

Linguistics in Pakistan: A Country Report

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Introduction

Pakistan does not have a university department or institute of higher education and research in linguistics. The subject is taught as part of English studies, especially of English language teaching, at the university of Karachi at the M.A. level and some courses are offered at other universities in those aspects of linguistics — such as phonetics, varieties of English, etc, — which are relevant for teachers of English. Departments of other languages like Urdu, Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, Balochi, Brahvi, Arabic and Persian, also focus on literature though sometimes a linguistic thesis gets written, as will be described later.

The language academies — National Language Authority for Urdu; Sindhi Language Authority; Pashto Academy; Balochi Academy; Brahvi Academy; Punjabi Adabi Board — focus on that aspect of language planning (LP), which is defined as corpus planning.¹ They compile dictionaries, standardize spelling and orthography and create technical terms (neologism) to express new concepts. But their language planning efforts are guided by political imperatives as we shall see later, and they are generally run by experts in literature whose knowledge of modern linguistics is very inadequate.

This being the scenario, there is little wonder that serious research in linguistics is not being produced by Pakistanis, at

they utter as one man. I will therefore define usage in speech as the agreed practice of educated men.⁵

The language of the elite, then, was "correct" while country dialects were "wrong". Such prescriptivism was obviously a boundary marker, an elitist symbol, a means of distinguishing the elite from the non-elite, but it was taken as being intrinsically elegant, desirable and superior. Norms of correctness were, indeed, used to suppress the common peoples' voice and even petitions written in the "vulgar tongue" were rejected by the parliament in England.⁶

The prescriptivists made grammars of English and remain powerful even today, as John Edwards describes. However, since the rise of modern science which aspires to be objective and descriptive, linguists too have taken to describe languages as they actually are. Even so, in the words of John Edwards:

If pop psychology abounds on station bookstalls and in magazines and other media, then so does an amateur linguistics in which prescriptivism still reigns. Anyone who reads newspapers, for example, knows how frequent are the cries for a return to "standards", they lament over unwanted linguistic incursions and the complaints about slang and profanity.⁷

The Prescriptivist Tradition in Urdu

Thus it is not surprising to find that the first concern of the people who wrote about the languages now used in Pakistan was about norms of "correctness". Most of these people were poets of Urdu who wrote in India much before Pakistan was made. However, if we want to understand the force of prescriptivism in the public mind we must refer to their attitudes, however summarily.

The process of changing the vocabulary of Hindi/Hindvi/Urdu may be called "renovation" or "restandardization" and Robert L. Cooper says that such renovated language fills no

Because of this exercise in corpus planning, words which are now understood and enjoyed by Urdu-using Pakistanis - *prem* (love); *jug* (age); *nain* (eyes); *laj* (bashfulness); *sundar* (beautiful); *sagar* (sea) and so on - are neither used in standard Urdu prose nor in poetry though they are enjoyed in songs by ordinary Pakistani users of Urdu and form the register of the form of poetry called the *doha* in Pakistan.¹⁵

As mentioned earlier, this attempt at renovation serves non-linguistic functions although it is seen as a purely linguistic phenomenon by the renovators and their supporters. The purpose Persianized Urdu served was that it became a marker of elitist identity for upper class (*sharif*). Muslims who felt politically impotent and threatened by the overwhelming majority of Hindus around them,¹⁶ from which the Muslims sought to be different and considered themselves superior. The new Urdu was, therefore, an identity marker, a badge of distinction, for the impoverished *shurafa* (gentlemen) of northern India who had little more than culture to fall back upon.

That this exercise in prescriptive linguistics was closely, and unabashedly, related to elitism is evidenced in the works of all the purists. Let us, for example, take the work of Insha Allah Khan Insha, the Urdu poet whose Persian work *Darya-e-Latafat* (1808) influenced many people during the nineteenth century when linguistic and religious symbols of identity were becoming congruous for both Muslims and Hindus.¹⁷ This book has been described by Maulvi Abdul Haq, called the father of Urdu (*Baba-e-Urdu*), in his preface to the Urdu translation as a monumental work on "the grammar, idiom and usage" of Urdu. Insha used the concept of *fasahat* which can only be translated as "correctness". But this was not merely a linguistic matter; it was an issue of class or rather a special combination of class, religion and certain respectable addresses in the Urdu-speaking cities of northern India.

The concept of *fasahat* was thus clearly based upon the speech of the Muslim elite. Thus it discriminates against Hindus as follows:

scriptive upholders of British Standard English (BSE) in the Received Pronunciation (RP) defend even now.

