

Provincial Autonomy and Devolution of Language Policy in Pakistan: Retrospect and Prospect

Ayaz Ahmad* and Asghar Khan**

Abstract

This paper revisits the concept of devolution in Pakistan as a federal state. It overviews the history of language policy from the perspective of the devolution in the context of 18th amendments. It evaluates the arguments of the supporters and opposers of devolution. While the supporters believe and argue in the support of devolution of decision making to the local level, the opposers consider such a move a threat to the existence of Pakistan. This paper establishes the validity of the argument of supporters of devolution and considers such a move beneficial for the promotion of local languages and the associated cultural, socio-political empowerment and economic opportunities of the local speakers. The absence of the substance of the opposers of devolution is thereby presented. The case of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a small unit of federation that houses a number of minority languages is explored. It is established that language policy became more conducive after passage of 18th Amendment in the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973. The devolution of Higher Education Commission (HEC) is also discussed and it is found that devolution of education - that remains the most important domain of language policy - still remains centralized and its devolution is resisted with the help of arguments of the opposers of devolution. This paper recommends the policy of considering local languages as source of strengthening the federation. It also suggests to make language related choices of minority languages a right that is protected through legal, material and institutional guarantees.

Keywords: Federalism, Provincial Autonomy, Devolution, Language Policy, Minority Languages, Language Rights.

Introduction

The multilingual and multiethnic Pakistan as a federal state is confronted with the challenge of achieving equality amongst

* Ayaz Ahmad, Department of Linguistics and English Language, Abdul Wali Khan University, Pakistan. Email: ayazmardan@gmail.com.

** Asghar Khan, Department of Political Science, Department of Regional Studies, University of Pakistan.

federating units. The 72 languages of Pakistan¹ plays decisive role in the formation of sub national ethnic identity. The language policy of Pakistan remains a tool of suppression of these identities. In this context the nature of federalism in Pakistan remains a contested area among those advocates and those opposes devolution. This paper, therefore, relates the current anomalies in language policy of Pakistan to the historical reasons and projects a future course for the current policy and the policy that includes suggestions offered in this paper. This paper consists of four sections. First section reviews relevant literature that outlines nature of language policy and relation of federation with the federating units and highlights the arguments in favor of and against devolution. Second section traces the roots of current language policies to policies adopted earlier by the political elites of Pakistan and before them by the British rule. This section also explores the causes and major outcomes of such policies. Third section analysis the effect of 18th constitutional amendment with regard to the devolution of language policy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (as a non-major federating unit). Last section proposes changes in the language policy that accords with the accommodative spirit of federalism.

Literature Review

Language is considered a tool which is used for materializing some ends, like communication etc. In this view it is logical to predict the possibility of failure in the attainment of the ends to which the language is put. To minimize this risk, intervention in language is considered legitimate.² Language planning and policy as a tool of intervention has therefore, gained importance in bringing the desired changes in the political and social features of the people concerned. Language planning and policy has various interpretations offered by its experts. Though in such discussion planning and policy remain indistinguishable from each other. However, if there to be maintained any distinction, policy is presented as a result usually in the form of norms while planning is reserved for the processes that may that happen after or before the emergence of a policy. Therefore, policy remains the normative side while planning happens to be applied side. For instance, consider, “language policy is a broad overarching term for decision on rights and access to languages and on the roles and function of particular languages and varieties of languages in a given polity”.³ According to her approach language planning is, “an operational concern within the field of language policy. Language planning

reflects the political and economic choices and value judgment of the planner.”⁴ For Spolsky it (language planning) is, “a determined and explicit policy change, a set of managed and planned interventions supported and enforced by law and implemented by a government agency”.⁵ The formation of language does not emerge in the form of an official document. Instead of following an over language policy such states engage in covert form of language policy. When the language policy does not exist in a document form, then belief of language speakers about their language are studied along such speakers’ practice (what they actually do about language and the forms of changes that are in language and its use).⁶ Tariq Rahman talks about language planning in these words:

“The term Language Policy covers many activities involving language. First, the decision as to how language (s) will function within the state is called status planning or language allocation. Certain languages will be used in the formal institutions, or state apparatus, which are called domain of power.... Once it has been decided which language will be used within the domain of power that language has to be given uniformity. This is called standardization. It also has to be modernized, new terms have to be added in order to express the new realities of a modern, industrial society.”⁷

Interest in the study of language policy as a branch of linguistics emerged in 20th century, when the Second World War resulted in the end of colonial rule in Africa and Asian and formation of a number of new states where nation building process normally included decision about official language, language of instruction and language for mass communication.⁸ Language policy as a term is attributed to Weinreich who coined it in 1957.⁹ Early use of language policy remained limited to political discourse, and such use has remained popular among the leading writers such as Cooper. In modern nation-states the political events remain multidimensional in their effect. One such effect in multilingual states affects bilingualism of population that relates to social, cultural, political and economic aspects of society.¹⁰ The current increase in the nature of language and its socio-political role has remained a topic of interest for thinkers like Nietzsche who considered close association exists between language and ideology as language forms, “a separate world beside the other world”.¹¹ Later Sapir and Whorf expressed it in more articulate form, that we know as linguistic determinism where language can influence our worldview.¹² Though such strong form has now been rejected, the

weaker form of this hypothesis remains an important underpinning in the study of language, culture, and identity.

Broadly speaking all socio-political, economic, and cultural variables are taken into account for the study of language policy, if they show the ability to influence a change in the functions of a language in a given context.¹³ Therefore, the ingredients that are taken into account might change their composition and hierarchical importance from context to context. In some states we find an organized and institutionalized approach to it, whereas, in others we extract it as a by-product of decisions and trends in the political, social, economic, cultural and demographic dimensions. In earlier studies of language policy, a top-down perspective was accepted as a universal norm. The emergence of a number of new states after the weakening of colonialism necessitated the use of language policy in nation building projects of such states. As the dominant model of national state included the concept of one language in a national states, modernization of states undertook language policy as a toll of building national identity among the citizens. The multilingual and multiethnic states faced the dilemma of whether to promote efficiency in administration through the promotion of a single official language or ensure equal rights of all language groups through promotion of multilingualism.¹⁴ In Soviet Union, the development of communist identity was partly achieved through planned changes in languages and their acquisition and thus the new identity of the “Soviet Man” was formed.¹⁵

Modern states normally realize their political ambitions by making planned changes in languages and their use.¹⁶ When the language of a group is declared as national language or it is given an official status, the speakers of that language become advantaged as they are not required to spend physical labour and material resources in learning this language and are thus qualified better to reap the social, political and economic benefits accruing from their language proficiency.¹⁷ Such speakers normally become the elite, while the speakers of other languages harbor resentments against this domination and such grievance often results in violent competition for domination and thus destabilize the structure of the state where such competition takes place.¹⁸

To sum up this literature review, we find language acting as a tool for social and political change. Language planning and policy offers various tools that link sociopolitical factors with the changes in choices and variation of language. Language policy can be gleaned from official documents. When such sources are

meager than careful observation of the language beliefs and practices become useful. The contest for power offers a useful means to ascertain the nature of contest between the elite who impose choices and the population who contest such imposition. Developing states like Pakistan, often pursue the goal of unity. A single language for the whole nations is therefore considered the best option. The following discussion explores, how multilingualism is governed and managed in Pakistan and what are the socio-political effects of Pakistani language planning and policy.

