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Language Shift and Maintenance: A Sociolinguistic Study of the Attitudes of the Youth towards the Local Language in Multan City

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Abstract



The present study was survey research conducted in the Multan city, and the purpose was to investigate the language attitudes of the youth towards the Punjabi language and its use in different domains of life. The study used Fishman's Domain theory and was descriptive in its nature. The study used the quantitative research approach and adopted the stratified random sampling technique. The data was obtained through an online survey from both male and female university students. Overall, 384 students were elected from both the private and the public universities of Multan, and the data was analyzed statistically using Microsoft Excel Software. The results of the study showed that the young Punjabis do not have positive attitude towards the Punjabi language. They consider it a useless language and shifting from it. They consider the English and the Urdu language more useful as compared to the Punjabi language. Majority of the respondents never used the Punjabi language for communication in any of the domains of life selected for the study. The future linguistic scenario of the Punjabi language in Multan seems to be in danger. The future researches can be done in different cities of South Punjab to know the status of the Punjabi language thoroughly.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Language Shift and Maintenance, Language Attitudes, Language Domains, Language Use

Introduction

Languages are considered crucial for maintaining the ethnic identity of any linguistic group. A language is not only an important tool for human communication rather it also encapsulates the whole cultural history of any particular ethnic community. The current study evaluates the attitudes of young Punjabis towards the Punjabi language and the use of the Punjabi language in different domains of life. An attitude is a mental state to like or dislike any object, person, idea, etc. (Worchel, Cooper & Goethals, 1988). The research study investigates the status of the Punjabi language from the perspective of language shift and maintenance. The status of any language in the eyes of its speakers means a lot for its long survival. The fate of the languages is tied up with those of its native speakers (Nettle & Romaine, 2000).

The language plays an important role in maintaining the identity of its speakers. Baker (1992) stated that a positive attitude can promote a language just as a healthy diet and an exercise maintains the health and reduces the risk of ailment. A Welsh proverb states, no language, no nation. In the modern era, not all of the languages are given equal importance. Many languages of the powerful and dominant groups have taken the place of the languages of less dominant and less powerful communities. The superior languages take the place of inferior ones and as a result the less commonly used languages slowly die. (Darwin, 1981)

In the age of advancement, the dominant languages like the English language have become the need of every person. The nations and communities are losing their own languages, and they are learning the languages of the dominant group to fulfill the needs of modern life. The trend of language shift seems to be common in many communities of indigenous languages. Language shift is a

constantly changing phenomenon where a community that uses a particular language as their native language starts speaking the other language (Bell, 2014).

The native speakers of many languages stop using their own languages, and they also stop transmitting it to the next generations. People should maintain their ethnic languages and not stop transmitting them to their children. The process of language maintenance refers to the phenomenon where the arterial language of a particular community is preserved and used continually in at least one or more spheres of life. It can also refer to the situation where a first language continues to be used in some but not all the domains by different generations of native speakers (Pauwels, 2016).

Purpose of the Study

The aim of the current research is to examine the attitudes of the young natives of the Punjabi language towards the Punjabi in the region where the Punjab community is in less concentration. The native youth of the Punjabi language will lead the future linguistic scenario of the Punjabi language in the country. The young generation will play a great role in transmitting their ethnic language to their offspring, and it will make possible the survival of the Punjabi language longer in future. For this reason, it is of great importance to be well aware of their attitudes about their first language i.e., Punjabi.

Significance of the Study

The present study will be useful to know the extent to which the Punjabi language is maintained or shifted by its young native speakers. The study will provide academic information in general. The study will also provide useful information for the language planners and policy makers in making future language policies. It will be useful for the education curriculum developers of the country while developing the curricula of different languages and help them determine the medium of instruction at different educational levels in the future.

Research Questions

The present study aims to answer the following question:

1. What is the current status of the local language Punjabi among its native young speakers?
2. What are the attitudes of the native young Punjabis towards the Punjabi language?
3. In what domains do the young Punjabis use the Punjabi language?
4. What is the proficiency level of the young Punjabi natives in the productive and the receptive skills in the Punjabi language?
5. Is the Punjabi language maintained or shifted by its young native speakers?

Theoretical Underpinning

Language attitudes towards a language and its use in different domains of life play a significant role in identifying the phenomena of language shift and maintenance. Fishman (1965, 1972) proposed a "domain theory," which particularly focused on the analysis of the domains of language use in different spheres of life in order to analyze the paradigm of language shift and maintenance in a particular community. The number of speakers matters a lot for the good fortune of a language and its maintenance, and it is quite a clear fact that the language of a community smaller in size has the great threat of language shift and death (Mesthrie, 2001).

The present study employed Fishman's domain theory as a theoretical ground for the study. The domain theory illustrated the use of various languages in different social and institutional contexts in multilingual communities. Domains are defined as socio-ecological co-occurrences or institutional contexts, and they try to entitle the major gatherings of interaction circumstances that occur in specific multilingual situations (Fishman, 1965, p.73). It refers to understanding the phenomena, who speaks what language to which person, and in which situation.

The domain analysis helps greatly in investigating the degree of language shift and maintenance (Fishman, 1965). The language attitudes and language use have great intimacy because the community having positive attitudes towards a language may learn or use that language in different domains of life. The low attitudes of people towards any language mean fewer and restricted domains of language use (Fishman, 1972).

The family domain is significantly important in transferring the language to the next generations. It is crucial to explore the use of the language in the family domain, as it shows the preference and attitudes of the speech community toward their native language and the extent of language shift and maintenance. The family domain has been demonstrated to be the vital one.

Multilingualism often initiates in the household and be contingent to it for reassurance if not for defense (Fishman, 1965, p.73).

The family is the only exclusive domain where an indigenous can be maintained. The home domain is in the control of the family, and the grandparents use the language, which increases the chance of language survival (Holmes, 1992). The family domain is the last domain where there is a chance of survival of a particular language, and it can be maintained, but its maintenance is at risk if the usage of the language is just limited to the home domain. It is impossible for a language to be maintained if it is only limited to the family domain because it has lost its functions in every other domain of life. (Coulmas, 2005). The young members of the community perform the function of social indicators, and they are more sensitive to the unfavourable and substandard status of their ancestral language and they may choose to speak in the language of the more dominant and more powerful group (Harrison, 2007).

The domain theory asserts that in every bilingual or multilingual society, each language should be assigned a specific function to be performed in different domains of life. If every language performs different roles in various spheres of life, then each language will remain functional in society instead of becoming useless and unprofitable for the community members.