Although in his grammar of Urdu Abdul Haq pointed out that "Urdu is a purely Indian language of the Indo-Aryan family. Arabic, on the other hand, is from the Semitic of Urdu to follow the rules of Arabic".²³ Even so, this prescriptive tradition influences Pakistani teachers of languages even today. School grammars, based upon medieval Persian models, specialize in taxonomy. Parts of speech are divided into sub-classes which have Persian and Arabic names which must be memorized. Pluralization follows Arabic or Persian rules leading to absurdities. While this is an irritant for school children, the urge for prescriptivism in Urdu and English can sometimes be offensive. The Urdu-speaking people from the United Provinces (in India) even now pride themselves upon their linguistic refinement. The older generation sometimes, though to a much lesser extent now than before, calls itself *ahle zaban* (the custodians of the language) and use their pronunciation and usage as symbols of elitism, refinement and past glory. Thus Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi, whose family prided itself for being from Delhi, wrote about the family's attitude towards Urdu as follows:

Special attention was paid to our speech and accent. I lived in the Deccan for twenty years without adopting a single local pronunciation, and continued to speak in pure Urdu.²⁴

More aggressively, Shabbir Hasan Josh, the famous Urdu poet who migrated from India to Pakistan, often objected to people not pronouncing *gaf* (the uvular stop /g/) correctly. Since the uvular stop does not exist in the indigenous languages of Pakistan, it is replaced by the velar stop /k/ in Pakistani Urdu which was considered a sign of lack of sophistication by some purists.

A number of books on usage, especially on English usage, suggest that the prescriptivist tradition is still very strong. Indeed, so much is it taken for granted that people are not aware that linguists follow any other tradition. However, the present

Apart from British linguists, there were many German-speaking scholars who also helped to describe Pakistani languages in philological term. The achievements of these scholars have been given in detail by Anne Marie Schimmel.²⁹ Among the best known names are: Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893); Ernest Trumpp (1828-1885); William Greiger (1856-1943) and Max Mueller (1823-1900). Sprenger's major contribution is to Urdu literature and bibliography but he did produce both an *English-Hindustani Grammar* (1845) and a *Dictionary of the Technical Terms in the Science of the Musalmans* (1854). Trumpp, however, wrote detailed grammars of Sindhi,³⁰ Pashto³¹ and Punjabi.³² He even wrote an article on the languages of the Kalash people (called Kafirs) of Chitral.³³ Greiger, who also wrote on Pushto and Baluchi, firmly placed them in the Indo-Iranian language family.³⁴ Max Muller, who, in the words of Schimmel "has become an institution in India",³⁵ is the doyen of Sanskritic studies but has contributed less to the languages now used in Pakistan. However, his essay on the sounds and alphabet of Arabic-based scripts, though obviously dated, is very insightful.³⁶

Unfortunately, despite Schimmel's book, the works of German-speaking linguists, even those which are written in English, are not well-known in Pakistan. Apart from isolated scholars like Ikram Chughtai,³⁷ they have been unjustly ignored. The works of English philologists, especially, Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* (1901-1921) has dominated, and still dominates, the philological tradition in Pakistan. It has been reprinted in five volumes as the *Linguistic Survey of Pakistan* in Lahore and has been referred to by everyone working in the comparativist philological tradition - and most people still work in it in Pakistan.

Grierson's survey is, indeed, a landmark in the study of the languages of South Asia. It was the work of a lifetime "extending over thirty years" from 1891 to 1921 and covering 290 million people speaking "872 different languages and dialects".³⁸ Grierson gives an introductory section on every lan-

light of contemporary linguistic theories) continue to be written by Western linguists. Among these descriptions are general works on South Asian languages⁵¹ as well as grammars of Siraiki;⁵² Sindhi;⁵³ Punjabi;⁵⁴ Balochi⁵⁵; Pashto⁵⁶ and the languages of Northern Pakistan.⁵⁷ Carina Jahani has made an excellent study of standardization in Balochi which also provides the reader with a good analysis of the sound system and dialects of the language.⁵⁸ Like Jahani, Buddruss too has written on the writing of 'Khowar', the major language of Chitral, in a script based upon Arabic.⁵⁹

The most illuminating works of foreigners are about the lesser-known languages of Pakistan: those of Chitral;⁶⁰ the Northern Areas⁶¹ and little known languages of the N.W.F.P. and Balochistan.⁶² But here the culmination of the work of decades of Western scholars has appeared only now. It is a socio-linguistic survey of these lesser known languages — the languages of Northern Pakistan.⁶³

So far, this survey is the best source about the languages of Northern Pakistan, though, as the present writer has pointed out, there is much room for research in these languages, such as aspects of pragmatics, phonology and grammar (possibly along Chomskyan lines) as well as other schools of linguistics.⁶⁴

The Philological Tradition in Pakistani Languages

Most of the works in Pakistani languages are dominated by the philological-comparativist tradition of the linguist orientalists of the nineteenth century. The revolution in linguistics following Ferdinand De Saussure and then Noam Chomsky remains almost unnoticed in Pakistani writings of this tradition. Most of these writings, even about the other languages of Pakistan, are in Urdu and their major focus remains words (as understood in common parlance) rather than other more precise units of analysis such as morphemes or phonemes. If the sound system is referred to there is often a confusion between phonemes, allophones and the symbols which represent them.

and Kashmiri,⁸⁰ — and Razzak Sabir's thesis on the relationship between Balochi and Brahvi,⁸¹ have been written. Basically all these writers compare words of one language with another without taking into account contemporary theories, especially those dealing with phonology. However, Sabir has made efforts to refer to morphology, grammar and phonology though his sources are dated and inadequate.