Provincial Autonomy and Devolution of Language Policy: Historical Overview

Historically language policy in Pakistan remained suppressive for regional and minority languages. Language plays an important role in the formation of class consciousness and belonging. Individual identifies himself or herself with a particular social, political or economic interest group using language as a tool. Language assumes an active role in determining the tendencies to merge identities with a particular interest group. This imposes limitations for the speakers of a less favored language, dialect or accent. Limitation of a less favored language and social, economic and political incentives create a situation for a group and/or an individual to start learning the more favored language. Social, economic and political values and tendencies incorporated in semantic and semiotic code of language is consciously or unconsciously assimilated through learning of the more favored language code. Powerful states in past used their language to create a more docile and ideologically congruent groups in their conquered colonies. Language planning was used as a tool of imperialism by them. Direct exploitation of the colonized people through economic, political and social means had a parallel in direct intervention through language learning. Denial of opportunities in business, jobs and socio-political roles in the elite circles created by them acted as a filter for the induction of sympathizers of the colonial setup in the ranks and files of the pro-colonizer elitist circles in the colonized. In classical imperialism language of the colonizer acted as a simple, dynamic and effective agent of protecting and propagating the interests of the colonizers.¹⁹

With the creation of Pakistan, the people living in the geographic confines of the newly conceived state inherited the governmental machinery of the British Raj. Departure of the

imperial British elite created a momentary vacuum which was readily filled by the pro-colonizer Anglicized local elite. The role of proto-elite fell in to the hands of the upholders of vernacular. Departure of British power had weakened the incumbent elite. They had no choice but to share economic, political and social privileges with the rival Urdu speaking emerging competitors. End of colonial times created a new environment of decolonization. James M. Blaut in his comprehensive work argues that decolonization was not the end of colonial set up. The economic set up left by the colonial masters continues with the typical limited circle of elite in power continuing to safeguard the colonial legacy.²⁰

This becomes an indirect economic rule over the former colonies constituting neocolonialism.²¹ Former colonies of Britain after gaining independence created British Commonwealth of Nations. This association deepened in some cases to the extent of signing strategic, political and economic agreements. Though USA was not a member but powerful presence made it a part of it. There was a big dichotomy of economic and industrial status in the former colonies of Britain. Those where English (as first language) speaking people were in majority were very rich and those with English (second language) speaking minority elite was in power remained poor. These nations grouped together in such a way that the rich states exclusively benefited from the protective rule of the elite for their interests in the poor states. The chemistry of the limited circle of the elite continued in Pakistan after the British Raj. Their main functions had two directions. One was to safeguard the interests and investments of the former colonial masters in exchange of economic assistance. Second, they had to establish their grip on power in such a way that the entry into their circle remained close to those who would not be sympathetic to the economic setup of the neocolonial style. However, the intense pressure of competing Urdu-speaking proto-elite who had migrated from India for fortune hunting in economics, politics and social privileges made the elite to relax the entry conditions for middle cadre job to the Urdu speakers. Solution was readily available in the continuation of essence of colonial rule. The policy that was most effective for mass level was the language policy.

Language planning was done in such a way that English continued to be used in the high circles of the overt and covert organs of government. Military and civil bureaucracy never lost its British essence. Conditions were relaxed to let the Urdu speaking proto-elite enter the middle level positions of power. Masses who

spoke other languages were completely shut out from the circle of power sharing. For instance in Sindh, Sindhi language was marginalized to such extent that Sindhi signs were removed from buildings and railway stations. There were fewer schools with Sindhi language than those with Urdu language.²² Main objective of the Pakistani elite can be summarized as follows:

- i). Continuation of the British Policies of the promotion and protection of the British Imperialism with addition of the protection of the Anglophone Commonwealth and the interest of Western investors.
- ii). Continuation of the pro-colonizer elite of the colonial era.
- iii). Accommodation of the Urdu speaking new proto-elitists in the inherited structure of power sharing and power limitation.
- iv). Suppression of the masses who do not speak Urdu or English.