Domain analysis helps in comprehending the extent of language shift and maintenance in any speech community. The young generation is more prone to language shift as they feel shame about using their own language, and they consider it as a useless language. The young members of the minority group shift from their ethnic language to the language of the more powerful group because they see the advantages of the dominant language in the modern world (Holmes, 1992).

The negative attitude towards the language minimizes its usage in different domains. A language dies slowly when the tasks performed by the language in a particular domain are taken over by the other superior language, and the speakers of the dying language become less proficient in it (Holmes, 1992). It is very important to examine the domains of language use to assess the extent of language shift and maintenance in a particular society.

Literature Review

Riaz (2011) conducted an ethnographic research in Islamabad and Toba Teksingh to explore the linguistic scenario of the Punjabi language among its native members and its use in different domains of life. The researcher conducted the research under the constructive qualitative paradigm using a purposive sampling technique. The results of the study revealed that the Punjabi native speakers considered the Punjabi language less prestigious compared to the English and the Urdu language in the urban site, and the rural natives of the Punjabi showed a positive attitude towards the Punjabi language.

Another research was conducted by (Nazir, Aftab and Saeed, 2013) in Sargodha to explore the attitudes of the Punjabi speakers and the causes and effects of language shift. The researchers selected different age group participants and carried out the study using both qualitative and quantitative methodology. Interviews and questionnaires were used to gather the information. The results of the study showed that the young generation is shifting from the Punjabi language, and the language is used in a few domains among youths. The elders showed a positive attitude and strong affiliation with the Punjabi language, which is maintained by the elders in different domains of life for communication purposes.

Khokhlova (2014) analyzed the status of the Punjabi language in Pakistan. The study focused on the different diplomatic, ethnic and psychical factors of the gradual language shift from the lives of the native speakers of the Punjabi language. The results showed that the Punjabi language is restricted to the informal domains only in the lives of the Punjabi natives and is treated as the language to be used only for informal communication purposes.

Zaidi (2014) performed a research to explore the status of the Punjabi language in Punjab. The research was based on the Ethno-linguistic Vitality Model in order to investigate the status of the Punjabi language. He claimed that the Punjabi language is being exiled by the Punjabis themselves in various domains of life. The province of Punjab is overwhelmed with Punjabi speakers, but despite this fact, the study revealed that the Punjabi language is being alienated in its homeland.

Gillani & Mahmood (2014) conducted a survey research in Faisalabad to explore the status of the Punjabi language among youth. The study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The data was collected via questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS software. The findings of the study

revealed that the Punjabi natives do not feel proud of their mother tongue, and the participants showed negative attitudes towards the Punjabi language and are shifting towards the English and the Urdu language.

John (2015) carried out a research on language attitudes to explore the status of the Punjabi language among youth in Lahore city and the rural areas of Sahiwal. The data was collected through structured interviews. The study concluded that significant differences were found in the attitudes of the urban and the rural participants. The urban participants associated the Punjabi language with fun and entertainment only. Whereas the rural participants showed favorable attitudes towards the Punjabi language, and they used the Punjabi language in almost all spheres of life.

Another research was conducted by (Zaidi, 2016) to explore the ethno-linguistic vitality of the Punjabi language in Pakistan. The researcher combined the Ethno-linguistic Vitality model the Fishman's GIDS (Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale) approach to investigate the objective ethno-linguistic vitality of Punjabi in a broader sense. The results of the study showed that the vitality of the Punjabi language is in danger zone and the Punjabi language has low status in Pakistan.

Abbas & Iqbal (2018) conducted a quantitative study to investigate the language attitudes of the young generation towards Punjabi, Urdu, and English language. The study was comparative in nature, and they adopted the mentalist approach. The study indicated that adult Punjabi speakers are not literate in their native language. The Punjabi young natives showed negative attitudes towards the Punjabi language.

Abbas, Jalil and Rehman (2019) examined the status of the Punjabi language by exploring the attitudes of the Punjabi native speakers towards the Punjabi language in the province of Punjab. They used the purposive sampling technique, and the research instrument for data collection was interview. The participants of the study expressed negative attitudes towards the Punjabi language. They described that the Punjabi language has no value in the modern era as it does not meet the requirements of the modern age.

Abbas, Jalil, Zaki and Irfan (2020) conducted a sociolinguistic study to investigate the linguistic scenario of the Punjabi language among the Punjabi community members as compared to the English and the Urdu language. The study used the mentalist approach and the indirect data collection method (matched guise technique). The findings of the study showed that the participants are in favor of using English and Urdu language. They showed negative attitudes towards the Punjabi language, and they gave it low value. The young respondents are more prone to language shift, and the Punjabi natives seem to shift their native language.

Shafi (n.d) investigated the status of the Punjabi language in the eyes of Punjabi parents and their opinion about the use of the Punjabi language by their children. The data was collected through a questionnaire. The study was exploratory and quantitative in its nature. The results of the study revealed that the Punjabi parents do not show positive attitudes towards the Punjabi language, and they do not consider the Punjabi language beneficial and useful for their children.

Research Methodology

The current research is descriptive in nature, and the sample for the current study was based on the educated young generation of Multan city. The characteristics of descriptive study are simply to express or describe and to determine 'what is' (Ethridge, 2004). Descriptive research approach examines the current state of any situation, and it explores what is happening at the present time (Bhawna & Gobind, 2015). The sample involved a total of 384 male and female respondents. Total of 192 male and 192 female students participated in the study. The students were selected from private and public universities.

The research used the stratified random sampling technique to conduct the study. The process of dividing the population into different groups called strata, and then taking the sample from each group (stratum) independently is termed as stratified sampling, and if the sample taken randomly from each stratum, then this process is termed as stratified random sampling (Singh & Mangat, 1996). Stratification was based on gender and educational level. The survey was conducted for the present research to explore the language attitudes and usage patterns among the young natives of the Punjabi language in different domains of life.