Mehr Abdul Haq's major concern is ideological to prove that Siraiki and Punjabi are different languages. It is this difference which enables Siraiki to function as an identity symbol of the people of the southern Punjab. Other Siraiki linguists, such as Ahsan Waga,⁸² have also tried to advance similar arguments. Razzak Sabir, who compares Balochi and Brahvi as competently as possible in the absence of the latest sources in linguistics, appears to go out of his way to argue that Brahvi is not a Dravidian language⁸³ as Bra and Emeneau claimed.⁸⁴ The problem is that Sabir does not know the Dravidian languages of India and his assertions are based on similarities between Balochi and Brahvi which could be explained on other grounds.

Similar to this is Ali Nawaz Jatoi's claim that Sindhi is a Semitic language.⁸⁵ Indeed, there are some people in Pakistan who argue that all languages came out of Arabic but their arguments are almost always based on comparisons of a few words. In fact, since language is an important symbol of ethnic nationalism in Pakistan,⁸⁶ such theses appear to be based upon arguments in which the writers are emotionally committed to on non-linguistic grounds. For the same reason most of the interest in the old indigenous languages of the country has come from the activists of the language movements. They have been active in corpus planning both in the official language academies and in their individual capacities.

In the official institutions for language planning the standardization of the script, modernization of the vocabulary by the creation of new technical terms (neologism) and research on languages and literature is undertaken. But orthog-

an exception since the author is quite aware of the concepts of modern linguistics and has created terms which can be used to describe Sindhi in the light of modern concepts.¹⁰⁴ But Allana's work falls in the modern linguistic tradition to which we turn now.

The Modern Tradition

It has been mentioned earlier that linguistics is not taught as an autonomous discipline in Pakistan. Among those who tried to establish it as a university subject, is Anwar Dil, presently living in the United States. Dil could not establish either a department or an institute of linguistics but he did manage to establish the Linguistic Research Group of Pakistan in 1961 which published a number of monographs containing scholarly articles and papers read out at linguistic conferences in Pakistan.¹⁰⁵ Some of the articles in the series are of a high standard but there are shoddy, ideologically inspired pieces too which mar most Pakistani publications. Such writings are published because there is no anonymous reviewing nor, indeed, the means to do good research. Moreover, most publications are supported by the state which influences the ideological contents of the publications. The Pakistani linguistics series — the organ of Dil's Linguistic Research Group — published work on most of the languages of Pakistan but it never became a permanent part of the academic establishment. Thus, when Dil went abroad, the series became defunct. However, Dil contributed to the field of socio-linguistics by editing a large, and highly significant, collection of the works of distinguished scholars. He is active in editing, compiling and generally trying to get linguistics recognized as an autonomous discipline in Pakistan. His wife Afia Dil, although she is counted among Bangladeshi linguists, has contributed earlier to Pakistani linguistics too. Her book on the *Muslim variety of Bengali* is highly relevant for Pakistanis, who used to think that Bengali was only a "Hindu" language.¹⁰⁶

concerned with English, and that too with its teaching. A survey of English language teaching, for instance, has recently been produced by Farida Malik.¹⁰⁹

However, it is because of this increased concern with English as a language that some scholars have written about its role in Pakistan.¹¹⁰ Even more significant is the questioning of the traditional prescriptivist notion that only BSE and RP should be considered "correct" and only it should be the pedagogical norm. This questioning is a consequence of the notion of the non-native varieties of English which are partly endonormative rather than being wholly exonormative as the RP and BE ideal was. The work of Kachru,¹¹¹ the Indian linguist, laid the foundation of the idea that the English used in India — and, of course other similar English-using countries — has its own norms and is different in certain systematic, rule-bound ways from native varieties of English. This notion was first introduced in Pakistan by Robert J. Baumgardner who later explored the grammatical and lexical features of Pakistani English (PE) in more detail.¹¹² The first detailed description of PE, including its phonetic and phonological features and sub-varieties which Baumgardner had not touched upon, was published by the present author.¹¹³ The notion of "Pakistani Urdu" advanced by the present author in a newspaper article, has still not been described in detail.¹¹⁴ In Pakistan, however, there is not much advancement upon this earlier work, while elsewhere in the world there is much debate about the concept, and features, of non-native varieties of a language. To this debate only one Pakistani linguist, Anjum Saleemi, has contributed. His comment is that native or non-native varieties of English are valid linguistic entities only to the extent that 'a language L' and 'a particular variety of L' are legitimate concepts.¹¹⁵

But Saleemi lives abroad and works in the mainstream tradition of Chomskyan theoretical linguistics which is hardly understood in Pakistan. That is why his study of language learnability, which should have been discussed by linguists as well as English language teachers, has gone unnoticed. In the