Means adopted for Suppression of Non-Major Languages

The Pakistan elite engaged in a range of practices that aimed at suppression of the non-major (local languages). This suppression ensured the dominance of English language in domains of power. Urdu was coopted as symbol of patriotism. Economic and political apartheid for the speakers of these languages pressurized the speakers of non-major languages to invest their resources in Urdu and English. Further, a myth of economic growth and national unity was created to legitimize the act of suppression of the non-major languages. Provision of resources and legitimacy helped in expansion of English and Urdu languages, while coercive practices hastened conversion to the new Pakistani identity where English is official language and Urdu the language of national unity.

Economic and political apartheid

For the realization of the objectives ruling elite adopted the policy of assigning special preferences in political, economic and social roles for the speakers of English and Urdu. This was the continuation of the British policy. Pennycook states that:

“The extent to which English is involved in the political, educational, social and economic life of a country is clearly a result of both the historical legacy of colonialism and of the varying success of countries since independence in warding off the threats of neo-colonialism.”²³

*Linked with the expansion of free market practices and laissez-faire economics of the West – and therefore imperialist in nature – English has demonstrated its role outside the confines of the political and economic elite and flourished in such diverse areas as advertising, music and the Internet.*²⁴

Suppression of the local languages

East Pakistan, was monolingual Bangali speakers. Urdu language was declared national language and Bengali language was denied this status. The protester in support of Bengali language was silenced through force. Therefore, Bengali Language Movement became an example of denying the language rights and imposing Urdu forcefully. The creation of national unity through imposition of the “myth-symbol complex” of a newly introduced national language was carried out with the hope that Urdu would act as a neutral language as it had no territorially bound population in Pakistan. This language bound identity was resisted successfully by Bengalis. It was better received in the Pashto speaking areas of Pakistan though Pashtun nationalists highly regret it.

The continued expansion of English Language

In Pakistan expansion of their language remains a major concern of policy making by the elite. This expansion fulfills their hegemony over power. Phillipson considers the legality of expanding English language domination is based on two fundamental areas i.e. ethnic identity and education. “Ethnicity [remains as the] practice of judging other cultures by standards of its own.”²⁵ In Pakistan these two areas have been the primary focus of the elite to expand the influence of English and augment it with Urdu where possible. While policy allow for expansion of these two languages, space for other languages is shrunk through the practice of stigmatizing other languages and identity they confer. The enhanced prestige associated with English and Urdu becomes therefore, a potent tool of limiting space and utility of other languages.

Conversion through coercion to the new identity of Pakistani nationalism

Propagation of the new “state myth-Symbol Complex”²⁶ of reverence, power and beauty after the creation of Pakistan has been conceived by the intelligentsia of the ruling elite to promote a new identity which will eventually weaken regional national loyalties. Apparently the propaganda of ease of communication and promotion of trade and commerce and national solidarity and

literary/ linguistic superiority of the two languages is used by the elite to spread English language. But keeping in view the High cost of education in elitist schools it can be easily understood that these schools are not for the children of the ordinary working class people. These institutions are for the children of the rich from whom the elite want to conscript. Myth of English/ Urdu being the repository of learning, technology and culture is incessantly spread through the state machinery of information, propaganda and education. There is an effective denial of opportunities to the speakers of local languages. Comparative lack of the availability of jobs and livelihood in areas dominated by the speakers of less favored languages exert a pressure on the speakers of other languages to involve in the pursuit of copying the language and culture of the elite. A very small number of this aspirant however gets an entry through CSS or Commission to the military officer ranks. Social, political and economic discrimination in short becomes the driving spirit behind the achievement of the objectives of exploitation of the powerless poor class by the rich and powerful elite.

The Myth of Economic Growth and National Integrity

Skutnabb-Kangas et al. consider:

“Antagonism towards linguistic minorities is based on false premises, and in particular on two myths, that monolingualism is desirable for economic growth, and that minority rights are a threat to the nation state.”²⁷

These are however false fabrications. Unwillingness of the economic and political elite to share the power however, in most cases becomes the cause of the failure of a state to maintain its national integrity.

