Linguistic domination and critical language awareness

Filza Waseem*a, Saeeda Asadullahb

*aHumanities Department, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Lahore, Pakistan
bChair HEC National Committee of English, President, Council of Social Sciences, H. No. I.H. 70, PAF Falcon Complex, Gulberg III, Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract

Language pedagogy in ESL/EFL contexts frequently use culturally and ideologically loaded texts. Combined with traditional methods of teaching English, which rely on positivist views of Eurocentric critics, these texts become a means of interpellation of the learner. This paper investigates the effects of teaching of English in the Pakistani context in terms of identity and subject construction of learners. As a case study, the research sampled responses from 461 learners in the city of Islamabad. The findings indicate that a certain level of subject construction does occur in learners of English depending on teaching methods and school environment. The paper suggests critical language awareness as an alternative approach to teaching language and literature with a view to enabling learners to counter the ideological impact of English teaching texts.

Keywords: Critical Language Awareness; ideology; interpellation; colonial language; language shift

1. Introduction

This study looks into the contemporary linguistic situation of the world in which English is seen to be the dominant language, and links it to English language teaching and the resultant effects on non-native learners of English in terms of identity formation, subject construction and language shift. Within this framework, the study reviews ELT in the Pakistani context and traces the historical beginnings of English in the colonial period, linking it to its present dominant position. The affective domain of ELT is an under researched area as international research on ELT has focused mostly on teaching approaches and...
pedagogies. The findings of the study have implications for all post-colonial scenarios where English was taught as the language of the colonizer and is still influencing language policies and planning. The aftermaths of the colonial educational policies are now manifest in the form of hybridity, identity crises and a sense of rootlessness amongst the post-colonial intellectuals, who are literal embodiments of Fanon’s (1952) ‘Black Skin White Mask’. The study becomes particularly relevant in terms of patterns of domination, linguistic assimilation and exploitation being established through language and literature teaching.

In the context of globalization, immigration, and perceptions about its prestige and power, there is an immense demand for English learning in Pakistan. There is a predominance of English use in all spheres of life. The national language policy has made English the official language for use in power domains, and an important distributor of economic and educational opportunities. Societal perceptions regard it as a high-value language which offers power, prestige and economic benefits to its users. These motivation for learning English, and correspondingly the demand for it, has led to an increase in the establishment of private, elite institutions where ELT practices usually use English literary texts to teach English (Nunan, 1992; Ur, 1996). The literary texts contain ideological content which can result in assimilation and identity construction of the huge mass of non-native learners who can be influenced by its ideological content, and become subtractive bilinguals (Baker et al, 1998; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). There is a need for ELT practitioners to be aware of this linguistic domination of English and of how Critical Language Awareness (hereafter CLA) can help the non-native learners of English to counter the ideological content of the teaching text.

In Pakistan, there is parallel system of education, in which the private, elite schools cater to the demands of the powerful, westernized elite section of society, where the medium of instruction is English, and the cash-strapped Urdu-medium schools which are frequented by the wards of the masses. There is a middle category of schools which falls between these two in terms of standards, fee structures and emphasis on using English. The aim of this research was to investigate whether English language teaching, as it is carried out in Pakistani schools, is affecting the identity of the learners or not. Language shift and subject construction of learners was examined under this hypothesis. Questionnaires were administered to 576 students, parents and teachers of private, middle category and state schools to assess the comparative effects of the English literary texts and teaching methodologies on them. As this study was part of a larger study, more than one method of data collection was used to triangulate the findings. However for the sake of economy and brevity, data was drawn only from the questionnaires. The participants were school students of classes 8th to 10th, from the elite, middle category and state-run schools of Islamabad. Parents and teachers responses were also used for yielding a holistic picture of the situation. The research used the case study method, combining quantitative and the qualitative data and triangulating it with the documentary sources. The EPINFO (version 6.04) was used to code the data and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 10.00) was used to analyze the data.

2. Background of the Study

In Pakistan, English owes its present position not only for being the international lingua franca, but also for being the language of the colonizer. After establishing its political control over Indian Subcontinent, Britain made systematic efforts to consolidate its presence by implementing language policies, because as Antonio Gramsci (1971) has pointed out, “cultural domination operates by consent” (as cited in Viswanathan, 1995) and the best way to generate consent is through education. After some initial controversy between the Anglicists and the Orientalists, regarding which education policy was best suited in the Indian context, the issue was settled in Lord Macaulay’s famous Minute of 1835 in favour of English language and literature, reasoning that “The literature of England being more valuable than that of classical antiquity” (1835). The Governor General, Lord Bentinck, an Anglicist, gave instructions to make English the court language in place of Persian, and that “all the funds appropriated for education
would be best employed in English education alone” (Shah, 1990). By hinging it to economic benefit, this measure provided the incentive and motivation to learn English. Even today economic benefit and professional rewards are the main motivations for learning English in Pakistan, as elsewhere in the world.

3. 1. Teaching of literature

Until 1837, the British curriculum of English in India was based primarily on English language. Viswanathan (1995) opines that because of the social conditions back in England there was a growing skepticism about the efficacy of a purely secular education. To include English literature in the curriculum provided a perfect synthesis to the two apparently divergent objectives of imparting western knowledge to the natives as well as instilling a sense of morality in them. It provided a perfect guise to achieve both these objectives “without having to throw open the door of English liberal thought to natives” (ibid). Literary studies have never been associated with political unrest so the British “discovered an ally in English literature to support them in maintaining control of the natives under the guise of a liberal education” (ibid).

Besides this, the literary text represented the superiority of English literature over all other forms of knowledge. Ashcroft et al. (1995) find that the literary texts claimed the “superiority of civilization embodied /encoded through the fetish of the English book.” The natives, it was thought, would benefit intellectually and morally by studying English literary texts, which would function as a “surrogate Englishman in his highest and perfect state” (Viswanathan, 1995). Macaulay (1835) said that studying these texts gave natives the daily opportunity “to converse with the best and wisest Englishmen through the medium of their work”, and to ultimately “westernize the people and impress upon them the superiority of western culture and knowledge” (as cited in Viswanathan, 1995). This system of education was envisioned as most effective to form, in Macaulay’s words, “a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect” (as cited in in Ashcroft, 1995). More than this, the literary text propounded the western values embodied in the texts as being universal and normative and claimed the superiority of the civilization, which had produced them.

4. Theoretical Framework

Linguistic domination can be examined under the theories of structuralism, post-modernism and deconstruction, language policy and planning, and theories relating language to power. The theory of structuralism is basically a linguistic theory which postulates that all systems are made up of abstract structures which form up the whole and depend for their meaning on the relationship between their parts. As a literary theory, it brackets off the actual content of the text and concentrates on the form. Saussure, the main proponent of structuralism, had postulated language to be a socially constructed symbol system that reflects and embodies the dominant values and ideologies of the speech community. It fixes and freezes meanings in a tight over-arching structure, excluding and marginalizing those that exist outside them. These notions explain the political and hegemonic functions of language. Ideologically loaded language can define our sense of reality and subjectivity, and therefore can be hegemonic in its affect on learners’ subjectivities. Althusser says in this regard that subjects are ‘born into’ ideology, they find subjectivity within the expectations of their parents and their society, and they endorse it because it provides a sense of identity and security through structures such as language, social codes and conventions (as cited in Ashcroft, 2000).

