orientalist mode (learning of and teaching in the vernaculars) with the Anglicist one (teaching English and in English); rather both systems continued alongside each other especially at the school level. As



a result, while the vast majority of people were educated in local vernaculars, education in English was provided to those select few, very often the elite, that the British wanted to co-opt into the colonial enterprise. It was also prohibitively expensive, strict entrance requirements notwithstanding. Spivak (2013) states, “a class of functionary-intelligentsia was often produced who acted as buffers between the foreign rulers and ruled” (p. 61).

English served the (colonial) regime both as an instrument of dominance and an agency of persuasion. As the language of the rulers, it stood for all that set them conspicuously apart from the mass of their subjects, who spoke only the local tongues. Yet, at the same time, as the principal medium of officially sponsored education, it was the means used by the Raj to induce a very small, but affluent and socially powerful, minority amongst the colonized to favor collaboration. (Guha, 2009, p. 413).

Hence, the denial of access to English was as important a part of colonialism as the insistence on it, and Viswanathan (1989) calls both Orientalists and Anglicists different sides of British divide and rule policies. Relatedly, “it can be safely said that from this point on, all over the expanding empire, it at different speeds, Macaulayism was pursued” (Anderson, 2006, p. 91).

Anglicism depended on the vast literature produced by the Orientalists for its ideological program, which was cherry-picked by Anglicists to attack Indian culture (Viswanathan, 1989). Said (1979) says, “The *guild* of Orientalists has a specific history of complicity with imperial power” (p. 341), and knowledge about “the Orient that was used by the colonial powers to justify their colonialism derived from Orientalist Scholarship” (p. 343).

Chavan (2013) writes: “It has frequently been observed that Orientalist research often furthered the pursuit of power in projects that represented themselves as the pursuit of truth” (p. 190).

In his *Minute*, Macaulay (1835) acknowledged that the intent was to create a *small elite Indian class* that would facilitate colonial rule:

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population (paragraph 34).

It was this bifurcation of language, and the stratification of Indian society along purpose and class lines—the “policy to divide the Indian population into two classes” (Durrani, 2012, p. 31)—that played a critical role in creating the *non-elites* of this study.

### **The Subaltern and Subalternity**

The terms non-elite and subaltern imply the same condition and meaning in my study. Gramsci (1971) coined the term *subaltern* to identify people excluded from the social, cultural, and economic institutions of society in order to deny them agency and *voice*. Subaltern refers to a person or groups who are cut off from the lines of social mobility (Spivak, 1993). Subalternity is thus the quality, state, or position of being subaltern, and subaltern studies (Guha, 2009) question colonial and nationalist historiographies which invariably exclude the contributions of those not from elite groups.

In the field critical theory the term Subaltern can be traced back to the writings of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Italian intellectual Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci used the word subaltern to signify a section of people who were subordinate to the hegemonic groups or classes.

Non-coercive assertion of authority by a particular (ruling) class over other groups of people is referred to by Gramsci as hegemony; that is by convincing the entire population that the interest of the ruling class is the interest of the entire population. This Gramscian understanding of the term subaltern was taken up by the influential group of South Asian historians who formed the Subaltern Studies Collective in the in 1980s who were primarily studying postcolonial South Asia and one of the significant persons within this group was the historian Ranajit Guha, who presents the term subaltern in oppositional relation to the term elite. The term elite represents all the sections of society which have access to hegemony (through their association with government or through their western style education or through their wealth) and agency and power to act out their self-interest and desires—people who can intervene and articulate their self-interests within the field of politics and economics. Guha defines subaltern as all those people within a society who do not fall under the category of elite. Subaltern is not really defined as a special caste or class or race but rather subaltern represents a negative space or a negative position. It is a position of disempowerment, a position without social or political agency; *a position without identity*. (Chattopadhyay, 2017, Lecture 17, minutes 14, 20 & 23).

Spivak (2008) describes her work with subalterns as an attempt “to learn to learn from the subaltern in order to be able to devise a philosophy of education that will develop the habits, or rituals of democratic behavior” (minute 27).

Spivak identifies the characterizing feature of this subaltern position as that of being unable to speak—that no speech is possible from here. So, in other words the answer to the question can the subaltern speak, according to Spivak, is an unequivocal no. The subaltern cannot speak. Now the terseness of this assertion has often led to confusion

about Spivak's intent and she has also been criticized for an attempt to silence the subaltern but Spivak's argument is really simple to grasp if we understand speaking as generating discourse. Now we had defined discourse as meaningful utterances and how within each society there are checks and filters which allow certain utterances to be accepted as discourse and certain others to be rejected. So theoretically though anyone can speak or write infinitely on any given topic under the sun, but what will be accepted as discourse and what will not is ultimately determined by the power equations that underline society. This is not to say that the physical act of speaking is impossible from within the subaltern position. This is to say that that speech never gets acceptance as meaningful utterances that carries the weight of socio-political agency and which can articulate self-interest and self-identity. It has been argued by some scholars that rather than saying that the subaltern cannot speak, it is more apt to say that the subaltern cannot be heard by society. Such rephrasing of Spivak's insight is perfectly alright provided we understand that both the statements, that subaltern cannot speak and subaltern cannot be heard, refer to the same inability to generate discourse from within the subaltern position. (Chattopadhyay, 2017, Lecture 17, minutes 23).

Curiously, Spivak (2013) shared at the Edward Said Memorial lecture at Columbia University, when speaking of the work she does with subalterns, "I also try to teach them how to love English" (minute 9). This study attempts to learn and understand that slice of the lived experience of non-elites in which they reconstructed their identities and acquired leadership on the basis of their acquisition of English. It is the *voice* of the non-elite that I try to register in this study; "the voice of a defiant subalternity committed to writing its own history" (Guha, 2009, p. 317).

## **Print Capitalism, the Development of English and the Industrial Revolution**

A number of factors coincided in making English the preeminent and unassailable global language it is today—the invention of the printing press, the industrial revolution, perhaps even the Enlightenment—not least among which are King Henry VIII's breaking away from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 during the reign on his daughter. Between the reign of Elizabeth I (1558) and Elizabeth II (1952), the number of English speakers grew from around 4/5 million to 1.5 Billion (Crystal, 2003). This is an astonishing fact especially when we consider the following:

Richard Mulcaster, the Headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School, was one of the strongest supporters of English, arguing for its strengths as a medium of educated expression, alongside Latin. But even he concluded that English could not compete with Latin as an international language. Writing in 1582, he says: 'Our English tongue is of small reach – nay, not there over all.' And he reflects: 'Our state is no Empire to hope to enlarge it by commanding over countries.' (Crystal, 2003, p. 34)

The defeat of the Spanish armada in 1588 (we may have been living in a Spanish-speaking world otherwise) precipitated the period of British colonial expansion, and about a decade later, in 1599, the East India Company was granted its charter by Elizabeth I with permission to sail to lands east of the Cape of Good Hope. The captured Spanish ships facilitated the English, and the *East Indiamen* of the Company set sail in search of wealth as well as to disrupt the Spanish and Portuguese monopoly on the Far East trade. This, along with the establishment of the first English settlement in Jamestown Virginia in 1607, marks the beginning of the Empire of English.

The other development that aided the development and expansion of the English

language in India was the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in Europe in mid-15<sup>th</sup> Century, also known as The Gutenberg Press, and which arrived on the Indian sub-continent with the British.

It can be understood that the invention of writing and printing changed the very concept of language in such a way that the praxis of a given 'lect' came to be entrenched in the written mode though in contemporary linguistics it is often repeated that speech is primary and writing is secondary. (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 73).

English as a printed language thus displaced the vernaculars of India. "Print-capitalism is linked with literacy and education which created the educated class, the administrative class, and a middle-class bureaucracy. Thus, in a way, the systems centered around privileged sacred languages were replaced by print-capitalism" (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 61). These systems were replaced with centers that evolved around the English language.

In pre-print Europe, and, of course, elsewhere in the world, the diversity of spoken languages, was immense. But these varied idiolects were capable of being assembled, within definite limits, into print-languages far fewer in number. These print-languages laid the basis for national consciousness. Speakers of huge varieties of Frenches, Englishes, or Spanishes, became capable of comprehending each other via print. The fixing of print-languages and the differentiation of status between them (resulted) from the explosive interaction between capitalism, technology and human linguistic diversity. The convergence of capitalism and print technology created the possibility for a new form of imagined community which set the stage for the modern nation. In all of them 'national print-languages' were of central ideological and political importance. (Anderson, 2006, pp. 43-45 & 67).

Literacy and education in India, after the arrival of the British, thus came to be associated with reading and using mass-produced printed books which replaced education based on the oral tradition and memorization. Education, especially religious education, centered on sacred languages such as Sanskrit and Arabic for Hindus and Muslims respectively, was replaced by education in English.

Printing was not involved in learning because education was imparted (in India) through the oral mode. The concept of a book that could be bought and read did not exist until the Europeans brought the printing press to India in the sixteenth century . . . . Both (colonialism and later anticolonialism) made use of printing and the English language, but, in that process the vast majority of people, the millions brought up in the oral tradition and the indigenous educational systems, got marginalized and became ‘illiterate’ . . . . They not only destroyed the indigenous educational system but also created a new system which made the British and, after their departure, the English-knowing Indians all powerful. This English-education and print-capitalism created a new urban-class of Indians thereby cutting out the rural masses, their oral tradition, and the Indian languages and their literatures from the mainstream . . . . English education serves as a powerful tool which turns the vast majority into illiterates — into a ‘silent majority’ which is marginalized while the English educated minority from the urban areas is centralized. (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 64, 67 & 68).

In addition, the industrial revolution that took place in England around the mid-1700s, made English the language of technology and scientific progress. Thus people from all over the world had to gain familiarity with English in order to partake of the benefits of this revolution. The industrial revolution had an enormous influence on how colonialism developed as eventually

“the colonies replaced the countryside as a source of raw materials” (Kuchta, 2010, p. 4). It turned India from an exporter of the finest linen, to become an importer of cloth that was weaved in British from Indian cotton (Tharoor, 2018). Though the growth of industrialization in England impacted India negatively, it buttressed the relationship between the colonized and the colonizers and hence aided in the development of English in India. As British interest in India increased, they were forced to create an administrative class that could understand and use English.

The depression which has prevailed in the Lancashire cotton industry since 1920 has been the subject of many studies. A general Survey of Textile Industries \* and a special study of "Japanese Competition in the Cotton Trade" have been made; but no detailed investigation into the effects of recent changes in the economic and political conditions in India upon the Lancashire cotton industry has yet been published. This is the more surprising when it is remembered that India has been since the middle of the nineteenth century to the present day Britain's best customer for cotton piece goods, the most important branch of the export trade. (Burnett-Hurst, 1932, p. 395)

In addition to print-capitalism, capitalism itself arrived in South Asia with the English Colonists and essentially destroyed the traditional structure of pre-colonial Indian society (discussed in the next section), which Namboodripad (1981) posits was a self-sufficient system:

The development of the world market and the slow but sure integration of the Indian village into that world market broke the self-sufficient character of India's village society which now became part of the growing world capitalist society. (In Ahmed, 1992, p. 239)

### **How European Colonialism was Different from Earlier Forms of Conquest**

Central Asian invasions of the India Subcontinent began thousands of years ago and a recent study by David Reich of Harvard University (published in March 2018 and co-authored



by 92 international scholars) called “The Genomic Formation of South and Central Asia,” suggests two major migrations into India in the last 10,000 years (Joseph, 2018). This study has caused controversy as Hindu nationalists feel that the Aryans—horse-riding, cattle rearing, nomadic warriors—originated in India and later spread across Europe and Asia. They believe that the Aryans are the source of Indian civilization, and who composed the Vedas, the oldest texts of the Hindu religion. The controversy that the migration theory of Dr. Reich engenders is that it places the Aryans (as originating in Central Asia, not India) on the same footing as other invaders, especially Muslim conquerors, who were ruling India when the British arrived in the 17<sup>th</sup> century—at which time India produced 24% of the world’s GDP (Tharoor, 2018).

The type of system of administration and tax collection that the Moguls and earlier invaders had imposed on the Indian Subcontinent was very different from the apparatus of conquest and control that English colonialism created in India. Loomba (2005) succinctly explains the difference between how the European colonization of South Asia, and for that matter, the rest of the world, was different from earlier forms of conquest.

Modern European colonialism cannot be sealed off from earlier histories of contact—the Crusades, or the Moorish invasion of Spain, the legendary exploits of Mongol rulers or the fabled wealth of the Incas or the Mughals (in India) were real or imagined fuel for the European journeys to different parts of the situating postcolonial. And yet, these newer European travels ushered in new and different kinds of colonial practices which altered the whole globe in a way that these other colonialisms did not. How do we think about these differences? Was it that Europeans established empires far away from their own shores? Were they more violent or more ruthless? Were they better organised? Or a superior race? All of these explanations have in fact been offered to account for the

global power and drastic effects of European colonialisms. Marxist thinking on the subject locates a crucial distinction between the two: whereas earlier colonialisms were pre-capitalist, modern colonialism was established alongside capitalism in Western Europe (see Bottomore 1983: 81–85). Modern colonialism did more than extract tribute, goods and wealth from the countries that it conquered—it restructured the economies of the latter, drawing them into a complex relationship with their own, so that there was a flow of human and natural resources between colonised and colonial countries. This flow worked in both directions—slaves and indentured labour as well as raw materials were transported to manufacture goods in the metropolis, or in other locations for metropolitan consumption, but the colonies also provided captive markets for European goods. Thus slaves were moved from Africa to the Americas, and in the West Indian plantations they produced sugar for consumption in Europe, and raw cotton was moved from India to be manufactured into cloth in England and then sold back to India whose own cloth production suffered as a result. In whichever direction human beings and materials travelled, the profits always flowed back into the so-called ‘mother country’. Loomba (2005, pp. 8-9)

Guha (2009) explains in detail how the English ruthlessly destroyed the old tax collection system and caused untold misery to the poor rural peasants after they brought Bengal under their control. At core lay the incompatibility of an age-old land system of the semi-feudal type with the neo-feudal agrarian order of colonialism that insisted on *strict and timely* payment of taxes or the “qist”.

Since it was the East India Company’s policy to use the land revenue to finance a seaborne trade, its collection had to be attuned to the latter. Consequently, it was

subjected to a discipline unprecedented in its insistence on the regularity and punctuality of tax returns. The mechanism used for that purpose was the *qist* or instalment of the total amount officially due for collection as specified intervals. No innovation, the *qist* had been a part of the fiscal procedure for at least two centuries since the reign of (King) Akbar. The difference between the Mughal and the British policies was simply that with the former the number of instalments per year ranged from four to six, with the latter from ten to twelve. The implication of that difference was not limited to the management of revenues alone. It put the state at odds with all of rural society under early colonial rule, threatening landlords and peasants alike and undermining the very foundations of the indigenous agrarian system ... a strategy designed carefully to dig deep into the resources of the conquered lands and extract the highest amount of tax. Among those who favored a moderate land tax was Philip Francis. 'Let us proportion our demand to *our* Necessities, not to *their* utmost abilities'. He argued invoking Montesquieu. This was, according to him, Mughal policy, in which a degree of 'moderation of the tribute' combined with the 'simplicity of their method of collecting it.' Warren Hastings opposed this view. He and his faction in the Bengal Council believed that the Company's territories were undertaxed and had to yield a revenue assessed on the optimal amount of their resources. In the end, as we know, the optimalists won ... a modern colonial autocracy, driven by capital's urge to invest money into commodity in order to make more money, knew no limit to its need for cash, in order to finance its global transactions. The simplicity of the land tax under Mughal rule was a tribute to the skill with which the previous regime (the Mughals) had coordinated its fiscal calendar with the traditional farm calendar of its subjects. The decisive point at issue in such co-ordination was the

adjustment of intervals between qists to the rhythm of agricultural production. The fiscal system of the Mughals was sensitive to this particular predicament and had its qists adjusted to the sluggishness of the production period. By contrast, it was the livelier and more strident pace of the Company's trans-continental commerce which made it insist, from the outset, on the regularity of tax collections and the frequency and punctuality of their instalments. All it was trying to do was simply to integrate tax returns to investment procedures according to a timetable suited best to the Company's commerce. And nothing could serve that purpose better than the aspect of governance most sensitive to time, namely, tax collection, which, with its instalments attuned to the schedules of a foreign power's seaborne trade, was necessarily at odds with the tradition of an indigenous farm calendar. How such decisions were taken at the top and at what cost to the proprietors and peasants alike at the local level were highlighted by the rigor and pain of this fiscal discipline in Burdwan; one of the most prosperous districts. Judged by the amount of damage done to the rural economy, the record of fiscal rapacity under the (previous) nawab was eclipsed, under the Raj, by the well-regulated tax regime of Warren Hastings. The famine of 1770 (that) reduced the population of Bengal by a third, had hit Burdwan more than most other districts. Yet the tax for that year of disaster was the highest ever collected from the district in a decade since 1760, and the net receipts for the ten years that followed maintained the pressure at the same level. Far from being helped to recover from the effects of the famine, productivity in agriculture was ruined by plunder systematized as fiscal policy. (Guha, 2009, pp. 395-99)

Guha (2009) writes how the strict enforcement of the *qist* rendered millions of farmers landless as their farms were auctioned due to their inability to comply with the new rules. This

could also be viewed a consequence of “the encounter between non-capitalist and capitalist societies” (Ahmed, 1992, p. 222). This colonial/capitalist system required extensive record keeping which meant creation of a large bureaucracy of administrators which again intersects with the need and eventual enforcement of the use of the language of the colonizers: English.

For a stranger to insist on punctuality could, therefore, be regarded as an assertion of his presence here and now. Nothing could endear him to the native. To the latter, the temporal threat, like the one that disrupted the indigenous farm calendar by an alien mercantile-fiscal timetable, had an unmistakably spatial correlative to it. Armed with punctuality, it signaled the intruders’ determination to cling on to the ‘here’ predicated on the ‘now’ and stay on. And nowhere was that spatial connection elucidated more clearly than in the drama of seizure and auction enacted in thousands of villages with the bailiff’s hammer coming down on the defaulter’s properties with clockwork regularity. All over Eastern India desolate hamlets, ancient homesteads vacated by families who had failed the deadline for payment of arrears, peasant huts whose owners had melted into the night before the morning of the dreaded auction, were, for the colonized, a spatial record of the fact that distraint with its unwavering schedule of days and hours had cut a swathe across that part of the country. That massive campaign, which redistributed land among a new class of rentiers by dispossessing the old in the course of thirty years following Permanent Settlement, marked the ultimate triumph of punctuality as an engine of expropriation. By then it was clear beyond all doubt that the new temporality had already secured a base for its dominance in territoriality. From now on conquest would no longer be seen as rider speeding, sword in hand, across the plains towards a receding horizon. A new iconography, more appropriate to the times, would take over. Its canons would

require a rather stationary, indeed sedentary figure, surrounded by orderlies and office files and sporting on the waistcoat, the chain of a pocket-watch. (Guha, 2009, pp. 407-408)

### **Indian Women and English (Bengal Sati Regulation of 1829)—“Saving Brown Women from Brown Men”**

That English would “open the gates for the emancipation of souls” (Kachru, 1986, p. 6) is a “perfect specimen of true justification of imperialism as a civilizing mission” (Spivak, 1993, p. 101), and as part of this purported civilizing and humanizing mission, the emancipation of Indian women was presented as an overriding concern. In his obsessive zeal for the cause, Grant felt that “Hindus were the most depraved people in the world. They were completely selfish, servile, brutal, and unpatriotic. Hindu marriage customs robbed Hindus of all paternal, maternal, connubial, and filial love. Women were everywhere degraded. Prostitution was honored” (Cutts, 1953, p. 836). However, the testimony of Sir Thomas Munro—a highly placed official of the East India Company—before a committee of the House of Commons in 1812 presents a very different picture on the position of women in Indian society at the time.

If ... the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other; and above all, a treatment of the female sex, full of confidence, respect and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilized people, then the Hindoos are not inferior to the natives of Europe.... It would be no slight praise to the women of any nation, not even to the ladies of England, to have it said, that the correctness of their conduct was not inferior to that of the Brahmin women and the Hindoo women of the higher castes. (Cutts, 1953, p. 836)

Spivak (1993) avers that “imperialism's image as the establisher of the good society is also marked by the espousal of the woman as object of protection from her own kind” (p. 94).

She further argues that the outlawing of widow immolation (sati) projected the image of the colonial rulers as “white men saving brown women from brown men” (p. 92). The timing of the Bengal Sati Regulation in 1829 would suggest it may have been part of the same evangelical build up that resulted in the Indian Education Act of 1835, as both were signed into law by the same person: Governor General Lord Bentinck.

Chandra (2009) writes: “English had already been established in colonial discourse as the language of a superior civilization. Now it was refashioned by colonial subjects as the conduit through which to introduce native women to the ‘advanced’ gender order of the modern world” (p. 215). It was also felt “that English-educated women would both nurture the vernacular and bring progressive ideals of domesticity and companionate love to fruition” (p. 213). Chandra (2009) quotes Rao Bahadur Chhotalal, who was part of a deputation of the “People of Poona,” that visited the governor of the presidency in August 1884 petitioning for a girls’ English school:

An acquaintance with English is essentially necessary to enlighten women on the practical questions of the day, and to enable them to take an intelligent interest in the pursuits and aspirations of their husbands and to encourage the growth of vernacular female education in general. (Chandra, 2009, p. 213)

Chandra’s (2009) closing remark in her essay is both poignant as well as thought provoking: “It was once English became desirable for ‘Indian’ women themselves that it could be disengaged from its point of origin as a colonial imposition and, finally, take its place as an Indian language” (p. 222).

### **The “New British Plan” and the Destruction of the Indigenous System of Education**

The first school set up in India (in Agra in 1813) by the Church Missionary Society, in whose establishment (in 1799) Grant had been instrumental, followed Grant's English-language

plan (Cutts, 1953). Daniel Corrie, an evangelical chaplain of the East India Company, who organized this school wrote "Set our native school in order by appointing six of the head boys to learn English on the new British plan" (Cutts, 1953, p. 838).

The "new British plan" was the inexpensive Bell-Lancastrian system of education on a monitor basis by which the instructor taught the lesson to the brighter boys and these in turn taught the same lesson to the rest of the class. The Reverend Andrew Bell got his original inspiration for this plan from watching the educational methods used in Hindu village schools. He then imported the plan into England where Joseph Lancaster improved upon it. The English missionary societies then brought the system back to India, proclaiming it to be the "new British plan." (Cutts, 1953, p. 838)

The British policy for India, as already stated, had been to employ English for high level administration and vernacular for the lower bureaucracy. They used the same dichotomy for their medium-of-instruction in education policies. In their lucid and well researched article, Bashir and Batool (2017) elucidate how the English by design destroyed India's functioning and effective village school system. With a focus on education policies in the province of Punjab, they write:

GW Leitner, a renowned educationist and linguist of the period, in 1865 carried out an extensive survey of indigenous community schools in Punjab in the decades after annexation in 1849. Leitner reports a more widespread literacy in pre-British days and his book, *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab* published in 1882, gives a detailed account of different kinds of schools. He writes, "In the very year of annexation, 1849, Sir John and Sir Henry Lawrence were able to declare that there was one school to every 1783 inhabitants in the most backward of the three divisions of Punjab, before the British government had expended anything on education, whilst in the most advanced, there was



one school to every 1441 inhabitants". The indigenous schools imparted instructions to Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs in Arabic, Sanskrit and Gurmukhi respectively as well as in Persian. The Persian medium schools were open to all. Leitner reports that in the 1840s at least 330000 pupils were enrolled in the schools who could read, write and carry out basic arithmetic while thousands more were enrolled in Arabic and Sanskrit colleges attaining mastery over oriental literature and law, logic, philosophy and medicine. The curriculum was both advanced and sophisticated (Sultan 2011). For the British the overriding consideration was political control of the colony and not the education and literacy of the masses. The British are generally believed to have promoted education in the subcontinent but their policies against the local vernaculars especially in the Punjab, closed down the widespread network of community schools. (In Bashir & Batool, 2017, pp. 14-15)

Bashir and Batool (2017) also share their findings on British education and language policies in Bengal, which was the first province of India conquered and annexed by the East India Company. How the colonial tax collection system destroyed the structure of Indian society and its system of education, beginning in Bengal, has already been mentioned in the earlier section on the differences between European and earlier forms of conquests.

The widespread pre-British network of indigenous schools that Leitner (1882) found in Punjab, William Adam found in Bengal, a province which was occupied much earlier than Punjab. In his reports on vernacular education in Bengal and Behar (Adam 1868) Adam found that on the eve of British occupation (1757) a widespread self-sustained local network of indigenous schools existed in rural Bengal where literacy and practical education suited to the needs of the society was delivered. It was gradually and

systematically stifled and marginalized after the takeover by the British with an imposition of tax on exempted lands leading to bankruptcy of many zamindars. This together with closure of local industrial crafts removed the support base of rural education (Long 1868). By the year 1877 the number of pupils had fallen to one in 688 instead of 2.5 to 100, 40 years before (Basu 1941). “Macaulay’s famous minute of 1835 established English as the official government school policy which concentrated on higher education .... throughout India this meant the use of available funds for colleges teaching in the English Language to the neglect of other educational institutions. By 1854 the Woods Dispatch called for the use of educational credentials for jobs with the colonial government, and this was the *death knell* for the indigenous system .... As the indigenous system schools disappeared, the English schools did not take their place. It was as if an elephant had departed and a flea appeared instead” (Di Bona 1981). (In Bashir & Batool, 2017, pp. 16)

Thus the “elephant” (roughly 25 per 1000 students), or millions of village children, presumably belonging to different social strata, who received education in the vernacular, were replaced by the “flea” (roughly less than 2 per 1000 students), or a tiny elite group, presumably urban, who received education in English. As Ahmad (1992) says, “Considering that barely 15 per cent of the population was in any sense literate by the time of decolonization, the failures of the system are obvious enough . . . the real ‘educated elite’ were a mere fraction of the 15 per cent” (p. 267). Moreover, this may explain why being educated is associated with the ability to speak English in Pakistan, and in other post-colonial societies as well, which this study evinces. This may also explain the lack of confidence that is often found in children who come through the vernacular public schools. What they receive, in what I would call a broken system, cannot

be called education—and they are aware of it—and thus it fails to instill any sense of pride or esteem in them. Good quality education *in the vernacular* helped achieve high levels of literacy in China, Vietnam, Thailand, Iran and Korea to name just a few (UNICEF, 2017; UNESCO, 2017). As a result, students do not have issues of esteem in these countries as the education they receive instills in them the sense of learnedness. This the public/government school system in Pakistan hopelessly fails to do.

### **Orientalism**

Orientalism was described by Edward Said (1979), who could be called the founder of postcolonial studies, as European perspectives on the people of the East (mainly Middle East and India) presented in a way to *validate* the inferiority of the Orient as opposed to the superiority of the Occident—“casting the East as its negative alter ego” (Lau and Mendes, 2011, p. 1).

Kiernan (1969) called Orientalism “Europe’s collective day dream of the Orient” (p. 131), and Said (1979) states that “empirical data about the Orient or about any of its parts counted for very little” (p. 69). Within the paradigm of Orientalism, an *Oriental* “was often meant as a derogatory expression signifying a lesser breed of human being” (Said, 1979, p. 340).

Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident." Thus a very large mass of writers, among whom are poet, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, "mind," destiny, and so on ... the phenomenon of Orientalism as I study it here deals principally, not with a correspondence between Orientalism and Orient, but with the internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient despite or beyond any correspondence, or lack thereof, with a "real" Orient. (Said, 1979, pp. 2-3).

Orientalism justified Western colonialism by arguing that the East was incapable of ruling itself (Said, 1979). As Said writes, “To say simply that Orientalism was a rationalization of colonial rule is to ignore the extent to which colonial rule was justified in advance by Orientalism, rather than after the fact” (p. 39).

On the one hand as institutes representing the authority of the colonizing people, it ratified the biased views and partial researches as the truth about the orient. And on the other hand it enabled the colonial power to justify its rule over the orient by using the myths of orientalism. Thus when the institutionally ratified discourse identified the occident as the seat of civilization and the orient as the den of barbaric customs and vile rituals, it started making eminent sense that European powers should have over control the orient not simply because it was economically profitable to them but also because it was the morally right thing to do. In other words it was precisely this institutional framework which supported the discourse of orientalism that repackaged the profitmaking motives of European colonialism into a civilizing enterprise.

(Chattopadhyay, 2017, lecture 4, minute 23)

In the pre-colonial era, Europeans integrated into Asian societies, learned local languages (Durrani, 2012) and produced knowledge about the East and plausibly, if not purposely, provided material for the program of colonization. As Viswanathan (1989) suggests, the vast literature produced by the early Orientalists was cherry-picked selectively by colonizers to justify their attack on Eastern cultures. Orientalism thus “accomplished its self-metamorphosis from a scholarly discourse to an imperial institution” (Said, 1979, p. 95).

The Orientalist, known nowadays as an 'area studies' specialist, appears as rational, logical, scientific, realistic, and objective. The knowledge of the Orientals, by contrast,

often seems irrational, illogical, unscientific, unrealistic, and subjective. The knowledge of the Orientalist is, therefore, privileged in relation to that of the Orientals and it invariably places itself in a relationship of intellectual dominance over that of the easterners. It has appropriated the power to represent the Oriental, to translate and explain his (and her) thoughts and acts not only to Europeans and Americans but also to the Orientals. His special knowledge enabled the Orientalist and his countrymen to gain trade concessions, conquer, colonize, rule, and punish in the East. In many respects the intellectual activities of the Orientalist have even produced in India the very Orient which it constructed in its discourse (Inden, 1986, p. 408).

Guha (2009) adds: “An elaborate structure of knowledges, institutions, and policies had indeed been devised and put into place over the centuries since Hernán Cortés and Vasco da Gama precisely to enable colonizers to understand the colonized and, by understanding, control them” (p. 388). By and large, until the mid-eighteenth century Orientalists were Biblical scholars, students of the Semitic languages, Islamic specialists, or, because the Jesuits had opened up the new study of China, Sinologists” (Said, 1979, p. 51).

Said is at pains to make a distinction therefore between truth and value. It's not that orientalist discourse is necessarily true or false; it is the case though that it is insidiously devaluing of its object of attention. That there is an implicit Eurocentrism, which Said does go so far as to consider a form of racism in Orientalism quite irrespective of any measure or degree of truth that, what are after all the meticulous researches of a lot of these characters, turn up (Fry, 2009, minute 23)

The literature the orientalists produced viewed the East and its people as *passive* objects of knowledge aided in “the removal of human agency from the autonomous Others of the East

and placing it in the hands of the scholars and leaders of the West” (Inden, 1986, p. 421). Hence, beyond the initial fascination, Europeans wanted to rule, exploit and impose their own languages and culture on the people of Asia and Africa. Within Orientalist discourse, whatever the Occident stood for, the Orient stood for exactly the opposite—Europe was masculine, mature, advanced, civilized, while the East was feminine, childlike, barbaric, uncivilized. Opponents of the concept of orientalism call it a “mentality of subalternity” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 54). After the passage of the Indian Education Act of 1835, English was imposed on the people of India which negatively impacted the status of native vernaculars like Hindi and Urdu.

**Re-Orientalism.** In recent years there has been a profusion of South Asian writers of English fiction such as Bapsi Sidhwa, Vikram Seth, Mohsin Hamid, and Aravind Adiga to name just a few. Kachru (1982) posits that “literary scholars have started to recognize and accept the commonwealth literature in English written by non-native users of the language as a noteworthy linguistic and literary activity” (p. 43).

It is fair to say, I think, that these writers born in other global spaces — Ghosh, Armah and Achebe, Lamming and Harris, not to speak of dozens of others, especially from South Africa — have altered the traditional map of English fiction beyond recognition. (Ahmad, 1992, p. 73)

These “new English literatures are essentially a linguistic legacy of the British colonial period” (Weir, 1982, p. 307). Some of these non-native writers of English prose, also referred to as “third world literature” (Ahmad, 1992, p. 90) however reinforce western ideas and notions about people in the Orient, which is a new form of “Orientalism,” and has been labelled “re-Orientalism” by Lau (2009). Ahmed speaks at length about what he feels is the cavalier historical approach of what has come to be called third world literature.

One of my difficulties with the *theoretical* [emphasis in the original] category of ‘Third World Literature’, it should be clear enough, is its rather cavalier way with history; its homogenization of a prolix and variegated archive which is little understood and then hurriedly categorized; its equally homogenizing impulse to slot very diverse kinds of public aspirations under the unitary insignia of ‘nationalism’ and then to designate this nationalism as the determinate and epochal ideology for cultural production in non-Western societies; its more recent propensity to inflate the choice of immigration into a rhetoric of exile, and then to contrive this inflation as the mediating term between Third World and the First . . . . To the extent that both ‘Third World Literature’ and ‘Colonial Discourse Analysis’ privilege coloniality as the framing term of epochal experience, national identity is logically privileged as the main locus of meaning, analysis and (self-)representation, which is, in turn, particularly attractive to the growing number of ‘Third World intellectuals’ who are based in the metropolitan university. They can now materially represent the undifferentiated colonized Other — more recently and more fashionably, the *post-colonial* Other — without much examining their own presence in that institution, except perhaps in the characteristically postmodernist mode of ironic pleasure in observing the duplicities and multiplicities of one’s own persona. The East, reborn and greatly expanded now as a ‘Third World’, seems to have become, yet again, a *career* [emphasis in the original] — even for the ‘Oriental’ this time, and within the ‘Occident’ too. (Ahmad, 1992, pp. 243 & 93-94)

### **Nativization of English and Englishization (Anglicization) of Urdu**

Urdu, a “language of the colonized” (Rahman, 2011, p. 202), was born out of the central Asian invasions of India that began around the 10<sup>th</sup> century. It has been known by many names

including Hindvi, Gojri, Dakhni and Hindustani (Bailey, 1930). Its base is a Hindi grammar with vocabulary borrowed from Turkish, Arabic and Persian, and in recent times predominantly from English (Rassool & Mansoor, 2007). This *openness* of Urdu, especially to borrowings from English, has stunted the development of its vocabulary. Any needed word is simply adopted or borrowed from English. Gordin (2015) gives the example of how Cicero “performed some grammatical manipulation to the ubiquitous question word ‘how much,’ *quantus*, producing *quantitas*, the root word for our own ‘quantity.’ Someone had to create the word ‘quantity’” (p. 29) for Latin. This process has for the most part stopped in Urdu.

A lot of English equivalent words are used in place of Urdu words by people without considering the fact that Urdu itself does have an alternative for the word too. Language growth of Urdu, in terms of increasing its lexicon, is close to nil. (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017, p. 61)

Urdu has had its own colonizing and hegemonic role *viz-a-viz* other vernaculars in Pakistani society and “vociferous language movements have resisted the Urdu-centric cultural practices throughout Pakistan’s history” (Durrani, 2012, p. 37). “Urdu as national language continues to exist in tension, lending credence to the argument that the nationalist project constructed around Urdu as the common language through which an integrative national bond could be cemented has not been fulfilled” (Rassool & Mansoor, 2007, p. 226). The privileged position of Urdu in Pakistan *viz-a-viz* other vernaculars may be called a form of linguicism (Canagarajah & Said, 2011; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995). For speakers of vernaculars such as Sindhi, Balochi and others, the cultural difference of English is perhaps no greater than that of Urdu. This is similar to Kothari’s (2013) assertion that the cultural difference of English “for the Dalit is no more marginalizing than an Indian language” (p. 65).



Crystal (2004) posits that “English is a vacuum-cleaner of a language, readily sucking in words from whichever language it meets—well over 350 of them in the history of British English” (p. 27). Fowler and Kress (1979) suggest, “The forms of language in use are a *part of*, as well as a *consequence of*, social process” (p. 26). The diversified lexical character of nativized varieties of English: Indian, African, Filipino, Singaporean and others can be looked at in various terms—acquisitional, sociocultural, functional and motivational (Kachru, 1982) as well as aspirational. To what extent indigenization of English has taken place in Pakistan within the “linguistic and contextual parameters that resulted in the nativization of English and the Englishization of local languages” (Kachru, 1982, p. 6), and the nature or lexical distinctiveness of Pakistani-English (PakE) (Baumgardner, 1995; Husain, 1992; Khan, 2012; Rahman, 1990, 1991) was not the focus of this study though some comment is needed.

**Pakistani-English (PakE).** A number of papers have been written on the topic of Pakistani-English (Baumgardner, 1995; Husain, 1992; Khan, 2012; Mahboob, 2009; Rahman, 1990, 1991, 2016) which evince that Pakistan’s historical, sociocultural and linguistic contexts have in fact engendered a nativized variety, or “a new idiom of English” (Kachru, 1965, p. 393). Other aspects notwithstanding, perhaps one of its unique features is a diction laced with religiosity and references to the sublimity of Islam. This is the argument presented by Mahboob (2009) who posits that “the English language in Pakistan represents Islamic values and embodies South Asian Islamic sensitivities” (p. 188). Among the nativized English words or unique collocations that are now used commonly in Indian as well as Pakistani English are cousin-sister, cousin-brother, botheration, headmastery, America-returned, foreign-travelled, black-money, marriage-season, village-elders, tiffin-carrier, alms-bowl, nose-screw, cart-man, inter-marriage, sub-caste, and many others. The list is longer within Indian English.

The only strata in Pakistan that converses *intragroup* in English are the “powerful English-using elite” (Khan, 2012, p. 97) who use it as a first language. This is grammatically and lexically correct English—an unrealistic and unavailable standard for most people. To imply that they are using *Pakistani-English* could perhaps be an “ego-cracking linguistic insult” (Kachru, 1982, p. 40). As in India, a wide variety of English is used in Pakistan “with local and regional flavor starting with the pukka enunciations of Oxbridge-educated Maharajahs . . . to the near-incomprehensible patois of the slums and streets” (Baral, 2006, p. 475). However, it is debatable to what extent pidginized local varieties of English have evolved or are used intragroup by people belonging to other social strata in Pakistan—the non-elites—who stick to mother tongue in their personal interactions. Low literacy levels, lack of a culture of reading, and elitist attitudes may be the reasons why, despite the Englishization of Urdu, Pakistan’s sociocultural and linguistic contexts have mostly been unable to engender nativized varieties of English, and if they have, these remain confined to narrow spaces in terms of actual usage. “Each localized form of English has its own characteristic lectal range, between *acrolect*, *mesolect*, and *basilect*, and its own social interpretations of when each is appropriate, and by people of what role in society” (Stevens, 1982, p. 26). Rahman (2016) speaks to this topic in greater detail:

Pakistani-English (PakE) has four subvarieties. There are varieties which differ only in a few phonological–phonetic features from Received Pronunciation (RP), but are otherwise identical to British Standard English (BSE). This variety is used by people who have been exposed, generally for long periods, to BSE spoken in the RP accent. These are the fluent English-speakers (the elite). This variety can be called Anglicized English and, in order to distinguish it from other varieties, we may call it Variety A. The *acrolect* (Variety B), differs from BSE in the dimensions of morphology and syntax as well as

lexis and semantics in addition to that of phonology. It is used by Pakistanis who have been educated in English-medium elite schools or have had much exposure to BSE and RP later. Many good journalists, administrators, professionals and other upper middle-class people write the acrolect or, at least, speak this variety of English. Most other people, however, write and speak the mesolect (Variety C), which differs more from BSE than the previous two varieties. Such people are in middle and upper middle-class occupations but they have generally been educated in Urdu medium schools and have not been much influenced by native varieties of English. The basilect (Variety D) is used by clerks, minor officials and typists, who have not had much education. This kind of English is full of clichés and is the least intelligible variety for foreigners. It is probably this variety which corresponds to Indian Pidgin English (Mehrotra. 1982, p. 55). (p. 22)

**The Law of Hobson-Jobson.** “The English Language”, observed Ralph Waldo Emerson, “is the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven” (in McCrum et al., 1986, p. 11). The nativization of Hindi and Urdu and other Indian vernacular words into English has been referred to as “the law of Hobson-Jobson” or “Hobson-Jobsonism,” derived from the title of Yule and Burnell’s (1886) wordlist of Anglo-Indianisms—*Hobson-Jobson: A glossary of colloquial Anglo-Indian words and phrases, and of kindred terms*. The term has been applied to reference any assimilated loanwords from native Indian languages (including Urdu) into English. Lambert (2014) calls Hobson-Jobson “a catchy title” (p. 65), that has “yet to be surpassed by any modern lexicographical work on Indian English” (p. 54). Indian English, and by default its Pakistani counterpart, have their roots in the “vernacular developed by British soldiers, officials and civilians stationed or residing in India” (Pei & Gaynor, 1954, p. 14) during colonial rule.

Lewis's (1998) *Sahibs, Nabobs & Boxwallahs* was a more contemporary dictionary of words used in South Asia that have Anglo-Indian origins. In addition, there is a comprehensive bibliography that was compiled by the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (Hyderabad, India) called *Indian English: A Bibliography Guide to Resources* (1988). It covers bibliographies, generalia, linguistic aspects, lexis and vocabulary, borrowings/loans and influences, lexicons, phonetics and phonology, grammatical aspects, errors and remedies, and stylistics (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, pp. 25-26). There is also *Indian and British English: A Handbook of Usage and Pronunciation* (Nihalani et al., 1979) in which the authors prefer the term Indian variant(s) of English, rather than Indian English.

***Blending and compounding of words.*** As mentioned, the elites use English as a first language among themselves and deploy it in both the *affective* (family and friendship) and the *utilitarian* (education and employment) domains (Sridhar 1982, p. 142). This is grammatically correct English and can be considered the *institutionalized* variety of English in Pakistan. Non-elites use English largely in utilitarian domains; a *performance* variety or “the actual use of language in concrete situations” (Hymes, 1972, p. 271). This performance variety consists of a basic written form which is used in government and private offices mainly in urban areas, and a rudimentary verbal form that non-elites may use during job interviews, official meetings and other utilitarian domains. It represents “*adequate* competence in one or more registers” and the ability “to make use of the language effectively in those restricted fields” (Kachru, 1965, p. 394). It is likely to have grammatical errors with misplaced vocabulary and poor pronunciation. These non-elite users of English may be said to have higher levels of “competence in *reception* but single (lower level) competence in *production*” (Hymes, 1972, p. 275). The situation in Pakistan is similar to Japan as described by Stanlaw (1982).

The *cline of proficiency* in the use of English in Japan, ranges from people fluent in both spoken and written discourse to those who know only a few vocabulary items. Though most Japanese people are not fluent in English, and the variety they use may be essentially a performance variety rather than an institutionalized variety, anyone even with a cursory exposure to Japan knows that English plays an important role in their everyday lives (p. 171).

However, unlike Japan, where a large corpus of blended and compounded words between English and Japanese has developed, such appears not to be the case in Pakistan. I was able to find few such hybrid formations or collocations that comprise elements from both languages (Kachru, 1965): Rata-fication (memorization), Chill-karo (relax), danto-fy (scold), depend-kartahai (it depends), nikah-fied (married), loor-ing (wandering aimlessly), ammi-ish (motherlike), ghuso-fy (to anger), full-masti (excessive fun), police-wala (policeman), lathi-charge (attack with batons), done-karo (close the deal). This perhaps exemplifies the fact that despite the Englishization of Urdu, Pakistan's sociocultural contexts have perhaps been able to nativize English only to a limited extent, and which may be traced to the highly unequal relationship between the two languages within society—one associated with power and prestige and one with lack of opportunity and exclusion. “The more roles a language can open up for the speaker, the higher its position” (Sridhar, 1982, p. 151) and there is simply no comparison between English (countless roles) and Urdu (limited roles) in this regard.

***Loanwords and transliterations.*** The Long Anglo-colonial history of South Asia, the fact that “mother tongue lacks the technical registers used in academic discussion” (Sridhar 1982, p. 149), the reality that “English is massively employed in higher-level governmental, technological and educational pursuits” (Fishman, 1982, p.16), and “an immense fascination with Western

customs and ideas facilitated the adoption of English loanwords” (Stanlaw, 1982, p. 168) into Urdu and other local vernaculars. “Loan words always add semantic value to the language, giving people the opportunity to express themselves in a more nuanced way. The language as a whole thus acquires an extra lexical dimension which it did not have before” (Crystal, 2004, p. 44). Khalique (2006) points out that “languages in general, and developing languages in particular, need support languages. English has become the support language of Urdu and has replaced Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit functionally, and to some extent linguistically” (p. 110).

According to Zaidi and Zaki (2017), “all languages have a tendency to diffuse into a stronger language, or undergo the influence of a stronger language – stronger in terms of the opportunities and the prestige that language offers” (p. 61). A large number of English words and labels written in the Arabic script (transliterations) are now an accepted part of the Urdu lexicon; words such as table, ticket, road, office, sofa, farm, airport, speed, mood, date, plate, burger, juice, beauty salon, water pump, car mechanic, bus stop, etc., and hundreds of others (Sipra, 2012). This could perhaps also be viewed as “the impact of the conquering language” (Hymes, 1972, p. 273).

Like Japan, in Pakistan “English loanwords can be heard in everyday conversation, on television and radio programs or announcements, and in political speeches” (Stanlaw, 1982, p. 171). However, unlike Japan, where the borrowed word “undergoes a substantial phonological modification” (Stanlaw, 1982, p. 172), in Pakistan the phonological modification is more restrained. Guha (2009) posits that English words were allowed “to come into an Indian language, but strictly on terms set by the host” (p. 331) which is Urdu here. Mahboob and Ahmar (2008) argue that there are variations in pronunciation that are unique to Pakistani-English. The naturalization of English words into Urdu is relentless and “virtually any English word in the

book is fair game in writing or in public speaking” (Stanlaw, 1982, p. 173). It can be argued that Urdu is undergoing language change which “refers to a language changing internally over time phonetically, morphologically, syntactically, or semantically” (Karan, 2011, p. 138).

Another phenomenon is the deployment of English proverbs such as “writing is on the wall (deewar par likha),” “last straw on the Camel’s back (unth par akhree tinka),” “heavens will not fall (aasman nahi girey ga),” “ storm in a teacup (piyali mai tufan),” “glass is half full (glass aadha bhara),” “double-edged sword (doh dharee talwar),” “fool’s paradise (baywaquf ke janat),” as well as others, as “literal translations of idioms” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 2) into Urdu. These word for word imitations of English phrases “have been completely adapted as transferred items” (Kachru, 1965, p. 402) into Urdu. They are often used in the media with a tacit assumption that listeners would get the thrust of what is being implied. “Code-switching, code mixing and borrowings; which are supported and promoted by Pakistani Urdu media are also threatening the purity of Urdu” (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017, p. 61). It perhaps evinces the fact that there is increasingly a greater familiarity amongst the educated classes with English proverbs, phrases and idioms than those from Urdu. It further indicates the pervasiveness as well as the privileged position of English in Pakistani society. To understand this privilege, one need only consider the fact that many helpline numbers in Pakistan default to English and not Urdu, and almost all urban billboards and road signs are in English or Romanized Urdu.

**Texting in Romanized Urdu.** Another aspect of the intricate relationship between English and Urdu is the ever-increasing usage of Romanized Urdu in Pakistan for the purposes of texting and online messaging (Bilal et al., 2017, 2019). Texting in Romanized Urdu is carried out mainly by non-elites due to their lack of ability in English. Bilal et al. (2017) posit that popularity of Romanized Urdu “among the masses to communicate on digital media such as

SMS, WhatsApp, and Facebook, etcetera” evolved due to “lack of comfort in English and unavailability of easy to use Urdu keyboards in its Arabic script” (p. 1). This is similar to the use of Romanized Arabic in United Arab Emirates or what is referred to as Arabizi.

Using Latin script for writing Arabic words online is generally deemed easier than using the Arabic script due to the dominance of English on the internet and since not all cell phones are Arabic friendly. For this reason, Arabizi has become a practical solution. (Hopkyns, Zoghbor, & Hassall, 2018, p. 166).

The move towards use Romanized Urdu is a conundrum as there are now legions of young people who cannot write Urdu in Arabic script but cannot speak English either. “This means that most Pakistanis are either excluded from the digital world or function in it as handicapped aliens” (Rahman, 2004, p. 1.). They are effectively compromised on both fronts as they have lost writing proficiency in the language they can speak, but do not possess speaking ability in the language whose alphabet they know and can write with. In a sense they have become *alingual* (Kamwangamalu, 1989, p. 326) having lost ability with both languages, or as Ali (2018) suggests: “This situation has resulted in producing students who can be considered semilinguals as they are neither proficient in their mother tongue nor in any of the mainstream languages, Urdu or English” (p. 11).

**Code-switching and code-mixing between English and Urdu.** In multilingual societies, users switch from language to language as per given situation, and “they not only code-switch but also culture-switch” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 78). According to Cheng and Butler (1989), “code-switching simply means alteration in the use of two languages (and) is different from the use of loan words and from language borrowing” (p. 294). Code-switching is the mixing of words, phrases and clauses from two distinct languages *across* sentence boundaries



within the same speech event—in other words, *intersentential* switching. On the other hand, Code-mixing is the mixing of words, phrases and clauses from two distinct language *within* the boundary of the same sentence—in other words, *intrasentential* switching (Bokamba, 1982, p. 278). Cheng and Butler (1989) state that “code-switching reflects how the participants see their relative social roles” (p. 295), while Kamwangamalu (1989) suggests that “code-mixing is a characteristic feature of the speech of the elite group” (p. 322).

When people rely simultaneously on two or more languages to communicate with each other, this kind of language is often described using a compound name — Taglish, Franglais, Japlish, Spanglish, Chinglish, Denglish, Wenglish, and many more. Linguists have spent a lot of time analyzing these ‘mixed’ languages and found that they are full of complexity and subtlety of expression. (Crystal, 2004, p. 29).

The elite in Pakistan indulge in some level of code-switching and code-mixing since they are the only ones who have command over English as well as at least one vernacular. They are the ones who can enjoy this luxury and “purposeful and appropriate code-switching, therefore, can be viewed as an expression of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972)—the “ability to say the right thing to the right person at the right place and time” (Cheng & Butler, 1989, p. 296). Non-elites do not have this advantage, and at times it is a source of humiliation. The elite can effectively cut them off, and often do, by switching purely to English in their presence. Elites also switch to English to talk down non-elites against which the latter are helpless and it compromises their dignity and confidence. All these can be considered examples of what Myers-Scotton (1990) defined as *elite closure*. Elites thus are subjects *of* the discourse, while non-elites have no choice but—due to an already unequal power relation further exacerbated by the aura that English wields—to remain subjects *to* the discourse (Pierce, 1995, p. 16).

*Marked and unmarked choices in code-switching.* Scotton's (1982) markedness model presents the "interpersonal use of linguistic choices as negotiations of identity" (Myers-Scotton, 1989, p. 334). The model suggests that language, or code, choice is always indexical of the social relationship between speaker and addressee and that speakers negotiate relationships in their verbal exchanges. A code choice is indexed by as well as indexes an expected set of rights and obligations between participants. Choices within expectation or community norms are considered *unmarked*, while those outside the expected norm would be considered *marked* and aimed at renegotiating the "balance of rights and obligations" (Myers-Scotton, 1989, p. 334). Norms give "speakers an indication of the consequences of their choices" (p. 335).

The use of English "serves to indicate social exclusiveness and high socio-economic rank" (Zuengler, 1982, p. 112). In Pakistan, the elite can be seen addressing non-elite persons in Urdu that is at times grammatically incorrect, perhaps indicating their contempt for the language and by default for those who speak it solely. It can be termed an unmarked choice which indexes their social superiority. The phenomenon of elites in certain situations addressing non-elites in English, knowing fully well that they cannot speak or understand English, could be termed a marked choice and has its roots in the extreme class consciousness that permeates Pakistani society.

The elite has a different linguistic repertoire from other members of the same community. The elite's repertoire is more positively evaluated than are the repertoires of others, or at least possessing such a repertoire is associated with such attributes as education and even competence and intelligence. Its language patterns automatically are a means of elite identification. The elite distinguishes itself from the rest through the use of English. Its

use symbolizes the speaker's desire to acknowledge the expected relationship between participants, a desire to maintain the status quo. (Myers-Scotton, 1990, p. 27, 29 & 32)

For non-elites, it is English that “allows them to meet traditional superiors on a more or less equal footing” (Moag, 1982, p. 276). When non-elites acquire English and are able to respond to the elites “in kind,” they are essentially, and intentionally, making a marked choice that aims at renegotiating the “balance of rights and obligations” (Myers-Scotton, 1989, p. 334). The moment a non-elite is able to respond in English, it completely changes the nature of the exchange and it becomes one between equals marked by a degree of mutual respect.

### **The Context of this Study**

In modern times, English continues to be bound up in a variety of socioeconomic complexities but we should be “highly suspicious of claims that the spread of English is natural, neutral, or beneficial” (Pennycook, 1995, p. 44). Yoshimoto (2008) does not consider language to be neutral and felt that it carries cultural ideology—a view shared by Ngugi (1986) who states that that “language, any language, has a dual character: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture” (p. 13). Trueba (1993) also suggests that language and culture are inseparable, and one cannot be acquired without the other. However, in most countries, even those that were once under Anglo-colonial rule, the ever-increasing use of English and its influence seem detached from the cultural context of Britain or America.

Kachru’s (1992b) definition of *World Englishes*—a term he coined—shows that English has the capacity to contextualize itself to the environment it permeates. Hindmarsh (1978) may not have been off the mark when he stated, “the world has opted for English and the world knows what it wants” (p. 42). Whatever connotations English has and/or has had as the language of colonization, these are now overshadowed by what it can do for its users (Kachru, 1986) especially in present day reality and increasingly so. As Ahmed (1992) avers, “One cannot reject

English now, on the basis of its initial colonial insertion, any more than one can boycott the railways for that same reason” (p. 77). “Regardless of what may have happened to the British Empire, the sun never sets on the English language” (Fishman, 1982, p. 18).

Suresh Canagarajah succinctly and vividly notes how the carpet has been pulled from under the feet of those non-Western countries that were undergoing the ‘project’ of decolonization, by another ‘project’, that of globalization. While decolonization entailed resisting English, globalization ‘has made the borders of the nation state porous and reinserted the importance of English language’. (Lin & Martin, 2005, p. 4)

### **Social Reproduction through the Poor Teaching of English**

In 1947, the newly created state of Pakistan adopted the colonial system of education, whereby English was rationed out only to a small elite group, while the masses were educated mainly in Urdu and in local vernaculars (Abbas, 1993). This dichotomous, and by design, exclusionary and unjust, system has prevailed with English acting as a gate keeper to positions of power and prestige as well as opportunity in society (Shamim, 2008; Rahman, 2004). The elitist system and its sustaining language-in-education policies have been maintained whether “through argument, rationalization, or subterfuge” (Haque, 1983, p. 16), and “it bestows power, and sustains the dominance of those in power” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 21). Its aim is to maintain the status quo and Gulzar et al. (2009) refers to “English as a status language in Pakistan (that) enjoys an apex status” (p. 4). “English language proficiency is considered to be one of the most outstanding status symbols in Pakistani society” (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017, p. 60).

Fluency in written and spoken English has become and remains “*the* main determinant of a child’s progress up the ladder of formal education” (Ngugi, 1985, p. 115), but which is only available at a small number of elite private schools whose fees are prohibitively expensive.

Educational institutions in Pakistan act as sites where social, cultural and economic inequities are reproduced (Bourdieu, 1973; Giroux, 1983; Simon, 1979), class stratification reinforced, and where English plays a role in maintaining class divisions (Tollefson, 1991).

A small top layer of our population is highly educated, skilled, qualified academically, and proficient in English. Isn't that enough to provide leadership and direction for the country? . . . The answers to these questions will be obvious if we take a close look at the issue of inequality, which is inbuilt in the Pakistani state. (Mustafa, 2015, p. 222)

Simon (1979) aptly encapsulates the aims of education as it is structured in Pakistan: "Schooling as a socializing institution whose aim is to regulate a sense of human possibility in support of the interests of the ruling bloc constituted within privileged positions of gender, class, race, ethnic, regional and sexual relations" (p. 30). Thus "the English educated urban elite, have become the colonizers" (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 57).

Theories of social reproduction take as a central issue the notion that schools occupy a major, if not critical, role in the reproduction of the social formations needed to sustain capitalist relations of production. In short, schooling represents a major social site for the construction of subjectivities and dispositions, a place where students from different social classes learn the necessary skills to occupy their class-specific locations in the occupational division of labor. (Giroux, 2001, p. 78)

### **Hegemony Building through Public Education Systems**

Chattopadhyay (2018) speaks to Antonio Gramsci's concept of *hegemony*—a form of dominance and control—and elucidates how educational institutions are used by the ruling elite to exercise control over the masses. This control is deployed in a subtle manner, aimed at persuading non-elites that what is good for the upper classes is good for everyone. In other

words, the dominant class transforms its own ideology, using the state apparatus, into a consensus world view. The education systems in most of the developing world are a domain where hegemony building takes place and they are used to convince non-elites that the ideology of the elites is the most natural way of conceptualizing the world, and one's position within it. Pakistan is no exception, and the purveying of the ideology that Pakistani *nationhood* is defined in terms of Islam as national religion and Urdu as national language—both symbols of national unity—is a form of hegemony that forms the basis of class stratification within Pakistani society.

In Gramsci the term hegemony is primarily used to mean *dominance with consent*. What Gramsci argues here is that the dominant class within any given society enjoys their dominance chiefly through the exercise of hegemony which signifies an ideological dominance rather than a physical dominance. The dominant class within a particular society exercises their dominance in two different ways; the first way is through civil society which is the domain of hegemony building, and the second is through political society which is the domain of coercive force. The civil society which is how Gramsci refers to it constitutes what Althusser identifies as the ideological state apparatus. That will mean educational institutions for instance, religious institutions, publication industry, media, etc. and in this domain of hegemony building the intellectuals of the dominant class convinces the rest of the society that the dominant class serves not just its own interest but also the interest of all other classes. This helps the dominant class gain consent of the rest of the society and exercise control over them thru hegemony thru consent. The political society on the other hand is what Althusser refers to as the repressive state apparatus and comes to the forefront with all its coercive force when hegemony fails. This political society with its governance structure and legal institutions

cannot function for long if there is no hegemonic control that would make the society accept a particular government and abide by a particular set of laws. So ultimately it is hegemony that is of paramount importance as far as dominance is concerned.

(Chattopadhyay, 2018, minutes 32-36)

### **English Education in Public Schools and Non-Elite Schools and Colleges**

English, and the way the educational system rations it out, plays a critical role in maintaining class division in Pakistan, and goes back to colonial education and language-in-education policies and the creation of an elite indigenous English-speaking class in India that the British needed as facilitators to their Empire.

The ambiguous language and education policies of the Pakistani government have ensued in two different types of educational systems in Pakistan. The top tiers of educational institutions, which are mostly non-state run, promote education in English; the other type of mainstream institutions use Urdu as MoI. These two mediums of instructions are poles apart from each other and have been producing two different groups of people ever since British rule. (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017, p. 60)

Non-elite students are caught on the wrong side of this iniquitous dichotomy that Shamim (2011) calls “language apartheid” (p. 300) and have to face and navigate its consequences. “The little amount of contact with English which most students usually have is in the form of formal, decontextualized, bookish, exam-oriented, and teacher-centered reading and writing English” (Manan & Kubra, 2017, p. 66), and which does not lead to any level of proficiency in the language; neither in writing nor in speech. “They become trapped in a perpetual cycle of textual translation and rote-memorization techniques, learning for the test” (Bhattacharya, 2013, p. 179).

The British realized rather early that it was neither possible nor desirable to teach English to the common man so they adopted English as a subject in the middle and senior high school and made compulsory for a matriculation certificate in class 10th. The largest number of pupils failed in English. While discussing teaching, Leitner noted the prevailing method of teaching caused pupils to memorize esoteric facts and to repeat sentences of whose meaning they were completely unaware subjecting them to “*the tyranny of cram.*” He also quotes an instance where he had to look over 50 papers in English prose where none of the answers to the question were correct (Sultan 2011:72). (In Bashir & Batool, 2017 pp. 16-17)

Not knowing English is demotivating and affects their self-esteem. The fact that they must pass the subject of English in order to matriculate from school is a distressing reality for most of them for which they have no recourse, yet non-elite/subaltern students possess few means to acquire the language. This results in a culture of cramming, rote-learning and cheating towards which society turns a blind eye and seems complicit in encouraging. The conspiracy of silence on this issue reinforces the impression that stratification of Pakistani society along purpose and class lines is maintained by design (Tollefson, 1991). The “need to control, regulate, or tame” (Fishman, 1982, p. 16) the spread of English may be one aspect of the “sociolinguistic balance of power” (p. 16) in Pakistan. English may thus be the most precious commodity in Pakistan, access to which it seems zealously guarded.

**Tertiary education.** At any college, university or institute of higher learning of repute and standing in Pakistan, education is imparted exclusively in English. In other words, the medium of instruction for all subjects is English. At most other institutions, though the medium of instruction may officially be English, in reality instruction is delivered in Urdu or a mix of



Urdu, English and the vernacular, as not just students but often teachers as well are unable to use English properly. For non-elites coming through the pipeline of Urdu or vernacular medium schooling, whatever English they know has been learned *only* through books, and failure in the English language paper means failure in the entire examination. This negatively impacts their academic progress as well as their career trajectories and life outcomes. “All teaching and learning, if there be any, is examination-oriented and the examination system tests nothing except the learner’s capacity to reproduce it” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 72). Cramming, memorization and rote learning, and cheating, are commonly used techniques employed by the vast majority of learners in order to pass examinations.

Jenkins (2007, p.42) asserts, ‘learners and teachers are reluctant to embrace changes in curriculum as the focus is on targets set in the test’. Such type of testing undermines the quality of instruction in the classroom (Hill, 2004). A significant reality of such examination is that, it does not take into account the needs of the learners ‘which are the development of basic skills in English’ (Siddiqui, 2007, p.163). (In Khan, 2013, p. 88)

**Washback effect of examinations.** Washback effect in testing and examinations is either negative or positive, in that it either maintains or hinders the accomplishment of educational goals (McKinley & Thompson, 2018). Negative washback occurs in situations of mismatch between the goals of instruction and the focus of assessment and may cause abandonment of instructional goals in favor of test preparation (teaching-to-the-test). Examinations based on the language needs of learners have beneficial washback; otherwise there will be harmful washback. Examinations, especially at the matriculation and intermediate levels, have negative washback effect in Pakistan.

The negative washback effect on teaching is of two kinds: explicit and implicit. In the Pakistani context, explicit effect is shown in the apparent tactics the teacher uses to help

students get good grades. The implicit washback effect is the teacher's own view of teaching which gets contaminated by the hanging sword of memory-geared tests (Siddiqui, 2007, p.189). (In Khan, 2013, p. 88)

### **Various Philosophies that inform Language-in-Education Policy Formation**

Mahmoudi and Hassan (2018) elucidate on the four philosophies and aims that drive the formation of language and language-in-education policies, which are Philological Integration, Phonological Heterogeneity, Vernacularization, and Internationalism. They state:

Cobarrubias (1983) termed four distinctive philosophies and principles that may inspire definite policymaking in language organization, formation, and usages in a specific society: these are Philological Integration (the belief that all and sundry, irrespective of derivation, should pick up and learn the leading language of the society and accomplished extensively and in an extensive variability of procedures), Phonological Heterogeneity (acknowledgment various languages. It also proceeds in a diversity of forms. It is bond by territory or individual or some mixture of the two. It can be whole or fractional, so that all or only some features of life can be directed in more than one semantic in a society), Vernacularization (is the renovation or amplification of a native language and its implementation as an official language), and Internationalism (acceptance of a non-native language of inclusive interaction either as an official language or for other drives such as schooling and trade). (In Mahmoudi and Hassan, 2018, p. 5)

Pakistan's language-in-education policies have been at the intersection of Philological Integration and Internationalism with the caveat that while the Philological Integration has been aimed at assimilating the mass of various language speaking groups under Urdu, the Internationalism has been reserved for the elites. Pakistani policy makers have in a sense been assimilationists (Tyack, 1967) and have attempted to use public education to give children a

common national identity through the shared experience of Islam and Urdu. This assimilative model has not worked well and East Pakistan refusing the hegemony of Urdu, seceded from the union to become Bangladesh in 1971. Even in present day Pakistan (erstwhile West Pakistan), Urdu has had a hegemonic role and is viewed negatively especially in Sindh and Baluchistan by the speakers of the vernaculars of those two provinces.

It is also relevant to point out that factors that impact language-in-education policies in Pakistan also share similarities with factors that impact language-in-education policies in Uganda. Tembe (2008) speaks to these factors in her doctoral dissertation.

According to Alidou (2004), three main factors - economic, political, and pedagogical trigger the problem of medium of instruction in African schools. The economic factors include the retention of textbook markets for Western publishing companies (Bgoya 1992, 2001; Brock Utne, 2000; Mazrui, 1997). The political factors include African elites' reluctance to implement a language policy that may reduce the gap between two unequal social classes: a limited but privileged minority of educated Africans who have access to economic and political power, and the masses of Africans deprived of economic and political resources (Alidou, 2004). Lastly, the pedagogical factors include inadequate preparation of school personnel in using a foreign language as the language of instruction (Brock-Utne, 2001) as well as the codification of African languages. (Tembe, 2008, p. 36).

### **The Negative Impact of the National Language Policy 1979 on the Teaching and Learning of English in Pakistan**

The National Language Policy 1979 (Rahman, 1995, 1996) had damaging impact on the teaching and learning of English in Pakistan. It promulgated the shift in the start of the teaching

of English, *only* in public schools, from Grade 1 to Grade 4 (Coleman, 2010)—Zaidi and Zaki (2017) state that English was not introduced until Grade 6—which coincided with the drive towards Islamization of Pakistani society (1978-1988) by the military dictator Gen. Zia-ul-Haq (Abbas, 1993). Private schools were not affected by this policy and were allowed to continue teaching in English. “Children joining Class 1 in 1979 (in public schools) started out with Urdu as their only medium of instruction” (Haque, 1983, p. 16).

This dual policy of the government was highly criticized. By 1987, some of the Urdu only policies were renounced. Such imposition of Urdu and then the retraction of the decision resulted in a sharp decline in the English language proficiency of the general masses and also resulted in dearth of competent English language teachers, a problem that the country has still not been able to recover. (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017, p. 59)

This shift damaged the pipeline that mainly provides teachers to the public-school system in Pakistan—the public system itself. Teachers in public schools in Pakistan had a working knowledge of English and could speak the language at some basic level. By shifting the start of English education to grade 4 (or Grade 6), students began losing English completely. The system thus became bereft of those success stories who erstwhile would emerge from the system as speakers of English, and many stayed in the public-school system as teachers of English. This regulation was reversed in the Education Policy of 1989 (Coleman, 2010), but the damage had been done.

However, this reversal in policies only occurred after the negative outcomes of the Urdu-Only policy had surfaced. Almost an entire decade of school-going children had had less exposure to the English language than the generations before them. The teachers also stopped working in English. This led to a sharp decline in the competency of people in

the English language, from which the Pakistani educational system has not yet been able to recover. (Mahboob, 2014, p. 15)

Today from out of the tens of thousands of public schools in Pakistan, there are perhaps only a handful, definitely not many, where English language teachers can actually converse in English (Coleman & Capstick, 2012). Khan (2013) elucidates the elitist elements of this strategy, which is “sometimes stated in clear terms and sometimes only practiced but not stated” (Khalique, 2006, p. 101).

Rahman (1996, p.242) quotes Lady Viqarunnisa Noon, an elitist educationist who said ‘the General had assured her earlier that she could continue to use English as the medium of instruction in her school’. This dual policy of General Zia ul Haq was found disagreeable (Mansoor, 2005). It was quite late realised that the change of language policy had been hurriedly passed. In 1983, the General’s government gave legal protection to the elite English medium schools and by 1987 some of the Urdu only policies were retracted. But the impact of this language policy can be seen on the present day education system in Pakistan (Khalique, 2006). (In Khan, 2013, p. 44)

### **Self-Determination Theory**

Self-Determination Theory, developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), is one of the most comprehensive theories of human motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, and posits that to be self-determining means to experience a sense of choice in initiating and regulating one's own actions (Deci, Connell & Ryan, 1989). According to self-determination theory, an individual’s inherent growth tendencies and psychological needs are the basis for their self-motivation and personality development. Central to self-determination theory is the distinction between autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. Thus, behaviors are characterized in terms of

the degree to which they are carried out with a sense of volition (autonomous or intrinsic) versus a sense of external pressure (controlled or extrinsic). It is important to note that both autonomous motivation and controlled motivation are *intentional*, and, therefore, distinct from *amotivation*, which is bereft of intentionality and wholly lacking of self-determination (Gagné and Deci, 2005). Figure 2 illustrates the self-determination continuum between amotivation (nonself-determined) and intrinsic motivation (self-determined).

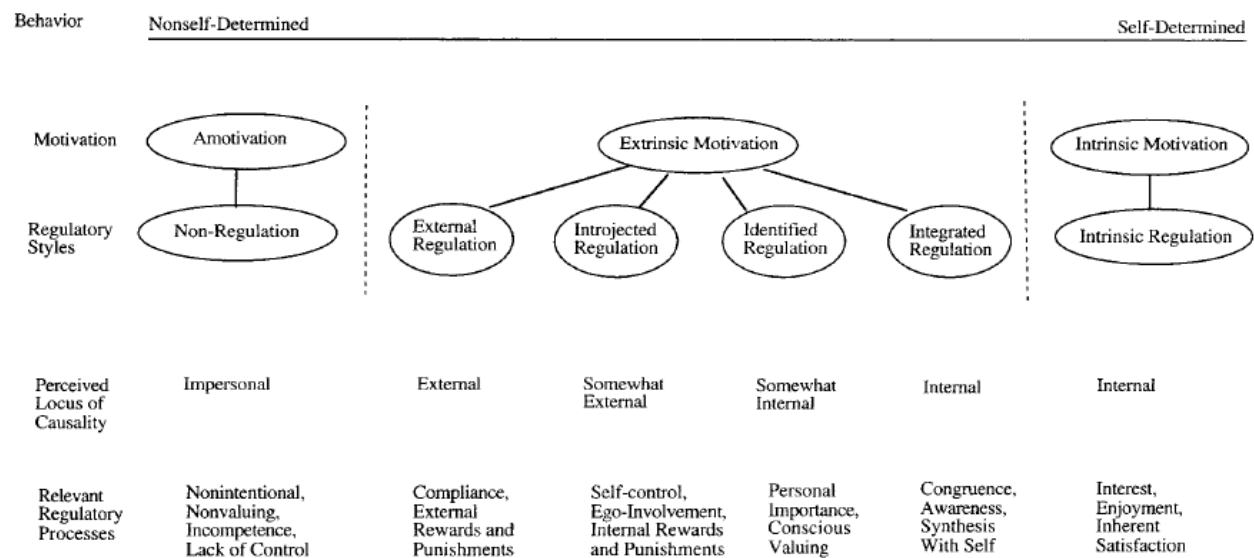


Figure 2. The Self-Determination Continuum shows the types of motivation with their regulatory styles, loci of causality, and corresponding processes (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 72). Reproduced with permission.

According to Self-Determination Theory, activities that propel an individual's interest will produce intrinsically motivated behaviors, and activities that are not so interesting will require some type of tangible/intangible reward or extrinsic incentive. Intrinsic motivation is invariably self-determined, and when intrinsically motivated, people carry out an activity for the pleasure that is inherent in the activity itself. On the other hand, externally motivated people act with the intention of achieving a desired, or avoiding an undesired, consequence. For example, a person may study English for the joy of learning something new or they may learn English for

the purpose of getting employment. The external to internal continuum of extrinsic motivation (Figure 2), which varies in its degree of self-determination, describes the extent to which a regulation (ranging between external, introjected, identified and integrated) could be *internalized* by the individual (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

For example, in the fullest form of extrinsic internalization, or *integrated regulation*, individuals have a sense that their behavior is an integral part of who they are, even though their behavior is externally motivated. Integrated regulation does not become intrinsic motivation, but the activity being undertaken is considered so instrumentally important for the achievement of an individual's personal goals, that there is coherence between internal values and external stimuli (Gagné & Deci, 2005). As such, Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) underscores the importance of *internalizing* a learning activity. This has particular relevance when applied to the learning of a second language by non-elites and was very much the case in the research I carried out.

## **Motivation**

No single phenomenon reflects the positive potential of human nature as much as intrinsic motivation, which promotes our natural inclination to seek out challenges, explore, learn and attain mastery (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These elements, which are so critical for social development, are a source of enjoyment and satisfaction throughout life (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993; Ryan, 1995). Motivation concerns energy, direction and persistence (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and, when people are intrinsically motivated, they act with enthusiasm, tenacity and confidence. High motivation may be related to resiliency, which is a trait found in individuals who demonstrate high achievement despite encountering challenges and hardships that would impede an average person's progress (Matthews, 2014). Positive relationships are a key factor in

developing resiliency (Kitano and Lewis, 2005) as are learning environments that place high expectations, provide choice in learning, and support student pride in their heritage (Matthews, 2014). These elements had a bearing on the successful acquisition of English by the participants of my study.

### **Cognitive Evaluation Theory**

Factors that impact intrinsic motivation fall under the purview of Cognitive Evaluation Theory, which is a sub-theory within Self-Determination Theory that focuses on the fundamental need for competence and autonomy. Rather than focusing on what causes intrinsic motivation, Cognitive Evaluation Theory is concerned with the environmental factors that sustain it and those that undermine it (Ryan et al., 1997). Cognitive Evaluation Theory specifies that by itself competence will *not* enhance intrinsic motivation unless it is accompanied with a sense of personal autonomy (Fisher, 1978; Ryan, 1982).