India there are also studies of Sindhi,¹²⁸ Punjabi¹²⁹ and other languages in English. But, since the focus is on Pakistan, these works cannot be explored here. In Pakistan there are only a few recent works written in Pakistani languages which show some awareness of contemporary terminology and concepts. Most of these works are written in Urdu and Sindhi. There is, for instance, G.A. Allana's (1967) book on the *phonetics of Sindhi* and his study of *the dialects and spread of the language*.¹³⁰ Also worth mentioning are Nabi Baksh Baloch's historical studies of Sindhi¹³¹ and Hidayat Ullah Akhund's thesis on the same subject.¹³² In Urdu there are studies by Suhail Bukhari¹³³ and Abdul Salam's Urdu book on general linguistics.¹³⁴ Although of a rudimentary level, Abdul Salam provides technical terms in Urdu which can help linguists describe modern linguistic concepts. After Mohiuddin Qadri Zor's similar introductory work entitled *Hindustani Lisaniyat*,¹³⁵ this is the most adequate attempt to provide an introductory book giving equivalents of the terminology of linguistics in Urdu.

A brief study of Pashto where the terminology of linguistics is introduced in that language is written by Khial Bukhari.¹³⁶ Bukhari touches upon dialectology and phonetics which are generally ignored by Pakistani linguists. His grammar of Pashto, also written in Pashto, is also worth mentioning, though it does not touch upon recent grammatical theories¹³⁷ (There are such works in Afghanistan, of course, but they fall outside our purview).

Indeed, for Pakistani linguists it is difficult not to ignore theoretical complexities, because the sources and the level of training available is not conducive to study of the more technical aspects of contemporary phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. What then is left for a Pakistani linguist is language planning and lexicology of which examples have been given earlier¹³⁸ or some aspects of socio-linguistics. There are, for instance, studies of politeness in Shina¹³⁹ and Urdu¹⁴⁰ and so on. The former work describes verbal politeness patterns in Shina while the latter argues that the norms of verbal

resources, have written more detailed studies,¹⁴⁴ while Rashid Akhtar Nadwi, the only Pakistani writer who has written a book on this subject in Urdu,¹⁴⁵ shows neither any awareness of the state of contemporary research in the subject nor of modern techniques in this field of research. The present author's article on the languages of the proto-historic Indus Valley is also historical in nature. Although it brings evidence from History, in one place it presents no linguistic evidence to support the conjecture that the languages of the Indus Valley were Dardic or any other.¹⁴⁶

In short, then, linguists working in Pakistan actually work on the peripheries of the field of linguistics. Since they do not find material on linguistic theory they wander off into history, political science and sociology or stop producing research work altogether. The present author too has undergone this shift from the study of language *per se* to fields which are touched by language or those in which language provides a focal point or serves as a analytical device. Thus, in a sense there is no authentic theoretical (or micro) linguist working in Pakistan. The present author has the reputation of being a linguist but that only reflects the state of the ignorance of the country. Those who really are linguists — such as Anjum Saleemi or Ruqaiya Hasan — do not live and work in Pakistan. Such is the state of affairs now but it is only by confessing it that we may be able to move forward.

Conclusion

Pakistan is perhaps the most backward country of South Asia in the field of linguistics. This is not because there is a dearth of talent but because the subject is not taught anywhere in the country. The few courses which departments of English do offer in it are meant to help in teaching English and not to equip the student to undertake research in linguistics proper. In any case they do not touch upon Pakistani languages. Worse of all, very few books and even fewer journals of linguistics are

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8. R.L. Cooper, *op.cit*, p.154.
9. Amrit Rai, *A House Divided... The Origin and Development of Hindi-Urdu*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1991, pp.247-252.
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11. *Ibid*, p.32.
12. *Ibid*, p.37.
13. Rai, *op.cit*, p.249.
14. Nasikh quoted in *ibid*, p.251.
15. Parto Rohila, *Raen Ujiara*, Rawalpindi, Mavra Publishers, 1976 and *Khwab: Parto Rohila Number*, (ed.), Sharif Farooq, Vol.1, No.5 July 1986.
16. Sunite Kumar Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, Calcutta, 1960, p.243.
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20. Pavan K. Varman, *Ghalib: The Man; The Times*, New Delhi, 1989, p.52.
21. Ghulam Rasool Mehr, *Khatoot-e-Ghalib*, Lahore, Sheikh Ghulam Ali, 1986.
22. Varma, *op.cit*, p.188.

