

LANGUAGE IN INDIA
Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow
Volume 13 : 2 February 2013
ISSN 1930-2940

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The Value Question: Informal Language Learning in Pakistan

Dr. Mariam Saeed

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Abstract

The requirement to learn English language for socio-economic progress is undeniable. Educational institutions have incorporated language learning courses within curriculum. However, Language is also being learned through peripheral aids which include: non-standard printed and produced materials. There is sublime indoctrination of western values with language learning.

Culture is embedded within language. Hence, with these peripheral learning aids the receivers are unconsciously exposed to foreign culture. The goal of this paper is to sensitize and empower the receivers and stakeholders. This can help create awareness of desirable and undesirable influences of Western values. To understand the shift in trends and value-system of Pakistan, this researcher conducted observational-studies and interviews for data-elicitation. Presently, the students of urban, private institutions are exposed to this mass-media explosion and formation of the counter-sub-cultures is limited. Nevertheless, foreign cultural ingress needs to be restricted to acceptable social norms of Pakistan.

Key words: Peripheral learning aids: Non-standard printed and produced material, music and magazines, influences: Linguistic, psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, values and culture.

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Introduction

A young language learner wants to understand a word “sun-bathing” he/ she comes across in the book and the teacher instructs the child to watch a TV serial Baywatch in order to understand what it means. Is there anything wrong with a child watching such a program or being exposed to a vocabulary which is alien to our culture? Will his/ her mother expose the child to such TV? These are basic questions triggering the debate on value-system of Pakistan and issue of language acquisition via peripheral methods - their psychological, sociological and linguistic impact on the young learners. Therefore, it is not an isolated aspect of Second Language (English language) learning but is also an inquiry into acceptance and adoption of its inbuilt value-system. As an example, in Urdu “aap” is an expression of respect to elders; “tum” for friends or age-fellows and “tu” for close associates, similar to the French honorifics representing a social value-system within language. In English however, “you” is the umbrella- word for all formal, informal modes of address. Nevertheless, English is the lingua franca, thus the necessity of English language learning to keep pace with the developed world. However, is it as simple as it appears or is there more to it? The sensitivity of this aspect is also indirectly explored by Anjum Riyaz-ul-Haq in her article The Position and Status of English in Pakistan where she narrates:

At the time of independence in 1947, the linguistic picture in Pakistan was complex...of the five provinces that then formed Pakistan, more could boast of a monolithic linguistic structure... the other provinces (except Bengal and N.W.F.P) had a variety of languages... the British used their funds to promote their Language with the aim of producing a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste and character, in morals and in intellect...A class to which many of us South Asians now belong... (1993, p.41)

The validity of this statement cannot be challenged as we experience this delicate distinction every day in any social situation and setting.

Despite this subtle realization, new language learning approach has incited new tendencies. These days social dictates emphasis learning of English language. This has stimulated a new trend in the educational and cultural environment of the country, making use of peripheral means and AV-Aids as teaching techniques, in almost all the elite institutions, in vogue. Apart from text-books; Non-Standard English Literature, cheap paper-back thrillers, English fashion magazines and comics, along with English music and films have become a parallel source for learners of English language under the cover of entertainment and pleasure. Tariq Rehman in an informal lecture on Teaching of English Language in Pakistan (2005) said, *“English cannot be taught. It is learnt through various channels e.g., through peers, exposure to non-serious extra-academic writings such as comics, and by watching English movies.”*

However, the question whether language learning also superimposes the native speaker’s culture remains unanswered. Should language learning mean accepting the foreign cultures’ ingress into our socio-cultural system or should the Target Language be de-culturalized to fulfill a student’s learning needs? It may sound xenophobic. But does not a counter-culture threaten the value-system of Pakistan? Is the recent unfortunate incident of a school girl shot by extremists, a manifestation of similar phobia?

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Malala's predicament and closed-societies' reaction makes it pertinent to prudently address these issues. Keeping in mind all these questions, this paper is an attempt to answer as many questions as possible.