According to Cognitive Evaluation Theory, tangible rewards and other extrinsic factors actually *undermine* intrinsic motivation (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). In other words, external incentives and rewards can be detrimental to outcomes that have come to be associated with intrinsically motivated behavior, such as creativity and cognitive flexibility (Amabile, Goldfarb, & Brackfield, 1990). For example, Deci (1971) found that when college students were paid to work on intrinsically interesting puzzles, the monetary reward (external motivation) undermined their intrinsic motivation for the activity (Deci, 1971). In contrast, the ability to exercise personal choice, test one's capacities, and be self-directed were all found to enhance intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Concerns have been raised about this theory, including the fact that studies that tested cognitive evaluation theory were laboratory experiments, and, in real life, many activities at the



workplace may not be interesting but have to be done (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Moreover, people work for and need money, so monetary reward as a motivational strategy is practical (Gagné & Deci, 2005). But above all, cognitive evaluation theory implies that management would have to focus on one or the other –intrinsic or extrinsic motivation– which is practically not possible. Hence, a differentiated analysis of extrinsic motivation was developed using the concept of internalization (Ryan and Connell, 1989)—Self-Determination theory. How external incentives impact internal motivation had significance with regards to non-elite English language learners in Pakistan.

**The needs of autonomy, relatedness and competence.** Within Self-Determination Theory, Deci and Ryan (1985) identified three innate psychological needs that are essential for constructive social development and personal well-being. These three are the need for autonomy (deCharms, 1968; Deci, 1975), relatedness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Reis, 1994), and competence (Harter, 1982; White, 1959).

**Autonomy.** The desire for autonomy and control over ones' own destiny is inherent in human nature. Richard deCharms (1968) states that people desire autonomy and constantly struggle against being constrained by external forces. According to deCharms' theory of personal causation, "a man is the origin of his behavior" (p. 272). He distinguishes between the state of being free ("Origin") and the state of being in circumstances of external control ("Pawn"). His research involved providing meaningful choice so that students could exercise what he calls the "origin sequence," which consists of "plan-choose-act-take responsibility" (deCharms, 1968, p. 298). deCharms (1977) found that those individuals who received training about how to be autonomous were both better motivated and better motivators than those who did not. Other scholars have built upon the concept of personal causation. Deci and Ryan (2012) see autonomy

as central to the satisfaction of our psychological needs. The need for autonomy, which is central to intrinsic motivation, can be supported or thwarted by the social environment with concomitant effects. As the social and physical environment of non-elite Pakistanis is neither supportive nor conducive to autonomous behavior, my study sheds light on how successful learners were able to keep themselves motivated to achieve high levels of proficiency in English despite such constraints.

***Relatedness.*** Some of the strongest emotions people experience are related to the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). People seek frequent, affectively positive interactions within the context of long-term caring connections, and a lack of stable relationships are linked to aversive consequences. Baumeister & Leary (1995) suggest that the need to belong is plausibly part of humanity's biological inheritance, and that there is a basic desire in humans to form social attachments. They concluded that the need to belong, or relatedness, is a powerful, fundamental, and extremely pervasive motivator. Ryan et al. (1995) added to the concept of and literature on relatedness by showing that relatedness and autonomy are integral to one another and are dialectically connected. In their discussion on the dynamics of the two constructs, they pointed out that ratings on indexes of relatedness, such as warmth and connectedness, and ratings on indexes of autonomy, such as choice and minimal control, were invariably inextricable. They suggest that the connection between the two is established in early infancy, and the strength of attachment and relatedness is in part a function of the autonomy afforded by parents and caregivers during childhood and runs very deep. The needs for belonging—to be able to blend in—and relatedness acted as motivators among non-elites Pakistanis, and was an aspect of successful English acquisition that my study evinces.

**Competence.** White (1959) introduced the construct of competence as a fundamental human need and proposed the concept of “effectance.” White (1959) states that, “the ever-present, ever primary feature of motivation is the tendency to deal with the environment” and effective interactions with the environment could be gathered “under the general heading of competence” (p. 317). He viewed competence motivation to be different from biological motivation, such as thirst and hunger. Deci (1975) defines competence as “one’s ability or capacity to deal effectively with his surroundings” (p. 55). Behaviors that lead to effective manipulation of one’s environment are selective, persistent and directed (Deci, 1975). Competence enhances the abilities of a person, and when people undertake activities to learn and enjoy, they experience competence. Harter (1978) proposed competence motivation theory, which states that individuals will gravitate towards those subjects and areas in which they perceive their own competence and avoid those where the possibility of accomplishment is unclear. Successful attempts at mastery in a domain reaffirm and reinforce the feeling of competence, and accordingly enhance motivation, and failed attempts have the opposite effect. This had relevance to the subjects of my study and their successful attempts towards fluency and higher levels of competence in the English language.

### **Self-Determination in Second Language Acquisition**

When applied to language education, Self-Determination Theory has shown positive explanatory power for students’ motivation to continue learning a new language (Noels et al., 2000, 2003). Motivation to learn a second language is defined by Gardner (1985) as “the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (p. 10).

Gardner (1985) argues that self-confidence arises from positive experiences in the context of the second language: "Self-confidence . . . develops as a result of positive experiences in the context of the second language and serves to motivate individuals to learn the second language" (p. 54). (In Pierce, 1995, p. 11)

### **Integrative and Instrumental Motivations in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)**

Gardner and his collaborators have highlighted the centrality of motivation as a key factor contributing to success in second language acquisition (Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Gardner et al., 1985). According to Gardner et al. (1985), two motivational Orientations drive the desire to learn a second language, instrumental and integrative. The former pertains to learning a second language for pragmatic gains such as employment, while the latter pertains to motivation towards learning a second language in order to integrate into a community (Pierce, 1995). Gardner and Lambert (1972) found that integrative Orientation was a stronger predictor of persistence and success in second language acquisition, but this finding has been criticized. Noels et al. (2003) found that the desire for contact and identification with a language community is not fundamental to the motivational process and has relevance only in specific sociocultural contexts. Dörnyei (1990) suggests that instrumental Orientation is perhaps more important than integrative Orientation for second language learners, as they are unlikely to assimilate into the culture of the people who speak the target language. The social distance (Schumann, 1976) between the elite and non-elite Pakistanis is indeed large but I found evidence of both integrative as well as instrumental motivation. In addition, I found the desire in participants for liberation from the class-based mental silos that non-elites are restricted to and for which I have offered new terminology in Chapter VI.

## **The Concept of Investment in Second Language Acquisition**

Pierce's (1995) argues that differences between theorists in SLA should not be easily dismissed and offers the notion of *investment* which differs from Gardner and Lambert's (1959) integrative and instrumental motivations. She felt that "artificial distinctions are drawn between the individual and the social [and that] relations of power in the social world affect social interaction between second language learners and target language speakers" (Pierce, 1995, p. 11-12). Pierce (1995) felt that the concept of motivation presupposes a fixed and ahistorical learner who simply desires some kind of external gain, whereas the notion of investment attempts to conceive the language learners as having multiple desires. Learners constantly construct and reconstruct who they are and their relationship to the social world. Thus, the investment in the desired target language is an investment in the learner's personal and social identity and self-concept. "Self-concept is a powerful central psychological construct that helps to explain learners' varied behaviors, approaches and attitudes towards language learning" (Mercer, 2011, p. 3).

SLA theory needs to develop a conception of the language learner as having a complex social identity that must be understood with reference to larger, and frequently inequitable social structures which are reproduced in day-to-day social interaction. In taking this position, I foreground the role of language as constitutive of and constituted by a language learner's social identity. It is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to-or is denied access to-powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak (Heller, 1987). (Pierce, 1995, p. 13)

## **The Perceived Benefit Model of Language Shift**

Karan's (2011) perceived benefit model of language shift is based on individual language choice decisions motivated by perceived personal benefit, and attributes code choice to "pragmatic decisions in which another variety is seen as more important for the future (Edwards, 1985, p. 71, in Karan, 2011, p. 1). Karan (2001) classified motivations behind the decisions that lead to language shift as communicative, economic (job, trade, and network related), social (solidarity group, prestige group, and distancing related) and religious (appeasing the divine, access to sacred languages, and proselytizing related). He later "expanded that simple classification into a basic taxonomy of motivations that influence language shift" (Karan, 2011, p. 140) and added "language power and prestige motivations" (ibid. p. 142) to the mix, and which certainly has relevance with regards to how English is viewed, consciously and perhaps even subconsciously, in Pakistan.

Language power and prestige motivations have to do with cases where languages or dialects themselves are associated with power and prestige (high language forms), or lack of power and prestige (low language forms). Language power and prestige motivations differ from social identity, prestige group -related motivations in that with language power and prestige motivations, the prestige or power is perceived to be in the language variety itself. In social identity, prestige-related motivations, the prestige, or lack of prestige is found in the group normally speaking the language variety. A good argument could be made for collapsing these language power and prestige motivations with social identity, prestige group motivations, as in most cases prestigious and powerful languages or dialects are associated with prestigious and powerful groups who use those language varieties. The rationale for not collapsing these types of motivations is the conviction that

certain societies do in fact attribute or associate power and prestige, or the lack of power and prestige, to certain language varieties. (Karan, 2011, p. 142)

### **Studies that Explored Motivation in SLA**

Noels et al. (2003) conducted a study on language learning Orientations using self-determination theory, which was one of the first applications of the theory to investigate intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. The study included students learning a second language at a French-English bilingual university in Canada. Noels and colleagues used subscales from the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand et al., 1992), which was designed to assess amotivation, the three types of external motivations (external, introjected, and identified regulations from the self-determination continuum), and the three types of internal motivations (knowledge, mastery, and stimulation). The sample consisted of 159 participants, 70% of whom were women, with a mean age of 22 years, who had studied the second language for an average length of 10.9 years. Noels et al. found that instrumental Orientation and the external regulation Orientation were strongly correlated. This suggests that external rewards, like the possibility of employment or recognition, can be highly motivating to second language learners.

In a recent quantitative study of students at a Vietnamese university, Ngo et al. (2017) drew on Self-Determination Theory to explore if motivation to learn a second language among students who chose to study English as their major differed from those who were required to study English as a minor component of their primary degrees. Taking a sample of 180 English major and 242 non-English major students, Ngo et al. found that both groups demonstrated high levels of motivation to learn English in order to prepare for their future professions. The findings also revealed that English majors felt more intrinsically motivated to learn English and that for both groups, intrinsically motivated students invested the highest levels of effort in learning

English. These findings confirmed that extrinsic factors can have an impact on the motivation of students to learn English (in this case, a focus on employment), but there could be other factors too, such as external approval and commendation.

In their research on demotivation, Tran and Baldauf (2007) found differences among English learners in Vietnam based on their classroom experiences. Using stimulated recall essays from 100 university students, they found demotivation to be a serious issue among language learners, which was significantly related to the different teaching methods and styles of different teachers. They also found that student awareness of both the role of English in finding employment, and their determination to be successful in life, were critical factors in overcoming demotivation to acquire the language.

In an exploration aimed at assessing the motivational responses of 268 third to sixth grade students in one public elementary school in Japan, Carreira et al. (2013) used a motivational model of English learning based on Self-Determination Theory. Their research suggests that English classes designed to stimulate student perceptions of teacher support for autonomy are crucial for promoting students' intrinsic motivation to acquire English. Their findings underscore the importance of student perception of teacher support for autonomy in English classes, and affirm that Ryan and Deci's (2000) concepts of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are germane to self-deterministic behavior.

In research aimed at investigating motivation for the learning of English and the ways that teacher support enhances student motivation in classroom settings, Vibulphol (2016) developed questionnaires based on Self-Determination Theory to collect data from students and teachers in 12 ninth-grade English language classrooms across Thailand. They also collected observational data, which was triangulated and used to describe student motivation and learning,



and teacher-led motivational strategies in each class. While most students had relatively high levels of motivation and interest in learning English, the findings show that autonomy-supporting strategies were found only in highly motivated and high-performing classrooms. This suggests that teaching strategies that not only initialize but also nurture students' internal motivation to learn English in and outside the classroom are critical for sustained second language acquisition. This is very much in line with Self-Determination Theory, which posits that teachers can promote or suppress student curiosity in learning (Niemic & Ryan, 2009).

In another study, Geddes (2016) focused on identifying Korean university students' attitudes towards studying English, and determining if attending after-school English academies had an impact on their attitudes. Geddes also sought to determine if studying English led to anxiety, whether students were more intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to learn, and what were the most important reasons for studying English. Fifty-two students from a single university completed a survey that included ranking their reasons for studying English. The findings revealed that students generally had a positive attitude towards studying English, and those who had previously attended private English academies had the most positive attitudes towards second language acquisition. It was also found that studying English did not lead to anxiety. The findings of the study suggest that an external incentive, like getting a better job, was the most important motive for studying English, which falls within externally motivated regulation as theorized within the self-determination continuum.

In a study that investigated student motivation during English vocabulary tasks, Wang et al. (2015) adopted self-determination theory to look into the impact of autonomy on college students' task motivation and engagement with vocabulary learning, and their general English learning motives (i.e. trait motivation). The research involved 48 freshmen and sophomores at a

University in Taiwan. The results of quantitative analysis of data obtained from questionnaires and observations over 14 weeks revealed that participants who were given the freedom to choose their own target words showed higher task motivation and task engagement than those who were required to learn pre-selected target words. General attitude toward English learning was not influenced by the provision of choice in the vocabulary learning tasks. This experimental research suggests that task motivation and engagement fluctuate over time, even with the same settings and task procedures. In accordance with Self-Determination Theory, the findings in the study affirmed the importance of creating vocabulary learning tasks that support and encourage autonomy for learners.

In another investigation of student engagement with foreign language lessons, Oga-Baldwin et al. (2017) studied 515 Japanese elementary school students over the course of a year, and found that teachers who provided appropriate needs support and structure helped students engage. This would imply that creating a clear, interesting, and well-paced learning environment is centrally important for second language learners. This finding is aligned to constructs within Self-Determination Theory—such as competence—and suggests that intrinsic motivation develops through the interaction of learners and the environment in which learners are expected to acquire the language.

In an assessment of the motivational propensities of Chinese college students towards learning English for specific purposes, such as marketing and finance, Liu (2016) examined and compared Gardner's (1985) Integrative-Instrumental Model and the Self-determination Theory of Deci and Ryan (1985). The sample included 558 junior students with a mean age of 20 years who had been studying English for an average length of ten years. The students answered a questionnaire with Likert-scale type questions similar to the one used by Noels et al. (2003) in

their study as mentioned above. The findings suggest that Self-determination Theory is more comprehensive and applicable to the Chinese case and that an emphasis on autonomy can help foster student motivation as posited within that theory.

While the importance of extrinsic motivation, learner autonomy and teacher supported autonomous learning environments emerge from a review of the above studies, what also stands out is the fact that all these studies have been carried out in countries that have well-developed public education systems, and where high literacy levels have been achieved in and through the mother tongue (UNICEF, 2017). The fact that Pakistan neither has a strong public education system nor high levels of literacy (UNESCO, 2017) makes this study different. In fact, the country falls into the bottom half of rankings of socioeconomic development—147<sup>th</sup> on the Human Development Index (United Nations Development Program, 2017) and 115<sup>th</sup> on Global Competitiveness Index (World Economic Forum, 2017).

The candidates I studied achieved literacy and fluency in English within a unique context as outlined above with concomitant effects on their identity. Although my study was not undertaken from a linguistic perspective, the field of second language acquisition has moved beyond its roots in linguistics making it easier for applied linguists to explore links between theories of identity and the learning of languages (Block, 2007). The construct of identity and its relationship to English language learners is explored next.

### **Identity**

“Identity is a linguistic construction” (Baumeister, 1986, p. 15) and is a highly studied construct, with searches in academic databases on the word “identity” yielding tens of thousands of results (Côté, 2006). While scientific publications increased by a factor of about seven over the last 50 years, the literature on identity grew by a factor of 50 during the same period

(Vignoles et al., 2011). Identity is a powerful concept that concerns the self and comprises, not just what one thinks one is, or acts as being, but also what recognition is accorded to that identity by others (Baumeister, 1986). Identity is complex and hard to define. For example, just because someone has a German passport, it does not necessarily confer a German identity on them (Vignoles et al., 2011). Similarly, a certain skin color, or being able to speak a language, does not necessarily translate into ethnic or linguistic identity. Baumeister (1986) names continuity and differentiation the two defining criteria of identity.

An effective identity is a well-defined identity, and it becomes well-defined if its parts adequately meet the defining criteria. In other words, something contributes to identity if it satisfies one or both of the defining criteria . . . . Continuity is a special case of unity, unity across time. Continuity entails being the same person today as yesterday or last year or next week. One's sense of identity is strengthened by things that require one to be the same person across time . . . . Differentiation entails being different from others. One's identity must contain some elements that distinguish it from others. (Baumeister, 1986, p. 18)

West (1992) postulates that identity relates to desire—the desire for recognition, the desire for association, and the desire for protection, which align to the needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness as encapsulated within self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Indeed, desire and determination are what drive learners to successfully overcome the internal and external obstacles they face in second language acquisition.

According to Côté & Levine (2002), theories on identity tend to focus on processes that emphasize the agentic role of people in creating or discovering their own individual identities. Identity can be defined at three different levels: individual, relational and collective (Sedikides &

Brewer, 2001). The first of these refers to the self-definition of identity at the personal level. This could include values (Marcia, 1966), religious beliefs (MacDonald, 2000) and goals (Waterman, 1999). Relational identity refers to roles such as parent, spouse, manager, owner etc. At the collective level, people are part of social groups that they identify with and accordingly imbibe the beliefs and attitudes that form as a result of participation in those groups, and which become part of their social identity (Tajfel, 1974, 1982). Identity reconstruction among non-elite English language learners happens at all three levels.

Mathews (2000) argues that people are not raised into identities, rather one assumes an identity and then works on it. Identity develops in what he calls the “cultural supermarket.” Just as a supermarket sells items from across the world, so the media and technology make available a range of possible identities that can be assumed. However, it is not all *laissez faire* and the identity one can adopt or acquire, or create, is based on the social structures within which an individual exists. According to Norton (1997), identity is framed in different ways: social identity, sociocultural identity, voice, cultural identity, and ethnic identity. Norton (1997) refers to *identity* as “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is *constructed* across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future” (p. 410).

Identity can also be described as a person’s commitments, characteristics, beliefs, roles, positions, relationships, memberships, status in group, ways of thinking, and sense of ethnic, geographical and material belonging (Vignoles et al. 2011). They further posit that multiple aspects of identity can co-exist with many identity processes undertaken deliberately and possibly involving a great deal of effort. The intersection—and possible conflict—between “mother tongue identity” and “second language identity” that participants negotiate may emerge

in this study. My research sheds light on the role of English in participants' attitudes towards their native languages.

### **Identity Motives**

Vignoles et al. (2006) assert that among the least contested claims in social psychology is that people in general are motivated to protect and enhance their self-esteem. They define identity as the subjective concept that one holds of oneself. Like all subjective meanings, identity is constructed through a complex process of social interactions occurring within one's cultural and personal contexts, which are guided by the particular motives or goals of the individual (Breakwell, 1988). These *identity motives*, though not necessarily present in the realm of awareness, guide the processes of identity construction towards certain identities and away from others (Vignoles et al. 2006). They further assert that identity motives are also likely to be reflected in people's desires for future identities that would satisfy those motives—similar to Norton's (2000) notion of imagined identities—and hence people strive to maximize satisfaction and minimize frustration of these motives when constructing their identities.

Vignoles et al. (2006) identify six motivational goals from different theories within the literature, and propose that people are motivated to construct their identities around the need for feelings of self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, belonging, efficacy, and meaning. Efficacy and belonging are akin to the needs of competence and relatedness within Self-determination Theory. Vignoles et al. (2006) found that despite the centrality of the self-esteem motive, motives for meaning, continuity, distinctiveness, efficacy, and belonging, each showed a variety of direct and indirect effects on cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of identity. The desire to acquire English within a country like Pakistan, especially by non-elite persons, was motivated by the desire to satisfy these six needs with concomitant effects on their personalities.

Vignoles et al. (2006) conducted four separate studies to try and understand the effects of identity motives on identity construction and their research confirmed the centrality and pervasiveness of self-esteem on all aspects of identity and showed the influence of the self-esteem motive on the structuring of multiple identities within the individual (Vignoles et al., 2006). They also found that the effects of the meaning motive equaled or outshone those of the self-esteem motive in all predictions of perceived centrality. The research tied motives for self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, and meaning directly to the internal processes of identity definition. Motives for self-esteem, efficacy, and belonging were found to be directly relevant to the external processes of identity enactment. The desire for higher levels of meaning and self-esteem were important identity motives for non-elite Pakistanis to strive towards the acquisition of English. The relationship between esteem and continuous imbibing of the language was a strong intrinsic motivator towards sustained effort and accordingly higher levels of proficiency.

### **ELL Identity Construction**

In Sri Lanka, English is sometimes referred to as *kaduva* or sword, and English language teaching units in universities are nicknamed *Kammala*, a place where you go to sharpen your sword. The metaphor crystallizes the socio-political-psychological attitudes of people who know that the sword, sharpened well and grasped firmly, will endow them with power and enable them to live with dignity and respect in an English-dominated system (Kandiah, 1984, 2010).

Norton (2013) states that “issues of identity have become central to the field” of language education (p. 1). Research in second-language acquisition has revealed that the language learning process is a complex interplay of many variables in which social roles, relationships, power relations, and identities are constantly reconstituted (Lee, 2003). For people from non-elite backgrounds, the respect and access to opportunity that English bestows in certain postcolonial

countries is the dividend of the time and resources they invest in it and becomes part of their identity.

The English language learners in the context that I researched are negotiating a myriad set of very complex and daunting circumstances. They acquired the language in the domestic context of a non-English speaking country where they did not have access to those who speak the language fluently. This social distance (Schumann, 1976) between them (non-elites) and the elite, who speak English as a first language, is too large to facilitate the acculturation of the second language. This struggle enabled these non-elites to emerge transformed and one important aspect of their re-constructed identities is power as is exemplified through the above anecdote. This relationship of language and power has been an area of study of sociolinguists (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Wolfson, 1989) and its elements emerged in my study as well.

McKay and Wong (1996) point out that the second language learner is a complex being as language acquisition is a multifaceted process, where many variables are at play and in which identities, roles and relationships are constantly reconstituted. Norton (1997) suggests that the literature on the topic of language and identity is somewhat fragmented and, while linguists such as Noam Chomsky do not see identity as central to theories of language, second language teachers have to take this relationship seriously as language learners are constantly engaged in identity construction. Lee (2003) refers to the lack of research on how language impacts identity as a “lacuna”, since culture and questions of identity are inextricably linked to language.

Norton (1997) states that since peoples’ desires can only be expressed in terms of their material resources, identity construction is also impacted by those constraints. For example, the identity of an English learner who could afford a reputed language institute developed differently than that of one who could only afford a-not-so-highly rated one. Hence, the identities they



constructed were not entirely within their control but were highly contingent on the context of personal circumstances (Lee, 2003).

Holland et al. (2001) state that identities are a key means through which people care for what is going on around them and are important bases from which people create new realities and new ways of being. The use of the plural in this definition implies the development of multiple identities in each person which is particularly true of language learners. Ochs (1993) posits that language learners develop “multiple, yet perfectly compatible identities—identities that are subtle and perhaps have no label, blended identities, even blurred identities” (p. 298). This also ties in with Candlin’s (1998) perspectives on identity, which posit that there is no one “self” waiting to be discovered, but a multitude of “selves” found in the different linguistic practices. He poignantly states that identity is a continuing mediated struggle between persons as authors of their own identities and as animators of identities that are authored for them. This is reflective of the struggles of many English language learners as they tried to acquire fluency in the face of social pressures against the reconstitution of their identity; identities that may have been, and often are, predefined in the milieu of class and gender consciousness.

As regards the time and effort that learners invest in English language acquisition, they do so in the expectation that they will get access to a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will increase the value of their cultural and social capital (Pierce, 1995) which was very much the case among the participants of my study. Learners hoped that the return on investment would be previously unattainable opportunities and Pierce (1995) felt that the concept of investment, rather than motivation, better captured the complex relationship between power, identity and language learning.

Pierce's (1995) notion of investment differs from Gardner and Lambert's (1959) concept of integrative and instrumental motivations. She felt that the concept of motivation presupposes a fixed and ahistorical learner who simply desires material gain, whereas the notion of investment *attempts* to conceive language learners as having complex identities and multiple desires. The learners in my study constantly constructed and reconstructed who they were and their relationship to the social world. Thus, the investment in English acquisition was also an investment in the learner's own social identity.

### **Social Identity Theory**

The concept of social identity is defined by Tajfel (1974) as "that part of an individual's self-concept, which derives from his knowledge of his group membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership" (p. 69). Ochs (1993) considers social identity as "a cover term for a range of social personae, including social statuses, roles, positions, relationships, and institutional and other relevant community identities one may attempt to claim or assign in the course of social life" (p. 288). "Social identity as a site of struggle is an extension of the position that social identity is multiple and contradictory" (Pierce, 1995, p. 15).

First, social identity is a relational term, defining who we are as a function of our similarities and differences with others. Second, social identity is shared with others and provides a basis for shared social action. Third, the meanings associated with any social identity are products of our collective history and present. Social identity is therefore something that links us to the social world. It provides the pivot between the individual and society. (Reicher, et al., 2010, p. 45)

In the words of the fifteenth century English poet John Donne, “no man is an island” (de Quincey, 1862). Humans are gregarious and seek empathy with others. As mentioned earlier, some of the strongest emotions people experience, negative and positive, are related to the need to belong, and people desire frequent interactions within the context of long-term caring relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Baumeister and Leary (1995) also suggest that the need to belong is part of humanity’s biological inheritance and that there is a basic proclivity in humans to form social attachments. People often see themselves and others as *group members* and it is around their intergroup behavior that Social Identity Theory is constructed.

The social identity approach was initiated in the early 1970’s by the work of Henri Tajfel, a survivor of the holocaust, and the question, “How could people sanction violence simply because of group membership?” drove his research. One of the cornerstones of social identity theory is to account for when and how social structures and belief systems impact how people act or choose to act (Reicher et al. 2010). The initial research by Tajfel (1974, 1982) revealed that the act of *mere categorization* into groups, irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality or language, makes people discriminate in favor of their own group, referred to as the *in-group*, and against those who are in the *out-group*. In other words, "people experience satisfaction in the knowledge that they belong to groups which enjoy some superiority over others" (Giles & Smith, 1979, p. 52).

According to Ellemers and Haslam (2012) the basic principles of social identity theory focuses on three issues. First, they delineate the three psychological processes by which personal identity is different from social identity. Second, they describe the three

identity management strategies that people employ to enhance their social identity. And third, they define the characteristics of the social structures that determine which strategies will be employed and when (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012).

Of the three psychological processes by which social identity is different from personal identity, the first is the process of social categorization by which people are formed into groups. The second process is that of social comparison where group characteristics are rated and assigned value in comparison to other groups. The third is the process of social identification or cognitive awareness that one can be included in a certain group and hence people are motivated to emphasize the distinctiveness of their group (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012). These three processes are the ways in which people define their social reality and their own position in that reality (Tajfel, 1974).

The three identity management strategies within social identity theory are social creativity, social competition and individual mobility. Social creativity is employed when group features are emphasized positively, such as “black is beautiful” or “men may be better in math but women can multitask.” Social competition is when group members act to change the status quo, such as forming a union or protesting for equal rights (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012). The last of these, individual mobility, is an individual level strategy whereby people try to leave a devalued group and seek membership of a group of higher social standing by employing the necessary strategies in this regard. Individuals will seek to become members of new groups if these groups will add positively to aspects of their self-identity (Tajfel, 1974). The idea of individual mobility is particularly relevant with regards to non-elite English learners in Pakistan for whom social mobility is hugely dependent on how well they can acquire fluency in the

language. Thus their desire for social mobility informs their motivation to acquire English and their identity formation, which Karan (2011) refers to as “social identity motivations for language use and acquisition [that are] prestige group-related” (p. 141).

### **Sociocultural Theory**

According to Duff and Uchida (1997), sociocultural identities and ideologies are not static, deterministic constructs, rather “in educational practice as in other facets of social life, identities and beliefs are co-constructed, negotiated, and transformed on an ongoing basis by means of language” (p. 452). Mika Yoshimoto’s (2008) study of Japanese women learning English from the perspective of sociocultural theory and critical theory has parallels to my research. She points out that “the process of participating in a new language and a new culture results in our living in neither culture but in hybrid spaces.” She uses Vygotsky’s (1978) sociocultural theory to articulate the ways in which language mediates the development of the self. She states in her book:

Vygotsky’s understanding that human development occurs on two planes—beginning with social interaction which in turn becomes internal and psychological, leads to the view that the individual and social selves are mutually constituted (1978). Therefore, it becomes impossible to consider language as independent from identity.

Vygotsky’s (1978) concepts of the “zone of proximal development” or ZPD, and especially the “more knowledgeable other” or MKO have relevance to the struggles of non-elite learners of English. For many of these learners, it was the presence or appearance of an MKO in their lives that played a critical role in taking them towards fluency or creating that desire to achieve proficiency in English. For some this MKO was a person and for others it was in the form of media and technology.

## Second Language Learning and Identity

There has been an increase in publications that explore the interrelationship between language and identity (Block, 2007; Gu, 2008; Lamb, 2004; Lee, 2003). Norton (2013) posits that “work on identity offers the field of language learning a comprehensive theory that integrates the individual language learner and the larger social world” (p. 2). She argues that learners from marginalized backgrounds can negotiate more desirable identities through the target language, and invites researchers to address how relations of power hinder access to target language communities. She also refers to research on *imagined communities*, a term coined by Anderson (1991), and to her own efforts to develop the concept further (Norton, 2001; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton and Gao, 2008). In other words, a desired community of the imagination that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future, or *imagined identities*.

There has also been in recent years recognition that the whole paradigm of English learning has shifted due to the effects of globalization and increased linguistic and sociocultural diversity. Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009) posit that those working in the area of second language acquisition have just begun to examine what the changed global reality means in terms of motivation to learn English for people aspiring to acquire global identity. Second language motivation is thus being re-conceptualized in the context of contemporary notions of self and identity in the new millennium. In a changed global reality, the concept of integrative orientation may become increasingly redundant when there is no specific reference group of speakers to target (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009). However, the findings of my study show that integrative motivations to learn English may still be relevant within the domestic context of many postcolonial societies, though in a somewhat different sense.

## **Multiple Identities**

In research conducted by Lee (2003), 14 students from a university were chosen to participate in a qualitative ethnographic study that aimed at exploring the role of English in the construction of the sociocultural identities of Malaysians, to see how these identities had been shaped by the acquisition of the English language. Her findings reveal that the participants possessed a range of diverse identities depending on the context and groups they were interacting in and with. Strategic identity switches seemed the norm and based on the circumstances, participants made conscious shifts to negotiate the requirements of a particular situation. The over-employment of English was used as a resistance strategy by some participants in settings where they felt they were being ostracized, while others, who were aware of the association of English with westernization, chose to minimize its use when associating with traditionally minded groups—strategically code switching and/or code mixing. The power that English bestows was reflected in the metaphors used by the participants, such as shield, double vision, sword, gift, and weapon, to describe the ways in which they felt empowered and how their knowledge of English had allowed them access to information that might otherwise not be known to them.

The relevance of these metaphors cannot be overemphasized especially within a highly class-conscious society like Pakistan, with its huge economic disparities between the tiny English-speaking elite (Rahman, 2016) and the non-elites. An intriguing finding from her study was that it is not necessarily the use of English but the knowing of English that affects identity in non-interactive ways in that it makes the user more reflective and engenders a more critical attitude towards their own culture.

## **Identity Reconstruction**

Using a life history interview methodology (Atkinson, 1998), which consist of in-depth, unstructured interviews that range the entire course of an individual's life, Hayes (2010) studied the career of a nonnative English teacher in Sri Lanka. This teacher, Krishnan, was educated in Tamil-medium institutions and had no contact with the English language until the beginning grade 6, where it was introduced to him for the first time. As he was at a disadvantage versus those students who had had English since grade 3, he would simply memorize the lines he was supposed to read and parrot them out from memory. This trick worked until he was finally caught out by the "ferocious-looking" (p. 70) English teacher and punished. This fear led him to go all out to acquire the language rapidly, though he admits that he has no idea how he learned it. He adds, however, that since he loved reading stories in Tamil, and was familiar with how story plots are laid out, he started understanding and enjoying stories in English and read them often. According to Krishnan (Hayes, 2010), encouragement and help received from a kind teacher in grade 10 also played a vital role in his rapid acquisition of the language, and he recalls the respect and esteem accorded to English teachers generally.

Krishnan worked in several offices and then ran his own business, which was destroyed in ethnic riots that forced him to return to his village to work in the fields. However, his knowledge of English re-established him in life as a teacher of English, and his story is indicative of the way English allows a person in many developing ex-colonial countries to recreate and reconstruct their identities because of the power it bestows on the speaker. One of the most interesting aspects of his story is that English helped to save his life and the lives of his students many times; he was teaching in a war zone but was respected by both sides in the conflict due to his ability to speak the language. He fondly recalls how some of his students were



able to achieve high military command due to their ability in English. He uses the metaphor of English as a *weapon* that helps one gain knowledge. The presence of English in his life impacted all his identity motives as defined by Vignoles et al. (2006), and greatly influenced his identity definition and identity enactment.

The above studies explored the impact of learning English on the identity construction of individuals. However, the construct of confidence was not explored in any general or specific contexts. Confidence is something one gains through the learning process, especially language acquisition processes, by way of improved competency and which was evidenced in my research.

### **Confidence in Learning versus Confidence from Learning**

According to Psychology Today (2017), confidence can be described as a belief in one's ability to succeed, and that a lack of it prevents us from taking risks and seizing the opportunities at school, work and in society that lead to success, as well as enhance success. Lickerman (2013) defines confidence as coming from three beliefs: belief in one's competence, belief in one's ability to learn and problem solve, and belief in one's intrinsic worth. Schunk (2012) defines self-confidence as the belief that "one can produce results, accomplish goals, or perform tasks competently. The belief that one is capable of performing a task can raise self-esteem. High self-esteem might lead one to attempt difficult tasks, and subsequent success enhances self-confidence" (p. 383).

Second language self-confidence relates to the belief that one can communicate in that language in an adaptive and efficient manner. MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels (1998) proposed that second language (L2) self-confidence consisted of two important components: cognitive (self-evaluation of communicative competence in the second language) and affective

(the anxiety associated with using the second language), both of which are shown in Figure 3. The relationship between communicative competence and anxiety is a negative one, as the anxiety and reluctance to speak makes second language learners lose opportunities to practice and assess their proficiency that plausibly would only lead to further gains in verbal ability. “Anything that increases state anxiety will reduce one's self-confidence and, therefore, one's WTC (willingness to communicate)” (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels (1998, p. 549).

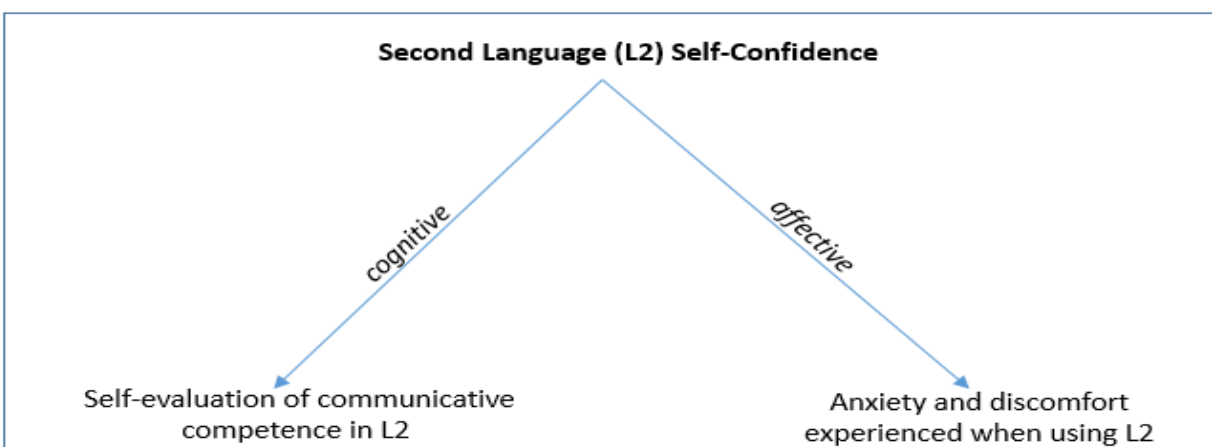


Figure 3. Components of second language self-confidence (adapted from MacIntyre et al., 1998).

Clément (1986) called self-confidence “the best predictor” (p. 286) of second language proficiency and as a predictor of linguistic ability, second language self-confidence has been studied as part of the willingness to communicate construct. This concept, which was originally developed as a first language construct (McCroskey & Baer, 1985; McCroskey & Richmond, 1991), was later applied to second language communication by MacIntyre et al. (1998), who defined it as “readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons using a second language” (p. 547). MacIntyre et al. (1998) also state, that “a proper objective for L2 education is to create WTC” (p. 547). The willingness to communicate construct and its relationship to second language self-confidence is shown in Figure 4.

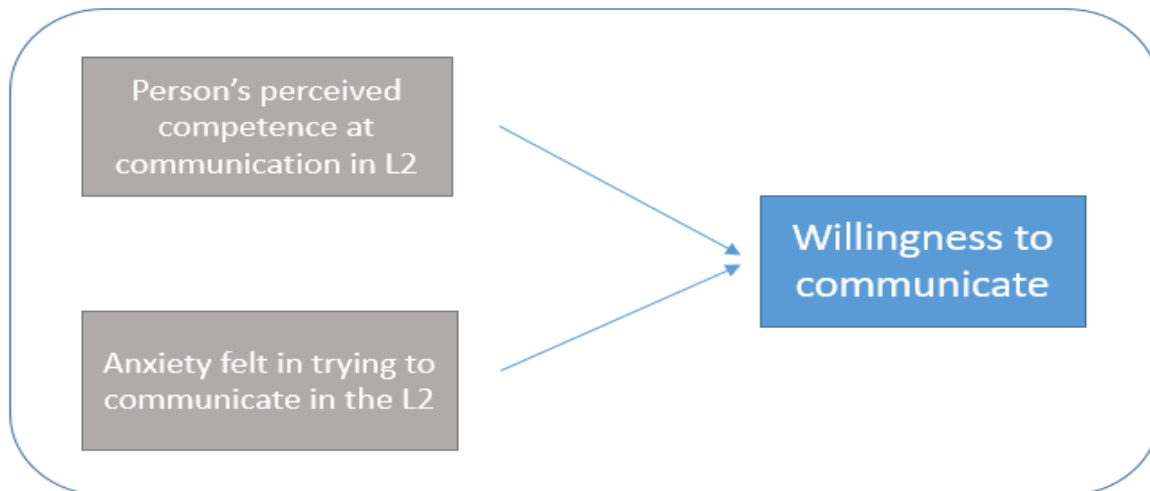


Figure 4. Portion of MacIntyre's (1994) willing to communicate model (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996, p. 8).

### **Studies that used the Willingness to Communicate Construct to study L2 Self-Confidence**

A number of studies have used the willingness to communicate construct to study second language self-confidence. For example, in their study of 293 Francophone students, Clément (1986) found proficiency and acculturation to be strongly associated with self-confidence. They also found classroom anxiety, which is correlated with self-confidence, to be a better predictor of English language proficiency than motivation. This suggests that frequent contact with English speakers promotes self-confidence and helps improve second language proficiency. They thus independently crossed the “rubicon” (p. 48), a metaphor used by Dörnyei and Otto (1998) to describe the threshold between the “pre-actional” and “actional” (p. 48) phases or the point of no return at which an individual commits to taking action directed at advancing their language learning. It was the point at which the person started conversing in the second language, well or otherwise, unhesitatingly.

In an exploration aimed at trying to understand the processes by which learners develop self-confidence in a second language, Edwards and Roger (2015) used the willingness to

communicate model to explore the process of confidence development in an advanced learner of English from Mauritius in Australia. Using a dual interview protocol separated by a period of two years, they found that interaction with native speakers not only deepens understanding of learners' own abilities to comprehend communicative situations, but they also enable learners to develop the capacity to feel "in control" of these interactions. Their study evidenced the interaction between self-confidence, willingness to communicate, and second language proficiency, and suggested the centrality of comprehension skills to the development of linguistic self-confidence.

According to Buitrago (2017), achieving fluency in English is among the most demanding challenges students face, and fluency problems derive from lack of practice. Her mixed methods research analyzed the effects of using collaborative learning strategies through speaking tasks aimed at developing oral fluency with a group of 10 students at a university in Colombia. Buitrago's findings suggest that fluency can be acquired collaboratively when learning from others and by making mistakes. She also found that working collaboratively increases learners' confidence, not only because they feel they are not being judged, but also because they learn to see that their mistakes are not just theirs. Collaboration positively influences self-directed learning and encourages students to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses helping to identify what is working, what is not and what they need to do to succeed.

A study carried out by Yashima (2002) examined relations among the variables of English language learning and communication in English in the Japanese context. The research used the willingness to communicate model and the socio-educational model as a framework with a sample of 297 university students. In the study, a latent variable, international posture, was hypothesized to capture the general attitude toward the international community and foreign

language learning in Japan. This variable was defined as “interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, and readiness to interact with intercultural partners” (p. 57). Using structural equation modeling, the findings indicate that international posture influences motivation, which in turn influences proficiency in English. Motivation affected self-confidence positively, which led to willingness to communicate in English.

AliAkbari et al. (2016) had similar findings in their study that also used structural equation modeling to examine the impact of anxiety, self-confidence, communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), and international posture on 194 Iranian students’ willingness to communicate in English. Their results revealed that students’ willingness to communicate is directly related to their attitude toward the international community, their perceived linguistic competence and self-confidence. Attitude towards the international community and the desire to learn English to be able to travel was an element that came up in my study. Pakistan’s strategic geographical location and related dependence on international aid, which has been referred to as the curse of its geostrategic circumstances (Paul, 2014), did not emerge in my findings.

It’s worth noting that these studies are focused on confidence in learning the English language. They do not touch upon the important aspect of the personal confidence that is gained as a result of learning English which was an element mentioned again and again by the participants of my study.

### **Studies that have Explored English Language Learning in Pakistan**

A study by Khan, Sani, and Shaikh-Abdullah (2016) explored reading motivation among college students in Lahore, which is the second largest city in Pakistan. Their study was conducted among 40 male second-year students of a public college to investigate levels of instrumental and integrative motivation towards English reading. Data were collected through an

adapted version of Dörnyei's (1990) language learning motivation questionnaire and analyzed by means of descriptive statistics. The findings indicate that the students had strong *instrumental* motivation for reading English and relatively low levels of *integrative* motivation. This is understandable since, as stated earlier, the social distance between the elites and the non-elites (the former attend expensive private colleges while the latter attend public institutions) is too great to accommodate possibilities for integration between the two groups. However, as mentioned earlier as well, integrative—the desire to meld in—did emerge in my research.

In a study aimed at exploring reasons for low motivation towards English Language learning at the undergraduate level, Ahmed, Aftab, & Yaqoob (2015) administered a questionnaire using Likert-scale type questions to test different levels of motivation. The population of this research consisted of 199 female students at a university in Faisalabad, which is the third largest city in Pakistan. The results of the research showed that learners were not passionate about learning English because the relationship between the students and their teachers was found to be an unhealthy one. The teachers were unable to create a student-centered environment which, by default, would imply that student autonomy was not supported. Given the fact that many teachers of English in Pakistan cannot communicate well in the language, this finding is not surprising and is also validated by my study.

Wadho, Memon, & Memon (2016) conducted a quantitative study at a community college in a town in rural Pakistan to investigate the influence of parents and teachers on English learning. The sample of 100 boys and 100 girls was purposefully selected so that half were those considering medical careers and the other half engineering. The finding revealed that most students learned English due to the influence of parents and teachers who held positive attitudes towards English and thus influenced student motivation and decisions considerably. Many

participants of my study also shared similar experiences. The study also found that most students learned English due to the monetary or material rewards given to them by their parents.

In their study of Pakistani students' motivation to learn English, Islam et al. (2016) used Dörnyei's (2009) second language Motivational Self System as the main theoretical framework. One of the purposes of the study was to contribute to the validation of Dörnyei's model for describing second language motivation in a contemporary context. For this study, Islam et al. administered a survey to over 1000 undergraduates in various institutions in Pakistani's largest province of Punjab. Correlation and regression analyses of the data provided considerable empirical support for the validity of the model and its relevance in the Pakistani context. Specifically, attitudes toward the learning experience and the ideal second language self were found to be the strongest predictors of learning effort. However, a proposed new construct—National Interest—made a strong contribution to the ideal second language self, highlighting the need to understand the association of English with the national identities and interests of learners. This finding brings to the fore the unusual association of English with national interest in the minds of students from a very representative sample and its impact on the construction of their identities. However, a more nuanced understanding of what these students felt, and what the links between English and “national interest” were, cannot be garnered since the research is quantitative in nature, as are the other three above mentioned studies.

### **Leadership**

Norton, Murfield, and Baucus (2014) state that there are three paths to leadership ignoring heredity (e.g., Prince William in Britain) and coups (e.g., Pinochet's overthrow of Allende in Chile), namely: election, appointment and emergence. They further add that while election and appointment are widely understood phenomena with support in the literature,

emergence is a messier construct. According to Schneider and Goktepe (1983), emergent leaders possess no formal authority, yet exert noteworthy influence on other group members. It is the emergence of leadership in a specific context that is the subject of this study.

Leadership is a much-studied construct and a search of the word on Google Scholar yields millions of results. From the different approaches—trait, skills, behavioral, situational and psychodynamic, to the different styles—transactional, transformational, adaptive, authentic and servant (Northouse, 2016), there is no dearth of definitions and theories. As Stogdill (1974) pointed out, there are likely as many definitions of leadership as the people who have defined it.

The word *leader* invariably conjures up notions of power, and the relationship between power and leadership was documented by Burns (1978) in his seminal work on the topic. History shows us that leadership and power have at times gone hand in hand and at times one has been bereft of the other, and Burns (1978) sums it up succinctly when he says that “all leaders are actual and potential power holders but not all power holders are leaders” (p. 18). He differentiates between acts of power and acts of leadership and identifies that the crucial variable between them is purpose.

Burns (1978) presented the concepts of transactional and transformational leadership with the former often lacking moral legitimacy. It is a difference that moves people toward higher purpose, and while transactional leadership needs authority, transformational leadership needs none. In this study of Pakistani non-elites who developed leadership traits as a result of their acquisition of the English language, their transformational impact on their environment was a factor that emerged in my research.

Palus and Drath (1995) distinguished between training programs that impart new skills, and development programs that stretch the ways one makes sense of oneself. Myatt (2012) calls



leadership *training* a transactional exercise, while he terms leadership *development* a transformational one. Myatt (2012) informs us that according to the American Society of Training and Development, more than \$170 billion is spent on leadership-based curriculum, with most of it being allocated to “Leadership Training.” He blames training as the foremost reason why leadership preparation fails, and presents a number of points to highlight the difference between training and development in order to emphasize that focus should be on the latter, as elucidated in Table 1:

Table 1  
*Difference between leadership training and leadership development (adapted from Maytt, 2012)*

	<b>Training</b>	<b>Development</b>
1	Blends to a norm	Occurs beyond the norm
2	Focuses on technique/content/curriculum	Focuses on people
3	Tests patience	Tests courage
4	Focuses on the present	Focuses on the future
5	Adheres to standards	Focuses on maximizing potential
6	Is transactional	Is transformational
7	Focuses on maintenance	Focuses on growth
8	Focuses on the role	Focuses on the person
9	Indoctrinates	Educates
10	Maintains status quo	Catalyzes change
11	Stifles culture	Enriches culture
12	Encourages compliance	Emphasizes performance
13	Focuses on efficiency	Focuses on effectiveness
14	Focuses on problems	Focuses on solutions
15	Focuses on reporting lines	Expands influence
16	Places people in a box	Frees them from the box
17	Is mechanical	Is intellectual
18	Focuses on the knowns	Explores the unknowns
19	Places people in a comfort zone	Moves people beyond their comfort zones
20	Is finite	Is infinite

As my research explored the intersection between the English language and the emergence of leadership consciousness and behavior, it is important and relevant to present the

literature on leadership traits as well as on the role of cognition in the development and exercise of leadership.

### **Leadership Traits**

It is worth mentioning that few issues have as contentious and as controversial a history as leadership characteristics. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the “great man’ theory of leadership was in vogue and dates back perhaps to Galton’s (1869) *Hereditary Genius*, which postulated that leadership was an attribute of unique individuals. These theories had a checkered history and became outmoded as argued by Slater and Bennis (1990) due to the growth of the organization and the diminished role of the individual. One limitation was that there were not enough great men to go around (Lord & Emrich, 2000). The great man theory, which suggested that leadership is an innate and immutable inherited property, evolved into trait theory, which does not make the assumption that leadership is acquired or inherent (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Trait theories refer to general leadership attributes and assert that leader characteristics are different from those of non-leaders.

Zaccaro (2007) informs us that trait theories on leadership guided research on the topic from the 1930s until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at which point many researchers discarded trait theory as being insufficient to explain leadership effectiveness. The theory was challenged by research that questioned the universality of leadership traits (Northouse, 2016). This rejection lasted for about 30 to 40 years when, spurred by the best seller *In Search of Excellence* (Peters & Waterman, 1982), the trait perspective on leadership came back into the spotlight.

According to Northouse (2016), “the trait approach was one of the first systematic attempts to study leadership” (p. 19) and that many people’s appreciation, as well as understanding of leadership is based on this Orientation. It focuses on identifying the innate

qualities of leaders like Mohandas Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, Joan of Arc and Napoleon Bonaparte (Northouse, 2016). Zaccaro (2007) delineates that trait approaches that began with identifying qualities of outstanding individuals later shifted to include situational impact on leadership (Blanchard & Hersey, 1970), but the emphasis on the role of traits on leadership is once again alive and well.

Bird's (1940) summary of leadership traits included accuracy in work, knowledge of human nature and moral habits. Stogdill (1948) cited decisiveness in judgment, speech fluency, interpersonal skills, and administrative abilities as stable leader qualities but suggested that no particular set of characteristics differentiated leaders from non-leaders across all situations. He theorized that someone may act like a leader in one set of circumstances but may not have the capacity to do so in a different situation. Blake and Mouton (1964) also suggest that different situations demand different kinds of leadership. Ten leadership traits emerged from Stogdill's (1974) survey that identified attributes that were positively associated with leadership. These are:

1. Drive for responsibility and task completion
2. Vigor and persistence in pursuit of goals
3. Risk taking and originality in problem solving
4. Drive to exercise initiative in social situations
5. Self-confidence and sense of personal identity
6. Willingness to accept consequences of decisions and actions
7. Readiness to absorb interpersonal stress
8. Willingness to tolerate frustration and delay
9. Ability to influence other people's behavior
10. Capacity to structure social interaction systems to the purpose at hand

Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) theorize that, while the possession of certain attributes does not guarantee leadership, there is evidence that effective leaders are different from other people in certain key respects. They identified six enduring qualities that leaders are known to possess and which distinguish them from non-leaders. These relatively coherent and integrated patterns of personal characteristics include:

1. Drive (includes achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity and initiative)
2. Leadership motivation (the desire to lead but not to seek power as an end in itself)
3. Honesty and integrity
4. Self-confidence (which is associated with emotional stability)
5. Cognitive ability
6. Knowledge.

This is a long list of attributes and traits, and how they manifested themselves in the participants of my research, and which would be the prominent ones, was an area that I was keenly interested in exploring in this study.

### **Impact of Cognition on Leadership**

In their review of studies on cognitive leadership research, one of the assumptions identified by Lord and Emrich (2000) that profoundly shaped the path of such research was the acknowledgement of a perennial question: What is the origin of causality? In other words, does leadership reside in the person, or does it emerge from a social system? In response, they opine that scholars who assume that leadership resides in leaders try to identify traits that inspire followers, whereas those who assume that it emanates from social systems try to identify conditions that are conducive to leadership emergence. Research indicates that cognition makes a big difference in leader emergence and performance (Mumford, Campion, and Morgeson, 2007).

Leadership research tends to focus on behavior and Mumford, Watts, and Partlow (2015) state that even a cursory review of the literature would suggest that leaders need not think; they must act! Hence theories of leadership (ethical, transformational, servant, and others) have mainly focused on follower perceptions of leaders (Dinh et al., 2014). Mumford et al. (2015) indicate that framing leadership in this way begs the question that where does it come from (identity, personality or cognition?), and suggest that “there is ample reason to suspect that cognition would be critical to understanding the nature and significance of both leader emergence and leader performance” (p. 301). How then do cognitive capacities influence leadership emergence and enactment?

Mumford et al. (2007) point out that the presence of five critical conditions appear to influence the need for cognition among leaders: 1) choice optimization, 2) complexity, 3) novelty, 4) resources accessibility, and 5) lack of support. The first of these implies that cognition will have more impact on the performance of higher level leaders as they have greater discretion in making choices as well as greater choices to make. The second suggests that greater cognition is required as task complexity increases. Novelty of tasks need increased evaluative skills, and limited resources place limits on the impact of cognition on leadership performance (and vice versa). Finally, lack of support means a greater need for cognitive skills in the exercise of leadership.

Petrie (2011) called for enhanced focus on innovation in the development methods of leadership, and Reams (2016) informs us that there has been a growing movement away from behavior training and peripheral capabilities towards the development of inner competencies and personal growth of leaders. Earlier, McCauley et al. (2006) postulated that the way in which leadership development unfolds over time is not fully understood. They suggested that

constructivist developmental theory could be used to understand key factors in leadership development, and Reams (2016) in a similar vein proposed taking a cognitive developmental approach to leadership development.

Leader cognition is a complex phenomenon (Mumford et al., 2015) and relates to how leaders work with information in solving problems (Ericsson, 2003). Consideration, initiating structure, participation, and change management are key attributes of leadership behavior (Bass & Bass, 2008). Information recall from prior life experiences influences the emergence of different styles of leadership (Ligon, Hunter, and Mumford, 2008). However, cognition is not simply a matter of recall of information or knowledge, and as Mumford et al. (2015) point out, it is also a person's capacity to work with that knowledge. One such capacity is general intelligence, which has probably received the most attention in studies of leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008), and is very strongly related to leadership emergence and performance (Mumford et al., 2007).

General intelligence is an important part of the cognitive development of leaders, and may be positively related to movement into leadership roles. In a study of how early cognitive ability contributed to occupancy of leadership roles across four decades, Daly et al. (2015) tested a large sample of 17,000 individuals. Their findings revealed that on average a one standard deviation increase in cognitive ability predicted a 6.2 percentage point higher probability of leadership role occupancy. This result suggests that early individual differences in childhood general cognitive ability may significantly shape trajectories of leadership across working life. Thus intelligence is positively related to movement into roles of leadership with the effect strengthening as people mature.

Mumford et al. (2015) suggest that this study highlights two important points. First, that impact of intelligence on achievement of leadership positions may depend in part on education. And second, that self-regulation, a construct commonly linked to wisdom, also makes a contribution to the likelihood of attainment of leadership roles. Zaccaro et al. (2013, 2015) provide evidence that problem solving skills, such as wisdom, are a strong predictor of leadership performance, stronger than general intelligence. McKenna et al. (2009) proposed that wisdom with regards to leadership involves the use of logic, a desire for humane solutions, openness to subjectivity and motivation toward social justice. It was instructive to explore how intelligence and wisdom intersected with English acquisition and leadership in the participants of my study.

Creative and divergent thinking are cognitive abilities that also positively impact leadership, and Vincent et al. (2002) found creative thinking skills to be more strongly related to leadership enactment than intelligence. In a study, 1,819 U.S. army officers ranging in ranks from lieutenant to colonel, were evaluated with respect to critical incident performance, rank attained, and medals won (Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, and Johnson, 1998). Participants were presented with a problem where they were asked to answer questions bearing on effective execution of core cognitive processes (e.g., problem definition, conceptual combination, idea generation, idea evaluation) commonly held to underlie creative thought. Their findings revealed that creative thinking skills were strongly related to rank attained and medals won. It also found creative thought to be more strongly related to leader performance than intelligence.

In a follow up study involving 640 army officers out of the original sample of 1,819, Zaccaro et al. (2015) tested the role that developmental experiences play in mediating the

relationship between cognitive capacities and retention and turnover. The findings provide evidence that divergent thinking skills and complex problem solving skills are associated with leader continuance in a linear relationship. In other words, divergent thinking and complex problem solving skills contributed to leader continuance.

Commenting on the findings of the above studies, Mumford et al. (2015) state that the impact of cognitive capacities on a leader's ability to profit from educational or developmental opportunities, suggests that developmental interventions focused on providing requisite knowledge and skills might prove especially valuable for developing leadership potential. In the case of Pakistani non-elites, the acquisition of English was a significant developmental step, likely the most important one, in realizing leadership potential.

Mumford et al. (2015) further point out that in assessing leadership performance, forecasting is another cognitive skill that must be taken into account. They point out that although traditionally forecasting has been discounted due to oft inaccuracy of forecasts, but when leaders have expertise, their ability to forecast improves substantially (Daily & Mumford, 2006). Their research indicates that forecasting skills and planning, which is mental simulation of future actions, are a powerful influence on both leadership performance and the types of solutions constructed. Planning is different from vision, and Mumford et al. (2007) suggested that although vision involves more than cognition, cognition does appear to play a role in any vision that is articulated by the leader. Strange and Mumford (2005) presented a theory of vision formation, postulating that vision involves the hypothetical formation of an idealized prescriptive mental model, which perhaps is not attainable, but nevertheless provides a guideline for leadership enactment.

### **Approaches to Examining Leader Cognition**



There have been two approaches to examining leader cognition; general and domain specific, and Mumford et al. (2007, 2015) urge us to recognize that different problem domains call for different types of cognition. They postulate that a leader who has the ability to make good decisions may not necessarily also be good at generating creative problem solutions, and suggest that unique models of leader cognition must be formulated with respect to specific domains. They suggest that four critical issues must be addressed in formation of these models: 1) knowledge, 2) mental processing operations, 3) strategies, and 4) errors.

In explaining these four issues, Mumford et al. (2007) state that any theory of cognition in a given domain of leader performance is knowledge. Secondly, the leader must structure knowledge using mental processes to generate viable solutions. In addition, strategies and/or standards selected to appraise ideas lead to optimal solutions. And finally, given that leaders deal with multiple pieces of information, processes and strategies, they will be prone to committing errors. Mumford et al. (2007) presented a summary of eight models (Table 2) examining each with respect to the applicable problems, knowledge, processes, strategies and errors.

Table 2  
*Status of Extant Cognitive Theories*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Applied problems</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Processes</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Errors</b>
Creativity	Novel, Ambiguous, Complex, Resource required	Schematic	Specified	Somewhat known	Unidentified
Wisdom	Ambiguous, Complex, Choice optimization, Resource required	Auto-biographical	Unspecified	Unknown	Unidentified
Decision-making	Choice optimization	Situational cases	Specified	Known	Identified
Intuition	Choice optimization, Ambiguous	Experiential	Unspecified	Unknown	Unidentified
Planning	Ambiguous, Complex, Choice Optimization	Causal, Goal	Specified	Somewhat known	Identified
Vision formation	Ambiguous, Complex, Social support	Causal, Goal	Specified	Unknown	Unidentified
Schematic knowledge	Choice optimization, Ambiguous, Complex	Principles abstracted	Specified	Known	Unidentified
Tacit knowledge	Choice optimization, Complex	Associational experience	Specified	Unknown	Unidentified

## Chapter II Closure

As Norton (2013) points out, “language learning processes focused on identity would be greatly enriched by research conducted in postcolonial sites where multilingualism is the norm and language acquisition processes can be quite different from immigrant language learning experiences in the Western countries” (pp. 22-23). Canagarajah (2007) also argues that “insights from non-Western communities should inform the current efforts for alternate theory-building in our field” (p. 935). There is still a dearth of such research, particularly studies of a qualitative nature that would provide in depth descriptions of the lived experiences of language learners in the context of non-English speaking countries. This is something my research attempts to do.

I explored the theoretical foundations of my study in this literature review and presented a discussion beginning with the history of English in the Indian Subcontinent and factors that account for its preeminent position in Pakistan today. I explored Pakistan’s language-in-education policies as well as the topic of Pakistani-English (PakE) and the nativization of English in a South Asian context. In addition, I discussed at length the literature around social reproduction, subalternity, orientalism, print-capitalism, and the destruction of the native school system in India—elements that influenced my thinking on the topic of my research.

With regards to motivation, the construct of self-determination, which informs the perseverance and resilience of language learners to overcome challenges to achieve proficiency in English, was discussed along with the elements within cognitive evaluation theory. The literature around integrative and instrumental motivations as well as the concept of investment was presented. I then discussed English acquisition and the identity construction and reconstruction of learners and the topics of identity, social identity theory, identity motives, self-esteem, sociometer theory, second-language confidence, and the willingness to communicate

construct were probed. The construct and literature of leadership was explored in detail with regards to behavior and cognition. The discussion around leadership training versus leadership development and how it intersects with English acquisition and leadership emergence in non-elite learners in Pakistan is significant and central to my study. I also presented a sizable review of studies conducted on the topic of second language learning from a global perspective.

However, in the dozens of books and scores of articles that I have perused on the topic of language and motivation and identity, there is scarce mention of the word “leadership” or any discussion around the learning of English and the emergence of leadership attitudes in learners. In addition, I noticed that the vast majority of research on the topic of second language acquisition is from a quantitative perspective.

The body of literature exploring the topic of English and the teaching and learning of English in South Asia, particularly Pakistan, also lacks a focus on the critical issues of esteem and leadership and their possible relationship to the learning of English by people not hailing from the elite classes. Even studies and research conducted by the British Council (Coleman, 2010; Coleman & Capstick, 2012) seem to skirt the issue, or perhaps have not considered the impact that the learning of the English language has on the consciousness of non-elites. As such the present study provides foundational work on this topic. This is the gap in the literature that my study attempts to fill.

The field will benefit greatly from the narratives of how non-elite Pakistanis connected the experience of acquiring proficiency in English—the reconstruction of their identities—and the experience of distinguishing themselves as leaders, in their cognition and practices. The rich description that this qualitative study provides will greatly add to the understanding of the lived experiences of subaltern Pakistanis.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of non-elite Pakistanis in educational leadership positions concerning how they (a) learned English through self-initiation, (b) reconstructed their identities as a result thereof, (c) changed their view of themselves as educational leaders, (d) changed their behaviors as educational leaders. This chapter discusses the methodology chosen and the rationale behind that choice. It highlights aspects of conducting this research, including the setting, sampling strategies, data collection and analysis procedures, ethical considerations and trustworthiness, and the limitations and delimitations of the study. I have attempted to bracket out my biases by including a self-reflection on my identity.

#### **Research Design and Rationale**

I chose a qualitative approach to address the research questions as it allowed for the deep exploration and rich description needed to better understand the phenomenon under study. Qualitative methods surpass other research methods in providing richer and deeper understanding of a complex issue (Conklin, 2007), and have become increasingly important modes of inquiry for the social sciences and applied fields such as education (Marshall & Rossman, 2015).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) posit that in a sense all qualitative research is phenomenological. Phenomenology refers to both a philosophy and a research approach founded by Edmund Husserl in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Richards & Morse, 2013). The purpose of the phenomenological method is to “reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence” (van Manen, 1990, p. 177). In a phenomenology, “the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by

the participants” (Creswell, 2014, p. 14), and it is the phenomenologist’s task to depict the essence of that experience (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Researchers collect data from people who have experienced that same phenomenon and then develop a description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals (Moustakas, 1994). This description “consists of “what” they experienced and “how” they experienced it (Creswell, 2013, p. 76).

Creswell (2013) describes a phenomenology to be a “philosophy without presuppositions” (p. 77) and notes that the essence of an experience has both textural (the what) and structural dimensions (the why). I chose a phenomenological approach to explore the essence of the phenomenon of the development of leadership cognition and behaviors concurrent to the acquisition of English for a number of Pakistani non-elite participants. I made no assumptions as I set out on this exploration to tease out the “what” and “how” of the experiences of my participants.

### **Reflection on My Identity**

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), “How we write is a reflection of our own interpretation based on the cultural, social, gender, class, and personal politics that we bring to the research” (p. 228). Accordingly, as I reflect on my identity I can see I had a very unusual upbringing. On the one hand, my family lived in the bubble of wealth; yet, on the other, my parents imbued us (my brothers and I) with egalitarian values. My father was the quintessential rebel and from him I learned early to question the structures and rules that are often loaded in favor of the well-heeled. However, having enjoyed the perks and privileges of belonging to the elite set, I may be identified as such. It is important to point out here that the word “elite” as understood in the South Asian context, that is, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, comes with the tacit understanding that the person is fluent in English and uses it as a first

language. My mother went to a convent school in Bombay and spoke English more often than Urdu, and I had the added advantage of having an Irish nun, Sister Mary Francis, a kind and gifted teacher, as my instructor of English Language Arts from grades 7 till 11. Furthermore, I was myself an English language teacher at the most prestigious K-12 institution in Pakistan (Karachi Grammar School), a school which could be compared to the Phillips Academy in Andover, with a percentage of its graduates headed to Ivy League universities in the United States, and to Oxbridge in England.

I also identify as a speaker of classical Urdu, which gives me the ability to move seamlessly between the two languages, code switching and code mixing effortlessly, and using phrases and idioms as appropriate whenever needed. My ability to promptly translate from one language to the other enables me to affect both audiences, the English-speaking elite and the Urdu speaking non-elites. More importantly, it enables me to be an effective teacher of English to students from non-elite backgrounds. These identities bring contrasting perspectives and biases to the research that can influence analysis and interpretation as well as enrich it.

Given my background, I had no idea what the experience of learning English means to someone whose parents did not speak the language and did not attend an elite institution, defined here as a place where English is taught as a language (mostly private schools) and not just as a subject (most public schools). However, I did have significant personal experience in this area, as I taught English for many years to under-privileged children and have seen the impact of the language on their personalities and mannerisms. Nevertheless, since I speak for a group outside of my own direct experience, it may be difficult to fully convey the phenomenon of the influence that English exerts on the development of leadership consciousness and practices among non-

elite persons in Pakistan. The fact that I was keenly interested in studying this phenomenon, as well as aware of its complexity, provided depth to the research,

I see myself as progressive and I have a soft corner for the marginalized and their struggles in a region of the world where language and class is enmeshed. Hence, I was careful lest my biases in favor of this group influenced my research, which would have been in some way akin to “going native” (Malinowski, 1922)—identification with the group under study. I remained cognizant of condescending and derogatory stereotyping of non-elite people in Pakistan and took precautions that these stereotypes did not inadvertently influence my interpretation of data and temper the results.

Finally, it is important to point out that I was aware that I was approaching the initial participants as someone they have known. This dynamic might have influenced participant response, especially given the fact that I come from a place of educational privilege, having earned a master’s degree at Harvard. Although I do not think they doubted my motives in conducting such a study, I remained mindful of this power dynamic during interviews. I must mention that having distinguished themselves, this dynamic did not play out at any point in the research. A disadvantage of using some participants from my network included the potential inability to separate myself from the research (Marshall & Rossman, 2015) but I remained mindful of it.

**Research as Praxis.** In my exploratory approach and choice of method, I was deeply influenced by the thinking of Patti Lather (1986). In her article titled ‘Research as Praxis’, she explored “what it means to do empirical research in an unjust world (and) the implications of searching for an emancipatory approach” (p. 257). She defines this approach as “research that is explicitly committed to critiquing the status quo and building a more just society — that is,

research as praxis” (p. 258). Although I did not begin my study with any clear view of my work as emancipatory or praxis-focused, it became increasingly so from the moment I started interviewing and hearing the stories of the participants and more so later as I coded the data. My study became a “search for different possibilities of making sense of human life, for other ways of knowing which do justice to the complexity, tenuity, and indeterminacy of most of human experience (Mishler, 1979 in Lather, 1986, p. 259). I became a praxis-oriented enquirer seeking emancipatory knowledge while staying increasingly aware that “lived experience in an unequal society too often lacks an awareness of the need to struggle against privilege” (p. 262). In fact it became a struggle against, or unlearning of, my own privilege or what Spivak (2017) calls *affirmative sabotage*.

Rather than the illusory "value-free" knowledge of the positivists, praxis-oriented inquirers seek emancipatory knowledge. Emancipatory knowledge increases awareness of the contradictions hidden or distorted by everyday understandings, and in doing so it directs attention to the possibilities for social transformation inherent in the present configuration of social processes. (Lather, 1986, p. 259)

As my research aspirations became progressively more emancipatory, they offered “a powerful opportunity for praxis to the extent that the process enables people to change by encouraging self-reflection and a deeper understanding of their particular situations” (Lather, 1986, p. 263). Whether I was able to prompt participants into a “deeper understanding of their particular situations” I cannot say; but what I can say is that the process of my study definitely instigated greater self-reflection in me. I also became aware that although my intentions were emancipatory, they in no way guaranteed that my research could or would have emancipatory outcomes. This is something that only time will tell.



## **Data Collection Planning**

### **Population**

The target population in this study was Pakistanis from non-elite backgrounds who have reconstructed their identities through the acquisition of English with concomitant development of leadership consciousness and traits. The population comprises individuals who had distinguished themselves in an educational setting.

### **Sample, Sampling Strategy and Numbers**

To identify participants for this study, I employed two strategies—criterion sampling and snowball sampling—which are widely used as sampling strategies for phenomenological studies (Patton, 2002). Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that criterion sampling, which seeks cases that meet a criterion, “works well when all participants represent individuals studied represent people who have experienced the phenomenon” (p. 157) under study. Snowball sampling involves asking initial participants for help in order to identify more cases who fall within the inclusionary criteria and who may be information-rich (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

People from non-elite backgrounds, who have acquired fluency in English, and have emerged as educational leaders in Pakistan, were recruited to participate in the study. There was no restriction on gender or race or ethnicity in order to get a better understanding of the phenomenon based on these differences. People whose parents could speak little or no English were selected. A sample size of approximately ten participants is suggested for phenomenological research by Creswell (2013) and I had planned to interview twelve individuals for my study. I achieved this number.

As it was difficult to find a sample that fit my strict selection criterions without privilege of association with such persons and knowledge of their educational trajectories, I drew my

initial participants from the people I knew who fell within my inclusionary criteria. These were, (a) they self-identify as non-elite, i.e., not of the wealthy and/or ruling class and not raised with English as a first language, (b) their parents speak little or no English, (c) their schooling was or is at an institution that teaches English as a second language, (d) they have acquired fluency in English, (e) they have distinguished themselves as leaders within either an educational private, for-profit, non-profit or government context, and (f) they fall between 20 and 70 years of age. Snowball sampling was used to increase the sample size. In case new themes and meanings emerged, the sample size would have been increased until saturation was reached. The sample was not expanded as no substantive new themes emerged after the eighth or ninth participant, and saturation was reached. As long as participants met the inclusionary criteria, there were no exclusionary criteria.

### **Instrumentation**

Marshall and Rossman (2015) point out that phenomenological approaches typically involve several long in-depth interviews with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon of interest. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state that to get to the basic underlying structure of the meaning of an experience, the phenomenological interview is the primary method of data collection. The phenomenological interview attempts to uncover the essence of an individual's lived experiences (Siedman, 2013). This format allows researchers to explore the worldview of the respondent and for new ideas as they emerge in the interview (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Data was collected via one-on-one in-depth in person interviews using a protocol. According to van Teijlingen (2014), semi-structured interviews have predetermined questions, but the interviewer can modify the order based on what seems most appropriate. Additionally, interviews can be structured to help participants discuss and explore specific thoughts, feelings,

and experiences that encompass the phenomenon under research (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). Inquiry through a semi-structured interview was made regarding the role English played in the development of leadership consciousness and traits among non-elite Pakistanis and factors related to this lived experience. The interview protocol that was used is as under:

Research Question 1: What is the motivation to learn English of non-elite leaders in educational settings?

Prompt: Please begin by telling me how you came to speak English fluently despite the fact that neither your parents spoke English nor did you have an elite upbringing. Please describe your journey with the language.

Research Question 2: What role has the acquisition of English played in the reconstruction of their identities as educational leaders?

Prompt: Now let's talk about your acquisition of English and your identity.

1. Please tell me how has the knowledge of English changed your self-view and self-belief as a leader?
2. Ok. Thank you. At what point did you become conscious that English was impacting your life? (a) In positive ways (b) In negative ways.

Research Question 3: How has fluency in English changed how non-elites think about themselves as educational leaders?

Research Question 4: How has fluency in English changed how non-elites behave as educational leaders?

Prompt: Now I'd like to talk with you about how you changed as a leader, both in terms of how you think about yourself as a leader, and how you behave as a leader. Let's start by you telling me about how you've changed because of English and that relationship to leadership.

1. (possible probe) Ok. Thanks. You've told me x, y, z. Could you tell me a bit more about how you think of yourself now as a leader?
2. (possible probe) Ok. Thanks. You've told me x, y, and z. Could you tell me a bit about how your behaviors have changed now that you are an English speaking leader.
3. Ok. Thanks. In your experience is the knowing of English more empowering or is its use more so. Please dissect the two and their impact on your life.
4. Ok. Thanks. Now I am curious to know how has your experience with English influenced your relationship with your mother tongue, especially Urdu?

Wrap up Question:

Is there anything about your experience as an educational leader that I did not ask you or would you like to add to our conversation today or any feedback you have about our interview?

### **Access and Rapport**

According to Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013), "building rapport or a human, personal connection with the interviewee, is foundational to effective interviewing" (p. 145), and conveying empathy and staying away from judgment is essential to building rapport (Patton, 2002). Given the unique attributes of the participants, I initially solicited and interviewed candidates from my network. This will be akin to doing research in my own setting, which provides ease of access to participants, less time spent on data collection and the potential to build trusting relationships (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). Toma (2000) points out that closeness to the people and the phenomenon through interactions provides subjective understandings that increase the quality of the data. During interviews, I used best practices through questions aimed at first contextualizing, then apprehending and finally clarifying the phenomenon (Bevan, 2014) to aid participants in speaking honestly and openly, yet precisely, about their experiences. I also

followed Creswell's (2013) advise that, "a good interviewer is a good listener, rather than a frequent speaker during an interview" (p. 166).

### **Human Subjects Institutional Review Board**

Prior to commencing my study, I sought permission from the Western Michigan University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB), to provide evidence and affirm that I will follow their guidelines for conducting ethical research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Accordingly, my recruitment, informed consent, and data collection procedures followed the Western Michigan University HSIRB guidelines. HSIRB reviews the extent to which the participants of my study were placed at risk (Creswell, 2014) and intent is to ensure that the issues of (a) informed consent, (b), confidentiality and, (c) risks and costs to the participants, are addressed.