The present study was quantitative in nature and used the closed form questionnaire (close-ended questions) as a research tool to gather the information. The questionnaire for the current research was adapted from (Gillani & Mahmood, 2014), (Anjum, 2016) and (Belmihoub, 2018). The

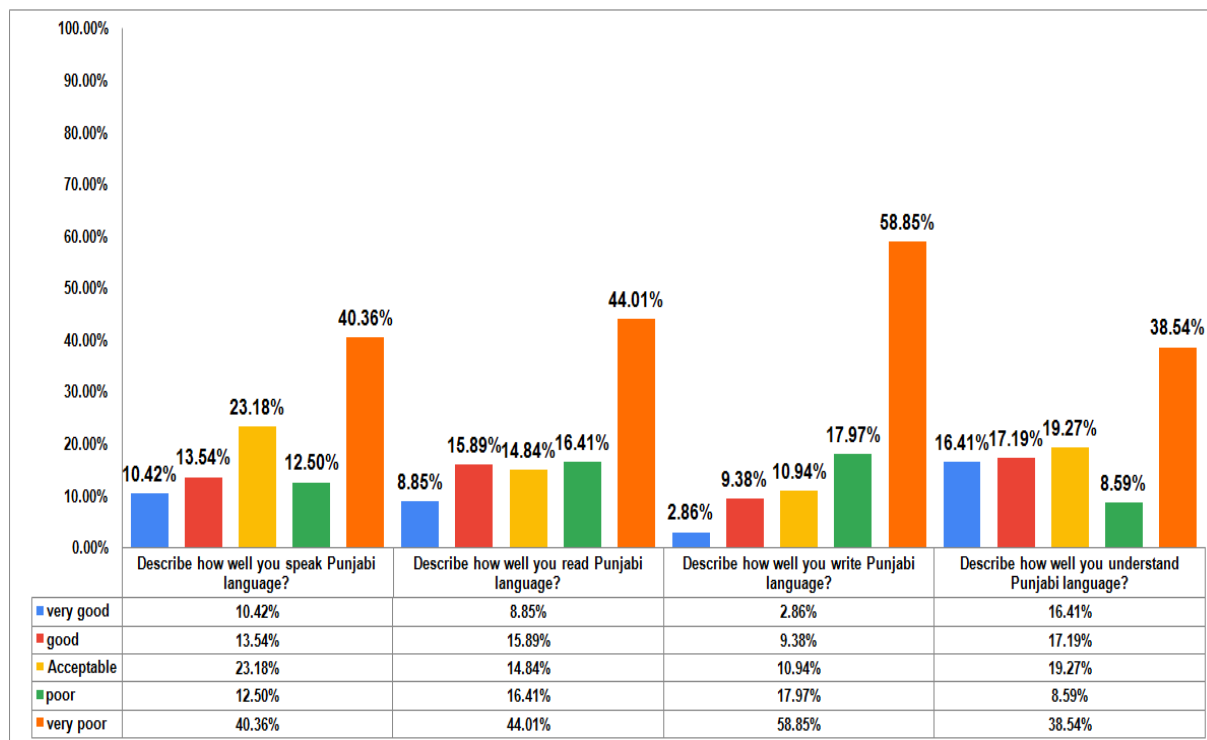
questionnaire was developed according to the nature of the topic being studied. The questionnaire was developed using the five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was based on total fifty-eight statements. The content of the questionnaire was divided into three sections. The data for the present research was collected through an online survey. The data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel Software. The results of the data were displayed using clustered columns and in tabular form.

Data analysis & Findings

Analysis of the Language Proficiency Level

In this section, the questions were asked about the proficiency level in the productive (speaking & writing) and receptive (listening and reading) skills in the Punjabi language.

Figure 1 Punjabi Language Proficiency Level



i. Speaking Proficiency Level in the Punjabi Language

The results show that on answering the question about the proficiency level of speaking in the Punjabi language, only 10.42 % of respondents selected the option very good for speaking proficiency in the Punjabi language, 13.54 % of respondents selected the option good, of 23.18 % of students selected the option acceptable, 12.50 % students selected poor option and 40.36 % respondents selected their speaking proficiency level in the Punjabi language as very poor.

ii. Proficiency Level of Reading Skill in the Punjabi Language

The results show that only 8.85 % of respondents selected the option of very good for reading proficiency level in the Punjabi language, 15.89 % of students selected their proficiency level as good, 14.84 % of participants selected their proficiency in reading the Punjabi language as acceptable, 16.41 % of respondents selected their proficiency as poor and 44.01 % students selected very poor option for their reading proficiency level in their native language Punjabi.

iii. Proficiency Level of Writing Skills in the Punjabi Language

The results about the proficiency level in writing the Punjabi language show that only 2.86 % of respondents selected very good option, 9.38 % of respondents selected good, 10.94 % of participants selected acceptable option, 17.97 % of respondents selected poor option and 58.85 % of respondents selected very poor for describing their proficiency level in writing their mother tongue.

iv. Proficiency level of Listening or Comprehension Skills in the Punjabi Language

The results about the listening or comprehension proficiency level in the Punjabi language show that 16.41 % of respondents describe their proficiency level as very good, 17.19 % of respondents answer their proficiency level as good, 19.27% of respondents selected the option

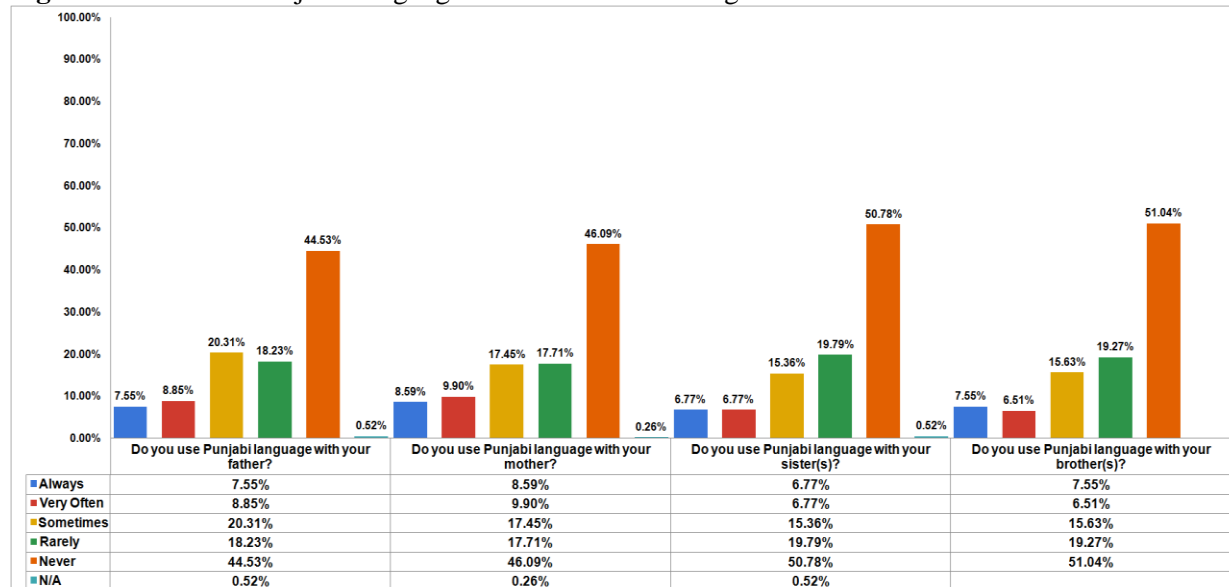
acceptable, 8.59% of students selected the option poor and 38.54 % of respondents selected the option very poor to describe their proficiency level of understanding the Punjabi language.