Poststructuralists challenge this position and hold that meaning is fluid and can destabilize the structure by producing multiple meaning. As Canagarajah (1999) states, “For post-structuralists the signs were caught in a play of endless oppositions, destabilizing the structure and producing endless meaning. Deconstruction allows marginalized knowledges to be legitimized and given a voice and agency. According to Derrida (as cited in Powell, 2003) deconstruction is a subversive way of reading which allows a free play of meaning destabilizing the center to include the other members of the binary pair to have a voice.
These theories have implications in ESL and EFL situations, where ‘center’ teaching methodologies and the curriculum inhibit learners to have a free play and negotiation of meaning and what Fairclough calls an ‘emancipatory’ learning to take place.

5. Review of Literature
5.1. What is language?

Each one of us has the ability to use language and live by it; but we do not always become aware of it, or realize fully the breadth and depth of its possibilities. (Halliday, 1971)

Halliday’s argument challenges the simplistic view of language as just an objective system of signs and symbols, which enables its speakers to communicate with each other (Yule, 1996), to express their emotions and get things done (Searle, 1971). Poststructuralists like Foucault and Derrida (as cited in Powell, 2003) have pointed out that language has serious implications for its non-native speakers relating to their ideology, worldview and philosophy of life. Since language is embedded in the culture of its speakers, it becomes a means of carrying this culture wherever it is used. The non-native learner of this language while learning to operate in that language also stands exposed, or ‘interpellated’ by the cultural and ideological influence of that language, (Althusser, as cited in Ashcroft, 2000). According to Foucault, just as the subject in psychoanalytical terms is produced by, and must operate within, the laws of language, so discourse produces a subject equally dependent upon the rules of the system of knowledge that produced it (as cited in Ashcroft et al., 2000). The target language influences thoughts and world views and forces the non-native learner to think in certain established ways. In fact cultural and linguistic assimilation has been one of the objectives since the time when the Western countries started expanding their limits (Bach, 2000). In modern times too, one of the main objectives of language classes in host countries having a large number of immigrant populations, is to assimilate these people into the host country’s culture (Baker et al., 1998; Phillipson, 1992).

5.2 Language and Education

Global change has impacted economic and workplace conditions and communication practices. Increasingly societies are seen to be bilingual, where one of the languages is almost always English. In non-native countries, even if it is not the official language, it is considered a prerequisite for development and progress, and is thus taught at different levels of education. Critics and theorists have researched the psychological role of language in molding worldviews and identities of learners, where unconsciously the learner has to subscribe to the underlying linguistic conventions, of what Rassool (2004) calls “different forms of discourse, including meanings produced in face-to-face interaction, at the interface of person and text, with another/others mediated by the computer screen, and cross-cultural discourse”. As a result, it is felt that the domination of English in education becomes a means of advancing and promoting certain desired ideologies. Therefore the language teaching and language of instruction in education, assumes a crucial role in the teaching situation.

It is felt that the neocolonial assumptions of superiority in terms of value, meaning, agency and the criteria for what constitutes literature are expounded in the Western text. The positivist orientation of this literary text needs to be deconstructed and reinterpreted, so that language teaching allows and takes into account various ‘other’ perspectives and experiences, which would allow a diverse and wider understanding. Teaching methodologies should be employed to help students develop an understanding and awareness of how language works and the ability to critically examine texts so as not to subscribe to their underlying assumptions of power and superiority.

5.3 Socio-cultural Aspect of Language Teaching

Although much research is devoted to language teaching and language in education, it has largely been
about methods and approaches in ELT and TEFL pedagogy. The recent concern of linguists such as Canagarajah (1999) and Pennycook (1994) is the social context of language teaching, and Hassan (1983) has advanced the notion of the learner as a “socially constructed being” (as cited in Baumgardner, 1993). Teaching, like any other human activity, cannot take place in a vacuum. In the microcosm it is constantly formed and informed by the personality and background of the teacher and the learner, and by the classroom milieu. In the macrocosm it is influenced by the socio-cultural environment of the teaching situation and the overall global situation, which in the case of Pakistan, places a high value on communicative competency in English.

However, what supersedes all these variables is the language itself. When the medium of instruction and the target language are the same then the situation is what McLuhan (1962) calls the “medium and the message” being the same. This metalanguage has strong implications in the teaching situation, in terms of social and cultural conditioning of individuals. The role of language is to give cohesion and coherence to a society by embodying its complex system of beliefs and norms. Greenblatt finds that the culture of a society acts as a system of “control and restraint” through its literary texts. For him, “literary texts are not merely cultural by virtue of reference to the world beyond themselves; they are cultural by virtue of social values and contexts that they have themselves successfully absorbed” (Greenblatt, 1995). This role of language when applied to non-native learners of the language will entail that some of these attitudes will obliterate the world view of the less dominant language.

The language which is used as a medium of instruction in education is of prime importance in terms of how a society perceives itself in relation to other societies, in identity formation, perceptions about others and construction of world views. It is because of this crucial function of language that it has been used by claimants of nationalism, and by groups to establish their separate identity. In the post-colonial era, language teaching is seen by some as a means of imposing dominant ideologies and cultures on less dominating linguistic communities (Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992; Rahman, 2002; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Ashcroft et al. (1995) say in this regard:

Language is a fundamental site of struggle for post-colonial discourse because the colonial process itself begins in language. The control over language by the imperial centre remains the most potent instrument of cultural control...when a dominant colonizing power promotes or enforces its language on conquered territories; it facilitates the spread of its own culture and political, social and sometimes religious ideologies.

5.4 Linguistic Domination at the Micro Level

Dominating others through language can be done at the individual as well as collective level. At the micro level, in face-to-face encounters between individuals, the interlocutors adopt strategies to establish their power over their counterparts. Grillo (1989) says, “The political in language has been defined by the power that one person (qua individual) can exercise over another within a conversation.” Even unconscious choices of words are meant to establish domination. Work done on Speech Acts by Austin (1962) and Searle (1971), calls attention to how socially established conventions of speech which force speakers to conform to them, in order to speak functionally appropriate language. These speech conventions literally lead speakers into what is called a “double blind”, where, Grillo (1989) says, the speaker “can only acquiesce or revolt”, and so, “the phenomenon of inarticulacy and mutedness is not simply silence”. He cites Ardener (1975) as saying that sometimes there is a “structural situation in which a group may be muted simply because it does not form part of the dominant communication system of a society” . This could be either a “dominant male mode” or that of a superior class hierarchy, but can be seen as applying to non-native speakers of a language as well. George Orwell’s British colonizer, in ‘Burmese Days’ (1949) chastises his native butler for trying to speak the English dialect of his master and advises him to speak only the Pidgin English of Burma. Grillo quotes a number of linguists to reinforce his point, for example, Gumperz: “Individuals possess or have competence in a subset of this totality which is their linguistic repertoire, and this provides the weapons for everyday communication... speakers
choose among this arsenal in accordance with the meaning they wish to convey”. Gumperz’ apt use of military terminology shows the political aspect of language and how it lends itself to manipulation to wield power. Paine describes politicians’, “attempts to sway, and even mould the experience and knowledge of their public… through political rhetoric”, as a method of linguistic manipulation. Bailey finds that linguistic conventions help those in powers to maintain the status quo by using “speech as a strategy for control” (in Grillo, 1989).