I addressed the first of these by conducting interviews after participants signed, the HSIRB approved informed consent form. I explained the contents of this form in detail before asking them to sign it. I addressed the issue of confidentiality by storing the data safely in the Principal investigator's office, and by de-identifying the transcribed data by assigning pseudonyms, so that participant confidentiality is maintained. In as far as risk is concerned, the nature of my inquiry, and the age of my participants, between 20 and 70, precluded them from any known physical or emotional risk. I explained to each potential candidate that their participation is being sought voluntarily, and that they had every right not to participate should they chose not to. I also informed them that they had the right to withdraw from participating in the study anytime during or even after the interview, until the publication of the study. Should the HSIRB reviewers request and/or advise any changes and alterations to design and procedures prior to the publication of the study, I shall make those changes.

## **Data Collection**

### **Collecting Data**

Data collection is a series of interrelated activities designed to collect information in order to answer the research questions (Lewis, 2015). As such, data collection for this study began with individual participant interviews, at a place and time of their choosing where they felt comfortable and could talk with ease and at leisure (Guest, 2013). This was at their homes, offices, or educational institutions. Since each interviewee was situated at a different location and cities, a single ideal spot with perfect acoustics and ambience could neither be determined nor chosen for the purposes of this study. Where they desired a more private and confidential location—given that some were living in joint family arrangements—I arranged the same. Interviews were conducted face-to-face with participants and I traveled to Pakistan to carry them out. Every effort was made to conduct the interviews face-to-face and avoid the use of any online platform and in this I was successful.

In-depth qualitative interviews are described as issue—not story—oriented conversations with active asking and listening between the researcher and participant (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). The instrument as mentioned above was used during a semi-structured interview process with active asking and listening between the participants and myself. Before the commencement of the interview, I reiterated the purpose of my research and the participants were free to ask questions and/or express concerns and/or seek clarifications and were encouraged to do so. The interview commenced once I obtained their written informed consent. The semi-structured format allowed for eliciting richer responses from participants through probes, sub-questions and occasional repartees as the interview progresses. The interviews—ranging between 30 to 100 minutes—with each participant were recorded. At the end, participants were thanked for their

participation. There was no pressure on participants to end the interview within any time frame and were encouraged to take as long as they needed. They were free to take as much time as they desired to fully share their experience. In each case the interviewees were happy and excited to share their experiences.

### **Storing Data**

Creswell & Poth (2018) advise that qualitative researchers should develop backup copies of computer files and protect the anonymity of participants. I regularly backed up my computer files of the ongoing research onto a password protected jump drive, and the transcribed data has been de-identified (Creswell, 2013) by assigning pseudonyms, so that participant confidentiality is not compromised. I maintain hard copies of all documents in a locked file.

Since the study has been completed, the data has been kept in a locked storage file in the Principal Investigator's office. It is on a jump drive and bears my name and the name of the study. It has been marked confidential and is password protected. Data will be kept for a total of seven years, in compliance with APA ethical guidelines (American Psychological Association, 2011).

## **Data Analysis**

### **Type of Data Analysis**

As Creswell (2013) points out, qualitative research is much more than just equating data analysis with a particular approach to analyzing data. It involves organizing the data, reading through the data, reducing data into themes through a process of coding, condensing codes, interpreting of data, and finally representing the data. Moreover, strategies can be deductive stemming from research questions or inductive stemming from the data. Also, as mentioned by Marshall and Rossman (2015), qualitative analysis searches for connections between statements

that can be turned into underlying themes. Memoing is an important part of the qualitative research process from the beginning until the end of the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). According to Richards (2015), memos are an informal record of thinking aloud, which were essential in validating my “account of the data” (p. 92). As advised by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), I wrote memos of my reflections, hunches, thoughts, and ideas after each interview which included things I, “want to ask, observe, or look for in the next round of data collection” (p. 196).

### **Analysis Steps**

Qualitative researchers often “learn by doing” data analysis, which leads to the criticism that qualitative research is largely soft, intuitive, and relativistic, and falls back on the three “I’s” – insight, intuition and impression (Dey, 1993). In phenomenological data analysis, there are structured methods of analysis as advanced by Moustakas (1994), but Creswell (2013) suggests a more simplified version of the same. The audio recordings of all interviews were transcribed mostly by M/s. Rev.com which is the largest and most reputable organizations providing professional transcription services, and some were transcribed by me. I carefully read through and cross-checked each transcribed interview with the audio recordings to ensure accuracy and corrected whatever errors there were. I am satisfied with the services provided by M/s. Rev.com especially considering that the voices are not those of native speakers. They were prompt in terms of turnaround time of the transcribed interviews.

The transcripts were imported singularly and were coded individually using the NVivo qualitative data analysis software created by QSR International. I did not try to group the codes around any pre-defined clusters and allowed the data to define the codes. The codes and sub-codes—242 and 15 respectively—became large in number and as I progressed from interview to



interview, clusters of similar meaning began to emerge, which I started organizing into larger groups or categories; 46 in total. Finally, a set of eleven themes emerged many of which developed around the research questions. Throughout the coding process I replayed the audio recordings numerous times to ensure that both content and context were reflected in the codes.

The list of significant statements from the transcribed interviews that were created were non-repetitive and treated as having equal worth. These significant statements or codes were grouped into larger units of information or categories. Next what the participants experienced with the phenomenon was described by themes. This is called the textural description of the experience using direct quotes and verbatim examples (Creswell, 2013). The structural description, or how the participants experienced the phenomenon was recorded (Creswell, 2013). Finally, a composite description of the phenomenon that combines the textural (what participants experienced) and structural (how they experienced it) descriptions was documented to re-create the “essence” of the shift in consciousness and behavior as a result of the learning of English in non-elite Pakistanis. Another criterion is that the schema should be marked by a coherent relationship between coded data was very much the case. There was reasonable inference, meaning that there was a clear and plausible fit between the schema and the coded data. Foss and Waters (2007) suggest that the schema should also meet the “ah-ha feeling” criterion, implying that it should invoke a sense that the schema does explain the data which it did. A table showing participant identification with each theme and sub-theme has been placed in appendix E. Negative findings have been marked in the table.

### **Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research**

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), “All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner” (p. 237). Trustworthiness does not naturally

occur, but is a result of rigorous procedures that the researcher closely attends to (Padgett, 1998). Trustworthiness in qualitative inquiries revolves around the standards of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Toma, 2011; Mertens, 2015), and differ from those in quantitative research: validity, reliability and objectivity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

According to Mertens (2015), “Standards for evidence and quality in qualitative inquiries requires careful documentation of how the research was conducted and the associated data analysis and interpretation processes, as well as the thinking processes of the researcher” (p. 267). Validation is one such standard and Creswell and Poth (2018) states “writers have searched for and found qualitative equivalents that parallel traditional quantitative approaches to validation” (p. 254). Creswell and Miller (2000) focus on eight validation strategies that include member checking, prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer review, negative case analysis, clarifying bias, thick description and external audits.

### **Trustworthiness Techniques in Collecting Data**

To ensure trustworthiness in data collection, I focused on two strategies: (a) member checking, and (b) memoing. Merriam & Tisdell (2016) state that member checks are a common strategy for ensuring internal—also called respondent—validity and credibility, where the idea is to get feedback on the emerging findings from participants to rule out the possibility of misinterpretation. At the end of interviews, I provided participants with a summary of their responses in order to verify if these accurately reflected the person’s position (Mertens 2015). If they requested changes, I made the same, which is the very purpose of member checking—identification and correction of inaccuracies to ensure higher reliability and validity of the research (Marshall & Rossman, 2015; Shenton, 2004). Participants were informed that they may be approached again once the analysis has been completed for validation of findings.

As stated earlier, memoing is an informal record of thinking aloud, which is essential to validate my “account of the data” (Richards, 2015, p. 92), and is a vital part of qualitative research from beginning until end of the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). I recorded my reflections after each interview, which included things I want to “look for in the next round of data collection” (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016, p. 196).

### **Trustworthiness in Data Analysis**

To ensure trustworthiness in data analysis, I focused on three strategies: (a) member checking, (b) thick description, and (c) negative case analysis. I carried out member checking of data, that Lincoln and Guba (1985) consider the most critical procedure for establishing credibility, which deals with the question of “how congruent are the findings with reality” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 242). After the data was analyzed, I asked participants to review the analysis to clarify, expand, or delete any findings. Member checking enables participants to judge the accuracy of a study through reviewing the data, the analysis, and the interpretations (Creswell, 2013). Member checking also allows for identification of any bias that may be influencing analysis as participants would point out any misleading interpretations.

To enhance possible transferability of the results of my study to other settings, I used thick rich description in presenting my findings. Mertens (2015) states that providing detailed description of the time, place, context and culture is known as thick description. Accordingly, I described the participants of my study in detail as suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), as well as intersperse findings with adequate evidence in the form of quotes from the interviews. Thick description allows readers to judge the differences and similarities within the study in comparison to their own experiences, and it is the researcher’s responsibility to provide sufficient detail to enable such comparisons (Mertens, 2015).

Mertens (2015) states that it should not be expected that all data will fall into appropriate categories. I carried out negative case analysis, which means that I refined the working hypothesis about themes and coding as the enquiry advanced in light of any disconfirming evidence (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As Creswell (2013) points out, in real life, evidence is both positive and negative, and not all evidence will fit the pattern of a code or a theme. Negative data that did not align with themes were collected and analyzed to see if they created a separate theme or modified one. Negative case analysis helped work against my biases and kept me from focusing on data obtained from any “favorite” participants. Mertens (2015) suggests that negative case analysis provides credibility and lists credibility as a qualitative parallel to internal validity. Regular review of my work with my Chair and committee, during the course of writing my dissertation, provided further validity and reliability to my research.

### **Delimitations and Limitations of the Study**

For this study, one delimitation is my choice to study participants of Pakistani origin coming from non-elite backgrounds, as there are non-elite persons in other countries in South Asia who may have undergone a similar transformation. Comparing findings from other places would be interesting should I decide to carry my research further, beyond my dissertation, by including persons from other countries in South Asia. Accordingly, this phenomenology can only explain the experiences of non-elite people from Pakistan who developed leadership cognition and practices with the influence of English in their lives. Future research can use phenomenological methods to understand the experiences of people from other countries and regions whose lives have been impacted by the learning of English in a similar manner.

Another delimitation is that this phenomenology examines the experience of persons who have developed leadership behaviors with the concurrent acquisition of the English language. It

cannot explain the experiences of people who may have distinguished themselves as leaders without the influence of English in their lives, or those non-elites who learned English but did not become leaders.

A key limitation could have been that the participants are unable to articulate their experiences due to a lack of introspection, but I would have been surprised if such was the case. My experience with persons who fall within my inclusionary criterion is that they are not only highly conscious of the role of English in their lives, but are also eager to talk about their journeys. And this was very much the case with every single one of my participants. This came across strongly throughout the study I conducted. Any discomfort that participants may have felt about disclosing personal details could have been a limitation but such was not the case although some participants were overcome with emotion while sharing their stories.

It is also important to mention that because of the nature of phenomenology, the underlying mechanisms and broader contextual experiences of the influence of English as a tool for leadership development cannot be identified by the proposed study. Phenomenology seeks to understand what is happening, not why it happens. The underlying mechanisms of these people's experiences are not within the scope of phenomenology and cannot be explained by the research.

### **Chapter III Closure**

This chapter outlined the methodology I used for conducting my study and described the epistemological frame that guided it. I presented the key steps for conducting this study including setting, sampling, data collection procedures, process for data analysis, ethical considerations and trustworthiness, and, delimitations and limitations of the study. In the following chapters I provide the findings of my research and answer the research questions posed in my study.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of non-elite Pakistanis in educational leadership positions concerning how they (a) learned English through self-initiation, (b) reconstructed their identities as a result thereof, (c) changed their view of themselves as educational leaders, and (d) changed their behaviors as educational leaders. The study focused on the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the motivation to learn English of non-elite leaders in educational settings?

Research Question 2: What role has the acquisition of English played in the reconstruction of their identities as educational leaders?

Research Question 3: How has fluency in English changed how non-elites think about themselves as educational leaders?

Research Question 4: How has fluency in English changed how non-elites behave as educational leaders?

The study was conducted using a phenomenological approach that allowed the participants to share their experiences with regards to the process of learning English, the identity reconstruction that took place as a result, and the development and enhancement of leadership consciousness and behaviors in them. This approach also enabled the student researcher to probe for and explore new ideas as they emerged during the narratives. The student researcher aggregated the data into themes and subthemes and actual quotes from the interviews have been used to provide a holistic picture of the lived experiences of the participants as they learned the English language.

The data or interviews were transcribed and a list of significant statements (in vivo Coding) from the transcribed interviews was created. In vivo “as a code refers to a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data record” (Saldana, 2016, p. 105). These significant statements or codes were grouped into larger units of information or categories. Next what the participants experienced was grouped under broad themes. A composite description of the phenomenon that combines the textural (what participants experienced) and structural (how they experienced it) descriptions was documented to re-create the “essence” of the phenomenon (i.e. the shift in consciousness and behavior as a result of the learning of English in non-elite Pakistanis). The data was organized and analyzed using the Nvivo qualitative research software.

### **The Participants**

The sample in my study comprised twelve unusually motivated non-elite Pakistanis in leadership positions who learned English even though there was nothing in their pedigree that would enable them to do so; not the culture, history, economics, education system, government, or any other social system such as their families. They describe their motivation to learn the language despite barriers; mainly the fact that they neither had English speaking parents nor did they get education in English. They talk about the change in their self-view and self-belief because of English and the point at which they started becoming conscious of this change. The participants also reflect on the influence of English on their relationship with their mother tongue. Most importantly, participants talk about how they changed as leaders or into leaders, both in terms of how they thought about themselves as leaders, and how they behaved as leaders. They spoke at length as to how they changed because of English and that relationship to leadership.

Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identities of the participants. My sample consisted of seven females and five males, of varying ages, and all, except two, hold either undergraduate, graduate or doctoral degrees. The one exception is presently doing undergraduate work at an agricultural university and is an educational leader within her community, while the other is head of an education reform effort in a rural district in the Punjab supervising hundreds of teachers. One of participants completed a bachelor's in engineering degree from one of Pakistan's top science universities and leads her research team. One holds a bachelor's degree in computer science from a highly rated business school and works for the World Bank in education related projects. Two participants hold doctorates; one is a professor at a well-respected institute of research and the other leads a higher education agency. One has a master's degree in English Literature and headed the civil services academy and is now teaching at a university. One holds a bachelor's degree in engineering and leads an organization conducting language translations for international clients, while another who has a double master's degree is a highly sought after English teacher at a large public sector girl's school. There are three ladies, one of whom holds what would be the equivalent of a CPA in America and trains public sector employees, one is a medical doctor and hugely impacts the educational trajectories of her contemporaries and students in her community, while the third is an international celebrity in the development/youth-leadership world and builds schools for the poorest children in rural areas and holds a bachelor degree. Last but not least, is a young lady, a graduate, who having acquired very good English, teaches it to girls at a public school and privately as well.

The student researcher travelled to Pakistan in September 2018 and personally interviewed all participants face-to-face. I had not anticipated as much difficulty as I actually experienced in finding people who fell within my inclusionary criterion. All participants were



either among, or discovered through my personal contacts, or were found through snowball sampling. In each case they made themselves available for the interview without hesitation, and were eager and excited to share their stories. Some wept during the interviews and many commended me on the topic I had chosen to conduct research on. All interviewees signed the informed consent form before the interviews began. Table 3 provides details of participants.

Table 3  
*Details of Participants*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Age Range Between</b>	<b>Region of Pakistan</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Urban/Rural</b>
1	30-40	South	Female	Urban
2	30-40	South	Male	Semi-Urban
3	60-70	Middle	Male	Urban
4	40-50	Middle	Male	Semi-Urban
5	30-40	North	Female	Semi-Urban
6	20-30	North	Female	Urban/Rural
7	30-40	North	Male	Urban
8	30-40	South	Male	Urban
9	20-30	South	Female	Urban
10	30-40	Middle	Female	Rural
11	20-30	South	Female	Urban
12	20-30	South	Female	Urban

### **Data Analysis**

The audio recordings of all interviews were transcribed by M/s. Rev.com which is one of the largest and most reputable organizations providing professional transcription services. I carefully read through and cross-checked each transcribed interview with the audio recordings to ensure accuracy and corrected whatever errors there were. Overall, I am satisfied with the services provided by M/s. Rev.com especially considering that the voices are not those of native speakers. They were also very prompt in terms of turnaround time of the transcribed interviews.

The transcripts were imported into Nvivo singularly and were coded individually. I did not try to group the codes around any pre-defined clusters and allowed the data to define the codes. The codes became large in number and as I progressed from interview to interview, clusters of similar meaning began to emerge, which I started organizing into larger groups or categories. Finally, a set of themes emerged many of which developed around the research questions. Throughout the coding process I replayed the audio recordings numerous times to ensure that both content and context were reflected in the codes.

### **Themes**

1. English is the intersection at which elites and non-elites meet as equals;
2. The influence of English on the behaviors of non-elites;
3. Benefits for non-elites through the acquisition of English;
4. English education in public and non-elite schools and colleges;
5. Identity Reconstruction: The impact of knowing and not knowing English in Pakistan;
6. The knowing of English versus the using of English;
7. English and leadership;
8. English and its relationship to mother tongue in Pakistan;
9. Motivations to learn English;
10. English and its impact on the self-view and self-belief of non-elite learners;
11. Sources for learning English;

Table 4 shows the number of participants that identified with each theme and sub-themes. It also shows the negative findings of the study highlighted in red which represent things I was not expecting to discover in my research. That English provides dignity was the theme that the highest number of participants—nine—identified with.

Table 4

Number of participants who identified with each theme inclusive of negative findings of the study

THEMES	Participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
1. English-the intersection at which elites & non-elites meet as equals		x				x					x	x		4
2. The influence of English on the behaviors of non-elites														
Change				x	x		x		x	x				5
No Change (NEGATIVE FINDING)		x	x					x						3
Others Behave differently		x		x		x				x	x			5
3. Benefits for non-elites through the acquisition of English														
More Important than a Degree		x			x	x	x		x	x	x		x	8
Higher Remunerations		x			x	x	x	x	x					6
Access to knowledge					x	x			x					3
Confidence			x			x		x	x	x			x	6
4. English education in public & non-elite schools & colleges														
Tertiary Education		x	x			x		x				x	x	6
Public and non-elite schooling				x				x				x	x	4
5. Identity Reconstruction: Impact of Knowing/Not-knowing English														
Positive impact of knowing English for non-elites														
Being considered Educated		x					x	x	x		x	x	x	7
Respect and Self-respect		x		x				x	x	x				5
Empowerment				x		x	x		x	x			x	6
Dignity			x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	9
Esteem							x		x				x	3
A more progressive and expressive identity						x			x				x	2
Negative impact of not knowing English for non-elites				x		x	x	x	x	x			x	7
6. The knowing of English versus the using of English		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	10
7. English and leadership														
Leadership is not possible without English				x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8
English provides opportunities for leadership enactment		x					x	x	x	x			x	6
English enables and enhances leadership					x		x	x	x	x				5
Others						x	x	x	x		x	x	x	7
Presence of elements of leadership (NEGATIVE FINDING)			x			x	x	x		x			x	6
8. English and its relationship to mother tongue in Pakistan														
Increased respect and improved relationship with Urdu			x					x	x	x	x	x		6
Disregard of Urdu						x	x	x						3
Ideas can be better communicated in mother tongue				x	x	x							x	4
Others						x			x		x		x	4
9. Motivations to learn English		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	12
10. English-impact on the self-view & belief of non-elite learners														
Changed self-view			x			x			x	x				4
No change (NEGATIVE FINDING)		x									x			2
11. Sources for learning English			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	9

### Themes at least half of the Participants Identified with

1. English gives dignity (9)
2. Leadership is not possible without English (8)
3. English is more important than almost any degree or qualification (8)
4. You are only considered educated in Pakistan when you speak in English (7)

5. Negative impacts of not knowing English for non-elites (7)
6. English provides higher remunerations (6)
7. English enables confidence for non-elites (6)
8. English is a source of empowerment for non-elites (6)
9. Importance of English in tertiary education (6)
10. English provides opportunities for leadership enactment (6)
11. Increased respect for mother tongue through English (6)

### **Negative Findings**

1. Elements of leadership were present in participants (6)
2. English acquisition did not change behavior (3)
3. English did not impact self-view and self-belief (2)

### **Theme 1. English is the Intersection at which Elites and Non-Elites meet as Equals**

The data revealed that English is the portal that allows the non-elite to enter into the elite world and the corridors of power. It also showed that English is the fastest and perhaps the only way that the non-elites can raise their position on the social ladder—"a social ladder they need to climb to accomplish" (Malani, 2008, p. 24). English not only gives non-elites the ability to compete with the elite, but it also provides access to people who matter in society. The elite are also likely to be more generous and helpful when spoken to in English. Another finding was that English speakers, mainly elites, can get away with almost anything because of their ability to speak the language well—they use English to talk down to non-elites, who cannot speak the language, as a way of claiming unfair advantage.

For example, Huma who is the first person in her family to acquire the ability to speak English, runs a non-governmental organization (NGO) aimed at providing education to rural

women. She shared how she gets more and larger amounts in donations when she asks for them in English from wealthy people who invariably use English as a first language. She says:

I love to speak Urdu. Yes, when you connect with an elite class people, when you are a community leader and you speak in English, so they really (are) attracted and they support you in your work. Because when you speak in English, when sharing your work with the (elite) people, they donate, they support you. English is so powerful, right? So powerful because, well, you know the reality, the most powerful people in this country, they talk in English.

Nad, who is the first person from his family to speak English and who attended a top business school in Pakistan, works with the World Bank on education related projects. He shares how English gives one an audience with powerful people, people who can solve the problems non-elites like him face. He says:

So English, it allows you to at least communicate your message and your idea to the people who matter. So, I think language especially in communication and all that, it helped me relate to the people who matter, and who could address the challenges and the problems that we typically face.

Simi worked very hard to learn English and is the first person in her family to earn a doctorate and that too from a foreign university. She was resentful how her work was never recognized until she learned to speak the language, and how she was used by those that could.

She says:

I was talking with you earlier about one of the project, which I was doing. I was doing 90 percent of that. I was traveling to collect the data to interviews from different cities. Like I went to Lahore for the very first time alone. I went to Quetta for the very first time, and

I was doing all that type of dirty stuff. When we used to go to see the Vice Chancellor, and everybody is talking and Vice Chancellor didn't even know that I am working on these things. Other people were presenting and they are doing all that in English. Like they exploit you a lot, like they are asking you to do all sort of quantitative analysis, you are doing it, you are sitting here late nights. Usually, in our culture, girls are not sitting late nights, but I was doing it. Honestly I did it just to be accepted. And then, at the end, when the paper is published, your name is nowhere.

She laments that the elite get away with incompetence and no one questions them because of their ability to speak English fluently. It also seems to give English speakers in Pakistan the prerogative to be rude and loud. She says:

When you are sitting in a meeting and stuff, and people are too outspoken, very blunt. And nobody will question that, even if they're presenting something and if it's wrong. You will come across a lot of people who do not know anything but nobody questions them. You know why people don't question them? (Because) they cannot speak that good English. Even if you move into this bureaucratic structure, you will see the same. I have seen a lot of mediocre officials (but) their English is good, and they are getting promotions, promotions, promotions.

Simi also felt that fluent English speakers, invariably the elite, can attain high positions with fewer qualification and in a shorter period of time. She had to work very hard to be where she is but someone from an elite English speaking background may get there in roughly half the time it had taken her. She shared:

But I just wanted to say that like the same (leadership) position I have right now and the same earning potential which I have right now, I got this after investing a lot of hard

work in it. But another person from a very good elite background, he can do it with only a Master's degree and that is what I am right now seeing. Like I had to do Ph.D. to get all this, but those people don't actually need to have that. That's what I really wanted to say. I am not saying that English is all in all, it helped me and I put in a lot of hard work. Like if somebody (from an English speaking background) invested just 18 years of their life, then I invested 30 of years of my life getting into this position, so that's the difference.

Hubi is also the first person from her family to acquire fluency in English and studied Medicine, and which she feels could never have been possible had she not learned English. She was heartbroken when she discovered that elite students formed friendships on the basis of the culture that surrounds the English speaking class. She wept as she shared her traumatic experience:

My medical college, when it was started, it changed my life as a whole. I wouldn't say that it was a good experience. It was initially a very bad experience. Because, from every background people were coming and from very elite backgrounds and I'm saying it on the basis of their educational status. They were very fluent in speaking English and people make friends on that basis. And that was so disappointing for me. The journey was not easy for me; it was so difficult. I never say this to my parents because I know they have done a lot for me. But it was difficult for me. One more thing I would like to add that when I realized that my English is not that good. When we are sitting in a group, in university, and people are discussing about English season, English dramas, and films and I hadn't watched a single episode of Games of Thrones and people used to judge. Like, really? Have you ever been into English season? I was like, no. So they are, like, you are so boring. This is not only the case of Games of Thrones. But, a lot of other

things. We discussed a lot more novels, and English seasons. And in that gathering you feel like a fish out of water because you have no clue what to say.

Hubi later discovered that one of the ways to confront the attacks on her esteem by elite students was through her strong knowledge of Urdu literature. She laughed when she added the following to her narrative:

Then I get the answer of that (her dilemma). Okay, if somebody asked me, “Have you watched that English serial or drama or movie?” I will add that, “Have you studied about that book by Bano Qudsia, have you studied Ashfaq Ahmed have you studied these Urdu writers?” So, they will be like “Urdu? I don't know how to speak in Urdu.” They think that Urdu has a low standard. So, this happens and I think I'm not going to be affected anymore in my life.

## **Theme 2. The Influence of English on the Behaviors of Non-Elites.**

Half the people in this study said that their behaviors had changed since they gained fluency in English and about half felt that their mannerisms had not been affected. The data also revealed that many of them felt the behaviors of others towards them had changed since they started speaking English, which was a more interesting finding. One of them shared how her children, whom she had admitted to an elite school, felt uncomfortable when she spoke to them in Urdu.

**Change in behavior.** Ainee, Anu, Aka, Kai and Yas felt their behaviors had changed after learning English. Ainee as a young person was motivated to learn English in order to be able to understand Hollywood movies. This led to his studying English literature at the university, which helped him enter the civil services and serve in a number of countries. He now



teaches at a university and felt that while his behaviors abroad were not affected by the language he used, this is not the case in Pakistan. He shared:

Maybe it does at some forums in Pakistan only, not internationally. But in Pakistan, it does impact my behavior to a certain extent where I find that many people who are sitting around the table or in that conference, are finding it difficult to communicate. And then if there is something that needs to be conveyed, or to be corrected, or to be challenged, then I say it in English. It's not that what I think of myself after I have learned English and speak well. But it's more by way of how other people react to me when they see me speaking in English, which is I think how it affects, maybe indirectly, me, because of their behavior, because of their reaction to it, yes.

Aka grew up in a slum and learned English by way of association through the highly educated English speakers that he was fortunate to work with. He only attended community college. For him the change came as a result of those associations and by his unconsciously adopting the mannerisms of those people. This is what he shared:

Well, of course (as) I said it to you in my whole thing that my behavior was channelized by the language and language not only the spoken words, these words were attached with some action which I was seeing in my cartoons, in my association with SM, with JT, all the enlightened (people) or Dr. AHK. So these words were associated, connected with some visual things.

Anu is also the first person in her family who learned how to speak English. This happened due to the appearance of a mentor in her life and her close and continuous attachment with that person. She now speaks in the elite accent that is found at the highest echelons of

Pakistani society. It was fascinating to hear her talk with that flair. She felt that she is treated differently and so behaves differently.

So yeah, that behavior... I don't know how to describe that. Of course it's changed the way you talk, the way you... I think you get instructions very clearly if you're working, and even people, with your boss, it's so easy to work with any boss, actually. And they start feeling this girl can understand English or she can read English, so if we give her some points or instructions or assignment or project, she will be able to do it (more) easily than a non-speaker.

Yas, whose parents have no education, acquired English by joining a language center. For him it is the confidence that one gains through the acquisition of English in a society like Pakistan, which changed his mannerisms. According to him, he became very expressive after learning the language.

Yeah. I was more confident. And the confident people obviously, you know, they behave differently. And the people who are unconfident they behave differently. They are shy, they hide themselves. So, after knowing English I was not like that, I was very expressive.

For many non-elites like Kai, English is associated with developed and advanced countries like America and Britain. Their main exposure to these societies is through the media and they see them as civilized and structured places where people conduct themselves in an organized manner. When I asked her if her behaviors had changed after learning how to speak English, she responded:

Yes, sir, a lot. Because of English. Because English is a language of Americans, means English people. And they are, how much I have seen, they are (well) mannered a lot. So,

they are more organized. Basically, they are more organized. So, English comes from them, so by adopting their language, a person can adopt their culture too, their behavior. So basically, I'm adopting their behavior, what kind of behavior they are doing so, they are showing so. So, this is how the way I talk to people. Whenever I talk in English, I speak more differently, whenever I talk in Urdu, I speak a little bit differently. Even I behave differently when I speak in English.

**No change in behavior.** Nad, Rose and Shah felt their behaviors had not changed after learning English. Nad shared his feelings:

Actually, I don't think behavior has changed much. I don't see that in myself. I mean, I go to my goth (settlement) every day. I interact with people living for the last 26 years in a way that they would not even say that this gentleman can speak the language. Right now, if I go with you straight to the guard and I start speaking with him in Sindhi or Punjabi or Saraiki, that guard won't believe that this guy can even speak English. So I think English has not changed my behavior.

Rose is also the first person in her family to learn English. She is a highly qualified accountant and has taught at universities and sits on the boards of national accounting bodies. She works in a high-level position in the banking bureaucracy. She said:

No, not at all. In my personal life, I don't think so. Behavior is, I think it's a natural thing and whatever you're speaking Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and you're speaking English. It's not wrong or connected with the behavior.

Shah, who self-taught himself English is an engineer by training. He now runs a language translation company providing services to many international clients. He grew up speaking both Punjabi and Urdu only. He responded:

I don't think it has any impact on my behavior. No, I don't think so. Any specific impact on my behavior, I don't think so. No. I am a person having sympathy, and respect for others, that is still the same. So English didn't change my behaviors, it's given me confidence.

**Others behave differently.** Similar to Ainee's experience as mentioned above, Anu, Huma, Rose and Simi all felt that people behave differently when one speaks in English. Anu said:

So, when I met that minister he treated me like a student earlier in my school, but over here when I met him and he saw me that oh, this girl is here and she's on some position and now she's speaking English. She's well dressed. And you know and he took my name on the stage, and he remembered me. He actually remembered my name and he took it on the stage in front of the media. So on that time, you realize that English has actually changed you.

Huma felt that one gets immediate attention when one speaks in English and it gives one an advantaged and privileged status instantly. She said:

That's true. It is true. Even you are in a government hospital and you speak with a reception person in Urdu, you have a Ph.D. degree, but reception person did not have a Ph.D. degree. When you start Urdu that I have this work they take you lightly. Oh why are the illiterate people come? When you say, "Hello, hi, my name is ..." you just saying your name in English, people giving you attention. In the government hospital. In the hospital even, can you imagine, health facility never judges a language. But even you go to the hospital, you speak in Urdu, nurses don't get serious, even you have a very serious

issue. But you speak in English, they directly give you an attention. And really I face these daily basic things in my life, because I'm working on women's health issues.

Simi's experiences are similar. She narrates how one is treated differently by shopkeepers if one speaks in English. She shared "if you are speaking with each other in English, and with your kids, everybody ... oh my God, everybody will come: "Okay, ma'am, what do you need? Okay, we have this, this, and that." She added that her child who was born in America during her Ph.D. gets preferential treatment as she only speaks English, and seeing this, Simi lamented that she discourages her from speaking in Urdu. She said:

My elder daughter, she's born in the US. She's four now, but she has a very good accent. Honestly, kids, they are so innocent, they don't know, but one thing which I observed, everyone cherishes my girl, even if we are going anywhere, if it's in the higher society or in our own family, because we are from a very humble background. All the kids, of any age irrespective of age, the youngest one, they will come and play with her and take her everywhere. They are holding her up, just because she's speaking English. She now somehow started understanding Urdu, but she's not speaking because we are not encouraging her, we are not pushing her in a way. And even if she utters some word (we say) "Oh, you are speaking in Urdu? Okay, why not say it this way (in English), so in a way discouraging her.

For Rose, as already mentioned, English has had no impact on her mannerisms. However, she feels that in Pakistani consciousness, Urdu is linked with conservatism and English with modernity and progressiveness. She shared:

Of course. I will behave the same but other will not behave the same. That is very important. They will think she is conservative, she is not able to speak English, and she

does not have ideas, and she is backward. And there are a lot of things, names they can call for me if I do not speak in English.

Rose also mentioned how her children are embarrassed if she speaks to them in Urdu at their elite school:

Like if I'm going to pick my child from school, if I'll speak Urdu with him, he used to say to me mamma, please speak English whenever you come to my school. My son is in class two and is already speaking English. They do not disrespect Urdu, but they feel English is very important rather than Urdu. They are aware of that.

### **Theme 3. Benefits for Non-Elites through the Acquisition of English**

The benefits of being able to speak English for non-elites in Pakistan are large and numerous but the one mentioned by most of the participants was the fact that being able to speak English is much more powerful than academic qualifications. This was followed by it being a guarantee of higher salary, employment and high position on the corporate ladder. A few also mentioned that English gives you access to knowledge, the ability to inspire as well as impress others, and that it establishes your credibility.

**More important than a degree.** Aka, Anu, Huma, Kai, Rose, Simi, Waji and Yas all felt that knowing English is the most powerful qualification in Pakistan and immediately opens the doors to employment, opportunities and recognition. Aka is project head of a public school reform project in a rural district with hundreds of teachers working under him. He shared how he starts every training session in English before code switching to Urdu, which establishes his credibility instantly with the audience:

And whenever I start, my first two minutes were in English. Without saying anything, they start believing I'm a highly qualified person. The same thing, which was understood

by my father, the same thing is understood by qualified people here. They hardly question my qualifications. People start believing, oh, this man must be foreign graduate.

Anu has worked in organizations and taught in both public and private institutes. She narrates how she obtained employment as human resources manager in a large company despite her lack of qualifications just on the basis of her language skills:

When I actually learned English, I started applying in different institutes and different even offices although though I didn't have any office experience, but when I actually started applying, I was getting positive response from there. The reason was that I could speak in English. And other people who were applying with me, even though they did have bigger degrees than me, they have done their masters or something, but they couldn't speak in English. But I could speak and I was getting that offer and getting the job.

Yas felt that he has swiftly moved ahead of his colleagues because of his ability to speak English. He narrated:

The other people they are same educated as me, but they cannot speak English. That's why they are far behind. So, I think English, that's how English has changed me, and it made me a leader. That I am now moving ahead from my counterparts because they cannot speak English.

Waji is also the first person in her family to learn English and holds an engineering degree from a top school. She shared that although she recognizes that being educated and being able to speak English are two different things, but in Pakistan the two have become enmeshed. She said:

Speaking English is, unfortunately, a big criterion for it matters more than the education you have or the qualification you have. It all comes down to how you speak or how you present yourself. Yeah. They don't take us seriously because, obviously, English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated, obviously people have these misconceptions in their mind because English, being qualified or educated and knowing English are two different things but, unfortunately, they have mixed up the two things and that's really messed up. They are two different things and, obviously, because I know English and I'm educated, I'm differentiating between the two.

Rose felt that you cannot get through job interviews without English. She said “because in interview, usually panels assess on the basis of your communication (in English), instead of your degrees, instead of other things.” Kai felt that one will not get recognized without being able to speak English. She said:

If you learn English, you make your identity because I feel that if you can't speak in English and you have done a M.Ed. you have got a M.Ed. degree, a B.Ed. degree, a Ph.D. whatever. So, if you don't know English, you can't get that much name, that big a name.

**Higher remunerations.** Anu, Kai, Rose, Shah, Simi and Yas all felt that English gets one higher levels of salary. Yas shared:

And I had then realized that it was the power of English, the power of language that I was just getting that respect. And after that, all of the money I have earned up till now or I am earning is because of English, because of that language. And in my life I think I have only positive impacts of English language.

When I asked Kai what would happen if she took a group of non-elites/subalterns and taught them English, she responded:



They would definitely go over the moon. What I'm telling you that their salary would get increased, and they would openly say that I'm earning this money, I'm earning this money. So this is the thing that they would feel like they are over the moon.

Shah felt that he would gladly pay someone who can speak English more as the person could fulfill more roles: He said “Yeah, I'll engage him in more roles, like I will engage him in my file works, my account works, my banking related works, so I will pay differently.” Rose feels that “Yeah, of course. If you can speak English, you can get higher salary, you can get higher position.” Simi shared her experience about people from elite backgrounds that “they are getting higher salary just because of their spoken English.”

**Access to knowledge.** Aka, Yas and Simi narrated how English gives you access to a plethora of information. Aka shared how he uses the internet to increase his knowledge:

Without the understanding of English, I can't use Google, I can't use YouTube. If I want to understand the concept of leftist and rightist movement, I simply click on few letters and I can pick out the five minute or two minute or one-hour video and that's what is most important.

Yas said that reading English literature had changed his conceptual thinking, increased his knowledge base and made him feel learned:

But I think I will not only talk about the confidence but also all the knowledge that I have gained because of English, especially when I started reading English literature. Literature was the thing that changed my mind paradigm obviously because English is a vast language and they have different varieties, different genres, different topics in novels and in stories. And so when I read those stories and novels, it just changed my mind, it just changed my concepts and increased my knowledge. The knowledge of the novels, the

knowledge of stories, the knowledge of Hollywood movies as well because it makes you learned.

Simi shared that as a result of learning English she has developed the reading habit: “And now I read a lot, and I read on everything. I don't have any specific interest. I will read politics. I will read literature. I will read fiction.” Zam, who holds a doctorate from America, and who heads a higher education agency, says, “What English did, it helped me really read literature books, which otherwise I wouldn't have been able to. I read more in English than Urdu. My English is better than Urdu.”

**Confidence.** That English imbues non-elites with confidence was a refrain expressed by most of the participants. Anu shared:

OK one thing is that I became very very very confident, very confident ok, and I actually you know, now I am not scared of anything. I am not even scared about you know that I will lose my job.

Hubi said:

So, if I can speak English no matter how good or bad, but I have this confidence that if I am in a meeting of the people, the people are speaking English, I can understand and I can somewhat speak in English. This gives me a sense of confidence.

Yas narrated:

I think English in a country like Pakistan makes you really confident. Here in a small country like Pakistan people only consider you educated if you can speak English. So here it can really boost up your confidence and can change you. And so when I read those stories and novels, it just changed my mind, it just changed my concepts and increased my knowledge. And, obviously, when you are knowledgeable and when you can speak

English, you become automatically confident. So, I think that why English made me confident.

Nad shared:

So, in that case, language helps. I mean in our society, in some segments of the society, it gives you an edge, a clear cut edge, and gives you some confidence to get out your thoughts and your ideas and to communicate whatever is there in your head.

Shah stated:

The knowledge of English given me confidence in my life, because what I am doing today is running my language learning company. If I could not speak good English how will they give me a project related to languages? So English is a source of confidence, source of motivation, and now it is paying me financially as well. I have the confidence that I can lead any team because I have a language skill, which is English.

Simi's experience after she graduated from university and joined the research institute is indicative of what happens to non-elites when they are throw among English speakers. She said:

I was very much active in extra-curricular all the time, I used to take lead, to arrange trips. I was the student representative for the faculty meetings, student and faculty meetings. And because like QA is not that elite university, I think that's one of the reason I could excel in that, in a way. All the students were just like you. And I was taking lead in that. But After that, when I started realizing that English is that much important, I lost all that confidence, and then I regained it after I learned English. Yes. For instance, a couple of months ago, planning commission invited me for a policy dialogue. That was my first time to present myself as an independent individual who has just a Ph.D. and who works in this field as ... I would not say an expert, but a knowledgeable person.

When I presented, and when people started asking a lot of questions, I was quite very much confident. I had that confidence that, yes, I know this really well. My knowledge is making me ... my knowledge, in addition to English, speaking English, is making me more comfortable, more privileged, in a way. People are starting now taking me seriously.

#### **Theme 4. English Education in Public and Non-Elite Schools and Colleges**

**Tertiary education.** Theoretically speaking, tertiary education is imparted in English in Pakistan. At any college, university or institute of higher learning of repute and standing, education is imparted exclusively in English. At most other institutions, though the medium of instruction may officially be English, in reality it is delivered in Urdu or a mix of Urdu, English and the vernacular, as not just students but often teachers as well are unable to use English properly. However, the exams are still in English and for non-elites coming through the pipeline of Urdu medium schooling, this can be a terrifying experience and negatively impacts their academic progress as well as their career trajectories and life outcomes. Whatever English they know has been learned only through books, and failure in the English language paper means failure in the entire examination.

“All teaching and learning, if there be any, is examination-oriented and the examination system tests nothing except the learner’s capacity to reproduce it” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 72). Cramming, memorization and rote learning are commonly used techniques employed by the vast majority of learners in order to pass examinations. These ground realities were faced by participants of this study since they were coming through the public and non-elite system. Rose narrated how despite being an outstanding student, her grades fell precipitously

once she came face-to-face with lectures in English in college. She was only able to regain good standing after improving her English. She said:

When I got admission in St. P's College, all papers were in English except Islamiyat. (Hence) my grade was low in intermediate. In metric (school) it was high. When the medium was changed (Urdu to English) in intermediate, I got second division. I used to have lectures there in English. So in graduation, I got first division and highest marks in St. Patrick's College after improving my English.

Hubi shared how her weak English made her concerned that she might misinterpret something from the medical textbooks, which might affect patient well-being and so worked hard on her English skills. She recalled:

All medical academic books are in English, as you know. So if you are not able to comprehend a sentence, you are going to take a different, or opposite, or wrong meaning of that sentence and it is going to impact the life of the patient. I realized that. I realized that. Then I started writing different grammatical sentences on internet, so that I can better understand my medical books. Especially this became the perspective of my life because I don't want that if I study it wrong the meaning ... if I study a wrong thing it is going to impact the life of the patient. So this became the purpose of my life. That's why basically I focus on learning better English so that I can get the perfect meaning out of the sentence.

Shah expressed his views on this reality as well:

English is the need of our time. You need English to communicate, you need English to do anything. Your university's whole curriculum is in English. Often our students get into the problem because they are in studying in Urdu medium schools and they go to a good

university, they have to give presentations and they have to give lectures. So there is a huge problem for them if they cannot speak English.

Simi lamented that the non-elite institutions of higher education are not preparing students for the real world. Non-elite students often excel in mathematics and statistics, which do not need much English skills but then run into problems in the job market. She said:

All the other institutions where I got my education, they were meant to be English medium, but that was just on paper, not in practice. I did my Master's and M.Phil. from University, that's one of the top universities, and I did it with distinction. Unfortunately, my discipline was totally ... I did statistics, so we didn't need much English to speak or to write, because we were just playing with the numbers. The English, which I knew, that was enough to go through that. Like in all public sector universities no one will ask you to present your research work or whatever in English. Like when they will go to the market how will they compete when they don't have that skill?

Nad shared:

And even in grade 11 and 12 at the government college, our professors, I mean the government college professors, they used to tell us ... I mean, for an instance, if there is a chapter in the book, what is the typical way of teaching it? The professor will come, he will read out first two lines, and then translate it. I mean, that's how you are teaching the subject. There is this first chapter in grade 11 book of syntax, because I still remember it. It's called Pakistan Zindabad. So, the teacher used to read it out and translate it for us. It means that the same conventional method. Translation, vocabulary, grammar. In that manner. By the rules.

Waji shared:

Since all the curriculum is designed in English, so it's unfortunately really important to know English, to be well versed in the language because if you're not then it promotes rote learning or parrot learning. You just scan whatever is written in the copy and you transfer it on the paper in the exam but that's why you're not learning any knowledge. You should have at least some basic decent English language skills. It really helps you because this is what my peers says, and this is as a teacher as well and I stress upon to my students and to my siblings because you should have a decent level of writing skills or communicating skills so you're not servant to the book or you're not servant to what's written in the notes or slide. You can read it from anywhere if you're preparing for an exam or you're preparing for a presentation. So, if you have the points in mind, you can elaborate it anyway you want. If you're giving a presentation, you're not limited to a sheet of paper or something so you can be more expressive.

**Public and non-elite schooling.** The fact that in public and non-elite schools there is just one period of English a day, that teachers cannot speak English, that there is no emphasis on conversation and that there is a culture of rote learning are the most oft repeated narratives that emerged in this study. Ainee, whose parents had basic education but could not converse in English went to a public school. He shared, “we used to speak in Urdu and I studied in Urdu medium schools throughout and wasn't taught English speech in the school.” Anu attended a so-called English medium private school for non-elites until grade eight. She says, “It was a school near my house and none of the teachers could speak English. They used to write the whole essay or applications on the board. They never used to discuss what teacher is writing.” Nad, who went to a charity school that had been set up by philanthropic Pakistanis, had this to say:

So, I learned the language in a very conventional, typical manner, the way most of underprivileged students and kids learn the language. So it was actually translating from one language to another. We taught the language with parts of speech, tenses and all that. And then we used to translate sentences. And I learned language whatever was possible from the textbooks. So we used to study from the same textbook board books. And that is how I studied whatever was there till grade ninth and 10th. And there was a good portion of translating sentences from Urdu to English, and English to Urdu. I learned the language more in grade 11 and 12 (college). Because the way elite institutions used to test the language was something that we were never taught ...in conversation. As, for an instance, they had tests designed on the SAT basis. And we were not taught and trained on those lines.

Shah remembered the time he was struggling to speak English. He went to a public school where science, mathematics and English were supposed to be taught in English but the teachers could not converse in English.

So when I was brought up I learned two languages, with a very good vocabulary, and a very good accent, in the Urdu and Punjabi. Then comes the time when I've gone to school, so I started to learn English as well. So, up to context, textbooks, it wasn't very difficult for me. But to speak or to communicate in English was a difficult thing for me, because I was a child, I was scared that I do not speak anything wrong.

Waji shares her experience about the culture of rote learning and cramming that exists in public and non-elite schools:



I did get some good teachers and one advantage I had over the other students was that even though the rote system was prevalent in the education system but thankfully, my parents, although they were not elite, but they never encourage rote learning.

Hubi also narrated her experiences with rote learning in the non-elite private school that she attended till middle level:

I started in a private school till my 8th standard. It was so-called English school. We used to be taught English. We used to teach English as a subject. And how we used to pass exam, just by cramming our question and answers. That was all.

### **Theme 5. Identity Reconstruction of Non-Elite Learners: Impact of Knowing and Not Knowing English in Pakistan**

**The impact of knowing English for non-elites.** As a teacher of English, I have seen the impact that the acquisition of this language has on the identity and behaviors of non-elites once they acquire the language. However, even I was not prepared for the flood of findings that would emerge under this theme. More than sixty different types of positive impacts were narrated by the participants with the most mentioned being: In Pakistan one is only considered educated and qualified if one can speak English. Hence, English allows non-elites to don the mantle of an identity that is considered educated, polished, and refined.

Almost equally stated was that English gives one respect in society as well as self-respect. This was followed by opportunities, empowerment, ability to inspire and impress others, ability to network, access to intellectual people, being taken seriously, change in thought processes, establishing a social position, feeling distinguished and learned, attracting people, being considered someone from a good background, getting attention, and being able to demand one's rights.

The next findings although individually mentioned were remarkable as they highlighted the extent to which English allows a non-elite person to reconstruct their identity in a society that is stratified by extreme class consciousness. The participants mentioned that English gives one the ability to say no, to become the voice of the underdog, to be able to advocate for the mother tongue, the appearance of privilege and status, the ability to challenge conventional wisdom, the ability to act independently without anyone's permission, gets one recognition, one is listened to, one is not rejected, one becomes more expressive, one is able to visit elite locales where English is the gate keeper, makes one open-minded and strong, people stand up for you, and that people feel you are empowered.

Under this theme, participants also mentioned that English completely changes the way people view you, it grooms, it is a label of intellect, a symbol of pride, one is considered competent, taken as someone of high profile, that it denotes superiority, that you don't need a man, that it is a means to enter the civil services, that it can make one feel arrogant, that it is a question of survival, that it is a path to knowledge, that it takes one places, that one stands out, that one is not questioned, that one pays more attention to one's appearance, that one is favored even in one's own home, and last but not least, that one is treated like a leader.

***Being considered educated.*** Hubi, Huma, Kai, Rose Shah, Waji and Yas all felt that in Pakistan one is not considered educated unless one can speak English. Hubi said, "It is very common in our country that it is considered that whoever speaks English, they basically have an education or they are basically literate." Huma shared, "some people I met, said to me that until I could speak English, people did not even think I was educated." Yas also felt the same when she said, "People do not consider you as educated if you cannot speak English." Rose shared:

Whenever you are speaking English, everybody think you are educated even you don't have degree, even you are just O level, and A level, and matriculate from English medium school. But where you are doctor, you are engineer but you can't speak English, everybody think you are not educated actually. You just cheated and you cleared. You just purchased your degree and qualification.

Shah also had similar feelings on this point and shared that someone who speaks English is seen as educated and respectable:

In Pakistan people don't think somebody is very educated if they cannot speak good English. They think that okay, he has studied something like Masters in Urdu, okay, that's fine. But if somebody speaks good English, then they consider that this person is well educated, and he knows how to carry and he's a good person. So there is a symbol of respect associated with English.

Waji said that while she knew that being educated and being able to speak English are two different things, but in the view of Pakistani society, the two are linked:

English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated, obviously people have these misconceptions in their mind. Many people consider you literate when you using excessive (English) vocabulary. That's something. Uselessly adding difficult words.

***Respect and self-respect.*** Ainee, Anu, Rose, Shah and Yas felt that English gives one a respectable identity in Pakistani society. Anu said, "I get more respect, of course! My boss doesn't want to lose me because she knows I can get job anywhere." Ainee said:

It's not that what I think of myself after I have learned English and speak well. But it's more by way of how other people react to me when they see me speaking in English,

which is I think how it affects, maybe indirectly, me, because of their behavior, because of their reaction to it, yes. So it's more respect, maybe.

For Yas, English has meant more respect as well as self-respect. He felt that the respect he gets now has raised him in his own eyes and enhanced his self-esteem:

And I had then realized that it was the power of English, the power of language that I was just getting that respect. It gives you not only respect in the eyes of others, but it gives you self-respect as well. The knowledge of English made me respectable in the other's eyes and in my own eyes. So that's how it has changed me.

Shah termed English a good habit and a symbol of respect and felt that although respect is not necessarily linked only to English, but to gain higher levels of respect, one needed to learn and speak English:

People give more respect to people who can speak English. He speaks very good English, so here it is considered as a good habit, or a symbol of respect. So you need that but for the communication, I don't think you need speaking English and that, everybody can understand Urdu. But if you want to gain respect, if you want to stand out then you need English in Pakistan as well. So there is a symbol of respect associated with English.

***Empowerment.*** A vast number of responses from participants centered around how learning English is a source of empowerment. In other words, an identity that is empowered. These ranged from feelings of learnedness, to having the ability to say no, to developing the praxis (Freire, 2000) to demand one's rights, to being able to impress people, and so forth. Waji shared how people listen when you speak English and how it establishes your social position:

I think it has affected me in that way and again in leadership qualities because unfortunately the masses are really impressed with someone's literary skills, English

language skills. So sometimes, obviously when you have to force, not force people but when you have to make them listen to you or something or make them notice then obviously you consciously or subconsciously use English. People feel if they are speaking English, they might be belonging to a more elite class, they might be belonging to a different class although we might come from the same background. People have this perception about English speaking people that they might be coming from a different social class and that sometimes does affect your working relationships or your grouping et cetera in university or in school.

Kai said that she is treated differently at home due to her ability to speak English. In her own words her father had “upgraded” her. She states, “So he made myself a little bit upgrade. Because of English? Because of English. Basically everyone in my home. And you know my grandparents, my uncle, my aunts, everyone. Even in the neighborhood.” She added that as she gained higher levels of proficiency, she started feeling learned and distinguished:

You know Sir, I started feeling different from others because at every point, whatever the teacher has to do, teacher ask me, teacher says my name. They organized a party, and they asked me to come there. So I feel very good and privileged that I have been able to become learned and feel distinguished between my fellows because of English. This is the thing.

Simi shared that she strategically code switches to English “where I want to show that yes I have some status.” When asked if non-elites do not feel empowered unless they speak in English, her response was insightful: “You will not feel empowered. People will not feel like you are empowered.” She went further and shared that English gives non-elites the ability to defend themselves, and said, “I know that when I will go to them, they will take me seriously, and I can

defend myself, because I can communicate.” She added that English gives non-elites the power and ability to say no. This was an unexpected finding and showed the extent to which English impacts the identities of underprivileged people. She shared that even though it was beyond her budget, she admitted her daughter to an elite school with just one focus; to give her the ability to speak good English:

I am Ph.D. and I am just drawing 100,000 and in this setup, it's nothing. My husband was thinking whether we would be able to afford it. I was saying, "I don't want my daughter to be just like me." He's like, "What do you mean?" I said, "I want her to learn to say no." I cannot say no; I didn't have that ability to say no.

Ainee shared how English gives one the power to become the voice of the underdog and challenge “accepted truths”

It helps me to challenge conventional wisdom or untruths, or false beliefs in an environment where everybody is saying yes and yes, and maybe some of the people disagree but they can't express their disagreements, so I become their voice sort of speaking.

Ainee also shared how many non-elites who entered the civil services studied English literature and that his own entry into the bureaucracy would not have been possible without English. He said:

I think it was because of English that we were able to enter the civil services. So that could have been one significant impact that English had on my career and I realized that now, in the competitive examination, the highest failure rate of those who attempt this competitive examination is in two papers, one is English essay, and the other is the English composition and grammar and that again is because English is not taught in our

public schools and colleges. So, I took English literature as an elective, and then I started getting better marks and better marks. And then I did my master's in English literature, which was again, English literature and not language. But it helped me. It helped me, and now I realize, and to answer your question, now I feel that I have become conscious now that because of their background in English literature, most of the central superior services' competitive examination youngsters, they used to come from an MA English background. Master's in English, not master's in economics, not master's in sociology, not master's in political science, which is more important for a public administrator, but master's in English literature. Now I realize that this was ... or become conscious, to use your ... the terms of your question, that this was helpful to enter into the service.

Yas took Ainee's narrative even further when he shared how English becomes the voice to advocate for Urdu which in Pakistani society has in many ways acquired the status of an underdog. He insightfully stated:

So you know obviously in a country like Pakistan if you cannot speak English and you just praise Urdu, so people will say you are praising Urdu because you cannot speak English, you know, they just start just finding your mistakes. But when you know the language English and then you are just praising and advocating the Urdu language then it just creates some impact and it gives some power to your words.

Yas also narrated that English gives non-elites the ability and privilege to enter spaces only frequented by the Elite. This in many ways represents the extent of the empowerment that English can bestow on the identity of a non-elite person in a highly class consciousness society like Pakistan. He shared:

I start talking to those people where I think that I could not talk if I cannot speak English, so that was a change English created in me. You can go to the places where you cannot go if you cannot speak English. Because there are places the people think that when you go there, you only speak in English. The restaurants, there's some good and big restaurants. There are some places, so I start going there and I really enjoyed that.

Anu felt that English had imbued her identity with fearlessness: “It made me more strong. I'm not afraid of anything now.” She further shared how her English ability has empowered her to take independent decisions without anyone’s permission. She narrated that when she wanted to go abroad for a vacation, she simply went and told her parents which would not have been the case for her sisters who cannot speak English. In fact, it would not be the case for most women in Pakistan. She narrated:

I don't need anyone's permission to... If I want to do something, of course, I'll talk to my parents about it, but I don't need anyone's permission. Nobody can stop me from something. English made that happen? Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. Because I can see. I can see the difference between me or my friends or my sisters even. Because all my sisters can't speak English, so they still feel... or my friends even, they still feel, no if we want to do something we need to ask. When I traveled I did not actually take permission from my parents. I have informed them, I have discussed it with them, they trust me; but, of course, I was not standing in front of them holding a paper and asking them that please sign it and let me go. I didn't do that.

Anu also shared her experience about how a provincial Minister fawned on her when she spoke to him in English:



And he was soooo impressed that this girl from that area and at that time she couldn't speak English and today she is standing here as/in a coordinator position and he was so impressed and when he went on stage he actually took my name, and he remembered my name and he is a minister and I am working with Ms. R and he does not remember Ms. R's name and he remembered my name and he took my name on stage and all the media people came to me and said that Ok you are Anu and I said yes I am. And he said that I want all the girls to be like Anu, that look at her, that she learned English and today she is standing here and she can earn money and she can actually do many things in life now.

Anu further shared that she had completely lost the fear of rejection since she had learned to speak English:

Absolutely. Absolutely, yeah. Because over here then you don't need to be afraid that oh, I'll get rejected. If I'm applying somewhere either for a job or for a course, for a university or college or whatever. But I wasn't afraid then, oh what if I'm rejected. I knew that, I know English. I will get this admission. Or I will get this job or whatever.

**Dignity.** English creates the space where non-elites are taken seriously which gives their identity dignity in a very elitist and class-conscious society. Kai was very straightforward when she said: "If I speak in English in front of the people, they would get inspired. If not inspired, impressed. They would take me more seriously than if I speak in Urdu." Simi shared how she was taken seriously only after she started conversing in English. She said, "Honestly, when I started communicating in English, then people started taking me seriously." Waji shared that English allows non-elites the sway to get people to notice them and be taken seriously:

When you have to make them listen to you or something or make them noticeable then obviously these consciously or subconsciously use English. They don't listen if you speak

in Urdu? They listen to you but they don't take you seriously because obviously English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated.

Anu, Ainee and Nad both shared how the ability to speak English makes people listen in Pakistan and the expectation is that the speaker will say erudite things. Ainee said:

Yeah, you can say that there is more weight if you speak in English, then people listen to you, and think that what you are saying is maybe worth listening to. But if you speak in Urdu, of course you are more or less disregarded, people don't even listen to you. So that is one problem.

Nad who works with a multilateral agency and has to deal with the Pakistani bureaucracy said that when one speaks in Urdu, people listen but when one speaks in English, they listen carefully. He stated:

For an instance, in the local bureaucracy, when I work with the World Bank, I worked with the provisional bureaucracy. If in a meeting, the secretary is chairing the meeting, or the chief secretary is chairing the meeting, and you speak in Urdu, he'll listen. But you start speaking in English, he will listen carefully. And he would be expecting something wise, something cool coming out.

Simi and Yas both felt that since they have acquired English, people come to them, seek them out, which adds to their dignity. Yas shared that once he started speaking English, "That's really impressed people. Then people make you leader. Then people come to you, then people ask you questions. So I think that using English is very much important." Simi said:

It opened the door to my success, somehow and for instance like now I am back now people are coming to me, rather than I am going to them. One of the things is, I have

Ph.D. degree, but a lot of people have Ph.D. degree. Now when I to go to someone to meet someone, intentionally or unintentionally, I start speaking English.

Simi further added that the ability to speak English in Pakistan influences the way people perceive one's background and raises one's status in many ways. She said: "This is the mentality of our society. If someone is speaking English, he or she is really good, he or she is from a very good background." Shah also said something similar: "If somebody speaks good English, then they consider that this person is well educated, and he knows how to carry (himself) and he's a good person."

Anu shared how people not just give attention when spoken to in English, but actually stand up and attend to one's concerns and needs instantly. She shared:

For example, I took my maid for treatment to a government hospital and over there they don't treat you well but when I went where the doctor was and I spoke in English and he actually stood up and saw my maid and, you know, he actually treated her well. So you know that's how the leadership came well.

Anu also shared how English gives her the aura of as well as real independence, which has particular relevance given the very patriarchal nature of Pakistani society: "That's what I said that people started, and in Pakistan especially, people started thinking that she can speak English so she's more independent now. You know? She doesn't need anybody, I think, which is very true."

Hubi, who faced a lot of anguish in college due to her weak English and which she worked hard to improve, called English a label of intellect:

As I said English, whenever I'm speaking English or whenever someone has learned how to speak English they get extra confidence. And especially in our society where English

is not our national language. Where English is considered as a label that you, a label of your intellect.

Ainee, while lamenting the slave mentality prevalent in society, nevertheless agreed that the ability to speak English is a label of superiority in Pakistan:

It's pathetic in some ways, because it shows the servility and the subservience of a kind of a mental slavery of these people who think that English speech denotes superiority. But it's a reality? That is true. It is a reality. It is a reality; it does denote superiority.

Somewhat relatedly, Simi felt that that for the non-elites who acquire the language, English can perhaps imbue them with a sense of arrogance:

It's not good, but I want to be really honest. In that social setup, where a lot of people does not know English, somehow, I feel like that I'm arrogant, to be really honest, or maybe I feel like I'm much privileged, or maybe I'm behaving in elitist way.

*Esteem.* The finding that English has perhaps become linked to the esteem of non-elites in Pakistan is one of the critical findings of my study. English gives an esteemed identity to those who can master it. As Yas says, "It gives you not only respect in the eyes of others, but it gives you self-respect as well. The knowledge of English made me respectable in other's eyes and in my own eyes." Kai shared:

But it has made my identity that I can speak in English, and it is very privileged ... What do we say? Privileged. Yes, sir. Esteem sir. Sir, self-esteem ... That is a self-esteem. It is building up your ... Whenever you speak English, you feel like Esteem you can sit like this, whenever you speak in English, you sit like this. Proud. You come to be a proud person. Although they can speak English (elites) but you are also the person who can speak English. So it is like that. So you sit with your head high. Yes, sir. In front of the

people who cannot speak English. In front of the people. Like, I think that sir the way I speak English and the area from where I belong. When I speak English over there, the people get motivated.

Waji had the same feeling as Kai. She said:

Definitely because again, people are impressed by fluency in English. Obviously when other people's perception about them, the people around them, their perception about the person changes, obviously that affects their self-esteem and that affects their inner self so yeah. It makes you more ...I talked about myself. It made me more confident. So are you saying that English is linked to people's self-esteem? Depends on their environment, yes. If they are in an environment where ... but I'd say yes. To an extent, yes. In our country, unfortunately yes.

*A more progressive and expressive identity.* Some of the responses from participants were unusual and unexpected in the sense of how English makes non-elites think differently and take better care of themselves. This to me is a powerful finding and shows that that the impact of English is deep on the psyche of these learners. Zam felt that English had changed his thought processes. He said, "I have become more progressive, more moderate, more modern. And my thought processes have changed. Because of English? Because of English. Access to literature, and books. Those books, which are not available in Urdu language." For Yas, English has opened the possibility to sit with educated and intellectual people, which has made him more expressive. He was part of a panel on education, which was conducted in English and in which many eminent personalities participated. He said, "There were so many great people sitting there, and you know being part of such great people, expressing yourself, representing yourself, it's really very important for me."

Simi felt that the process of acquiring English as well as the world of knowledge that has opened up to her has perhaps made her more open minded. She shared:

I don't know whether English made me this, or maybe the social network in which I am moving, and that is, again, the English-speaking people, that made me less conservative. Now A lot of things, like when I'm talking about misfit, a lot of my ideas, my thinking, they are totally different. Yes, I say that I'm more liberal on a lot of social issues. Is it also because English has made more knowledge accessible to you so that, that has changed your thinking? Yes. And now I read a lot, and I read on everything. I don't have any specific interest. I will read politics. I will read literature. I will read fiction.

*Self-love.* Simi further shared how non-elites who learn English, start taking better care of themselves. She said:

And one thing which I observed is that when we start speaking English, it's not just that you are speaking English, it's that you start investing on your outlook too. Somehow there is our mentality, we want to change everything around that, like we want to be an Englishman altogether as well. You know, those people who are from the background like which is not very much supportive to the elite structure, but when like they start changing their appearance as well as their communication skills.

**The impact of not knowing English for non-elites.** The elites in Pakistan, literally the one percent, attend expensive elite schools, travel the world and grow up with English. They appear unaware of what a person who does not have these advantages goes through in a society like Pakistan where English is the gatekeeper and passport for entry to almost anything and everything that is meaningful. From the responses of the participants of my study, I was able to

gain an understanding of what it means to not know, or what one suffers by not knowing, English, and how it affects, or may affect, one's identity.

*A Crime.* Hubi felt that many talented people cannot get ahead in life simply because they cannot speak English and compared it to a crime:

English is really neglected in our society and it is impacting the life of a lot of people, a lot of genius talented people. They are lagging behind in their careers just because they can't speak better English. They are genius, they have intelligence, they have great minds but they cannot excel just because they cannot speak English. And that's not their crime. But it has become their crime now.

*Question of existence.* Hubi further shared that the level of despair a non-elite can experience for not being able to speak English, and which she experienced, can become a question of one's very existence. This can only translate into a very compromised identity. She said:

I became conscious when I entered my medical school that it is now the question of your existence. Yes. I realize when I enter medical school that now it has become the question of your existence. If you can speak English or you can't. Because it literally shattered someone's confidence.

*Fear of being ridiculed.* From personal experience, I know that people, mainly non-elites, are ridiculed in Pakistan for speaking poor English and/or for their accent and/or for their pronunciation. This creates an insecure identity. Simi shared that non-elites who "cannot speak that good English they are all the time thinking, if I will ask this question, how can I ask this? Can I speak that good English? People will start laughing at me. A lot of people have this fear in Pakistan." This stark reality further negatively impacts their efforts towards fluency in English.

She shared an incident about her supervisor at a conference where people were laughing at the way he spoke:

Like for instance one of my supervisors in Pakistan, he was very good researcher and worked on migration and poverty and people really admired his work but when he comes to like presentations and going to different seminars and conferences, I saw people laughing just because his pronunciation of the words was not good and he could not talk in fluent English in British or American accent. So he suffered from that in a way.

***A source of depression.*** Not being able to speak English can be a source of a depressed Identity. According to Shah:

So I wasn't that much shy or scared that I could not speak, but my friends who were from rural areas of Pakistan, they were very scared that our fellow guys are speaking very well English and giving a good presentation and getting good marks. They cannot speak even one line, so they were shy, they were depressed. I wasn't that much shy or depressed.

***Pressure to oblige.*** Simi narrated that until she learned English she lacked self-belief and felt pressure to oblige others, especially those that could speak. In other words, an obsequious identity. She shared:

Now I'm very much confident for instance I got this paper for review and another thesis for review as an expert in this field. Now, when I'm writing about and I'm reading this, I am not obliging. I am not obliged to give good reviews. Before that, maybe I would be doing this.

***No one listens if you speak in Urdu.*** Ainee lamented how English carries weight and Urdu does not. In other words, a person who only speaks Urdu has a marginalized identity. He said:



Yeah, you can say that there is more weight if you speak in English, then people listen to you, and think that what you are saying is maybe worth listening to. But if you speak in Urdu, of course you are more or less disregarded, people don't even listen to you.

Anu was even more blunt when she shared her feelings about the sad inconsequentiality of Urdu in Pakistani society. She felt that as she learned English and noticed how differently people were behaving towards her, it made her sometimes feel negatively toward Urdu. These negative feelings went away once she traveled to Europe and saw how much mother tongues were respected across the continent. She shared:

I didn't want to say it but, yeah, sometimes, yes, because that's what people make me think like that. Because they don't listen when I talk in Urdu, but they actually leave their chair when I talk to them in English. So I feel there is no respect you know, what if, you know I cannot hold my degree in my hand that see see see I am so educated you know, I cannot speak in English but I am such an educated person. But they don't listen to you. And when you start actually start speaking with them in English they are like madam madam madam come come come we will listen to you. So that is the reason.

***You start underestimating yourself.*** Simi who works in a highly respected public institute of research, shared how not knowing English made her start doubting herself; a self-doubting identity. She shared:

I met a couple of friends over here who were from the elite background, my colleagues, and they were speaking in English. They were very good in English. And then I realized that although I have a lot of knowledge, better knowledge, but I am not like... When I'm going to a meeting or stuff like that, people are not taking me seriously, because I was not communicating in English. Maybe they were thinking I'm unable to convey or express

what I want to say. That put me ... That was a lot of pressure. It was a lot of pressure because you start underestimating yourself.

She further shared how once she had learned English, she felt less pressure. She sighed a sense of relief as she reminisced:

Yes, I feel a lot of change in myself. I don't see much pressure while moving in these circles in society, and when I am talking about society, mostly, I am talking about my social network, more towards professional network. I feel less pressure while navigating my professional base.

*No English no recognition.* Kai felt that there is no encouragement towards Urdu as you cannot get recognition in Pakistan unless you speak English. She said, “especially in Pakistan, there is no encouragement, Sir what I am trying to say is that without English we cannot get any recognition anywhere.” In other words, without English your identity goes unrecognized.

*If you can't speak English, you hide:* As a teacher of English to underprivileged children I am witness that children who are the weakest in English often are the quietest and it is almost as if they hide through their reticence. This could be termed a fearful identity. Yas validated my impression when he shared, “Yeah, I was more confident. And the confident people obviously, you know, they behave differently. And the people who are unconfident they behave differently. They are shy, they hide themselves. So after knowing English I was not like that, I was very expressive.”

## **Theme 6. The Knowing of English versus the Using of English**

When I had originally framed this sub-question in my protocol, my thinking was that perhaps non-elites may feel a sense of empowerment in having the option to exercise or not to exercise the use of the English language. However, as my interviews progressed, I came to

realize that the perspective of the participants of my study was based on the ground realities in Pakistan where many people, certainly not the majority, can draft letters and applications in English but have no ability to speak the language. They equated knowing with that basic rudimentary non-verbal level, and using with the ability to actually speak English. I came to this understanding when I was well into the interviewing process and it led me to a “re-realization” of the critical importance of acquiring actual verbal fluency. It was an “ah-ha” moment when I realized that it is the engagement in actual conversation in English that is the source of empowerment for non-elites.

Aka, Anu, Kai, Hubi, Huma, Nad, Rose, Shah, Simi and Yas all felt that spoken English was very important and empowering. They felt it gave them respect, dignity and credibility. Simi answered the question with just one word; she simply stated “using.” Aka admitted that the rural context he works in does not afford him the opportunity to use spoken English. However, as mentioned earlier, he begins every speech and training with English in order to establish his credentials. For him, the knowing element of English, as in his good writing abilities, are contributing more to his progress and leadership. He said:

So my English right now is not contributing ... spoken English, I'm not talking about the written. But my written English, yes, still now, for communication in English. And the more I write in English, the more it makes sense to the other and people start believing in these things. Although my written English is also not very good if you compare with any qualified person but I can really ... I work very hard, if you can write a very good piece in 5 minutes, I can write not good equally in terms of English but 70 percent in like half an hour or one hour.

Anu was very clear that it is spoken English which is empowering as, perhaps, far too

many people in Pakistan know the rules of English grammar but have no ability to converse. She shared:

Using English is more powerful, of course. I have seen so many people in my, because now I'm an English teacher and I'm training some girls, so I can see so many people even girls or boys they exactly know the tenses, the sentences, the parts of speech; you know present, past, or future. But they can't use it! They can't communicate with you.

When I put this question to Hubi; whether knowing or actually speaking English was more empowering, she responded:

Its use, of course. It's use. No matter how much English novels you read, no matter how much your English grammar is good, but how fluently you speak English, this matters a lot. For me, the actual usage. I should know.

Huma was very clear in that she considers the power of speech as the critically important element of the whole paradigm of English when it comes to non-elites:

For my opinion, even you know, you can't read and understand, but you speak English, so it's a more powerful compared to reading. Because I know so many peoples which is my friends, they don't read and write English, they just speak English, and fabulous English. I know these peoples. I have a friend which is Sikh. He is a Sikh from India, but he lives in New York. He is a taxi driver, he is a world leader and connect to different programs just because he speaks a fabulous English.

Nad also felt that speaking English in Pakistan is very empowering but added another Element in that he was cognizant where not to use English. He shared:

I think, in Pakistan especially, it's using English. Knowing English is not sufficient enough. I think for me, in my case, it's both. Both are important. Knowing and using.

There are places where I should not use the language. I should not consciously use the language. I need to be very conscious when I speak with my relatives, with my parents that I do not use even a single word of English language. Because if in the sentence, that very word is the key word and my parents are unable to comprehend the word and they don't know the meaning, I mean that demeans the purpose of speaking to them. But in some cases, using English is empowering.

Rose was emphatic in her views and opinion on the subject, which of course, were based on her own experiences. She said:

Using. Using English is empowering. Knowing, yes. But if you don't know how can you use it, it's a question. Both are important. But sometimes you might know English and you don't care to show anybody that you know English? It's required to show. All the time. In your official life, it's required to show. Use is empowering. And I think that English using, knowing, and speaking is very very important. Whenever I talk about communication skills, it's in English.

Shah reflected that when he was not aware of the importance of English, it didn't matter to him whether he knew how to converse or not. But now that he could speak well, he felt its use was more empowering than earlier when he only had a technical knowledge of the language. He narrated:

Yeah, didn't care about English. As far as learning was concerned I was good in English, my written English was good. But as far as speaking is concerned, I wasn't interested in that. But you can say that I wasn't aware that why should I learn English. I guess use is more empowering, it's how you use it. If you know some skill but you do not use it, I

think that skill is useless for you. So, if you have some skill and you use that properly, I think that skill will become useful.

Yas was very clear in his response and shared how the good impression one makes when speaking in English in Pakistan is a source of empowerment. It also raises your value in the eyes of educated people, invariably the elite. He added the element of transfer of knowledge to others that has been acquired through English. He said:

I think it's more empowering to use English. Because when you use, then people get impressed by yourself. You are using that thing. But when you know that the thing is just inside you. So using is more important. When you use obviously then you are just giving your knowledge to others, you are transferring it. So, I think it makes you more important amongst the people who are educated, who can speak English. So the use is very important. It, actually it empowers you.

### **Theme 7. English and Leadership**

This was the most important part of my research and every time I asked a question around leadership I approached it with some trepidation. I was excited to hear participant experiences but also anxious that my findings may not align with my thinking. I also had to be careful to not ask, unintentionally, loaded questions. I did not want to lead my interviewees in any direction and wanted to hear their pure unadulterated stories.