Results of Suppressive Language Policy

The suppressive language policies has the tendency to weaken the unity of a multilingual state instead of strengthening it. It polarizes the social, economic and political classes, instead of bringing them together. This section explores the relation of suppressive language policies in Pakistan with the symptoms of disunity and polarization.

Disintegration of National fabric

According to John Glenn ex-colonial states share with each other one common feature of lacking internal legitimacy due to the

presence of opposition to the national identity imposed by the state. Opposition comes from the ethnic and linguistic identity of local groups.²⁸ In past Bengali Language Movement became the major component of the force behind the struggle for independence. Recently language has been used by the nationalist to create Mohajir, Pashtun, Panjabi and Balochi identity and consciousness that is acting as the opposing force against the impose identity of Pakistani nationalism.

Social, Political and economic polarization

The continuation of the discrimination by the ruling elite on cultural/ linguistic bases has forced the poor to find vengeance in identities that pose threat to the hegemony of the elite. Pashtun nationalists have been using language for the unification of Pashtun against the exploiting elite. Punjabis and Muhajirs are seen as the continuation of the British colonialism against which they marshal the masses. This has provided opportunity to the suppressed class to struggle collectively for a state on ethno-linguistic basis. Sindhi separatism is voicing through Sindhi language and Pashtun through Pashto.

The ethno-linguistic differences in the areas that were to become part of Pakistan did not present a homogenous monolith. Therefore, Pakistan was conceived as a federation before its formation in 1947 as it was the best among available to structure the new state. Political leadership of this nascent state envisioned democracy as the best means of safeguarding the interests of all federating units. However, lack of democratic practices led to a series of martial laws that were occasionally punctuated by a brief period of civil rule.

Local autonomy was viewed by the anti-colonial struggle as the best guarantee for the preservation of the diversity in cultural identity during the colonial era of British Raj. This very concept of freedom became the root of worries for establishment, who continued to work with the colonial mindset even after the end of the formal colonial rule in the territories of South Asia designated as Pakistan. The most innocuous demand of preserving mother tongue was labeled as a treasonous act and suppressed in East Pakistan which led to protest, and consequently the tragedy of 21st February, 1951 was immortalized by the United Nation (UN) as the International Day for Mother Language[16]and won for Western Pakistan an image of oppressor in the mind of Bengalis. This murky view later became the cause of their separation from Pakistan. Instead of learning a lesson from this suppression of the

right of the people the decision makers in the remaining portion of Pakistan saw a practical realization of their phobia to the least expression of difference from their perceived image of national identity.

Centralization was actively pursued especially in the time of martial laws. The reason for the support of army for a highly centralized government lies in the chain of command and nature of organization they get their character and world view i.e. armed forces. The centralized character of army presented to military dictators a panacea for the ills of federalism. So, during the rule of martial law, experiment with One Unit and then enforcement of a powerful central structure of governance were realization of the love of the dictators for the military organization and their sincere effort to turn the whole state into form modeled upon the military formation. The bureaucracy, legislation army and political parties over rode the spirit of federalism and promoted a structure of centralization.

Devolution of Language Policy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

In discourse on national identity the essence of federalism was presented as sinister and treasonous. Assertion of local cultural identity was translated into a sign for the beginning of secession in that region and use of military might in line with the policy of colonial past became the only workable solution. The support of the larger federating unit for a powerful center alienated the smaller provinces to see the strong center as a means of exploitation of smaller provinces. As insurgency and militancy has made the integrity of Pakistan doubtful, the political forces of Pakistan revisited the mechanism of governance and agreed on the devolution of the long awaited powers to the federating units.

As it has been pointed out earlier that language based identity became the starting point in the dismemberment of Pakistan, the same issue still continues to be a source of conflict between the centre and the federation. After devolution, the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa passed the “The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa promotion of Regional Languages Authority Act, 2012”. This act along with “The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010” can be viewed as central piece in the development after devolution.