Analysis of the Domains of Language Use

The second section explored the usage of the Punjabi language in different domains of life by young native speakers of the Punjabi language. The results of each domain are discussed as follows:

1. Analysis of the Use of the Punjabi Language in the Family Domain

Figure 2 Use of the Punjabi Language with Parents & Siblings



• Frequency of Use of the Punjabi Language with Father

The results show that on describing the frequency of Punjabi language use with their father, only 7.55 % of respondents always use the Punjabi language while talking to their father, 8.85 % of respondents selected the option very often, 20.21 % of respondents selected the option sometimes, 18.23 % respondents rarely use the Punjabi language and 44.53 % participants never talk to their father in the Punjabi language, while 0.52 % selected the option NA (Not Allowed).

• Frequency of Use of the Punjabi Language with Mother

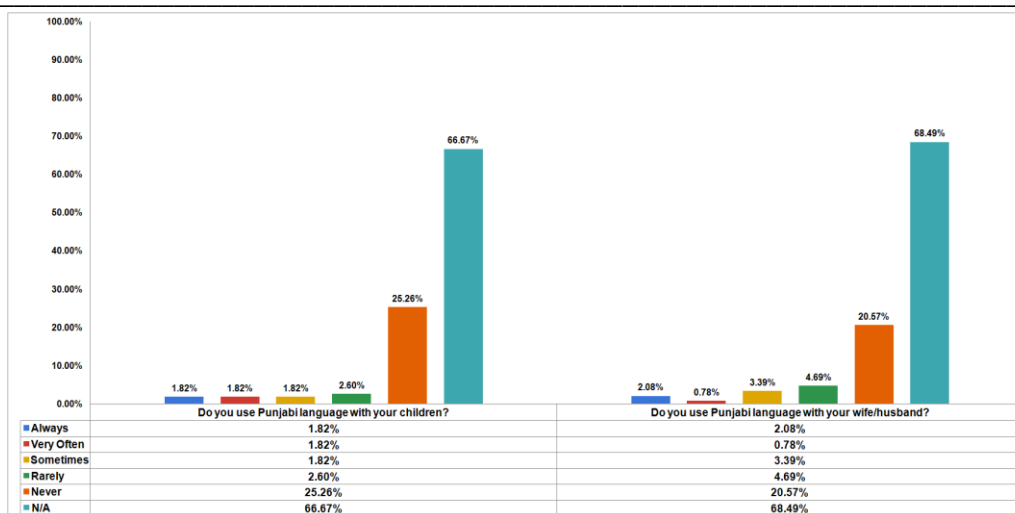
The results show that only 8.95 % of respondents talk to their mother in the Punjabi language, 9.95 % of respondents selected the option very often, 17.45 % of students selected the option sometimes, 17.71 % of participants rarely use the Punjabi language, 46.09 % of respondents never use the Punjabi language while communicating with their mother and 0.26 % students selected the option NA.

• Frequency of Use of the Punjabi Language with Siblings

The results indicate that 6.77 % of respondents always use Punjabi language with their sister(s), 6.77 % of respondents very often use the Punjabi language, 15.3 % of respondents sometimes use the Punjabi language, 17.97 % of participants rarely use the Punjabi language, 50.78 % respondents never talk in the Punjabi language with their sister(s) and 0.52 % people selected the option NA.

On the other hand, the results show that 7.55 % of respondents talk in the Punjabi language with their brother(s), only 6.51 % people very often uses the Punjabi language, 15.63 % of respondents sometimes communicate in the Punjabi language, 19.27 % of people rarely use the Punjabi language and 51.04 % respondents never communicate in the Punjabi language with their brother(s). None of the respondents selected option NA.

Figure 3 Use of the Punjabi Language with Spouse & Children



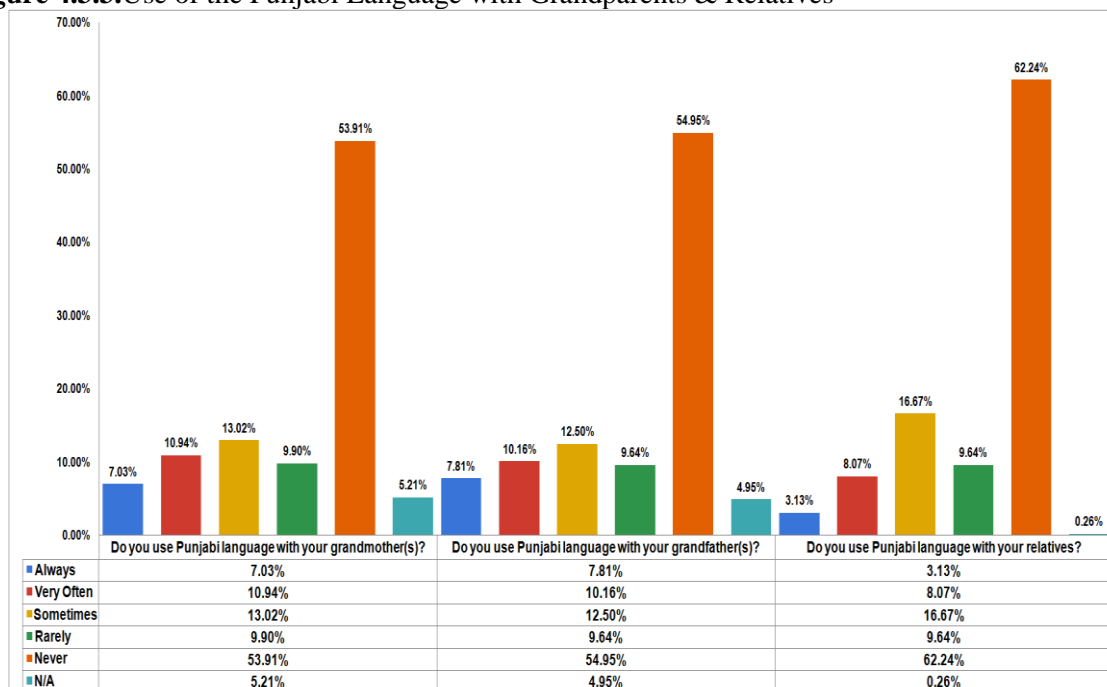
• **Frequency of the Use of the Punjabi Language with Children**

The results show that only 1.82 % of married respondents always use the Punjabi language with their children, the same ratio 1.82 % of respondents very often talk to their children in the Punjabi language, similarly 1.82 % of people sometimes use the Punjabi language and 25.26 % of people never communicate in the Punjabi language with their children. Majority of the respondents are unmarried, so 66.67 % of people selected option NA.