One of the main, and what could also be called a critical finding of my research, is: English may or may not create leadership but English definitely enhances leadership. While most participants felt that they had leadership qualities but that their leadership had been greatly enabled and enhanced by English. Half the participants felt that the ability to speak English provides opportunities for leadership enactment with some saying that it bestows leadership.

Most of them also felt that in a society like Pakistan with its long Anglo-colonial history and deep class stratification, leadership is not possible without English. Some mentioned English as a component of leadership development, while a few mentioned the importance of English for international leadership. A couple of them felt that leadership has to be learned and one shared how leadership was nurtured in her by her father. Last but not least, two interviewees said that leadership is possible in Pakistan and two thought that without English you can only lead illiterates in Pakistan.

**Leadership is not possible without English.** Ainee, Anu, Hubi, Huma, Kai, Shah, Simi and Yas all felt that leadership is not possible without English in Pakistan. When I asked Rose about any possible link between the two, she was emphatic in saying, “Of course it’s linked, it’s linked, it’s linked.” Ainee said:

In the early part of my working life, English was only used in the files, in the noting and drafting. It wasn't used in public dealing, because most of the public is illiterate. And it wasn't used in the interaction that we had amongst ourselves the officers and the clerks. It was there in the early stages. But later in life, when I was reaching the end of my career, I took over a position where English, it mattered. I joined the National School of Public Policy in Lahore, which is the premier institution for the training of public servants. I became a dean there. I joined there as one. And there, I realized that English mattered. It was necessary for the dean and for chief instructors and for NIPAs, because the medium of instruction was English. All the guest speakers who used to come there were required to deliver their lecture in English. So this was where I realized that English was necessary.

When asked if it is possible to create leadership in Pakistan without English, Anu responded: “If you talk about Pakistan, then English is necessary. It's necessary here. You have to teach them English. Yes. To make them into leaders. Yes, you have to.” When I asked Kai if she could be the leader she is today without knowing English, she said:

Sir, unfortunately, I would not be a leader without English. Unfortunately, I'm just saying. Sir unfortunately, because the environment has built the thing in our mind that a person without English, whoever, a leader or another person, whatever ...Boss, whoever could be nothing without English. Could be nothing without English. Yes sir. If we are talking about Pakistan, then ... And you are about to be a leader, so you have to know about English. Means, your step, as I have told you earlier is that it is a step of success. Not we can say the key to success, but step to step success.

Shah had an interesting take on why English is important for leadership in Pakistan given that many people have a rudimentary knowledge of the language. He added, more relevantly, that to lead people from the elite classes is not possible without English. He said:

Like, let's say I have hired some employee and he's used to speak bilingual, he used to use English words as well. So if I'm his boss and in the meeting he says something and I don't know five or six or seven words, what he spoke, then I think it's a shame for me, I cannot understand what my employee is saying, and I am just claiming that I am a good leader. So I think that English is required to the leadership of elites, for the leadership of foreigners, for the leadership of good human resource need English. So if you have to lead a group of laborers, and the low class employees you can do without English, but to lead a proper company like I'm doing you need English.



Simi's response on this question was mixed. On the one hand, she felt that leadership is possible in Pakistan without English but then admitted that in her own consciousness she would find it hard to accept a person as a leader who cannot speak English. She shared:

My gut feeling says yes, but again ... like when I am sitting in front of TV, and I am listening to a leader and he is speaking very bad English, we say that he or she is not a good leader. I have that. Even you have that? Yes. When it comes to getting a good position in upper echelon of the society maybe it becomes difficult.

Yas was very clear in his response to the question. He gave the interesting example of the Pakistan cricket team and their trials with trying to speak English well in order to get respect and credibility, which are essential elements of leadership. He narrated:

Yeah. Obviously. Obviously. For a leader it's really necessary to speak English. In Pakistan. You cannot be a leader without English? No. Not at all. No way. I will give you a simple example. In the Pakistani cricket team, people are very talented in cricket but if they cannot speak English the others, the audience, they are ridiculing them because they cannot speak English. They have to go to learn English. They learn English, then they come to there, then they make their speeches and then they have that respect, which they deserve. Although their talent is to play. Their talent is not to speak in English. But still people are not giving them that respect, which they deserve. So in the same way I would say that anywhere, in any of the departments in Pakistan, if you want to just have the...

Yeah. Acceptance.

**English provides opportunities for leadership enactment.** Anu, Kai, Rose, Shah, Waji and Yas shared how English provides numerous opportunities for leadership enactment to non-elites. Anu shared her story:

One recent example is I was doing a job in a IT company and I was HR manager there ok and I was one of the youngest persons there and I saw one thing that everybody, some of them were actually getting more than me because they were doing a lot of other things you know designing and other stuff but the fact is that I could speak in English and they don't. So you know when they want to take or ask something from the boss or you know request something from the boss, they always tell me that OK Anu they (the boss) speaks in English and you speak in English so can you go and pass our message to him. I said ok ok I can do that you know. That's how I became a leader, actually I become a leader everywhere wherever I go.

Kai and Shah both had similar experiences when they were asked to act as hosts at school events. Kai recalled:

They pushed me to get into the activities like speeches, like I get to host the function in English. They knew there is something in me that I could put a lot of effort to speak in English. There was a phenomenon of effort and they said you can do it and they encouraged me a lot. That was a point where my self-confidence started building. My teacher said, "Yes Kai, you can do it." I done a lot in front of people. So at that time, teachers started asking me that Kai you are a good speaker, teachers ask me to participate. So that was the thing that if they can believe in me, so why don't me. I can do it. So I started doing that and at that time, I just, you know sir. I started feeling different from others.

Shah's shared his experience:

I got a good review in my school that he's a good speaker, he can speaker English. So I used to do hosting in all the events of the school, in the college as well, "Ask Shah, he

will do the hosting." Yeah, because of English as hostings were in English, like prize distributions, like any activity, their hosting was in English. So what others doing that write the content and cram that and speak that, but I wasn't fond of that. I used to take notes and I used to speak naturally. I established my skill in my university as well, after that I took part in almost every event, I used to do hosting. Yeah, so I have positive impacts, I had respect, my teacher used to give me that respect that he can speak good English, we can give him to any ceremony or any conference or any presentation. So that was a positive impact on my life, I was gaining confidence.

Rose who works at a very senior level in the banking bureaucracy shared that there was no possibility of her being in the leadership role that she is in without English. She said:

Panels assess on the basis of your communication instead of your degrees, instead of other things. Of course, in business English. The interview is the first stage to get position in any organization. I would not be able to get to that position of executive director if the interview was not cleared over there. Board conducted interview and the language was English.

Waji who completed her degree from one of the best engineering colleges in Pakistan, narrated the following:

I'm working in a research group. My qualification wise, I'm the most junior but I have been doing research for the last year and a half and all of my peers are relatively new so, I am kind of a leader there. Not a leader but kind of. So again, I think I'm very good at what I'm doing because my main job includes literature reviews so obviously if my English is good, only then I can read all those numerous articles and papers and stuff and

studies. So yeah. It has affected me. Obviously again, as I said earlier, I am where I am because of my English language skills.

Yas who works at a large public school for girls, and perhaps the only teacher there who is fluent in English, said the following:

In my school I can speak English, so whenever there is a ceremony, whenever there is an event, I was the one who was just selected for the hosting because I can speak English. I'm the one who can receive people. So they just send me to receive people. For example, ministers are coming and all these people are coming, so I go there. So that's really impressed people. Then people make you leader. Then people come to you, then people ask you questions. So I think that using English is very much important.

Yas added how he was given a higher level position because of his English skills. He said, "People have positive thinking for me, they considered me as educated and although I was appointed as a primary teacher but I was put up to the secondary classes. So that was very appreciating (encouraging) for me." Yas also narrated how he was asked to be part of a powerful panel on education due to the work he did translating a teacher's guidebook from English to Urdu, work that he could never have done without his strong language skills. He shared his experience, which honed his leadership further:

When we had done that Teacher's innovation book and you know I was sitting there in that panel and I was representing the government teachers. So I think you know it was a really amazing experience for me. And I think it's all because of the English language. If I did not have the language, I would not be there, it's so simple.

**English enables and enhances leadership.** Aka, Anu, Kai, Shah and Yas all felt that their leadership abilities had been enabled and enhanced by their acquisition of English. Aka felt

that as a person in the field of education, English became the path that increased his theoretical knowledge and therefore enhanced his leadership. He said:

I can answer your question, that's the English helped me in my leadership because those words were making sense in my mind. Rote learning, 14th century content, elite content, and a lot of words - these are all making sense to me. And I have different points of view with these. Like "fantasy", we use the word fantasy in children's literature. In Pakistan, a lot of educationalists believe that fantasy is "jhoot". It's a lie. Fabrication. So if you start using the word fantasy, then you will not use the children's language. You will always cut down that thing because that symbolizes the "jhoot", lie, everything to you. Just like the "tamashay", just like the "kutta" or "kuttiya".

For Anu, losing the fear of rejection greatly enhanced her leadership, which has been shared earlier. She said that English allows her to travel the world without worrying about communication barriers. She had a unique take on how she now feels equal to anyone anywhere. She said:

Like I said earlier, that I was all alone standing there, I wasn't afraid and I said I can't speak your language. And so are you! You can't speak English. So, yeah that English enhanced my leadership and... because over here then you don't need to be afraid that oh, I'll get rejected. If I'm applying somewhere either for a job or for a course, for a university or college or whatever. But I wasn't afraid then, oh what if I'm rejected. I knew that, I know English. I will get this admission. Or I will get this job or whatever. I can get any- somewhere. So yeah, it enhanced as you say... It enhanced your leadership? Yeah.

Kai summarized that she always had leadership ability and also that leadership does not come from English. She, however, used a beautiful metaphor and called English, “The cherry on the cake” of leadership. She shared:

Sir for me, leadership doesn't come from English. Leader has his own qualities. I just told you that he is a kind of person understands everything, has ability to manage everything, to know the difference between right and wrong, to be able to tell the difference whoever, elder or younger. He is able to tell the difference between right and wrong to everyone. So for me, the leadership doesn't come from English, but, yes, it is cherry on the cake. So, it could be like that. Basically I'm just trying to say that leadership is enhanced by English.

Like Kai, Shah also felt he had leadership abilities but that these have been enhanced by English. He said that leadership is not something that can be acquired overnight and has to be learned over time. He said:

Yeah, I was because whenever we have some plan with friends, I used to lead that, I used to plan that. Let's say some birthday party of my friends, I used to, okay, this this money everybody has to pay, I will manage this, I will manage this. So it was in my skills, leadership was there. I used to lead my friends, I used to lead my family as well, I used to work with my father in his business as well. So I was having leadership skill, I think, before having English as well. So after having English skill it get improved, now I am doing the leadership of the company of 12 people, 12 people are working with me. I am leading them. So English is also playing a role in that, I have leadership skill, but I think leadership can be learned with the time, with the different mistakes. You cannot be a leader, be able to wake up and you're a leader. No, I don't so. For leadership you have to

spend time, you have to learn from your own mistakes, you have to go and you have to study different leaders, and then you can be a good leader. So I am trying to be, I'm in phase of leadership, I'm trying to be a good leader.

Shah also termed English a trait of leadership in Pakistan and that English had given him the confidence to be able to lead any team whether local or foreign. He shared his feeling about this in detail:

Actually, now I think that I am very good leader, but there are traits of leadership which I have to learn, there are different traits, how to handle people, how to handle pressure, and I have to learn. But the basic traits which are required for leadership which includes English which included good communication, which includes how you carry yourself, how you carry your work, that I know, I have English. If you give me a team of 10 Americans, I can even convey my message to them, I can even lead them, I have the confidence that I can lead any team because I have a language skill, which is English.

Yas was very clear and definitive on the topic and gave English all the credit for the emergence, development, and enhancement of his leadership ability. He shared his experiences in detail:

Because my language skills were good, so people just go around you and they come to you for many things and have so many works with you. I will give you the example of the people at my school, they often come to me and ask me to write applications and letters to the different government departments, obviously they ask me write reports, ask me to write speeches for the students and so many things. So that's how I am just leading them because they know I am the one whose English-speaking skills and my writing skills are better than others. So because of my better English speaking and writing skills,

my mates, my fellow English teachers, the management, the people, the students, they come to me, they ask for my help and that's how my leaders qualities are enhanced, they are increased and I am enjoying it. So English turned you into a leader? Yeah. Obviously. Obviously. It let me earn so much money. But money is something different. And leadership is something different. So are you saying English enabled your leadership? Yeah. Absolutely. Actually, I think that when, in a country like Pakistan, when you are speaking English, then the respect you receive, that makes you leader. So, knowing English people start treating you like a leader, is that what you are saying? Yeah. Absolutely.

**English as a component of leadership development in Pakistan.** Simi and Yas both indicated that they would place English right at the top of any leadership development program while Waji noted she would place it high but not at the top. Simi shared:

At the top. I would definitely put English on the top. Because that's what I suffer. Like internally, I feel like language should not be a barrier in leadership. But it is there, and to become an effective leader and to be heard, because you know in Pakistan it's not that you are accepted among masses. It's about that whether those top people they accept you or not. It's what they think of you.

Yas was again very clear on this topic as well and was unhesitating and spontaneous in his response:

Obviously, on the top. I think this question is quite easy because all the higher studies are in English and here, as I told you previously, that people consider yourself educated if you speak English. So if I'm designing any such kind of program, English would be on the top. First people can speak English, then obviously the science, mathematics, and the



other subjects are coming. We're talking about a leadership program we're not talking about an academic program. Yeah. Obviously. Obviously.

Waji was more measured and thoughtful in her response:

Again, it depends obviously because the course is leadership. I need to teach him other things as well, which should be of more priority like how to deal with people, how to be a good leader or how strategic or management and stuff like that because these are important leadership qualities. Therefore, I think proficiency in English is rather not that important in comparison to all those qualities. That's why I'll not give it the top of my priority. Would it be in the top five? Yes, it would be.

**English as a component of international leadership.** Although my study and the questions therein were focused purely on Pakistan but references to international leadership (i.e. leadership ability to lead and act on the international stage, and/or to interact with foreign persons and entities) emerged in the narratives. Hubi shared:

Because English is international language, you cannot be a leader without speaking English. That's simple for example, if I had been elected Education Minister of Pakistan and I need to go in different countries to discuss different ideas. English would be the medium. And probably the only medium I guess.

Huma said:

I am a leader, but I am like leader for my community. But when I speak English, I am a leader of the world. Because I've speak on the stage on women in the world, I've speak on Tukaram stadium London. I've speak in Bangladesh on Asia 21 Young Leaders stage. When I speak English, so I speak on a stage of China and thousands of people of China, even political, nonpolitical, academic person. So I am a leader before that, but I am a

world leader after that. Actually, I always thinking I am a community worker, not a leader. Because I believe to work with a community for changing the community. But yes, somehow, I'm a leader because I connect my work to the world and raise my people's voice on different stages and sharing my community stories on different stages. So yes, English is a very supportive thing to louder my voice to the world.

Shah said:

There are motivations for English, that if you are a good English speaker you can communication with the whole world, on Facebook, on any social media platform, you can convey your message. So English is a source of confidence, source of motivation, and now it is paying me financially as well. It is giving me monetary benefits as well. And the last thing is I can communication with the whole world, everybody can understand English. Somebody cannot understand Chinese, Japanese, a lot of issues, but you can communication your message in English. So, whichever country I will visit, I have no problem. I can communication my message at least. So that image give me need of English that there is need of English, there is need of speaking English, if you have to communicate with the world, if you have to survive in the world you should be speaking English. Yeah. So that point, that image give me the realization.

**In Pakistan you only lead the illiterate and uneducated if you don't know English.**

This was an unexpected finding and upset me a bit. It elucidates the structures and barriers that exist against the non-elites, who go through public school, where the acquisition of spoken English is next to impossible. Shah and Simi shared their feeling on this matter. Shah said:

If I continue my leadership without English that will be a local leadership. I can lead a group of people of Pakistan without English, I can lead a group of people who are less

educated, but to lead the people who are very educated... Even here? Yeah, here. So, I think that English is required to the leadership of elites, for the leadership of foreigners, for the leadership of good human resource need English. So, if you have to lead a group of laborers, and the low-class employees you can do without English, but to lead a proper company like I'm doing you need English.

Simi shared that leadership is possible without English because seventy percent of the population is illiterate and one could lead them in the vernacular. But when it came to being a leader among the educated, where it would matter, this would not be the case. By inference, it would also mean weak leadership that could be easily subverted. She said:

I am saying that leadership is possible without English and why am I saying this is 70% of our population is still living rural area and again like the literacy rate is very low. Ok. And when we talk about literacy rate it just means that you can read or write your name. So it's just a basic definition of literacy. But if you really want to know if they can read anything, they can't. So, maybe if a person is speaking in their own language, who has vision, he can survive among the masses. I have a couple of people who I know who are motivational speakers and they are speaking in Urdu and stuff like that and people are following them and they are getting like their presence, like you can see them on the TV and stuff like that. I think it's good to hear them but when it comes to like delegate them maybe the so-called leaders which we have right now maybe will not give them right now the chance.

**Presence of elements of leadership.** Half the participants of the study felt that elements of leadership were present in them before they learned English. Kai answered the query with a simple “Yes Sir.” While Anu said, “I would say yes, because I had those qualities in my school

also, you know that I used to be a leader or something. So, yes I had that quality. Yeah.” Hubi shared how she was encouraged by her teachers towards leadership and by helping her colleagues, it developed further:

Leadership qualities I have since my school life. This is because my teachers gave me so much confidence and they always taught me that she has learned something and she presented me in front of all the class, that you should learn from her. That she has achieved good result and you should learn from her. Then I started from that time, I started teaching my fellows that how she can excel in their exam. I think this is what leadership is when you can teach people of the same group.

Nad narrated how as a young boy he used to work in a factory to supplement the family income and that he led his team there. He shared the following:

I think I was a leader when I was working as a 13-year old in a factory where child labor was not allowed, and I was leading other three boys to run 24 loom factory. I mean, to run in a way ... I don't know if you know how the loom works, but there is this bobbin that takes out the thread and help the machine run. So I and the three other boys, we were responsible to work for 12 hours and to manage all of that.

He further shared how he went to the director of his institute and convinced him to allow poor children to come to study there even when his English was weak:

And at that point in time, I didn't know English so well. And I was not that good with the language to go and speak before the director. And I think that was because of my own personal life experiences. And perhaps based on those experiences, how I could relate to and convince the director to allow those slum kids just to enter the campus. And then allow us some space to teach them without any cost. So in that case, I mean, I was not

even confident enough to type an initial email that would go out to the directors P.A. for some time for an appointment. But people generally said ... That's what I've seen in life.

That without language, I'm good with whatever, you know...

Shah also felt that leadership was present in him before he learned to speak English, which has been shared before as well in the section on leadership enhancement:

Yeah, I was. Yeah, I was because whenever we have some plan with friends, I used to lead that, I used to plan that. Let's say some birthday party of my friends, I used to, okay, this this money everybody has to pay, I will manage this, I will manage this. So it was in my skills, leadership was there. I used to lead my friends, I used to lead my family as well, I used to work with my father in his business as well. So I was having leadership skill, I think, before having English as well.

Simi said:

I think I was, in a way, but I didn't know that. Before that, I was a little ... as I mentioned before that, I was very much active in extra-curricular ... all the time, I used to take lead, to arrange trips. I was the student representative for the faculty meetings, student and faculty meetings.

**Nurtured towards leadership.** Kai shared how her memorization of the scriptures gives her a unique position in her home, and which nurtured leadership in her. She narrated:

Sir, let me tell you a thing that I have told you I am Hafiz-e-Quran. So, Hafiz-e-Quran are given so much respect. So my mother treat me like a princess. Made me sleep in front of the fan. Whenever I come to home, especially she cooks for me. Serve me first a leg piece (preferred piece of chicken). She would have a leg piece for me. Sir, my father ... Whenever I come to home from Madrassa, my father calls, beta (child) what you have to

eat, what you have to do? He was just treating me like a guest, putting everything in front of me, decorating a table, and yes Kai, this is for you, this is for you. And sometimes, she is used to feed me with her own hands. Because my parents always treated me ... They always treated me like a leader. You know as a leader ... Leader has a lot of abilities, a lot of things, qualities. Like a leader understands everything, a leader knows how to handle other thing. So always they treated me like a princess, but they had idea that Kai can do this thing. Kai can understand that thing. So, they always had idea ... now my father ... When there was my mother, she was about to take my opinion, my father discusses everything with me, I give them idea. Not idea, just a word ... Whatever happens in my ... Whatever my mind says that this should be done or this should not be done. And they have openly ... They have said you can say anything openly. They have boundary between parents and children, but I can say anything to my father, with the limits. With the respect, but I can say anything. Whenever my father is doing bad, good, I give my opinion. Whenever I say everything good or bad in my father, whenever we sit in night and we eat together. Me and my father eat together at night. Whenever we get a time to eat. Basically, we take dinner daily together. So me and father, it was a done thing. So basically he is, at that time, I say everything. Whatever happens to me, even whatever the street person says to me. Bullying or whatever the things happen. Anything. I share everything to my father. So basically he really made me a leader. Even before English? Yes sir, even before English.

### **Theme 8. English and its Relationship to Mother Tongue in Pakistan**

The question of mother tongue and its relationship to English learning and acquisition was an important part of my research. As the findings have so far shown, people who cannot

Speak English are considered uneducated in Pakistan. They are unable to get respect in society and have limited opportunities. The findings under this theme were mixed and interesting and ranged from the ability to communicate ideas better in the mother tongue to the disregard of Urdu. An unusual finding was that most participants felt that their relationship with their mother tongue had improved as a result of their acquisition of English and that they respected it more now. Urdu has its own hegemonic role in Pakistani society and this was mentioned by one participant, while two spoke about how being weak in Urdu has become a status symbol. Two points with regards to mother tongue were mentioned in earlier sections; that English is a tool to advocate for Urdu and that Urdu implies backwardness and conservatism. One participant called Urdu an integral part of their identity and a source of credibility, while another spoke about how mother tongue gives dignity. Also mentioned was that Urdu does not make one feel empowered and that in professional environments in Pakistan, there is an unwritten understanding that Urdu is not kosher; at least not encouraged. Another lamented that society is destroying its roots by disrespecting Urdu. An interesting finding in this section was that scolding someone in mother tongue is more hurtful than doing it in English and also how many words in Urdu have more negative connotations than when the same words are spoken in English.

**Increased respect and improved relationship with Urdu.** While for Ainee and Waji there was no relation, Anu, Hubi, Huma, Nad and Shah all felt that their relationship with Urdu had strengthened. In speaking about her connection to Urdu, Huma eloquently stated: “I always love with my basic languages because when I speak Urdu, I speak from heart. When I speak English, I speak English from my mouth.” For Kai, her relationship to Urdu was a question of self-respect: “No, of course not sir. Now I'm 21 years old, so how can I do that? If I disrespect Urdu, so how would get I respect sir?” Anu’s travels, made possible due to her command of

English, made her realize the importance and respect given to mother tongues in other countries.

She shared:

I think that mother tongue is also important, at some places you have to speak that with family you know. Because now I have traveled some places and over there I have seen that their relation with their mother tongue is very strong, and they don't want to lose it at any cost. They're not like some Pakistanis, they're speaking English so they have lost their relationship with their mother tongue. But yes, I would want to make it more stronger maybe. I don't want to lose it at any way. You respect it more? Of course, I do. Because I am... my mother tongue. Because I have seen that with people they are living in what you can say a better country, so they're giving more respect to their mother tongue then we should too.

Hubi was very clear about her feelings. She is familiar with Urdu literature and has extensively read in it. She said:

I respect it even more. Because our Urdu language is so deep, so beautiful, it has a lot of emotions. Whenever I used to read Urdu novel, but I had to read English novel just to improve my English. But then I realized, Urdu novel had more emotions, more you know, it was more beautifully written, and for example there is a one word, and it has a lot of synonyms in Urdu. I love the Urdu sentence making and I love Urdu more. It's so deep. How has your knowledge of English impacted your relationship with your mother tongue? It has become stronger, I would say.

For Nad, his acquisition of English has engendered in him the desire to read the literature of his mother tongue which is Punjabi. He shared:



Yup. I think learning English and learning more and more English language has encouraged me to learn my native language more as well. I mean my bond with my native language has got strengthened more. And over time, I've realized that I've got more interested in my own mother language which is Punjabi. I mean, figuring out what work in Punjabi is being translated in other languages, especially English. What work from English is being potentially translated to Punjabi? How the Punjabis of Indian Punjab are working to improve the language and for the progress of Punjabi language at large. Why and how BBC launch its Punjabi service. How Mohammed Hanif, who writes well in English and does a very good video blog in Punjabi for BBC. I think my relation and my bond with my native language has got very strong, and English has perhaps played an important role in that. So there is this direct relationship. More English, more respect kind of. That's what I'm hearing? Yes, absolutely. That's why I said initially that this is, for me, I mean, that actually strengthened my bond with my native language and with other languages as well. And respect for those languages.

For Shah, greater levels of exposure to international audiences and the work he does in his language translation business has helped him develop a desire to work towards improving his mother tongue. He said:

Yeah, exactly. Because now my exposure is enhanced. It is enhanced and I saw that people love their mother language. Like Chinese, they don't want to learn English, they teach their children in Chinese. Now I've given you an interesting example over here, that Sikh people of India, they love their language, they make their movies in Punjabi, they teach their children, and kids in Punjabi, till the grade four, till the grade three. And if you see some Punjabi movie you will see how good vocabulary, how well instructed

Punjabi is there, and if you see our Punjabi ...that is damaged. So, they love their language, they preserve that. They respect their languages, so I have more respect for my mother tongue and my local language, so we have to preserve that. So, that is what English impacted and given me ... It taught me the importance of language, that there is a importance of language, it is a tool, what is the connection between language and history? So having English I have learned these things.

Yas shared his feelings in detail about the issue, which were instructive and laid bare the direct nature of the relationship that exists between higher levels of English proficiency and higher levels of respect for and an improved relationship with the mother tongue. He summarized:

It has it has actually because when I had started learning English, before I started learning English I was in the mindset that every country is speaking English, learning English, giving so much importance to English. But after learning English I have realized that there are countries that are giving so much importance to their mother tongue although that's a fact that English is a lingua franca and is being spoken all round the world but still countries like Germany France Japan China they give a lot of respect to their own languages to their mother tongues. So, you know obviously in a country like Pakistan if you cannot speak English and you just praise Urdu, so people will say you are praising Urdu because you cannot speak English you know, they just start just finding your mistakes. But when you know the language English and then you are just praising and advocating the Urdu language then it just creates some impact and it gives some power to your words. So, after learning English I really realized that, you know, from the bottom from my heart that learning different languages is obviously very good, it's a good skill

to have, but giving importance to your mother tongue it is you know like that, it is for the dignified people, it is the dignity you have inside yourself, so being dignified, to get dignity you need to give importance to your mother tongue.

**Disregard of Urdu.** Simi simply said, “I really believe that Urdu is deteriorating. We don't know how to write we don't know how to say things in Urdu.” Kai talked about how there was no encouragement and hence no interest in learning and improving the Urdu language. Her concern was that people have limited vocabulary and mix up the tenses, which is leading to a decline in the quality of the language. She admitted that even she was much more interested in learning English than Urdu. She shared:

I think we don't even know abcd of Urdu. Just we don't speak proper Urdu. For me, it is a gulabi (street) Urdu. We can say, for me, like not tenses, we have not vocabulary, the basic vocabulary of Urdu. We say that we don't have a vocabulary of English, like big-big words, we don't know. But we even don't know about Urdu. So for me, the bad relationship with both Urdu.... Means I can speak Urdu but can't get those words which are basically the part of Urdu.

When I asked Kai if she desired to improve her learning of Urdu, she responded that without English, non-elites cannot get recognition anywhere. She reflected:

Sir, could be a little bit, because we have no exposure to learn Urdu. We have just ... especially in Pakistan, could be in India, but especially in Pakistan, there is [pee-chay say] just you have to speak [pee-chay say hota hai na]. Encouragement? Yes sir, encouragement. No encouragement sir. What I am trying to say is that without English we cannot get any recognition anywhere. So you're saying that because of that, Urdu is neglected? Yes sir. This is the thing. Because everyone, even the teachers working here,

they are the officers. You even ask them that they know the better Urdu, they would say they don't ... Even they speak in Urdu, but they don't know the better Urdu, the real Urdu, the pure Urdu. No one knows the pure Urdu. So for me, my base is Urdu, so I can't disrespect Urdu. Yes, I can say this, I have more interest to learn English, rather than Urdu. I can say this. It could be a little bit part, means, if I talk about 100%, so there would might be 95% that I want to speak English, I want more vocabulary of English and 5% Urdu. For me, yes.

For Shah, the mixing up of the languages was damaging Urdu. The writing of English words in Arabic script is increasingly commonplace and is indicative of Urdu's capacity to absorb words from any language into itself. Shah said:

So because I am in the, manager of a language related business, but if you consider somebody who's not in this, his Urdu is affecting, because continuously speaking English, people are getting lack in vocabulary of Urdu. So that is impacting, but remember I am in the language business, I used to deal with all the three languages, so it's not affecting me that much. But what I believe is that we should not damage one language on the sake of other, that we use to mix a lot of English words in Urdu and English. And spoil Urdu. So this is bad, but if you speak your local language for the locals and the national language for the internationals, so there's not damage-

**Ideas can be better communicated in mother tongue.** Aka, Ainee, Simi and Waji spoke on the importance of communication in the mother tongue. Simi was clear on the topic and said, "I still feel that my ideas would be much more clear when I am speaking in Urdu. I can present my knowledge and communicate better in that." For Aka it was very simple as he works to develop books in Urdu. He shared:

Ninety-five to ninety-eight percent, I speak Urdu language so my relationship is always strengthened. And working with SM developing Urdu books, gave me the understanding that your conceptual understanding always develops in your mother tongue. If you have a weak mother tongue, you have difficulty articulating.

Ainee narrated how he switches to Urdu during his lectures at the University even though, officially, he is supposed to stick to English. He said:

In fact, to tell you the truth, in our university where I am teaching now, the language of instruction is English. But I teach all my subjects in Urdu, which is against the rules, and against the policy. But the children love it, and they understand better. And you're being fair to those whose English is not very strong? Absolutely, I think if I deliver my lectures in English, although I don't deliver lectures, but if we conduct the classes, the classroom learning in English, they won't understand. Many of them will have a problem. So they won't understand. The concepts are complex, and language is not their own language.

Like Ainee, Waji also felt that lectures delivered in Urdu are so much more effective given the fact that most students are not English speakers:

I had some amazing teachers who taught me courses like management and stuff and although they were well versed but they opted to speak in Urdu so their message could be far reached because even in a class, you have many people and most of them understand Urdu so definitely they choose that medium and I see it impacts. It matters.

Huma shared how she speaks from the heart in Urdu and is able to connect better with her audience. She said:

Even my Urdu is thank God, my Urdu is fabulous, because in Urdu, I speak from heart. So inshallah one day, I try my best same as in English when I speak to people, listen to

the heart. Because when I share my story in Urdu, every time I have so many comments from the people “we have goose bumps.” When I speak in Urdu, it's from my heart. But English, I finding vocabularies.

**Destroying the roots of society.** Simi lamented that due to the disrespect shown to Urdu, to the point of it being considered fashionable, Pakistani society was damaging its foundations. She shared how Urdu is discouraged in covert ways. She said:

Somehow this is our asset. This is what we are. You cannot run away from your reality, from your roots. But still we are trying to cut our people, but we are not thinking about how will we survive without roots. Like it's not written, it's not said, but in a way, in signs and in gestures, they are telling you that Urdu is not accepted.

**Respect for mother tongue is a sign of dignity.** As shared earlier, Yas fely that you cannot be a dignified person if you do not give respect to your mother tongue. He shared:

So, after learning English I really realized that you know from the bottom from my heart that learning different languages is obviously very good, it's a good skill to have, but giving importance to your mother tongue it is you know like that, it is for the dignified people, it is the dignity you have inside yourself, so being dignified, to get dignity you need to give importance to your mother tongue.

**Urdu does not make you feel empowered.** Waji shared that she is forced to use English to assimilate and admitted that using Urdu does not make her feel empowered. She said:

Sometimes I do subconsciously or even consciously use English to blend in in certain events or in certain places in certain settings but unfortunately, as much as I love Urdu, I cannot say that speaking Urdu makes me more empowered or something. I haven't reached that mental stage yet.

**Bad Urdu has become a status symbol.** As shared in earlier sections, Hubi and Simi lamented that not knowing or being weak in Urdu has become a status symbol. Hubi said, “So, they will be like “Urdu? I don't know how to speak in Urdu. I don't know how to speak Urdu.” They think that Urdu has a low standard.” Simi shared, “people are really proud when they say that "Oh, our kids are really weak in Urdu." They don't know how to write it or they don't know how to speak. This is another status symbol if your kid doesn't know how to write and read Urdu.”

### **Theme 9. Motivations to Learn English**

This was an important element in my study. Although to someone like myself who came from privilege, it would seem intuitive that people would be motivated to learn English in a society like Pakistan. However, hearing how people who actually face marginalization due to their non-English speaking backgrounds discuss their actual motivations was eye-opening. From having a craze to learn English with a vengeance, to a wanting to travel, to the desire to please parents, to needing access to a greater audience, were some of the motivations that were shared. Other narratives under this theme include wanting to order people around to being able to get employment anywhere to the desire to get to higher positions to wanting to understand movies and radio programs. As mentioned in an earlier section, the desire to blend in and be accepted by the elites was an overriding motivation. The names that the participants of my study gave their motivations was instructive as well as moving, and reflected the extent of the discrimination that one faces in Pakistani society if one cannot converse in the global lingua franca.

**Names of motivations.** The following is the list of the names, labels and definitions that the participants of my study gave to their motivations in their own words:

*Ainee:* A desire to be able to understand artistic creations.

*Aka:* To understand the cartoons and the movies.

*Anu:* English can change your life. It can give you better life much better life in Pakistan.

*Hubi:* A journey of a warrior.

*Huma:* It's like changing the mindset. And proving yourself.

*Kai:* I just wanna be successful. Success. I just need success.

*Nad:* To step out from the social and poverty barrier that I was in.

*Shah:* English is a need of time.

*Simi:* A door that can open a lot of opportunities and success and enter into elite society.

*Waji:* Initially the peer pressure of blending in. To be accepted. Now my motive is different. Now I want to improve my vocabulary and my writing to access more people, to access a greater audience.

*Yas:* When you start speaking a language which is the second language for you, that's really amazing. That's really interesting. That was the period, that was the time when I started speaking, I started taking interest.

**Desire to be the boss.** Kai who is only 21 years old and faced the tragedy of losing her mother at a very young age was full of excitement when she shared her motivation to acquire fluency in English. She said:

I wanna give orders. Big Salary. I wanna big salary, basically I wanna everyone works under me. I want that. Yes Sir. Sir I am putting a lot of effort. I am trying. My father is putting a lot of effort to bring me everywhere where I can get exposure, basically get groomed. This is all credit goes to basically my parents. Sir you can't even imagine whenever I see my parents, I just, you know.

**To please parents.** Kai also narrated how the pleasure her parents received hearing her



Speak in English motivated her towards greater levels of proficiency. She could hardly control her emotions as she shared this:

And wherever I speak in English my father just gets pleased, my daughter can speak in English. My father ask can you speak in English multiple of times and I speak to him and my mother and both of them just got pleased, yes my daughter speak in English. It was also a motivation for myself that even my father couldn't afford the fee and still he is putting a lot of effort and I wanna make his effort fruitful.

**Freedom to have many employment possibilities.** Anu felt that as her English was improving, people were treating her differently and this led to the realization that she could a job anywhere if she could reach fluency. She shared:

During that teacher training I met a lot of people, a lot of speakers used to come. As I started earning, I started going out and I started slowly gradually seeing that English is very important because with English you can get a job wherever you want to. I realized that, Oh! Okay. Yes, because I was thinking that I could only be a teacher in some preschool. But when I got a job there, I realized no, actually no. I can get a job anywhere. Because of English. So, yeah. And no other qualifications are needed? No, no, not in Pakistan at least. And people were giving me so much value that oh this girl can speak English although I was not conversing with them and actually this thing motivated me that English is so important that if you are living in Pakistan English is so important, you have to speak it, if you know English you can get job anywhere and make more money, so yes this thing motivated me a lot.

**To get out of poverty.** Nad shared a story from his childhood, which was the beginning of the realization and the motivation to learn English. He narrated:

I would say, to step out from the social and poverty barrier that I was in. And education was a mean for it and English was one of the major reasons. I knew in grade 10 that I could not get out of this poverty trap and whatever I was in without learning a language. And I realized that ...Without learning English primarily. Because when I was in grade 10, I used to work in a local factory in the nights and used to go to the school in the morning. One day, the supervisor came in and there was some letter in English, and there were so many labor and the supervisor himself he was unable to read the letter. And then someone told him this boy is in school show it to him and he came to me and gave me the letter. It was written by some manager or something. I read it out and translated it for him, and he was so surprised. I was like 10 tiers lower than him in the factory. And I was a kid of 14-15-year old. And other than that, I had no means to know the importance of the language, but I had that feeling that this (English) is one thing that would get out of me ...Out of all these circumstances. So at different stages of my life and at different edge points, I realized and I got conscious that this is how English is impacting how people see me and how do they value me.

**To blend in and be accepted as an educated person.** For Waji, the pressure to assimilate and the need to be accepted was overwhelming. She narrated:

To be honest enough, the pressure, the need to blend in because obviously for most of the people you'll ask, they would have responded in a way that speaking English is unfortunately a big criteria for ... it matters more than the education you have or the qualification you have. It all comes down to how you speak or how you present yourself. And proficiency in English is a big part of that. So that really motivated me, to be honest enough.

**To be able to travel (visit the US).** On the basis of his good academic standing, Shah was one of the students selected from his school to compete for a scholarship to tour the United States. He knew he could not pass the interview if he could not speak English at some rudimentary level. This led to his using an innovative technique to become conversational, which led to realizations of the power and importance of English. He said:

Yeah, so there's pressure I have to learn, I have to learn. If I have to get this scholarship, that was a huge opportunity for me that I will go to United States. So, that interview was the motivation? That interview and the tour of the United States was the motivation.

**To have the confidence to travel.** Anu's motivation to reach higher levels of proficiency in spoken English was also driven by the higher levels of confidence she was gaining from her travels. She said:

English also gave me the confidence that whether I live in Pakistan, I travel abroad, that although I cannot speak their language, Turkish or German or Italian, still I have that confidence, you know that I can travel, I can speak to them in English.

**To be able to understand movies and radio programs.** For Aka and Ainee, the fascination with English began with watching movies. They were fortunate to grow up in a golden era in Pakistan when movie theaters were everywhere and accommodated every price range. English movies were regularly released and were not dubbed. The cinemas were not just places where the elites and non-elites shared a common physical space but it also afforded non-elites the opportunity to hear English as well as imbibe the culture that is associated with English speaking countries which are invariably developed, advanced, modern and liberal. This is not the case anymore and movie theaters are expensive and well outside the affordability of average people. Aka candidly shared:

“My fascination with English it started with watching English movies. That's what I

would say. My father allowed me to watch movies. My father considered that the person who can speak English can be a good educated person. So while he could not afford to send me to an elite education institution, he was very optimistic in allowing me to go to see English movies. He used to take me to English movies a lot. And after his death the only place I could enjoy was in the cinema. I used to go to Capri cinema which showed English movies only and those movies gave me some kind of understanding of English. Ainee said that his motivation to learn English was “to understand the movies and later when I started listening to the BBC to understand the plays that were there and the comedy shows that were on the radio on the BBC, I wanted to understand that.” He narrated his journey in detail:

When I reached the 10th class we had started going to the movies. We were a group of 6 boys and we used to go to the movies every single day. Whatever pocket money we were getting from home we didn't eat anything we starved ourselves to movies. We bought the lowest possible cheapest tickets and it was the English movies that we were interested in. So, when we used to come out of the theater it was a problem that we all realized we were facing because we could enjoy the action but we could not understand the dialogue. No one was teaching the accent the pronunciation, how to speak was never taught to us. we were just reading and writing and that was it. So, I don't know what the others did perhaps they didn't do what I did. What I did was that I wanted to understand what they were saying in the movies, movies like Dr. No, Ian Fleming movies like From Russia with love. So, I bought Dr. No but I could understand because it was different kind of diction in that. So, I asked my father to help me understand that movie/novel. So, he helped me, he had an elementary knowledge of English, I used to read a couple of lines

and he used to translate. So, both of us read that novel in about 4 to 5 weeks. We used to sit for hours together and used to read page by page. It was painful too as there were words that I did not understand and my father also did not know the meaning of so we had a dictionary by our side and we used to consult that. That was how my first exposure to something that was out of my syllabus/course happened. After that I could still not speak but it was good exposure and it helped me understand what was there in the movie but it also confused me as the movies are always made slightly differently from the book.

#### **Theme 10. English and its Impact on the Self-View and Self-Belief of Non-Elite Learners**

Some participants of my study felt that their self-view had changed after learning English, while others did not think that it had. Ainee had mixed feelings based on the fact that his initial desire to learn English was to understand movies. He said:

I think it didn't change my self-belief or sense of identity much, because the objective of learning how to speak English, or to understand when English was spoken by a native English speaker was such that it didn't affect me or my personality as such. The intention was to understand, to understand what were they saying, the dialogue in the movies, and the plays, and whatever. So when I acquired that ability, I was satisfied with that and I liked it. And there it ended. In so far as self-belief or whatever is concerned, I think to a some extent, yes, self-belief, you can say it did influence myself in some ways now that I think about it. It gave me a kind of confidence in my own abilities to learn something on my own.

Waji had mixed feelings and while admitting that English had provided her with unattainable opportunities, she still felt her self-view had not changed that much. She summarized:

Yeah. Obviously, I felt more comfortable, I felt more confident but now, I don't think so other than that, after that part of me that has affected me a lot. But I would say the job I'm doing, I'm working as a research assistant, and obviously my job includes writing proposals and grants and stuff like that and writing reports, et cetera. Obviously, if I didn't have the proficiency in English, if I wasn't so good in English, I wouldn't be doing this job, although I really like this job but no matter how much I loved it, if I didn't have the skills, I couldn't be doing it. No, I don't think so it has affected it that much.

**Changed self-view.** Anu, Nad, Yas and Zam were very clear in their feeling that the process and acquisition had changed their self-view and self-belief. Zam put it very succinctly: “I have become more progressive, more moderate, more modern. And my thought processes have changed.” Anu said:

Self-belief is changed. Why? Because in the beginning, you didn't know that ... how much capable you are and how much opportunities you can get. But when you started learning it, and when you are on that point when opportunities are coming to you or people are coming to you and giving you more value or you started feeling different about yourself ... yeah, that's when my point, my belief is changed. I don't think like other girls, say they want to get married or they want to live here or they want to get married, because ... I started seeing it and no. I can work throughout my life you know.

Nad felt that his thinking about everything changed once he learned English. He started reading international newspapers and questioning prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness. He narrated his experiences in detail:

Yes. I think it actually transformed my self-view and self-belief. If I imagine myself without the English language, I would not be knowing a lot of things and a lot of view.

When I was in school in my grade nine, 10, I used to read the newspaper. And there was just Urdu newspaper, not in the school, but at the local barber's shop. At the barber's shop people get a haircut and read the newspaper which is of low standard. So without English, for me if I now compare the newspapers that I used to read in my grade nine and ten; Awam, Jurat, Riyasat, Ummat, with the papers that I read now, Guardian, Times and all, there is a huge difference. And people who write in Ummat, when I see their views, and there are so many controversial areas from Mumtaz Qadri to Tehreek-e-Labbaik and so many other issues. It changed a lot. So I think I changed my world view a lot. Yes. For an instance, when I was kid and in school the molanas would give the sermon and I used to get motivated from the narratives. And now I don't. My religious teacher who taught me when I was a child, he is a very good friend as well. He never went to a school. He is a Madrassa graduate. But we have this kind of relation that I request him not to do that. I request him not to build such and such narrative. So when I see my other friends, they have no problem with it, and they even become part ... For an instance, in the election, they used to setup the TLP banners in the goth, and I requested them not to do that. So that was the difference.

For Yas, English was the portal through which he could enter the world of the elites and this according to him changed his self-belief. He shared his unique views and experiences:

I felt confident. I felt really confident. I start meeting people. I start meeting those people. I start talking to those people where I think that I could not talk if I cannot speak English, so that was a change English created in me. You can go to the places where you cannot go if you cannot speak English. Because there are places the people think that when you go there, you only speak in English. The restaurants, there's some good and big

restaurants. There are some places, so I start going there and I really enjoyed that.

**No change in self-view.** Huma and Rose did not feel any change in their self-view and self-belief. Huma shared:

No. Because before the English, I am as it is and after the English, I am as it is. Even when I live in a slum I am same like as, and now I live in construct house, I'm same like a ...I never change myself because of the language, because of the lifestyle and because of it. I always believe that I am the same yesterday, today and tomorrow no matter what. Rose said:

I learn English as the requirement of my office and my studies. So I think there is no change because whenever I started in first year, there was not any option for me to do the course in English or Urdu, there was just medium, that was English. So I think it was mandatory requirement to have a graduation from St. Patrick's College and ICMAP. So that's it. There is no change.

### **Theme 11. Sources for Learning English**

Movies were cited as the number one source for learning English followed by the BBC and radio, then books and newspapers, English songs, cartoons, cricket commentary, motivating teachers, language centers, TV programs, teacher training program, focused practice with friends, translation games, and rehearsal. Many participants also mentioned that there are very few opportunities for actual conversation for non-elites. Yas said:

For the elite the places are different where they can easily learn English, where they can easily speak English, where they can practice English. But for the non-elite, if, for example, they have reached a place for learning English, where would they practice? There's no place for practicing English. So that's how the barriers for the middle class and



for the non-English speakers, non-elite people. They have no place of practicing English. They have no resources of learning English.

#### **Chapter IV Closure**

This chapter presented the findings to the questions posed in my study. I explained the process for analyzing the data utilizing a phenomenological approach and provided information of the interviewees. The results included eleven themes derived from the voices of the participants. The next chapter will discuss this study's findings in light of previous literature.

## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of non-elite Pakistanis in educational leadership positions concerning how they: (a) learned English through self-initiation, (b) reconstructed their identities as a result thereof, (c) changed their view of themselves as educational leaders, and (d) changed their behaviors as educational leaders.

I used a phenomenological qualitative approach to conduct my study. As Creswell (2013) points out, qualitative research is more than just equating data analysis with a particular approach to analyzing data. It involves organizing the data, reading through the data, reducing data into themes through a process of coding, condensing codes, interpreting data, and finally representing the data. Strategies can be deductive stemming from research questions or inductive stemming from the data.

Initially I felt that themes would emerge around my research questions in a deductive manner. However, once I began the coding, I gravitated towards an inductive approach to analyze the data and the codes and themes emerged out of the interviews. Qualitative inductive analysis is described by Patton (2015) as generating new concepts, explanations, results, and/or theories from the specific data of a qualitative study.

This chapter discusses the themes that emerged from the data, elicited from interviews with the participants of my study, in relation to previous literature and the findings of research studies in: (a) the field of motivation to learn a language and second language acquisition, (b) identity and identity reconstruction, (c) leadership cognition, and (d) leadership behaviors. When the four research questions and the eleven themes are matched according to relevance, the following rough alignments emerge:

Research question 1. Participants learned English through self-initiation.

1. Motivations to learn English;
2. Sources for learning English;
3. English education in public and non-elite schools and colleges;
4. The knowing of English versus the using of English;

Research Question 2. Participants reconstructed their identities as a result of learning English.

1. Identity Reconstruction: The impact of knowing and not knowing English in Pakistan;
2. English is the intersection at which elites and non-elites meet as equals;
3. English and its relationship to mother tongue in Pakistan;

Research Question 3. Participants changed their view of themselves as educational leaders.

1. English and leadership;
2. English and its impact on the self-view and self-belief of non-elite learners;

Research Question 4. Participants changed their behaviors as educational leaders.

1. The influence of English on the behaviors of non-elites;
2. Benefits for non-elites through the acquisition of English;

I will now discuss the findings of my study in light of existing literature and previous research studies in the area of language acquisition, identity, and leadership.

### **Research Question 1: Participants Learned English through Self-Initiation**

**Theme 1. Motivations to learn English.** Gardner & Lambert (1959) highlighted the centrality of motivation as a key factor contributing to success in second language acquisition. Motivation to learn a second language is defined by Gardner (1985) as, “the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (p. 10). Ryan and Deci (2000) theorized that intrinsic motivation,

which promotes our natural inclination to seek out challenges, explore, learn and attain mastery, reflects the positive potential of human nature more than any other phenomenon. Motivation concerns energy, direction and persistence and, when people are intrinsically motivated, they act with enthusiasm and tenacity (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Matthews (2014) suggests that Resiliency is another trait found in individuals who demonstrate high achievement despite encountering challenges and hardships that would impede an average person's progress. *Positive relationships* are a key factor in developing resiliency (Kitano and Lewis, 2005). These elements, and the resiliency and tenacity they engendered, had a bearing on the successful acquisition of English by the participants of my study.

***Positive relationships.*** Nearly all participants mentioned the positive relationships they had with their parents and the support they received from them in their learning trajectories, and which made them more resilient. As Kai said, "My father is putting a lot of effort to bring me everywhere where I can get exposure, basically get groomed. This is all credit goes to basically my parents." Simi also spoke about the support she received from her parents:

My parents, they are from a humble background. My father was a laborer in factories. He just passed 8th grade, and my mother is totally illiterate. But they really had that love for education. There is this blessing. When my school years begin, my father thought that I am one of the intelligent ones in the family, so he put me in a school that was one of the top. That school meant to be English medium, but all the teaching matters they were in Urdu, the teachers are speaking Urdu.

For Huma, the situation was unusual. Her father was hostile to female education but her mother secretly helped her go to school and financed it with her earnings as a seamstress. Huma said, "My mother really helped me. So my mother stitch clothes and finance my education." Aka

spoke of the love his father gave him: “Father raised me with a lot of love. He was not educated, could not even write in Urdu forget about English. He was very passionate that I receive a quality education.” Ainee’s education was supported by his parents and his first foray into trying to read an English novel would not have been possible without the help of his father. He shared:

So I bought Dr. No (Ian Fleming’s novel) but I could not understand because it was different kind of diction in that. So I asked my father to help me understand that movie/novel. So he helped me, he had an elementary knowledge of English. I used to read a couple of lines and he used to translate. So both of us read that novel in about 4 to 5 weeks. We used to sit for hours together and used to read page by page. It was painful too as there were words that I did not understand and my father also did not know the meaning of. So we had a dictionary by our side and we used to consult that.

***Autonomy.*** The desire for autonomy and control over ones’ own destiny is inherent in human nature. Richard deCharms (1968) believes that people desire autonomy and constantly struggle against being constrained by external forces. His research involved providing meaningful choice so that students could exercise what he calls the “origin sequence,” which consists of “plan-choose-act-take responsibility” (deCharms, 1968, p. 298). Deci and Ryan (2012) see autonomy as central to the satisfaction of our psychological needs. The need for autonomy, which is central to intrinsic motivation, can be supported or thwarted by the social environment. Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) identified three innate psychological needs that are essential for constructive social development and personal well-being, which, include autonomy (deCharms, 1968; Deci, 1975), relatedness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Reis, 1994), and competence (Harter, 1982; White, 1959). Cognitive Evaluation Theory—a sub-theory within Self-Determination Theory—also focuses on the fundamental

need for competence and autonomy; factors that impact intrinsic motivation. Rather than focusing on what causes intrinsic motivation, Cognitive Evaluation Theory is concerned with the environmental factors that sustain it and those that undermine it (Ryan et al., 1997). Cognitive Evaluation Theory specifies that by itself competence will *not* enhance intrinsic motivation unless it is accompanied with a sense of personal autonomy (Fisher, 1978; Ryan, 1982).

The social and physical environment of non-elite Pakistanis is neither supportive nor conducive to autonomous behavior. This was, however, not the case for the participants of my study. All except one mentioned that they had complete freedom to choose their educational and career trajectories. As already noted, almost all participants mentioned the love and support they received from their parents, which are elements that enable autonomy. Waji shared how her parents supported her efforts and gave her autonomy:

I did have some good teachers and one advantage I had over the other students was that even though the rote system was prevalent in the education system but thankfully, my parents, although they were not elite, but they never encouraged rote learning.

Aka spoke of the autonomy afforded by the environment he was placed in by his circumstances and which aided his learning of English:

There was a TV in the office and after 5 PM the office shuts down and my life starts because there was no body in the office. I started imagining myself as Dr. AHK, sometimes used to sit in his chair. One of the jobs was to clean the dustbins also, so instead of throwing the things, I used to collect all those letters from his dustbin and try to read what Dr. Sahib was receiving. A person who could throw away things written in English into the dustbin was a thing fascinating to me. I would take them out and read them. I had difficulty reading in the handwritten script, but I could read the printed script.

Unable to comprehend the entire message but mostly bits and pieces I could jot down what the person was saying. I used to watch Tom and Jerry. You are fascinated with the cartoons.

The above findings are similar to those of Liu's (2016) assessment of the motivational propensities of Chinese college students towards learning English wherein he examined and compared Gardner's (1985) Integrative-Instrumental Model and the Self-determination Theory of Deci and Ryan (1985). The findings of that study suggested that Self-determination Theory is more applicable to the Chinese case and that an emphasis on autonomy can help foster student motivation as posited within that theory.

***Relatedness.*** Baumeister & Leary (1995) suggest that the need to belong is plausibly part of humanity's biological inheritance, and that there is a basic desire in humans to form social attachments. They concluded that the need to belong, or relatedness, is a powerful, fundamental, and extremely pervasive motivator and some of the strongest emotions people experience are related to it (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Ryan et al. (1995) added to the concept of and literature on relatedness by showing that relatedness and autonomy are integral to one another and are dialectically connected. In their discussion on the dynamics of the two constructs, they pointed out that ratings on indexes of relatedness, such as warmth and connectedness, and ratings on indices of autonomy, such as choice and minimal control, were invariably inextricable. This was very much the case with the participants of my study. The needs for belonging—to be able to blend in—and relatedness acted as motivators among non-elites Pakistanis and was an aspect of successful English acquisition that my study evinces. For Waji, the pressure to assimilate and the need to be accepted was overwhelming. She narrated:

To be honest enough, the pressure, the need to blend in because, obviously for most of the people you'll ask, they would have responded in a way that speaking English is unfortunately a big criteria, for it matters more than the education you have or the qualification you have. It all comes down to how you speak or how you present yourself. And proficiency in English is a big part of that. So that really motivated me, to be honest enough.

Simi shared that just to be accepted, she worked very hard and obliged people but it was only after she learned English that she actually found acceptance.

I was talking with you earlier about one of the project, which I was doing. I was doing 90 percent of that (but) when we used to go to see the Vice Chancellor, and everybody is talking and Vice Chancellor didn't even know that I am working on these things. Other people were presenting and they are doing all that in English. Like they exploit you a lot, like they are asking you to do all sort of quantitative analysis, you are doing it, you are sitting here late nights. Usually, in our culture, girls are not sitting late nights, but I was doing it. Honestly I did it just to be accepted. And then, at the end, when the paper is published, your name is nowhere.

Simi shares how despite doing everything in her power to find acceptance, it was only after she learned English that she finally found respect and recognition among her colleagues and in the research community:

A couple of months ago, planning commission invited me for a policy dialogue. That was my first time to present myself as an independent individual who has a Ph.D. and who works in this field as ... I would not say an expert, but a knowledgeable person. When I presented, and when people started asking a lot of questions, I was quite very much



confident. I had that confidence that, yes, I know this really well. My knowledge is making me ... my knowledge, in addition to English, speaking English, is making me more comfortable, more privileged, in a way. People are starting now taking me seriously.

**Competence.** White (1959) introduced the construct of competence as a fundamental human need. Deci (1975) defines competence as “one’s ability or capacity to deal effectively with his surroundings” (p. 55). Behaviors that lead to effective manipulation of one’s environment are selective, persistent and directed (Deci, 1975). Competence enhances the abilities of a person, and when people undertake activities to learn and enjoy, they experience competence. Harter (1978) proposed competence motivation theory, which states that individuals will gravitate towards those subjects and areas in which they perceive their own competence and avoid those where the possibility of accomplishment is unclear. Successful attempts at mastery in a domain reaffirm and reinforce the feeling of competence, and accordingly enhance motivation, and failed attempts have the opposite effect.

When Anu was asked what motivated her to learn English, she responded that as she started slowly acquiring English at a teacher’s training program, it led to a greater perception of her own competence as well as a desire to acquire further competency in the language. She shared her experience.

In that training I started speaking English, not conversational, but small sentences like how are you, where are you going, you know, and those sentences gave me so much confidence. And people were giving me so much value that oh this girl can speak English although I was not conversing with them and actually this thing motivated me that English is so important that if you are living in Pakistan English is so important, you

have to speak it. If you know English you can get job anywhere and make more money, so yes this thing motivated me a lot.

She also narrated how the ability to speak English establishes you as a competent person in Pakistan. She said:

I think you get instructions very clearly if you're working, and even people, with your boss, it's so easy to work with any boss, actually. And they start feeling this girl can understand English or she can read English, so if we give her some points or instructions or assignment or project, she will be able to do it easily than a non-speaker.

Nad's story is also indicative of how knowing English, even at a basic and rudimentary level, leads to the consciousness of feeling competent as well others seeing the speaker as competent. He recalled:

When I was in grade 10, I used to work in a local factory in the nights and used to go to the school in the morning. One day, the supervisor came in and there was some letter in English, and there were so many labor and the supervisor himself he was unable to read the letter. And then someone told him this boy is in school show it to him and he came to me and gave me the letter. It was written by some manager or something. I read it out and translated it for him, and he was so surprised. I was like 10 tiers lower than him in the factory. And I was a kid of 14-15-year old. And other than that, I had no means to know the importance of the language, but I had that feeling that this (English) is one thing that would get out of me ...out of all these circumstances. So at different stages of my life and at different edge points, I realized and I got conscious that this is how English is impacting how people see me and how do they value me.

The above narratives are similar to the findings of Oga-Baldwin et al.'s (2017) study of Japanese students which found that constructs within Self-Determination Theory—such as competence—develop through the interaction of learners and the environment in which learners are expected to acquire the language. I recognize that although the environments of Japanese learners and underprivileged learners in Pakistan are different, similar inferences can be drawn between my study and their study of students in Japan.

***Instrumental and integrative motivations.*** According to Gardner et al. (1985), two motivational Orientations drive the desire to learn a second language, instrumental and integrative. The former pertains to learning a second language for pragmatic gains such as employment, while the latter pertains to motivation towards learning a second language in order to integrate into a community (Pierce, 1995). Gardner and Lambert (1972) found that integrative Orientation was a stronger predictor of persistence and success in second language acquisition. Noels et al. (2003) posit that the desire for contact and identification with a language community is not fundamental to the motivational process and has relevance only in specific sociocultural contexts. Dörnyei (1990) suggests that instrumental Orientation is perhaps more important than integrative Orientation for learners of a second language, as they are unlikely to assimilate into the culture of the people who speak the target language. In many post-colonial societies, the social distance (Schumann, 1976) between the speakers of the language of their erstwhile colonizers; the elite, and those who cannot, the non-elite, is often very large.

***The concept of investment.*** Pierce (1995) felt that the concept of investment, rather than motivation, better captured the complex relationship between power, identity and language learning. She felt that the concept of integrative and instrumental motivations (Gardner & Lambert, 1959) presupposes a fixed and ahistorical learner who simply desires to gain something

externally, whereas the notion of investment *attempts* to conceive language learners as having complex identities and multiple desires.

In the case of underprivileged Pakistani learners of English, the findings are mixed and an indication of both instrumental and integrative motivations emerged. The social distance (Schumann, 1976) between the elites and the non-elites in Pakistan is indeed great and I had ruled out finding any evidence of integrative orientations. I felt that the motivational driver to acquire English would be the hope and promise of better life prospects and outcomes. However, in my interviews there were definitely voices that expressed the need and necessity, as well as desire, to gain access to and be accepted in elite society, where English is used as a first language and is the gatekeeper to entry. The desire was not necessarily just for the material perks, which the higher echelons of society afford. For many of them the motivations to learn English were both instrumental and integrative and is in line with the position of Noels et al. (2003) that the latter has relevance in specific sociocultural contexts; in this case Pakistani society that is stratified along purpose and class lines. The time and effort they were investing in the English language could almost be called an investment (Pierce, 1995) in their own liberation.

As someone coming from privilege, to me it seemed intuitive that people would be motivated to learn English in a society like Pakistan. However, hearing people who actually face marginalization due to their non-English speaking backgrounds discuss their actual motivations was eye-opening. The names that the participants of my study gave their motivations also reflected the extent of the discrimination that one faces in Pakistani society if one cannot converse in the global lingua franca.

The following responses could be termed examples of *instrumental* motivations.

Anu: English can change your life. It can give you better life much better life in Pakistan.

Kai: I just wanna be successful. I just need success.

Nad: To step out from the social and poverty barrier that I was in.

Simi: A door that can open a lot of opportunities and success.

Shah: English is a need of time.

The following responses could be termed examples of *integrative* motivations.

Waji: The pressure of blending in. To be accepted.

Simi: A door to enter into elite society.

Hubi: A journey of a warrior.

Huma: It's like changing the mindset. And proving yourself.

The following responses could be termed examples of *other* motivations.

Ainee: A desire to be able to understand artistic creations.

Aka: To understand the cartoons and the movies.

Yas: When you start speaking a language which is the second language for you, that's really amazing.

For Kai, who is only 21 years old, English is the road to wealth and power as well as a means to please her parents. Her motivations were more than simply integrative or instrumental and beg the coining of a new definition or term. She shared:

I wanna give orders. Big Salary. I wanna big salary. Basically, I wanna everyone works under me. I want that. Yes Sir. Sir I am putting a lot of effort. I am trying. And wherever I speak in English my father just gets pleased, my daughter can speak in English. My father ask can you speak in English multiple of times and I speak to him and my mother and both of them just got pleased, yes my daughter speak in English. It was also a

motivation for myself that even my father couldn't afford the fee and still he is putting a lot of effort and I wanna make his effort fruitful.

For Anu, English meant unlimited employment opportunities and her motivation was mainly instrumental but her reference to *value* hints at something more. As her English was improving, people were treating her differently, valuing her, and this led to the realization that she could get a job anywhere if she could reach fluency. She shared:

I started slowly gradually seeing that English is very important because with English you can get a job wherever you want to. I realized that. And people were giving me so much value that oh this girl can speak English although I was not conversing with them and actually this thing motivated me that if you are living in Pakistan English is so important, you have to speak it, if you know English you can get job anywhere and make more money, so yes this thing motivated me a lot.

Similarly, Nad's narrative is indicative of something more than simply instrumental motivation to acquire the English language. He also refers to how he was being *valued* once he knew English. He said:

I knew I could not get out of this poverty trap and whatever I was in without learning a language... without learning English primarily. I had that feeling that this (English) is one thing that would get me out of all these circumstances. So at different stages of my life and at different edge points, I realized and I got conscious that this is how English is impacting how people see me and how do they value me.

For Waji, the motivation was more than simply integrative—like a desire to be accepted as a fully functioning human being—since the pressure to assimilate and the need to be accepted became overwhelming. She narrated:

To be honest enough, the pressure, the need to blend in because obviously for most of the people you'll ask, they would have responded in a way that speaking English is unfortunately a big criteria for ... it matters more than the education you have or the qualification you have. It all comes down to how you speak or how you present yourself. And proficiency in English is a big part of that. So that really motivated me, to be honest enough.

Shah who was competing for a USAid scholarship knew that the only way he could pass the qualifying interview was by improving his ability to hold a conversation in English at some rudimentary level. His motivation to learn English was clearly instrumental and it made him realize the power and importance of English. He said:

Yeah, so there's pressure I have to learn, I have to learn. If I have to get this scholarship, that was a huge opportunity for me that I will go to United States. That interview and the tour of the United States was the motivation.

For Aka and Ainee, the fascination with English began through watching Hollywood movies and then developing the desire to learn the language. Their motivation can neither be labeled instrumental nor integrative and is more within Pierce's (1995) concept of investment. They grew up in a golden age in Pakistan when movie theaters were everywhere and accommodated every price range. English movies were regularly released and were not dubbed in Urdu. The cinemas were not just places where the elites and non-elites shared a common physical space, but it also afforded non-elites the opportunity to hear English as well as imbibe the culture that is associated with English speaking countries, which are invariably developed, advanced, modern and liberal. Language and culture are linked and one cannot be acquired without the other (Trueba, 1993). As Ainee said, his motivation to learn English was

“to understand the movies and later when I started listening to the BBC to understand the plays that were there and the comedy shows that were on the radio on the BBC, I wanted to understand that.” Aka candidly shared:

“My fascination with English it started with watching English movies. That’s what I would say. My father allowed me to watch movies. He used to take me to English movies a lot. And after his death the only place I could enjoy was in the cinema. I used to go to Capri cinema which showed English movies only and those movies gave me some kind of understanding of English.

**Theme 2. The knowing of English versus the using of English.** In her study of the impact of English on the identities of Malaysian second-language learners, Lee (2003) states:

Another dominant theme that emerges from the data is that knowing English also affects identity in non-interactive ways. A significant finding is that it is not the use of English but rather knowing English that affects identity in non-interactive ways. Subjects reported that a knowledge of English brings along with it an exposure to alternative views and ideas and facilitates a more reflective and critical attitude towards one’s own culture. Knowing the English language allows the subjects a decentering from one’s own culture or from just one cultural viewpoint. The subjects also reported that knowing the English language offers them a form of empowerment.

***Knowing versus using English as understood in Pakistan.*** When I had originally framed this sub-question, my thinking was similar to Lee’s (2003). I had surmised that perhaps Pakistani non-elites, who have successfully acquired verbal fluency English, may also feel a sense of empowerment in having the option to exercise or not to exercise the use of the language as was reported in Lee’s (2003) study. Certainly, English had exposed my subjects to alternative



views and engendered in them deeper introspection towards Pakistani culture. However, as the interviews progressed, I came to the realization that the perspective of the participants of my study was based on the ground realities in Pakistan where many people, certainly not the majority, can draft letters and applications in English but have very limited ability to speak it. The government is full of “babus” and section officers; the education system with teachers at all levels; the service industry with people who answer phone calls; the tourism with guides and facilitators, who use a pidginized English—“their words are haltingly delivered or run on uncontrolled, their figures of speech ungainly, their words and sentences clumsy” (Hymes, 1972, p. 276). Nevertheless, even these speakers represent only a small percentage of the population and their English is purely a performance variety. Their deployment of English is mostly in the reading and writing domains.

A non-native user’s speech is writing-oriented since in the process of learning, writing comes first and speech is learned through writing; that is why many Indians ‘speak English like books’. The competence of the non-native user of English is more rule-governed than speech-governed. (Krishnaswamy and Burde, 1998, p. 77)

The ground realities in Pakistan are different from Malaysia, a country that has achieved high levels of literacy through mother tongue—the Malay language. In Malaysia, literacy and English are not equated with one another the way they are in Pakistan, which is one of the findings of my study. My participants equated *knowing* English with that basic rudimentary non-verbal level, and equated *using* English with the ability to converse well in English. I came to this understanding when I was well into the interviewing process and it led me to a “re-realization” of the critical importance of acquiring actual verbal fluency. It was an “ah-ha”

moment when I grasped, finally, that it is engagement in actual conversation in English that is a source of empowerment for non-elites in Pakistan.

*Empowerment comes from speaking English.* Aka, Anu, Kai, Hubi, Huma, Nad, Rose, Shah, Simi and Yas all felt that spoken English was very important and empowering. They felt it gave them respect, dignity, and credibility; near liberation. Simi answered the question with just one word; she simply stated “using.” Aka admitted that the rural context he works in does not afford him the opportunity to speak English much. However, as mentioned earlier, he begins every speech and training with English in order to establish his credentials. Anu was very clear that it is spoken English which is empowering since many people in Pakistan know the rules of English grammar, as stated above, but have no ability to converse in it. She shared:

Using English is more powerful, of course. Because now I'm an English teacher and I'm training some girls, so I can see so many people even girls or boys they exactly know the tenses, the sentences, the parts of speech; you know present, past, or future. But they can't use it! They can't communicate with you.

When I put this question to Hubi; whether knowing or actually speaking English was more empowering, she responded:

Its use, of course. It's use. No matter how much English novels you read, no matter how much your English grammar is good, but how fluently you speak English, this matters a lot. For me, the actual usage. I should know.

Nad also felt that speaking English in Pakistan is empowering but added another element in that he was cognizant where not to use English. This non-use was similar to some findings in Lee's (2003) study. He shared:

I think, in Pakistan especially, it's using English. Knowing English is not sufficient enough. There are places where I should not use the language. I should not consciously use the language. I need to be very conscious when I speak with my relatives, with my parents that I do not use even a single word of English language. Because if in the sentence, that very word is the key word and my parents are unable to comprehend the word and they don't know the meaning, I mean that demeans the purpose of speaking to them. But in some cases, using English is empowering.

Rose was emphatic in her views and opinion on the subject, which of course, were based on her own experiences. She said: "Using English is empowering." When I asked what if someone might know English but may not care to show that they can speak it, she responded "It's required to show. All the time. In your official life, it's required to show. Use is empowering. And I think that English using and speaking is very very important."

Shah reflected that when he was not aware of the importance of English, it didn't matter to him whether he knew how to converse or not. But now that he could speak well, he felt its use was more empowering than earlier when he only had a technical knowledge of the language. He narrated:

Yeah, I didn't care about English. As far as learning was concerned, I was good in English, my written English was good. But as far as speaking is concerned, I wasn't interested in that. But you can say that I wasn't aware that why should I learn English. I guess use is more empowering.

Yas was definitive in his response and shared how the good impression one makes when

speaking in English in Pakistan is a source of empowerment. It also raises your value in the eyes of educated people, invariably the elite. He also linked being educated with knowing English. He said:

I think it's more empowering to use English. Because when you use, then people get impressed by you. You are using that thing. But when you know that the thing is just inside you. So using is more important. When you use obviously then you are just giving your knowledge to others, you are transferring it. So, I think it makes you more important amongst the people who are educated, who can speak English. So the use is very important. It, actually it empowers you.

*Need for defining/coining new terminology.* Unlike Lee's (2003) study, the knowing and the use of English in speech in Pakistan has only positive implications, connotations and consequences. There is hardly any situation where one could make a negative impression when one speaks English or be ostracized for speaking it. From the narratives of the participants of my study, I surmise that the motivation to learn English in the setting of many post-colonial societies like Pakistan, goes beyond current definitions as either integrative or instrumental or even Norton's (1995) concept of investment; indeed it builds on that concept. I feel that the definition of a new term for such motivation is needed—more within the critical tradition—which may or would apply to the context of South Asia, East Africa, and other ex-colonial environments. It is also needed given present day reality of the global preponderance of English as well as the intersectionality of language and identity, and class-based dichotomies.

**Theme 3. English education in public and non-elite schools and colleges.** In 1947, the newly created state of Pakistan adopted the colonial system of education, whereby English was rationed out only to a small elite group, while the masses were educated mainly in Urdu and

in local vernaculars (Abbas, 1993). This dichotomous and by design exclusionary system has prevailed with English acting as a gate keeper to positions of power and prestige as well as opportunity in society (Rahman, 2004; Shamim, 2008).

***Social reproduction through the poor teaching of English in public institutions.*** Fluency in written and spoken English has become and remains “*the* main determinant of a child’s progress up the ladder of formal education” (Ngugi, 1985, p. 115) in Pakistan but which is only available at a small number of elite private schools whose fees are prohibitively expensive. Educational institutions in Pakistan act as sites where social, cultural and economic inequities are reproduced (Bourdieu, 1973; Giroux, 2001) and class stratification is reinforced, and this is true even of schools on military cantonments. Simon (1979) aptly encapsulates the aims of education as it is structured in Pakistan: “Schooling as a socializing institution whose aim is to regulate a sense of human possibility in support of the interests of the ruling bloc constituted within privileged positions of gender, class, race, ethnic, regional and sexual relations” (p. 30).

Theories of social reproduction take as a central issue the notion that schools occupy a major, if not critical, role in the reproduction of the social formations needed to sustain capitalist relations of production. In short, schooling represents a major social site for the construction of subjectivities and dispositions, a place where students from different social classes learn the necessary skills to occupy their class-specific locations in the occupational division of labor (Giroux, 2001, p. 78)

English, and the way the educational system rations it out, plays a critical role in maintaining class division in Pakistan. Non-elite students are caught on the wrong side of this iniquitous dichotomy or educational apartheid (Malik, 2012) or educational and have to face and navigate its consequences. Not knowing English is demotivating and affects their self-esteem.

The fact that they must pass the subject of English in order to matriculate from school is a distressing reality for most of them for which they have no recourse, yet possess no means to acquire the language. This results in a culture of cramming and cheating towards which society turns a blind eye and is complicit in encouraging it. The conspiracy of silence on this issue reinforces the impression that stratification of Pakistani society along purpose and class lines is maintained by design (Tollefson, 1991). English may thus be the most precious commodity in Pakistan access to which it seems zealously guarded. The “need to control, regulate, or tame” (Fishman, 1982, p. 16) the spread of English may be one aspect of the “sociolinguistic balance of power” (Fishman, 1982, p. 16) in Pakistan. The narratives of the participants of my study were mixed. Some realized the importance of English early and others late, but it was the poor teaching of English in their schools that played a part in their realizations. In each case this realization led to the motivation to acquire greater fluency in the language.