38. Grierson, *op.cit.*, Vol.I, 'Preface', p.26.
39. *Ibid.*, p.119.
40. Mehr Abdul Haq, *op.cit.*
41. For the Siraiki-Punjabi controversy see Tariq Rahman, 'The Siraiki Movement in Pakistan', *Language Problems and Language Planning* 19:1, Spring 1995, pp.1-25.
42. For the attitude of the ruling elite towards languages see Tariq Rahman, *Language and Politics in Pakistan*, Karachi, Oxford University Press, 1996.
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44. H.G. Raverty, *A Dictionary of the Pakhto, Pushto, or Languages of the Afghans*, 1901, Repr. Peshawar, Saeed Book Bank, 1982.
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46. G.W. Leitner, *Dardistan in 1866 and 1893*, 1889, Repr., Karachi, Indus Publications, 1985, Appendix IV.
47. George Morgensteierne, *Report on a Linguistic Mission to Worth-Western India*, Oslo: Institute for Sammenligende Kultur forskning, 1932. Repr. Karachi, Indus Publications, n.d.
48. T. Grahame Bailey, *Punjabi Grammar*, 1904. Repr. Lahore, Saadi Punjabi Academy, 1977. This contains an 'introduction' by Irshad Punjabi.
49. Denis Bray, *The Brahvi Language*, 1907, Repr. Quetta, Brahvi Academy, 1977.
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71. S. Sabzwari, *op.cit.*, p.38.
72. H. Mahmood Shirani, *Punjab Mein Urdu*, Lahore, 1928.
73. Grierson, *op.cit.*, pp.121-127
74. Ainul Haq Faridkoti, *Urdu Zaban Ki Qadeem Tareekh*, Lahore. Orient Research Centre, 1972. Also see his *Pre-Aryan Origins of the Pakistani Languages: A Monograph*, Lahore, Orient Research Centre, 1992.
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96. Sayyid Hashmi, *Balochi Siyahaye Rastnibisag*, Karachi, Privately Published, 1962.
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126. *Ibid*, *Pashto and Urdu*, p.1.
127. Asmat Javed, *Nae Urdu Qawaid*, New Delhi, Taraqqi-i-Urdu Bureau, 1981.
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available in the country, so that it is only when one goes abroad that one learns what is happening in the field.

Those who are interested in languages either write in the nineteenth century philological tradition ignoring all recent advances in linguistics or produce prescriptive manuals of "good usage". Activists of language movements also write works of an amateur and tendentious quality either to air their views or to promote their languages. There are no academic journals of linguistics in the country nor professional groups holding conferences and responding to research. Those who write in this field are virtually isolated. That is why, as in the case of the present writer, linguists turn away from linguistics proper to inter-disciplinary areas in which the resources of the established social sciences — such as politics, history or sociology — are available. To sum up, Pakistan has not even started crawling in the field of modern linguistics.

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politeness in English-speaking cultures, such as the use of the first name without honorifics irrespective of the age differentials of the interlocutors, are influencing English-using Pakistanis. Another kind of work is that of surveying the attitude of people towards different languages. This has been done in great detail by the authors of the *Socio-linguistic Survey of Pakistan* (1992) which already has been mentioned. Even more relevant from the point of view of education is the survey of student's attitudes towards Urdu, English and Punjabi by Sabiha Mansoor in Lahore.¹⁴¹ The point made in this survey is that students respond pragmatically to the apparent social prestige of a language and evaluate it positively if it increases chances of upward social mobility.

This brings one to the relationship between language and politics; the way language policy can make one language more pragmatically useful, and therefore of higher status than another language. An example of this is the increase in the social status of English with the corresponding decrease in that of Persian because of British language policies (*Rehman 1996b*). Another aspect of this relationship is the way language becomes a symbol of ethnicity and may be used to mobilize people against the ruling elite. This has been investigated by the present author in a book-length study, *Language and Politics in Pakistan* out of which articles on the Hindi-Urdu controversy, the Siraiki, Sindhi, Pashto, Bengali, Balochi/Brahvi and Hindko language movements have been published separately.

Other Pakistanis interested in linguistic matters focus on history. The investigations on the history of Urdu and other languages have been mentioned. Among the more scholarly works in other fields are the proto-historical works of A.H. Dani on the Kharoshthi script, the languages of "Sind and Sauvira" and archaeological research shedding light on the undeciphered script of the Indus Valley civilization.¹⁴² F.A. Durani, for instance, suggests that the symbols on Kot Dijian artifacts may be the beginning of writing in the Indus Valley.¹⁴³ But on this subject too Western scholars, with their immense

only review of the book in Pakistan, the present writer confessed his own ignorance of some of the theories used by Saleemi because research journals and books are not available in such a highly technical subject.¹¹⁶ Similarly, the work of Ruqaiya Hasan, who collaborated with Halliday (and was married to him) in a well-known book *cohesion in English*¹¹⁷ is unknown in Pakistan. Indeed, discourse analysis and systemic grammar, the linguistic tradition associated with Halliday in which Ruqaiya Hasan worked,¹¹⁸ is even less known in Pakistan than the Chomskyan one. Indeed, it is in the Chomskyan tradition that some studies on Urdu by Baber S.Khan¹¹⁹ and, once again, Saleemi¹²⁰ have been written. There is also a dissertation on Punjabi morphology in this tradition.¹²¹ However, a study of "word form" in Urdu¹²² and the phonology of the verbal phrase in Hindko are not in this tradition.¹²³ The present author has also helped in introducing some basic Chomskyan theories to students in Pakistan.¹²⁴ However, most of the works in modern linguistics were completed in Western universities and it is significant that the authors did not produce any further studies on similar lines in Pakistan.