• **Frequency of the Use of the Punjabi Language with Spouses**

The results indicate that 2.08 % of people always communicate in the Punjabi language with their spouses, 0.78 % of respondents very often use the Punjabi language, 3.39 % of participants sometimes talk to their partners in the Punjabi language, 4.69 % of respondents rarely use the Punjabi language for communication and 20.57 % of respondents out of the total married participants never communicate in the Punjabi language with their spouses. Most of the respondents are unmarried, so 8.49 % of people selected option NA.

Figure 4.3.3. Use of the Punjabi Language with Grandparents & Relatives



• **Frequency of the Use of the Punjabi Language with Grandmother(s)**

The results show that only 7.03 % of respondents always communicate in the Punjabi language with their grandmother(s), 10.94 % of people very often use the Punjabi language, 13.02 % of respondents sometimes talk in the Punjabi language, 9.90% of people rarely use the Punjabi language and 53.91 % of respondents never communicate to their grandmother(s) in the Punjabi language, while 5.21 % of people selected the option NA.

• **Frequency of the Use of the Punjabi Language with Grandfather(s)**

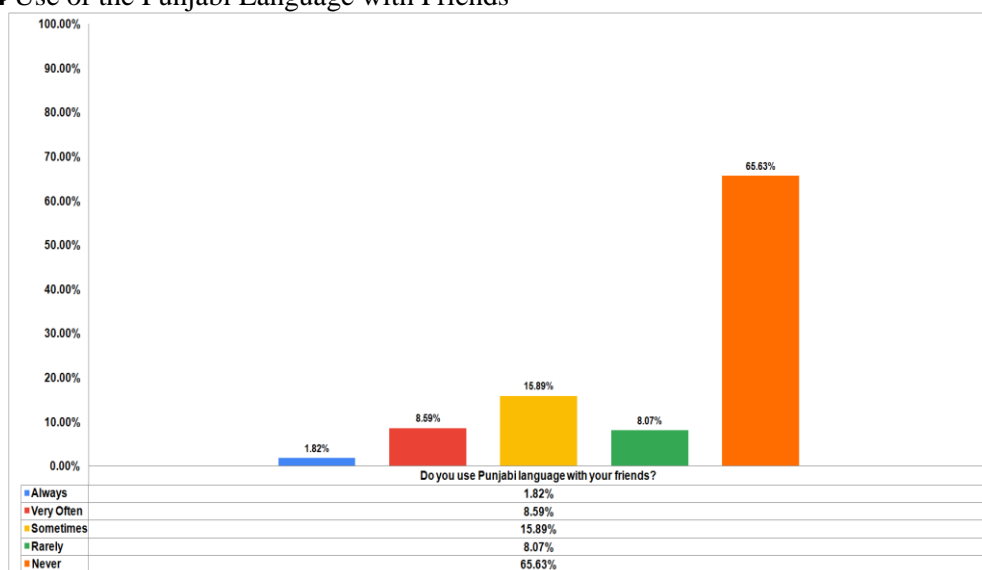
The results indicate that only 7.81 % of respondents always communicate to their grandfather(s) in the Punjabi language, 10.16 % of people very often use the Punjabi language, 12.50 % of participants sometimes talk in the Punjabi language, 9.64 % of respondents rarely use the Punjabi language while talking to their grandfather(s), 54.95 % of students never communicate to their grandfather(s) in the Punjabi language and 4.95 % of people selected the option NA.

• **Frequency of the Use of the Punjabi Language with Relatives**

The results specify that only 3.13 % of respondents always communicate to their relatives in the Punjabi language, 8.09 % people very often talk in the Punjabi language, 16.67 % respondents sometimes use the Punjabi language with their relatives, 9.64 % participants rarely use the Punjabi language, 62.24 % respondents never communicate to their relatives in the Punjabi language and 0.26 % people selected the option NA.

2. Analysis of the Use of the Punjabi Language in the Friendship Domain

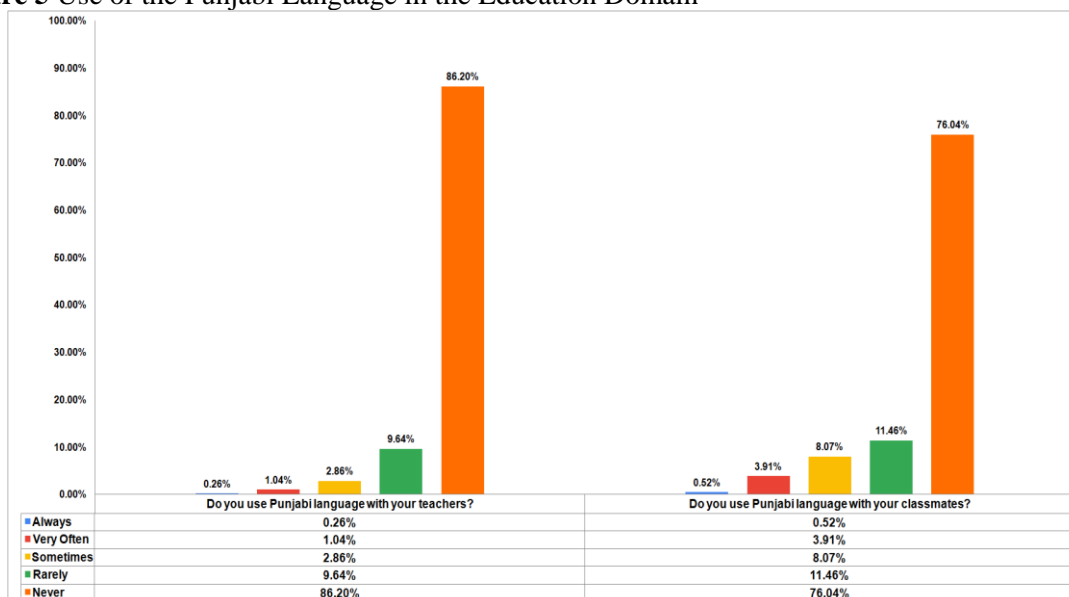
Figure 4 Use of the Punjabi Language with Friends



The results show that only 1.82 % respondents always communicate to their friends in the Punjabi language, 8.59 % people very often use the Punjabi language with their friends, 15.89 % respondents sometimes talk to their friends in the Punjabi language, 8.07 % participants rarely use the Punjabi language while talking to their friends and 65.63 % respondents never use the Punjabi language in order to communicate with their friends.