*Poor teaching of English motivated participants to acquire fluency.* The fact that in public and non-elite schools there is just one period of English a day, that teachers cannot speak English, that there is no emphasis on conversation, and that there is a culture of rote learning were the most oft repeated narratives that emerged under this theme. At elite institutions of higher learning, education is imparted exclusively in English. At others, though the medium of instruction is officially supposed to be English, education is delivered in Urdu or a mix of Urdu, English and vernacular as not just students, most teachers also struggle with English. However, exams are in English and for non-elites coming through the pipeline of Urdu medium schooling, this can be a terrifying experience and negatively impacts their academic progress, career trajectories and life outcomes. Rote learning and dishonest methods are employed by many learners in order to pass examinations; the system is often complicit in the latter. These ground

realities were faced by participants of this study since they were coming through the public and non-elite system. Rose narrated how despite being an outstanding student, her grades fell precipitously once she came face-to-face with lectures in English in college. This motivated her to improve her English to regain her good standing. She said:

When I got admission in St. P's College, all papers were in English. (Hence) my grade was low in intermediate (college). In matric (school) it was high. When the medium was changed (Urdu to English) in intermediate, I got second division. I used to have lectures there in English. So at graduation, I got first division and highest marks in St. P's College after improving my English.

Hubi was troubled that her weak English could lead to misinterpretation of text from her medical books and could have affected patient well-being. This motivated her to work hard on her English skills. She recalled:

All medical academic books are in English, as you know. So if you are not able to comprehend a sentence, you are going to take a different, or opposite, or wrong meaning of that sentence and it is going to impact the life of the patient. I realized that. I realized that. Then I started writing different grammatical sentences on internet, so that I can better understand my medical books. Especially this became the perspective of my life because I don't want that if I study a wrong thing it is going to impact the life of the patient. So this became the purpose of my life. That's why basically I focus on learning better English so that I can get the perfect meaning out of the sentence.

Shah expressed his views on this reality in a hypothetical sense. It lays out the

importance of acquiring English given the way the education system and society in Pakistan are structured. The need becomes dire as one moves from school to college. For him this was certainly a motivation. He said:

English is the need of our time. You need English to communicate, you need English to do anything. Your university's whole curriculum is in English. Often our students get into the problem because they are in studying in Urdu medium schools and they go to a good university, they have to give presentations and they have to give lectures. So there is a huge problem for them if they cannot speak English.

Simi lamented that the non-elite institutions of higher education are not preparing students for the real world. Non-elite students often excel in mathematics and statistics, which do not need English skills but then run into problems in the job market. This is exactly what Simi faced and it was the realization of the importance of English to negotiate her work space that motivated her towards gaining fluency. She said:

All the other institutions where I got my education, they were meant to be English medium, but that was just on paper, not in practice. I did my Master's and M.Phil. from a University, that's one of the top universities, and I did it with distinction. I did statistics, so we didn't need much English to speak or to write, because we were just playing with the numbers. The English, which I knew, that was enough to go through that. Like in all public sector universities no one will ask you to present your research work or whatever in English. Like when they will go to the market how will they compete when they don't have that skill?

Nad felt the way of teaching English in non-elite schools and colleges does not aim at



imparting fluency in speech. It focuses on the basic non-verbal *knowing* level that was mentioned earlier. Thus, students have to motivate themselves to make extra effort to acquire fluency, which is what happened with him once he realized the importance of English. He said:

I mean, for an instance, if there is a chapter in the book, what is the typical way of teaching it? The professor will come, he will read out first two lines, and then translate it. So, the teacher used to read it out and translate it for us. It means the same conventional method. Translation, vocabulary, grammar. In that manner. By the rules.

Waji shared how the limitation that rote-learning poses to the process of acquisition of knowledge became her motivation to acquire the language. She elucidates:

Since all the curriculum is designed in English, so it's unfortunately really important to know English, to be well versed in the language because if you're not then it promotes rote learning or parrot learning. You just scan whatever is written in the copy and you transfer it on the paper in the exam but that's why you're not learning any knowledge. You should have at least some basic decent English language skills. It really helps you because this is what my peers says, and this is as a teacher as well and I stress upon to my students and to my siblings because you should have a decent level of writing skills or communicating skills so you're not servant to the book or you're not servant to what's written in the notes or slide. You can read it from anywhere if you're preparing for an exam or you're preparing for a presentation. So, if you have the points in mind, you can elaborate it anyway you want. If you're giving a presentation, you're not limited to a sheet of paper or something, so you can be more expressive.

**Theme 4. Sources for learning English.** Movies were cited as the number one source for learning English followed by the BBC and radio, then books and newspapers, English songs,

cartoons, cricket commentary, motivating teachers, language centers, TV programs, teacher training program, focused practice with friends, translation games, and rehearsal. Many participants also mentioned that there are very few opportunities for actual conversation for non-elites. Yas said:

For the elite the places are different where they can easily learn English, where they can easily speak English, where they can practice English. But for the non-elite, if, for example, they have reached a place for learning English, where would they practice? There's no place for practicing English. So that's how the barriers for the middle class and for the non-English speakers, non-elite people. They have no place of practicing English. They have no resources of learning English.

## **Research Question 2. Identity Reconstruction through the Acquisition of English**

### **Theme 1. Identity construction of non-elite English learners.**

*Identity.* Identity is a powerful concept that concerns the self and comprises, not just what one thinks one is, or acts as being, but also what recognition is accorded to that identity by others (Baumeister, 1986). Identity is complex and hard to define. For example, a German passport, does not necessarily confer German identity (Vignoles et al., 2011). Similarly, a certain skin color, or being able to speak a language, does not necessarily translate into ethnic or linguistic identity. West (1992) postulates that identity relates to desire—the desire for recognition, for association, for protection. Identity can be defined at the individual, relational and collective level (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). According to Côté and Levine (2002), “identities are becoming increasingly transitory and unstable in late modern society” (p. 6).

Mathews (2000) argues that people are not raised into identities, rather one assumes an identity and then works on it. Identity develops in what he calls the “cultural supermarket”

and media and technology make available a range of possible identities that can be assumed. The identity one can adopt or acquire, or create, is based largely on the social structures within which an individual exists. According to Norton (1997), identity is framed in different ways: social identity, sociocultural identity, voice, cultural identity, and ethnic identity. She refers to *identity* as “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is *constructed* across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future” (p. 410). Multiple aspects of identity can co-exist, with many identity processes undertaken deliberately and involving a great deal of effort (Vignoles et al., 2011).

*The impact of knowing English for non-elites—an educated identity.* More than sixty different types of positive impacts were narrated by the participants with the most mentioned being that in Pakistan one is only considered educated and qualified if one can speak English. Hence, English allows non-elites to don the mantle of an identity that is considered educated, polished, and refined.

Hubi, Huma, Kai, Rose Shah, Waji and Yas all felt that in Pakistan one is not considered educated unless one can speak English. Hubi said, “It is very common in our country that it is considered that whoever speaks English, they basically have an education or they are basically literate.” Huma shared, “some people I met, said to me that until I could speak English, people did not even think I was educated.” Yas also felt the same when he said, “People do not consider you as educated if you cannot speak English.” Rose shared:

Whenever you are speaking English, everybody think you are educated even you don't have degree, even you are just O level, and A level, and matriculate from English medium school. But where you are doctor, you are engineer but you can't speak English,

everybody think you are not educated actually. You just cheated and you cleared. You just purchased your degree and qualification.

Shah also had similar feelings on this point and shared that someone who speaks English is seen as educated and respectable:

In Pakistan people don't think somebody is very educated if they cannot speak good English. They think that okay, he has studied something like Masters in Urdu, okay, that's fine. But if somebody speaks good English, then they consider that this person is well educated, and he knows how to carry and he's a good person. So there is a symbol of respect associated with English.

Waji said that while she knew that being educated and being able to speak English are two different things, but in the view of Pakistani society, the two are linked:

English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated, obviously people have these misconceptions in their mind. Many people consider you literate when you using excessive (English) vocabulary. That's something. Uselessly adding difficult words.

***Identity motives.*** Breakwell (1988) suggests that identity processes operate in order to achieve certain end states for identity: self-esteem, continuity, and distinctiveness. These *identity motives* (Vignoles et al. 2006), which guide the processes of identity construction are also reflected in people's desires for future identities that would satisfy those motives— similar to Norton's (2000) notion of *imagined identities*. People strive to maximize satisfaction of these motives when constructing their identities. Vignoles et al. (2006) assert that among the least contested claims in social psychology is that people are motivated to enhance their self-esteem. Leary & Baumeister (2000) state that “the universality and potency of self-esteem suggests that it

is an inherent, adaptive part of human nature” (p. 8). “Identity is not only influenced by self-esteem, but rather, the relationship is bidirectional. Threats to important aspects of identity affect one’s self-esteem” (Heppner & Kernis, 2011, p.340).

*The Self-esteem motive.* The self-esteem motive refers to “the motivation to maintain and enhance a positive conception of oneself” (Gecas, 1982, p. 20). Vignoles et al. (2006) identify six goals or the needs of self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, belonging, efficacy and meaning, that people are motivated to construct their identities around. There is a pervasiveness of self-esteem on all aspects of identity and “the self-esteem motive prompts people to behave in ways that maintain their connections with other people” (Leary et al. 1995, p. 529).

*Sociometer theory of self-esteem.* Humans have an innate need to belong and “the central tenet of sociometer theory is that the self-esteem system monitors the quality of an individual’s actual and potential relationships—specifically the degree to which other people value their relationships with the individual” (Leary & Baumeister, 2000, pp. 11-12). *State self-esteem* monitors a person’s current relational value—the degree to which they are likely to be accepted or rejected by others, while *trait self-esteem* is “a subjective sense of one’s potential for social inclusion versus exclusion over the long run” (pp. 12-13). People can deal with short-term dips in self-esteem if they believe that long-term possibilities for belongingness are favorable.

To understand the determinants of self-esteem, we must look at factors that can lead to exclusion from groups and relationships: (a) people who are uncongenial and recalcitrant, (b) incompetent people who do not pull their own weight, (c) unattractive people are often not desired as group members and (d) groups avoid people who do not follow rules and norms. “Virtually all events that threaten self-esteem involve incidents that portray the individual as

socially undesirable, incompetent, physically unattractive, or irresponsible or immoral” (Leary & Baumeister, 2000, p. 17).

From the earliest days of psychology and sociology, theorists interested in the self have suggested that people's self-images, as well as their self-esteem, are based heavily on their perceptions of the evaluative reactions of other people. Sociometer perspective shows clearly why this is the case (Leary, Tambor, Terdal & Downs, 1995, p. 528).

*The relationship between self-esteem and English in Pakistan.* In Pakistan, the findings of this study reveal that people who cannot speak English are excluded from all meaningful circles and groups in society, and as Leary et al. (1995) suggest, that “in behaving in ways that promote self-esteem, people are striving to enhance their inclusionary status” (p. 528). Accordingly, once non-elites gain fluency in English, the doors of opportunity and inclusion are flung open to them which greatly raises their self-esteem.

The finding that English has perhaps become linked to the esteem of non-elites in Pakistan is one of the critical findings of my study. English gives an esteemed identity to those who can master it. The desire for higher levels of meaning and self-esteem and inclusion were important identity motives for non-elite Pakistanis to strive towards fluency in English. There appears a direct intertwined relationship between esteem and the continuous imbibing of English, and vice versa. Kai shared how the successful acquisition of English in Pakistan give one high self-esteem—one sits with one’s head raised high is how she put it:

But it has made my identity that I can speak in English, and it is very privileged ... What do we say? Privileged. Yes, sir. Esteem sir. Sir, self-esteem ... That is a self-esteem. It is building up your ... Whenever you speak English, you feel like Esteem you can sit like this, whenever you speak in English, you sit like this. Proud. You come to be a proud

person. Although they can speak English (elites) but you are also the person who can speak English. So it is like that. So you sit with your head high. Yes, sir. In front of the people who cannot speak English. In front of the people. Like, I think that sir the way I speak English and the area from where I belong. When I speak English over there, the people get motivated.

Waji had the same feeling as Kai. She said that the ability to speak English makes you distinctive and changes how people perceive you in Pakistan:

Definitely because again, people are impressed by fluency in English. Obviously when other people's perception about them, the people around them, their perception about the person changes, obviously that affects their self-esteem and that affects their inner self so yeah. It makes you more ...I talked about myself. It made me more confident. So are you saying that English is linked to people's self-esteem? Depends on their environment, yes. If they are in an environment where ... but I'd say yes. To an extent, yes. In our country, unfortunately yes.

Yas's experience with how English opened opportunities and possibilities for him to enter privilege spaces only frequented by the Elite—not face exclusion—raised his self-esteem. His experience epitomizes the extent of the empowerment that English can bestow on the identity of a non-elite person in a highly class consciousness society like Pakistan. He shared:

I start talking to those people where I think that I could not talk if I cannot speak English, so that was a change English created in me. You can go to the places where you cannot go if you cannot speak English. Because there are places the people think that when you

go there, you only speak in English. The restaurants, there's some good and big restaurants. There are some places, so I start going there and I really enjoyed that.

***The meaning motive.*** Vignoles et al. (2006) found that the effects of the meaning motive equaled, and at times even outshone, those of the self-esteem motive in all predictions of perceived centrality. The research tied motives for self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, and meaning directly to the *internal processes of identity definition*. Motives for self-esteem, efficacy, and belonging were found to be directly relevant to the *external processes of identity enactment*.

*The meaning motive—respect and self-respect.* English gives one respect in society as well as self-respect, was the second most mentioned narrative. This was followed by the ability to inspire and impress others, being taken seriously, establishing a social position, being listened to, not being rejected, feeling distinguished and learned, attracting people, being considered someone from a good background, and getting attention.

Ainee, Anu, Rose, Shah and Yas felt that English gives one a respectable identity in Pakistani society. Anu said, “I get more respect, of course! My boss doesn't want to lose me because she knows I can get job anywhere.” Ainee said:

It's not that what I think of myself after I have learned English and speak well. But it's more by way of how other people react to me when they see me speaking in English, which is I think how it affects, maybe indirectly, me, because of their behavior, because of their reaction to it, yes. So it's more respect, maybe.

For Yas, English has meant more respect as well as self-respect. He felt that the respect he gets now has raised him in his own eyes and enhanced his self-esteem:



And I had then realized that it was the power of English, the power of language that I was just getting that respect. It gives you not only respect in the eyes of others, but it gives you self-respect as well. The knowledge of English made me respectable in the other's eyes and in my own eyes. So that's how it has changed me.

Shah termed English a good habit and a symbol of respect and felt that although respect is not necessarily linked only to English, but to gain higher levels of respect, one needed to learn and speak English:

People give more respect to people who can speak English. He speaks very good English, so here it is considered as a good habit, or a symbol of respect. So you need that but for the communication, I don't think you need speaking English and that, everybody can understand Urdu. But if you want to gain respect, if you want to stand out then you need English in Pakistan as well. So there is a symbol of respect associated with English.

*The meaning motive—English gives non-elites dignity in Pakistan.* English creates the space where non-elites are taken seriously, which gives their identity dignity in a very elitist and class-conscious society. Kai was very straightforward when she said: “If I speak in English in front of the people, they would get inspired. If not inspired, impressed. They would take me more seriously than if I speak in Urdu.” Simi shared how she was taken seriously only after she started conversing in English. She said, “Honestly, when I started communicating in English, then people started taking me seriously.” Waji's narrative shows how English allows non-elites the sway to get people to notice them and be taken seriously:

When you have to make them listen to you or something or make them notice, then obviously you consciously or subconsciously use English. They don't listen if you speak

in Urdu? They listen to you, but they don't take you seriously because obviously English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated.

Anu, Ainee and Nad both shared how the ability to speak English makes people listen in Pakistan and the expectation is that the speaker will say erudite things. Ainee said:

Yeah, you can say that there is more weight if you speak in English, then people listen to you, and think that what you are saying is maybe worth listening to. But if you speak in Urdu, of course you are more or less disregarded, people don't even listen to you. So that is one problem.

Nad who works with a multilateral agency and has to deal with the Pakistani bureaucracy said that when one speaks in Urdu people listen, but when one speaks in English, they listen *carefully*. He stated:

For an instance, in the local bureaucracy, when I work with the World Bank, I worked with the provisional bureaucracy. If in a meeting, the secretary is chairing the meeting, or the chief secretary is chairing the meeting, and you speak in Urdu, he'll listen. But you start speaking in English, he will listen carefully. And he would be expecting something wise, something cool coming out.

Simi and Yas both felt that since they have acquired English, people come to them, seek them out, which adds to their dignity. Yas shared that once he started speaking English, "That's really impressed people. Then people make you leader. Then people come to you, then people ask you questions. So I think that using English is very much important." Simi said:

It opened the door to my success, somehow and for instance like now I am back now people are coming to me, rather than I am going to them. One of the things is, I have

Ph.D. degree, but a lot of people have Ph.D. degrees. Now when I go to someone to meet someone, intentionally or unintentionally, I start speaking English.

Simi further added that the ability to speak English in Pakistan influences the way people perceive one's background and raises one's status in many ways. She said: "This is the mentality of our society. If someone is speaking English, he or she is really good, he or she is from a very good background." Shah also said something similar: "If somebody speaks good English, then they consider that this person is well educated, and he knows how to carry (himself) and he's a good person."

Anu shared how people actually stand up and attend to one's concerns and needs instantly when spoken to in English. She shared:

For example, I took my maid for treatment to a government hospital and over there they don't treat you well but when I went where the doctor was and I spoke in English and he actually stood up and saw my maid and, you know, he actually treated her well. So you know that's how the leadership came.

Anu also shared how English gives her the aura of, as well as real, independence, which has particular relevance given the very patriarchal nature of Pakistani society: "That's what I said that people started, and in Pakistan especially, people started thinking that she can speak English so she's more independent now. You know? She doesn't need anybody, I think, which is very true."

Hubi, who faced a lot of anguish in college due to her weak English, and which she worked hard to improve, called English a label of intellect:

As I said English, whenever I'm speaking English or whenever someone has learned how to speak English they get extra confidence. And especially in our society where English

is not our national language. Where English is considered as a label that you, a label of your intellect.

Ainee, while lamenting the slave mentality prevalent in society, nevertheless agreed that the ability to speak English is a label of superiority in Pakistan:

It's pathetic in some ways, because it shows the servility and the subservience of a kind of a mental slavery of these people who think that English speech denotes superiority. But it's a reality? That is true. It is a reality. It is a reality; it does denote superiority.

Somewhat relatedly, Simi felt that that for the non-elites who acquire the language, English can perhaps imbue them with a sense of arrogance:

It's not good, but I want to be really honest. In that social setup, where a lot of people does not know English, somehow, I feel like that I'm arrogant, to be really honest, or maybe I feel like I'm much privileged, or maybe I'm behaving in elitist way.

***Identity reconstruction of learners.*** Research in second-language acquisition has revealed that the language learning process is a complex interplay of many variables in which social roles, relationships, power relations, and identities are constantly reconstituted (Lee, 2003). McKay and Wong (1996) point out that the second language learner is a complex being as language acquisition is a multifaceted process, where many variables are at play and in which identities, roles and relationships are constantly reconstituted. Holland et al. (2001) state that identities are important bases from which people create new realities and ways of being. Candlin (1998) states that identity is a continuing mediated struggle between persons as authors of their own identities and as animators of identities that are authored for them. Norton shares this view when she asserts that “language constructs our sense of self, and that identity is multiple, changing and a site of struggle” (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

This is reflective of the struggles of non-elite English learners in Pakistan as they acquired fluency in the face of social pressures, visible and invisible, against the reconstitution of their identities; identities that are often predefined in the milieu of class and gender consciousness. Learners hoped that the return on their investment in English would be previously unattainable opportunities both tangible and intangible. In fact, they seem to be driven by and desired something which builds on Norton's (1995) concept of investment; they were investing in their own liberation.

These learners constantly constructed and reconstructed who they were and their relationship to a social world that is defined mainly, if not totally, by elitism. In the domestic context of a non-English speaking country like Pakistan, non-elite learners do not have access to those who speak the language fluently—the elite—who often use English as a first language. The use of English as a first language is the hallmark of elitism in Pakistan and perhaps all South Asia. Their struggles at acquiring fluency especially in spoken English were an investment in their own individual and social identities. They invested time and effort in English language acquisition in the expectation of access to a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which would increase their cultural and social capital (Pierce, 1995). This struggle enabled these non-elites to emerge transformed, empowered—liberated.

*English is empowerment.* Findings around the theme of empowerment were remarkable as they highlighted the extent to which English allows non-elites to reconstruct their identity in a society that is stratified by extreme class consciousness. The participants mentioned that English gives one the ability to say no, to become the voice of the underdog, to be able to advocate for the mother tongue, to be able to demand one's rights, the appearance of privilege and status, the ability to challenge conventional wisdom, the ability to act independently without anyone's

permission, the ability to network, and access to intellectual people. Further knowing English gets one recognition, one is listened to, one becomes more expressive, one is able to visit elite locales where English is a gate keeper, makes one open-minded and strong, makes people stand up for you, and makes people feel you are empowered.

A vast number of responses from participants centered on how learning English is a source of empowerment. In other words, English had empowered their sense of identity. These ranged from feelings of learnedness to feelings of fearlessness; and from acquiring the praxis; “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (Freire, 1970, p. 36), to being able to demand one’s rights to having the wherewithal to say no. Waji shared how people listen when you speak English and how it establishes your social position:

I think it has affected me in that way and again in leadership qualities because unfortunately the masses are really impressed with someone's literary skills, English language skills. So sometimes, obviously when you have to force, not force people but when you have to make them listen to you or something or make them notice then obviously you consciously or subconsciously use English. People feel if they are speaking English, they might be belonging to a more elite class, they might be belonging to a different class although we might come from the same background. People have this perception about English speaking people that they might be coming from a different social class and that sometimes does affect your working relationships or your grouping et cetera in university or in school.

Kai said that she is treated differently at home due to her ability to speak English. In her own words her father had “upgraded” her. She states, “So he made myself a little bit upgrade. Because of English? Because of English. Basically everyone in my home. And you know my

grandparents, my uncle, my aunts, everyone. Even in the neighborhood.” She added that as she gained higher levels of proficiency, she started feeling learned and distinguished:

You know Sir, I started feeling different from others because at every point, whatever the teacher has to do, teacher ask me, teacher says my name. They organized a party, and they asked me to come there. So I feel very good and privileged that I have been able to become learned and feel distinguished between my fellows because of English. This is the thing.

Simi shared that she strategically code switches (Gumprez, 1977) to English “where I want to show that, yes, I have some status.” When asked if non-elites do not feel empowered unless they speak in English, her response was insightful: “You will not feel empowered. People will not feel like you are empowered.” She went further and shared that English gives non-elites the ability to defend themselves, and said, “I know that when I will go to them, they will take me seriously, and I can defend myself, because I can communicate.” She added that English gives non-elites the power and ability to say no. This was an unexpected finding and showed the extent to which English impacts the identities of underprivileged people and empowers them. She shared that even though it was beyond her budget, she admitted her daughter to an elite school with just one focus; to give her the ability to speak good English:

I am Ph.D. and I am just drawing 100,000 and, in this setup, it's nothing. My husband was thinking whether we would be able to afford it. I was saying, "I don't want my daughter to be just like me." He's like, "What do you mean?" I said, "I want her to learn to say no." I cannot say no; I didn't have that ability to say no.

Ainee shared how English gives one the power to become the voice of the underdog and challenge “accepted truths:”

It helps me to challenge conventional wisdom or untruths, or false beliefs in an environment where everybody is saying yes and yes, and maybe some of the people disagree, but they can't express their disagreements, so I become their voice sort of speaking.

Ainee also shared how many non-elites who enter the civil services studied English literature and that his own entry into the bureaucracy would not have been possible without English. He said:

I think it was because of English that we were able to enter the civil services. So that could have been one significant impact that English had on my career and I realize that now, in the competitive examination, the highest failure rate of those who attempt this competitive examination is in two papers, one is English essay, and the other is the English composition and grammar, and that again is because English is not taught in our public schools and colleges. So, I took English literature as an elective, and then I started getting better marks and better marks. And then I did my master's in English literature, which was again, English literature and not language. But it helped me. It helped me, and now I realize, and to answer your question, now I feel that, I have become conscious now, that because of their background in English literature, most of the central superior services' competitive examination youngsters, they used to come from an MA English background. Master's in English, not master's in economics, not master's in sociology, not master's in political science, which is more important for a public administrator, but master's in English literature. Now I realize that this was ... or become conscious, to use your ... the terms of your question, that this was helpful to enter into the service.

Yas took Ainee's narrative even further when he shared how English becomes the voice



to advocate for Urdu which in Pakistani society has in many ways acquired the status of an underdog. He insightfully stated:

So, you know obviously in a country like Pakistan if you cannot speak English and you just praise Urdu, so people will say you are praising Urdu because you cannot speak English, you know, they just start just finding your mistakes. But when you know the language English, and then you are just praising and advocating the Urdu language, then it just creates some impact and it gives some power to your words.

Yas also narrated that English gives non-elites the ability and privilege to enter spaces only frequented by the Elite. This in many ways epitomizes the extent of the empowerment that English can bestow on the identity of a non-elite person in a highly class consciousness society like Pakistan. He shared:

I start talking to those people where I think that I could not talk if I cannot speak English, so that was a change English created in me. You can go to the places where you cannot go if you cannot speak English. Because there are places the people think that when you go there, you only speak in English. The restaurants, there's some good and big restaurants. There are some places, so I start going there and I really enjoyed that.

Anu felt that English had imbued her identity with fearlessness: "It made me more strong. I'm not afraid of anything now." She further shared how her English ability has empowered her to take independent decisions without anyone's permission. She narrated that when she wanted to go abroad for a vacation, she simply went and told her parents which would not have been the case for her sisters who cannot speak English. In fact, it would not be the case for most women in Pakistan. She narrated:

I don't need anyone's permission to... if I want to do something. Of course, I'll talk to my parents about it, but I don't need anyone's permission. Nobody can stop me from something. English made that happen? Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. Because I can see, I can see the difference between me or my friends or my sisters even. Because all my sisters can't speak English, so they still feel... or my friends even, they still feel, no if we want to do something we need to ask. When I traveled, I did not actually take permission from my parents. I have informed them, I have discussed it with them, they trust me; but of course, I was not standing in front of them holding a paper and asking them that please sign it and let me go. I didn't do that.

Anu also shared her experience about how a provincial Minister fawned on her when she spoke to him in English:

And he was soooo impressed that this girl from that area and at that time she couldn't speak English and today she is standing here as/in a coordinator position and he was so impressed and when he went on stage he actually took my name, and he remembered my name and he is a minister and I am working with Ms. R and he does not remember Ms. R's name and he remembered my name and he took my name on stage and all the media people came to me and said that Ok you are Anu and I said yes I am. And he said that I want all the girls to be like Anu, that look at her, that she learned English and today she is standing here, and she can earn money and she can actually do many things in life now.

Anu further shared that she had completely lost the fear of rejection since she had learned to speak English:

Absolutely. Absolutely, yeah. Because over here then you don't need to be afraid that oh, I'll get rejected. If I'm applying somewhere either for a job or for a course, for

a university or college or whatever. But I wasn't afraid then, oh what if I'm rejected. I knew that, I know English. I will get this admission. Or I will get this job or whatever.

***Social identity.*** Norton (2013) posits that “work on identity offers the field of language learning a comprehensive theory that integrates the individual language learner and the larger social world” (p. 2). The concept of social identity is defined by Tajfel (1974) as “that part of an individual’s self-concept, which derives from his knowledge of his group membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership” (p. 69). While Reicher, et al. (2010) define social identity as “something that links us to the social world (and) provides the pivot between the individual and society” (p. 45), Breakwell (1988) suggests that “the distinction between personal and social identity is superfluous” (p. 192). One of the cornerstones of social identity theory is to account for the way social structures and belief systems impact how people act or choose to act (Reicher et al. 2010). The research by Tajfel (1974, 1982) revealed that the act of *mere categorization* into groups, irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality or language, can make people discriminate in favor of their own group.

Group formation is a fundamental characteristic of human society, and this is accompanied by the exclusion of others. The concept takes us beyond mere descriptions of deprivation, and focuses attention on social relations and the processes and institutions that underlie and are part and parcel of deprivation. (De Haan, 2000, p. 26)

According to Ellemers and Haslam (2012) the basic principles of social identity theory focus on three psychological processes by which personal identity is different from social identity: (a) the process of *social categorization* by which people are formed into groups, (b) the process of *social comparison* where group characteristics are rated and assigned value in

comparison to other groups and (c) the process of *social identification* that one can be included in a certain group and emphasize the distinctiveness of that group (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012).

Identity management strategies within social identity theory are social creativity, social competition and individual mobility. Social creativity is employed when group features are emphasized positively, such as “black is beautiful.” Social competition is when group members act to change the status quo, such as forming a union or protesting for equal rights (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012). The last of these, individual mobility, is an individual level strategy whereby people try to leave a devalued group and seek membership of a group of higher social standing by employing the necessary strategies in this regard. Individuals will seek to become members of new groups if these groups will add positively to aspects of their self-identity (Tajfel, 1974, 1982).

*Social identity in Pakistan.* There are more than 60 different languages and dialects in Pakistan (Rahman, 2011; Coleman 2010) and the participants of my study were at least bilingual, if not trilingual or quad-lingual, and all of them knew Urdu, which is the national language. Pakistan was created as an ideological state and defines its national identity in terms of faith, with Islam and the Urdu language being symbols of national unity—“a linguistic emblem of national identity” (Durrani, 2012, p. 35). Urdu is widely used and understood and is a medium of communication in most of the large urban areas of the country. Urdu, however, is not the language of power or prestige. In fact, the term “Urdu-medium,” as in “someone who has had an education in public schools where Urdu is the medium of instruction,” has derogatory connotations. The language of power, prestige and opportunity is English (Shamim, 2008). It is the critical barrier that demarcates class and privilege in Pakistan.

*What it means to have the social identity “Urdu-medium.”* To be considered “Urdu-medium” is not a desirable social identity in Pakistan for to be such can mean effective excommunication from most meaningful aspects of society and enrichment opportunities. This term, spoken or unspoken, can be considered degrading and depreciative, and is used by the elite mostly within their own circles covertly as a label of low status or overtly to put someone down. To be called “Urdu-medium” is deeply humiliating and represents a state of mind of those who use it to deride others and of those on whom it is appended. It affects people’s esteem and puts them off-balance. It is a decisive marker of social identity and class stratification in Pakistan.

Tajfel’s (1974, 1982) research had revealed that the act of *mere categorization* into groups makes people discriminate in favor of their own group, referred to as the *in-group*, and against those who are in the *out-group*. The ultimate “in” group in Pakistan—a somewhat contextual interpretation of Tajfel’s definition—and perhaps in all South Asia, is the English-speaking elite (Haque, 1983; Rahman, 2016), which discriminates in its own favor irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality or mother tongue. Credentials for access to this in-group can be established through the ability to speak English and familiarity with the culture that English brings—the current lingua franca of the globe. Trueba (1993) calls language and culture “two interlocking symbols” (p. 23) implying that they are inseparable and English provides cultural capital. “Powerful groups restrict the access of outsiders through social closure” (De Haan, 2000, p. 28), and to be in the non-English speaking “out” group is akin to being perpetually stuck on a one-way street that has a dead end. For this reason people are often find disowning Urdu or feigning unfamiliarity with it.

Language power and prestige motivations have to do with cases where languages or dialects themselves are associated with power and prestige. Language power and prestige

motivations are also evident when people avoid using or acquiring a language form that is non-prestigious and non-powerful, in order to not be associated with that lack of power or prestige. (Karan, 2011, p. 142)

The three psychological processes (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012) of *social categorization* of non-English speakers as “Urdu-mediums,” of *social comparison* where group characteristics of non-speakers are assigned a lower value in comparison to a higher value to English speakers, and of *social identification* to those who can speak English as “the elite” in-group, can have devastating consequences for the “Urdu-mediums.” In Pakistan the social reality for non-English speakers is pre-defined and against which they are helpless since most neither have the resources nor the environment through which they can acquire English. Norton’s (2016) suggestion that “a learner’s imagined identity and hopes for the future will impact his or her investment in the language” (p. 477) thus has limited relevance for those whose desire to acquire English is impacted by resource constraints, their hopes and dreams notwithstanding. The Urdu language itself also gets devalued “as speakers from a lower class (or socio-economic group) disvalue their own speech when asked by others to make judgements” (Kress, 1979, p. 53).

The idea of individual mobility (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012) is particularly relevant with regards to non-elite English learners in Pakistan for whom social mobility is hugely, if not totally, dependent on their ability to acquire English quickly and fluently. Hence, the aspirations of social mobility of my participants were informed by an intricate intertwining of English acquisition and identity formation. The social structures and belief systems influenced how people chose to act (Reicher et al. 2010) as they navigated their social world not just to be able to access the in-group of English speakers, who hold all positions of power and privilege, but also to overcome their own mental constraints.

*Not knowing English for non-elites—a crime.* The elites in Pakistan appear unaware of what a person goes through in a society like Pakistan where English is the gatekeeper and passport for entry to almost anything and everything that is meaningful. From the responses of the participants of my study, I was able to gain an understanding of the social reality one suffers by not knowing English, and how it can affect one's personal and social identity.

Hubi felt that many talented people cannot get ahead in life simply because they cannot speak English and compared it to a crime:

English is really neglected in our society and it is impacting the life of a lot of people, a lot of genius talented people. They are lagging behind in their careers just because they can't speak better English. They are genius, they have intelligence, they have great minds but they cannot excel just because they cannot speak English. And that's not their crime.

But it has become their crime now.

*Question of existence.* Hubi further shared that the level of despair a non-elite can experience for not being able to speak English, and which she experienced, can become a question of one's very existence. This can only translate into a very compromised social identity. She said:

I became conscious when I entered my medical school that it is now the question of your existence. Yes. I realize when I enter medical school that now it has become the question of your existence. If you can speak English or you can't. Because it literally shattered someone's confidence.

*Fear of being ridiculed.* From personal experience, I know that people, mainly non-elites, are ridiculed in Pakistan for speaking poor English and/or for their accent and/or for their pronunciation. This creates an insecure social identity. Simi shared that non-elites who “cannot

speaking that good English they are all the time thinking, if I will ask this question, how can I ask this? People will start laughing at me. A lot of people have this fear in Pakistan.” She shared an incident about her supervisor at a conference where people were laughing at the way he spoke:

Like for instance one of my supervisors in Pakistan, he was very good researcher and worked on migration and poverty and people really admired his work but when he comes to like presentations and going to different seminars and conferences, I saw people laughing just because his pronunciation of the words was not good and he could not talk in fluent English in British or American accent. So he suffered from that in a way.

*Pressure to oblige.* Simi narrated that until she learned English she lacked self-belief and felt pressured to oblige others, especially those that could speak. In other words, an obsequious social identity. She shared:

Now I'm very much confident (after learning English). For instance, I got this paper for review and another thesis for review as an expert in this field. Now, when I'm writing about and I'm reading this, I am not obliging. I am not obliged to give good reviews. Before that, maybe I would be doing this.

*No English no recognition.* Kai felt that there is no encouragement towards Urdu as you cannot get recognition in Pakistan unless you speak English. She said, “especially in Pakistan, there is no encouragement, Sir what I am trying to say is that without English we cannot get any recognition anywhere.” In other words, without English one’s identity goes unrecognized in the wider social world and one cannot access the resources and opportunities for social development and networking that are available in that milieu.

*“You start underestimating yourself.”* Simi who works in a highly respected public



institute of research shared how not knowing English made her start doubting herself which compromised the development of her social identity until she learnt English. She shared:

When I'm going to a meeting or stuff like that, people are not taking me seriously, because I was not communicating in English. Maybe they were thinking I'm unable to convey or express what I want to say. That was a lot of pressure. It was a lot of pressure because you start underestimating yourself. Yes, I feel a lot of change in myself (after learning English). I don't see much pressure while moving in these circles in society, and when I am talking about society, mostly, I am talking about my social network, more towards professional network. I feel less pressure while navigating my professional base.

**Theme 2. English is the intersection at which elites and non-elites meet as equals.**

English provides economic and cultural capital (Kothari, 2013) and is “required for the acquisition of social membership and cultural citizenship” (Nayar, 2011, p. 24). Norton (2000) argues that learners from marginalized backgrounds can negotiate more desirable identities through the target language, and invites researchers to address how relations of power hinder access to target language communities. She also refers to research on *imagined communities*, a term coined by Anderson (2006), and to her own efforts to develop the concept further (Norton, 2001; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton and Gao, 2008). In other words, a desired community of the imagination that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options, or *imagined identities*. My study suggests that one of those imagined communities would be one where non-elites meet elites as equals—as equal speakers of English. In other words, an “expansion of the range of possible social identities people may become” (Simon, 1979, p. 22). If relations of power deny access, English is the empowerment that provides access.

The data revealed that English is the portal that allows the non-elite to enter into the

elite world and the corridors of power and privilege. Participants mentioned how English completely changes the way people view you, it grooms, it is a label of intellect, a symbol of pride, one is considered competent, taken as someone of high profile, that it denotes superiority, that it takes one places, that one stands out, that it is a means to enter the elite civil services, and that one is treated like a leader.

My study shows that English is the fastest and perhaps the only way that non-elites can raise their position on the social ladder. English not only gives non-elites the ability to compete with the elite, but it also provides access to people who matter in society. English is the “means by which access to networks is regulated: If you do not speak the right language, you do not have access to forming relationships with certain people, or to participating in certain activities” (Heller, 1987, p. 181). The elite are also likely to be more generous and helpful when spoken to in English. Another finding was that English speakers, mainly elites, can get away with almost anything because of their ability to speak the language well. Code-switching is generally believed to be intentional (Cheng & Butler, 1989, p. 295) and the elite switch to (or use) English to talk down non-elites, who cannot speak the language, as a way of claiming unfair advantage.

Cheng and Butler (1989) state that “due to differences in social situations, an individual may switch from one language to the other, depending on the person to whom he or she is talking,” and that “code-switching reflects how the participants see their relative social roles and the topic of discussion” (p. 295). As in other postcolonial societies, the use of English in Pakistan “serves to indicate social exclusiveness and high socio-economic rank” (Zuengler, 1982, p. 112). Yet for non-elites, it is the same English that “allows them to meet traditional superiors on a more or less equal footing” (Moag, 1982, p. 276). English opens the door, provides access.

For example, Huma who is the first person in her family to acquire the ability to speak English, runs a non-governmental organization (NGO) aimed at providing education to rural women. She shared how she gets more and larger amounts in donations when she asks for them in English from wealthy people who invariably use English as a first language. This is perhaps because she is now interacting with them as an equal—she can demand not supplicate. She says:

I love to speak Urdu. Yes, when you connect with an elite class people, when you are a community leader and you speak in English, so they really (are) attracted and they support you in your work. Because when you speak in English, when sharing your work with the (elite) people, they donate, they support you. English is so powerful, right? So powerful because, well, you know the reality, the most powerful people in this country, they talk in English.

Nad, who is the first person from his family to speak English and who attended a top business school in Pakistan (English played a big part in his admission to it), works with the World Bank on education related projects. He shares how English gives one an audience with powerful people, people who can solve the problems non-elites like him face. He says:

So English, it allows you to at least communicate your message and your idea to the people who matter. So, I think language especially in communication and all that, it helped me relate to the people who matter, and who could address the challenges and the problems that we typically face.

Simi worked very hard to learn English and is the first person in her family to earn a doctorate and that too from a foreign university. She was resentful how her work was never recognized until she learned to speak the language, and how she was used by those that could. She laments that the elite get away with incompetence and no one questions them because

of their ability to speak English fluently. It also seems to give English speakers in Pakistan the prerogative to be rude and loud. She says:

When you are sitting in a meeting and stuff, and people are too outspoken, very blunt. And nobody will question that, even if they're presenting something and if it's wrong. You will come across a lot of people who do not know anything, but nobody questions them. You know why people don't question them? (Because) they cannot speak that good English. Even if you move into this bureaucratic structure, you will see the same. I have seen a lot of mediocre officials (but) their English is good, and they are getting promotions, promotions, promotions.

Simi also felt that fluent English speakers, invariably the elite, can attain high positions with fewer qualification and in a shorter period of time. She had to work very hard to be where she is but someone from an elite English-speaking background may get there in roughly half the time it had taken her. Nevertheless, she could not be in that position without knowing English. She shared:

But I just wanted to say that like the same (leadership) position I have right now and the same earning potential which I have right now, I got this after investing a lot of hard work in it. But another person from a very good elite background, he can do it with only a Master's degree and that is what I am right now seeing. Like I had to do Ph.D. to get all this, but those people don't actually need to have that. That's what I really wanted to say. I am not saying that English is all in all, it helped me and I put in a lot of hard work. Like if somebody (from an English-speaking background) invested just 18 years of their life, then I invested 30 of years of my life getting into this position, so that's the difference.

**Theme 3. English and its relationship to mother tongue in Pakistan.** The question of mother tongue and its relationship to English learning and acquisition was an important part of my research. As the findings indicate, people who cannot speak English are not considered educated in Pakistan. They are unable to get respect in society and have limited opportunities. The findings under this theme were mixed and interesting and ranged from the ability to communicate ideas better in the mother tongue to the disregard of Urdu. An unusual finding was that most participants felt that their relationship with their mother tongue had improved as a result of their acquisition of English and that they respected it more now.

This hegemonic role of Urdu was mentioned by one participant, while two spoke about how being weak in Urdu has become a status symbol. One participant called Urdu an integral part of their identity and a source of credibility, while another spoke about how mother tongue gives dignity. Also mentioned was that Urdu does not make one feel empowered and that in professional environments in Pakistan, there is an unwritten understanding that Urdu is not kosher; at least not encouraged. Another lamented that society is destroying its roots by disparaging Urdu. An interesting finding in this section was that scolding someone in mother tongue is more hurtful than doing it in English. Similarly, many words in Urdu have more negative connotations than when the same words are spoken in English. It was also mentioned that Urdu implies backwardness and conservatism. A most unique finding was that English is a tool that can be used to advocate for Urdu.

***Increased respect and improved relationship with Urdu.*** While for Ainee and Waji there was no relation, Anu, Hubi, Huma, Nad and Shah all felt that their relationship with Urdu had strengthened. In speaking about her connection to Urdu, Huma eloquently stated: “I always love with my basic languages because when I speak Urdu, I speak from heart. When I speak English,

I speak English from my mouth.” For Kai, her relationship to Urdu was a question of self-respect: “No, of course not sir. Now I'm 21 years old, so how can I do that? If I disrespect Urdu, so how would get I respect sir?” Anu’s travels, made possible due to her command of English, made her realize the importance and respect given to mother tongues in other countries. She shared:

I think that mother tongue is also important, at some places you have to speak that with family you know. Because now I have traveled some places and over there I have seen that their relation with their mother tongue is very strong, and they don't want to lose it at any cost. They're not like some Pakistanis, they're speaking English so they have lost their relationship with their mother tongue. But yes, I would want to make it stronger maybe. I don't want to lose it at any way. You respect it more? Of course, I do. Because I am... my mother tongue. Because I have seen that with people they are living in what you can say a better country, so they're giving more respect to their mother tongue then we should too.

Hubi was very clear about her feelings. She is familiar with Urdu literature and has extensively read in it. She said:

I respect it even more. Because our Urdu language is so deep, so beautiful, it has a lot of emotions. Whenever I used to read Urdu novel, but I had to read English novel just to improve my English. But then I realized, Urdu novel had more emotions, more you know, it was more beautifully written, and for example there is a one word, and it has a lot of synonyms in Urdu. I love the Urdu sentence making and I love Urdu more. It's so deep. How has your knowledge of English impacted your relationship with your mother tongue? It has become stronger, I would say.

For Nad, his acquisition of English has engendered in him the desire to read the literature of his mother tongue which is Punjabi. He shared:

Yup. I think learning English and learning more and more English language has encouraged me to learn my native language more as well. I mean my bond with my native language has got strengthened more. And over time, I've realized that I've got more interested in my own mother language which is Punjabi. I mean, figuring out what work in Punjabi is being translated in other languages, especially English. What work from English is being potentially translated to Punjabi? How the Punjabis of Indian Punjab are working to improve the language and for the progress of Punjabi language at large. Why and how BBC launch its Punjabi service. How Mohammed Hanif, who writes well in English and does a very good video blog in Punjabi for BBC. I think my relation and my bond with my native language has got very strong, and English has perhaps played an important role in that. So there is this direct relationship. More English, more respect kind of. That's what I'm hearing? Yes, absolutely. That's why I said initially that this is, for me, I mean, that actually strengthened my bond with my native language and with other languages as well. And respect for those languages.

For Shah, greater levels of exposure to international audiences and the work he does in his language translation business has helped him develop a desire to work towards improving his mother tongue. He said:

Yeah, exactly. Because now my exposure is enhanced. It is enhanced and I saw that people love their mother language. Like Chinese, they don't want to learn English, they teach their children in Chinese. Now I've given you an interesting example over here, that Sikh people of India, they love their language, they make their movies in Punjabi, they

teach their children, and kids in Punjabi, till the grade four, till the grade three. And if you see some Punjabi movie you will see how good vocabulary, how well instructed Punjabi is there, and if you see our Punjabi ...that is damaged. So, they love their language, they preserve that. They respect their languages, so I have more respect for my mother tongue and my local language, so we have to preserve that. So, that is what English impacted and given me ... It taught me the importance of language, that there is a importance of language, it is a tool, what is the connection between language and history? So having English I have learned these things.

Yas shared his feelings in detail about the issue, which were instructive and laid bare the direct nature of the relationship that exists between higher levers of English proficiency and higher levels of respect for and an improved relationship with the mother tongue. He summarized:

It has it has actually because when I had started learning English, before I started learning English I was in the mindset that every country is speaking English, learning English, giving so much importance to English. But after learning English I have realized that there are countries that are giving so much importance to their mother tongue although that's a fact that English is a lingua franca and is being spoken all round the world but still countries like Germany France Japan China they give a lot of respect to their own languages to their mother tongues. So, you know obviously in a country like Pakistan if you cannot speak English and you just praise Urdu, so people will say you are praising Urdu because you cannot speak English you know, they just start just finding your mistakes. But when you know the language English and then you are just praising and advocating the Urdu language then it just creates some impact and it gives some power to



your words. So, after learning English I really realized that, you know, from the bottom from my heart that learning different languages is obviously very good, it's a good skill to have, but giving importance to your mother tongue it is you know like that, it is for the dignified people, it is the dignity you have inside yourself, so being dignified, to get dignity you need to give importance to your mother tongue.

*Ideas can be better communicated in mother tongue.* Aka, Ainee, Simi and Waji spoke on the importance of communication in the mother tongue. Simi was clear on the topic and said, "I still feel that my ideas would be much more clear when I am speaking in Urdu. I can present my knowledge and communicate better in that." For Aka it was very simple as he works to develop books in Urdu. He shared:

Ninety-five to ninety-eight percent, I speak Urdu language so my relationship is always strengthened. And working with SM developing Urdu books, gave me the understanding that your conceptual understanding always develops in your mother tongue. If you have a weak mother tongue, you have difficulty articulating.

Ainee narrated how he switches to Urdu during his lectures at the University even though, officially, he is supposed to stick to English. He said:

In fact, to tell you the truth, in our university where I am teaching now, the language of instruction is English. But I teach all my subjects in Urdu, which is against the rules, and against the policy. But the children love it, and they understand better. And you're being fair to those whose English is not very strong? Absolutely, I think if I deliver my lectures in English, although I don't deliver lectures, but if we conduct the classes, the

classroom learning in English, they won't understand. Many of them will have a problem. So they won't understand. The concepts are complex, and language is not their own language.

Like Ainee, Waji also felt that lectures delivered in Urdu are so much more effective given the fact that most students are not English speakers:

I had some amazing teachers who taught me courses like management and stuff and although they were well versed but they opted to speak in Urdu so their message could be far reached because even in a class, you have many people and most of them understand Urdu so definitely they choose that medium and I see it impacts. It matters.

Huma shared how she speaks from the heart in Urdu and is able to connect better with her audience. She said:

Even my Urdu is thank God, my Urdu is fabulous, because in Urdu, I speak from heart. So inshallah one day, I try my best same as in English when I speak to people, listen to the heart. Because when I share my story in Urdu, every time I have so many comments from the people “we have goose bumps.” When I speak in Urdu, it's from my heart. But English, I finding vocabularies.

*Respect for mother tongue is a sign of dignity.* As shared earlier, Yas felt that you cannot be a dignified person if you do not give respect to your mother tongue. He shared:

So, after learning English I really realized that you know from the bottom from my heart that learning different languages is obviously very good, it's a good skill to have, but giving importance to your mother tongue it is you know like that, it is for the dignified people, it is the dignity you have inside yourself, so being dignified, to get dignity you need to give importance to your mother tongue.

*No one listens if you speak in Urdu.* Ainee lamented how English carries weight and Urdu does not. In other words, a person who only speaks Urdu has a marginalized identity. He said:

Yeah, you can say that there is more weight if you speak in English, then people listen to you, and think that what you are saying is maybe worth listening to. But if you speak in Urdu, of course you are more or less disregarded, people don't even listen to you.

Anu was even more blunt when she shared her feelings about the sad inconsequentiality of Urdu in Pakistani society. She felt that as she learned English and noticed how differently people were behaving towards her, it made her sometimes feel negatively toward Urdu. These negative feelings went away once she traveled to Europe and saw how much mother tongues were respected across the continent. She shared:

I didn't want to say it but, yeah, sometimes, yes, because that's what people make me think like that. Because they don't listen when I talk in Urdu, but they actually leave their chair when I talk to them in English. So I feel there is no respect you know, what if, you know I cannot hold my degree in my hand that see see see I am so educated you know, I cannot speak in English but I am such an educated person. But they don't listen to you. And when you start actually start speaking with them in English they are like madam madam madam come come come we will listen to you. So that is the reason.

*Urdu does not make you feel empowered.* Waji shared that she is forced to use English to assimilate and admitted that using Urdu does not make her feel empowered. She said:

Sometimes I do subconsciously or even consciously use English to blend in in certain events or in certain places in certain settings but unfortunately, as much as I love Urdu, I cannot say that speaking Urdu makes me more empowered or something. I haven't

reached that mental stage yet.

*Disregard of Urdu.* Simi simply said, “I really believe that Urdu is deteriorating. We don't know how to write we don't know how to say things in Urdu.” Kai talked about how there was no encouragement and hence no interest in learning and improving the Urdu language. Her concern was that people have limited vocabulary and mix up the tenses, which is leading to a decline in the quality of the language. She admitted that even she was much more interested in learning English than Urdu. She shared:

I think we don't even know abcd of Urdu. Just we don't speak proper Urdu. For me, it is a gulabi (street) Urdu. We can say, for me, like not tenses, we have not vocabulary, the basic vocabulary of Urdu. We say that we don't have a vocabulary of English, like big-big words, we don't know. But we even don't know about Urdu. So for me, the bad relationship with both Urdu.... Means I can speak Urdu but can't get those words which are basically the part of Urdu.

When I asked Kai if she desired to improve her learning of Urdu, she responded that without English, non-elites cannot get recognition anywhere. She reflected:

Sir, could be a little bit, because we have no exposure to learn Urdu. We have just ... especially in Pakistan, could be in India, but especially in Pakistan, there is [pee-chay say] just you have to speak [pee-chay say hota hai na]. Encouragement? Yes sir, encouragement. No encouragement sir. What I am trying to say is that without English we cannot get any recognition anywhere. So you're saying that because of that, Urdu is neglected? Yes sir. This is the thing. Because everyone, even the teachers working here, they are the officers. You even ask them that they know the better Urdu, they would say they don't ... Even they speak in Urdu, but they don't know the better Urdu, the real Urdu,

the pure Urdu. No one knows the pure Urdu. So for me, my base is Urdu, so I can't disrespect Urdu. Yes, I can say this, I have more interest to learn English, rather than Urdu. I can say this. It could be a little bit part, means, if I talk about 100%, so there would might be 95% that I want to speak English, I want more vocabulary of English and 5% Urdu. For me, yes.

For Shah, the mixing up of the languages was damaging Urdu. The writing of English words in Arabic script is increasingly commonplace and is indicative of Urdu's capacity to absorb words from any language into itself. Shah said:

So because I am in the, manager of a language related business, but if you consider somebody who's not in this, his Urdu is affecting, because continuously speaking English, people are getting lack in vocabulary of Urdu. So that is impacting, but remember I am in the language business, I used to deal with all the three languages, so it's not affecting me that much. But what I believe is that we should not damage one language on the sake of other, that we use to mix a lot of English words in Urdu and English. And spoil Urdu. So this is bad, but if you speak your local language for the locals and the national language (English) for the internationals, so there's no damage.

*Destroying the roots of society.* Simi lamented that due to the disrespect shown to Urdu, to the point of it being considered fashionable, Pakistani society was damaging its foundations. She shared how Urdu is discouraged in covert ways. She said:

Somehow this is our asset. This is what we are. You cannot run away from your reality, from your roots. But still we are trying to cut our people, but we are not thinking about how will we survive without roots. Like it's not written, it's not said, but in a way, in signs and in gestures, they are telling you that Urdu is not accepted.

*Bad Urdu has become a status symbol.* This was an unexpected finding and may be indicative of a certain mindset with regards to Urdu. Hubi and Simi both lamented that not knowing or being weak in Urdu has become a status symbol. Hubi said, “So, they will be like “Urdu? I don't know how to speak in Urdu. I don't know how to speak Urdu.” They think that Urdu has a low standard.” Simi shared, “people are really proud when they say that "Oh, our kids are really weak in Urdu." They don't know how to write it or they don't know how to speak. This is another status symbol if your kid doesn't know how to write and read Urdu.”

Hubi is also the first person from her family to acquire fluency in English and studied medicine, and which she feels could never have been possible had she not learned English. She was heartbroken when she discovered that elite students formed friendships on the basis of the culture that surrounds the English-speaking class. She wept as she shared her traumatic experience:

My medical college, when it was started, it changed my life as a whole. I wouldn't say that it was a good experience. It was initially a very bad experience. Because, from every background people were coming and from very elite backgrounds and I'm saying it on the basis of their educational status. They were very fluent in speaking English and people make friends on that basis. And that was so disappointing for me. The journey was not easy for me; it was so difficult. I never say this to my parents because I know they have done a lot for me. But it was difficult for me. One more thing I would like to add that when I realized that my English is not that good. When we are sitting in a group, in university, and people are discussing about English season, English dramas, and films and I hadn't watched a single episode of Games of Thrones and people used to judge. Like, really? Have you ever been into English season? I was like, no. So they are, like,

you are so boring. This is not only the case of Games of Thrones. But, a lot of other things. We discussed a lot more novels, and English seasons. And in that gathering you feel like a fish out of water because you have no clue what to say.

Hubi later discovered that one of the ways to confront the attacks on her esteem by elite students was through her strong knowledge of Urdu literature. She laughed when she added the following to her narrative:

Then I get the answer of that (her dilemma). Okay, if somebody asked me, “Have you watched that English serial or drama or movie?” I will add that, “Have you studied about that book by Bano Qudsia, have you studied Ashfaq Ahmed have you studied these Urdu writers?” So, they will be like “Urdu? I don’t know how to speak in Urdu.” They think that Urdu has a low standard. So, this happens and I think I’m not going to be affected anymore in my life.

*If you can’t speak English, you hide.* As a teacher of English to underprivileged children I am witness that children who are the weakest in English often are the quietest and it is almost as if they hide through their reticence. This could be termed a fearful identity. Yas validated my impression when he shared, “Yeah, I was more confident. And the confident people obviously, you know, they behave differently. And the people who are unconfident they behave differently. They are shy, they hide themselves. So after knowing English I was not like that, I was very expressive.”

*A source of depression.* Not being able to speak English can be a source of a depressed Identity. According to Shah:

So I wasn't that much shy or scared that I could not speak, but my friends who were from rural areas of Pakistan, they were very scared that our fellow guys are speaking very well

English and giving a good presentation and getting good marks. They cannot speak even one line, so they were shy, they were depressed. I wasn't that much shy or depressed.

### **Research Question 3. Participants Changed View of Themselves as Educational Leaders**

**Theme 1. English and leadership.** There are three paths to leadership ignoring heredity and coups, namely: election, appointment and emergence (Norton, et al., 2014), and while election and appointment are widely understood phenomena with support in the literature, *emergence* is a more complex construct. According to Schneider and Goktepe (1983), emergent leaders possess no formal authority, yet exert noteworthy influence on other group members. The emergence of leadership in successful non-elite English learners in Pakistan is a unique element of this study.

My search of numerous books, studies and dissertations on second language acquisition did not reveal any specific linkage or attempt to study the construct of leadership in relationship to the learning of English whether in the inner, outer or expanding circles of English speakers and users (Kachru, 1992a). The inner circle comprises native English-speaking countries such as Britain and America, the outer circle covers former British colonies such as Pakistan and India where English is *de rigueur*, and the expanding circle includes emerging economies where English is taught as a foreign language and is widely used such as China and Korea (Kachru, 1992).

The word leader invariably conjures up notions of power, and history shows us that leadership and power have at times gone hand in hand and at times one has been bereft of the other. Burns (1978) sums it up succinctly when he says that “all leaders are actual and potential power holders but not all power holders are leaders” (p. 18) and differentiates between acts of power and acts of leadership. Kachru (1986), compared English to the “Aladdin's lamp, which



permits one to open, as it were, the linguistic gates of international business, technology, science, and travel. In short, English provides linguistic power" (p. 1).

In her study of second language learners in Malaysia, Lee (2003) mentioned how many of her participants felt that English had given them a sense of empowerment. The subjects of Yoshimoto's (2008) study of female Japanese learners of English also felt that English had empowered them. The theme of empowerment through the learning of English is mentioned in other studies as well. However, in no study I came across was the idea that English leads to leadership or helps develop leadership was explored or specifically mentioned. In my study, a number of participants drew direct links between their acquisition of English and the emergence of leadership in their thinking and behaviors.

Burns (1978) presented the concepts of transactional leadership and transformational leadership with the former often lacking moral legitimacy—a difference that moves people toward higher purpose. While transactional leadership needs authority, transformational leadership needs none. The type of leadership that English engendered in the participants of my study was transformational in nature and they began inspiring positive change in their environments.

Palus and Drath (1995) distinguished between training programs that impart new skills, and development programs that stretch the ways one makes sense of oneself. Myatt (2012) calls leadership *training* a transactional exercise, while he terms leadership *development* a transformational one (Table 5). He blames training as the foremost reason why leadership development fails and presents a number of points to highlight the difference between the two (I have added the words underneath the captions in italics in parenthesis):

Table 5

*Difference between leadership training and leadership development (adapted from Myatt, 2012)*

	<b>Training</b>	<b>Development</b>
1	Blends to a norm	Occurs beyond the norm
2	Focuses on technique/content/curriculum	Focuses on people
3	Tests patience	Tests courage
4	Focuses on the present	Focuses on the future
5	Adheres to standards	Focuses on maximizing potential
6	Is transactional	Is transformational
7	Focuses on maintenance	Focuses on growth
8	Focuses on the role	Focuses on the person
9	Indoctrinates	Educates
10	Maintains status quo	Catalyzes change
11	Stifles culture	Enriches culture
12	Encourages compliance	Emphasizes performance
13	Focuses on efficiency	Focuses on effectiveness
14	Focuses on problems	Focuses on solutions
15	Focuses on reporting lines	Expands influence
16	Places people in a box	Frees them from the box
17	Is mechanical	Is intellectual
18	Focuses on the knowns	Explores the unknowns
19	Places people in a comfort zone	Moves people beyond their comfort zones
20	Is finite	Is infinite

Education, as being provided in public schools in Pakistan, which the vast majority of children attend, and which hardly imparts any English communication skills, is akin to “training” as elucidated in Table 5. On the other hand, the impact that the learning of English has on Pakistani non-elites as they acquire the language, may be compared to leadership development, as outlined above by Myatt, on each of the 20 points raised. Hence, the learning of English may be considered a very significant element of leadership development in Pakistan which this study provides evidence for.

**Leadership traits.** Galton's (1869) *Hereditary Genius* suggested that leadership is an innate and immutable inherited property. This evolved into trait theory which does not make the assumption that leadership is acquired or inherent (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). According to Northouse (2016), "the trait approach was one of the first systematic attempts to study leadership" (p. 19) and focused on identifying the innate qualities of leaders like Mohandas Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, Joan of Arc and Napoleon Bonaparte. Zaccaro (2007) delineates that trait approaches began with identifying qualities of outstanding individuals and later shifted to include situational impact on leadership (Blanchard & Hersey, 1970). Blake and Mouton (1964) suggest that different situations demand different kinds of leadership.

Many of the leadership traits and qualities as identified by Bird (1940), Stogdill (1948), and Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) were present in the participants of my study. Bird's (1940) summary of leadership traits include accuracy in work, knowledge of human nature and moral habits. Stogdill (1948) cited decisiveness in judgment, speech fluency, interpersonal skills, and administrative abilities as stable leader qualities. Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) identified six enduring qualities that leaders are known to possess, and which distinguish them from non-leaders. These include:

1. Drive (includes achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity and initiative)
2. Leadership motivation (the desire to lead but not to seek power as an end in itself)
3. Honesty and integrity
4. Self-confidence (which is associated with emotional stability)
5. Knowledge.
6. Cognitive ability

*Impact of cognition on leadership.* One of the assumptions identified by Lord and Emrich (2000) that has shaped the path of cognitive leadership research is the acknowledgement of a perennial question: What is the origin of causality? In other words, does leadership reside in the person or does it emerge from social systems? In response, they opine that scholars who assume that leadership resides in leaders try to identify traits that inspire followers, whereas those who assume that it emanates from social systems try to identify conditions that are conducive to leadership emergence. Research indicates that cognition makes a big difference in leader emergence and performance (Mumford, Campion, & Morgeson, 2007). It would appear that in the Pakistani milieu, leadership may emerge in non-elites from any environment or social system that makes English acquisition possible.

Leadership research tends to focus on behavior and Mumford, Watts, and Partlow (2015) state that even a cursory review of the literature would suggest that leaders need not think; they must act! Hence, theories of leadership (ethical, transformational, servant, and others) have mainly focused on follower perceptions of leaders (Dinh et al., 2014). Petrie (2011) called for enhanced focus on innovation in the development methods of leadership, which supports my research around the idea of English as a path to leadership.

Reams (2016) informs us that there has been a growing movement away from behavior training and peripheral capabilities towards the development of inner competencies and personal growth of leaders. This is similar to what Myatt (2012) suggests. The findings of my study show that mastery of the English language by non-elites develops core inner competencies and confidence in them and adds to their growth as leaders.

Mumford et al. (2015) suggest that “there is ample reason to suspect that cognition would be critical to understanding the nature and significance of both leader emergence and leader

performance” (p. 301) and point out that cognition is a person’s capacity to work with information and knowledge. One such capacity is general intelligence, which has probably received the most attention in studies of leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008), and is very strongly related to leadership emergence and performance (Mumford et al., 2007). Intelligence is also positively related to movement into leadership roles with the effect strengthening as people mature (Daly et al., 2015). Mumford et al. (2015) suggest that the impact of intelligence on achievement of leadership positions depends in part on education. Most of the participants of my study had worked hard over their academic trajectories and by inference had developed higher levels of intelligence. Their academic successes and their successful acquisition of English—both intertwined—had led to the development of leadership attitude and the achievement of leadership positions and roles.

McKenna et al. (2009) posit that wisdom with regards to leadership involves the use of logic, a desire for humane solutions, openness to subjectivity and motivation toward social justice. For the subjects of my study, the doors of knowledge that English flung open, had led to a more logical and open-minded approach in their thought processes, as well as a higher level of social consciousness and realism. Their stories are imbued with a sense of justice.

Creative thinking and complex problem-solving skills are cognitive abilities that also positively impact leadership and leader continuance (Vincent et al., 2002; Zaccaro et al., 2015). Mumford et al. (2015) state that the impact of cognitive capacities on a leader's ability to profit from educational or developmental opportunities, suggests that developmental interventions focused on providing requisite knowledge and skills might prove especially valuable for developing leadership potential. In the case of Pakistani non-elites, English acquisition was a significant developmental step, likely the most important one, in realizing leadership potential.

***English enhances leadership.*** One of the main findings of my research is: English may or may not create leadership but English definitely enhances leadership. While most participants felt that they had leadership qualities but that their leadership had been greatly enabled and enhanced by English. Half the participants felt that the ability to speak English provides opportunities for leadership enactment with some saying that it bestows leadership. Most of them also felt that in an elitist society like Pakistan with its long Anglo-colonial history and deep class stratification, leadership is not possible without English. Some mentioned English as a component of leadership development, while a few mentioned the importance of English for international leadership. Two interviewees said that leadership is possible in Pakistan without English and two thought that without English, you may only lead illiterates in Pakistan.

***Leadership is not possible without English.*** Ainee, Anu, Hubi, Huma, Kai, Shah, Simi and Yas all felt that leadership is not possible without English in Pakistan. When I asked Rose about any possible link between the two, she was emphatic in saying, “Of course it’s linked, it’s linked, it’s linked.” Ainee said:

In the early part of my working life, English was only used in the files, in the noting and drafting. It wasn't used in public dealing, because most of the public is illiterate. And it wasn't used in the interaction that we had amongst ourselves the officers and the clerks. But later in life, when I was reaching the end of my career, I took over a position where English, it mattered. I joined the National School of Public Policy in Lahore, which is the premier institution for the training of public servants. I became a dean there. I joined there as one. And there, I realized that English mattered. It was necessary for the dean

and for chief instructors and for NIPAs, because the medium of instruction was English. All the guest speakers who used to come there were required to deliver their lecture in English. So this was where I realized that English was necessary.

When asked if it is possible to create leadership in Pakistan without English, Anu responded: “If you talk about Pakistan, then English is necessary. It's necessary here. You have to teach them English. Yes. To make them into leaders. Yes, you have to.” When I asked Kai if she could be the leader she is today without knowing English, she said:

Sir, unfortunately, I would not be a leader without English. Unfortunately, I'm just saying. Sir unfortunately, because the environment has built the thing in our mind that a person without English, whoever, a leader or another person, whatever ...Boss, whoever could be nothing without English. Could be nothing without English. Yes sir. If we are talking about Pakistan, then ... And you are about to be a leader, so you have to know about English. Means, your step, as I have told you earlier is that it is a step of success. Not we can say the key to success, but step to success.

Shah had an interesting take on why English is important for leadership in Pakistan given that many people have a rudimentary knowledge of the language. He added, more relevantly, that to lead people from the elite classes is not possible without English. He said:

Like, let's say I have hired some employee and he's used to speak bilingual, he used to use English words as well. So if I'm his boss and in the meeting he says something and I don't know five or six or seven words, what he spoke, then I think it's a shame for me, I cannot understand what my employee is saying, and I am just claiming that I am a good leader. So I think that English is required to the leadership of elites, for the leadership of foreigners, for the leadership of good human resource need English.

Simi's response on this question was mixed. On the one hand, she felt that leadership is possible in Pakistan without English but then admitted that in her own consciousness she would find it hard to accept a person as a leader who cannot speak English. She shared:

My gut feeling says yes, but again ... like when I am sitting in front of TV, and I am listening to a leader and he is speaking very bad English, we say that he or she is not a good leader. I have that. Even you have that? Yes. When it comes to getting a good position in upper echelon of the society maybe it becomes difficult.

Yas was very clear in his response to the question. He gave the interesting example of the Pakistan cricket team and their trials with trying to speak English well in order to get respect and credibility, which are essential elements of leadership. He narrated:

Yeah. Obviously. Obviously. For a leader it's really necessary to speak English. In Pakistan. You cannot be a leader without English? No. Not at all. No way. I will give you a simple example. In the Pakistani cricket team, people are very talented in cricket but if they cannot speak English the others, the audience, they are ridiculing them because they cannot speak English. They have to go to learn English. They learn English, then they come to there, then they make their speeches and then they have that respect, which they deserve. Although their talent is to play. Their talent is not to speak in English. But still people are not giving them that respect, which they deserve. So in the same way I would say that anywhere, in any of the departments in Pakistan, if you want to just have the...  
Yeah. Acceptance.

***English provides opportunities for leadership enactment.*** Anu, Kai, Rose, Shah, Waji and Yas shared how English provides numerous opportunities for leadership enactment to non-elites. Anu shared her story:



One recent example is I was doing a job in an IT company, and I was HR manager there ok. I was one of the youngest persons there, and some of them were actually getting more than me because they were doing a lot of other things you know, designing and other stuff, but the fact is that I could speak in English and they don't. So you know when they want to take or ask something from the boss or you know request something from the boss, they always tell me that OK Anu they (the boss) speak in English and you speak in English so can you go and pass our message to him. I said ok I can do that you know. That's how I became a leader, actually I become a leader everywhere wherever I go.

Kai and Shah both had similar experiences when they were asked to act as hosts at school events. Kai recalled:

They pushed me to get into the activities like speeches, like I get to host the function in English. They knew there is something in me that I could put a lot of effort to speak in English. There was a phenomenon of effort and they said you can do it and they encouraged me a lot. That was a point where my self-confidence started building. My teacher said, "Yes Kai, you can do it." I done a lot in front of people. So at that time, teachers started asking me that Kai you are a good speaker, teachers ask me to participate. So that was the thing that if they can believe in me, so why don't me. I can do it. So I started doing that and at that time, I just, you know sir. I started feeling different from others.

Shah's shared his experience:

I got a good review in my school that he's a good speaker, he can speak English. So I used to do hosting in all the events of the school, in the college as well, "Ask Shah, he will do the hosting." Yeah, because of English as hostings were in English, like

prize distributions, like any activity, their hosting was in English. So what others doing that write the content and cram that and speak that, but I wasn't fond of that. I used to take notes and I used to speak naturally. I established my skill in my university as well. After that, I took part in almost every event. I used to do hosting. Yeah, so I have positive impacts, I had respect, my teacher used to give me that respect that he can speak good English, we can give him any ceremony or any conference or any presentation. So that was a positive impact on my life, I was gaining confidence.

Rose who works at a very senior level in the banking bureaucracy shared that there was no possibility of her being in the leadership role that she is in without English. She said:

Panels assess on the basis of your communication instead of your degrees, instead of other things. Of course, in business English. The interview is the first stage to get position in any organization. I would not be able to get to that position of executive director if the interview was not cleared over there. Board conducted interview and the language was English.

Waji who completed her degree from one of the best engineering colleges in Pakistan, narrated the following:

I'm working in a research group. My qualification wise, I'm the most junior but I have been doing research for the last year and a half and all of my peers are relatively new so, I am kind of a leader there. Not a leader but kind of. So again, I think I'm very good at what I'm doing because my main job includes literature reviews so obviously if my English is good, only then I can read all those numerous articles and papers and stuff and studies. So yeah. It has affected me. Obviously again, as I said earlier, I am where I am because of my English language skills.

Yas who works at a large public school for girls, and perhaps the only teacher there who is fluent in English, said the following:

In my school, I can speak English, so whenever there is a ceremony, whenever there is an event, I was the one who was just selected for the hosting because I can speak English.

I'm the one who can receive people. So they just send me to receive people. For example, ministers are coming and all these people are coming, so I go there. So that's really impressed people. Then people make you leader. Then people come to you. Then people ask you questions. So I think that using English is very much important.

Yas added how he was given a higher-level position because of his English skills. He said, "People have positive thinking for me, they considered me as educated and although I was appointed as a primary teacher but I was put up to the secondary classes. So that was very appreciating (encouraging) for me." Yas also narrated how he was asked to be part of a powerful panel on education due to the work he did translating a teacher's guidebook from English to Urdu, work that he could never have done without his strong language skills. He shared his experience, which honed his leadership further:

When we had done that Teacher's innovation book and you know I was sitting there in that panel and I was representing the government teachers. So I think you know it was a really amazing experience for me. And I think it's all because of the English language. If I did not have the language, I would not be there, it's so simple.

***English enables leadership.*** Anu, Kai, Shah and Yas all felt that their leadership abilities had been enabled and enhanced by their acquisition of English. For Anu, losing the fear of rejection greatly enhanced her leadership, as shared earlier. She said that English allows her to

travel the world without worrying about communication barriers. She had a unique take on how she now feels equal to anyone anywhere. She said:

Like I said earlier, that I was all alone standing there, I wasn't afraid and I said I can't speak your language. And so are you! You can't speak English. So, yeah that English enhanced my leadership and... because over here then you don't need to be afraid that oh, I'll get rejected. If I'm applying somewhere either for a job or for a course, for university or college or whatever. But I wasn't afraid then, oh what if I'm rejected. I knew that, I know English. I will get this admission. Or I will get this job or whatever. I can get anywhere. So yeah, it enhanced as you say... It enhanced your leadership? Yeah.

Kai summarized that she had leadership ability and also that leadership does not come from English. She, however, used a beautiful metaphor and called English, "The cherry on the cake" of leadership. She shared:

Sir for me, leadership doesn't come from English. Leader has his own qualities. I just told you that he is a kind of person understands everything, has ability to manage everything, to know the difference between right and wrong, to be able to tell the difference whoever, elder or younger. He is able to tell the difference between right and wrong to everyone. So for me, the leadership doesn't come from English, but, yes, it is cherry on the cake. So, it could be like that. Basically, I'm just trying to say that leadership is enhanced by English.

Like Kai, Shah also felt he had leadership abilities but that these have been enhanced by English. He said that leadership is not something that can be acquired overnight and has to be learned over time. He said:

Yeah, I was because whenever we have some plan with friends, I used to lead that, I used to plan that. Let's say some birthday party of my friends, I used to say, okay, this this money everybody has to pay, I will manage this. So it was in my skills, leadership was there. I used to lead my friends, I used to lead my family as well, I used to work with my father in his business as well. So I was having leadership skill, I think, before having English as well. So after having English skill it get improved, now I am doing the leadership of the company of 12 people, 12 people are working with me. I am leading them. So English is also playing a role in that.

Shah also termed English a trait of leadership in Pakistan and that English had given him the confidence to be able to lead any team whether local or foreign. He shared his feeling about this in detail:

Actually, now I think that I am very good leader, but there are traits of leadership which I have to learn, there are different traits, how to handle people, how to handle pressure, and I have to learn. But the basic traits which are required for leadership which includes English which included good communication, which includes how you carry yourself, how you carry your work, that I know, I have English. If you give me a team of 10 Americans, I can even convey my message to them, I can even lead them, I have the confidence that I can lead any team because I have a language skill, which is English.