Fairclough (2001) together with other critical linguists like Phillipson and Tollefson, feels that merely stating the formal conventions of speech, or “speech rituals” helps to perpetuate existing power relations between speakers. Fairclough sees the turn-taking system as not as a general “norm”, but something, which depends on the power relationship of the participants. For example, in linguistic encounters between teacher/student, doctor/patient and native interviewer/non-native interviewee, the conventional or social superiority of one establishes him/her as assuming the dominant role in conversation. Linguistic superiority of one individual and its acceptance by the other establishes unequal power relationship between the interlocutors, and misleads us to accept them as the norm. Fairclough holds that instead of justifying this as “turn-taking rights”, linguists should try to highlight the underlying coerciveness of such situations, and show that in reality “turn-taking rights are unequal”. Taking a middle position regarding the role of sociolinguistics, Wright (2004) states that the “main scholars under this umbrella see themselves as involved and implicated. They do not believe in the value, or even the possibility of reporting dispassionately on events.” She advocates a more proactive role for the sociolinguists to challenge the structures of language, power and inequality in societies.

I find that as linguistic superiority confers power on its users, the users of non-native variety of English are disadvantaged in encounters with native speakers. Within their own society non-native speakers of English vie for power with those who have varying degrees of proficiency in English, with speakers of less prestigious variety often being marginalized and excluded. English becomes a significant barrier for those who desire social mobility and a share in economic opportunities. The acquisition of English has thus been seen as a means of empowerment and disempowerment in those post-colonial societies where it is used as an official language and where perceptions about its superiority abound.

5.5 Linguistic Domination at the Macro Level

At the macro level, the phenomenon of globalization, and the economic and military expansion of USA have elevated the status of English as an international lingua franca. Increasingly it is being felt that literacy in English leads to economic prosperity. Ownership of English by the comprador elite or the “native intellectual” (Fanon, 1963), in the former colonies and blocking out its access to the common man have become a divisive factor, especially in the Pakistani society. Abedi,1991; Rahman, 2002; Hussain, 1983 and Kazi, 1994 have highlighted the issues related to the possession of a prestige language like English by the elite and how those who are in power maintain the status quo, perpetuate the phenomenon of exclusion of the common man. Hussain points out:

The ruling elite, that is, all those with power and influence in Pakistan, like the bureaucracy and the military, have command over English, through their English medium schooling and training. English is not only the language of the upper classes in Pakistan, but it also provides the best jobs in the government, non-governmental and international bureaucracy. Thus it is quite understandable that the elite should maintain the status quo (Hussain, 1983)

Another important perspective as Mansoor (2005) says, is that, “In many countries English has become implicated in social and economic mechanism that structure inequality” and “in post-colonial countries like India and Pakistan, English medium schools provide one of the mechanisms of distributing social and economic power”. Relating the role of language planning at the macro level in structuring inequalities, she says, “In planning language policy, governments have to take into account who has
access to the institutions of power - and how a high level of proficiency in English gives a head start over others, academically and therefore economically” (ibid).

Because language planning has been described as deciding who gets what and by whom, Pennycook (2000) sees the function of English as a gatekeeper to positions of power (in Mansoor, 2005). Rahman (2002) has linked it to formation of social classes. He says: “Class supremacy is maintained by denying people an educational system which gives them as much control of the language of the domain of power as the elite”.

This view is shared by Fairclough (2001) who has linked the emergence of Standard English and its prescriptive approach, as an attempt by the British elite to establish its dominance and the subordination of the speakers of “non-standard” dialects. Since the end of the medieval period, the social dialect of East Midland of England was associated with capitalism, and nationhood, and in spite of what Fairclough calls its “schizophrenia” to be “a national language belonging to all classes and sections of society, (and) yet remains in many respects a class dialect”. It is perceived “as an asset because its use is a passport to good jobs and positions of influence and power in national and local communities”. From this perspective one can see how English can construct inequalities at an even larger macro level when used by native speakers to put non-native speakers at a disadvantage. Ashcroft et al (1989) relate language oppression to be the main feature of the controlling devices of the imperial powers. “The imperial education system installs a ‘standard’ version of the metropolitan language as the norm, and marginalizes all ‘variants’ as impurities… the political reality is that English sets itself apart from all other ‘lesser’ variants (the ‘englishes’) and so demands to be interrogated about its claim to this special status”.

Theorizing the relationship between language and power, Skutnabb-Kangas (in Mansoor, 2005) provides another perspective about language planning at the macro level. She explains that the imposition of dominant languages is an attempt to assimilate world languages and cultures; a sort of “Macdonalization” of the cultural and linguistic diversity that presently exists in the world. She too feels that by setting English as a universal second language, the British and American governments protect their capital interests. Phillipson (1992) sees English as the language of international capitalism where policies of English language promotion are linked with political-economic and cultural policies. The provision of textbooks and granting of scholarships is seen as a means of forwarding these objectives. Taking the example of Philippines, he finds the work of Enriquez and Marcelino very relevant to forward his premise:

With the imposition of the English language, the country became dependent on a borrowed language that carries with it the dominant ideology and the political-economic interest of the US. With the dependence of the country on a borrowed language, it became dependent too on foreign theories and methods underlying the borrowed language, thus resulting in a borrowed consciousness. The people’s values were then more easily modified so that they equate foreign interest with national interest. (Enriquez & Marcelino, 1984)

These views link the role of English to the continuation of the economic and political dominance of its native speakers. Mansoor (2005) sees in such views an attempt, “To establish a connection between imperialism in general and global structural relations that maintain and reproduce economic and other inequalities between countries”.