“The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa promotion of Regional Languages Authority Act, 2012” can be seen as a top-down approach in policy. In this model of policy formulation and implementation the risk of ignoring the voice of recipient of the

policy is always present and often result in the policy rebuttals. However, when compared with a uniform policy made in the center to the policy that is made in more regional context the chances of sustainability increase. In the center after devolution the development is still discouraging as the status of the languages of federating units is not recognized and such bills that attempted to make Pashto, Sindhi, Balochi, Punjabi and Siraiki are not even allowed to be voted on in the national assembly.²⁹ The effort of the provincial assembly is a land mark. In consequent activity the language standardization of minority languages of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa present a hope that the process of devolution would will result in the empowerment of the people in provinces.

Devolution of HEC and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Language-in-Education as an instrument of resisting devolution

Erstwhile education was a potent mechanism of nation building in the hands of policy makers. However, they used education for hegemonizing Urdu/English and indoctrination the mind of the young. State-dominated publications in Pakistan have always presented a distorted history to students and people Aziz has pointed out some of the falsities in our books about the time before partition.³⁰ Recently the Sustainable Development Policy Institute published a comprehensive research report on the curricula and textbooks of Pakistan pointing out numerous foci in the curricula for Class 1 to 12 that are full of indoctrination of negative elements, e.g. militarism and hatred of India.³¹ The engagement in Afghanistan after 1979 has led to bloating of textbooks and curricula with militancy in the name of Islam. Such orientation is conducive to a belligerent image of Pakistan cherished by military and the associated armed groups inundated in armed insurgency in the region. When the military coup of 1999 debarred all political parties from election and introduced, instead of party based governance a centrally managed one, the Charter of Democracy became a rallying point for the political struggle. The grievances of federating units led to agreement on devolution of power. On April 19, 2010 the Eighteenth constitutional amendment became Act and part of constitution of Pakistan. With this amendment devolution of education took place along other ministries.

Higher education in the past one decade became a center of focus. With the establishment of Higher Education Commission an unprecedented flow of capital shifted the expectations of people to higher education as a deliverance from the ills of the society in Pakistan. Acting as a highly centralized body HEC started to

produce stricter control on the working of universities. The centralized role of HEC formed a structure which was seen by its advocates like Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman as the only available means of overhauling the whole higher education in Pakistan through a process of standardization and quality assurance.³² However, the critics saw in this centralization restriction of decision making to a few self-styled visionaries who planned without reference to applicability and ground realities and in the end wasted most of the resources that could have been spent in a more meaningful way through some other mechanization. To the later group, devolution of HEC meant a step in the right direction and to the earlier group this was the beginning of chaos. The discourse on education is now being revisited through these debates on different forums by a range of participants, whose diversity present a hope of change.

Following arguments appear in the media generated discourse (specifically the print media):

- i). HEC is doing a great job, devolution of education would destroy the end HEC was about to achieve.
- ii). Provinces lack structural and technical capability to shoulder the burden of higher education
- iii). Devolution would increase segmentation and inequalities in Pakistan.
- iv). Education would be placed on “back burners” and forgotten in provinces. Higher education stands some hope in the center in provinces all such hope would be blasted for good.

Then in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa devolution of higher education saw opposition from the academia in universities and beneficiary students of HEC scholarships. These people considered devolution of HEC as cessation of the regulation of Higher Education; beginning of the downfall of the standard of higher education; destruction of the gains of HEC; and beginning of increased negative political interference in higher education. They based their argument on the central premise of trusting in the status quo and plans of HEC. The fact of wastage of resources and failure of HEC in meeting its goals were ignored and the future where federating units were seen gaining control of their own affairs caused alarm in the agents of status quo. In this protest centralization was presented as the only way of dealing with any matter in Pakistan. The doubt on the lack of capacity found sympathizers in establishment and academia. Media instead of