Yas was very clear and definitive on the topic and gave English all the credit for the emergence, development, and enhancement of his leadership ability. He shared his experience:

Because my language skills were good, so people just go around you and they come to you for many things and have so many works with you. I will give you the example of the people at my school, they often come to me and ask me to write applications and

letters to the different government departments, obviously they ask me write reports, ask me to write speeches for the students and so many things. So that's how I am just leading them because they know I am the one whose English-speaking skills and my writing skills are better than others. So because of my better English speaking and writing skills, my mates, my fellow English teachers, the management, the people, the students, they come to me, they ask for my help and that's how my leaders qualities are enhanced, they are increased and I am enjoying it. So English turned you into a leader? Yeah. Obviously. Obviously. It let me earn so much money. But money is something different. And leadership is something different. So are you saying English enabled your leadership? Yeah. Absolutely. Actually, I think that when, in a country like Pakistan, when you are speaking English, then the respect you receive, that makes you leader. So, knowing English people start treating you like a leader, is that what you are saying? Yeah. Absolutely.

***English as a component of leadership development in Pakistan.*** Simi and Yas both indicated that they would place English right at the top of any leadership development program while Waji noted she would place it high but not at the top. Simi shared:

At the top. I would definitely put English on the top. Because that's what I suffer. Like internally, I feel like language should not be a barrier in leadership. But it is there, and to become an effective leader and to be heard, because you know in Pakistan it's not that you are accepted among masses. It's about that whether those top people they accept you or not. It's what they think of you.

Yas was again very clear on this topic as well and was unhesitating and spontaneous in his response:

Obviously, on the top. I think this question is quite easy because all the higher studies are in English and here, as I told you previously, that people consider you educated if you speak English. So if I'm designing any such kind of program, English would be on the top. First people can speak English, then obviously the science, mathematics, and the other subjects are coming. We're talking about a leadership program we're not talking about an academic program. Yeah. Obviously. Obviously.

Waji was more measured and thoughtful in her response:

Again, it depends obviously because the course is leadership. I need to teach him other things as well, which should be of more priority like how to deal with people, how to be a good leader or how strategic or management and stuff like that because these are important leadership qualities. Therefore, I think proficiency in English is rather not that important in comparison to all those qualities. That's why I'll not give it the top of my priority. Would it be in the top five? Yes, it would be.

***English as a component of international leadership.*** There has also been in recent years a recognition that the whole paradigm of English learning has shifted due to the effects of globalization and increased linguistic and sociocultural diversity. Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009) posit that those working in the area of second language acquisition have begun to examine what the changed global reality means in terms of motivation to learn English for people aspiring to acquire global identity. Second language motivation is thus being re-conceptualized in the context of contemporary notions of self and identity in the new millennium. In a changed global reality, the concept of integrative Orientation may become increasingly redundant when there is “no specific target reference group of speakers” (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009, p. 2). However, the findings of my study show that integrative motivations to learn English are still relevant

within the domestic context of many postcolonial societies. Although my study and the questions therein were focused purely on Pakistan but references to international leadership (i.e. leadership ability to lead and act on the international stage, and/or to interact with foreign persons and entities) emerged in the narratives. Hubi shared:

Because English is international language, you cannot be a leader without speaking English. That's simple. For example, if I had been Education Minister of Pakistan and I need to go in different countries to discuss different ideas. English would be the medium. And probably the only medium I guess.

Huma said:

I am a leader, but I am like leader for my community. But when I speak English, I am a leader of the world. Because I've speak on the stage on women in the world, I've speak on Tukaram stadium London. I've speak in Bangladesh on Asia 21 Young Leaders stage. When I speak English, so I speak on a stage of China and thousands of people of China, even political, nonpolitical, academic person. So I am a leader before that, but I am a world leader after that. Actually, I always thinking I am a community worker, not a leader. Because I believe to work with a community for changing the community. But yes, somehow, I'm a leader because I connect my work to the world and raise my people's voice on different stages and sharing my community stories on different stages. So yes, English is a very supportive thing to louder my voice to the world.

Shah said:

There are motivations for English, that if you are a good English speaker you can have communication with the whole world, on Facebook, on any social media platform, you can convey your message. So English is a source of confidence, source of motivation,



and now it is paying me financially as well. It is giving me monetary benefits as well. And the last thing is I can communication with the whole world, everybody can understand English. Somebody cannot understand Chinese, Japanese, a lot of issues, but you can communication your message in English. So, whichever country I will visit, I have no problem. I can communication my message at least. So that image gives me need of English that there is need of English, there is need of speaking English. If you have to communicate with the world, if you have to survive in the world you should be speaking English. Yeah. So that point, that image give me the realization.

***In Pakistan you only lead the illiterate and uneducated if you don't know English.*** This was an unexpected finding and upset me a bit. It elucidates the structures and barriers that exist against the non-elites, who go through public school, where the acquisition of spoken English is next to impossible. Shah and Simi shared their feeling on this matter. Shah said:

If I continue my leadership without English that will be a local leadership. I can lead a group of people of Pakistan without English, I can lead a group of people who are less educated, but to lead the people who are very educated... Even here? Yeah, here. So, I think that English is required to the leadership of elites, for the leadership of foreigners, for the leadership of good human resource you need English. So, if you have to lead a group of laborers, and the low-class employees you can do without English, but to lead a proper company like I'm doing you need English.

Simi shared that leadership is possible without English because seventy percent of the population is illiterate and one could lead them in the vernacular. But when it came to being a leader among the educated, where it would matter, this would not be the case. By inference, it would also mean weak leadership that could be easily subverted. She said:

I am saying that leadership is possible without English and why am I saying this is 70% of our population is still living rural area and again like the literacy rate is very low ok. And when we talk about literacy rate it just means that you can read or write your name. So it's just a basic definition of literacy. But if you really want to know if they can read anything, they can't. So, maybe if a person is speaking in their own language, who has vision, he can survive among the masses. I have a couple of people who I know who are motivational speakers and they are speaking in Urdu and stuff like that and people are following them and they are getting like their presence, like you can see them on the TV and stuff like that. I think it's good to hear them but when it comes to like delegate to them maybe the so-called leaders which we have right now maybe will not give them right now the chance.

***Presence of elements of leadership.*** Half the participants of the study felt that elements of leadership were present in them before they learned English. Kai answered the query with a simple "Yes Sir." While Anu said, "I would say yes, because I had those qualities in my school also, you know that I used to be a leader or something. So, yes I had that quality. Yeah." Hubi shared how she was encouraged by her teachers towards leadership, and by helping her colleagues it developed further:

Leadership qualities I have since my school life. This is because my teachers gave me so much confidence and they always taught me that she has learned something and she presented me in front of all the class that you should learn from her. That she has achieved good result and you should learn from her. Then I started from that time, I started teaching my fellows that how she can excel in their exam. I think this is what leadership is when you can teach people of the same group.

Nad narrated how as a young boy he used to work in a factory to supplement the family income and that he led his team there. He shared the following:

I think I was a leader when I was working as a 13-year old in a factory, and I was leading other three boys to run 24-loom factory. I mean, to run in a way ... I don't know if you know how the loom works, but there is this bobbin that takes out the thread and help the machine run. So I and the three other boys, we were responsible to work for 12 hours and to manage all of that.

He further shared how he went to the director of his institute and convinced him to allow poor children to come to study there even when his English was weak:

And at that point in time, I didn't know English so well. And I was not that good with the language to go and speak before the director. And I think that was because of my own personal life experiences. And perhaps based on those experiences, how I could relate to and convince the director to allow those slum kids just to enter the campus. And then allow us some space to teach them without any cost. So in that case, I mean, I was not even confident enough to type an initial email that would go out to the directors P.A. for some time for an appointment. That's what I've seen in life. That even without language, I'm good with whatever, you know.

Shah also felt that leadership was present in him before he learned to speak English, which was shared earlier as well in the section on leadership enhancement:

Yeah, I was. Yeah, I was because whenever we have some plan with friends, I used to lead that, I used to plan that. So it was in my skills, leadership was there. I used to lead my friends, I used to lead my family as well, I used to work with my father in his business as well. So I was having leadership skill, I think, before having English as well.

Simi said:

I think I was, in a way, but I didn't know that. Before that, I was a little ... as I mentioned before that, I was very much active in extra-curricular ... all the time, I used to take lead, to arrange trips. I was the student representative for the faculty meetings, student and faculty meetings.

*Nurtured towards leadership.* Kai shared how her memorization of the scriptures gives her a unique position in her home, and which nurtured leadership in her. She narrated:

Sir, let me tell you a thing that I have told you I am Hafiz-e-Quran. So, Hafiz-e-Quran are given so much respect. So my mother treat me like a princess. Made me sleep in front of the fan. Whenever I come to home, especially she cooks for me. Serve me first a leg piece (preferred piece of chicken). Whenever I come to home from Madrassa my father calls, beta (child) what you have to eat, what you have to do? He was just treating me like a guest, putting everything in front of me, decorating a table. Kai, this is for you, this is for you. And sometimes she used to feed me with her own hands. Because my parents always treated me like a leader. You know as a leader ... Leader has a lot of abilities, a lot of things, qualities. Like, a leader understands everything. A leader knows how to handle other things. So always they treated me like a princess. When there was my mother, she was about to take my opinion, my father discusses everything with me. They have said you can say anything openly. They have boundary between parents and children, but I can say anything to my father. With the respect, but I can say anything. Whenever my father is doing bad, good, I give my opinion. Basically, we take dinner daily together. So me and father, it was a done thing. So basically at that time, I say everything. Whatever happens to me, even whatever the street person says to me. Bullying or whatever the

things happen. Anything. I share everything to my father. So basically he really made me a leader. Even before English? Yes sir, even before English.

## **Theme 2. Impact of English on the self-view and self-belief of non-elite Learners.**

*Changed self-view.* Some participants of my study felt their self-view had changed After learning English, while others did not think that it had. Anu, Nad, Yas and Zam were very clear in their feeling that the process and acquisition had changed their self-view and self-belief. Zam put it very succinctly: “I have become more progressive, more moderate, more modern. And my thought processes have changed.” Anu said:

Self-belief is changed. Why? Because in the beginning, you didn't know that ... how much capable you are and how much opportunities you can get. But when you started learning it, and when you are on that point when opportunities are coming to you or people are coming to you and giving you more value or you started feeling different about yourself ... yeah, that's when my point, my belief is changed. I don't think like other girls, say they want to get married or they want to live here or they want to get married, because ... I started seeing it and no. I can work throughout my life you know.

Nad felt that his thinking about everything changed once he learned English. He started reading international newspapers and questioning prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness. He narrated his experiences in detail:

Yes. I think it actually transformed my self-view and self-belief. If I imagine myself without the English language, I would not be knowing a lot of things and a lot of views. When I was in school in my grade nine, 10, I used to read the newspaper. And there was just Urdu newspaper, not in the school, but at the local barber's shop. At the barber's shop people get a haircut and read the newspaper which is of low standard. So without

English, for me if I now compare the newspapers that I used to read in my grade nine and ten; Awam, Jurat, Riyasat, Ummat, with the papers that I read now, Guardian, Times and all, there is a huge difference. And people who write in Ummat, when I see their views, and there are so many controversial areas from Mumtaz Qadri to Tehreek-e-Labbaik and so many other issues. It changed a lot. So I think I changed my world view a lot. Yes.

For an instance, when I was a kid and in school the Molanas would give the sermon and I used to get motivated from the narratives. And now I don't. My religious teacher who taught me when I was a child, he is a very good friend as well. He never went to a school. He is Madrassa graduate. But we have this kind of relation that I request him not to do that. I request him not to build such and such narrative. So when I see my other friends, they have no problem with it, and they even become part ... For an instance, in the election, they used to setup the TLP banners in the goth, and I requested them not to do that. So that was the difference.

For Yas, English was the portal through which he could enter the world of the elites and this according to him changed his self-belief. He shared his unique views and experiences:

I felt confident. I felt really confident. I start meeting people. I start meeting those people. I start talking to those people where I think that I could not talk if I cannot speak English so that was a change English created in me. You can go to the places where you cannot go if you cannot speak English. Because there are places the people think that when you go there, you only speak in English. The restaurants, there's some good and big restaurants. There are some places, so I start going there and I really enjoyed that.

***No change in self-view.*** Huma and Rose did not feel any change in their self-view and self-belief. Huma shared:

No. Because before the English, I am as it is and after the English, I am as it is. Even when I live in a slum I am same like as, and now I live in constructed house, I'm same like a ...I never change myself because of the language, because of the lifestyle and because of it. I always believe that I am the same yesterday, today and tomorrow no matter what.

Rose said:

I learn English as the requirement of my office and my studies. So I think there is no change because whenever I started in first year, there was not any option for me to do the course in English or Urdu, there was just medium, that was English. So I think it was mandatory requirement to have a graduation from St. Patrick's College and ICMAP. So that's it. There is no change.

*Mixed feelings.* Ainee had mixed feelings based on the fact that his initial desire to learn English was to understand movies. He said:

The intention was to understand, to understand what were they saying, the dialogue in the movies, and the plays, and whatever. So when I acquired that ability, I was satisfied with that and I liked it. And there it ended. In so far as self-belief or whatever is concerned, I think to some extent, yes, self-belief, you can say it did influence myself in some ways now that I think about it. It gave me a kind of confidence in my own abilities to learn something on my own.

Waji also had mixed feelings and while admitting that English had provided her with unattainable opportunities, she still felt her self-view had not changed that much. She summarized:

Yeah. Obviously, I felt more comfortable, I felt more confident but now, I don't think so

other than that, after that part of me that has affected me a lot. But I would say the job I'm doing, I'm working as a research assistant, and obviously my job includes writing proposals and grants and stuff like that and writing reports, et cetera. Obviously, if I didn't have the proficiency in English, if I wasn't so good in English, I wouldn't be doing this job, although I really like this job but no matter how much I loved it, if I didn't have the skills, I couldn't be doing it. No, I don't think so it has affected it that much.

*A more progressive and expressive identity.* Some of the responses from participants were unusual and unexpected in the sense of how English makes non-elites think differently and take better care of themselves. This to me is a powerful finding and shows that the impact of English is deep on the psyche of these learners. Zam felt that English had changed his thought processes. He said, "I have become more progressive, more moderate, more modern. And my thought processes have changed. Because of English? Because of English. Access to literature, and books. Those books, which are not available in Urdu language." For Yas, English has opened the possibility to sit with educated and intellectual people, which has made him more expressive. He was part of a panel on education, which was conducted in English and in which many eminent personalities participated. He said, "There were so many great people sitting there, and you know being part of such great people, expressing yourself, representing yourself, it's really very important for me."

Simi felt that the process of acquiring English as well as the world of knowledge that has opened up to her has perhaps made her more open minded. She shared:

I don't know whether English made me this, or maybe the social network in which I am moving, and that is, again, the English-speaking people, that made me less conservative. Now a lot of things, like when I'm talking about misfit, a lot of my ideas, my thinking,



they are totally different. Yes, I say that I'm more liberal on a lot of social issues. Is it also because English has made more knowledge accessible to you so that, that has changed your thinking? Yes. And now I read a lot, and I read on everything. I don't have any specific interest. I will read politics. I will read literature. I will read fiction.

*Self-love.* Simi further shared how non-elites who learn English, start taking better care of themselves. She said:

And one thing which I observed is that when we start speaking English, it's not just that you are speaking English, it's that you start investing on your outlook too. Somehow that is our mentality, we want to change everything around that, like we want to be an Englishman altogether as well. You know, those people who are from the background like which is not very much supportive to the elite structure, but when like they start changing their appearance as well as their communication skills.

#### **Research Question 4. Participants Changed their Behaviors as Educational Leaders**

**Confidence.** According to Psychology Today (2017), confidence can be described as a belief in one's ability to succeed, and that a lack of it prevents us from taking risks and seizing opportunities at school, work and in society that lead to success. Lickerman (2013) defines confidence as coming from three beliefs: belief in one's competence, belief in one's ability to learn and problem solve, and belief in one's intrinsic worth. Schunk (2012) defines self-confidence as the belief that "one can produce results, accomplish goals, or perform tasks competently. The belief that one is capable of performing a task can raise self-esteem. High self-esteem might lead one to attempt difficult tasks, and subsequent success enhances self-confidence" (p. 383). The participants of my study were imbued with many of the elements as delineated above, such as belief in their own competence and in their ability to learn and

accomplish goals, and many elements were enhanced as a result of their acquisition of English, such as their esteem and their belief in their intrinsic worth and competence.

***Second language (L2) self-confidence.*** Clément (1986) calls self-confidence “the best predictor” (p. 286) of second language proficiency. Second language (L2) self-confidence relates to “the overall belief in being communicate in the L2 in an adaptive and efficient manner” (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998, p. 551). MacIntyre et al. (1998) proposed that L2 self-confidence consisted of two important components: cognitive (self-evaluation of communicative competence in the second language) and affective (the anxiety associated with using the second language). The relationship between communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) and anxiety is a negative one, as the anxiety and reluctance to speak makes second language learners lose opportunities to practice and assess their proficiency that plausibly would only lead to further gains in verbal ability. In my study, the participants were able to overcome their anxiety and independently cross the “rubicon” (p. 48), a metaphor used by Dörnyei and Otto (1998) to describe the threshold between the “pre-actional” and “actional” (p. 48) phases or the point of no return at which an individual commits to taking action directed at advancing their language learning. It was the point at which participants started conversing in the second language, well or otherwise, unhesitatingly.

***Willingness to communicate.*** As a predictor of linguistic ability, second language self-confidence has been studied as part of the willingness to communicate construct. This concept, which was originally developed as a first language construct (McCroskey & Baer, 1985; McCroskey & Richmond, 1991), was later applied to second language communication by MacIntyre, et al. (1998), who defined it as “readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (p. 547). A number of studies have used the

willingness to communicate construct to study second language self-confidence; Clément's (1986) study of 293 Francophone learners of English, Edwards and Roger's (2015) exploration of the process of confidence development in an advanced learner of English from Mauritius in Australia, Yashima's (2002) study of the attitude of 297 university students toward the international community and foreign language learning in Japan, and research by AliAkbari et al. (2016) to examine the impact of anxiety, self-confidence, communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), and international posture of 194 Iranian students' willingness to communicate in English.

The willingness to attempt communication in English and the confidence it engenders, and vice versa, is deeply intertwined with the efforts that Pakistani non-elites make in acquiring the language. These efforts are all the more remarkable given the fact that they live in environments where opportunities for communication in English hardly exist. Self-confidence may indeed be "the best predictor" of second language proficiency (Clément, 1986) but greater language proficiency equally adds to the self-confidence of non-elite learners in a continuous direct relationship where each is scaffolding on top of the other.

As their narratives elucidate, the participants of my study used many different techniques to overcome the hurdles that stood in the way of their English language acquisition. Some used movies as a path to learning while others used BBC radio programs and cricket commentary. Some found mentors while others went on long strolls with friends to be able to practice speaking English without the fear of being ridiculed. The latter was similar to Buitrago's (2017) findings in her study of Colombian English learners using collaborative learning strategies, which suggests that fluency can be acquired collaboratively when learning from others and by making mistakes. She also found that working collaboratively increases learners' confidence, not

only because they feel they are not being judged, but also because they learn to see that their mistakes are not just theirs

**Theme 1. The influence of English on the behaviors of non-elites.** Half the people in this study said that their behaviors had changed since they gained fluency in English and about half felt that their mannerisms had not been affected. The data also revealed that many of them felt the behaviors of others towards them had changed since they started speaking English, which was a more interesting and intriguing finding. One of them shared how her children, whom she had admitted to an elite school, felt uncomfortable when she spoke to them in Urdu.

*Confidence that English engenders.* That English imbues non-elites with confidence was a refrain expressed by most of the participants. Anu shared:

OK one thing is that I became very very very confident, very confident ok, and I actually you know, now I am not scared of anything. I am not even scared about you know that I will lose my job.

Hubi said:

So, if I can speak English no matter how good or bad, but I have this confidence that if I am in a meeting of the people, the people are speaking English, I can understand and I can somewhat speak in English. This gives me a sense of confidence.

Yas narrated:

I think English in a country like Pakistan makes you really confident. Here in a small country like Pakistan people only consider you educated if you can speak English.

So here it can really boost up your confidence and can change you. And so when I read those stories and novels, it just changed my mind, it just changed my concepts and increased my knowledge. And, obviously, when you are knowledgeable and when you

can speak English, you become automatically confident. So, I think that's why English made me confident.

Nad shared:

So, in that case, language helps. I mean in our society, in some segments of the society, it gives you an edge, a clear-cut edge, and gives you some confidence to get out your thoughts and your ideas and to communicate whatever is there in your head.

Shah stated:

The knowledge of English given me confidence in my life, because what I am doing today is running my language learning company. If I could not speak good English how will they give me a project related to languages? So English is a source of confidence, source of motivation, and now it is paying me financially as well. I have the confidence that I can lead any team because I have a language skill, which is English.

Simi's experience after she graduated from university and joined the research institute is indicative of what happens to non-elites when they are throw among English speakers. She said:

I was very much active in extra-curricular all the time, I used to take lead, to arrange trips. I was the student representative for the faculty meetings, student and faculty meetings. And because like QA is not that elite university, I think that's one of the reason I could excel in that, in a way. All the students were just like you. And I was taking lead in that. But After that, when I started realizing that English is that much important, I lost all that confidence, and then I regained it after I learned English. Yes. For instance, a couple of months ago, planning commission invited me for a policy dialogue. That was my first time to present myself as an independent individual who has just a Ph.D. and who works in this field as ... I would not say an expert, but a

knowledgeable person. When I presented, and when people started asking a lot of questions, I was quite very much confident. I had that confidence that, yes, I know this really well. My knowledge is making me ... my knowledge, in addition to English, speaking English, is making me more comfortable, more privileged, in a way. People are starting now taking me seriously.

***Change in behavior.*** Ainee, Anu, Aka, Kai and Yas felt their behaviors had changed after learning English. Ainee as a young person was motivated to learn English in order to be able to understand Hollywood movies. This led to his studying English literature at the university, which helped him enter the civil services and serve in a number of countries. He now teaches at a university and felt that while his behaviors abroad were not affected by the language he used, this is not the case in Pakistan. He shared:

Maybe it does at some forums in Pakistan only, not internationally. But in Pakistan, it does impact my behavior to a certain extent where I find that many people who are sitting around the table or in that conference, are finding it difficult to communicate. And then if there is something that needs to be conveyed, or to be corrected, or to be challenged, then I say it in English. It's not that what I think of myself after I have learned English and speak well. But it's more by way of how other people react to me when they see me speaking in English, which is I think how it affects, maybe indirectly, me, because of their behavior, because of their reaction to it, yes.

Aka grew up in a slum and learned English by way of association with the highly educated English speakers he was fortunate to work with. He only attended community college. For him the change came as a result of those associations and by his unconsciously adopting the mannerisms of those people. This is what he shared:

Well, of course (as) I said it to you in my whole thing that my behavior was channelized by the language and language not only the spoken words, these words were attached with some action which I was seeing in my cartoons, in my association with SM, with JT, all the enlightened (people) or Dr. AHK. So these words were associated, connected with some visual things.

Anu is also the first person in her family who learned how to speak English. This happened due to the appearance of a mentor in her life and her close and continuous attachment with that person. She now speaks in the elite accent that is found at the highest echelons of Pakistani society. It was fascinating to hear her talk with that flair. She felt that she is treated differently and so behaves differently.

So yeah, that behavior... I don't know how to describe that. Of course, it's changed the way you talk, the way you... I think you get instructions very clearly if you're working, and even people, with your boss, it's so easy to work with any boss, actually. And they start feeling this girl can understand English or she can read English, so if we give her some points or instructions or assignment or project, she will be able to do it (more) easily than a non-speaker.

Yas, whose parents have no education, acquired English by joining a language center. For him it is the confidence that one gains through the acquisition of English in a society like Pakistan, which changed his mannerisms. According to him, he became very expressive after learning the language.

Yeah. I was more confident. And the confident people obviously, you know, they behave differently. And the people who are unconfident they behave differently. They are shy,

they hide themselves. So after knowing English I was not like that, I was very expressive.

For many non-elites like Kai, English is associated with developed and advanced countries like America and Britain. Their main exposure to these societies is through the media and they see them as civilized and structured places where people conduct themselves in an organized manner. When I asked her if her behaviors had changed after learning how to speak English, she responded:

Yes, sir, a lot. Because of English. Because English is a language of Americans, means English people. And they are, how much I have seen, they are (well) mannered a lot. So they are more organized. Basically, they are more organized. So English comes from them, so by adopting their language, a person can adopt their culture too, their behavior. So basically I'm adopting their behavior, what kind of behavior they are doing so, they are showing so. So this is how the way I talk to people. Whenever I talk in English, I speak more differently, whenever I talk in Urdu, I speak a little bit differently. Even I behave differently when I speak in English.

***No change in behavior.*** Nad, Rose and Shah felt their behaviors had not changed after learning English. Nad shared his feelings:

Actually, I don't think behavior has changed much. I don't see that in myself. I mean, I go to my Goth (settlement) every day. I interact with people living for the last 26 years in a way that they would not even say that this gentleman can speak the language. Right now, if I go with you straight to the guard and I start speaking with him in Sindhi or Punjabi or Saraiki, that guard won't believe that this guy can even speak English. So I think English has not changed my behavior.



Rose is also the first person in her family to learn English. She is a highly qualified accountant and has taught at universities and sits on the boards of national accounting bodies.

She works in a high-level position in the banking bureaucracy. She said:

No, not at all. In my personal life, I don't think so. Behavior is, I think it's a natural thing and whatever you're speaking Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and you're speaking English. It's not wrong or connected with the behavior.

Shah, who self-taught himself English is an engineer by training. He now runs a translation company providing services to many international clients. He grew up speaking both Punjabi and Urdu only. He responded:

I don't think it has any impact on my behavior. No, I don't think so. Any specific impact on my behavior, I don't think so. No. I am a person having sympathy, and respect for others, that is still the same. So English didn't change my behaviors, it's given me confidence.

***Others behave differently.*** Similar to Ainee's experience as mentioned above, Anu, Huma, Rose and Simi all felt that people behave differently when one speaks in English. Anu said:

So, when I met that minister he treated me like a student earlier in my school, but over here when I met him and he saw me that oh, this girl is here and she's on some position and now she's speaking English. She's well dressed. And you know and he took my name on the stage, and he remembered me. He actually remembered my name and he took it on the stage in front of the media. So on that time, you realize that English has actually changed you.

Huma felt that one gets immediate attention when one speaks in English and it gives one an advantaged and privileged status instantly. She said:

That's true. It is true. Even you are in a government hospital and you speak with a reception person in Urdu, you have a Ph.D. degree, but reception person did not have a Ph.D. degree. When you start Urdu that I have this work they take you lightly. Oh why are the illiterate people come? When you say, "Hello, hi, my name is ..." you just saying your name in English, people giving you attention. In the government hospital. In the hospital even, can you imagine, health facility never judges a language. But even you go to the hospital, you speak in Urdu, nurses don't get serious, even you have a very serious issue. But you speak in English, they directly give you an attention. And really, I face these daily basic things in my life, because I'm working on women's health issues.

Simi's experiences are similar. She narrates how one is treated differently by shop keepers if one speaks in English. She shared "if you are speaking with each other in English, and with your kids, everybody ... oh my God, everybody will come. "Okay, ma'am, what do you need? Okay, we have this, this, and that." She added that her child who was born in America during her Ph.D. gets preferential treatment as she only speaks English, and seeing this, Simi lamented that she discourages her from speaking in Urdu. She said:

My elder daughter, she's born in the US. She's four now, but she has a very good accent. Honestly, kids, they are so innocent, they don't know, but one thing which I observed, everyone cherishes my girl, even if we are going anywhere, if it's in the higher society or in our own family, because we are from a very humble background. All the kids, of any age irrespective of age, the youngest one, they will come and play with her and take her everywhere. They are holding her up, just because she's speaking English. She now

somehow started understanding Urdu, but she's not speaking because we are not encouraging her, we are not pushing her in a way. And even if she utters some word (we say) "Oh, you are speaking in Urdu? Okay, why not say it this way (in English), so in a way discouraging her.

For Rose, as already mentioned, English has had no impact on her mannerisms. However, she feels that in Pakistani consciousness, Urdu is linked with conservatism and English with modernity and progressiveness. She shared:

Of course. I will behave the same but other will not behave the same. That is very important. They will think she is conservative, she is not able to speak English, and she does not have ideas, and she is backward. And there are a lot of things, names they can call for me if I do not speak in English.

Rose also mentioned how her children are embarrassed if she speaks to them in Urdu at their elite school:

Like if I'm going to pick my child from school, if I'll speak Urdu with him, he used to say to me mamma, please speak English whenever you come to my school. My son is in class two and is already speaking English. They do not disrespect Urdu, but they feel English is very important rather than Urdu. They are aware of that.

**Theme 2. Benefits for non-elites through the acquisition of English.** The benefits of being able to speak English for non-elites in Pakistan are large and numerous but the one mentioned by most of the participants was the fact that being able to speak English is much more powerful than academic qualifications. This was followed by it being a guarantee of higher salary, employment and high position on the corporate ladder. A few also mentioned that English

gives you access to knowledge, the ability to inspire as well as impress others, and that it establishes your credibility.

*More important than a degree.* Aka, Anu, Huma, Kai, Rose, Simi, Waji and Yas all felt that knowing English is the most powerful qualification in Pakistan and immediately opens the doors to employment, opportunities and recognition. Aka is project head of a public school Reform project in a rural district with hundreds of teachers working under him. He shared how he starts every training session in English before code switching to Urdu, which establishes his credibility instantly with the audience:

And whenever I start, my first two minutes were in English. Without saying anything, they start believing I'm a highly qualified person. The same thing, which was understood by my father, the same thing is understood by qualified people here. They hardly question my qualifications. People start believing, oh, this man must be foreign graduate.

Anu has worked in organizations and taught in both public and private institutes. She narrates how she obtained employment as human resources manager in a large company despite her lack of qualifications just on the basis of her language skills:

When I actually learned English, I started applying in different institutes and different even offices although though I didn't have any office experience, but when I actually started applying, I was getting positive response from there. The reason was that I could speak in English. And other people who were applying with me, even though they did have bigger degrees than me, they have done their masters or something, but they couldn't speak in English. But I could speak and I was getting that offer and getting the job.

Yas felt that he has swiftly moved ahead of his colleagues because of his ability to speak English. He narrated:

The other people they are same educated as me, but they cannot speak English. That's why they are far behind. So I think English, that's how English has changed me, and it made me a leader. That I am now moving ahead from my counterparts because they cannot speak English.

Waji is also the first person in her family to learn English and holds an engineering degree from a top school. She shared that although she recognizes that being educated and being able to speak English are two different things, but in Pakistan the two have become enmeshed. She said:

Speaking English is, unfortunately, a big criterion for it matters more than the education you have or the qualification you have. It all comes down to how you speak or how you present yourself. Yeah. They don't take us seriously because, obviously, English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated, obviously people have these misconceptions in their mind because English, being qualified or educated and knowing English are two different things but, unfortunately, they have mixed up the two things and that's really messed up. They are two different things and, obviously, because I know English and I'm educated, I'm differentiating between the two.

Rose felt that you cannot get through job interviews without English. She said “because in interview, usually panels assess on the basis of your communication (in English), instead of your degrees, instead of other things.” Kai felt that one will not get recognized without being able to speak English. She said:

If you learn English, you make your identity because I feel that if you can't speak in English and you have done a M.Ed. you have got a M.Ed. degree, a B.Ed. degree, a Ph.D. whatever. So if you don't know English, you can't get that much name, that big a name.

**Higher remunerations.** Anu, Kai, Rose, Shah, Simi and Yas all felt that English gets you higher levels of salaries. Yas shared:

And I had then realized that it was the power of English, the power of language that I was just getting that respect. And after that, all of the money I have earned up till now or I am earning is because of English, because of that language. And in my life I think I have only positive impacts of English language.

When I asked Kai what would happen if she took a group of common people and taught them English, she responded:

They would definitely go over the moon. What I'm telling you that their salary would get increased, and they would openly say that I'm earning this money, I'm earning this money. So this is the thing that they would feel like they are over the moon.

Shah felt that he would gladly pay someone who can speak English more as the person could fulfill more roles: He said "Yeah, I'll engage him in more roles, like I will engage him in my file works, my account works, my banking related works, so I will pay differently." Rose feels that "Yeah, of course. If you can speak English, you can get higher salary, you can get higher position." Simi shared her experience about people from elite backgrounds that "they are getting higher salary just because of their spoken English."

**Access to knowledge.** Aka, Yas and Simi narrated how English gives you access to a plethora of information. Aka shared how he uses the internet to increase his knowledge:

Without the understanding of English, I can't use Google, I can't use YouTube. If I want to understand the concept of leftist and rightist movement, I simply click on few letters and I can pick out the five minute or two minute or one-hour video and that's what is most important.

Yas said that reading English literature had changed his conceptual thinking, increased his knowledge base and made him feel learned:

But I think I will not only talk about the confidence but also all the knowledge that I have gained because of English, especially when I started reading English literature. Literature was the thing that changed my mind paradigm obviously because English is a vast language and they have different varieties, different genres, different topics in novels and in stories. And so when I read those stories and novels, it just changed my mind, it just changed my concepts and increased my knowledge. The knowledge of the novels, the knowledge of stories, the knowledge of Hollywood movies as well because it makes you learned.

Simi shared that as a result of learning English she has developed the reading habit: "And now I read a lot, and I read on everything. I don't have any specific interest. I will read politics. I will read literature. I will read fiction." Zam, who holds a doctorate from America, and who heads a higher education agency, says, "What English did, it helped me really read literature books, which otherwise I wouldn't have been able to. I read more in English than Urdu. My English is better than Urdu."

### **Chapter V Closure**

In this chapter I presented the analysis of my findings in light of existing literature and previous research studies in the area of second language learning, identity, and leadership. In

Chapter VI, I will discuss and summarize the implications of my analysis as it applies and relates to the acquisition of English by people from non-elite and subaltern backgrounds in Pakistan.



## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Between the utopia of the elite and the dystopia of the non-elites in Pakistan is an impenetrable chasm the *bridge* across which is called the English language. There may be other, incidental, points of crossing such as marriage, connections, and luck. However, the guaranteed path, for non-elites, that opens the door to a life of dignity, possibility, and leadership, *within* Pakistan, is to acquire fluency in the global lingua franca; opportunities abroad notwithstanding.

In my statement of purpose to Harvard (Appendix F), I compared the public and private education systems in Pakistan with these words: “One is dark and dreary and ignorant and a dead end. The other is bright and gay and full of knowledge and opportunity.” My research shows that the distinct line between the two is the English language, which has the power to transform one into the other. I cannot say how clear this was to me at the time I wrote these words in the winter of 2010. Now after having met and interviewed many non-elites who have lived within the harsh realities that people who do not know English face in Pakistan, it is crystal clear.

Throughout history, the people of the upper crust have been bilingual. Gordin (2015) writes how the Roman elect spoke Greek alongside Latin, the Russian aristocracy preferred both French and German, and of the “avowed Francomania of the Swedish elite” (p. 44). Similarly, “Scots, or ‘northern English’ was spoken at the Scottish court and by the social elite” (Anderson, 2006, p. 89) alongside Gaelic, the Czech and Hungarian nobility used German, French was the preferred idiolect of the Vietnamese elite, and Persian was the lexicon of the select in India prior to the arrival of the British. However, it is unlikely that a ruling class has been in near exclusive possession of a diction as planetary in its reach as English today is—the undisputed language of science, international communication and global business—as the elites of South Asian are.

The aim of my study was to understand the lived experiences of non-elite Pakistanis in educational leadership positions concerning how they: (a) learned English through self-initiation, (b) reconstructed their identities as a result thereof, (c) changed their view of themselves as educational leaders, and (d) changed their behaviors as educational leaders. It employed a qualitative study design using semi-structured interviews through questions that required specific data from respondents (Marriam & Tisdell, 2016). Participants were invited to discuss experiences related to the change in their consciousness and self-view as they became progressively more familiar with English. Participants were asked to discuss how that change resulted in their thinking and behaving differently. Specifically, these participants were asked as to how the knowing of English helped them develop leadership practices. The themes that emerged from the findings and their analysis were presented in Chapters IV and V respectively. The summaries based on the findings and the analysis are as under:

1. Has English Become a Basic Human Right?
2. Deliverance: The Language of Colonization is now the Language of Liberation—Going Beyond Instrumental and Integrative Motivations
3. Liberation Lies in Being Able to *Speak* English Fluently
4. English—The Most Precious Commodity in Pakistan
5. Without English, an Educated Identity is a Near Impossibility
6. The Relationship of English and Self-Esteem in Pakistan
7. You are only taken seriously in Pakistan when you can speak in English
8. English Engenders the Wherewithal to Stand Up for One’s Rights—Ability to say “No”
9. What it Means to have the Social Identity “Urdu-Medium”
10. English: The Intersection Where Elites and Non-Elites Meet as Equals

11. English as the Advocate of Urdu (Has English Become the Advocate of Urdu?)
12. Disregard of Urdu—A Crises
13. English Enhances Leadership Even *if* It Does Not Create it
14. English Changes the Self-View and Self-Belief of Non-Elites
15. English—A Powerful Source of Confidence for Non-Elites
16. “When You Speak in English, People Behave Differently”
17. English is More Important than a Degree or Diploma (Any Degree or Qualification)

The above summaries will now be discussed in relation to the findings from Chapter IV and the analysis from Chapter V. My study brings forth several critical issues and I also suggest new terminology that encapsulates the motivation to acquire English of non-elite/subaltern learners—a desire to break out of their class-based silos—which goes beyond simply calling it integrative or instrumental (Gardner and Lambert 1972). I have suggested the terms “liberative motivation” or “deliverance motivation” in second-language acquisition generally, and in English-acquisition specifically to represent such motivations. It builds on Norton-Pierce’s (1995) concept of investment in a second language, in this case English. This chapter highlights the significant findings and interpretations of this research based on the data generated from participants. It then presents the limitations and recommendations for further research.

### **Has English Become A Human Right?**

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948) lists fundamental liberties that are universally protected. Its articles mention, among other things, that humans are equal in terms of dignity and rights; that no one should be discriminated against on the basis of race, gender, religion, color, *language*, and so forth; that servitude is unacceptable; and that everyone should have an education directed at the full development of their personality. The question

however is: “Is it possible today to have these things without knowing English?” Is it at all possible in a world so totally dominated by English, that one would not be discriminated against—perhaps face social exclusion (Lenoir, 1974)—or that one’s personality could fully develop, without fluency in the global lingua franca? And these questions become all the more cogent when underprivileged people in the developing world are placed at their center.

According to Prasad (2015), learning English has become the greatest mass movement the world has ever seen, while Crystal (2004) asserts that “the case that we are living at the beginning of a new linguistic era is unassailable” (p. 1). To truly understand what this language of power and opportunity means to those who do not have it, one need only to consider how the 200-million strong Dalit community, one of the most marginalized people on the planet, tried a decade ago to build “a temple to the *Goddess of English* in North India” (Sasikumar, 2017, p. 8). The plan did not get far but for the Dalits, English has become a symbol of their renaissance (Pandey, 2011). The first president of India and the framer of its constitution, Ambedkar, a Dalit, had called English the milk of a lioness; only those who drink it could roar (Pandey, 2011). The Dalits, like many other subalterns—people who are cut off from the lines of social mobility (Spivak, 2008)—realize that the “castlessness” (Kothari, 2013, p. 61) of English has the power to blur caste and class, give them dignity, restore their humanity. No surprises then that in India “both the cow and the English Language are held in reverence and worshipped” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 1).

Lenoir (1974), coined the expression *social exclusion*, and Amartya Sen (2000) states that “the idea of social exclusion has conceptual connections with well-established notions in the literature on poverty and deprivation” (p. 3). Social exclusion is defined as “the opposite of social integration, mirroring the perceived importance of being ‘included.’ The concept takes us

beyond descriptions of deprivation, and focuses on social relations, processes and institutions that are part and parcel of deprivation” (De Haan, 2000, p. 26).

The characterization of poverty as simply shortage of income is very ancient and fairly common in the established literature on deprivation and destitution. The impoverishment of our lives results frequently from the inadequacy of income, and in this sense low income must be an important cause of poor living. Income may be the most prominent means for a good life without deprivation. (Sen, 2000, p. 3)

Sen (2000) further argues that social exclusion can be better understood when placed in the broader context of the idea or view of poverty as *capability deprivation*, that is, “poverty seen as the lack of the capability to live a minimally decent life” (p. 4). In a world where meaningful opportunities of employment and livelihood are often open mainly, if not only, to those who can speak English, how does one avoid poverty and/or capability deprivation, if one does not have access to those channels that provide education in English, or English as part of their education?

### **English is the Language in which Language Rights and Human Rights are Articulated**

Any law, human rights law or otherwise, is “directly or indirectly a matter of language, or linguistic articulation” (Toolan, 2003, p. 57), and Toolan (2003) rhetorically poses the question of *English as the supranatural language of human rights?* Even the case against linguisticicide, for which, in recent times, English is mainly responsible; or the case in favor of achieving equitable linguistic human rights (Phillipson, 1998; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995), can only be fought with laws overwhelmingly written in English.

Even as the widening recognition and submission to human rights law, globally, may bring protections for less-widely-used languages, at the same time the articulation of

those rights, and their enforcement in courts is quite likely to be *in* English language law. This will not be English law, but English language law (Toolan, 2003, p. 64).

Around the time of the fall of the Berlin wall, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996) suggested that "in postcommunist states, English is being vigorously promoted as the royal road to democracy, a market economy, and human rights" (p. 431). The power of English in present reality is such that even those who fight for the rights of mother tongue are well aware that their cause will gain maximum impact if it is expressed through the medium of English (Crystal, 2004). Writers and intellectuals loyal to vernacular in India, for example, criticize Indian writing in English but their criticism is voiced in English. How "English education became a mask for exploitation has been narrated by Gauri Viswanathan (1989) in her book *Masks of Conquest* but the unmasking had to be done in English" (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 67).

A famous instance of this occurred a few years ago in India, where a march supporting Hindi and opposing English was seen on world television: most of the banners were in Hindi, but one astute marcher carried a prominent sign which enabled the voice of his group to reach much further around the world than would otherwise have been possible. His sign read: '*Death to English.*' (Crystal, 2004, p. 12)

### **The Liberative Power of English**

Hall (2016) declares, that "using English in some manner is no longer a luxury; it must be part of that basic universal education we all wish for. Keeping English away from anyone, whether active or indirectly, must now be seen as a social injustice" (p. 3). Annamalai (2003) refers to English as the "Medium of power" (p. 177) and yet large swathes of humanity are denied the liberative power of this language. Bob (2007) in his essay on caste discrimination in India titled "Dalit Rights are Human Rights" correctly points out that instruments such as the

United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948) mean little to those suffering at the lowest rungs of society.

For many aggrieved groups, the general coverage provided by international human rights instruments may be insufficient. For adequate remedies to be found, it may be necessary to pinpoint violations in a more specific sense. Naming an *abuse* specifically may make it possible to target perpetrators and shame institutions into corrective action. (Bob, 2007, p. 192)

The denial of access to English may be the greatest abuse in present reality as it is a denial of access to knowledge, which is overwhelmingly being produced and communicated in English. Knowledge liberates the mind and creates what Paulo Freire (1970) calls *critical-consciousness* or *conscientization*—“the struggle for change begins, then, at the moment when human beings become critically aware and intolerant of the oppressive conditions in which they find themselves and push toward new ways of knowing and being in the world” (Darder, 2014, p. 1). Canagarajah and Said (2011) support the idea that English can become the voice of the oppressed and a means towards their own liberation from the class-based silos that they are often restricted to.

Although language may suppress people, it also has the liberatory potential of facilitating critical thinking, and enabling subjects to rise above domination; that each language is heterogeneous enough to accommodate diverse interests that may be tapped by marginalized groups to serve their own purposes. The *resistance perspective* provides for the possibility that the powerless may negotiate, alter, and oppose political structures in their everyday life through many untheorized ways. (p. 393)

One of those untheorized ways, perhaps the most important one, would be the acquisition of English by non-elites in developing countries, such as India and Pakistan, as a means to their

own deliverance; as a means to being able to self-actualize (Maslow, 1943) and achieve their potential as fully functioning human beings. The latter I suggest, unhesitatingly, in recognition of present global reality which affirms the unassailability and preeminence of English well into the foreseeable future. It is for this reason that I suggest the terms “Deliverance Motivation” and “Liberative Motivation” to represent desires in people, especially marginalized people in the developing world, to acquire the global lingua franca.

### **English is the Most Successful Language in the History of Humankind**

English may be the most successful language ever with over a billion and a half users worldwide (Pennycook, 1995). By another more recent ‘guesstimate’, this figure could very well be around 2.3 billion users at different levels of proficiency (Crystal, 2019), and this number will only grow given that the cultural hegemony of English—Hollywood movies, pop music, et alia—shows no signs of relenting. It is more “widely spoken and written, than any other language has ever been. It has become the language of the planet, the first truly global language” (McCrum et al., 1986, p. 19). Krishnaswamy & Burde (1998) state it somewhat dramatically: “It is almost as if God said, ‘Let there be a language’, and there was English” (p. 5).

English is the world language, like it or not. It is the international auxiliary language.

That language may someday be Chinese; it isn’t now. When two people with the means to travel but sharing no language communicate, they will *nine* times out of ten perforce resort to English. English is the world language not because it is better than other languages for the purpose but because of the British Empire and a love affair of the rest of the world with American popular culture that began as far back as the 1930s. (King, 2011, p. 284)



This may perhaps be an oversimplification and, as Pennycook (1995) suggests, the spread of English is part of “the deliberate policy of English-speaking countries protecting and promoting their economic and political interests” (p. 54). Phillipson (1992) also feels that the rapid expansion of English in a postcolonial world could not have been possible without the blessing of the U.S. and U.K. governments: “English is enshrouded in myths, including for the British the comforting myth that they did not impose their language anywhere” (p. 110). Ammon (2012) posits that “the long-lasting conflicts on the European continent, especially between France and Germany, gave Britain leeway for colonialization” (p. 337) and the prodigiously successful transplantation of its language across the globe. More than 80% of all information and data stored in computers and electronic retrieval systems is in English (Crystal, 2019, McCrum et al., 1986). The idea that the world has become a global village is predicated on the *sine qua non* that there is a common language; English—“the window to the world” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 52).

English, the primary vehicle of international communication even among non-native speakers, is a passport to international, cultural, and metropolitan citizenship. It thus has a strong international constituency. English has become the language of knowledge; it is the language with the biggest reservoir of information, knowledge, and literature known in history. (Haque, 1983, pp. 15–17)

### **English is a Non-Gendered, Neutral and Precise Language**

The proliferation of English was and is aided by its non-gendered nature and the absence of any formal or informal registers. In addition, “English also has a commendable tendency towards conciseness” (Bryson, 1990, p. 19). Herder (1769) felt that English was imbued with a spirit of liberty and realism (Pillar, 2016). According to Fishman (1982), “English is viewed as

richer, more precise, more logical, more sophisticated, and more competence related” (p. 20). In the non-English-speaking world “English is associated with practical and powerful pursuits and recurringly viewed as *more* suitable for science, international diplomacy, industry/commerce, high oratory” (Cooper & Seckbach, 1977 in Fishman, 1982, p.19). English has hundreds of thousands of more words than any other language (McCrum et al., 1986) and “the richness of the English vocabulary, and the wealth of available synonyms, means that English speakers can often draw shades of distinction unavailable to non-English speakers” (Bryson, 1990, p. 13). Additionally, in countries with diverse linguistic/ethnic groups, English “is considered to have the (added) advantage of being ethnically neutral, as it is a second language to all and does not bestow natural advantage to any linguistic group” (Annamalai, 2003, p. 179). It has become “a vital alternative language, often unifying huge territories and diverse populations” (McCrum et al., 1986, p. 22).

These elements make English attractive and easier to learn than other languages, and academic institutions in English-speaking countries host more than half of the world’s international students (Altbach, 2013). As per OECD’s (2018) International Migration Outlook report, the English-speaking or Anglophone countries (USA, Canada, UK, Australia and New Zealand) continue to receive the highest number of immigrants from the developing world and knowledge of English is necessary, and facilitates entry. Hence, the market for the teaching of English, the book trade, the ever-expanding media-market, and the new markets that have been created by computers and the internet have made English the only language of communication in the world today -“from politics to pornography, from medicine to management” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 8). It is perhaps less an expression of her weak ability with Hindi, and more about the precise nature of expression that English offers, that the celebrated Indian author

Arundhai Roy says at a lecture in Delhi, when she switches from Hindi to English: “I probably will reduce the sophistication of what I want to say if I speak in Hindi” (Roy, 2018, minute 9.30).

### **English does not belong to any Nation or Country Anymore**

Crystal (2004) posits that “human language cannot be controlled. The more a language becomes a national, then an international, then a global language, the more it ceases to be in the ownership of its originators” (p. 45). He further states that “to have learned a language is immediately to have rights in it” (Crystal, 2004, p. 23). According to Phillipson (2018), influential advocates of English as a global language feel that it is now the property of anyone who uses it—a *lingua nullius*. Canagarajah and Said (2011) make a similar point that English does not belong to anyone anymore, and that its unstoppable spread has been aided by technology, especially the ubiquitous online world of the internet.

The power of English is not dependent on a specific country anymore. It is sustained by transnational processes and institutions. English enables the contemporary forms of financial, production, media, and educational relations across borders. English-based cultural institutions, such as mass media, cinema, and music, also enjoy global status. These sources have spread English far beyond the former British Empire. English expands its reach today through technological, infrastructural, and material resources that other imperialistic languages didn't enjoy in previous periods in history. Given these reasons, we can understand why scholars like Crystal (2004) believe that the global power of English is here to stay. (Canagarajah & Said, 2011, p. 389)

Hence, if as Pennycook (1995) suggests “that English today is the language of the global panopticon” (p. 49), which he appropriately refers to as Foucault's (1979) powerful metaphor, then the denial of this vital tool is the denial of *vision*; denial of the tremendous resources

available mainly in English on the internet; and denial of a necessary and acutely needed right. Phillipson (2003) posits that “in international gatherings, there is a pecking order of languages. English has the sharpest beak” (p. 5). This poignant truth applies even more in the domestic context of many postcolonial developing nations, like Pakistan, that those without English, mostly non-elites, are left stranded at the bottom of the pecking order—any “exercise in antediluvian myth-making, and ultimately a return to pre-Babel monolingualism” (Phillipson, 1998, p. 103) being the least of their concerns. As Mahboob (2002) posits, “no English, no future” (p. 1).

### **Linguistic Rights Mean Nothing if they Cannot Feed You**

I admire and respect the work of scholars on linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), linguistic human rights, linguicism and linguicid, and their principled stance against these wrongs. I am at the same time intrigued when native speakers of English from the Anglophone world—Kachru’s (1986) inner circle—speak for those whose native tongues and lives are being affected by the relentless onslaught of English; especially in the way English renders mother tongue competency almost valueless. As noble as their purposes are, I feel these academicians are unable to fully comprehend what it means for underprivileged peoples not to have access to the language of knowledge, opportunity and power—English. This may be because such scholars view English as the voice of the prevailing forces of colonialism, neocolonialism, neonationalism, globalization, capitalism, elitism, and transnational agendas. What they may not realize is that for most people, especially non-elites, it is not these issues that affect their lives directly. What affects them deeply is that without English, they cannot put a decent morsel of nutrition in their mouths; the very mouths that are repositories of mother tongues that these scholars so vociferously are trying to protect. It is one thing to pursue noble ideals sitting

comfortably in the western world, and quite another to be a marginalized person in the global south desperately trying to feed one's children. In some ways the endeavor of these scholars is akin to Kipling's (1899) "white man's burden" to civilize and save the world. Without in any way doubting their motives or intentions, the fact is that the protection of languages and linguistic rights are battles that native speakers of those tongues have to fight, and this fight is only possible when speakers are, and feel, empowered. English provides this empowerment, gives *voice*, commands that people *listen*. It has "the power to impose reception" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648).

Linguistic diversity is great for linguists and for Anglophones but a mixed bag for speakers of languages further down the linguistic hierarchy. Linguists should lose their fear of also analyzing the pros, and not only the cons, of a linguistically more unified world. (Ammon, 2012, p. 352)

### **English is the Language of Globalization; the Language of Officialdom**

In a post-communism, post 9/11, reality, the power and reach of global capital and multilateral organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank have strengthened. In the developing world, the control that elites have over the economies of countries has become more entrenched. The elite in many postcolonial societies like Pakistan and India use English as a first language, and English will continue to be the language of power, prestige and opportunity. Any hope that it might get replaced by mother tongue is a distant dream as "it has permeated far too deeply and far too long for that" (Haque, 1983, p. 17). If the non-elites, or subalterns, of our world could ever unite, it would likely be through the English language. English may now very well be *the* pedagogy that can free the oppressed (Freire, 1970). A decade before 9/11, Joshi (1991) had said about India:

The presence of transnational corporations and India's increasing integration into the world market, the state's deepening dependence on global technology and capital as reflected in its economic policies, and the emergence of a new techno-managerial and consumerist middle class ensures a long and vigorous life for English. (p. 2)

The empire of English is the “First World within the First World and its agents the First World within the Third World” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 53). English has an official status recognized by governments in more than 75 countries (Altbach, 2013; Crystal, 2019) as an official or national language, and to get on in such societies “it is essential to master the official language as early in life as possible (Crystal, 2004, p. 7). The “global fever” (Kasanga, 2012, p. 48) of English is best depicted in data collected by Yun Kyung Cha and Seung Hwan Ham in 2008 (Bianco 2009) that compares the choice of a foreign language in school curricula across the globe from 1850 till 2005, a period of a century and a half. German which started at 50% has completely disappeared over this stretch of 155 years. French dropped by two-thirds from 33% to 13%. The position of English rose imperviously from 8% to 80%.

### **Increased Respect for Mother Tongue through English**

My research provides evidence that higher levels of fluency in English can, or may, lead to increased respect for the mother tongue, thus, in effect playing an additive role, not a subtractive one. Orton (2009) had similar findings in her study of Chinese teachers of English in China, many of whom felt that learning English “would serve only to strengthen appreciation of Chinese language and culture” (p. 280). China's *lurch* towards English (Bianco, 2009; Guo & Beckett, 2012; Norton & Gao, 2008; Orton, 2009)—a country that has achieved high levels of economic and social development through Mandarin—is indicative of the reality that the “ubiquity of English is an undeniable trend” (Kubota, 2011, p. 248). China's adoption of English

lays to rest King's (2011) assertion that the auxiliary language of the world "may someday be Chinese" (p. 284). China views English as *paramount* to its success in the global market and had 400 million learners of English in 2010 (Cai, 2006 in Guo & Beckett, 2012), which is greater even today than the entire population of the United States. In India, English has played a role as a protector of native languages and when, in the 1960s, the Indian government tried to impose Hindi nationwide, "politicians championed English as a way to protect the place of South Indian languages" (Sasikumar, 2017, p. 7).

Canagarajah (2005) points "to ways in which the negotiation of the global can be conducted by taking greater account of the local and respecting its value and validity" (p. xiv). In the intersectionality of English and mother tongue, the order seems reversed, and it would appear that respecting the value and validity of the local (mother tongue) lies through the global lingua franca. Perhaps "globalization from below" (Appadurai, 2000 in Canagarajah, 2005, p. xiv) happens via English in present global reality, and to truly appreciate one's mother tongue one has to perhaps first drink from the well of English.

Chinua Achebe, the celebrated writer from Nigeria (where all higher education is imparted in English), made a powerful point when he said, "the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience" (Achebe, 1965, p. 30). The renowned, award-winning, Kenyan writer and academic, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, too, wrote in the English language before moving to writing primarily in his mother tongue, Gikuyu (Ngũgĩ, 1986). Rabindranath Tagore—the first Asian to win a Nobel prize—when asked why he wrote in Bengali and not in English, responded, "We in Bengal were the first to wear English, speak English, and eat English. The charm wears off after a while" (Iqbal, 1986, P. 25).

## **One has to Conquer the Empire of English to Conquer the “Empires of the Mind”**

The deep roots of the empire of English also connect back to the industrial revolution that began in England in the mid-1700s (Burnes, 2009), and English has since been closely associated with technological power and economic progress. It is the language of maritime matters, and all countries employ English terminology for aviation affairs. English was the first language to be transmitted by radio, and when sound was added to movies “in the late 1920s, it was the English language that came to dominate the movie world” (Crystal, 2004, p. 16). In addition, since the phonograph was invented in America by Thomas Edison in 1877—‘What has God wrought’ were the first words ever recorded—all major recording companies in popular music have English-language origins (Crystal, 2004).

By the time modern popular music arrived, it was almost entirely an English scene. The pop stars of the two chief English speaking nations were soon to dominate the recording world. No other single source has spread the English language around the youth of the world so rapidly and so pervasively. (Crystal, 2004, pp. 17-18)

Winston Churchill understood the heavy burden territorial colonialism carried, and foresaw that the conquest of the mind, of knowledge, was a far more powerful form of colonization. While receiving an honorary doctorate at Harvard, Churchill (1943) presciently stated:

I do not see why we should not try to spread our common language even more widely throughout the globe and, without seeking selfish advantage over any. Such plans offer far better prizes than taking away other people's provinces or lands or grinding them down in exploitation. The empires of the future are the empires of the mind. (Phillipson, 2014, p. 2)



To overcome the empires of the mind that have been constructed in English, through English, and with English, one has to overcome the *charm* of English by learning it.

### English is the Undisputed and Unassailable Language of Science

English has been called “the carrier of wisdom” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 52), and its status as the near exclusive language of science today (Figure 5) means that those without access to it are not only denied access to knowledge but also to opportunities to participate in intellectual discourse. In any intellectual discourse, anywhere, the assumption that English will be spoken, that it will be understood, is almost a *fait accompli*. Figure 5 clearly shows that over the last 125 years, the only language that challenged English as a language of science was German in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. However, after the defeat of Germany in the First world war, and the subsequent ban on German, and on the learning of German, in the United States (Gordin, 2015), the near complete hegemony of English as *the* language of science is indisputable.

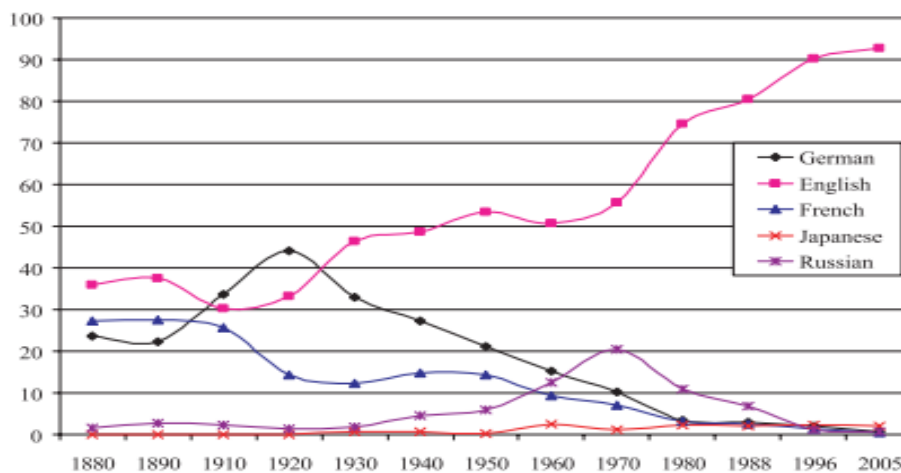


Figure 5. Proportions of languages in publications of the natural sciences worldwide 1880–2005 in Ammon, U. (2012). Linguistic inequality and its effects on participation in scientific discourse and on global knowledge accumulation—with a closer look at the problems of the second-rank language communities. *Applied Linguistics Review* 3(2), 333–355, on page 338. Reproduced with permission.

Di Bitetti and Ferreras (2016) state: “more than 90 % of the indexed scientific articles in the natural sciences” are being published in English, and almost all international scientific conferences and meetings use English as their official language. “Even conferences on the Romance languages and cultures now prefer English as their meta-language” (Hans Goebel, 2010 in Ammon, 2012, p. 347)

English now serves unchallenged as the main international academic language (and) it is not hard to see why English is the dominant academic and scientific language. The nations using English, particularly the United States, have become the academic superpowers. The United States alone spends almost half the world’s R&D funds and is home to a large proportion of the top universities on the world’s increasingly influential league tables. The main scientific and scholarly journals are published in English because their editors and most of their contributors are professors at universities in the English-speaking countries. Similarly, the large majority of the world’s academic Web sites and scientific networks function in English. A global academic environment needs a common medium of communication, and English is the only possible language. (Altbach (2013, pp. 2 - 4)

What we have today in the world of academia—the world of knowledge—is fittingly described by Gordin (2015) as “waves on top of deluges on top of tsunamis of scientific English” (p. 7), and best portrayed by the fact that even in a highly developed and advanced country like Holland, only *one in 40* academic papers is in Dutch (Huttner-Kuros, 2015). The removal of foreign language requirements at universities in Anglophone countries, especially the United States, has further “substantially strengthened English as the prominent scientific language, for it has forced scientists, who want to communicate or co-operate with the leading center of science,

to learn and use its language” (Ammon, 2012, p. 338). The pervasiveness of English is such that even in non-English speaking countries, developed or otherwise, papers and articles in English outnumber publications in the country’s own language.

Regardless of its native language, a nation’s English-language publications have the highest impact. For example, 59 percent of West Germany’s 41,000 source items were in English and 41 percent in German. Its English-language publications had a cited impact of 8.87 and a total impact of 5.83, compared to 3.08 and 1.16, respectively, for German. Switzerland’s exceptional citation record (. . .) is even better in English. It’s cited impact of 11.71 and total impact of 7.67 are well above the second-ranked United States, at 9.29 and 4.95, respectively. (Garfield & Welljams-Dorof, 1990 in Ammon, 2012, p. 343)

According to Altbach (2013), even in a highly developed and literate country like Norway, “Norwegian academics who publish in English and in recognized journals are paid fees for their accomplishments, while their colleagues who publish in Norwegian are paid less or not at all” (p. 3). Moreover, since metrics used to evaluate research, including citation indexes and publications in top-ranked journals, are nested in English—presumed requirement is English—questions around *linguistic medium* have been removed from the conversation (Curry and Lillis, 2018).

### **Learn English and Publish, or Perish**

There is a “confirmed bias in favor of English in the global bibliographical data banks or citation indexes” (Ammon, 2012, p. 344) and scholars in non-English speaking countries have no choice but to conform to the standards of prestigious journals if they want to publish in them, and for this they must *conquer* the English language. For non-Anglophones, and this especially applies to and expressly affects those who come from non-elite backgrounds in the developing

world, “skills in English are mandatory and their lack often means foreclosure of an academic career” (Ammon, 2012, p. 342). Di Bitetti and Ferreras (2016) poignantly state in their aptly titled article *Publish (in English) or perish*: “under current circumstances promoting the use of their native languages in scientific publications will not help these countries or researchers promote their scientific agendas or careers” (p. 126).

Advances in science and technology, the paraphernalia of planning and development, and developments in the humanities and the arts are mostly expressed through English. The rate of change in today's world, and the rate of its acceleration, imply that technological advancement, scientific discovery, and research and development will continue at a staggering pace, with a definite time-lag for its assimilation in languages other than the primary international language. (Haque, 1983, p. 17)

The time-lag Haque (1983) speaks of as above is not relevant anymore as in the vast majority of countries, even attempts at assimilation and translation of scientific research and articles from English to local vernacular have been abandoned. Knowledge of English among researchers and within academia worldwide is now taken as *fait accompli*. It is very much a case of *learn English or perish*.

Four academics in my study; two doctorate holders and two with master's degrees, stated unequivocally that they could not have achieved their high standing in the world of academia without English, and all of them came from non-elite backgrounds. It is those academics, particularly within the developing world, who have non-elite or non-English speaking credentials (the two often conflate) that are more likely to be at the *drowning end* of the “tsunamis of scientific English” (Gordin, 2015, p. 7). The situation is so extreme that even those whose area of study is mother tongue, cannot advance in their careers without a solid foundation in English,

which I am personally witness to. In an elite high school where I taught English, teachers of Urdu could not command the respect of students due to their weak English skills, which intersected with their non-elite background and education. This is also evinced by Guo and Beckett (2012) in their critical analysis of English in China:

English is also a precondition for promotion as many professionals invest heavily in English language learning because it is used as a yardstick to measure general competence (Xie, 2004), regardless of whether their field is in any way related to English. For example, an associate professor of Chinese in Qingdao was denied promotion because she failed the English examination. (p. 57)

### **English is now the Yardstick of Competence; of being Considered Educated**

The above also brings forth the issue of English being used as a yardstick to measure general competence (Xie, 2004), which again affects non-elites mainly as they are the ones most likely to have poor English skills. My study highlights how even competent researchers face ridicule if they have weak speaking skills in English. Ammon (2012) shares a similar experience.

The proposal, which I, but also many others, have made repeatedly, (is) of more tolerance toward non-native and non-inner-circle English (Ammon 2000) or, similarly, the recognition of “International English” with norms which differ from inner-circle standard English (Jenkins 2000; 2002; Seidlhofer 2003). Such tolerance or recognition seems indeed important where fair judgment is missing, such as a British functionary of the European Science Foundation once betrayed when he remarked to me, seemingly gleefully, that non-Anglophone professors sometimes appeared like babies when they tried to speak English. (Ammon, 2012, p. 350)

It is not surprising that the Ministry of Education in China in 2001, in their guidelines for teaching English in elementary schools, changed the focus from receptive skills to one that emphasizes productive skills. “The new curricula place less stress on grammar, reading, and writing, in favor of listening and speaking” (Guo & Beckett, 2012, p. 57).

Along with the issue of English being associated with competence, is the issue of how ability in English is also associated with being considered educated. Each and every participant in my study affirmed that unless one speaks English, one is not considered educated in Pakistan. Tembe (2006) had similar findings in her study of teacher training: “To be educated in Uganda means being able to speak English” (p. 857). Tembe (2008) also found that when a child is able to speak English, it is considered “proof that learning is taking place” (p. 176). I would posit that findings would be similar in other Anglo postcolonial societies like India as well. Guo and Beckett’s (2012) study indicates that China may be moving in a similar direction.

### **English Provides Dignity, Self-Esteem and Self-Respect**

In his presentation to the Annual Meeting of TESOL, Phillipson (2019) refers to a number of, what he calls, “myths” about English as a global language, and attempts to debunk them. However, one thing is not a myth, and which is the shift in consciousness and higher levels of respect, dignity and self-esteem that English provides non-elites, irrespective of material gain, or linguistic instrumentalism (Kubota, 2011; Wee, 2003) which my research evinces. According to Fay (1975), critical enquiry is a response to the experiences, desires, and needs of oppressed people (in Lather, 1986, p. 268). In this study I tried to look at things critically, using as a lens the reality that the vast majority of people—the non-elite, the underprivileged, the marginalized, the subaltern (Gramsci, 1971; Guha, 2009) the wretched of the earth (Fanon, 1961)—face without English in this world. Theoretical arguments that English is not a real lingua franca since

it is not a non-native language for all its users, as Latin was, or that English is *lingua divina* or *lingua diabolica* (Phillipson, 2014), or what the French call “*la langue du Coca-Cola*” (Krishnaswamy & Burde, 1998, p. 5) mean nothing to them. These semantics are far removed from the exclusion that common people face in this world without English. Armchair theorizing or the search for significance, as is wont in the ivory tower of the academy, does not solve their predicament. My perspective is based on the harsh truths of our present-day existence as it has evolved and/or has been constructed. The metamorphosis that non-elites undergo, once they acquire English, allows them to break free from the class-based mental silos and consciousness they are restricted to, or are trapped in. English is no more just the language *of* human rights, or the road *to* human rights, but has now become an essential and critical human right in itself.

### **Deliverance: The Language of Colonization is now the Language of Liberation**

#### **Motivation of Participants to Acquire English as a Path to their Emancipation**

Motivation is a key factor in second language acquisition and Gardner & Lambert (1959) define it as “the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (p. 10). The participants of my study were highly motivated and determined to acquire English and overcame the absence of an enabling environment to acquire fluency. Their intrinsic motivation to seek out the challenge of learning a second language and attempts at attaining mastery reflected the positive potential of human nature as posited in Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Self-Determination Theory underscores the importance of internalizing learning activities. In other words, if a learning activity such as the acquisition of English becomes instrumentally important for the fulfillment of goals and desires, coherence between internal values and external stimuli takes

place (Gagné & Deci, 2005). This was very much the case with my participants for whom the acquisition of English became *raison d'être*.

Narratives such as “you are nothing without English,” “it has become the question of your existence,” “without English we cannot get any recognition anywhere,” “I'm not afraid of anything now,” “English can change your life,” “people give more respect to people who can speak English,” and English is impacting how people *value* me” evince that participants were not simply motivated by a desire for tangible rewards, but were seeking dignity, respect and inclusion. They sought liberation from the class-based silos that non-elites are often restricted to in societies like Pakistan. Their desire to acquire English lay outside traditional definitions of motivations in second language acquisition. At the end of this section, I suggest new terminology to define this motivation—motivation to break away from the indignities and exclusion that the language barrier places on non-elites.

### **Factors that Aided Fluency in English**

STD identified the needs of autonomy (deCharms, 1968; Deci, 1975), relatedness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Reis, 1994), and competence (Harter, 1982; White, 1959) as essential for social development and well-being, and all three influenced the learning trajectories of the participants of this study. The fact that they were motivated and demonstrated high achievement despite challenges shows their tenacity and resiliency (Matthews, 2014), and positive relationships are a key factor in developing resiliency (Kitano and Lewis, 2005).

**Positive Relationships.** Nearly all participants mentioned the positive relationships they had with their parents and the support they received from them in their learning trajectories and which made them more resilient. As Kai said, “My father is putting a lot of effort to bring me everywhere where I can get exposure, basically get groomed. This is all credit goes to basically



my parents.” Simi also spoke about the support she received from her parents: “My parents, they are from a humble background. My father was a laborer in factories. He just passed 8th grade, and my mother is totally illiterate. But they really had that love for education. There is this blessing.” For Huma, the situation was unusual. Her father was hostile to female education but her mother secretly helped her go to school and financed it with her earnings as a seamstress. Huma said, “My mother really helped me. So my mother stitch clothes and finance my education.” Aka spoke of the love his father gave him: “Father raised me with a lot of love. He was not educated, could not even write in Urdu forget about English. He was very passionate that I receive a quality education.” Ainee’s education was supported by his parents and his first foray into trying to read an English novel would not have been possible without the help of his father. He shared: “I bought Dr. No but I couldn’t understand because it was different kind of diction. I asked my father to help me. He had an elementary knowledge of English. We’d sit together for hours and read page by page. We had a dictionary by our side and we used to consult that.”

**Autonomy.** Deci and Ryan (2012) see autonomy as central to intrinsic motivation and an important psychological need that can be supported or thwarted by the social environment. The desire for autonomy is inherent in human nature and deCharms (1968) states that people constantly struggle against being constrained by external forces. The social environment of non-elite Pakistanis is often not conducive to autonomous conduct as the large joint-family systems within which they often live dictate that they stay within societal mores. This was, however, not the case for the participants of my study. All except one mentioned that they had complete freedom to choose their educational and career trajectories. Almost all participants mentioned the love and support they received from their parents, which are elements that enable autonomy. Waji shared how her parents supported her efforts and gave her autonomy: “I did one advantage

I had over the other students was that even though the rote system was prevalent in the education system but thankfully, my parents, although they were not elite, but they never encouraged rote learning.” Aka spoke of the autonomy afforded by the environment he was placed in by his circumstances and which aided his learning of English: “After five p.m. my life starts because there was no body in the office. I started imagining myself as Dr. Sahib. I used to collect all those letters from his dustbin and try to read what Dr. Sahib was receiving.”

**Relatedness.** Baumeister & Leary (1995) suggest that the need to belong, or relatedness, is a powerful, fundamental, and extremely pervasive motivator. Some of the strongest emotions people experience are related to the desire in humans to form social attachments. Ryan et al. (1995) added to the literature by showing that relatedness and autonomy are integral to one another. This was very much the case with the participants of my study. The needs for belonging—to be able to blend in—acted as motivators among non-elite Pakistanis and was an aspect of successful English acquisition that my study evinces. For Waji, the pressure to assimilate and the need to be accepted was overwhelming. She narrated how the need to be accepted motivated her: “The pressure, the need to blend in, because English is a big criteria for it matters more than the education you have. It comes down to how you speak, how you present yourself, proficiency in English is a big part of that.” Simi said that to be accepted she worked very hard and obliged people but was exploited. She said, “I was doing 90% of the project but Vice Chancellor didn’t even know that. Other people were presenting and they are doing all that in English. I did it just to be accepted. At the end, when the paper is published, your name is nowhere.” Simi further shared that it was only after she learned English that she finally found respect and recognition.

It opened the door to my success, somehow and for instance like now people are coming to me, rather than I am going to them. One of the things is I have PhD degree, but a lot of people have PhD degrees. Now when I to go to someone to meet someone, intentionally or unintentionally, I start speaking English.

**Competence.** White (1959) introduced the construct of competence as a fundamental human need. Deci (1975) defines competence as “one’s ability or capacity to deal effectively with his surroundings” (p. 55). According to competence motivation theory, individuals will gravitate towards areas in which they perceive their own competence and avoid those where the possibility of accomplishment is unclear (Harter, 1978). Successful attempts at mastery in any domain reinforce the feeling of competence, and accordingly enhance motivation, and failed attempts have the opposite effect. When Anu was asked what motivated her to learn English, she responded that as she started slowly acquiring English at a teacher’s training program, it led to a greater perception of her own competence and the desire to acquire further fluency in English. She shared her experience: “In that training I started speaking English, not conversational, but small sentences like how are you, where are you going, you know, and those sentences gave me so much confidence.” She also narrated how the ability to speak English establishes you as a competent person in Pakistan. She said: “It’s so easy to work with any boss, actually. They start feeling this girl can understand English, so if we give her some points or instructions or assignment or project, she will be able to do it easily than a non-speaker.” Nad’s story is also indicative of how knowing English, even at a basic rudimentary level, leads to the consciousness of feeling competent as well as others seeing the speaker as such. He recalled:

When I was in grade 10, I used to work in a factory in the nights and go to the school in the morning. One day, the supervisor came in and there was some letter in English and

the supervisor himself was unable to read the letter. Then someone told him this boy is in school, show it to him, and he came to me and gave me the letter. It was written by some manager or something. I read it out and translated it for him, and he was so surprised. I was like 10 tiers lower than him in the factory. And I was a kid of 14-15-years.