However not all regard this domination of English as negative. Pennycook’s (2001) views the split in opinion about the predominant use of English as an international language as a situation, “where one group of sociolinguists views the spread of English as natural, neutral and beneficial and the others who see it as a deliberate manipulation of vested interests to perpetuate their power and control on a global basis” (in Mansoor: 2005). The beneficial aspect of ELT is reinforced in Rassool’s work (2004) as she feels that because the possibility of being flexible “language users is available in the global context of communication, therefore to view language domination as (just) homogenization is a too simplistic and one-dimensional view”.
5.6 Critical Language Awareness

It has been observed that there is a general lack of professional awareness about English teaching. In view of the immense influence of English language in acculturization and identity formation of non-native learners, there is growing concern about the need for bringing about a change in the established pedagogical practices. Language is increasingly seen as being used as a strategy to wield power and to maintain the status quo. Language minorities are put at a disadvantage educationally, socially and economically. Fairclough (2001) and Grillo (1989) see the advantage of asking ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions, for bringing a change in the situation, instead of the ‘what’ questions, which encourage to take facts at face value. They find that merely stating the established conventions of language use becomes a means of perpetuating the existing power relations. Fairclough says, “Sociolinguistics has often described sociolinguistic conventions in terms of what are the ‘appropriate’ linguistic forms for a given social situation, whatever the intention, this terminology is likely to lend legitimacy to the ‘facts’ and their underlying power relations.” Cameron et al (1992) have advanced Foucault’s observation that “the citizens of modern democracies are controlled less by naked violence or the economic power of the boss and the landlord than by the pronouncements of expert discourse”, to suggest that research conducted in language is equally relevant for deconstructing the power underlying dominant discourses. They say:

Evidently, programmes of social scientific research … have contributed ‘regimes of truth’. In studying and presenting the ‘facts’ about these phenomena, they have both helped to construct particular people (‘criminals’, ‘deviants’, ‘teenage mothers’) as targets for social control and influenced the form of the control itself will take.

Fairclough (2001) advocates the use of Critical Language Study (hereafter CLS) in language education in schools, as a “significant objective”, to enable linguistically less-advantaged groups to find the hidden assumptions of superiority expounded in literary texts. Rather than being limited to the mainstream methods of viewing texts, learners should be taught critical language awareness to enable them to understand the intricate patterns of social and cultural variations and to decipher the themes of domination, which are the necessary component of all language texts.

Fairclough’s work in this context is has developed a comprehensive model of how a literary text should be taught in the class going through the step by step process of allowing students to reflect and ponder over the message of the text, and come up with their own response it. Then the technique of changing the point of view and rewriting the same text is used. Fairclough suggests the following four part cycle: Explanation and reflection on experience, systematizing experience, and developing practice. Though Fairclough’s research is based on the multilingual society of Britain, his research findings and suggestions are relevant in the wider global context today. They are especially significant in post-colonial societies like Pakistan where English language has become a second language. The dominant position occupied by English entails that, unless deliberate attempts are made to understand the way languages work in society and to see how literary works become important means of assimilation and identity formation, the danger remains of their being received and used to achieve these very objectives. He says in the same vein as Althusser, “consciousness is the first step towards emancipation… domination works… through ‘consent’ rather than ‘coercion’, through ideology, and through language” (ibid). He feels that CLS might help in the struggle for social emancipation of the under privileged, in such contexts as the teaching of English as a Second Language (hereafter ESL). Teachers can be made to see the potential in this area for empowering students, as this educational process is: “grounded in a dialogue about the meaning of power and its encoding in language”. In the area of ESL, there is already a basis for developing a critical consciousness of discourse on which an ideological struggle can be carried out. Combined with critical language awareness, CLS can become “a facilitator for ‘emancipatory discourse’ which challenges, and may ultimately transform the dominant orders of discourse as a part of the struggle of oppressed social groupings against the dominant bloc”(ibid). The current perspective of CLS and of the
discourse which he advocates is radically different from the mainstream, instrumental conception of viewing language teaching which is task oriented and ignores how language is also, “a matter of expressing and constituting and reproducing social identities and social relations, including crucial relations of power”. He finds that this current view ignores the social origins of language and the problems inherent in the transmission of knowledge. Literary texts too, if taken in this way advocate the “transmission of dominant cultural values, teaching children what conventional wisdom regards as ‘great literature’”. This “impacting” aspect of education, merely trains learners “to be good at being conventional” and does not develop the learners’ ability to critically evaluate their environment and their critical self-consciousness (ibid). Such an education cannot be seen as enabling students to do much to change the status quo of their social world. Language is taken to be naturally constituted instead of humanly and socially constituted. This positivist perspective leads to the impression that texts, which are actually human and social constructions, are as immutable and unchangeable as the natural environment.

Alternate views and perspectives are therefore “trivialized and misrepresented as abuse of loaded language by unscrupulous individuals”. Fairclough is against such an alienating view of language. He says: “Such ways of representing language inhibit children from coming to conceptualize it as an object of critical consciousness — that is, they prevent a genuinely educational orientation to language” (ibid).

Fairclough gives a workable guideline to apply his research findings to actual pedagogical practice. Children know how language works in society and they have unconsciously grasped the basics of language use, which is, how to use which language and where to use it. But this experience can become a basis for their development, only if they are helped to put it in words, that is, in trying to formulate it into “knowledge”. Reflecting upon their linguistic experiences, sharing these experiences with the class, systematically putting it down, as “knowledge” and then using this base for further reflection and analysis will help them find social explanations for various linguistic phenomenons. Finally using this acquired awareness for developing the child’s capacity for purposeful discourse is where the teacher can play an important role. As an example, he suggests a writing activity, in which learners are asked to write historical accounts, a domain from which a majority of people are conventionally excluded. The students will bring their critical awareness to bear upon this activity and by going through the steps given above, they will find themselves breaking the conventions of discourse, of language use, and achieving emancipation through it. They would have entered a discourse type or a particular subject position, from which people are normally excluded and would have also empowered themselves by showing that “existing orders of discourse are not immutable” and therefore they can be deconstructed and replaced by new orders. He goes on to say: “This second level of awareness is essential if the schools are to develop children’s language capabilities to the point where the commonsense practices and constraints of currently dominant orders of discourse are probed, challenged, and transformed — rather than simply training children to be good at being conventional” (ibid).

Useful suggestions for practical implementation of CLS have been offered by a number of practitioners. For example, Baker et al (1998) have suggest that learners should be made aware that minority languages are devalued vis-à-vis majority ones because of prejudices against minority languages and to recognize how language can either be offensive or show respect and then to choose appropriate language forms accordingly. They should learn to understand and challenge different conventions of language practice in different circumstances and recognize what possibilities and constraints for change exist in current circumstances. A CLS pedagogy will enable learners to recognize how people with power choose the language to describe people, things and events, how language, especially written language, has been shaped by the more prestigious groups, and seems to exclude and sometimes devalue lower status groups, how the relative status of people involved affects the way they use language and how language use can either reproduce or challenge existing power relations. Baker et al (1998) agree with Fairclough’s suggestions regarding CLS being an important adjunct to any language program. According to them, of the three aspects of language study namely, accuracy, contextual appropriateness and language awareness; the first two are normative and require strict conformity to standards. “Language can exclude
people... In a majority/minority language situation, a person who is not proficient in the majority language may be perceived as being unintelligent or inferior”. Being hinged upon established linguistic conventions they do not challenge, with a view to changing inequalities of power and status. The third, critical awareness of language entails being able to perceive how discrimination, inferiority, dominance are established through linguistic forms. It means that one can decipher encoded messages in texts and arrive at impartial understandings. Language minority children, for example, need to be able to read to understand hidden propaganda in texts. This is not as difficult as it seems, because according to Baker et al, “minority language children are keenly aware of the seeming insignificance of their heritage culture compared with the prestige and high profile of the majority culture.” If alternate perspectives in the curriculum are included, not as appendix to the main stream perspective, but “with the distinctive contribution of different cultural groups justly represented, and the interdependence of different experience faithfully told”, learners get a chance to critically examine their comparative values objectively, and gain from patterns of the experience. Learners are also enabled to perceive patterns of discrimination, inferiority and ascendancy and see how language reinforces superiority, and sometimes creates all these. They are also enabled to see that perceptions about values of appropriateness and accuracy are socially constructed and can change over time. Moreover, a critical awareness of language probes question of why and how certain languages have assumed value, whereas others have been devalued. These views regard language learning from more of an instrumental than an emotive or integrative perspective. Baker et al emphasize:

While people want to conform to standards of language accuracy and appropriateness, they may also need to challenge such standards. A person living in Asia, for example may learn English as a second language for a specific purpose such as employment and educational success. That person may need to be made aware that English does not have to be learnt at the cost of the mother tongue, nor does it have to conform to a British or US standard of English.

Thus a critical awareness of language would encourage the Pakistani learners to be less inhibited in asking questions about the assumptions in language texts. They would be proactive in using non-standard varieties of language and would be confident in code-switching.

Others like Foley and Thompson agree with the view that awareness about the power of language has to be taught explicitly within the school curriculum as “language awareness” or “critical literacy”. They suggest the three requirements taken from Macken-Horarik (in Foley & Thompson, 1998) for teaching critical language awareness in school: 1) contextualization, which entails an ability to understand the relationship between the textual meaning and social practices, 2) meta-language awareness, which has to do with theme, lexical cohesion and transitivity relations for an understanding of the text as being within the framework of a particular genre, so as to be able to disengage from the text and see above and around what the writer is saying, and 3) looking at the text closely using the above two techniques (ibid). By giving examples from primary history textbooks, journal articles, advertisements, letters in newspapers, etc., they show how language can be used to convey ideological messages, how texts position people in certain ways and how learners can be actually “learning not only not to question anomalies or injustices but also learning not to see them”, (ibid) if not taught otherwise.

Claire Kramsch (1993) in her work ‘Context and Culture in Language Teaching’, says that the real value of using literature in teaching a language is that it provides a place where the particular voice of the writer appeals to the particular in the reader. After years of functional courses, there is again interest for the individual voice and creative utterance. Literature is what Bakhtin calls the ‘double-voiced discourse’ (in Kramsch, 1993) as it allows writers to use language in conventional ways while standing outside it. Thus the literary texts “offer models of particularity and opportunity for the dialogic negotiation of meaning”. Kramsch cites Widdowson (1975), who calls literature, “alternative contexts of reality”. In the current practices of teaching literature, teachers uses the text as springboard to invite students to express themselves and relate their experiences. However, they hesitate to ask students to critically look into these
experiences because of the risk of what they view as indoctrinating students to their own point of view, or of promoting stereotyped views. Although teachers realize that they have to consider the context of the text and the intended readers, yet they hesitate to make generalizations about “cultural characteristics” because of these two concerns. Kramsch feels that: “The concerns about indoctrination, and cultural stereotyping, are the two most frequently cited reasons for refraining from interpreting both the particular and general cultural meanings conveyed by written text” (ibid). Widdowson sees this dilemma, as “a central problem in the teaching of anything is to know how to exert control without stifling initiative”.

The third reason can be seen in the attitude of non-native teachers of English at the periphery, typically in the Pakistani context. Their feeling of linguistic inferiority and low ethno-linguistic self-esteem inhibits them to have a free interplay of their own ideas and views with the text. “Non-native teachers and students alike are intimidated by the native speakers’ norm and understandably try to approximate this norm” (Kramsch, 2003). Because of this and not being trained themselves to have “any meaningful reader participation, they often confuse reader response with free-associations and reactions of the reader’s mind” (ibid). All these factors account for the fact that many teachers refrain from exploring either their own response to the text or that of their students. Kramsch advises them to, first get in touch with themselves as readers, and then get their students to become critical readers before expecting them to find meaning and pleasure in the texts they read. She suggests a number of pre- and post-reading activities that would allow a multiple perspective on the layers of textual meaning. Varying the medium or the genre, varying the point of view, varying the text time and audience, varying the referential world of the story and teasing out the voices in the text, could help in creating pedagogy of dialogue that elicits and values “diversity and difference”.

For a more creative and critical pedagogy of literary texts, the teaching of stylistics has been suggested. Stylistic deconstruction enables students to develop their creative and interpretive skills. Without the proper training in stylistic, students tend to lack analytical methods and the confidence to propose their own views, and thus they often resort to the adoption and “recycling of ready-made critical judgments” (Widdowson, 1975). In a typical Pakistani English literature class, the students are often told the significance and background of a text before their actual engagement with it. Such a methodology deprives students of chances to trust their own critical and analytical skills, and they end up parroting the critiques of others. It is felt that students are not competent and mature enough to have their own independent judgment of the text (anonymous teacher, 2005), so the views of eminent critics are given to the students. The restraint of time was also stated to be one of the reasons for this methodology. But the benefits of producing better writers and speakers of English far outweigh the disadvantage of having to curtail a literary course, which might have to be done to create space for stylistics. Kramsch (1993) finds that the literary text offers opportunities to the reader to engage with it on a personal level and advocates the use of an innovative pedagogy, to help students to engage in more creative and critical manner with the literary texts, instead of relying on stereotyped views. Greenblatt (1995) sees the value of literary texts in their function to formulate cultural constructs, and at the same time allow writers and critics to bring forth the conflicting and opposing voices, which are always present in society.

Whereas Kramsch has suggested the potential of literary discourse in helping learners to attain multiple perspectives and meanings from the text, Greenblatt (1995) sees the role of literature in helping to formulate normative social boundaries of a society. In his essay ‘Culture’, he examines the role of literature in such cultural functions as “mobility” and “constraint”. He finds that literature has always functioned to give ideals of human conduct and at the same time set limits for undesirable behaviors. Referring to Shakespeare’s tragi-comedy, ‘The Tempest’, Greenblatt finds the playwright using cultural mobility and constraint, in a creative way but at the same time allowing discordant notes to appear in the smooth structure of the play. Drawing upon the growing interests of his contemporaries in exploration and discovery, magical arts and alchemy, Shakespeare had combined these, with themes of civilizing and reforming the newly discovered lands. But the two themes hardly synchronize. In fact there is an oddly discordant effect. “The magical power is clearly impressive but its legitimacy is less clear”. When
Caliban, “the salvage and deformed slave”, voices its discontent for Prospero’s harsh and brutal treatment, the reader is offered an opportunity to view the play from a different perspective. Greenblatt appreciates Shakespeare’s artistic integrity for hearing and giving agency to this marginalized voice. He states: “Within the powerful constraints of Shakespeare’s Jacobean culture, the artist’s imaginative mobility enables him to display cracks in the glacial front of princely power and to record a voice, the voice of the displaced and oppressed, that is heard scarcely anywhere else in his own time”. When literary works are viewed from the perspective of being representatives of different voices, they become important sources of deciphering formations of race, class, gender and ethnicity. Informed readers can find new meanings and fresh perspectives underlying the surface text. In fact, says Greenblatt, “Most students of literature reserve their highest admiration for those works that... batter against the boundaries of their own culture” (ibid).