3. Analysis of the Use of the Punjabi Language in the Education Domain

Figure 5 Use of the Punjabi Language in the Education Domain

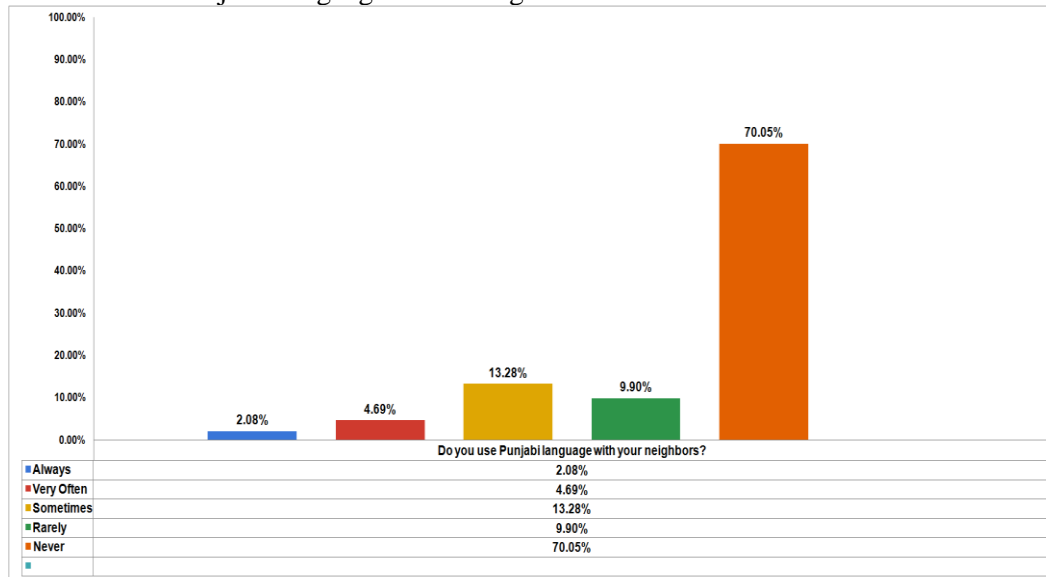


The results indicate that only 0.26 % respondents always use the Punjabi language with their teachers, 1.04 % respondents very often talk to their teachers in the Punjabi language, 2.86 % participants sometimes communicate in the Punjabi language, 9.64 % people rarely use the Punjabi language while talking to their teachers and 86.20 % respondents never communicate with their teachers in the Punjabi language.

The results also show that 0.52 % respondents always use the Punjabi language with their classmates, 3.91 % students very often talk to their classmates in the Punjabi language, 8.07 % participants sometimes communicate in the Punjabi language, 11.46 % people rarely use the Punjabi language with their classmates and 76.04 % respondents never use the Punjabi language while talking to their classmates.

4. Analysis of the Use of the Punjabi Language in the Neighborhood domain

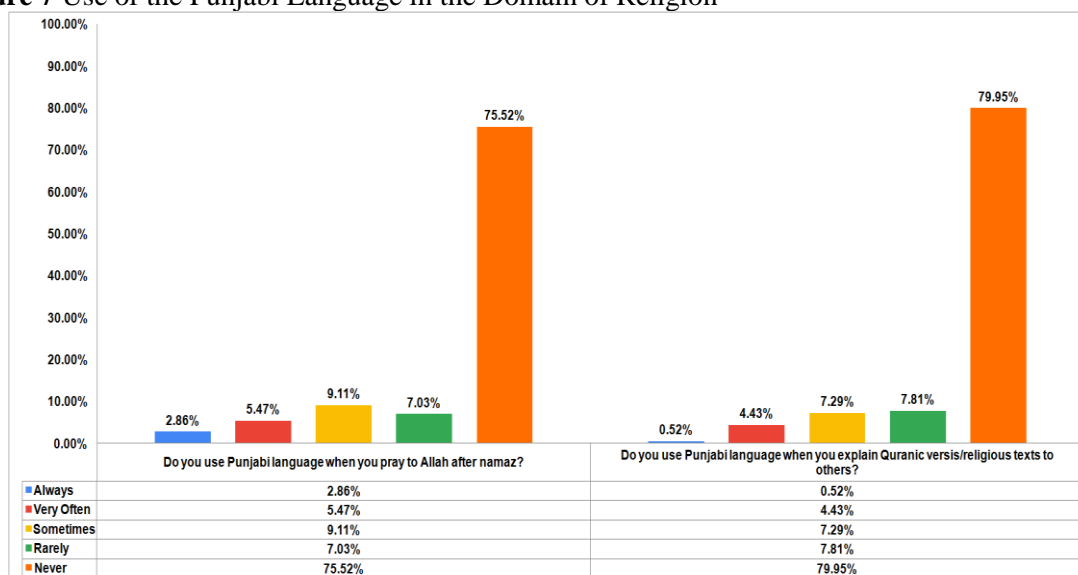
Figure 6 Use of the Punjabi Language in the Neighborhood Domain



The results show that only 2.08 % respondents always use the Punjabi language while communicating to their neighbors, 4.69 % people very often use the Punjabi language with neighbors, 13.28 % participants sometimes talk to their neighbors in the Punjabi language, 9.90 % people rarely use the Punjabi language and 70.05 % respondents never communicate with their neighbors in the Punjabi language.