A linguist who, though trained in the U.S.A, did produce some work in Pakistan is Elena Bashir. The work is along modern lines though it is contrastive. Bashir has contrasted Urdu with Pashto, Balochi and Brahvi.¹²⁵ According to her, this "Contrastive analysis will provide a set of statements about similarities and difference between" Urdu and these other languages of Pakistan.¹²⁶ Although the aim of the analysis is pedagogical — to help teachers design instructional material and teach Urdu to children who speak Pashto, Balochi and Brahvi at home — the comparison of the languages gives useful data to those interested in the languages as such.

As mentioned earlier, there is very little work done on linguistics in Pakistani languages. There is not even a study of Urdu on modern lines in Pakistan though there is one written in India in Urdu.¹²⁷ This is known only to a few experts because the technical vocabulary used in it is not taught in Pakistan. In

In the seventies and eighties the British Council and the educational agencies of the United States started emphasizing the teaching of English as a second or other language, and TESOL/TESL/ELT were among the acronyms to describe the phenomenon. Upto this time the departments of English focussed almost exclusively on English (which generally meant only British) literature upto T.S.Eliot. However, when the University Grants Commission and the Allama Iqbal Open University started offering diploma courses in TESOL in 1985, a number of young lecturers with vested interest and knowledge of English language teaching formed a pressure group which brought about changes in the English departments. The present writer, when appointed to the Chair of English at the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (Muzaffarabad) in 1987, started the first M.A. in English Language Teaching and Linguistics. This M.A. was unique in that it had courses on general linguistics, socio and psycho-linguistics as well as English language teaching. However, upon his relocation at the Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad the contents of this M.A. became more traditional and the linguistics courses were replaced with literature ones. At Quaid-i-Azam University, however, a course in anthropological linguistics and on language planning and language problems in Pakistan have been added by the present writer.

Apart from the efforts of the British Council etc., ELT also got a boost from the activities of the Society of Pakistani English Language Teachers (SPELT) which was established in 1984 by Zakia Sarwar.¹⁰⁷ SPELT holds lectures workshops and conferences on a regular basis — the 12th conference was held in Karachi and Islamabad in October 1996, which increased awareness about the teaching of English. Although SPELT and other ELT programmes do not focus on linguistics as such, they do contribute indirectly to the teaching of the rudiments of phonetics, varieties of language or stylistics. However, their concern is the teaching of English and not theoretical analysis. Books produced by SPELT¹⁰⁸ or by those involved in ELT are

raphy and neologism are both related with identity and thus with ethnic politics.⁸⁷ Thus, those who emphasize the Pakistani-Islamic identity insist upon the use of Arabic based scripts and the creation of new terms based upon Perso-Arabic roots, whereas ethnic nationalists sometimes reject this script and coin words from the roots of their own languages. A number of private individuals too are promoting their languages because they feel that they are part of their identity and should not be allowed to become extinct. Not all such works are linguistic; there are many which are literary and cultural but in which language serves as a focal point. One such work, for instance, is Ghulam Haider Buriro's thesis which compares Sindhi with the other languages of Pakistan to prove how developed and widely used it is in Sindh.⁸⁸ Another one is Abdur Rahman Brahvi's *Study of Brahvi*⁸⁹ which is more historical and literary than linguistic. Most such works are written by very committed and identity-conscious people from the less powerful language groups who write, about their languages to make them better known and make their own people take pride in them. The names of works on the following languages come to mind: Siraiki,⁹⁰ Shina,⁹¹ Wakhi,⁹² Wanechi,⁹³ Balti,⁹⁴ Hindko,⁹⁵ Balochi,⁹⁶ Burushaski⁹⁷ etc. Most of these works are either primers or deal with orthography and the historical aspects of language at a very elementary level. Private efforts on behalf of the larger languages — Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi and Urdu are too numerous to be described.⁹⁸

Unfortunately, these language planners too are mostly unaware of the contemporary developments in the theories of language planning. The only exception is Atash Durrani whose book on neologism called *Urdu Istilahat Sazi* shows awareness of some of the developments in this field.⁹⁹ Works by Raj Wali Khattak on *Pashto orthography*,¹⁰⁰ by Syed Hashimi on *Balochi technical terms*,¹⁰¹ by Khair Muhammad Baloch¹⁰² on the parts of a vehicle in Sindhi and by Qais Faridi in Siraiki¹⁰³ do not refer to the theoretical basis of similar work elsewhere in the world. However, G.A. Allana's book on *Sindhi orthography* is

Thus Sabzwari⁶⁵, Badakshani⁶⁶, and Mehr Abdul Haq⁶⁷, to name only three, do not differentiate between the letters of the alphabet and the sounds of the language. They sometimes appear to think that the letters actually represent the sounds of the language.