The post structural movement in literary criticism does precisely this, that is, to dismantle the assumptions of the canonical text; to find alternate meaning in the sub text. Parry points out how Rhys dismantles the text of such works as Bronte’s ‘Jane Eyre’ in ‘Wide Sargasso Sea’ and calls for it to be seen with fresh eyes, from the point of view of the marginalized and the excluded, “the savage voice” (In Ashcroft, 1995).

6. English Language Teaching in Pakistan

In Pakistan, English language is taught as a compulsory subject in government and private schools and at the Bachelors level in tertiary education. English literature per se is offered as an optional subject at the O’ and A’ levels and at college level, but a considerable part of the content of the English language courses is based on literary material. The British school certificate program, which is followed in most of the elite institutions, entails that its prescribed syllabus be used. The textbooks are published in foreign countries and texts are literary and full of cultural content. Teachers are rarely trained to teach English Literature. The Eurocentric perspective presented in these texts is reinforced by the students’ reliance on computer for information, and viewing of cable networks, which are essentially dominated by the West. Alternate world views and perspectives are not encouraged in class and Western traditional norms of literary criticism are adhered to with faithful uniformity. Parallels with current issues and realities in the changing global scenario are not established in the teaching text. Conventional ways of assessing and evaluating the text are the usual practice. Assimilation and acculturization into dominant ideologies of a literary discourse thus become the obvious outcome of such pedagogy.

6.1 The curriculum.

In the elite schools of Pakistan, the curriculum prepares students for entering the British ‘O’ and ‘A’ levels examination system with textbooks that are predominantly meant for a western readership. English is the medium of classroom and peer interaction in all aspects of school time. Though English language teaching is of a much better standard here, but this is achieved by exclusion of the students’ mother tongue. Combined together, all these aspects of the learning environment constitute the hidden curriculum, and have implications on identity formation and subject construction of students.

6.2 The Content.

The content is carefully selected from literary texts, which have been produced in the “core” English-speaking countries, mostly British or American. Even literatures of countries like Canada or Australia are considered peripheral (Dockr, 1995). Works written in the other commonwealth, countries, like Pakistan and India, the new ‘Englishes’, as they are called, have until recently been scrupulously excluded, on grounds of their themes that are considered too local or temporary. Texts expounding ideologies, such as Marxism and feminism, and their accompanying concerns with social issues of race, class and gender, are also deemed unfit to be included in teaching material, because of the possibility of their opening up dissention, and subversive debates. Texts which expound the classic themes of the self, truth, peace and
happiness which are taken to be universal for all humanity, are usually prescribed in the English teaching texts in Pakistan as in most other non-native countries. Although there have been recent efforts to incorporate writings from commonwealth countries in the English curriculum, and also training of non-native teachers to handle literary texts is being included in teacher training programs, yet this effort is so limited that it can only scratch the surface of this huge area.

6.3 Methodology
The methods employed in teaching English language and literature in Pakistan is mainly in the tradition of established practices of the pre-partition period. ELT practices rely on mainstream methods, which advocate center policies to be implemented in the periphery (Canagarajah, 1999). The English literary texts are reinforced through the teaching methodology. In Pakistan it is mostly the lecture method, which inhibits learner participation and class discussion. Individual and independent responses are not invited. Methodologies of TEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language) advocated by renowned practitioners (Nunan, 2003; Freeman, 1985; Broughton et al, 1980) of bringing students life-contexts in the class are rarely used. Age-old methods of critiquing the texts are taught, with no attempt to evoke fresh perspectives and to establish parallels with local realities and personal experiences. If at all invoked, students’ responses are based on their observations from television viewing and from the Internet. Due to Western domination of world media, this only serves to reinforce the prescribed text’s message, rather than allowing fresh perspectives and insights. Texts are reinforced and internalized by teaching methodologies of role plays and “learning by heart” (Ashcroft, 1995), especially in the private schools where the school environment encourages this. All this entails that learners who study literary texts, will be exposed exclusively to views and perspectives based on the Western world views and philosophies.

6.4 Hidden Curriculum
The domination of English in Pakistani school system, especially in those schools which cater to the demand of the elite section of society can be termed as the ‘Hidden Curriculum’. A Hidden Curriculum constitutes all the learning, which is not included in the official curriculum, which takes place in school. Its influence ranges from attitudes, trends and fashions current in society to the formation of basic understanding about life, values, norms and views of the world. John Dewey was perhaps the first to define this aspect of education as “the collateral learning of attitudes by children” at school (in Meighan and Siraj-Blatchford, 2003). Abbas finds it manifested in the implicit norms of behavior and speech, which children pick up and assimilate, without being told explicitly to do so (Interview, 2005). Some of the aspects of the hidden curriculum might be conscious, being a part of the whole infrastructure of the school, while others could be unconsciously imparted, through attitudes and practices prevalent in the school environment. Meighan and Siraj (2003) opine that the hidden curriculum is present not only in the academic part of schooling, that is, in the subjects that are taught according to the official curriculum, but also in such seemingly neutral areas, like the timetable, the school building, teacher expectation and talk, assessment and most importantly in the language of education. (Language assumes a great significance in schooling because everything which is learnt is as Malmkjoer (1991) opines, “linguistically realized”. The class is a language-saturated environment, and it has been pointed out that literacy depends a great deal on communicative competence of learners. In the school situation two-third of the activity is language based. Stubbs (1976) as cited by Walker and Meighan say: “For us teaching and learning typically comprise linguistic activities such as lecturing, explaining, discussing, telling, questioning, answering, listening, repeating, paraphrasing, and summarizing” (in Meighan et al 2003). The class is a language-saturated environment, and it has been pointed out that literacy depends a great deal on communicative competence of learners. In the school situation two-third of the activity is language based. However the stylized language used in school has important implications in teaching, as messages are conveyed in the form and context of communication. The notion of “proper” usage compels learners to make value judgments about others, because of the hidden messages underlying the school language. With reference
to continued exposure to these messages, Walker and Meighan note:

In accepting allegiance to a particular form of speech and expression, children are made vulnerable to fairly persistent social attitudes to different modes of language usage as they come into contact with other speech communities. These arise from the fact that, in learning language, we also learn ideas about what constitutes appropriate usage in different contexts, and on the basis of this... we learn how to use our understanding of language and appropriateness as a basis for ordering our impression of others.