### **Going Beyond Traditional Definitions of Motivation in Second Language Acquisition**

According to Gardner et al. (1985), two motivational orientations drive the desire to learn a second language: instrumental and integrative. The former pertains to learning a second language for pragmatic gains such as employment, while the latter pertains to motivation towards learning a second language in order to integrate into a community (Pierce, 1995). While Gardner and Lambert (1972) found that integrative orientation was a stronger predictor of persistence and success in second language acquisition, Noels et al. (2003) suggest that the desire for contact and identification with a language community is not fundamental to the motivational process and has relevance only in specific sociocultural contexts. Dörnyei (1990) suggests that instrumental orientation is perhaps more important than integrative orientation for learners of a second language as they are unlikely to assimilate into the culture of the people who speak the target language. From the narratives of the participants, their motivation to learn English cannot simply be described as instrumental and integrative.

**Social Distance.** The social distance (Schumann, 1976) between the elites and the non-elites in Pakistan is great and I had ruled out finding any evidence of integrative orientations. I felt that the motivational driver to acquire English would be the hope and promise of better life prospects and outcomes. However, the findings were mixed and indication of both instrumental and integrative motivations emerged. Non-elite learners in Pakistan hope that the return on their investment in English would be previously unattainable opportunities both tangible and

intangible. They expressed the need and necessity, as well as desire, to gain access to and be accepted in elite society, where English is used as a first language and is the gatekeeper to entry. The desire was not necessarily just for the material perks which the higher echelons of society afford. For many of them the motivation to learn English was going beyond simply instrumental and integrative and has relevance in Pakistan's sociocultural context (Noels et al, 2003), which is a society stratified along purpose and class lines and steeped in elitist attitudes.

### **The Concept of *Investment* in Second Language Acquisition**

While constructs of motivation frequently view the individual as having a unitary and coherent identity with specific character traits, Pierce's (1995) concept of *investment*, which was "inspired by the work of Bourdieu (1977)" (Norton & Gao, 2008), regards the learner as a social being with a complex identity that changes across time and space and is reproduced in social interaction. In addition to asking, "Are students motivated to learn a language?" one asks, "Are students and teachers invested in the language and literacy practices of a given classroom and community?" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 37). Thus Pierce (1995) feels that the concept of investment, rather than motivation, better captures the complex relationship between power, identity, and language learning. Her notion of investment differs from Gardner and Lambert's (1959) integrative and instrumental motivations as she felt that the concept presupposes a fixed and ahistorical learner who simply desires to gain something externally, whereas the notion of investment attempts to conceive language learners as multifaceted in their identities and desires.

That participants were driven by and hoped for something more than integration or material gain builds upon Pierce's (1995) concept of investment. They constantly constructed and reconstructed who they were and their relationship to a social world that is defined and constrained mainly, if not totally, by elitism. These learners, in the domestic context of a non-

English speaking country like Pakistan, did not have access to those who speak the language fluently—the elite—who use English as a first language, and who consider Urdu “a language of servants and taxi drivers” (Khaliq, 2006, p. 101). The use of English as a first language is the hallmark of elitism in Pakistan and perhaps in all of South Asia. Their struggles at acquiring fluency especially in spoken English were an investment in their own individual and social identities. They invested time and effort in English language acquisition in the expectation of access to a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which would increase their cultural and social capital (Pierce, 1995), and more. This struggle enabled non-elites to emerge transformed and empowered. The resources they invested in the English language could be called an investment (Pierce, 1995) in their own liberation which their narratives evince.

To someone like myself who came from privilege, it seemed intuitive that people would be motivated to learn English in a society like Pakistan. However, hearing people who actually face marginalization due to their non-English speaking backgrounds discuss their actual motivations was eye-opening. For Kai, who is only 21 years old, English is the road to wealth and power as well as a means to please her parents. She shared:

I wanna give orders. Big Salary. I wanna big salary. Basically, I wanna everyone works under me. I want that. Yes Sir. And wherever I speak in English my father just gets pleased, my daughter can speak in English. My father ask can you speak in English multiple of times and I speak to him and my mother and both of them just got pleased, yes my daughter speak in English.

For Anu, English meant unlimited employment opportunities and her motivation was mainly instrumental but her reference to value hints at something more. As her English was improving, people were treating her differently, valuing her, and this led to the realization that

she could find employment anywhere if she could reach fluency. She shared: “And people were giving me so much value that oh this girl can speak English and actually this thing motivated me that if you are living in Pakistan, English is so important, so yes this thing motivated me a lot.”

Nad’s narrative is indicative of something more than simply instrumental or integrative motivation to acquire English. He also refers to how he was being valued once he knew English.

I knew I could not get out of this poverty trap and whatever I was in without learning English primarily. I had that feeling that this (English) is one thing that would get me out of all these circumstances. So at different stages of my life and at different edge points, I realized and I got conscious that this is how English is impacting how people see me and how do they *value* me.

For Waji, the motivation was more than simply integrative—like a desire to be accepted as a fully functioning human being—since the pressure to assimilate and the need to be accepted became overwhelming. She narrated:

To be honest enough, the pressure, the need to blend in because, obviously for most of the people you'll ask, they would have responded in a way that speaking English is unfortunately a big criteria, for it matters more than the education you have or the qualification you have. It all comes down to how you speak or how you present yourself. And proficiency in English is a big part of that. So that really motivated me.

Shah who was competing for a USAid scholarship knew that the only way he could pass the qualifying interview was by improving his ability to hold a conversation in English at some rudimentary level. For him to transcend his physical space and embark on a journey of personal growth was only possible through English and it made him realize the power

and importance of the global lingua franca. He said: “Yeah, so there's pressure I have to learn, if I have to get this scholarship, that was a huge opportunity for me that I will go to United States. That interview and the tour of the United States was the motivation.”

The culture that is associated with English speaking countries is invariably developed, advanced, modern and liberal. Language and culture are linked and one cannot be acquired without the other (Trueba, 1993). As Ainee said, his motivation to learn English was “to understand the movies and later when I started listening to the BBC to understand the plays that were there and the comedy shows that were on the radio on the BBC, I wanted to understand that.” Aka candidly shared: “My fascination with English it started with watching English movies. My father used to take me to English movies a lot. I used to go to Capri cinema which showed English movies only and those movies gave me some kind of understanding of English.”

### **Need for Defining New Terminology**

**Deliverance Motivation or Liberative Motivation.** From the narratives of the participants of my study, I surmise that the motivation to learn English in the setting of many post-colonial societies like Pakistan goes beyond current definitions as either integrative or instrumental and builds on Norton’s (1995) concept of investment. I feel that the defining or coining of terminology for such motivation is needed—more within the critical tradition—which may, or would, apply to the context of South Asia, East Africa, and other ex-colonial environments. It is needed given the present day reality of the indisputable preeminence of English which now serves “as a kind of global-hegemonic, post-clerical Latin” (Anderson, 2006, p. 207). It is also needed given the intersectionality of language and identity, and class-based dichotomies especially in the developing world. I would suggest “Deliverance Motivation” and/or “Liberative Motivation” as terminology to define the motivation to acquire English of



such learners. I feel that these terms represent quite well, as well as forcefully, what English means or can mean to non-elite English learners in the domestic context of postcolonial developing societies, as well as in the context of current global reality—motivation to break away from the indignities and class-based silos that the language barrier places on them. For non-elite learners, successful English acquisition can, almost, be called a matter of life and death.

### **Liberation lies in being able to Speak English Fluently**

The perspectives of the participants of my study were based on the ground realities in Pakistan where many people, certainly not the majority, can draft letters and applications in English but have very limited ability to speak it. Participants equated *knowing* English with that basic rudimentary non-conversational level and equated *using* English with the ability to converse in it well. I came to understand this critical importance of verbal fluency when I was well into the interviewing process. I grasped that it is engagement in actual conversation in English that liberates non-elites in Pakistan from their class-based silos. In addition, it became clear that unlike Lee's (2003) study in Malaysia, speaking in English in Pakistan has only positive implications, connotations and consequences. There is hardly any situation in Pakistan where one could make a negative impression when one speaks in English or be ostracized for speaking it.

Empowerment comes from speaking English. Almost all participants said that being able to speak English was very important and empowering. They felt it gave them respect, dignity, and credibility; near liberation. Aka shared how he begins every speech and training with English in order to establish his credentials. Anu was clear that it is spoken English, which is empowering since many people in Pakistan know the rules of English grammar, but have no ability to converse in it. She shared: "Using English is powerful, of course. I'm an English

teacher and I'm training girls, I can see they know the tenses, parts of speech; you know present, past, or future. But they can't use it! They can't communicate with you.” When I put this question to Hubi, she responded: “No matter how many English novels you read, no matter how much your English grammar is good, but how fluently you speak English, this matters a lot.” Nad also felt that speaking English in Pakistan is very empowering. He shared: “I think in Pakistan especially, it's using (speaking) English. Knowing English is not sufficient enough.” Rose was emphatic in her views based on her own experiences. She said: “Using English is empowering.” When I asked what if someone might know English but may not care to show that they can speak it, she responded “It's required to show. All the time. In your official life, it's required to show. Use is empowering. And I think that English speaking is very very important.” Yas was definitive in his response and shared how the good impression one makes when speaking in English in Pakistan is a source of empowerment. It also raises your value in the eyes of educated people, invariably the elite. He also linked being educated with knowing English. He said: “It's more empowering to use English because when you use, then people get impressed by you. So, I think it makes you more important amongst the people who are educated, who can speak English. So the use is very important. It actually empowers you.”

### **English—the most precious commodity in Pakistan**

#### **Social Reproduction Through the Poor Teaching of English**

In 1947, the newly created state of Pakistan adopted the colonial system of education, whereby English was rationed out only to a small elite group, while the masses were educated mainly in Urdu and in local vernaculars (Abbas, 1993). This dichotomous and exclusionary system has prevailed with English acting as a gate keeper to positions of power, prestige opportunity in society (Rahman, 2004; Shamim, 2008). Fluency in English has become and

remains “the main determinant of a child’s progress up the ladder of formal education” (Ngugi, 1985, p. 115) in Pakistan but which is only available at a small number of elite private schools, which are prohibitively expensive. Educational institutions in Pakistan act as sites where social, cultural, and economic inequality is reproduced in a society marked by significant inequities in wealth, power, and privilege (Bourdieu, 1973; Giroux, 1983), thus reinforcing class stratification. Simon (1979) aptly encapsulates the aims of education as it is structured in Pakistan: “Schooling as a socializing institution whose aim is to regulate a sense of human possibility in support of the interests of the ruling bloc constituted within privileged positions of gender, class, race, ethnic, regional and sexual relations” (p. 30).

### **The Need to Improve English Teaching in Public Schools and Colleges.**

English, and the way the educational system rations it out, plays a critical role in maintaining class division in Pakistan where “all the good marks are scored by the ‘bright’ English-speaking students” (Anand, 1999, p. 2055). Non-elite students are caught on the wrong side of this divide or “language apartheid” (Shamim, 2011, p. 300) or “educational apartheid” (Manan et al., 2017, p. 748) and have to face its consequences. “‘Bad English’ is frowned upon and the disprivileged students’ sense of handicap is reinforced by the system’s indifference typically expressed as, ‘can’t do anything about it at this late stage’” (Anand, 1999, p. 2054).

Not knowing English is demotivating and affects their self-esteem. The fact that they must pass the subject of English in order to matriculate from school is a reality yet non-elite/subaltern students possess few means to acquire the language. This results in a culture of cramming and cheating (Memon, 2007, Rehman & Waheed, 2014) towards which society seems to turn a blind eye and appears complicit in encouraging it. The latter is in line with Tibbetts’ (1997) research that found that perceived social norms and cheating behavior may be linked (in

Whitley et al., 1999). The conspiracy of silence on this issue reinforces the impression that stratification of Pakistani society along purpose and class lines is maintained by design (Tollefson, 1991). The “need to control, regulate, or tame” the spread of English may be one aspect of the “sociolinguistic balance of power” (Fishman, 1982, p. 16). English may thus be the most precious commodity in Pakistan access to which seems zealously guarded.

It is thus that the genuinely democratic possibilities that English could have otherwise opened up in a caste society like ours have been nipped in the bud by a casteist elite that does not let go of power by subverting the potential of each new challenge — here, we see English as one such symbolic challenge — to serve its own interests. (Anand, 1999, p. 2054).

The fact that in public and non-elite schools there is just one period of English a day, that teachers cannot speak English, that there is no emphasis on conversation and that there is a culture of rote learning, were often repeated narratives from the participants of my study. At elite institutions of higher learning, education is imparted exclusively in English. At non-elite private institutions, though the medium of instruction officially may be English, education is delivered in Urdu or a mix of Urdu, English, and vernacular, as students and teachers both struggle with English. In most public schools, even the teachers of English cannot converse in English. However, since the matriculation requires passing the subject of English—even if one opts to write the exam of the other subjects in Urdu or vernacular—rote learning and dishonest methods are employed by many learners in order to pass examinations (Memon, 2007, Rehman & Waheed, 2014); the system often complicit in the latter.

These ground realities were faced by participants of this study since they were coming through the public and non-elite system. Rose narrated how despite being an outstanding student,

her grades fell precipitously once she came face-to-face with lectures in English in college. This motivated her to improve her English to regain her good standing. She said:

When I got admission in St. P's College, all papers were in English. (Hence) my grade was low in intermediate (college). In matric (school) it was high. When the medium was changed (Urdu to English) in intermediate, I got second division. I used to have lectures there in English. So at graduation, I got first division and highest marks in St. P's College after improving my English.

Hubi was troubled that her weak English could lead to misinterpretation of text from her medical books and which would have affected patient well-being. This motivated her to work hard on her English skills. She recalled:

All medical academic books are in English, as you know. So if you are not able to comprehend a sentence, you are going to take a different, or opposite, or wrong meaning of that sentence and it is going to impact the life of the patient. I realized that. I realized that. Then I started writing different grammatical sentences on internet, so that I can better understand my medical books. Especially this became the perspective of my life because I don't want if I study a wrong thing it is going to impact the life of the patient. I focus on learning better English so that I can get the perfect meaning out of the sentence.

Shah expressed his views on this reality in a hypothetical sense. It lays out the importance of acquiring English given the way the education system and society in Pakistan are structured. The need becomes dire as one moves from secondary school to college. For him this was certainly a motivation. He said:

English is the need of our time. You need English to communicate, you need English to do anything. Your university's whole curriculum is in English. Often our students get into

the problem because they are in studying in Urdu medium schools and they go to a good university, they have to give presentations and they have to give lectures. So there is a huge problem for them if they cannot speak English.

Simi lamented that the non-elite institutions of higher education are not preparing students for the real world. Non-elite students often excel in mathematics and statistics, which do not need English skills but then run into problems in the job market. This is exactly what Simi faced and it was the realization of the importance of English to negotiate her work space that motivated her towards gaining fluency. She said:

All the other institutions where I got my education, they were meant to be English medium, but that was just on paper, not in practice. I did my Master's and M.Phil. from a University, that's one of the top universities, and I did it with distinction. I did statistics, so we didn't need much English to speak or to write, because we were just playing with the numbers. The English, which I knew, that was enough to go through that. Like in all public sector universities no one will ask you to present your research work or whatever in English. Like when they will go to the market how will they compete when they don't have that skill?

Nad felt the way of teaching English in non-elite schools and colleges does not aim at imparting fluency in speech. It focuses on the basic non-verbal knowing level that was mentioned earlier. Thus, students have to motivate themselves to make extra effort to acquire fluency, which is what happened with him once he realized the importance of English. He said:

I mean, for an instance, if there is a chapter in the book, what is the typical way of teaching it? The professor will come, he will read out first two lines, and then translate it.

So, the teacher used to read it out and translate it for us. It means the same conventional method. Translation, vocabulary, grammar. In that manner. By the rules.

Waji shared how the limitation that rote-learning poses to the process of acquisition of knowledge became her motivation to acquire the language. She elucidates:

Since all the curriculum is designed in English, so it's unfortunately really important to know English, to be well versed in the language because if you're not then it promotes rote learning or parrot learning. You just scan whatever is written in the copy and you transfer it on the paper in the exam but that's why you're not learning any knowledge.

You should have at least some basic decent English language skills. It really helps you.

As a teacher I stress upon to my students and to my siblings you should have a decent level of writing skills or communicating skills so you're not servant to the book or you're not servant to what's written in the notes or slide. You can read it from anywhere if you're preparing for an exam or you're preparing for a presentation. So, if you have the points in mind, you can elaborate it anyway you want. If you're giving a presentation, you're not limited to a sheet of paper or something, so you can be more expressive.

### **An Educated Identity is a Near Impossibility in Pakistan without English**

#### **Identity Construction of Non-Elite English Learners**

Identity is a powerful concept that concerns the self and comprises, not just what one thinks one is, or acts as being, but also what recognition is accorded to that identity by others (Baumeister, 1986). West (1992) postulates that identity relates to desire for recognition, for association, for protection. According to Côté and Levine (2002), “identities are becoming increasingly transitory and unstable in late modern society” (p. 6). Mathews (2000) argues that identity develops in what he calls the “cultural supermarket” and media and technology make

available a range of possible identities that can be assumed. The identity one can adopt or acquire, or create, is based largely on the social structures within which an individual exists. Norton (1997) posits that identity is framed in different ways: social identity, sociocultural identity, voice, cultural identity, and ethnic identity. She refers to identity as “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future” (p. 410). Multiple aspects of identity can co-exist, with many identity processes undertaken deliberately and involving a great deal of effort (Vignoles et al., 2011). Breakwell (1988) suggests that identity processes operate in order to achieve certain end states for identity: self-esteem, continuity, and distinctiveness.

**English means an educated identity for non-elite learners in Pakistan.** More than 60 different types of positive impacts of English were narrated by the participants, the most mentioned being: *In Pakistan one is only considered educated and qualified if one can speak English.* Hence, English allows non-elites to don the mantle of an identity that is considered educated, polished, and refined. Hubi said, “It is very common in our country that it is considered that whoever speaks English, they basically have an education or they are basically literate.” Huma shared, “some people I met, said to me that until I could speak English, people did not even think I was educated.” Yas also felt the same when he said, “People do not consider you as educated if you cannot speak English.” Rose shared:

Whenever you are speaking English, everybody think you are educated even you don't have degree, even you are just matriculate from English medium school. You are doctor, you are engineer, but you can't speak English, everybody think you are not educated actually. You just cheated. You just purchased your degree and qualification.

Shah also had similar feelings on this point and shared that someone who speaks



English is seen as educated and respectable, and a *good* person:

In Pakistan people don't think somebody is very educated if they cannot speak good English. They think that okay he has studied something like MA Urdu. But if somebody speaks good English, then they consider this person is well educated, and he knows how to carry and he's a good person. So there is a symbol of respect associated with English.

Waji said that while she knew that being educated and being able to speak English are two different things, but in the view of Pakistani society, the two are linked, or have become linked:

English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated, obviously people have these misconceptions in their mind. Many people consider you literate when you using excessive (English) vocabulary; uselessly adding difficult words.

**A more progressive and expressive identity.** Some of the responses from participants were unusual and unexpected in the sense of how English makes non-elites think differently. This, to me, is a powerful finding and shows that that the impact of English is deep on the psyche of these learners. Zam felt that English had changed his thought processes. He said, "I have become more progressive, more moderate, more modern. And my thought processes have changed because of English. Access to literature, and books. Those books, which are not available in Urdu language." For Yas, English has opened the possibility to sit with educated and intellectual people, which has made him more expressive. He was part of a panel on education, conducted in English, in which many eminent personalities participated. He said, "There were so many great people sitting there, and you know being part of such great people, expressing yourself, representing yourself, it's really very important for me." Simi felt that the process of

acquiring English and the world of knowledge it opened up had perhaps made her more open minded. She shared:

I don't know whether English made me this, or maybe the social network in which I am moving, and that is, again, the English-speaking people, that made me less conservative. Now a lot of things, like when I'm talking about misfit, a lot of my ideas, my thinking, they are totally different. Yes, I say that I'm more liberal on a lot of social issues. Yes. And now I read a lot, and I read on everything. I don't have any specific interest. I will read politics. I will read literature. I will read fiction.

### **The Relationship of English and Self-Esteem**

#### **The Self-Esteem Motive in Identity Construction**

Vignoles et al. (2006) assert that among the least contested claims in social psychology is that people are motivated to enhance their self-esteem. Leary & Baumeister (2000) state that “the universality and potency of self-esteem suggests that it is an inherent, adaptive part of human nature” (p. 8). “Identity is not only influenced by self-esteem, but rather, the relationship is bidirectional” (Heppner & Kernis, 2011, p.340). The self-esteem motive refers to “the motivation to maintain and enhance a positive conception of oneself” (Gecas, 1982, p. 20). There is a pervasiveness of self-esteem on all aspects of identity and “the self-esteem motive prompts people to behave in ways that maintain their connections with others (Leary et al. 1995, p. 529).

**Sociometer Theory of Self-Esteem.** Leary and Downs (1995) posit that “the need to protect and enhance one's self-esteem constitutes an exceptionally pervasive and important motive” (p. 124). According to Leary et al. (1995), “people's self-images, as well as their self-esteem, are based heavily on their perceptions of the evaluative reactions of other people” (p. 528). The central tenet of sociometer theory is “that the self-esteem system monitors the quality

of an individual's actual and potential relationships—specifically the degree to which other people value their relationships with the individual” (Leary & Baumeister, 2000, pp. 11-12). “Virtually all events that threaten self-esteem involve incidents that portray the individual as socially undesirable, incompetent, physically unattractive, or irresponsible or immoral” (Leary & Baumeister, 2000, p. 17).

**Social exclusion.** Lenoir (1974), coined the expression *social exclusion*, and Amartya Sen (2000) states that “the idea of social exclusion has conceptual connections with well-established notions in the literature on poverty and deprivation. The impoverishment of our lives results frequently from the inadequacy of income” (p. 3). Sen (2000) further argues that social exclusion can be better understood when placed in the broader context of the notion of poverty as capability deprivation, that is, “poverty seen as the lack of the capability to live a minimally decent life ... unemployment can be a major causal factor predisposing people to social exclusion” (pp. 4 & 20).

People not only “learn by doing,” they also “unlearn” by “not doing,” that is, by being out of work and out of practice. Also, in addition to the depreciation of skill through nonpractice, unemployment may generate loss of cognitive abilities as a result of the unemployed person's loss of confidence and sense of control. (Sen, 2000, p. 19)

### **The Relationship between Self-Esteem and English in Pakistan**

The fact that people who cannot speak English are excluded from most meaningful circles and activities is one of the findings of my study and evinces the reality that English and self-esteem have become linked in Pakistan. As Leary et al. (1995) suggest, that “in behaving in ways that promote self-esteem, people are striving to enhance their inclusionary status” (p. 528) and the acquisition of English by subalterns may be one such behavior, perhaps the most critical

one. Once non-elites gain fluency in English, the doors of opportunity, employment, and inclusion are flung open to them, which greatly raises their self-esteem. As Sen (2000) points out, unemployment can lead to poverty, shame and social exclusion. Employment of any significance in Pakistan is nearly impossible without a basic knowledge of English, and a high level of fluency is a must for meaningful employment.

In Pakistan, English gives an esteemed identity to those who can master it and the desire for higher levels of meaning and self-esteem and inclusion were important identity motives for non-elite Pakistanis to strive towards fluency. Kai shared how the successful acquisition of English in Pakistan gives one high self-esteem—one sits with one's head raised high is how she put it:

But it has made my identity that I can speak in English, and it is very privileged ... What do we say? Privileged. Yes, sir. Esteem sir. Sir, self-esteem ... That is a self-esteem. It is building up your ... Whenever you speak English, you feel like Esteem you can sit like this, whenever you speak in English, you sit like this. Proud. You come to be a proud person. Although they can speak English (elites) but you are also the person who can speak English. So it is like that. So you sit with your head high. Yes, sir. In front of the people who cannot speak English. In front of the people. Like, I think that sir the way I speak English and the area from where I belong. When I speak English over there, the people get motivated.

Waji had the same feeling as Kai. She said that the ability to speak English makes you distinctive and changes how people perceive you in Pakistan:

Definitely because again, people are impressed by fluency in English. Obviously when other people's perception about them, the people around them, their perception about the

person changes, obviously that affects their self-esteem and that affects their inner self so yeah. It makes you more ...I talked about myself. It made me more confident. So are you saying that English is linked to people's self-esteem? Depends on their environment, yes. If they are in an environment where ... but I'd say yes. To an extent, yes. In our country, unfortunately yes.

Yas's experience with how English opened opportunities and possibilities for him to enter privilege spaces only frequented by the Elite—not face exclusion—raised his self-esteem. His experience epitomizes the extent of the empowerment that English can bestow on the identity of a non-elite person in a highly class consciousness society like Pakistan. He shared:

I start talking to those people where I think that I could not talk if I cannot speak English, so that was a change English created in me. You can go to the places where you cannot go if you cannot speak English. Because there are places the people think that when you go there, you only speak in English. The restaurants, there's some good and big restaurants. There are some places, so I start going there and I really enjoyed that.

**The meaning motive in identity construction—respect, self-respect and dignity.** The second most mentioned narrative was that English gives one respect in society as well as self-respect. This was followed by ability to inspire and impress others, being taken seriously, being listened to, not being rejected, feeling distinguished and learned, attracting people, being considered someone from a good background, and getting attention.

Ainee, Anu, Rose, Shah and Yas felt that English gives one a respectable identity in Pakistani society. Anu said, “I get more respect, of course! My boss doesn't want to lose me because she knows I can get job anywhere.” Ainee said: “It's not what I think of myself but it's

more how other people react to me when they see me speaking in English, which is how it affects, maybe indirectly, me, because of their reaction to it, yes. So it's more respect.” For Yas, English has meant more respect as well as self-respect. He felt that the respect he gets now has raised him in his own eyes and enhanced his self-esteem: “I realized that it was the power of English that I was just getting that respect. It gives you not only respect in the eyes of others, but it gives you self-respect as well. So that’s how it has changed me.” Shah too felt that in order to gain higher levels of respect, one needed to learn and speak English: “People give more respect to people who can speak English. It is considered as a good habit. So if you want to gain respect, want to stand out then you need English in Pakistan. There is a symbol of respect associated with English.”

#### **Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs—Self-Actualization not Possible without English**

According to Maslow’s (1943) well known and widely employed Hierarchy of Needs, there are five basic needs; physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. These needs are related to one another and form a hierarchy, with physiological needs like food at the bottom and the need for self-actualization on top. Maslow (1943) suggests that when a need is fairly well satisfied, only then the next “*higher* need emerges, in turn to dominate the conscious life and to serve as the center of organization of behavior, since gratified needs are not active motivators.” (p. 395). Maslow’s (1943) model suggests that the need for esteem has to be fulfilled before the possibilities for self-actualization open up. Since the need for self-actualization only manifests itself once the need of esteem has been satisfied, and since my study evinces that the ability to speak English and self-esteem have formed a certain linkage in Pakistan, particularly among people from non-elite backgrounds, an inference is that self-actualization for subalterns is not possible unless they acquire English. In Figure 6, I have attempted to explicate and interpret the

intersectionality of English language acquisition and Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, with specific reference to non-elite/subaltern learners of English.

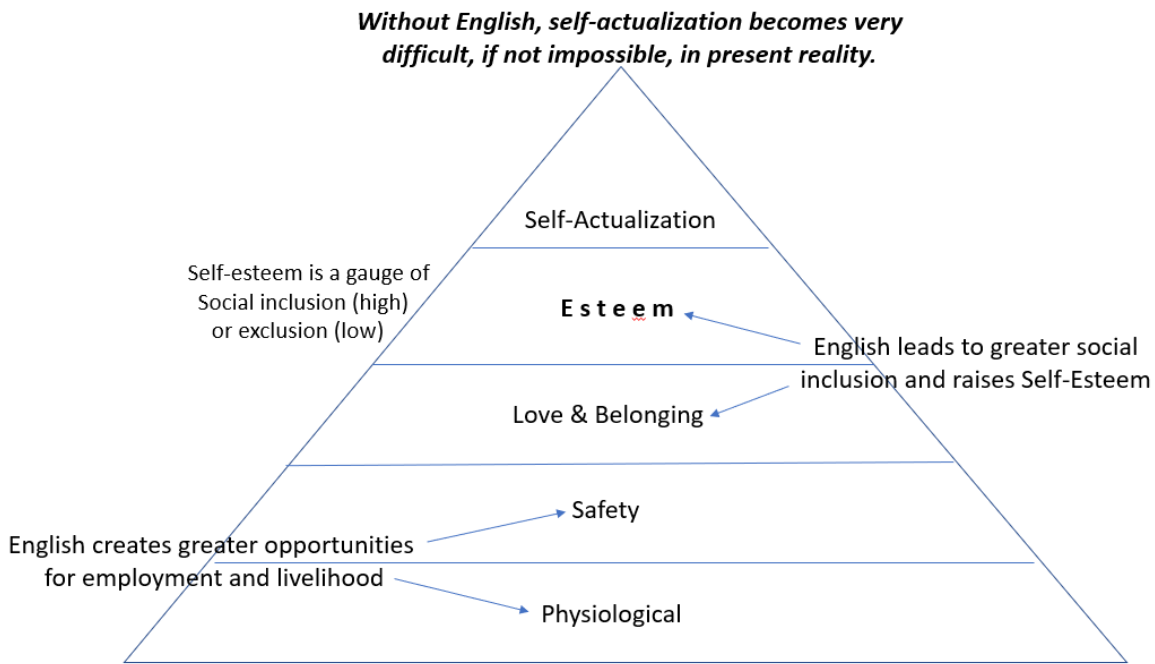


Figure 6. The intersectionality of ability in the English Language and Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.

### **You are Only Taken Seriously in Pakistan when you Speak in English**

English creates the space where subalterns are taken seriously, which gives their identity dignity in an elitist and class-conscious society. Kai was very straightforward when she said: “If I speak in English in front of the people, they would get inspired. If not inspired, impressed. They would take me more seriously than if I speak in Urdu.” Simi shared how she was taken seriously only after she started conversing in English. She said, “Honestly, when I started communicating in English, then people started taking me seriously.” Waji narrative shoes how English allows non-elites the sway to get people to notice them and be taken seriously:

“When you have to make them listen or make them notice then obviously you consciously or subconsciously use English. They listen but they don't take you seriously because obviously English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated.”

### **People listen when you speak in English**

Anu, Ainee and Nad both shared how the ability to speak English makes people listen in Pakistan and the expectation is that the speaker will say erudite things. Ainee said: “there is more weight if you speak in English, then people think that what you are saying is maybe worth listening to. But if you speak in Urdu, of course you are more or less disregarded, people don't even listen to you.” Anu shared how English gives her the aura of, as well as real, independence, which has particular relevance given the patriarchal nature of Pakistani society. She said: “That's what I said that people started, and in Pakistan especially, people started thinking that she can speak English so she's more independent now. You know? She doesn't need anybody, I think, which is very true.”

Nad who works with a multilateral agency and has to deal with the Pakistani bureaucracy said that when one speaks in Urdu people listen, but when one speaks in English, they listen carefully. He stated:

For an instance, in the local bureaucracy, when I work with the World Bank, I worked with the provisional bureaucracy. If in a meeting, the secretary is chairing the meeting, or the chief secretary is chairing the meeting, and you speak in Urdu, he'll listen. But you start speaking in English, he will listen *carefully*. And he would be expecting something wise, something *cool* coming out.

### **People seek you out when you speak English**



Simi and Yas both felt that since they have acquired English, people come to them, seek them out, which adds to their dignity. Yas shared that once he started speaking English, “That's really impressed people. Then people make you leader. Then people come to you, then people ask you questions. So I think that using English is very much important.” Simi said:

It opened the door to my success, somehow and for instance like now I am back now people are coming to me, rather than I am going to them. One of the things is, I have Ph.D. degree, but a lot of people have Ph.D. degrees. Now when I go to someone to meet someone, intentionally or unintentionally, I start speaking English.

### **English means you have a good background**

Simi further added that the ability to speak English in Pakistan influences the way people perceive one's background and raises one's status in many ways. She said, “This is the mentality of our society. If someone is speaking English, he or she is really good, he or she is from a very good background.” Shah also said something similar: “If somebody speaks good English, then they consider that this person is well educated, and he knows how to carry (himself) and he's a good person.”

### **English means you get immediate attention**

Anu shared how people not just give attention when spoken to in English, but actually stand up and attend to one's concerns and needs instantly. She shared:

For example, I took my maid for treatment to a government hospital and over there they don't treat you well but when I went where the doctor was and I spoke in English and he actually stood up and saw my maid and, you know, he actually treated her well. So you know that's how the leadership came.

### **English establishes credibility instantly**

Aka is project head of a public-school reform project in a rural district with hundreds of teachers working under him. He shared how he starts every training session in English before code switching to Urdu, which establishes his credibility instantly with the audience:

And whenever I start, my first two minutes were in English. Without saying anything, they start believing I'm a highly qualified person. The same thing, which was understood by my father, the same thing is understood by qualified people here. They hardly question my qualifications. People start believing, oh, this man must be foreign graduate.

### **English is a label of intellect**

Hubi, who faced a lot of anguish in college due to her weak English and which she worked hard to improve, called English a label of intellect:

As I said English, whenever I'm speaking English or whenever someone has learned how to speak English they get extra confidence. And especially in our society where English is not our national language. Where English is considered as a label that you, a label of your intellect.

### **English establishes superiority**

Ainee, while lamenting the slave mentality prevalent in society, nevertheless agreed that the ability to speak English is a label of superiority in Pakistan:

It's pathetic in some ways, because it shows the servility and the subservience of a kind of a mental slavery of these people who think that English speech denotes superiority. But it's a reality? That is true. It is a reality. It is a reality; it does denote superiority.

### **English can create arrogance**

Somewhat relatedly, Simi felt that that for the non-elites who acquire the language, English can perhaps imbue them with a sense of arrogance:

It's not good, but I want to be really honest. In that social setup, where a lot of people does not know English, somehow, I feel like that I'm arrogant, to be really honest, or maybe I feel like I'm much privileged, or maybe I'm behaving in elitist way.

**English Engenders the Wherewithal to Stand Up for One's Rights—Ability to say “No”**  
**The Identity Reconstruction of Subaltern English Learners**

Baumeister (1986) posits that “identity is a linguistic construction” (p. 15), and research in second-language acquisition has revealed that the learning process is a complex interplay of many variables in which social roles, relationships, power relations, and identities are constantly reconstituted (Lee, 2003). Candlin (1998) states that identity is a continuing mediated struggle between persons as authors of their own identities and as animators of identities that are authored for them. Norton shares this view when she asserts that “language constructs our sense of self, and that identity is multiple, changing and a site of struggle” (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

Non-elite English learners in Pakistan acquire fluency in the face of social pressures, visible and invisible, against the reconstitution of their identities; identities that are often predefined in the milieu of extreme class consciousness. Learners hoped that the return on their investment (Pierce, 1995) in English would be previously unattainable opportunities both tangible and intangible. They were investing in their release from the class-based silos that non-elites are mostly restricted to. Their struggles at acquiring fluency in English were an investment in their own individual and social identities. They invested time and effort in English language acquisition in the expectation of access to a wider range of symbolic and material resources which would increase their cultural and social capital (Pierce, 1995). This enabled them to emerge transformed, empowered—liberated.

**English is empowerment.** The vast number of findings around the theme of

empowerment were remarkable in how they highlighted the wide space that English provides non-elites to reconstruct their identity in a society that is stratified by elitist mores. The participants mentioned that English gives one the ability to say no, to become the voice of the underdog, to be able to advocate for the mother tongue, to be able to demand one's rights, the appearance of privilege and status, the ability to challenge conventional wisdom, the ability to act independently without anyone's permission, the ability to network, access to intellectual people, gets one recognition, one is listened to, one becomes more expressive, one is able to visit elite locales where English is the gate keeper, makes one open-minded and strong, people stand up for you, and that people feel you are empowered. The list seems almost endless and these responses reflect how learning English had empowered their sense of identity—*from feelings of learnedness to feelings of fearlessness*. English had given them praxis; “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (Freire, 1970, p. 36). Waji shared how English makes people notice you and how it establishes your social position:

I think it has affected me in that way and again in leadership qualities because unfortunately the masses are really impressed with someone's English language skills. So sometimes when you have to make them listen or make them notice then obviously you consciously or subconsciously use English. People have this perception about English speaking people that they might be coming from a different social class and sometimes that does affect your working relationships or your grouping in university or in school.

Kai said that she is treated differently at home due to her ability to speak English. In her own words her father had “upgraded” her. She added that as she gained higher levels of proficiency, she started feeling learned and distinguished:

You know Sir, I started feeling different from others because at every point, whatever the teacher has to do, teacher ask me, teacher says my name. They organized a party, and they asked me to come there. So I feel very good and privileged that I have been able to become learned and feel distinguished between my fellows because of English.

**“You will not feel empowered. People will not feel like you are empowered.”** Simi shared that she strategically code switches (Gumprez, 1977) to English “where I want to show that yes I have some status.” When asked if non-elites do not feel empowered unless they speak in English, her response was insightful: “You will not feel empowered. People will not feel like you are empowered.” She went further and shared that English gives non-elites the ability to defend themselves, and said, “I know that when I will go to them, they will take me seriously, and I can defend myself, because I can communicate.” She added that English gives non-elites the power and ability to say no. This was an unexpected finding and showed the extent to which English impacts the identities of underprivileged people and empowers them. She shared that even though it was beyond her budget, she admitted her daughter to an elite school with just one focus; to give her the ability to speak good English:

I am Ph.D. and I am just drawing 100,000 and, in this setup, it's nothing. My husband was thinking whether we would be able to afford it. I was saying, "I don't want my daughter to be just like me." He's like, "What do you mean?" I said, "I want her to learn to say no." I cannot say no; I didn't have that ability to say no.

**English becomes the voice of the underdog.** Ainee shared that the highest failure rate in the civil services “competitive examination is in two papers, one is English essay, and the other is the English composition and grammar and that again is because English is not taught in our public schools and colleges.” This effectively keeps non-elites out of the upper echelons of

the bureaucracy. He added how English gives one the power to become the voice of the underdog and challenge “accepted truths.”

It helps me to challenge conventional wisdom or untruths, or false beliefs in an environment where everybody is saying yes and yes, and maybe some of the people disagree but they can't express their disagreements, so I become their voice sort of.

**English provides access to elite locales.** Yas also narrated that English gives non-elites the ability and privilege to enter spaces only frequented by the elite. This epitomizes the extent of the empowerment that English can bestow on the identity of a non-elite person in a highly class consciousness society like Pakistan. He shared:

I start talking to those people where I think that I could not talk if I cannot speak English, so that was a change English created in me. You can go to the places where you cannot go if you cannot speak English. Because there are places the people think that when you go there, you only speak in English. The restaurants, there's some good and big restaurants. There are some places, so I start going there and I really enjoyed that.

**English makes one fearless.** Anu felt that English had imbued her identity with fearlessness: “It made me more strong. I'm not afraid of anything now.” She further shared how her abilities in English have empowered her to take independent decisions without anyone’s permission. She narrated that when she wanted to go abroad for a vacation, she simply went and told her parents, which would not have been the case for her sisters who cannot speak English. In fact, it would not be the case for most women in Pakistan. She narrated:

I don't need anyone's permission if I want to do something. Of course, I'll talk to my parents about it, but I don't need anyone's permission. Nobody can stop me from something. English made that happen? Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. Because I can see. I

can see the difference between me or my friends or my sisters even. Because my sisters can't speak English. When I traveled I did not actually take permission from my parents.

**English invites recognition from the highest in the land.** Anu also shared her experience of how a provincial Minister fawned on her when she spoke to him in English:

And he was soooo impressed that this girl from that area and at that time she couldn't speak English and today she is standing here as/in a coordinator position and he was so impressed and when he went on stage he actually took my name, and he remembered my name and he is a minister and I am working with Ms. R and he does not remember Ms. R's name and he remembered my name and he took my name on stage and all the media people came to me and said that Ok you are Anu and I said yes I am. And he said that I want all the girls to be like Anu, that look at her, that she learned English and today she is standing here and she can earn money and she can actually do many things in life now.

**English removes the fear of rejection.** Anu further shared that she had completely lost the fear of rejection since she had learned to speak English:

Absolutely. Absolutely, yeah. Because over here then you don't need to be afraid that oh, I'll get rejected. If I'm applying somewhere either for a job or for a university or college or whatever. But I wasn't afraid then, oh what if I'm rejected. I knew that, I know English. I will get this admission. Or I will get this job or whatever.

### **“Urdu-Medium”—the Least Desirable Social Identity in Pakistan**

#### **Social Identity and Social Identity Theory**

Norton (2013) posits that “work on identity offers the field of language learning a comprehensive theory that integrates the individual language learner and the larger social world” (p. 2). The concept of social identity is defined by Tajfel (1974) as “that part of an

individual's self-concept, which derives from his knowledge of his group membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership" (p. 69).

While Reicher, et al. (2010) define social identity as "something that links us to the social world" (p. 45), Breakwell (1988) suggests that "the distinction between personal and social identity is superfluous" (p. 192). The research by Tajfel (1974, 1982) revealed that the act of mere categorization into groups, irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality or language, can make people discriminate in favor of their own group.

Group formation is a fundamental characteristic of human society, and this is accompanied by the exclusion of others. The social exclusion debate does not focus on bounded groups, but stresses societal relations and processes through which people are being deprived, taking the debate beyond mere descriptions of people's situations. (De Haan, 2000, p. 29)

Social identity theory proposes that social structures and belief systems impact how people act or choose to act (Reicher et al. 2010). Individuals will seek to become members of new groups if these groups will add positively to aspects of their self-identity (Tajfel, 1974). Individual mobility is an identity management strategy (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012) within social identity theory that applies to subaltern English learners in Pakistan. This is an individual level strategy whereby people try to leave a devalued group and seek membership of a group of higher social standing by employing the necessary strategies; in this case learning English.

### **Social Identity in Pakistan**

There are more than 60 different languages and dialects in Pakistan (Rahman, 2011; Coleman 2010) and the participants of my study were at least bilingual, if not trilingual or quadrilingual, and all of them knew Urdu, which is the national language. Urdu is widely used and



understood but does not engender a sense of pride since it neither conveys power nor prestige. In fact, the term “Urdu-medium,” as in someone who has had an education in public schools where Urdu is the medium of instruction, has derogatory connotations.

**What it means to have the social identity “Urdu-medium.”** To be considered “Urdu-medium” is not a desirable social identity in Pakistan for to be such can mean effective excommunication from many meaningful aspects of society and enrichment opportunities. This term, spoken or imagined, can be considered degrading and depreciative, and can be used to put someone down; devalue them. To be called “Urdu-medium” is humiliating. It represents a state of mind of those who use it to deride others, and perhaps even of those on whom it is appended. It can affect people’s esteem and put them off-balance. It is a *decisive marker* of social identity and class stratification in Pakistan.

Tajfel’s (1974, 1982) research had revealed that the act of mere categorization into groups makes people discriminate in favor of their own group, referred to as the in-group, and against those who are in the out-group. The ultimate “in” group in Pakistan—a somewhat contextual interpretation of Tajfel’s definition—and perhaps in all South Asia, is the English-speaking elite (Haque, 1983; Rahman, 2016), which discriminates in its own favor irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality or mother tongue. Credentials for access to this in-group can be established through the ability to speak English fluently and possession of the knowledge and culture that English brings—the current lingua franca of the globe. Trueba (1993) calls language and culture “two interlocking symbols” (p. 23) implying that they are inseparable, and there can be no two opinions about the reality that English provides cultural capital via the doors of opportunity, both social and economic, that it opens. To be in the non-English speaking out-group is akin to being perpetually stuck on a one-way street that has only a dead end.

The basic principles of social identity theory focus on three psychological processes by which personal identity is different from social identity (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012). The process of social categorization of non-English speakers as “Urdu-mediums,” of social comparison where non-speakers are assigned a lower value in comparison to English speakers, and of social identification to those who can speak English as the elite, can have devastating consequences for the “Urdu-mediums.” Norton’s (2016) suggestion that “a learner’s imagined identity and hopes for the future will impact his or her investment in the language” (p. 477) thus has limited relevance for those whose desire to acquire English is impacted by resource constraint. The Urdu language also gets devalued “as speakers from a lower class (or socio-economic group) disvalue their own speech when asked by others to make judgements” (Kress, 1979, p. 53).

**Individual mobility.** The idea of individual mobility (Ellemers & Haslam, 2012) is particularly relevant with regards to non-elite English learners in Pakistan for whom social mobility is hugely, if not totally, dependent on their ability to acquire English. Hence, the aspirations of social mobility of the participants of this study were informed by an intricate entwining of English acquisition and identity formation. The social structures and belief systems influenced how people chose to act (Reicher et al. 2010) as they navigated their social world not just to be able to access the in-group of English speakers, who hold all positions of power and privilege, but also to overcome their own mental constraints.

**Not knowing English for non-elites—a crime.** The elites in Pakistan appear unaware of what a person goes through in a society like Pakistan where English is the gatekeeper and passport for entry to almost anything and everything that is meaningful. From the responses of the participants of my study, I was able to gain an understanding of the social reality one suffers by not knowing English, and how it can affect one’s personal and social identity.

Hubi felt that many talented people cannot get ahead in life simply because they cannot speak English and compared it to a crime:

English is really neglected in our society and it is impacting the life of a lot of people, a lot of genius talented people. They are lagging behind in their careers just because they can't speak better English. They are genius, they have intelligence, they have great minds, but they cannot excel just because they cannot speak English. And that's not their crime. But it has become their crime now.

**Question of existence.** Hubi further shared that the level of despair a non-elite can experience for not being able to speak English, which she experienced, can become a question of one's very existence. This could only but translate into a very compromised social identity. She said:

I became conscious when I entered my medical school that it is now the question of your existence. Yes. I realize when I enter medical school that now it has become the question of your existence. If you can speak English or you can't. Because it literally shattered someone's (my) confidence.

**Fear of being ridiculed.** From personal experience, I know that people, mainly non-elites, are ridiculed in Pakistan for speaking poor English and/or for their accent and/or for their pronunciation. This creates an insecure social identity. Simi shared that non-elites who “cannot speak that good English they are all the time thinking, if I will ask this question, how can I ask this? People will start laughing at me. A lot of people have this fear in Pakistan.” She shared an incident about her supervisor at a conference where people were laughing at the way he spoke:

Like for instance one of my supervisors in Pakistan, he was very good researcher and worked on migration and poverty and people really admired his work but when he

comes to like presentations and going to different seminars and conferences, I saw people laughing just because his pronunciation of the words was not good and he could not talk in fluent English in British or American accent. So he suffered from that in a way.

**Pressure to oblige.** Simi narrated that until she learned English she lacked self-belief and felt pressured to oblige others, especially those that could speak English. In other words, her weak English skills engendered an obsequious social identity. She shared:

Now I'm very much confident (after learning English). For instance, I got this paper for review and another thesis for review as an expert in this field. Now, when I'm writing about and I'm reading this, I am not obliging. I am not obliged to give good reviews. Before that, maybe I would be doing this.

**No English no recognition.** Kai felt that there is no encouragement towards Urdu as you cannot get recognition in Pakistan unless you speak English. She said, “especially in Pakistan, there is no encouragement, Sir what I am trying to say is that without English we cannot get any recognition anywhere.” In other words, without English one’s identity goes unrecognized in the wider social world and one cannot access the resources and opportunities for social development and networking that are available in that milieu.

**“You start underestimating yourself.”** Simi who works in a highly respected public institute of research shared how not knowing English made her start doubting herself which compromised the development of her social identity until she learnt English. She shared:

When I'm going to a meeting or stuff like that, people are not taking me seriously, because I was not communicating in English. Maybe they were thinking I'm unable to convey or express what I want to say. That was a lot of pressure. It was a lot of pressure because you start underestimating yourself. Yes, I feel a lot of change in myself (after

learning English). I don't see much pressure while moving in these circles in society, and when I am talking about society, mostly, I am talking about my social network, more towards professional network. I feel less pressure while navigating my professional base.

### **English: The Intersection Where Elites and Non-Elites Meet as Equals**

As in other postcolonial societies, the use of English in Pakistan “serves to indicate social exclusiveness and high socio-economic rank” (Zuengler, 1982, p. 112). Yet for non-elites, it is the same English that “allows them to meet traditional superiors on a more or less equal footing” (Moag, 1982, p. 276). English provides economic and cultural capital (Kothari, 2013) and is “required for the acquisition of social membership and cultural citizenship” (Nayar, 2011, p. 24). English opens the door, provides access and learners from marginalized backgrounds can negotiate more desirable identities. Norton (2000) refers to research on *imagined* communities (Anderson, 1991)—a desired community of the imagination that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options—and to her own efforts to develop the concept further (Norton, 2001; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton and Gao, 2008). My research suggests that one of those imagined communities is where non-elites can meet elites as equals. In other words, an “expansion of the range of possible social identities people may become” (Simon, 1979, p. 22). If relations of power deny access, English is the empowerment that provides it.

### **English is the Portal that Provides Access to the Elite World**

My study shows that English is the portal that allows non-elites to enter the elite world and the corridors of power and privilege. English may be the fastest and perhaps the only way through which subalterns can raise their position on the social ladder. Non-elites who speak English get treated as leaders. English not only gives non-elites the ability to compete with the elite, but it also provides access to people who matter in society. English is the “means by which

access to networks is regulated: If you do not speak the right language, you do not have access to forming relationships with certain people, or to participating in certain activities” (Heller, 1987, p. 181). The elite are also likely to be more generous and helpful when spoken to in English. Another finding was that English speakers, mainly elites, can get away with almost anything because of their ability to speak the language well. Cheng and Butler (1989) state, that “due to differences in social situations, an individual may switch from one language to the other, depending on the person to whom he or she is talking; code-switching reflects how participants see their relative social roles and topic of discussion” (p. 295). The elite often switch to English to talk down non-elites, who cannot speak the language, as a way of claiming an (unfair) advantage.

**Higher donations for non-elites who can speak English.** Huma who is the first person in her family to acquire the ability to speak English, runs an organization aimed at providing education to rural women. She shared how she gets more and larger amounts in donations when she asks for them in English from wealthy people who invariably speak English. This is perhaps because she is now interacting with them as an equal—she can demand not supplicate. She says:

When you connect with an elite class people, when you are a community leader and you speak in English, so they really (are) attracted and they support you in your work.

Because when you speak in English, when sharing your work with the (elite) people, they donate, they support you. English is so powerful, right? So powerful because, well, you know the reality, the most powerful people in this country, they talk in English.

**English provides access to powerful people.** Nad, who is the first person from his family to speak English and who attended a top business school in Pakistan (impossible without

English) works with the World Bank on educational projects. He shares how English provides audience with powerful people, people who can solve the problems non-elites like him face.

So English, it allows you to at least communicate your message and your idea to the people who matter. So, I think language especially in communication and all that, it helped me relate to the people who matter, and who could address the challenges and the problems that we typically face.

**English can be used as a cover for incompetence.** Simi worked very hard to learn English and is the first person in her family to earn a doctorate and that too from a foreign university. She was resentful how her work was never recognized until she learned to speak the language, and how she was used by those that could. She laments that the elite get away with incompetence and no one questions them because of their ability to speak English fluently. It also seems to give English speakers in Pakistan the prerogative to be rude and loud. She says:

When you are sitting in a meeting and stuff, and people are too outspoken, very blunt. And nobody will question that, even if they're presenting something and if it's wrong. You will come across a lot of people who do not know anything, but nobody questions them. You know why people don't question them? (Because) they cannot speak that good English. Even if you move into this bureaucratic structure, you will see the same. I have seen a lot of mediocre officials but their English is good, and they are getting promotions.

### **Has English become the Advocate of Urdu?**

#### **The Relationship of English and Mother Tongue in Pakistan**

Kachru's (1992) definition of *World Englishes*—a term he coined—shows that English has the capacity to contextualize itself to the environment it permeates. Hindmarsh (1978) was on point when he stated, “the world has opted for English and the world knows what it wants” (p.

42). Whatever connotations that English has or has had as the language of colonialism, these have been “overshadowed by what it can do for its users” (Kachru, 1986. p. 8) especially in present day reality. “Regardless of what may have happened to the British Empire, the sun never sets on the English language” (Fishman, 1982, p. 18).

The question of mother tongue and its relationship to English learning and acquisition was an important part of my research. As the findings indicate, people who cannot speak English are not considered educated in Pakistan, are unable to get respect in society, and have limited opportunities. The findings under this theme were mixed and interesting and ranged from the ability to communicate ideas better in the mother tongue to the disregard of Urdu. An unusual finding was that most participants felt that their relationship with their mother tongue had improved as a result of their acquisition of English and that they respected it more now. Two participants mentioned how being weak in Urdu has become a status symbol. One participant called Urdu an integral part of their identity and a source of credibility, while another spoke about how mother tongue gives dignity.

Also mentioned was that Urdu does not make one feel empowered and that in professional environments, there is an unwritten understanding that Urdu is not kosher; at least not encouraged. Another lamented that society is destroying its roots by disparaging Urdu. An interesting finding in this section was that scolding someone in mother tongue is more hurtful than doing it in English. Similarly, many words in Urdu have more negative connotations than when the same words are spoken in English. It was also mentioned that Urdu implies backwardness and conservatism. A most unique finding was that English is a tool that can be used to advocate for Urdu.



## **Texting in Romanized Urdu**

A critical and more recent aspect of the intricate relationship between English and Urdu is the ever-increasing usage of Romanized Urdu in Pakistan for the purposes of texting and online messaging (Bilal et al., 2017, 2019). Texting in Romanized Urdu is carried out mainly by non-elites due to their lack of ability in English. Bilal et al. (2017) posit that popularity of Romanized Urdu “among the masses to communicate on digital media such as SMS, WhatsApp, and Facebook, etcetera” evolved due to “lack of comfort in English and unavailability of easy to use Urdu keyboards in its Arabic script” (p. 1). This is similar to the use of Romanized Arabic in United Arab Emirates; what is referred to as Arabizi, since “using Latin script for writing Arabic words online is generally deemed easier than using Arabic script” (Hopkyns et al. 2018, p. 166).

**Cannot speak English, cannot write Urdu—“alingualism.”** The move towards the use of Romanized Urdu is a conundrum as there are now legions of young people who cannot write Urdu in Arabic script but cannot speak English either. They are effectively compromised on both fronts as they have lost writing proficiency in the language they can speak, but do not possess speaking ability in the language whose alphabet they understand and can write with. In a sense they have become *alingual* (Kamwangamalu, 1989, p. 326), or *semilingual* (Ali, 2018, p. 11); bereft of ability in either language.

## **Code-Switching by Elites**

Purposeful and appropriate code-switching can be viewed as an expression of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), which is the “ability to say the right thing to the right person at the right place and time” (Cheng & Butler, 1989, p. 296). Code-switching is the mixing of words, phrases and clauses from two distinct languages across sentence boundaries within the same speech event—intersentential switching; code-mixing is the mixing of words,

phrases and clauses from two distinct language within the boundary of the same sentence— intrasentential switching (Bokamba, 1982, p. 278). Cheng and Butler (1989) state that “code-switching reflects how the participants see their relative social roles” (p. 295), and Kamwangamalu (1989) suggests that “code-mixing is a characteristic feature of the speech of the elite group” (p. 322). The elites in Pakistan indulge in some level of code-switching and code-mixing since they are the only ones who have command over English as well as at least one vernacular. Non-elites do not have this advantage and it can be a source of humiliation and compromises their dignity and self-respect. The elites can effectively cut them off, and often do, by switching purely to English in their presence.

**Marked and unmarked choices in code-switching.** Dell Scotton’s (1983) markedness model suggests that language, or code, choice is always indexical of the social relationship between speaker and addressee and that speakers negotiate relationships in their verbal exchanges. Code choices within expectation or community norms are considered unmarked, while those that outside the expected norm would be considered marked and aimed at renegotiating the “balance of rights and obligations” (Myers-Scotton, 1989, p. 334). In Pakistan, the phenomenon of elites in certain situations addressing non-elites in English knowing fully well that they cannot speak or understand it has its roots in the intense class consciousness that permeates Pakistani society and aims at humiliation. When non-elites acquire English and can respond “in kind,” they are essentially making a marked choice that aims at reasserting their rights and reclaiming their dignity. When a subaltern responds in English, it changes the nature of the exchange and it becomes one between equals marked by a degree of mutual respect. Only through the use of English can a non-elite person renegotiate his or her “balance of rights and obligations” (Myers-Scotton, 1989, p. 334).

## **Increased Respect and Improved Relationship with Urdu**

Many participants felt that their relationship with Urdu had strengthened since their acquisition of English. Huma eloquently stated: “I always love with my basic languages because when I speak Urdu, I speak from heart. When I speak English, I speak English from my mouth.” For Kai, her relationship to Urdu was a question of self-respect: “No, of course not sir. Now I'm 21 years old, so how can I do that? If I disrespect Urdu, so how would get I respect sir?”

### **English creates the possibility of travel and travel creates an appreciation for Urdu.**

Anu's travels, made possible due to her command of English, made her realize the importance and respect given to mother tongues in other countries. She shared:

Because now I have traveled some places and over there I have seen their relation with their mother tongue is very strong. They're not like some Pakistanis, who're speaking English so they have lost their relationship with their mother tongue. But yes, I would want to make it more stronger maybe. I don't want to lose it at any way. You respect it more? Of course, I do. Because I am... my mother tongue. I have seen people living in a better country. So they're giving more respect to their mother tongue then we should too.

Yas and Shah shared Anu's feelings on the issue, which were instructive and laid bare the direct nature of the relationship that exists between higher levels of English proficiency and higher levels of respect and an improved relationship with the mother tongue. Shah said “now my exposure is enhanced, and I saw that people love their mother language. Like Chinese, they don't want to learn English, they teach their children in Chinese. Yas summarized:

Before I started learning English I was in the mindset that every country is speaking English, learning English, giving so much importance to English. But after learning English I have realized that there are countries that are giving so much importance to

their mother tongue although that's a fact that English is a lingua franca and is being spoken all round the world but still countries like Germany, France, Japan, China they give a lot of respect to their own languages to their mother tongues.

**English provides the opportunity to compare literatures.** Hubi was very clear about her feelings. She is familiar with Urdu literature and has extensively read in it. She said:

I respect it even more. Because our Urdu language is so deep, so beautiful, it has a lot of emotions. I had to read English novel just to improve my English. But then I realized, Urdu novel had more emotions, it was more beautifully written, and for example there is a one word, and it has a lot of synonyms in Urdu. I love the Urdu sentence making and I love Urdu more. It's so deep. How has your knowledge of English impacted your relationship with your mother tongue? It has become stronger, I would say.

**English inspired a love for Punjabi.** For Nad, his acquisition of English has engendered in him the desire to read the literature of his mother tongue which is Punjabi. He shared:

I think learning more and more English language has encouraged me to learn my native language more as well. I mean my bond with my native language has got strengthened more and over time I've realized that I've got more interested in my own mother language which is Punjabi. I mean, figuring out what work in Punjabi is being translated in other languages, especially English. What work from English is being potentially translated to Punjabi? How the Punjabis of Indian Punjab are working to improve the language and for the progress of Punjabi language at large. Why and how BBC launch its Punjabi service. How Mohammed Hanif, who writes well in English and does a very good video blog in Punjabi for BBC. I think my relation and my bond with my native language has got very strong, and English has perhaps played an important role in that. So there is this direct

relationship. More English, more respect kind of. That's what I'm hearing? Yes, absolutely. That's why I said initially that this actually strengthened my bond with my native language and with other languages as well. And respect for those languages.

Shah shared Nad's feelings about Punjabi. His work in the language translation business has helped him develop a desire to work towards improving his mother tongue. He said:

Sikh people of India they love their language, they make their movies in Punjabi, they teach their children in Punjabi. And if you see some Punjabi movie you will see how good vocabulary, how well instructed Punjabi is there, and if you see our Punjabi ...that is damaged. So, they love their language, they preserve that. They respect their languages, so I have more respect for my mother tongue and my local language, so we have to preserve that. So, that is what English impacted and given me. It taught me the importance of language, that there is an importance of language, it is a tool, what is the connection between language and history. So having English I have learned these things.

### **English has become the Advocate for Urdu**

This was one of the most significant and unexpected findings of my study. It evinces the fact that even the battle for the rights of Urdu has to be fought with English. It is almost as if only those who can speak English can provide greater respectability to Urdu in Pakistan now.

Yas shared his experiences which were eye-opening.

So, you know obviously in a country like Pakistan if you cannot speak English and you just praise Urdu, so people will say you are praising Urdu because you cannot speak English you know, they just start just finding your mistakes. But when you know the language English and then you are just praising and advocating the Urdu language then it just creates some impact and it gives some power to your words.

**Ideas can be better communicated in mother tongue.** Ainee, Simi and Waji spoke on the importance of communication in the mother tongue. Simi was clear on the topic and said, “I still feel that my ideas would be much more clear when I am speaking in Urdu. I can present my knowledge and communicate better in that.” Ainee narrated how he switches to Urdu during his lectures at the University even though, officially, he is supposed to stick to English. He said:

In fact, to tell you the truth, in our university where I am teaching now, the language of instruction is English. But I teach all my subjects in Urdu, which is against the rules, and against the policy. But the children love it, and they understand better. And you're being fair to those whose English is not very strong? Absolutely, I think if I deliver my lectures in English, although I don't deliver lectures, but if we conduct the classes, the classroom learning in English, they won't understand. Many of them will have a problem. So they won't understand. The concepts are complex, and language is not their own language.

Like Ainee, Waji also felt that lectures delivered in Urdu are so much more effective given the fact that most students are not English speakers:

I had some amazing teachers who taught me courses like management and stuff and although they were well versed but they opted to speak in Urdu so their message could be far reached because even in a class, you have many people and most of them understand Urdu so definitely they choose that medium and I see it impacts. It matters.

Huma shared how she speaks from the heart in Urdu and is able to connect better with her audience. She said:

Even my Urdu is thank God, my Urdu is fabulous, because in Urdu, I speak from heart. So inshallah one day, I try my best same as in English when I speak to people, listen to

the heart. Because when I share my story in Urdu, every time I have so many comments from the people “we have goose bumps.” When I speak in Urdu, it's from my heart. But English, I finding vocabularies.

**Respect for mother tongue is a sign of dignity.** As shared earlier, Yas felt that you cannot be a dignified person if you do not give respect to your mother tongue. He shared:

So, after learning English I really realized that you know from the bottom from my heart that learning different languages is obviously very good, it's a good skill to have, but giving importance to your mother tongue it is you know like that, it is for the dignified people, it is the dignity you have inside yourself, so being dignified, to get dignity you need to give importance to your mother tongue.

Anu was even more blunt when she shared her feelings about the sad inconsequentiality And unimportance of Urdu in Pakistani society. She felt that as she learned English and noticed how differently people were behaving towards her, it made her sometimes feel negatively toward Urdu—feelings she was not comfortable with. These negative feelings went away once she traveled to Europe and saw how much mother tongues were respected across the continent. She shared:

I didn't want to say it but, yeah, sometimes, yes, because that's what people make me think like that. Because they don't listen when I talk in Urdu, but they actually leave their chair when I talk to them in English. So I feel there is no respect you know, what if, you know I cannot hold my degree in my hand that see see see I am so educated you know, I cannot speak in English but I am such an educated person. But they don't listen to you. And when you start actually start speaking with them in English they are like madam madam madam come come come we will listen to you. So that is the reason.

## The Disregard of Urdu

Notwithstanding the fact that Urdu has had its own hegemonic role vis-a-vis other vernaculars in Pakistani society and “vociferous language movements have resisted the Urdu-centric cultural practices throughout Pakistan’s history” (Durrani, 2012, p. 37), there is a certain disregard and disdain towards it. “We are more concerned about the social, cultural, economic and intellectual weight that a statement made in English carries and how the same statement made in a ‘bhasha’, even if made more intelligibly, fails to make much headway” (Anand, 1999, p. 2056).

Simi said “I really believe that Urdu is deteriorating. We don't know how to write we don't know how to say things in Urdu.” Kai talked about how there was no encouragement and hence no interest in learning and improving the Urdu language. Her concern was that people now had limited vocabulary and mixed-up tenses, which is leading to a certain decline in the quality of the language. She admitted that even she was much more interested in learning English than Urdu. She shared:

I think we don't even know abcd of Urdu. Just we don't speak proper Urdu. For me, it is a gulabi (street) Urdu. We can say, like no tenses, we have not vocabulary, the basic vocabulary of Urdu. Because we have no exposure to learn Urdu. We have just ... especially in Pakistan, could be in India, but especially in Pakistan, there is [pee-chay say] just you have to speak [pee-chay say hota hai na]...encouragement. No encouragement sir. What I am trying to say is that without English we cannot get any recognition anywhere. So for me, my base is Urdu, so I can't disrespect Urdu. Yes, I can say this, I have more interest to learn English, rather than Urdu.

**Destroying the roots of society.** Simi lamented that due to the disrespect shown to Urdu,



to the point of it being considered fashionable, Pakistani society was damaging its foundations. She shared how Urdu is discouraged in covert ways. She said:

Somehow this is our asset. This is what we are. You cannot run away from your reality, from your roots. But still we are trying to cut our people, but we are not thinking about how will we survive without roots. Like it's not written, it's not said, but in a way, in signs and in gestures, they are telling you that Urdu is not accepted.

**Bad Urdu has become a status symbol.** This was an unexpected finding and may be indicative of a certain mindset with regards to Urdu. Hubi and Simi both lamented that not knowing or being weak in Urdu has become a status symbol. Hubi said, “So, they will be like “Urdu? I don't know how to speak in Urdu. I don't know how to speak Urdu.” They think that Urdu has a low standard.” Simi shared, “people are really proud when they say that "Oh, our kids are really weak in Urdu." They don't know how to write it or they don't know how to speak. This is another status symbol if your kid doesn't know how to write and read Urdu.” Hubi who is also the first person from her family to acquire fluency in English and study Medicine (not possible without English) was heartbroken when she discovered that elite students formed friendships on the basis of the culture that surrounds elite lifestyle. She wept while sharing her traumatic experience.

My medical college, when it was started, it changed my life as a whole. I wouldn't say that it was a good experience. It was initially a very bad experience. Because, from every background people were coming and from very elite backgrounds. They were very fluent in speaking English and people make friends on that basis. And that was so disappointing for me. The journey was not easy for me; it was so difficult. When we are sitting in a group, in university, and people are discussing about English dramas and films and I

hadn't watched a single episode of Games of Thrones and people used to judge. Like, really? Have you ever been into English season? I was like, no. And in that gathering you feel like a fish out of water because you have no clue what to say.

**Urdu literature as an anecdote to elitism.** Hubi later discovered that one of the ways to confront the attacks on her esteem by elite students was through her strong knowledge of Urdu literature. She laughed when she added the following to her narrative:

Then I get the answer of that (her dilemma). Okay, if somebody asked me, “Have you watched that English serial or drama or movie?” I will add that, “Have you studied about that book by Bano Qudsia, have you studied Ashfaq Ahmed have you studied these Urdu writers?” So, they will be like “Urdu? I don't know how to speak in Urdu.” They think that Urdu has a low standard. So, this happens and I think I'm not going to be affected anymore in my life.

**If you can't speak English, you hide.** As a teacher of English to underprivileged children I am witness that children who are the weakest in English often are the quietest and it is almost as if they hide through their reticence. This could be termed a fearful identity. Yas validated my impression when he shared, “Yeah, I was more confident. And the confident people obviously, you know, they behave differently. And the people who are unconfident they behave differently. They are shy, they hide themselves.”

**A source of depression.** Not being able to speak English can be a source of a depressed Identity. According to Shah:

So I wasn't that much shy or scared that I could not speak, but my friends who were from rural areas of Pakistan, they were very scared that our fellow guys are speaking very well

English and giving a good presentation and getting good marks. They cannot speak even one line, so they were shy, they were depressed. I wasn't that much shy or depressed.

**Urdu does not make you feel empowered.** Waji shared that she is forced to use English to assimilate and admitted that using Urdu does not make her feel empowered. She said:

Sometimes I do subconsciously or even consciously use English to blend in in certain events or in certain places in certain settings but unfortunately, as much as I love Urdu, I cannot say that speaking Urdu makes me more empowered or something. I haven't reached that mental stage yet.

**Urdu can be a cause of embarrassment.** Rose also mentioned how her children are embarrassed if she speaks to them in Urdu at their elite school:

Like if I'm going to pick my child from school, if I'll speak Urdu with him, he used to say to me mamma, please speak English whenever you come to my school. My son is in class two and is already speaking English. They do not disrespect Urdu, but they feel English is very important rather than Urdu. They are aware of that.

### **English May or May not Create Leadership but English Definitely Enhances Leadership**

#### **English and Leadership**

The word leader invariably conjures up notions of power, and history shows us that leadership and power have at times gone hand-in-hand and at times one has been bereft of the other. Burns (1978) sums it up succinctly when he says that "all leaders are actual and potential power holders but not all power holders are leaders" (p. 18), and differentiates between acts of power and acts of leadership. Kachru (1986), compared English to the "Aladdin's lamp, which permits one to open, as it were, the linguistic gates of international business, technology, science, and travel. In short, English provides linguistic power" (p. 1). Emergent leaders possess no

formal authority, yet exert noteworthy influence (Schneider & Goktepe, 1983). The emergence of leadership in successful non-elite English learners in Pakistan is a unique element of this study.

My search of numerous books, studies and dissertations on second language acquisition did not reveal any specific linkage or attempt to study the construct of leadership in relationship to the learning of English whether in the inner, outer, or expanding circles of English speakers and users (Kachru, 1992). The inner circle comprises native English-speaking countries such as Britain and America, the outer circle covers former British colonies such as Pakistan and India where English is *de rigueur*, and the expanding circle includes emerging economies where English is taught as a foreign language and is widely used such as China and Korea (Kachru, 1992).

In her study of English learners in Malaysia, Lee (2003) mentioned how many of her participants felt that English had given them a sense of empowerment. The subjects of Yoshimoto's (2008) study of female Japanese learners of English also felt that English had empowered them. The theme of empowerment through the learning of English is mentioned in other studies as well. However, in no study I came across was the idea that English leads to leadership or helps develop leadership was explored or specifically mentioned. In my study, participants drew direct links between their acquisition of English and the emergence of leadership in their thinking and behaviors.

### **Acquisition of English is a Significant Element of Leadership Development in Pakistan**

Palus and Drath (1995) distinguished between training programs that impart new skills, and development programs that stretch the ways people makes sense of their being (Table 6). Myatt (2012) calls leadership training a transactional exercise while he terms leadership

development a transformational one (Burns, 1978). He blames training as the foremost reason why leadership development fails and presents 20 points to highlight the differences between the two (the words underneath the captions in italics are mine):

Table 6  
*Difference between leadership training and leadership development (adapted from Myatt, 2012)*

	<b>Training</b>	<b>Development</b>
1	Blends to a norm	Occurs beyond the norm
2	Focuses on technique/content/curriculum	Focuses on people
3	Tests patience	Tests courage
4	Focuses on the present	Focuses on the future
5	Adheres to standards	Focuses on maximizing potential
6	Is transactional	Is transformational
7	Focuses on maintenance	Focuses on growth
8	Focuses on the role	Focuses on the person
9	Indoctrinates	Educates
10	Maintains status quo	Catalyzes change
11	Stifles culture	Enriches culture
12	Encourages compliance	Emphasizes performance
13	Focuses on efficiency	Focuses on effectiveness
14	Focuses on problems	Focuses on solutions
15	Focuses on reporting lines	Expands influence
16	Places people in a box	Frees them from the box
17	Is mechanical	Is intellectual
18	Focuses on the knowns	Explores the unknowns
19	Places people in a comfort zone	Moves people beyond their comfort zones
20	Is finite	Is infinite

Education, as being provided in public schools in Pakistan, which the vast majority of children attend, and which hardly imparts any English communication skills, is akin to “training” as elucidated in Table 6. On the other hand, the impact that the learning of English has on Pakistani non-elites as they acquire the language, may be compared to leadership development,

as outlined above on each of the 20 points raised. Hence, the learning of English may be considered the most significant element of leadership development in Pakistan, which this study provides evidence for and which the narratives of the participants evince.

**Leadership traits.** Many of the leadership traits and qualities as identified by Bird (1940), Stogdill (1948), and Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) were present in the participants of my study. Bird's (1940) summary of leadership traits include accuracy in work, knowledge of human nature and moral habits. Stogdill (1948) cited decisiveness in judgment, *speech fluency*, interpersonal skills, and administrative abilities as stable leader qualities. Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) identified six enduring qualities that leaders are known to possess, and which distinguish them from non-leaders. These include:

7. Drive (includes achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity and initiative)
8. Leadership motivation (the desire to lead but not to seek power as an end in itself)
9. Honesty and integrity
10. Self-confidence (which is associated with emotional stability)
11. Knowledge.
12. Cognitive ability

**Impact of cognition on leadership.** Scholars who assume that leadership resides in leaders try to identify traits that inspire followers, whereas those who assume that it emanates from social systems try to identify conditions that are conducive to leadership emergence (Lord & Emrich, 2000). Research indicates that cognition makes a big difference in leader emergence and performance (Mumford, Campion, & Morgeson, 2007). In the Pakistani milieu, leadership consciousness may emerge in non-elites from any environment or social system that enables English learning and acquisition.

Petrie (2011) called for enhanced focus on innovation in the development methods of leadership, which supports my research around the idea of English, and using English, as a path to leadership. Reams (2016) informs us that there has been a growing movement away from behavior training and peripheral capabilities towards the development of inner competencies and personal growth of leaders, which is similar to what Myatt (2012) suggests. The findings of my study show that mastery of the English language by non-elites develops core inner competencies and confidence in them and adds to their growth as leaders.