Informal Channels of Language Learning

English is learned both formally and informally, consciously and unconsciously. Whether acknowledged or not, younger readers particularly, irrespective of motivation or purpose, read popular and trashy Literature more than standard texts in School books. Likewise, English movies, films and music are very popular with our younger generation. Evaluation of these sources of language learning, and the influence or impact created psychologically, sociologically and linguistically, is crucial. It is however, important to have a brief overview of what these peripheral mediums are. Broadly, they are printed and produced materials. It is also important to identify the trashy from standard material.

Martin Gray in Dictionary of Literary Terms (1994) discusses the written discourses as:

A. PRINTED MATERIAL

Printed material is written literature of any kind and is the "product of creative abilities of the human mind, seeking to communicate" with its readers.

Literary works can be roughly categorized into the following sub-divisions based on the ideas of Dr. Tariq Rehman and Martin Gray:

1) STANDARD LITERATURE is written work which has "certain linguistic features like tone, and exhibits style". Moreover, it should "arouse positive and timeless criticism" for its evaluation. In fact, it withstands the test of time, proving its universality and appeal to readers of all ages.

2) NON-STANDARD LITERATURE in contrast to Standard Literature does not have much to offer. Nevertheless, one cannot deny its existence and acceptance by the readers. Non-Standard Literature can be classified into the following types:

(a) Popular Literature can be termed as "contemporary literature", that is, literature written for the readers of a specific age-group and class. It is commonly read for the purpose of entertainment. This kind of literature has been defined in The Chamber's 21st Century Dictionary, (1999, rev.ed.) "(Perceived) as having little or no artistic, critical or creative merit."

This type of literature, in contrast to Standard Literature, lacks originality, creativity and innovation, generally based on similar themes. Nevertheless, this form of literature is quite popular among its readers as it can easily lead to the world of fantasy and escapism. Such a world of glamour and artifice is portrayed in the romance series of Mills and Boon or in the novels written by Danielle Steel and the likes. The language has not much to offer other than day to day functional language with the addition, perhaps, of crude words. An example can be quoted from Jeffrey Archer's First Among Equals:

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Charles was about to protest. 'I'm not complaining, you've done damn well so far. Just keep working on the fifty waverers. Threaten, Cajole, bully, bribe. Try anything, but get them in the right lobby, come the night, Pumpkin included. 'How about sex?' Asked Charles. 'You've been seeing too many American films,' said the Chief Whip, laughing. 'In any case I don't think we've got anything other than Miss Norse to offer them'

After reading this excerpt, one can not expect any of the finer linguistic features. However, depending upon the variety of themes they are at times a source of information on contemporary scientific and other disciplines like Hailey's novels Wheels and Hotel.

b. Trashy Literature is third-rate written material which according to The Chambers 21st Century Dictionary is, "Poor in quality."

Generally speaking this kind of literature encompasses all the inferior characteristics of Popular Literature. The distinction between Popular and Trashy Literature is only a difference of degree in vulgarity, rather than anything else. Its quality is questioned by this writer on two counts:-

- i. Stylistically it is not well written.
- ii. Ethically it is inappropriate.

This trashy written material lacks all the finer aspects of standard literature, yet is being read by countless members of a specific age group or class. The Hollywood recipe, sex and violence are both the essence and the main theme. Such novels and other written material do not impart any knowledge or contain any linguistic features for functional language learning. In fact some scholars and ELT specialists of Pakistan are of the view that such type of literature is a cause of deterioration of language. These cheap paper-back novels by Jackie Collins and others, with Hollywood stories of sex and violence, are considered trash. These stories generally revolve around the icons of Hollywood and their affairs. An excerpt from The Lonely Lady by Harold Robbins can be taken as example;

'Jesus Christ!' A voice broke the sudden hush in the control room. 'She's got nothing but tits and pussy under her dress. ' ... Up on the stage the woman clutched the Oscar to her and moved towards the microphone.... She paused for a moment until the applause died away. 'Still there is within me a lingering doubt and a feeling of sadness. Did I earn this award as writer, or as a woman?... I do not intend to ignore the custom of thanking all the people who made it possible for me to win this award. So my first thanks go to my agent, who told me the only thing that mattered with getting the picture made..... All I had to do was climb on the producer's...., lick the star's ass and My thanks to all of them'.... 'Holy shit!' The director whispered. 'Do you think we got on the air?' 'Someone asked. 'Fuck yes. I hope so', he answered. 'It would be a shame if truth didn't get as much of a chance to be heard as bullshit'.