5. Analysis of the Use of the Punjabi Language in the Domain of Religion

Figure 7 Use of the Punjabi Language in the Domain of Religion



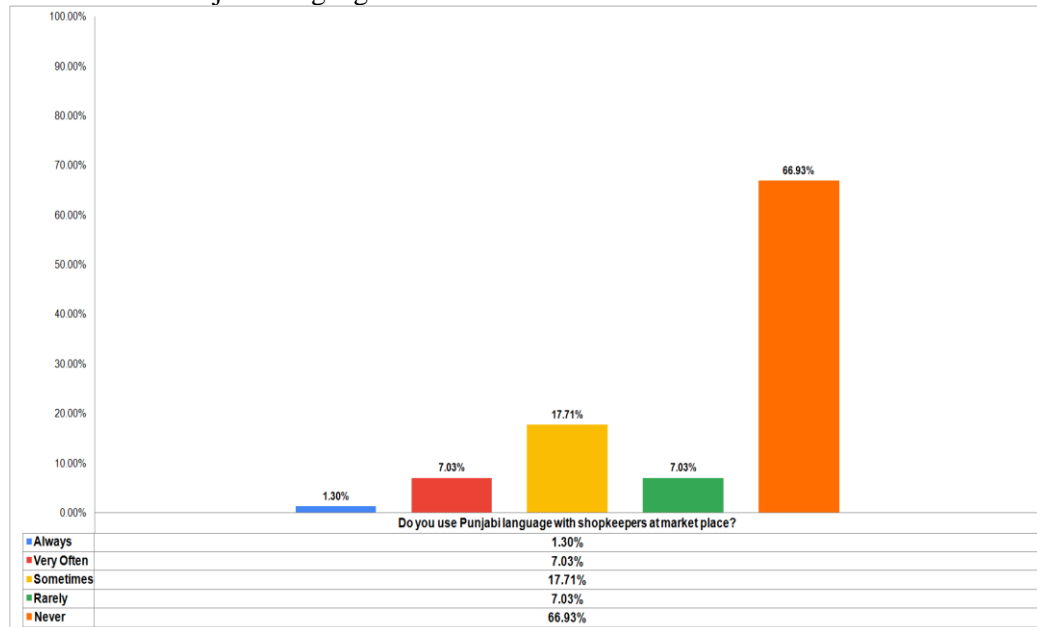
The results show that 2.86 % respondents always use the Punjabi language while praying to Allah, 5.47 % people very often use the Punjabi language, 9.11% people sometimes supplicate in the

Punjabi language, 7.03 % participants rarely use the Punjabi language and 75.52 % respondents never supplicate in the Punjabi language.

The results indicate that 0.52 % respondents use the Punjabi language while explaining religious texts to others, 4.43 % people very often address others in the Punjabi language, 7.29 % respondents sometimes use the Punjabi language, 7.81% participants rarely communicate in the Punjabi language and 79.95 % respondents never use the Punjabi language for explaining the religious texts and verses to other people.

6. Analysis of the Use of the Punjabi Language in the Domain of Market

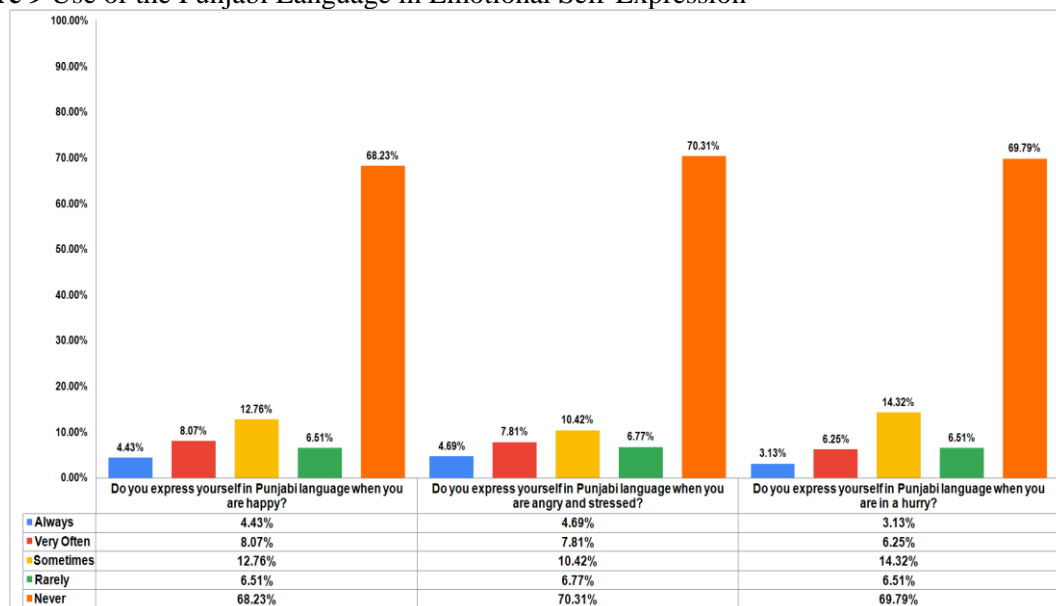
Figure 8 Use of the Punjabi Language in the Domain of Market



The results indicate that only 1.30 % respondents always communicate in the Punjabi language with the shopkeepers in the market, 7.03 % people very often talk to the shopkeepers in the Punjabi language, 17.71 % participants sometimes use the Punjabi language while talking to the shopkeepers, 7.03 % people rarely communicate in the Punjabi language and 66.93 % respondents never communicate with the shopkeepers in the Punjabi language.

7. Analysis of the Use of the Punjabi Language in Emotional Self-Expression

Figure 9 Use of the Punjabi Language in Emotional Self-Expression



The results show that only 4.43 % respondents always use the Punjabi language to express themselves when they are in happy mood, 8.07 % people very often express themselves in the Punjabi language while talking to themselves in happiness, 12.76 % people sometimes express themselves in

the Punjabi language, 6.51 % participants rarely use the Punjabi language and 68.23 % respondents never use the Punjabi language to express themselves when they are happy.

The results indicate that only 4.69 % respondents always use the Punjabi language to express themselves when they are stressed or in the state of anger, 7.81 % people very often use the Punjabi language to express themselves in anger, 10.42 % people sometimes use the Punjabi language when they express themselves in the state of anger, 6.77 % people rarely talk to them in the Punjabi language in stressed situation and 70.31 % respondents never use the Punjabi language to express themselves in the Punjabi language when they are angry or in a tensed situation.

The respondents answers show that only 3.13 % people use the Punjabi language to express themselves when they are in rush, 6.25 % people very often use the Punjabi language to express themselves in state of urgency, 14.32 % participants sometimes talk to themselves in the Punjabi language, 6.51 % people rarely use the Punjabi language in expressing themselves when they are in hurry and 69.79 % respondents never use the Punjabi language to express themselves when they are in hurry.

Analysis of the Language Attitudes

The last section of the sociolinguistic questionnaire contains the statements about the attitudes towards the Punjabi language.