Mumford et al. (2015) suggest that “there is ample reason to suspect that cognition would be critical to understanding the nature and significance of both leader emergence and leader performance” (p. 301) and point out that cognition is a person’s capacity to work with information and knowledge. One such capacity is general intelligence, which has received the most attention in studies of leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008). Intelligence is strongly related to leadership emergence and performance (Mumford et al., 2007) and is also positively related to movement into leadership (Daly et al., 2015). Mumford et al. (2015) suggest that the impact of intelligence on achievement of leadership positions depends in part on education. Most of the participants of my study had worked hard over their academic trajectories and their academic successes and their successful acquisition of English, interrelatedly, led to the development of leadership attitude and the achievement of leadership positions and roles.

McKenna et al. (2009) posit that wisdom with regards to leadership involves the use of logic, a desire for humane solutions, openness to subjectivity and motivation toward social justice. For the subjects of my study, the doors of knowledge that English flung open, led to a more logical and open-minded approach in their thought processes, as well as a higher level of social consciousness and realism. Mumford et al.’s (2015) position that the impact of cognitive

capacities on a leader's ability to profit from educational or developmental opportunities, suggests that developmental interventions focused on providing requisite knowledge and skills might prove especially valuable for further developing leadership potential. In the case of Pakistani non-elites, English acquisition was a significant developmental step, *likely the most important one*, in realizing leadership potential.

### **English Enhances Leadership**

One of the main findings of my research is: English may or may not create leadership but English definitely enhances leadership. Most participants felt that they had leadership qualities but that their leadership had been greatly enabled and enhanced by English. Half the participants felt that the ability to speak English provides opportunities for leadership enactment with some saying that it bestows leadership. Most of them also felt that leadership is not possible in an elitist society like Pakistan, with its long Anglo-colonial history and deep class stratification, without English. Some mentioned English as a component of leadership development, while a few mentioned the importance of English for international leadership. Two interviewees thought that without English, you may only lead illiterates in Pakistan.

**Leadership is not possible without English.** Ainee, Anu, Hubi, Huma, Kai, Shah, Simi and Yas all felt leadership is not possible without English in Pakistan. When I asked Rose about any possible link between the two, she was emphatic in saying, “Of course it’s linked, it’s linked, it’s linked.” Ainee said:

In the early part of my working life, English was only used in the files, in the noting and drafting. It wasn't used in public dealing, because most of the public is illiterate. But later in life, I joined the National School of Public Policy which is the premier institution for the training of public servants. And there, I realized that English mattered because the



medium of instruction was English. All the guest speakers who used to come there were required to deliver their lecture in English.

When asked if it is possible to create leadership in Pakistan without English, Anu responded: “If you talk about Pakistan, then English is necessary. It's necessary here. You have to teach them English. Yes. To make them into leaders. Yes, you have to.”

**You are nothing without English.** When I asked Kai if she could be the leader she is today without knowing English, she said she “*could be nothing without English.*”

Sir, unfortunately, I would not be a leader without English. Sir unfortunately, because the environment has built the thing in our mind that a person without English, whoever, a leader or another person, boss, whoever, could be nothing without English. Could be nothing without English. Yes sir. If we are talking about Pakistan, then ... And you are about to be a leader, so you have to know about English.

**You are ridiculed without English.** Yas was very clear in his response to the question. He gave the interesting example of the Pakistan cricket team and their trials with trying to speak English well in order to get respect and credibility; essential elements of leadership. He narrated:

For a leader it's really necessary to speak English in Pakistan. You cannot be a leader without English? No. Not at all. No way. I will give you a simple example. In the Pakistani cricket team, people are very talented in cricket but if they cannot speak English the others, the audience, they are ridiculing them because they cannot speak English. They have to go to learn English. They learn English, then they come to there, then they make their speeches and then they have that respect, which they deserve.

Although their talent is to play. Their talent is not to speak in English. But still people are not giving them that respect, which they deserve.

## **English Provides Opportunities for Leadership Enactment**

Anu, Kai, Rose, Shah, Waji and Yas shared how knowing English provides possibilities and opportunities for leadership enactment for non-elites.

**Opportunity to be close to the boss.** Anu narrated how her ability to speak English well enabled her to be the liaison between her co-workers and her boss:

I was doing a job in an IT company, and I was HR manager there ok. I was one of the youngest persons there, and some of them were actually doing a lot of other things you know, designing and other stuff, but the fact is that I could speak in English and they don't. So when they want to take or ask something from the boss or you know request something from the boss, they always tell me that OK Anu they (the boss) speak in English and you speak in English so can you go and pass our message to him. I said ok I can do that. That's how I became a leader. *I become a leader everywhere wherever I go.*

**Opportunity to be the host at events.** Kai and Shah both had similar experiences when they were asked to act as hosts at school events. Shamim and Rashid (2019) in their study of Pakistani schools also found that students who could speak English received preferential treatment and opportunities. Kai recalled:

They pushed me to get into the activities like speeches, like I get to host the function in English. They knew there is something in me that I could put a lot of effort to speak in English. That was a point where my self-confidence started building. My teacher said, "Yes Kai, you can do it." So at that time, teachers started asking me that Kai you are a good speaker. So that was the thing that if they can believe in me, so why don't me. I can do it. So I started doing that. I just, you know sir. I started feeling different from others. Shah's experience was similar to Kai's. He also shared how the teachers respected him

due to his English ability:

I got a good review in my school that he's a good speaker, he can speak English. So I used to do hosting in all the events of the school, in the college as well, "Ask Shah, he will do the hosting." Yeah, because of English as hostings were in English, like prize distributions, like any activity, their hosting was in English. I established my skill in my university as well. After that, I took part in almost every event. I used to do hosting. Yeah, so I have positive impacts, I had respect, my teacher used to give me that respect that he can speak good English, we can give him any ceremony or any conference or any presentation. So that was a positive impact on my life, I was gaining confidence.

**Opportunity to attain high level positions.** Rose who works at a very senior level in the banking bureaucracy shared that there was no possibility of her being in the leadership role that she is in without English. She said:

Panels assess on the basis of your communication instead of your degrees, instead of other things. Of course, in business English. The interview is the first stage to get position in any organization. I would not be able to get to that position of executive director if the interview was not cleared. Board conducted interview and the language was English.

**Opportunity to be the team leader.** Waji who completed her degree from one of the best engineering colleges in Pakistan, narrated the following:

I'm working in a research group. My qualification wise, I'm the most junior but I have been doing research for the last year and a half. I am kind of a leader there. Not a leader but kind of. So again, I think I'm very good at what I'm doing because my main job includes literature reviews so obviously if my English is good, only then I can read all

those numerous articles and papers and stuff and studies. So yeah. It has affected me.

Obviously again, as I said earlier, I'm where I am because of my English language skills.

**Opportunity to meet important and powerful people.** Yas who works at a large public school for girls, and perhaps the only teacher there who is perfectly fluent in English, said the following:

In my school, I can speak English, so whenever there is a ceremony, whenever there is an event, I was the one who was just selected for the hosting because I can speak English.

I'm the one who can receive people. So they just send me to receive people. For example, ministers are coming and all these people are coming, so I go there. So that's really impressed people. Then people make you leader. Then people come to you. Then people ask you questions. So I think that using English is very much important.

**Opportunity to be in positions and at events above your qualifications.** Yas shared how he got a higher level position because of his English skills. He said, "People have positive thinking for me, they considered me as educated and although I was appointed as a primary teacher but I was put up to the secondary classes. So that was very appreciating (encouraging) for me." Yas also narrated how he was part of a powerful panel on education due to the work he did translating a teacher's guidebook from English to Urdu, work that he could never have done without his strong language skills. He shared his experience which honed his leadership further:

When we had done that Teacher's innovation book and you know I was sitting there in that panel and I was representing the government teachers. So I think you know it was a really amazing experience for me. And I think it's all because of the English language. If I did not have the language, I would not be there, it's so simple.

## **English Enables Leadership**

Anu, Kai, Shah and Yas all felt that their leadership abilities had been greatly enabled by their acquisition of English.

**English enables international travel.** For Anu, who is now studying at a University in Europe, losing the fear of rejection greatly enhanced her leadership, as shared earlier. She said that English allows her to travel the world without worrying about communication barriers. She had a unique take on how she now feels equal to anyone anywhere. She said:

Like I said earlier, that I was all alone standing there, I wasn't afraid and I said I can't speak your language. And so are you! You can't speak English. So, yeah that English enhanced my leadership and... because over here then you don't need to be afraid that oh, I'll get rejected. If I'm applying somewhere either for a job or for a course, for university or college or whatever. But I wasn't afraid then, oh what if I'm rejected. I knew that, I know English. I will get this admission. Or I will get this job or whatever. I can get anywhere. So yeah, it enhanced as you say... It enhanced your leadership? Yeah.

**English, “The cherry on the cake” of leadership.** Kai summarized that she had leadership ability and also that leadership does not come from English. She, however, used a beautiful metaphor and called English, “The cherry on the cake” of leadership. She shared:

Sir for me, leadership doesn't come from English. Leader has his own qualities. I just told you that he is a kind of person understands everything, has ability to manage everything, to know the difference between right and wrong, to be able to tell the difference whoever, elder or younger. He is able to tell the difference between right and wrong to everyone. So for me the leadership doesn't come from English but yes it is cherry on the cake. So, it could be like that. Basically I'm just trying to say that leadership is enhanced by English.

**English enables leadership to be thrust upon you.** Yas was very clear and definitive on the topic and gave English all the credit for the emergence, development, and enhancement of his leadership ability. He shared his experience:

Because my language skills were good, so people just go around you and they come to you for many things and have so many works with you. I will give you the example of the people at my school, they often come to me and ask me to write applications and letters to the different government departments, obviously they ask me write reports, ask me to write speeches for the students and so many things. So that's how I am just leading them because they know I am the one whose English-speaking skills and my writing skills are better than others.

**English engenders respect; respect enables leadership.** When I asked Yas if English had enabled his leadership, turned him into a leader, he responded:

So because of my better English speaking and writing skills, my mates, my fellow English teachers, the management, the people, the students, they come to me, they ask for my help and that's how my leadership qualities are enhanced, they are increased and I am enjoying it. Actually I think that when, in a country like Pakistan, when you are speaking English, then the respect you receive, that makes you leader. Yeah. Absolutely.

### **English as a Component of Leadership Development in Pakistan**

Simi and Yas both indicated that they would place English right at the top of any leadership development program while Waji noted she would place it high but not at the top.

Simi shared:

At the top. I would definitely put English on the top. Because that's what I suffer. Like internally, I feel like language should not be a barrier in leadership. But it is there, and to

become an effective leader and to be heard, because you know in Pakistan it's not that you are accepted among masses. It's about that whether those top people they accept you or not. It's what they think of you.

Yas was again very clear on this topic as well and was unhesitating and spontaneous in his response.

Obviously, on the top. I think this question is quite easy because all the higher studies are in English and here, as I told you previously, people consider you educated if you speak English. So if I'm designing any such kind of program, English would be on the top.

Waji was more measured and thoughtful in her response and placed English in her top five but not at the top.

Again, it depends obviously because the course is leadership. I need to teach him other things as well, which should be of more priority like how to deal with people, how to be a good leader or how strategic or management and stuff like that because these are important leadership qualities. Therefore, I think proficiency in English is rather not that important in comparison to all those qualities. That's why I'll not give it the top of my priority. Would it be in the top five? Yes, it would be.

**English as a trait of leadership.** Shah also termed English a trait of leadership in Pakistan and that English had given him the confidence to be able to lead any team whether local or foreign. He shared his feeling about this in detail:

Basic traits which are required for leadership which includes English which include good communication, which includes how you carry yourself, how you carry your work, that I know, I have English. If you give me a team of 10 Americans, I can even convey my message to them, I can even lead them, *because I have a language skill, which is English.*

## **English as a Component of International Leadership**

In recent years the whole paradigm of English learning has shifted due to the effects of globalization and increased linguistic and sociocultural diversity. Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009) posit that those working in the area of second language acquisition have begun to examine what the changed global reality means in terms of motivation to learn English for people aspiring to acquire global identity. In a changed global reality, the concept of integrative orientation may become increasingly redundant when there is “no specific target reference group of speakers” (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009, p. 2). Second language motivation is thus being re-conceptualized in the context of contemporary notions of self and identity in the new millennium and the unassailable preeminence of English.

The findings of my study show that something beyond integrative motivations to learn English is more relevant within the domestic context of many postcolonial societies and builds on Pierce’s (1995) concept of investment. For such motivations I have proposed the terminology “deliverance” and/or “liberative” motivation. Although my study and the questions therein were focused purely on Pakistan but references to international leadership (i.e. leadership ability to lead and act on the international stage, and/or to interact with foreign persons and entities) emerged in the narratives. Hubi shared:

Because English is international language, you cannot be a leader without speaking English. That’s simple. For example, if I had been Education Minister of Pakistan and I need to go in different countries to discuss different ideas. English would be the medium. And probably the only medium I guess.

**Through English you can convey your message to the world directly.** Huma felt that



English allows her to act with confidence and as a leader on the world stage. It also allows her to raise the issues her community faces in front of the international fraternity.

I am a leader, but I am like leader for my community. But when I speak English, I am a leader of the world. Because I've speak on the stage on women in the world, I've speak on Tukaram stadium London. I've speak in Bangladesh on Asia 21 Young Leaders stage. When I speak English, so I speak on a stage of China and thousands of people of China, even political, nonpolitical, academic person. So I am a leader before that, but I am a world leader after that. Actually, I always thinking I am a community worker, not a leader. Because I believe to work with a community for changing the community. But yes, somehow, I'm a leader because I connect my work to the world and raise my people's voice on different stages and sharing my community stories on different stages. So yes, English is a very supportive thing to louder my voice to the world.

**English enables a powerful social media presence.** Shah felt that English had given him a powerful social media presence where he can convey his message and make money too.

If you are a good English speaker you can have communication with the whole world, on Facebook, on any social media platform, you can convey your message. And the last thing is I can communication with the whole world, everybody can understand English. Somebody cannot understand Chinese, Japanese, a lot of issues but you can communicate your message in English. So, whichever country I will visit, I have no problem. I can communicate my message. So that image gives me need of English, there is need of English, there is need of speaking English. If you have to communicate with the world, if you have to survive in the world you should be speaking English.

**English is associated with advanced and developed societies.** For many non-elites like Kai, English is associated with developed and advanced countries like America and Britain. Their main exposure to these societies is through the media and they see them as civilized and structured places where people conduct themselves in an organized manner. When I asked her if her behaviors had changed after learning how to speak English, she responded:

Yes, sir, a lot. Because of English. Because English is a language of Americans, means English people. And they are, how much I have seen, they are (well) mannered a lot. So they are more organized. Basically they are more organized. So English comes from them, so by adopting their language, a person can adopt their culture too, their behavior. So basically I'm adopting their behavior, what kind of behavior they are doing so, they are showing so. So this is how the way I talk to people. Whenever I talk in English, I speak more differently, whenever I talk in Urdu, I speak a little bit differently. Even I behave differently when I speak in English.

### **Without English You Can Only Lead the Illiterate and Uneducated**

This finding evinces the structures and barriers that exist against non-elites, who go through public schools, where the acquisition of spoken English is next to impossible. Shah and Simi shared their feeling on this matter. Shah said:

If I continue my leadership without English that will be a local leadership. I can lead a group of people of Pakistan without English, I can lead a group of people who are less educated, but to lead the people who are very educated... Even here? Yeah, here. So, I think that English is required to the leadership of elites, for the leadership of foreigners, for the leadership of good human resource you need English. So, if you have to lead a

group of laborers, and the low-class employees you can do without English, but to lead a proper company like I'm doing you need English.

Simi shared that leadership is possible without English because seventy percent of the population is illiterate and one could lead them in the vernacular. But when it came to being a leader among the educated, where it would matter, this would not be the case. By inference, it would also mean weak leadership that could be easily subverted. She said:

I am saying that leadership is possible without English and why am I saying this is 70% of our population is still living rural area and again like the literacy rate is very low ok. And when we talk about literacy rate it just means that you can read or write your name. So it's just a basic definition of literacy. But if you really want to know if they can read anything, they can't. So, maybe if a person is speaking in their own language, who has vision, he can survive among the masses. I have a couple of people who I know who are motivational speakers and they are speaking in Urdu and stuff like that and people are following them and they are getting like their presence, like you can see them on the TV and stuff like that. I think it's good to hear them but when it comes to like delegate to them maybe the so-called leaders which we have right now maybe will not give them right now the chance.

### **Presence of Elements of Leadership**

Half the participants of the study felt that elements of leadership were present in them before they learned English. Kai answered the query with a simple "Yes Sir." While Anu said, "I would say yes, because I had those qualities in my school also, you know that I used to be a leader or something. So, yes I had that quality. Yeah." Hubi shared how she was encouraged by her teachers towards leadership, and by helping her colleagues it developed further:

Leadership qualities I have since my school life. This is because my teachers gave me so much confidence and they always taught me that she has learned something and she presented me in front of all the class that you should learn from her. That she has achieved good result and you should learn from her.

Nad narrated how as a young boy he used to work in a factory to supplement the family income and that he led his team there. He shared the following:

I think I was a leader when I was working as a 13-year old in a factory, and I was leading other three boys to run 24-loom factory. I don't know if you know how the loom works, but there is this bobbin that takes out the thread and help the machine run. So I and the three other boys, we were responsible to work for 12 hours and to manage all of that.

Shah also felt that leadership was present in him before he learned to speak English. He shared:

Yeah, I was. Yeah, I was because whenever we have some plan with friends, I used to lead that, I used to plan that. So it was in my skills, leadership was there. I used to lead my friends, I used to lead my family as well, I used to work with my father in his business as well. So I was having leadership skill, I think, before having English as well.

Simi also felt that leadership was present in her and shared how she would take initiatives at her university.

I think I was, in a way, but I didn't know that. Before that, as I mentioned, before that I was very much active in extra-curricular all the time, I used to take lead, to arrange trips. I was the student representative for the faculty meetings, student and faculty meetings.

**Memorization of the scriptures creates leadership.** Kai shared how her memorization of scripture gives her a unique position in society which nurtured leadership in her. She narrated:

Sir, let me tell you a thing that I have told you I am Hafiz-e-Quran. So, Hafiz-e-Quran are given so much respect. So my mother treat me like a princess. He was just treating me like a guest, putting everything in front of me, decorating a table. Kai, this is for you, this is for you. And sometimes she used to feed me with her own hands. Because my parents always treated me like a leader. You know leader has a lot of abilities, a lot of things, qualities. Like, a leader understands everything. A leader knows how to handle other things. So always they treated me like a princess. When there was my mother, she was about to take my opinion, my father discusses everything with me. Whenever my father is doing bad, good, I give my opinion. I say everything. Anything. I share everything to my father. So basically he really made me a leader.

#### **English changes the self-view and self-belief of non-elite Learners.**

Some participants felt their self-view had changed after learning English, while others did not think that it had. Anu, Nad, Yas and Zam were very clear in their feeling that the process and acquisition had changed their self-view and self-belief. Anu said:

Self-belief is changed. Why? Because when opportunities are coming to you or people are coming to you and giving you more value or you started feeling different about yourself ... yeah, that's when my point, my belief is changed. I don't think like other girls, say they want to get married. I can work throughout my life you know.

Nad felt that his thinking about everything changed once he learned English. He started reading international newspapers and questioning prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness. He narrated his experiences in detail:

Yes. I think it actually transformed my self-view and self-belief. If I imagine myself without the English language, I would not be knowing a lot of things and a lot of views.

So without English, for me if I now compare the newspapers that I used to read in my grade nine and ten; Awam, Jurat, Riyasat, Ummat, with the papers that I read now, Guardian, Times and all, there is a huge difference. So I think I changed my world view a lot. Yes. For an instance, when I was a kid and in school I used to get motivated from the religious narratives. And now I don't.

### **No Change in Self-View**

Huma and Rose did not feel any change in their self-view and self-belief. Huma said, “Before English and after the English. Even when I live in a slum I am same and now I live in constructed house. I always believe that I am the same yesterday, today and tomorrow no matter what.” Rose said:

I learn English as the requirement of my office and my studies. So I think there is no change because whenever I started in first year, there was not any option for me to do the course in English or Urdu, there was just one medium, that was English. So I think it was mandatory requirement to have a graduation. So that's it. There is no change.

**Mixed feelings.** Ainee had mixed feelings based on the fact that his initial desire to learn English was to understand movies. He said:

The intention was to understand the dialogue in the movies, and the plays, and whatever. So when I acquired that ability, I was satisfied with that and I liked it. And there it ended. In so far as self-belief or whatever is concerned, I think to some extent, yes, self-belief, you can say it did influence myself in some ways now that I think about it. It gave me a kind of confidence in my own abilities.

Waji also had mixed feelings and while admitting that English had provided her with unattainable opportunities, she still felt her self-view had not changed that much. She

summarized:

Yeah. Obviously, I felt more comfortable, I felt more confident but now, I don't think so other than that, after that part of me that has affected me a lot. But I would say the job I'm doing, I'm working as a research assistant, and obviously my job includes writing proposals and grants and stuff like that and writing reports, et cetera. Obviously, if I didn't have the proficiency in English I wouldn't be doing this job, although I really like this job but no matter how much I loved it, if I didn't have the skill, I couldn't be doing it.

**Self-love.** Simi further shared how non-elites who learn English, start taking better care of themselves. She said:

And one thing which I observed is that when we start speaking English, it's not just that you are speaking English, it's that you start investing on your outlook too. Somehow that is our mentality, we want to change everything around that, like we want to be an Englishman altogether as well. You know, those people who are from the background like which is not very much supportive to the elite structure, but when like they start changing their appearance as well as their communication skills.

### **English is the Single Most Powerful Source of Confidence for Non-Elites**

Lickerman (2013) defines confidence as coming from three beliefs: belief in one's competence, belief in one's ability to learn and problem solve, and belief in one's intrinsic worth. Schunk (2012) defines self-confidence as the belief that "one can produce results, accomplish goals, or perform tasks competently. The belief that one is capable of performing a task can raise self-esteem. High self-esteem might lead one to attempt difficult tasks, and subsequent success enhances self-confidence" (p. 383). The participants of my study were imbued with many of the elements as delineated above, such as belief in their own competence and in their ability to learn

and accomplish goals, and many elements were enhanced as a result of their acquisition of English, such as their esteem and their belief in their intrinsic worth and competence.

### **Second Language Self-Confidence**

Second language self-confidence relates to the belief that one can communicate in another language (MacIntyre et al. 1998). The relationship between the anxiety to attempt speech and communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) is a negative one, as the reluctance to speak makes learners lose opportunities to practice that would lead to further gains in verbal ability. In my study, the participants were able to overcome their anxiety and independently cross the “rubicon” (p. 48), a metaphor used by Dörnyei and Otto (1998) to describe the threshold between the “pre-actional” and “actional” (p. 48) phases, or the point of no return, at which learners commit themselves to speaking. It was the point at which participants of my study started conversing in English, well or otherwise, unhesitatingly.

**Willingness to communicate.** As a predictor of linguistic ability, second language self-confidence has been studied as part of the willingness to communicate construct which is defined by MacIntyre, et al. (1998) as “readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons using a second language” (p. 547). The willingness to attempt communication in English and the confidence it engenders, and vice versa, is deeply intertwined with the efforts that Pakistani non-elites make in acquiring the language. These efforts are all the more remarkable given the fact that they live in environments where opportunities for communication in English hardly exist. Self-confidence may indeed be “the best predictor” of second language proficiency (Clément, 1986) but greater language proficiency equally adds to the self-confidence of non-elite learners in a continuous direct relationship where each is scaffolding on top of the other.



As their narratives elucidate, the participants of my study used many different techniques to overcome the hurdles that stood in the way of their English language acquisition. Some used movies as a path to learning while others used BBC radio programs and cricket commentary. Some found mentors while others went on strolls with friends to be able to practice speaking English without the fear of being ridiculed. The latter was similar to Buitrago's (2017) findings in her study of Colombian English learners using collaborative learning strategies that suggests that fluency can be acquired collaboratively when learning from others and by making mistakes. Working collaboratively increased learners' confidence as they felt they are not being judged and were also able to see that their mistakes were not just theirs.

**Sources for learning English.** Movies were cited as the number one source for learning English followed by the BBC and radio, then books and newspapers, English songs, cartoons, Cricket commentary, motivating teachers, language centers, TV programs, teacher training program, focused practice with friends, translation games, and rehearsal. Many participants also mentioned that there are very few opportunities for participation in actual conversation for non-elites. Yas said:

For the elite the places are different where they can easily learn English, where they can easily speak English, where they can practice English. But for the non-elite, if, for example, they have reached a place for learning English, where would they practice? There's no place for practicing English. So that's how the barriers for the middle class and for the non-English speakers, non-elite people. They have no place of practicing English. They have no resources of learning English.

### **The Influence of English on the Confidence of Non-Elites**

Half the people in this study said that their behaviors had changed since they gained

fluency in English and about half felt that their mannerisms had not been affected. The data also revealed that many of them felt the behaviors of others towards them had changed since they started speaking English, which was a more interesting and intriguing finding. One of them shared how her children, whom she had admitted to an elite school, felt uncomfortable when she spoke to them in Urdu.

**Confidence that English engenders.** That English imbues non-elites with confidence was a refrain expressed by most of the participants. Hubi said “I can speak English no matter how good or bad, but I have this confidence that if I am in a meeting of the people, the people are speaking English, I can understand.”

**Confidence that one can never lose one’s job.** Anu shared “OK one thing is that I became very very very confident, very confident ok, and I actually you know, now I am not scared of anything. I am not even scared about you know that I will lose my job.”

**Confidence that knowledge English enables brings.** Yas narrated:

Here in a small country like Pakistan people only consider you educated if you can speak English. So here it can really boost up your confidence and can change you. And so when I read those stories and novels, it just changed my mind, it just changed my concepts and increased my knowledge. And, obviously, when you are knowledgeable and when you can speak English, you become automatically confident.

**Confidence that comes from having “a clear-cut edge.”** Nad shared:

So, in that case, language helps. I mean in our society, in some segments of the society, it gives you an edge, a clear-cut edge, and gives you some confidence to get out your thoughts and your ideas and to communicate whatever is there in your head.

**Confidence to be able to lead any team.** Shah stated “English is a source of confidence, source of motivation, and now it is giving me monetary benefits as well. Actually, now I think that I am very good leader. The knowledge of English given me confidence in my life, because what I am doing today is running my language learning company. If I could not speak good English how will they give me a project related to languages? I have the confidence that I can lead any team because I have a language skill, which is English.

**Confidence lost and then recovered through English.** Simi’s experience after she graduated from university and joined the research institute is indicative of what happens to non-elites when they are throw among English speakers. She said:

I was the student representative for the faculty meetings, student and faculty meetings. And because like QA is not that elite university, I think that's one of the reason I could excel in that, in a way. All the students were just like you. But After that, when I started realizing that English is that much important, I lost all that confidence, and then I regained it after I learned English. Yes. For instance, a couple of months ago, planning commission invited me for a policy dialogue. I had that confidence that, yes, I know this really well. My knowledge, in addition to English, speaking English, is making me more comfortable, more privileged. People are starting now taking me seriously.

### **English is More Important than any Degree or Qualification**

#### **Benefits for Non-Elites through the Acquisition of English**

The benefits of being able to speak English for non-elites in Pakistan are large and numerous but the one mentioned by most of the participants was the fact that being able to speak English is much more powerful than academic qualifications. Aka, Anu, Huma, Kai, Rose,

Simi, Waji and Yas all felt that knowing English is the most powerful qualification in Pakistan and immediately opens the doors to employment, opportunities and recognition. Aka shared:

And whenever I start, my first two minutes were in English. Without saying anything, they start believing I'm a highly qualified person. The same thing, which was understood by my father, the same thing is understood by qualified people here. They hardly question my qualifications. People start believing, oh, this man must be foreign graduate.

Anu has worked in organizations and taught in both public and private institutes. She narrates how she obtained employment as human resources manager in a large company despite her lack of qualifications just on the basis of her language skills:

When I learned English I started applying in different institutes and different even offices although though I didn't have any office experience, but when I actually started applying, I was getting positive response from there. The reason was that I could speak in English. And other people who were applying with me, even though they did have bigger degrees than me, they have done their masters or something, but they couldn't speak in English. But I could speak and I was getting that offer and getting the job.

Yas felt that he has swiftly moved ahead of his colleagues because of his ability to speak English. He narrated:

The other people they are same educated as me, but they cannot speak English. That's why they are far behind. So I think English, that's how English has changed me, and it made me a leader. That I am now moving ahead from my counterparts because they cannot speak English.

Waji holds an engineering degree from a top school. She shared that although she

recognizes that being educated and being able to speak English are two different things, but in Pakistan the two have become enmeshed. She said:

Speaking English is, unfortunately, a big criterion for it matters more than the education you have or the qualification you have. It all comes down to how you speak or how you present yourself. They don't take us seriously because obviously English is associated with qualification and English is associated with being educated, obviously people have these misconceptions in their mind because English, being qualified or educated and knowing English are two different things but, unfortunately, they have mixed up the two things and that's really messed up. They are two different things and, obviously, because I know English and I'm educated, I'm differentiating between the two.

Rose felt that you cannot get through job interviews without English. She said “because in interview, usually panels assess on the basis of your communication (in English), instead of your degrees, instead of other things.” Kai felt that one will not get recognized without being able to speak English. She said: “If you learn English, you make your identity because I feel if you can't speak in English and you have got a M.Ed., a B.Ed., a Ph.D., whatever. If you don't know English, you can't get that big a name.”

Anu, Kai, Rose, Shah, Simi and Yas all felt that English gets you higher levels of salary.

Yas shared:

And I had then realized that it was the power of English, the power of language that I was just getting that respect. And after that, all of the money I have earned up till now or I am earning is because of English, because of that language. And in my life I think I have only positive impacts of English language.

When I asked Kai what would happen if she took a group of common people and taught

them English, she responded:

They would definitely go over the moon. What I'm telling you that their salary would get increased, and they would openly say that I'm earning this money, I'm earning this money. So this is the thing that they would feel like they are over the moon.

Shah felt that he would gladly pay someone who can speak English more as the person could fulfill more roles: He said “Yeah, I'll engage him in more roles, like I will engage him in my file works, my account works, my banking related works, so I will pay differently.” Rose feels that “Yeah, of course. If you can speak English, you can get higher salary, you can get higher position.” Simi shared her experience about people from elite backgrounds that “they are getting higher salary just because of their spoken English.”

Aka, Yas and Simi narrated how English gives you access to a plethora of information. Simi shared that as a result of learning English she has developed the reading habit: “And now I read a lot, and I read on everything. I don't have any specific interest. I will read politics. I will read literature. I will read fiction.” Zam, who holds a doctorate from America, and who heads a higher education agency, says, “What English did, it helped me really read literature books, which otherwise I wouldn't have been able to. I read more in English than Urdu. My English is better than Urdu.” Aka shared how he uses the internet to gain knowledge:

Without the understanding of English, I can't use Google, I can't use YouTube. If I want to understand the concept of leftist and rightist movement, I simply click on few letters and I can pick out 5 or two minute or one-hour video and that's what is most important.

Yas said that reading English literature had changed his conceptual thinking, increased his knowledge base and made him feel learned:

I will not only talk about the confidence but also all the knowledge that I have gained because of English, especially when I started reading English literature. Literature was the thing that changed my mind paradigm obviously because English is a vast language and they have different varieties, different genres, different topics in novels and in stories. And so when I read those stories and novels, it just changed my mind, it just changed my concepts and increased my knowledge. The knowledge of the novels, the knowledge of stories, the knowledge of Hollywood movies as well because it makes you learned.

### **Others Behave Differently When You Speak in English**

#### **The Influence of English on the Behaviors of Non-Elites**

Ainee, Anu, Huma, Rose and Simi all felt that people behave differently when one speaks in English. Ainee as a young person was motivated to learn English in order to be able to understand Hollywood movies. This led to his studying English literature at university, which helped him enter the civil services and serve in a number of countries. He now teaches at a university and felt that while his behaviors abroad were not affected by the language he used, this is not the case in Pakistan. He shared:

Maybe it does at some forums in Pakistan only, not internationally. But in Pakistan, it does impact my behavior to a certain extent where I find that many people who are sitting around the table or in that conference, are finding it difficult to communicate. And then if there is something that needs to be conveyed, or to be corrected, or to be challenged, then I say it in English. It's not that what I think of myself after I have learned English and speak well. But it's more by way of how other people react to me when they see me speaking in English, which is I think how it affects, maybe indirectly, me, because of their behavior, because of their reaction to it, yes.

Anu shared that even a person at the ministerial level starts behaving differently when you speak to them in English. She said:

So, when I met that minister he treated me like a student earlier in my school, but over here when I met him and he saw me that oh, this girl is here and she's on some position and now she's speaking English. And you know and he took my name on the stage, and he remembered me. He actually remembered my name and he took it on the stage in front of the media. So on that time, you realize that English has actually changed you.

Huma felt that one gets immediate attention when one speaks in English and it gives one an advantaged and privileged status instantly. She said:

That's true. It is true. Even you are in a government hospital and you speak with a reception person in Urdu, you have a Ph.D. degree, but reception person did not have a Ph.D. degree. When you start Urdu that I have this work they take you lightly. Oh why are the illiterate people come? When you say, "Hello, hi, my name is ..." you just saying your name in English, people giving you attention. In the government hospital. In the hospital even, can you imagine, health facility never judges a language. But even you go to the hospital, you speak in Urdu, nurses don't get serious, even you have a very serious issue. But you speak in English, they directly give you an attention. And really I face these daily basic things in my life, because I'm working on women's health issues.

Simi's experiences are similar. She narrates how one is treated differently by shop owners if one speaks in English. She shared "if you are speaking with each other in English, and with your kids, everybody ... oh my God, everybody will come. "Okay, ma'am, what do you need? Okay, we have this, this, and that." She added that her child who was born in America during her Ph.D. gets preferential treatment as she only speaks English. She said:



My elder daughter, she's born in the US. She's four now, but she has a very good accent. Honestly, kids, they are so innocent, they don't know, but one thing which I observed, everyone cherishes my girl, even if we are going anywhere, if it's in the higher society or in our own family, because we are from a very humble background. All the kids, of any age irrespective of age, the youngest one, they will come and play with her and take her everywhere. They are holding her up, just because she's speaking English.

For Rose, as already mentioned, English has had no impact on her mannerisms. However, she feels that in Pakistani consciousness, Urdu is linked with conservatism and English with modernity and progressiveness. She shared:

Of course. I will behave the same but other will not behave the same. That is very important. They will think she is conservative, she is not able to speak English, and she does not have ideas, and she is backward. And there are a lot of things, names they can call for me if I do not speak in English.

These narratives evince the fact that even if the acquisition of English does not impact one's own behavior, the way others behave changes, and thus indirectly impacts one's behavior.

### **Chapter VI Closure**

In this chapter I presented sixteen summaries inferred from the research and analysis. I strongly feel that the denial of access to English is the denial of access to what has become a basic human right and that efforts have to be made to take English to non-Elites and subalterns, everywhere, whose lives would be enriched if this language of power; and which gives access to knowledge, is made more effectively available to them.

As my research was conducted at a postcolonial non-Western site, throughout this study I

remained cognizant of the words of the two great scholars in second-language research, Bonny Norton and Suresh Canagarajah: “Language learning processes focused on identity would be greatly enriched by research conducted in postcolonial sites where multilingualism is the norm and language acquisition processes can be quite different from immigrant language learning experiences in the Western countries” (Norton, 2013, pp. 22-23) and “Insights from non-Western communities should inform the current efforts for alternate theory-building in our field” (Canagarajah, 2007, p. 935).

In this chapter, in what may be called an attempt at “alternate theory-building,” I suggested the terminology of “deliverance motivation” or “liberative motivation” to represent desires among non-elites and subalterns mainly within the developing world, towards second-language acquisition generally, but English acquisition specifically given the unique position of English in the world today. These have been suggested based on my research at a postcolonial non-Western site. Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) integrative and instrumental motivation had been defined based on research within a Western context. I will now present my conclusions and recommendations for further research in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When I began my doctoral journey five years ago, I knew it would be a study around non-elite English learners, their desires, their identities, and their challenges. At the time I was unclear as to what methodology would be appropriate, but it morphed into a qualitative study around the intersectionality of language learning and leadership emergence, and it sent me down the path of colonial history, critical-theory, political thought, post-coloniality, subaltern studies, subalternity, orientalism, motivation, self-determination, identity, leadership, esteem, language policy, language rights, human rights, and a lot else. It has been a privilege to have been able to read the scholarly literature written on these myriad of topics. It was an even greater privilege to meet the outstanding individuals who so unhesitatingly became part of my study and who so generously shared their moving and powerful stories. I am grateful and indebted to each of them, as I am to the authors of the books and research I perused, imbibed, and gained knowledge from. It has truly been a journey of personal growth and indeed the re-construction of my own identity.

Eleven themes emerged in my findings and were recorded and presented in Chapter IV. These themes were aligned to the four research questions and discussed in Chapter V in relation to theory and other studies. From this discussion, I condensed sixteen summaries in Chapter VI. This final chapter of my dissertation presents a synopsis that foregrounds, what I feel, is the significant conclusion of this study based on data elicited from the interviews with participants. I have chosen one statement of each participant around this main finding and will briefly discuss and comment on it. I feel this a befitting way to bring my study to a close as well as highlight how English gives praxis and presence to the subaltern. I hope my study will lead to a movement to take English to those who need it the most to be able to live lives of dignity and possibility.

### **When the Subaltern Speaks, *in English*, she is *Heard!***

My statistics professor Dr. Fernando Andrade, who is from Peru told me this story: “I was working with the Ministry of Education of Peru between 1999 to 2001 providing assistance in measuring student performance in math and literacy as part of the national evaluations of achievement among 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders in elementary education and 5<sup>th</sup> graders in High School. One part of my work was supervising test taking during the week of testing. In one opportunity, I was assigned to a remote area of the Peruvian highlands among native speakers of Quechua. When visiting one of the schools, I was introduced as teacher Fernando to have a 10 minutes talk with the children, explaining what we are doing. Because during elementary school, education is bilingual and my Quechua is limited to some words I learned at home, I prepared a song in Spanish to share and sing with the children. I was interrupted by one children, telling me why should they learn Spanish? They wanted to learn English and if I could teach them something in English. The other children echoed his request. Thus, I improvised and we counted in English from one to ten as well as sing an old song I learned in second grade: “Good morning teacher, good morning teacher, how are you?” (personal communication via email dated November 4, 2019). Somehow those Quechua children in the Peruvian highlands, despite living in a Spanish-speaking world, knew that English was the language everyone had to know. It is likely for similar reasons that in the francophone world too, there is clear evidence that language shift is happening away from French towards English (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2007; Luanga, 2012).

Throughout my doctoral journey I have seen my study as research as praxis which according to Lather (1986) is “research that is explicitly committed to critiquing the status quo and building a more just society” (p. 258). I have remained cognizant of the fact that although the amount of social, cultural and economic capital that each person has is highly unequal, and

that equal outcomes in an unjust world are not possible, I am committed to the belief that equal opportunities in education—especially in the provision of linguistic capital—should be our goal. Spivak’s (1993) question, “Can the subaltern speak?” which I would rephrase, “Is the subaltern *heard* when she or he speaks?” has remained at the forefront of my thinking.

It is important to mention that Spivak’s (1993) uses the word “speak” in the sense of speech that can generate discourse and engagement, for the physical act of speaking is possible from the subaltern position, or any position. Unless speech carries the weight of socio-political agency that can articulate self-interest and self-identity, it is nothing more than meaningless sounds. So both statements; that the subaltern cannot speak or that the subaltern is not heard, are acceptable as long as we understand that both the statements, that subaltern cannot speak and subaltern cannot be heard, refer to the same inability to generate discourse and dialogue from within subalternity.

In this study powerful expressions of what English can mean to subalterns, and the consequences of knowing it, or not knowing it, were shared by participants.

- “They are lagging behind in their careers just because they can't speak better English. They are genius, they have intelligence, they have great minds but they cannot excel just because they cannot speak English. And that's not their crime. But it has become their crime now.”
- “People who cannot speak that good English they are all the time thinking, if I will ask this question, how can I ask this? Can I speak that good English? People will start laughing at me. A lot of people have this fear in Pakistan.”
- “What I am trying to say is that without English we cannot get any recognition anywhere.”

- “Unfortunately, I would not be a leader without English because the environment has built the thing in our mind that a person without English, whoever, a leader or another person, whatever ...Boss, whoever, could be nothing without English. Could be nothing without English.”
- “So if you have to lead a group of laborers, and the low-class employees you can do without English, but to lead a proper company like I'm doing you need English.”
- “Actually, I think that when, in a country like Pakistan, when you are speaking English, then the respect you receive, that makes you leader.”
- “People are really proud when they say that ‘Oh, our kids are really weak in Urdu’. This is another status symbol if your kid doesn't know how to write and read Urdu.”

### **To be Heard is the Acknowledgement of Presence and Recognition of Identity**

Self-esteem has a pervasive influence on all aspects of identity (Vignoles et al., 2006) and people's self-image and esteem are heavily grounded in their perception of how others are reacting to them. Leary et al.'s (1995) sociometer perspective shows that “in behaving in ways that promote self-esteem, people are striving to enhance their inclusionary status” (p. 528). There can be no greater expression of inclusion or a more positive evaluative reaction than when a person is accorded the respect of being *listened to*. It is an acknowledgement of the person's presence; it raises self-esteem and heightens their sense of identity. English provides the communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) that has “the power to impose reception” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648). For the subaltern it is a movement away from that negative space of *no-identity* to a position of identity.

The constant refrain, or lament, throughout my doctoral research was: “No one listens

when we use Urdu” and “We are only heard when we speak in English.” It is as if a person does not exist, has no identity, no agency, unless they speak in English in Pakistan. Every participant was unequivocal in expressing how English had and has given them *voice*, that they could now *speak*, were being *listened to*, were being *heard*. They could now “impose reception” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648). I share a quote from each of them.

1. Huma: “You go to the hospital, you speak in Urdu, nurses don’t get serious, even you have a very serious issue. But you speak in English, they directly give you an attention.”
2. Nad: “If in a meeting, the secretary is chairing the meeting, and you speak in Urdu, he'll listen. But you start speaking in English, he will listen carefully.”
3. Ainee: “There is more weight if you speak in English, then people listen to you, and think that what you are saying is maybe worth listening to. But if you speak in Urdu, you are more or less disregarded, people don't even listen to you.”
4. Waji: “When you have to make them listen to you or make them notice then obviously you consciously or subconsciously use English. They listen to you (when you speak in Urdu) but they don't take you seriously.”
5. Yas: “If you cannot speak English and you praise Urdu, so people will say you are praising Urdu because you cannot speak English. But when you know English and then you are praising and advocating for Urdu language, then it just creates some impact and it gives some power to your words.”
6. Shah: “If somebody speaks English, then they consider that this person is well educated and he knows how to carry himself and he's a good person. So there is a symbol of respect associated with English.”
7. Simi: “You will not feel empowered; people will not feel like you are empowered (if you

use Urdu). I know that when I will go to them, they will take me seriously, and I can defend myself, because I can communicate in English.”

8. Anu: “They don’t listen when I talk in Urdu, but they actually leave their chair and stand up when I talk to them in English. You know I cannot hold my degree in my hand that see I am so educated, I cannot speak in English, but I am an educated person. But they don’t listen to you. And when you start speaking with them in English they are like madam madam come come come we will listen to you.”

9. Rose: “I will behave the same but other will not behave the same (if I use Urdu). That is very important. They will think she is not able to speak English, and she does not have ideas, and she is backward. And there are a lot of things, names they can call for me if I do not speak in English.”

10. Aka: “And whenever I start, my first two minutes were in English. Without saying anything, they start believing I’m a highly qualified person. They hardly question my qualifications. People start believing, oh, this man must be foreign graduate.”

11. Hubi: “I became conscious when I entered my medical school that it is now the question of your existence. Yes. I realize when I enter medical school that now it has become the question of your existence. If you can speak English or you can't.”

12. Kai: “But it has made my identity that I can speak in English, and it is very privileged ... What do we say? Privileged. Yes, sir. Esteem sir. Sir, self-esteem ... That is a self-esteem. ... Whenever you speak English, you feel like Esteem, you can sit like this, whenever you speak in English, you sit like this. Proud. You come to be a proud person. Although they can speak English (elites) but you are also the person who can speak English. So it is like that. So you sit with your head high.”



There was a time in Pakistan when people who only spoke Urdu or their vernacular could make it as actors in movies, in plays, as successful media personalities, as important members of society. This is nearly impossible now and to get a part of any consequence even in an Urdu TV drama, or serial, or to be a TV anchor, you have to have English credentials. In other words, the ability to hold conversation in the English language.

Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra, the indefatigable advocate of Urdu, poignantly stated in a panel at the Karachi Literature Festival (2018) that one now has to use the Urdu language almost in protest. Her point was relevant given the elitist mores prevalent among the English-speaking classes and their near contempt for those who can only speak Urdu. People were listening in rapt attention to her eloquent speech but I could not help but wonder whether her words would have had the power they did had her English also not been perfect. Could she have self-actualized as an erudite scholar, who enjoys credibility at the highest level, without the knowledge of English? Can anyone in our world today, especially a non-elite person, fully self-actualize without English?

### **English is now the Pedagogy that Frees the Oppressed**

In various studies of foreign human trafficking survivors in the U.S., (Baldwin et al., 2011; Busch-Armendariz et al., 2100; Johnson, 2012), one of the significant needs of the victims identified was the learning of the English language. Although one could argue that it is but natural that they would need English now that they were in the United States, a more nuanced view, rather question would be; could these women have been ensnared and kept enslaved in the sex trade by human traffickers had they been able to speak English? As Baldwin et al. (2011) state, “Most of the survivors interviewed had limited English proficiency while they were

enslaved” (p. 45). The liberating power of the English language, that participants of my study experienced, was missing from the lives of these marginalized women.

Language is not only an instrument of communication or even of knowledge, but also an instrument of power. A person speaks not only to be understood but also to be believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished. Hence the full definition of competence as the right to speech, i.e. to the legitimate language, the authorized language which is also the language of authority. Competence implies the power to impose reception. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648)

Pierce (1995) suggests, that “although a person may be positioned in a particular way within a given discourse, the person might resist the subject position or even set up a counterdiscourse which positions the person in a powerful rather than marginalized subject position” (p. 16). The ability to use the English language was the powerful counterdiscourse that the victims of human trafficking were bereft of. For non-elites, the ability to speak English has now become a powerful counterdiscourse through which unequal relations of power may be tempered. English wields the power to impose reception. It provides agency and praxis (Freire, 1970) to the marginalized.

On the basis of my findings, I have revised my conceptual framework and which not only answer’s Spivak’s seminal question, it is based on what I would call: “Can the Subaltern speak?” model. I have named it: “When the Subaltern speaks, *in English*, she is HEARD!” Conceptual Framework. The focus in the revised framework shifts away from English as a path to leadership for the non-elite, to English as a path to high levels of self-esteem and self-actualization as fully functioning human beings, and which creates the opportunities and possibilities for leadership

emergence, development, and enactment for subalterns. My revised conceptual framework (figure 7) is as under:

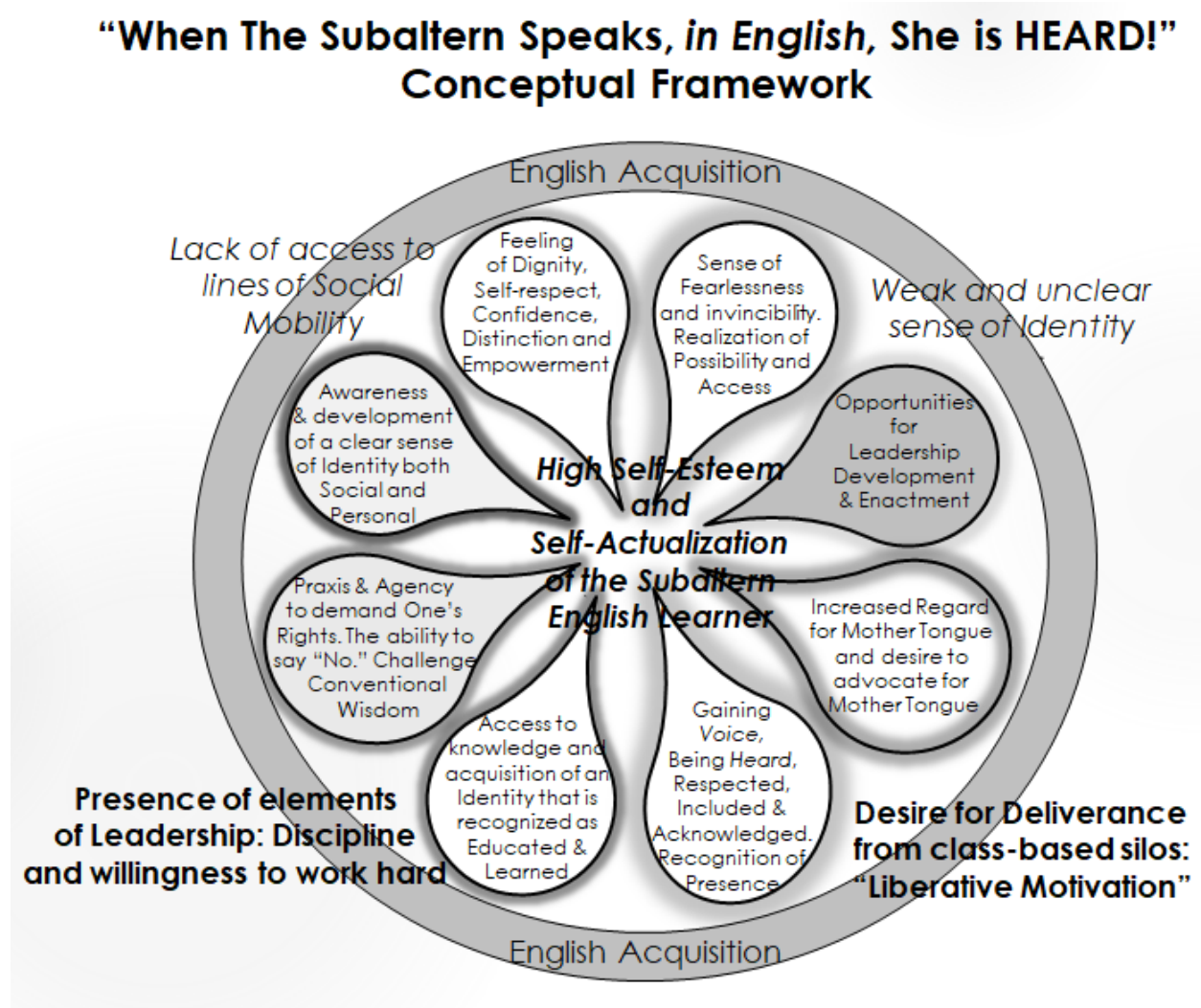


Figure 7. “When the Subaltern speaks, *in English*, she is HEARD!” Conceptual Framework.

### **From Motivation to Investment to Liberation**

The study of second language acquisition has come a long way and there is now a body of literature that has been written around research conducted at non-Western sites. However, a perusal of these studies reveals that the intersectionality of English acquisition and leadership development, particularly leadership emergence in non-elite learners, has not been considered.

There is also little attempt at understanding the motivations of learners—successful subaltern learner in particular—beyond traditional definitions. Gardner and Lambert's (1959) concept of integrative and instrumental motivation, as well as Pierce's (1995) concept of investment were developed based on research at Western sites.

Similar to Lee's (2001) doctoral study of English learners in Malaysia, my study exposes the insufficiency of definitions generated from research conducted at locations in the developed world. I found the existing terminologies insufficient to describe the desires and motivations of the participants of my study. There is a near insurmountable contrast between research conducted at native-speaker settings in the developed world, and that which has been conducted in the domestic context of non-native speaker settings, and that too with subaltern learners who face the double bind of resource constraint as well as non-availability of a conducive English-learning environment.

Pierce (1995) argues that the concept of motivation, especially of instrumental motivation, views the language learner as unitary, fixed, and ahistorical, who desires some kind of external advancement. She felt that this understanding saw motivation as “a fixed personality trait” (Pierce, 1995, p. 17) or a property of the language learner. Her notion of investment is built around the dynamic between the learner and the social world. Pierce (1995) states:

It [investment] conceives of the language learner as having a complex social identity and multiple desires. The notion presupposes that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space. (p. 17-18)

Drawing on my research I have proposed the terms “Deliverance Motivation” or “Liberative Motivation” to encapsulate the desires of non-elite and subaltern persons that emerge out of interactions with an unjust social world and go beyond the construction and reconstruction of their relationship with that world. In a sense it comes full circle back to the person and their sense of self-respect and the need to be liberated from the indignities of the class-based silos that unequal power relations and elitist norms push them into in their own consciousness. It comes back full circle not in the sense of “a fixed personality trait” (Pierce, 1995, p. 17), but rather as a powerful consciousness of praxis, which according to Freire (1970) is “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (p. 36).

Identity theorists have been studying the ways in which relations of race, gender, and class impact the language learning processes (Norton, 2013). This study shows that the desire to challenge relations of class and power can inform the successful acquisition of English for certain non-elites. Acquisition of English impacts the identity of non-elite learners in ways that further enables them to question, challenge and overcome those relations. Such SLA motivations may be specific to language learners in the developing, postcolonial, non-Western world specifically, and to subaltern learners everywhere generally. Pierce (1995) correctly suggests that “power relations play a crucial role in social interactions between language learners and target language speaker” (p. 12). I would add that in the non-Western context, English provides an egalitarian context to these interactions, levels the playing field. Pierce (1995) suggests that the “logical extension of reconceptualizing notions of the individual in SLA theory is the need to problematize the concept of motivation” (p. 16). I have attempted to problematize the concept of motivation in English acquisition and, like her, I too hope that my proposed terminology “will contribute to debates on second language learning” (Pierce, 1995, p. 12).

## **The Way Forward**

Presidential hopeful Senator Bernie Sanders (2020) has declared that the internet must be now treated as a public utility that everyone deserves as a basic human right. I cannot agree with him more. I consider English in the same vein. I am also in complete agreement with Hall (2016) when he declares: “Using English in some manner is no longer a luxury; it must be part of that basic universal education we all wish for. Keeping English away from anyone, whether active or indirectly, must now be seen as a social injustice” (p. 3). I deeply believe that English has become a basic human right and it enrages me when I see people being denied the self-esteem and possibility for self-actualization that English opens the door to. I therefore aim to dedicate my energies to taking the global lingua franca to the poorest child, in the poorest village, of the poorest country, and every country. To this end, I plan to create resources, alliances, spaces and frameworks—physical, virtual and legal—for rapid English acquisition for those who most need it to live lives of dignity and possibility. For a time now this has been the motivation which has kept me focused on the completion of my dissertation. From this point onwards, it will be the purpose of my life.

### **Delimitations and Limitations of the Study**

For this study, one delimitation is my choice to study participants of Pakistani origin coming from non-elite backgrounds, as there are non-elite persons in other countries in South Asia who may have undergone a similar transformation. Comparing findings from other places would be interesting should I decide to carry my research further, by including persons from other countries. Hence, this phenomenology can only explain the experiences of non-elite people from Pakistan who developed leadership cognition and practices with the influence of English in their lives. Future research can use phenomenological methods to understand the experiences of

people from other countries and regions whose lives have similarly been impacted by their acquisition of English.

Another delimitation is that this phenomenology examines the experience of non-elite persons who have developed leadership traits and practices with the concurrent acquisition of the English language. It can neither explain the experience of subalterns who may have distinguished themselves as leaders without the influence of English in their lives, nor the experiences of those non-elites who learned English but did not develop leadership cognition and behaviors.

My sample comprised of a diverse, though select, group of fluent speakers of English and who also possessed higher education credentials. They do not represent the average Pakistani who has completed tertiary level education but who cannot converse in the English language. Because of their fluency in English, they were able express their feelings and share their experiences which would certainly have not been possible if the English skills of participants were weak. The study used a good mixed sample in terms of age, location and gender balance.

A key limitation could be that participants were unable to articulate their experiences due to a lack of introspection, but I would be surprised if such was the case. My experience with persons who fall within my inclusionary criterion is that they are not only highly conscious of the role of English in their lives, but are also eager to talk about their journeys. And this was very much the case with every single one of my participants. This came across strongly throughout the study I conducted. Any discomfort that participants may have felt about disclosing personal details could have been a limitation but such was not the case although some participants were overcome with emotion while sharing their stories. The fact that the study could not be conducted longitudinally, due to time constraints, could be considered a limitation. However the fact that possession of leadership emergence was an inclusionary criterion, it would have been

impossible to locate candidates prior to the beginning of their journey with English. It would of course be instructive to conduct a follow-up study with participants to gauge any change in their responses.

It is also important to mention that because of the nature of phenomenology, the underlying mechanisms and broader contextual experiences of the influence of English as a tool for leadership development cannot be identified by my study. Phenomenology seeks to understand what is happening, not why it happens. The underlying mechanisms of the experiences of the participants were not within the scope of phenomenology and cannot be explained by this research. As this was qualitative, the findings may not be generalizable to the overall population. Nevertheless, the value of qualitative work is not prescriptive as it uses smaller samples than quantitative research, rather it goes deeper into trying to understand the complexities of the human experience.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

My study is possibly the first that explores the intersectionality between English and leadership, and could be considered an exploratory study that represents a first step for more research along similar lines using participants from other countries. A paper based on the initial findings of my study has been accepted for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Education and Research Association in San Francisco in April 2020. One of the reviewers has commented that “the implications as they’re currently articulated are important and suggest that this paper is poised to make a unique contribution to the literature.”

Similar studies at other post-colonial sites, especially involving countries in South Asia, could be carried out and the findings compared. The research could also focus on either male or female participants to dissect if the intersectionality and impact of English acquisition and



leadership emergence differs between the sexes among subaltern English learners. Studies focused on successful non-elite English learners who attained leadership, within the developed world, would produce a wealth of information about leadership emergence among non-native learners in native-speaker settings.

There is certainly a need for more qualitative research which is the more suitable approach to study constructs as complex as leadership, identity and motivation, and how they intersect with one another. Longitudinal studies on the acquisition of the English language and its impact on identity formation and leadership development are needed in order to validate and refine issues discussed in my study.

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Appendix A

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Letter of Approval

# WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Institutional Review Board

FWA00007042

IRB00000254

Date: July 27, 2018

To: Brett Geier, Principal Investigator  
Aamir Hasan, Student Investigator for dissertation  
Sue Poppink, Co-Principal Investigator

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 17-01-40

This letter will serve as confirmation that the change to your research project titled "The Lived Experiences of Non-Elite Pakistani Learners of English: Identity Reconstruction and Leadership Emergence" requested in your memo received July 27, 2018 (to add Co-Principal Investigator Sue Poppink) has been approved by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board.

The conditions and the duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University.

Please note that you may **only** conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

**Approval Termination:**

**February 1, 2019**


Office of the Vice President for Research  
Research Compliance Office  
1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5456  
PHONE: (269) 387-8293 FAX: (269) 387-8276  
WEBSITE: [wmich.edu/research/compliance/hsirb](http://wmich.edu/research/compliance/hsirb)

CAMPUS SITE: 251 W. Walwood Hall

# WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Institutional Review Board  
FWA00007042  
IRB00000254

Date: March 7, 2018  
To: Brett Geier, Principal Investigator  
Aamir Hasan, Student Investigator for dissertation  
From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair   
Re: HSIRB Project Number 17-01-40

This letter will serve as confirmation that the change to your research project titled "The Lived Experiences of Non-Elite Pakistani Learners of English: Identity Reconstruction and Leadership Emergence" requested in your memo received March 7, 2018 (to change study title from "English as a tool for leadership development" to "The Lived Experiences of Non-Elite Pakistani Learners of English: Identity Reconstruction and Leadership Emergence") has been approved by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board.

The conditions and the duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University.

Please note that you may **only** conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

**Approval Termination:**

**February 1, 2019**

Office of the Vice President for Research  
Research Compliance Office  
1901 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5456  
PHONE: (269) 387-8253 fax: (269) 387-8276  
WEBSITE: [wmich.edu/research/compliance/hsirb](http://wmich.edu/research/compliance/hsirb)

CAMPUS SITE: 251 W. Walwood Hall

Appendix B  
Interview Protocol

## Interview Protocol

Overarching research purpose: The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of non-elite Pakistanis in educational leadership positions concerning how they (a) learned English through self-initiation, (b) reconstructed their identities as a result thereof, (c) changed their view of themselves as educational leaders, and (d) changed their behaviors as educational leaders.

Research Question 1: What is the motivation to learn English of non-elite leaders in educational settings?

Prompt: Please begin by telling me how you came to speak English fluently despite the fact that neither your parents spoke English nor did you have an elite upbringing. Please describe your journey with the language.

1. What motivated you to learn English?
2. Thank you. If you were to give that motivation a name or label, what might you call it?

Research Question 2: What role has the acquisition of English played in the reconstruction of their identities as educational leaders?

Prompt: Now let's talk about your acquisition of English and your identity.

1. Please tell me how has the knowledge of English changed your self-view and self-belief?
2. Ok. Thank you. At what point did you become conscious that English was impacting your life if it was?
3. Do you think you were a leader even before you started learning English?

Research Question 3: How has fluency in English changed how non-elites think about themselves as educational leaders?

Research Question 4: How has fluency in English changed how non-elites behave as educational leaders?

Prompt: Now I'd like to talk with you about how you changed as a leader, both in terms of how you think about yourself as a leader, and how you behave as a leader. Let's start by you telling me about how you've changed because of English and that relationship to leadership.

1. (possible probe) Ok. Thanks. You've told me x, y, z. Could you tell me a bit more about how you think of yourself now as a leader?
2. (possible probe) Ok. Thanks. You've told me x, y, and z. Could you tell me a bit about how your behaviors have changed now that you are an English speaking leader?
3. Ok. Thanks. In your experience is the knowing of English more empowering or is its use more so. Please dissect the two and their impact on your life?
4. Ok. Thanks. Now I am curious to know how has your experience with English influenced your relationship with your mother tongue, especially Urdu?

Wrap up Question:

Is there anything about your experience as an educational leader that I did not ask you or would you like to add to our conversation today or any feedback you have about our interview?

## Appendix C

Permission via email to reproduce the Self-Determination Continuum

## Permission via email to reproduce the Self-Determination Continuum

From: Shannon Hoefen Cerasoli <shannon@selfdeterminationtheory.org>  
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2020 9:04 AM  
To: Aamir Hasan <hasan.aamir@wmich.edu>  
Subject: Re: Permission to reproduce figure showing the self-determination continuum

Dear Aamir,  
On behalf of Dr. Richard Ryan and the Center for Self-Determination Theory, you have our permission to use that figure – their journal publisher, APA, allows a figure to be reproduced. But perhaps you may prefer to use a more updated version of the continuum – I'm attaching a few options for you, which CSDT owns and you can reproduce without issue. Best,  
**Shannon Hoefen Cerasoli, MPA**

Director  
Center for Self-Determination Theory  
m: 585.943.3570  
w: [www.selfdeterminationtheory.org](http://www.selfdeterminationtheory.org) e: [shannon@selfdeterminationtheory.org](mailto:shannon@selfdeterminationtheory.org)  
Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [LinkedIn](#)

From: Aamir Hasan <hasan.aamir@wmich.edu>  
Date: February 21, 2020 at 14:47:15 GMT+11  
To: "Deci, Edward" <deci@psych.rochester.edu>, "Ryan, Richard" <richard.ryan@rochester.edu>  
Subject: Permission to reproduce figure showing the self-determination continuum

Dear Dr. Ryan and Dr. Deci, Greetings

I am a Ph.D. student at Western Michigan University studying the intersectionality of English acquisition and leadership emergence. I would like to use the figure on page no. 72 of the below-mentioned article in my dissertation. I would be grateful if you could kindly grant me the same. I await your response.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78.

Thank you and sincere regards

**Aamir Hasan**, Ed.M. (Harvard)  
International Programs Development Coordinator  
Haenicke Institute for Global Education  
2425 Ellsworth Hall | Western Michigan University  
269 808 1024  
Harmony | Positivity | Connectedness | Input | Intellection

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## Appendix D

Permission via email to reproduce the graph showing proportions of languages in publications of the natural sciences worldwide 1880–2005



Permission via email to reproduce the graph showing proportions of languages in publications of  
the natural sciences worldwide 1880–2005

From: Ulrich Ammon <ulrich.ammon@uni-due.de>

Date: Tue, Feb 25, 2020 at 10:45 AM

Subject: Re: Permission to reproduce graph showing Proportions of languages in publications of the natural sciences worldwide 1880–2005

To: Aamir Hasan <aah835@mail.harvard.edu>

Dear Mr. Aamir,

I answer your request to use a graph from a certain article. My husband died unfortunately already last year. But he would certainly have agreed to your request. He was always happy to see that his publications were of interest worldwide and quoted.

Good luck and nice regards

Katharina Ammon

Am 25.02.2020 um 11:19 schrieb Aamir Hasan:

Dear Dr. Ammon,

I am a Ph.D. student at Western Michigan University studying the intersectionality of English acquisition and leadership emergence. I would like to use the graph on page no. 338 of the below-mentioned article in my dissertation. I would be grateful if you could kindly grant me the same. It will be fully cited. I await your response.

Ammon, U. (2012). Linguistic inequality and its effects on participation in scientific discourse and on global knowledge accumulation—With a closer look at the problems of the second-rank language communities. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 3(2), 333-355.

Thank you and regards

Aamir Hasan, Ed.M. (Harvard)

Doctoral Candidate | College of Education

3571 Sangren Hall | Western Michigan University

## Appendix E

Table showing the number of participants who identified with each theme and sub-theme  
inclusive of negative findings

Number of participants who identified with each theme and sub-theme inclusive of negative findings

THEMES	Participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
1. English-the intersection at which elites & non-elites meet as equals		x				x					x	x		4
2. The influence of English on the behaviors of non-elites														
Change				x	x		x		x	x				5
No Change (NEGATIVE FINDING)		x	x					x						3
Others Behave differently		x		x		x				x	x			5
3. Benefits for non-elites through the acquisition of English														
More Important than a Degree		x			x	x	x		x	x	x		x	8
Higher Remunerations		x			x	x	x	x	x					6
Access to knowledge					x	x			x					3
Confidence			x			x		x	x	x			x	6
4. English education in public & non-elite schools & colleges														
Tertiary Education		x	x			x		x				x	x	6
Public and non-elite schooling				x				x				x	x	4
5. Identity Reconstruction: Impact of Knowing/Not-knowing English														
Positive impact of knowing English for non-elites														
Being considered Educated		x					x	x	x		x	x	x	7
Respect and Self-respect		x		x				x	x	x				5
Empowerment				x		x	x		x	x			x	6
Dignity			x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	9
Esteem							x		x				x	3
A more progressive and expressive identity						x			x				x	2
Negative impact of not knowing English for non-elites				x		x	x	x	x	x			x	7
6. The knowing of English versus the using of English		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	10
7. English and leadership														
Leadership is not possible without English				x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8
English provides opportunities for leadership enactment		x					x	x	x	x			x	6
English enables and enhances leadership					x		x	x	x	x				5
Others						x	x	x	x		x	x	x	7
Presence of elements of leadership (NEGATIVE FINDING)			x			x	x	x		x			x	6
8. English and its relationship to mother tongue in Pakistan														
Increased respect and improved relationship with Urdu			x					x	x	x	x	x		6
Disregard of Urdu						x	x	x						3
Ideas can be better communicated in mother tongue				x	x	x							x	4
Others						x			x		x		x	4
9. Motivations to learn English		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	12
10. English-impact on the self-view & belief of non-elite learners														
Changed self-view			x			x			x	x				4
No change (NEGATIVE FINDING)		x									x			2
11. Sources for learning English			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	9

Appendix F

My Statement of Purpose for admission to Harvard

## Statement of Purpose

I look at her beautiful Urdu script and feel ashamed. Yet it is she who is disadvantaged; her sole sin being that she writes and converses only in her mother tongue. The issues related to education in Pakistan, rather its absence, are immense and very complex.

People who read about the problems here such as fundamentalism and extremism would find it hard to believe that the same country is a net exporter of doctors and engineers. It best exemplifies the confused state of affairs that exist in this land.

All over Asia are nations which have, in a remarkably short time, gone from being disaster zones to relatively developed and civilized societies. Naturally, the only reason why they have been able to do so is through the implementation of properly planned educational policies.

I glance back at my college days and my work at the tutorial service. It always amazed me getting paid for doing stuff I loved so much, i.e., helping my colleagues better understand concepts they were struggling with. I look further into the past and remember the people who raised me, individuals who were selfless and generous to a fault.

My maternal Grandfather taught Engineering at Aligarh University in the days when graduating from high school guaranteed a good career. My aunt, who was among the first professors at the Teacher's Training College in Karachi, did her B.Ed. from University College London at a time when Asian women rarely ventured out of homes. They gave without counting and taught without reserve. Their doors were never shut. Only now that I teach do I realize how much they had influenced me.

My journey to the field of Education has been long winded and runs through the world of transportation, business and human resources. Perhaps my encounter with 'reality' makes me a better teacher as educationists can at times be pedantic and overly theoretical. In fact I would recommend a stint in the real world to all teachers as it hones in on one home truth, that out there, there are no rules! More relevant is that the years outside my field of choice enable me to better observe from a macro standpoint the chronic and inherent weaknesses in the structure of the educational system as it has evolved in Pakistan

Working at Karachi Grammar School was a wonderful experience for what delights a teacher more than to be surrounded by outstanding scholars of the senior grades. At this most elite institution, I taught the kids of feudal lords and generals, bureaucrats and industrialists, movers & shakers. It's quite a ride as people revere you like a deity once they discover your association with KGS. The brilliance of the students there cannot be over-stated and many enter Ivy League and other top colleges here & abroad every year

My move to Fatima Jinnah Government Girl's School as part of a public sector reform project was a real eye opener. The pupils now were children of cobblers & cooks, milk vendors & masons, the down and the dispossessed, and I came face to face with the glaring dichotomy in the present educational system. It has a two-tier outlay. The O/A level system for the few, the Matriculation format for the masses. In the former English is the medium of instruction, while in

the latter it is taught only as a subject and that too from grade 6 onwards. One is bright and gay and full of knowledge and opportunity. The other is dark and dreary and ignorant and a dead end.

It was not always so, and although myself a beneficiary of O & A levels, I recall the countless gifted pupils who emerged out of public schools and went to do great things. Until the 1970's scholars from both systems entered higher centers of learning in proportionate numbers. However today all good schools are teaching exclusively O's & A's, and students of the public system now hardly make it to college; their futures permanently jeopardized.

How things have been allowed to come to this sorry pass boggles the mind. However, for instance, if one considers that the spouse of the last minister of education runs the biggest private English educational network in Pakistan, it would seem almost conspiratorial. The task of restructuring the system along modern and more equitable lines is indeed daunting.

The government runs more than a hundred thousand schools all over Pakistan and it is the government which, by a long mile, is the biggest employer of teachers as well. Hence if universal literacy is to be achieved, then improvement has to be brought through the public system under the Matriculation format. Private education (O's & A's) is too expensive and hence cannot accomplish this goal.

Our project has attracted a lot of publicity and Ministers & Governors beat a regular path to our door and heap laurels on our endeavors and achievements. They unanimously agree that a major overhaul of the education system is long overdue but are clueless how to go about it even if the political will existed. Some of the issues that one would have to contend with, apart from huge bureaucratic hurdles, are text-book reform, improved & modern teacher training, phasing out of corporal punishment, fusion of the rural & urban medium-of-instruction divide, end of a culture of cheating (a serious impediment to the underprivileged child's desire to excel), to name just a few. The fact that there are different boards for different provinces and even cities only complicates matters further.

My assessment of the situation in Pakistan leads me to believe that the system here needs to be structured along the lines of the immersion format in Canada in which French and English are taught simultaneous and concurrently. While the kids coming out of private schools here are deficient in Urdu (not an impediment to upward mobility), the children of the public system are terribly disadvantaged due to their weak English. And to those who raise their voices against 'Ang-ray-zee', I say unabashedly, that in the age of the internet, not knowing the lingua franca of the world is akin to living in the dark ages.

Hence Urdu and English need to be taught right from pre-school and although one recognizes the dearth of English teachers, a lot can still be achieved using audio-visual aids to fill the gaps. The number of educational movies and programs available is enormous and while they cannot replace good teachers, they would certainly allow students to glean enough knowledge of English to eventually be able to obtain at least third, if not second, tier level jobs.

Having gotten my toe in, a M.Ed. from Harvard would open for me the doors leading to a role in any educational reform in Pakistan. Although at this stage I do not know if my purpose would be

better served by getting into Government, but that is not my interest as too many people become dead wood upon entering the corridors of power. My approach to influencing official policy would be through the formation of an NGO or a think tank of like-minded and capable people (there are many), while simultaneously and initially returning to and continuing with my work at Fatima Jinnah School or other similar institution. I could also take up the formation of a new school strictly along the lines I am proposing, where both English & Urdu literature are properly taught, perhaps with the further addition of Persian.

At this stage I should mention that the fact that I work at a girl's school has particular relevance, as this is by far the most neglected group/area within the wider gambit of the issue at hand. Female education is a sacred cow and is enveloped in a shroud of secrecy and hypocrisy. A family will starve and scrape in order to put boys through private schools while girls are either kept at home or admitted to public institutions. Also, girls are expected to cook, clean, launder, wash, serve, what have you. Hence homework never gets done. In many cases, television where they would imbibe new ideas also remains off limits to them. Hence, the imperativeness of public educational reform becomes even more apparent as this is where the vast majority of female students are enrolled.

Over half the population of Pakistan (200 million) is below 25, and it is set to double in the next 30 years. This is a time bomb which will explode in everyone's face lest education is taken to the poorest child of the poorest village. There is a misconception among the elite that the poor are not necessarily interested in educating their progeny. This myth has been thoroughly dispelled by my experiences working with the children of the underprivileged. I have received nothing but appreciation from them despite the fact that at times I speak unguardedly and against convention.

From teaching the richest to educating the most impoverished, the common thread I found is the hope and goodness that runs through the heart of the people of this land. There's an unflinching belief that a more just and tolerant society is possible. They are also deeply aware that education is the path that will lead them to this utopia. I know that I can make a positive and perhaps even decisive contribution to these lofty ideals and goals.