promoting the significance of decentralization as an essential component of federalism joined in the effort to defend status quo. To others, as stated earlier, the central position was ruinous for the spirit of the research and knowledge production in universities. They saw a greater sensitivity to local conditions in the regional counterpart of HEC. Their argument was based on decentralized local autonomy. Before the partition of British India it was the provinces or the federating units that decided on the future form for the state that best suited the diversity of these provinces. At that time only communication, foreign affairs, defense and finance were allowed to be maintained by the centre of the future state. Centralization is the single reason of the formation of grievances and conflict in federation. Instead of political and social uniformity resulting from centralization federalism demands cooperation based on seeing diversity as a resource.

Development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after the devolution point out preparations being underway to establish infrastructure for taking over the roles hitherto dominated by the center. Legislations after devolution present the outlining of a course that this province is aiming to follow. In this perspective the scope of legislation presents a self confidence in building a better society.

Recommendations

In the preceding section some of the results of the language imperialism in Pakistan are discussed. Denial of linguistic and cultural autonomy pose a serious threat to the internal legitimacy of Pakistan. Skutnabb-Kangas et al. consider the topics of human rights and language are seldom put together because they are, “politically sensitive and inextricably interwoven with power structures”.³³ They further state:

Linguistic rights should be considered basic human rights. Linguistic majorities, speakers of a dominant language, usually enjoy all those linguistic human rights which can be seen fundamental, regardless of how they are defined. Most linguistic minorities do not enjoy these rights. It is only a few hundred of the world’s 6-7,000 languages that have any kind of official status; it is only speakers of official language who enjoy all linguistic human rights.³⁴

This entails a right for the minority languages’ speakers to be freely able to participate in the promotion of their language and associated culture. The ability to establish teaching of their language, the right to educate their children in their mother tongue (first language) and to have a say in the development of curricula

for their children. Such rights requires guarantees from federation to represent their language in formal official settings. The federation has to ensure that the use of first language would not disadvantage its speakers in securing social, political and economic wellbeing. It also involves guarantees of representation in the political affairs of the state, and the granting autonomy to administer matters internal to the groups, at least in the field of culture, education, religion, information, and social affairs, with financial means, through taxation or grants, to fulfill those functions.³⁵

Further legislation is recommended to accommodate the following points about language policy for the promotion of minority languages. The legislation is recommended to promote the following proposals.

- Provision of protection of culture by state. Autonomy to learn, promote and protect local languages and culture. Policy of cultural pluralism and tolerance of diversity.
- Policy of equal opportunity with express objective of avoiding discrimination on the basis of language and culture.
- Non-productive and illogical formation of exploiting elitism to be discouraged.
- Segregation of social, political and economic empowerment from ethno-linguistic or inherited, exploitative identity formation to be prohibited.

Conclusion

This paper overviewed the treatment of multilingualism in Pakistan. It is pointed out in the review of relevant scholarly literature that language as sociopolitical and economic tool can relate to sociopolitical policies. The history of Pakistan in essence is the continuation of the policy of British raj, where devolution of power to the local from center was considered a threat to their rule. After the inception of Pakistan, the project of national unity employed language planning and policy as a tool of building Pakistani identity. This new identity was based on modernization and Pakistani nationalism. English was given importance as it had to modernize the new state, and Urdu was chosen as a symbol of Pakistani nationalism. Suppression of local languages was coupled with devolution of power to the federating units. Pashtun, Sindhi and Bengali nationalists support for their languages was considered as part of conspiracy to break down Pakistan. The suppressive policies became cause of the weakening of national unity along

with social, political and economic polarization. It is, therefore, suggested to correct the policy of imposing English and Urdu from the top, make necessary legislation to support the growth of local languages. Languages do not survive without their speakers. The speakers of non-major languages should have legal and institutional protection so that they are socially, politically and economically marginalized. This paper support a change in the rationale of policy making to shift away from considering linguistic diversity as a problem and start considering linguistic diversity as a resource for strengthening national unity.