One major theme of the people writing in this tradition is discovering the origin, the language family, and the roots of a language. In the case of Urdu, this is an obsession. Almost everyone of note has devoted considerable time on the origin and development of Urdu. Opinions on this subject are many and diverse: that Urdu was born out of Brij Bhashha;⁶⁸ Hariani;⁶⁹ the indigenous language (Prakrit) of Maharashtra;⁷⁰ Khari Boli⁷¹ and so on. Probably the best known works of Pakistani origin on this subject are Hafiz Mahmood Shirani's thesis that Urdu was born in the Punjab and travelled to northern India.⁷² Another interesting thesis, and one which seriously challenges Grierson's assumption that all the Indo-Aryan languages are the daughters of Sanskrit⁷³, is that Urdu is the descendant of the languages of the Dravidian and Munda tribes of this region and is, in essence, a pre-Sanskritic language.⁷⁴ In fact Grierson himself acknowledged that the Indo-Aryan languages borrowed words from the Dravidian ones and that "the borrowings have been much more considerable than has been admitted by many scholars of later years" but he also added "that they were nothing like so universal as was once contended".⁷⁵ Emeneau and others have given lists of such borrowings as well as Dravidian influences on the phonology of the languages in question.⁷⁶ But influence is one thing, origin quite another. If Faridkoti's works is substantiated — and it might well be true⁷⁷ — it will be a significant piece of new research.

That the question of the roots of Urdu still absorbs the minds of Pakistanis writing in the philological-comparativist tradition is evident from the large number of studies still being undertaken in it.⁷⁸ It is also in this tradition that other well-known studies - Mehr Abdul Haq's thesis on Multani (now called Siraiki)⁷⁹, Yusuf Bukhari's comparative study of Urdu

guage followed by a vocabulary and a grammar. One of his theories which remains significant, especially because it is controversial, is his division of the Indo-Aryan languages of India into an inner and outer sub-branch. In the inner one sibilants are pronounced (such as the alveolar fricative /s/). In the outer they either become glottal fricatives /h/ or are dropped altogether. The "Inner sub-branch is bounded on the north by the Himalayas, on the west by, roughly speaking, the Jhelum, and on the east by the degree of longitude which passes through Benares".³⁹ In short, while Punjabi belongs to the inner branch, the language of Southern Punjab (Grierson's Lahnda), called Siraiki nowadays, belongs to the outer branch. This theory is strongly supported by the activists of the Siraiki language movement, of whom Mehr Abdul Haq was the major theoretician.⁴⁰ This is because Siraiki is used as the major identity symbol by the activists of the Siraiki language movement in Pakistan. Writers from northern Pakistani Punjab, however, call it a dialect of Punjabi and accuse Grierson of being a divisive imperialist.⁴¹

Other orientalist-linguists who are still well known to Pakistani writers are Langworth Dames, H.G. Raverty, George Morgenstierne and G.W. Leitner. In some cases their books have been reprinted by the supporters of the indigenous languages of Pakistan who feel that their languages, are ignored by the ruling elite.⁴² Among the reprinted, and hence more easily available, books are Dames's *grammar and vocabulary of Balochi*;⁴³ Raverty's *dictionary*⁴⁴ and Bellew's *grammar of Pashto*;⁴⁵ Leitner⁴⁶ and Morgenstierne's *brief description of the languages of the Hindu Kush*;⁴⁷ Bailey's *Punjabi Grammar*,⁴⁸ Denis Bray's *description of Brahvi*⁴⁹ and, of course, Gilchrist's well-known *grammar of Hindustani* (Urdu-Hindi) which was translated in Urdu in India⁵⁰ and so on.

Contemporary Western Studies of Pakistani Languages

Even now, fifty years after the establishment of Pakistan, most of the best descriptions of Pakistani languages (in the

writer is among those who are trying to question this tradition by supporting the notion of Pakistani English and Urdu, as we shall see later.

The Orientalist Philological Tradition

Whatever the support Orientalism — the scholarly study of the East — might have given to nineteenth century European domination of India,²⁵ individual orientalists have left behind invaluable studies of the languages of South Asia. In India the work of Sir William Jones (1746-1794) laid the foundations for the comparativist philological tradition which dominates the work of many Pakistani linguists even now. Jones's comparison of the vocabulary of Latin and Greek with Sanskrit laid down the basis for the hypothesis that most of the languages of northern India, Iran and Europe belong to the same family - the Indo-European language family.²⁶

The vernacular languages were studied by the missionary William Carey who, with Ward and Marshman, surveyed 33 of them in 1816. Among the languages used in Pakistan they translated the "Lord's Prayer" of the Christians in Sindhi, Gujerati, Punjabi, Bhauchi and Pashto among other languages.²⁷

The development of the vernaculars, of course, depended on what the British recognized as a "vernacular". The dialects which were recognized as such were necessarily standardized and prose writings were produced in them at the Fort William College where, for instance, Gilchrist wrote the *Grammar of the Hindoostanee Language* in 1796. Once developed, these standard vernaculars were used in schools and at the lower levels of the administration and judiciary. Command of these languages by British officers, as Bernard Cohn rightly argues, helped them to consolidate their authority on Indians.²⁸ But coming back to purely linguistic matters, it may be argued that Fort William, by emphasizing functional narrative, laid down the foundations of modern prose and fiction in most South Asian languages.