Clearly, the forms of language that English schools value are not available to many second language learners who come from class, gender and cultural backgrounds that differ from norms of the dominant language. These learners stand in the vulnerable position to see their own language ghettoized by the powerful language’s normative assumptions. The language of the school is thus preferred by the learner as it ensures their inclusion into the dominant group.

7. Research Findings

7.1 Subject Construction

Subject construction was examined under the variables of teaching technologies of role-playing, identification with and emulation of text characters. Research findings indicate that the class room technology of role-plays/dramas is a much favoured activity, pointing again to issues of identity faced by the learners. See Table 1, 2 & 3. Students’, teachers’ and parents’ responses from all categories of schools indicate that students assume the mannerisms of the characters they are representing during the activities of role playing and favour integrative activities of role plays.

a. Role Playing

Table 1. Students’ responses

| Type of activity | Favour by students | Private schools | Other schools |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Role playing     | Private schools    | 20             | 12.4         |
|                  | Other schools      | 80             | 87.6         |
| Total students   | 170                | 290            |

A significantly higher number of students in the private schools are engaged in integrative activities as compared to other schools to learn English ($\chi^2 = 4.78; df = 1; p-value = 0.02878$)

Table 2. Parents’ responses

| Part of English course | Favour by students | Public | Private | Middle | Category | School | Total |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------|---------|--------|----------|--------|-------|
| Creative writing       | Percent (%)        | 0.0%   | 7.1%    | 44.4%  |
| Drama/role play        | Percent (%)        | 66.7%  | 14.3%   | 33.3%  |
| Presentation           | Percent (%)        | 0.0%   | 42.9%   | 33.3%  |
| Reciting poetry        | Percent (%)        | 0.0%   | 7.1%    | 66.7%  |
Percent (66.7%) (35.7%) (66.7%)
Total 3 14 9 26

Percentages and totals are based on respondents
Table 3. Teachers’ responses

Students entering into the private public middle category
Role of characters

Yes 88.9 83.3 70.4
No 11.1 16.7 29.6

Number of teachers 27 24 27

A non-significant association was found between type of school and teachers’ opinion about students’
tendency to assume the role of characters in role playing ($\chi^2 = 3.091; \text{ df} = 2; \text{ p-value} = 0.213$)

b. Emulation of Western Models
The majority of students, that is, 80.4% of all schools indicate that they desire to emulate the characters of
the texts. See Table 4.

Table 4. Students’ responses

| Desire to emulate texts private public middle category characters | Yes | No |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
|                                                               | 59.2| 40.8|
|                                                               | 43.7| 56.5|
|                                                               | 51.4| 48.7|
| Number of students                                            | 169 | 131 |
|                                                               | 146 |     |

A significantly higher number of students in the private schools indicate the desire to emulate the texts’
characters ($\chi^2 = 7.314; \text{ df} = 2; \text{ p-value} = 0.026$)

The reason for this desire is the character qualities of that fictional character (See Table 5) and “way of
speaking”. Parents’ responses indicate that the effect of English education is most discernible in their
dress code and in the ideas and thoughts of the children.
Table 5. Students’ responses

| Reasons for emulation of Private Public Middle Category fictional character | Appearances | Extraordinary powers | Character | Culture |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-----------|---------|
|                                                                            | 5.7 0 9     | 24.1 7.1 8.0         | 68.4 92.9 91.2 | 1.9 0 0 |
| Number of students                                                        | 158 56 113  |                      |           |         |

A significant association was found between type of school and reasons for students’ desire to emulate
western models ($\chi^2 = 33.245; \text{ df} = 6; \text{ p-value} < 0.001$)
c. Identification with Text’s Characters
A large or majority of students, that is, 60.0% identify with the texts’ characters. Responses indicate that in certain circumstances they would have responded in the same way as those of the characters depicted in the texts. 64.4% and 60.8% students of the private and middle category students have responded in the affirmative while 53.0% of the public schools have done the same. See Table 6.

Table 6. Students’ views

| Placed in similar situation Private Public Middle Category would you have acted and thought in the same way as the character as in the book |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yes | 64.4 | 53.0 | 60.8 |
| No  | 35.6 | 47.0 | 39.2 |
| Number of students | 160 | 115 | 143 |

A non-significant association was found between type of school and students’ opinion about their acting and thinking in the same way as the character in their books. 
\( \chi^2 = 3.618; df = 2; p\text{-value} = 0.164 \).
Overall 80% said they think in English and 78% said they want to be like these characters.

Discussion
Most of the teaching discourse which is used in the elite private schools English is literature extracts or complete texts from the English classics and their implicit ideological content reinforces the superiority of the western knowledge system. These texts present the lived reality of a western readership. When these texts are used at the periphery, they help in establishing a Eurocentric orientation in the class which is absorbed by the non-native learners along with its underlying assumptions about the social reality of a society which is necessarily alien for them. Their ‘hidden curriculum’ of imparting cultural values for the apprehension of reality is instrumental in molding identities of learners towards a western norm. Their education thus ‘interpellates’ these learners to locate themselves as subjects within the system through which they are educated.

The Eurocentricism implied in western literary texts has been criticized by educationists and linguists as causing assimilation of non-native learners. As language is the means by which the individual knows himself and the world around him (Lacan, 1992), the dominant language works to inculcate a single culture, philosophy and ways of apprehending reality and truth. The language of the teaching text is English, and the underlying message invites the learner to its view of life, which is alluring because of its material and intellectual superiority over the learner’s own. Literary discourses are important vehicles in terms of initiating readers into “dominant ideologies” (Althusser, 1992). Common sense conventions of language embody social and cultural assumptions which are actually ideologies (Fairclough, 2001). Language can be used in everyday communication to establish certain desired ideologies and their acceptance by society. The Western discourse emphasizes the universality of human experience, and postulates that certain types of human behavior are normative for all humanity. Students of all these schools, especially the elite schools, have been exposed to texts whose positivist orientation leaves no scope for questioning the essential meaning which underlines all such discourse.

7.2 Language shift
Language shift was examined under the variables of domains of use. 80% of the student respondents said that they used English for communication with their friends and peers, whereas they used their mother tongue to converse with grandparents and servants. See Table 7.

Data collected from students’ questionnaires, regarding the spheres where English is spoken, reveals that there is a significant use of English with friends as compared to other areas of language use, that is, in social gatherings, in dreaming, and thinking. However, for classroom interaction, significantly more use of English is indicated. As regards any difference in language use between the schools, there is no significant finding. See Table 8.