Notes & References

- ¹ M. Paul Lewis, Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig, *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. Vol. 16. (Dallas, TX: SIL international, 2009).
- ² Donald C. Laycock and Peter Mühlhäusler, "Language engineering: special languages", *An encyclopedia of language* (London: Routledge, 1990), 843-853.
- ³ Robert Phillipson and T. O. V. E. Skutnabb-Kangas, "English only worldwide or language ecology?." *TESOL quarterly* 30, no. 3 (1996): 429-452.
- ⁴ Bernard Spolsky, *Language policy: Key topics in sociolinguistics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2004).
- ⁵ *ibid.*
- ⁶ *ibid.*
- ⁷ Tariq Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- ⁸ Jr, Richard B. Baldauf, *Methodologies for Policy and Planning*. In ed. R.B. Kaplan ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)
- ⁹ Tariq Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, op.cit.
- ¹⁰ Naz Rasool, "Language and Communicative Competence in the Twenty-first Century: Examining the Role of Education". In S. Mansoor, S. Meraj, and A. Tahir, Ed., *Language Policy Planning & Practice: A South Asian Perspective* (Karachi: Aga Khan University/ Oxford University Press, 2004), 3-22.
- ¹¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Nietzsche: Human, all too human: A book for free spirits* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- ¹² Larry Trask, *A Student's Dictionary of Language and Linguistics* London: Arnold, A Member of Hadder Headline Group, 1997).
- ¹³ Bernard Spolsky, "Language policy: Key topics in sociolinguistics", (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2004).
- ¹⁴ Roger T. Bell, "Psycholinguistic/cognitive approaches". In M. Baker and K. Malmkjær (eds) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, 1st edition (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 185-90.
- ¹⁵ John Glenn, *Soviet Legacy in Central Asia* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1999)
- ¹⁶ Roger T. Bell, "Psycholinguistic/cognitive approaches", op.cit.
- ¹⁷ *ibid.*
- ¹⁸ Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism* (n.p: Oxford University Press, 1992).
- ¹⁹ Tariq Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, op.cit.
- ²⁰ James M. Blaut, *The national question: decolonizing the theory of nationalism* (n.p: ZED Books, 1987).
- ²¹ *ibid.*
- ²² Tariq Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, op.cit., 117-118

- ²³ Alastair Pennycook, "English in the World/the World in English". In Anne Burns and Caroline Coffin, eds. *Analysing English in a global context: a reader* (n.p.: Psychology Press, 2001)
- ²⁴ William Kevin Penn, "Linguistic Imperialism: The Role of English as an International Language". Available at: <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/cels/essays/sociolinguistics/Penny6.pdf>.
- ²⁵ Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*. op.cit.
- ²⁶ John Glenn, *Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*. op.cit., 91.
- ²⁷ Robert Phillipson and T. O. V. E. Skutnabb-Kangas, "English only worldwide or language ecology?." op.cit., 4.
- ²⁸ John Glenn, *Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, op.cit.
- ²⁹ Z. Ali, "Laws for Language: If the British used Sindhi, why shouldn't we, experts urge minister", *The Express Tribune*, February 16, 2012.
- ³⁰ Kamal Khurshid Aziz, *Murder of History in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1993).
- ³¹ Abdul Hameed Nayyar and Ahmed Salim, "The subtle subversion: The state of curricula and textbooks in Pakistan Urdu, English, Social Studies and Civics", *Sustainable Development Policy Institute* (2005).
- ³² Attaur Rahman, "Time to Save the Higher Education Commission", *The Express Tribune*, April 5, 2011.
- ³³ Robert Phillipson and T. O. V. E. Skutnabb-Kangas, "English only worldwide or language ecology?." op.cit.
- ³⁴ *ibid.*
- ³⁵ UNCFH, "Human rights fact sheet", *Centre for Human Rights* (1987).