It is not hidden from the sophisticated that the arts of conversation, cuisine and sartorial elegance have been learned by the Hindus from the Muslims. Their (the Hindus') word or act cannot therefore be authoritative.¹⁸

Among Muslims too he makes it clear that one had to belong to Delhi or Lucknow. And even in these cities one had to belong to certain, generally Muslim, *sharif* localities.¹⁹

Having said this, it must be emphasized that all Indians, including Hindus, agreed with the social stratification of society. The working classes were considered naturally inferior and the idea that the *ashraf* were superior was accepted by all parties. Similarly, the idea that there were naturally superior and inferior languages too was not in dispute. The Muslim language reformers were therefore working within the established parameters of a world view which was commonly accepted in their time. What they were doing was new only insofar as their valorization of Urdu was concerned. The value which had so far been given to Persian was now transferred to Urdu. Indeed, Urdu rose in the social scale of languages according to the degree to which it borrowed the clothes of Persian. The old Muslim elite did not, therefore, cease identifying with a linguistic symbol of superiority; it merely changed that symbol.

But this transition took more than a century, and Ghalib, the greatest poet of Urdu, "continued to stubbornly look upon Urdu as a plebeian trespasser" on Persian.²⁰

The concept of *fasahat* so dominated the classical poet of Urdu that it is the most important criterion for the evaluation of poetry even upto our own time. The prescriptive norms came from the Persian poets and the last court of appeal for diction too was literary Persian. Thus the endless hair-splitting about *fasahat* in the letters of Ghalib illustrates his preoccupation with Persian.²¹ Indeed, in 1859 Ghalib wrote a critical commentary on Mohammad Hussain Tabrizi's Persian dictionary *Burhan-i-Qate*. In this book, called *Qaata-i-Burhan*, Ghalib upheld the authority of the Persian rather than the Indian writers of Persian, i.e. exonormativism,²² something which the pre-

communicative function but it does "contribute to the non-linguistic goals" which elites desire.⁸ What the non-linguistic goals of the Urdu-speaking elite which brought about this renovation were, will become clear later. The movement probably began as early as 1648 when Shah Jahan, the Mughal emperor (ruled 1628-1658), laid the foundation of Shahjahanabad (old Delhi).

However, it became really noticeable between a period beginning in 1702 and continuing for the most part of the early nineteenth century.⁹ Among the prescriptive linguists, who carried out the purge of Sanskritic or other indigenous words and replaced them with Persian and Arabic ones, were Sirajuddin Ali Khan (Khan-e-Arzu), Shah Hatim, Mirza Mazhar, and the poet Nasikh.

Khan-e-Arzu produced his own version of Mir Abdul Wasey's *Gharaibul Lughat* with additions, deletions and changes. Whereas Wasey had included the words used by the common people of Hariana during the time of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (ruled 1658-1707), Arzu criticized them in his *Nawadir ul Alfaz*.¹⁰ For Arzu, Urdu was the language of royalty and the aristocracy, the people of cities rather than villages, and that standard language which could be used in literature.¹¹ Arzu did not exclude all Sanskritic words; indeed he included some which were hardly ever used by later writers of Urdu.¹² But these were literary words from classical Sanskrit. The words he relentlessly purged from the language were those which the common people used. In short, the enterprise was meant to create an elitist sociolect.

Shah Hatim in his *Divanzada* (1755) laid down rules which prescribe the exclusion of "bhaka" (Common Hindi) words; the greater use of Persian ones and the restoration of their original spellings. For him too the criterion of "correctness" was the usage of the aristocracy of Delhi.¹³ Imam Baksh Nasikh (1776-1838), one of the most zealous of the purists, too advised in *Jalwa-e-Khizr* that "as long as you find Persian and Arabic words that serve the purpose, do not use Hindi words".¹⁴

least not by those who live in Pakistan. Most serious work has been done by Western scholars and it is to this work that we shall turn presently. Before doing so; however, let us divide the tradition of linguistic research into two major streams: the prescriptive and the descriptive traditions. The latter can then be further divided into the philological comparativist tradition which came from the nineteenth century, and the modern one which came in the wake of insights following the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, Halliday, Pike and Chomsky. The indigenous tradition, being a prescriptive one, continues as the major driving force of language-teaching in the country though it has no major exponents any more. Let us, however start with it because it is still a living force in the lives of students.

The Prescriptivist Tradition

Educated elites always saw language change as deterioration, and grammar was codified in order to prevent change. Perhaps the first attempt to fix language in this part of the world was Panini's grammar which contained about 4,000 rules about Sanskrit, the sacred language of the Hindus. The grammar was orally transmitted for hundreds of years² and then became the central text of Brahmanical studies of the Indus Valley Aryans.³ Panini was born near Attock and taught in Taxila, both in northern Pakistan, and his Sanskrit was the standard of the elite of this region which was widely acknowledged at that time as the best or "correct" Sanskrit.⁴

The notion of "corrections" was, indeed, the focal point of not only Panini for whom Sanskrit, being a sacred language, could not be changed, but all linguists of the world. In the West too the linguist prescribed rules to deviate from which could result in academic and social ostracism. Quintilian (c.41-118), the great Latin stylist, dismissed the language of uneducated people in *De Intititione Oratoria* as follows:

..... we are all of us well aware that whole theatres and the entire crowd of spectators will often commit *barbarisms* in the cries which