Table 7. Students’ responses
Where do you use English Private Public Middle Category

Friends 46.3 35.8 25.7
Family 14.0 22.5 8.6
Teachers 34.1 16.7 49.3
Chat Friends 5.5 25.0 16.4

Number of students 164 120 152

A significant association was found between type of school and the domains in which students use English. ($\chi^2 = 60.566; \text{df} = 6; \text{p-value} < 0.001$)

Table 8. Students’ responses
Domains of English use Private Public Middle Category

In Class 81.1 71.6 74.2
In Social Gathering 14.6 7.8 14.6
In Your Dreams 1.8 13.6 4.0
In thinking 2.4 9.6 7.3

Number of students 170 126 145

There is a significant association found between type of school and students’ use of English in various domains: ($\chi^2 = 2.315; \text{df} = 6; \text{p-value} < 0.001$)

Parents’ responses about their children’s choice of language show interesting details. Findings from the teachers’ and parents’ responses indicate that a large number of elite school students use the mother tongue only with their grandparents. Its use with siblings and friends is minimal. With parents, siblings and servants, the use of mother tongue decreases in the same order. The use of mother tongue is minimal for social interaction, that is, with friends (See Table 9).

Table 9. Parents’ responses
Use of mother tongue Public Private Middle Category Total

Grand Parents 3 8 9 20
Percent (100.0%) (57.1%) (100.0%)
Siblings 1 2 3 6
Percent (33.3%) (14.3%) (33.3%)
Parents 2 6 3 11
Percent (66.7%) (42.9%) (33.3%)
Servants 1 5 4 10  
Percent (33.3%) (5.7%) (44.4%)  
Friends 1 1 0 2  
Percent (33.3%) (7.1%) (0%)  
Total Parents 3 14 9 26  

Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

The result findings in the present research indicate that majority of the students are strongly motivated to learn English. All categories of students believe that the western countries have a lead in education (See Table 10) and the main reason why students want to go abroad is for better education. This instrumental motivation to learn English indicates that students believe in the intellectual superiority of the West.

Table 10. Students’ responses

| Opinion about difference | Private | Public | Middle | Category |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|--------|----------|
| Educational              | 41.4    | 48.7   | 47.6   |          |
| Economic                 | 13.6    | 7.6    | 13.8   |          |
| Political                | 4.3     | 5.9    | 2.1    |          |
| Moral                    | 9.3     | 7.6    | 1.4    |          |
| Ethical                  | 4.3     | 3.4    | 3.4    |          |
| Culture                  | 27.2    | 31.7   | 31.7   |          |
| Number of students       | 162     | 119    | 145    |          |

A significant association was found between type of school and student’s opinion about the difference in the western countries and Pakistan ($\chi^2 = 17.939; df = 10; p-value = 0.056$).

Discussion

According to my research findings, ELT in Pakistan has relegated the local indigenous languages to inferior positions which points to an eventual language shift. An ELT program in which the less prestigious language is ignored results in a language shift in which the socially dominant language replaces the less-empowering language. Some have called this phenomenon ‘language death’ or ‘language suicide’. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) points to this assimilation, absorption or “Macdonaldization” as being more than just a linguistic phenomenon. The culture, which is embedded in the less dominant language, is also stifled in the process and eventually when this language passes into oblivion, its culture, philosophy, ways of naming the world, disappear too. She points out how the policies towards language can either “kill a language” or support it through partial or full support (in Mansoor, 2005).

In the Pakistani private, elite schools, there is an insistence on the use of English. ELT methodology of immersion is used; English is used in all areas of school life. There is a strict policy of not allowing the use of the mother tongue during school hours. As a consequence Pakistani learners become keenly aware of the low prestige and status of their own languages vis-à-vis English. This denigrating of the mother
tongue has a negative impact on their self-esteem and academic achievement (See Baker & Jones, 1998). Talking about the hegemonic function of the dominant language, Ashcroft says that, “(It) directly affects colonized peoples’ perceptions of their identities and their capacities to resist the conditions of their domination, their ‘subjection’”, (1995). But most importantly, in school situations it encourages learners to assimilate the approved language of the school as it provides them social capital and the feeling of security of belonging to a prestigious social group. In this process, the cultural and social conventions of speech which are the necessary adjuncts of any language are also internalized.

Languages are said to take three generations of speakers to make a complete shift. Findings indicate that all categories of schools use Urdu or the regional languages only when communicating with grandparents and servants. This indicates that they are giving up their repertoire of the national and the mother tongue and are becoming subtractive bilinguals. Linguistic situations, in which a foreign language is perceived as economically lucrative and as social capital, encourage learners to become subtractive bilinguals. Instead of adding another language to their linguistic repertoire and becoming additive bilinguals, they lose their self-esteem as well as their linguistic inheritance. The present language policies of the State are conducive for learners to desert their own language and to assimilate into the socially dominant English. The curriculum and text books in the elite and middle category schools are based on western models, and there is a possibility that students could have been influenced in subscribing to the views of western superiority expounded in the literary teaching texts. This links up with the fact that teaching text propounds the western values embodied in it as being universal and normative and claims the superiority of the civilization, which had produced them.

Moreover the positivist and global orientation in the literary texts holds that they possess complete answers to all questions in a closed world. This approach imposes unitary meanings on all texts and not only stifles initiative, but also leaves no choice to the learners to make independent aesthetic and critical judgments. This positivism allows no interpretations which would allow the learner to relate the text to his own lived experience especially if teachers are not trained to create a critical awareness of language (CLS) to learners. Since social perceptions about the prestige of English are so strong, learners with a low ethno-linguistic vitality lose sight of their own identity and subscribe to the ideological message of the text. The research findings point to the fact that the private, elite schools are sites where more identity construction of learners is possible because the teaching discourses combine with state policies, institutional approval, societal attitudes and pedagogical practices to induce the learner to collude in his own subjectivity. The learner becomes a passive recipient for the language to shape his identity. The institution, the language and the social milieu of the school collude to form a triangle which constructs subject positions of willing learners. The Enlightenment position which regards human beings, as being independent of social forces and language, referred to as ‘Cartesian individualism’ is therefore contested. In the Pakistani context we see that language, society and English discourse are the determining factors in the construction of the learner and the elite institutions thus play a major role in the identity construction of the learner.

8. Conclusion

The study points to the complexity of the current linguistic situation in Pakistan, compounded as it is within the global scenario in which imperatives of communicative competency in English have impacted the socio-cultural dimension of ELT in terms of subtractive bilingualism, identity and subject formation of learners. The national language policies in Pakistan have made English a prerequisite for economic prosperity and progress; and societal perceptions regard English as a must-have for progress and prosperity. All categories of learners are motivated to acquire English. The national policy, working in tandem with societal attitudes and combined with the historical background of English in the area, has colluded to impact learners’ subjectivity and to bring about a language shift. Based on its findings, this study suggests changes in ELT pedagogy to avert the complexity of the situation which has surfaced in
the area of ELT in Pakistan in particular and in generally in situations in which English is taught as a second language. The use of critical approaches to teach English literary texts should be combined with traditional teaching methods, and alternate texts with different perspectives and sensibilities should be offered to learners, giving them opportunities for intertextual comparison and contrast. This would enable learners to decipher the underlying meanings and assumptions of ideological texts and help them to counter the effects of these on their subjectivities, as well as to keep their mother tongue repertoire intact.

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