1. Language Loyalty, Affiliation, Perception, Prestige & Status of the Punjabi Language

Table 1 *Language loyalty, affiliation, perception, prestige & status of the Punjabi language*

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neutral
I believe that Punjabi is a beautiful language.	18.23%	53.39%	19.27%	0.78%	8.33%
I strongly identify myself with my mother tongue and the group that speaks it.	18.49%	51.04%	21.09%	1.82%	7.55%
The status of Punjabi language is higher than that of any other language for me.	9.38%	24.48%	45.83%	9.64%	10.68%
I like Punjabi language.	18.49%	32.55%	35.16%	7.03%	6.77%
Punjabi is a prestigious language.	16.41%	45.31%	29.95%	1.82%	6.51%
I feel proud to say that I can speak Punjabi language.	16.41%	14.84%	44.79%	16.93%	7.03%
If I had to choose whether my child would be educated in the medium of Punjabi or Urdu/English, I would definitely choose Punjabi language.	2.60%	8.07%	33.59%	42.97%	12.76%
It is important that my children communicate effectively in Punjabi language.	7.81%	11.98%	37.50%	33.33%	9.38%
I would not mind marrying a Punjabi speaker.	20.83%	32.29%	30.21%	9.11%	7.55%
Punjabi is a difficult language to learn.	21.35%	53.13%	16.93%	3.65%	4.95%
Punjabi is a funny language.	28.65%	37.76%	24.48%	2.08%	7.03%
I do not like speaking Punjabi language.	33.59%	30.99%	17.45%	10.42%	7.55%

2. Language and Education, Language and Government Policies and the Use of Punjabi Language in Daily Life

Table 2 *Punjabi language use in education & daily life, Punjabi language & government policies*

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neutral
Punjabi language should be used in every aspect of daily life as English is used.	4.43%	19.01%	41.41%	24.74%	10.42%
Government should take steps and make language policies to promote Punjabi language.	10.42%	22.92%	38.02%	19.27%	9.38%
Punjabi language should be taught as a compulsory subject in schools.	5.21%	16.67%	35.68%	31.51%	10.94%

3. Language Usefulness and Instrumental and Integrative Motivation in Learning and Using the language

Table 3 Usefulness of the Punjabi language and instrumental and integrative motivation for using & learning the language

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neutral
Punjabi language is more useful than English.	1.82%	6.25%	35.68%	42.45%	13.80%
There are more useful languages than Punjabi to learn.	38.80%	38.54%	10.94%	0.00%	11.46%
Learning Punjabi language enriches my cultural knowledge.	12.24%	30.73%	32.29%	15.89%	8.85%
Punjabi is less useful to know than Urdu/English.	46.09%	34.90%	8.07%	2.08%	8.85%
For a better job I need to know either Urdu or English not Punjabi.	60.68%	21.88%	7.29%	1.82%	8.33%
I do not like Punjabi language because it does not offer advantages in seeking good job opportunities.	42.71%	34.11%	11.72%	2.60%	8.85%

4. Language Use and the Social Pressure

Table 4 Punjabi language use and the social pressure

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neutral
I would feel embarrassed if I speak Punjabi in front of my friends.	52.34%	20.05%	13.28%	9.38%	4.95%
People would consider me uneducated if I speak Punjabi language.	56.77%	18.75%	12.76%	5.47%	6.25%

5. Language and Entertainment

Table 5 Punjabi language and entertainment

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neutral
I like Punjabi songs.	20.05%	31.77%	5.73%	36.20%	6.25%
I like Punjabi movies.	9.64%	25.26%	16.41%	38.02%	10.68%
I like watching Punjabi T.V channels.	4.69%	21.61%	21.09%	40.10%	12.50%

The results of the study clearly show that majority of the young educated native Punjabis do not like to use their mother tongue. They do not want this language to be a part of their life. The majority showed negative attitudes toward the Punjabi language.

Discussion

The first research question was about the proficiency level of the young Punjabi natives in productive and receptive skills in the Punjabi language. The results showed that young Punjabi speakers have less proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and understanding the Punjabi language. Only a few 2.86 % of respondents can write the Punjabi language well. Rest of the majority is very poor at writing the Punjabi language. The results of the study were similar to the study conducted by (Abbas and Iqbal, 2018) that Punjabi speakers have the weakest writing skill in the Punjabi language.

The second question was about the domains in which the Punjabi language is used by its young natives. The results of the study showed most of the young Punjabis do not use the Punjabi language in any of the seven domains selected for the present study. The results clearly indicated that most young Punjabis do not use the Punjabi language for communication in their life.

The third question was about the attitudes of the young Punjabis towards the Punjabi language. The results clearly indicated that the Punjabi youth do not have a positive attitude towards the Punjabi language. The results showed that most of the young Punjabis do not like speaking the Punjabi language and consider Punjabi as a funny and difficult language to learn. The young native Punjabis do not have a positive attitude towards the Punjabi language. They do not consider their mother tongue a prestigious language, and they consider it useless in the modern world. The findings of the study are similar to the previous studies (Abbas, Jalil and Rehman, 2019; Abbas & Iqbal, 2018; Gillani & Mahmood, 2014; Zaidi, 2014; Khokhlova, 2014; Nazir, Aftab & Saeed, 2013; Riaz, 2011).

The fourth question was about the current status of the Punjabi language among its young native speakers. The results indicated that the Punjabi language is not enjoying a good status among

its young speakers. The young Punjabis do not feel any pride in using their own mother tongue. They consider that there are more useful languages than Punjabi to learn and that the Punjabi language has no role and value in obtaining a good job. They feel shame and embarrassment about using the Punjabi language.

The last question was an attempt to know about the trend of language shift or maintenance among the young natives of the Punjabi language. The findings of the study showed the trend of language shift among young Punjabis. The results clearly indicated that the young Punjabis are not interested in maintaining their ancestral language, and they are shifting from it.

Conclusions

The current research was an attempt to evaluate the paradigm of language shift and maintenance among young Punjabis by investigating their attitudes towards the Punjabi language and their use of the Punjabi language in different domains of life. The researcher found that most of the young Punjabi natives do not show a positive attitude towards learning and using the Punjabi language. They do not consider the Punjabi language useful, and they feel shame in speaking the Punjabi language. They are shifting from the Punjabi language, and they consider the Urdu and the English language more useful and beneficial to survive with the pace of the modern world.

Recommendations & Suggestions

The present study is an effort to explore the status of the Punjabi language among native youths. The results of the study showed that the current linguistic scenario of the Punjabi language in Multan seems to be in danger. There is no single school in Punjab where the Punjabi language is an obligatory part of the curriculum. The government should make reforms in the education policies of Pakistan, and the Punjabi language should be incorporated as a part of the syllabus and coached as an obligatory subject in schools. Future researches can be conducted in different cities of South Punjab to understand the status of the Punjabi language. The researchers can also compare the developed and less developed areas of South Punjab to know the status of the Punjabi language comprehensively.

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