This excerpt probably reflects the social values of Hollywood society. This may be the functional language of TV in United States of America; however, it does not fit the linguistic or the cultural set-up of Pakistan. The question remains however, that with pragmatic and colloquial language learning, such cultural values of west are also acceptable to the east?

3) COMICS AND MAGAZINES:

Comics were very popular with Pakistani readers, fifteen to twenty years ago. This illustrated colorful reading material is still bought and sold on a limited scale as it is the print form of a film. Presently, because of economic reasons like inflation, and enhanced prices of such material, the readership of this type of literature has declined.

Magazines are “what is happening this week or month.” They deal with issues like world politics, sports, cookery, fashion etc. They attract readers by being brief, spicy and multihued. However, there are a lot of magazines which are meant only for entertainment. Vulgarly and pornography are the main themes in such magazines. These magazines have become the major source of erotic pleasures of the readers. Though considered unethical, they are read discreetly by the majority of teen-aged people in Pakistan. This category includes magazines like Play Boy, Play Girl, Cosmopolitan and Punch to name a few.

B. PRODUCED MATERIAL

Produced Films and Songs are entertainment material and can be classified as under:

1. FILMS

Drama never depicts real life, but always the exaggerated versions of human experiences - be they good or bad. In present times, a film is produced with a complete story for the viewers. The viewer prefer to watch a film on a weekend, as it takes less time and has more entertainment value, than picking up a book or novel from a bookshop and going through it. Like literature, these films can also be categorized into the following sub-divisions:-

(a) Standard Films: Movies based on classics or classical themes like The First Knight, Excalibur, Brave-Heart, Frankenstein, and the plays of Shakespeare for example, or the plays on works of Bernard Shaw, Jane Austen, Emily Bronte etc. are grouped into this category.

Some animated movies like The Lion King, A Bug's Tale, The Toy Story and Walt Disney productions like Mary Poppins, 101 Dalmatians are also regarded as standard films. These have a tendency either towards teaching of language or towards presenting a moral for the general public. These movies, films and cartoons are equally popular with young and old. They are not only a source of entertainment but also contribute positively towards personality development of children and learning of a foreign/second language.

(b) Popular Films are based on Popular Literature with temporary appeal for the audience focusing on contemporary issues for example, motion pictures made on the novels of Sydney Sheldon-If Tomorrow Comes, Windmills of The Gods and John Grisham's - The Client And The Rain Maker; and so on. Usually people prefer to watch these movies than reading the novel. Romantic dramas Titanic, romantic comedies like My Best Friend's Wedding, action thrillers e.g. Jurassic Park, musical features like Centre Stage, science fiction movies like E.T., Inner Space, Masters of Universe or movies based on issues related to social sciences like Instinct (Psychological issue); PSI Factor, X-Files and so on, though do not impart knowledge or seek to contribute to linguistic aspects of learning; yet they do carry some interesting information for the audience and leave their impact upon the minds of people.

(c) Trashy Films have nothing to show except violence and pornographic scenes. So-called horror movies like Blood-Lust, and Scream (Sequels) all tend to degrade humanity. Such films, whether exhibiting violence or pornography, are considered harmful both psychologically and emotionally by psychologists and sociologists. Nevertheless, such material is not only being produced but is also being watched by millions around the globe.

2. SONGS AND MUSIC

Songs and Music are far more popular than films can ever be. Irrespective of age or class, people are generally fond of Music. Modern means of satellite communication has brought western music virtually to every home. Moreover, being economical and accessible, music is enjoyed by most people and does not require the concentration of any sense other than that of listening. One can listen and enjoy music while doing any other activity.

English songs, in the present era, are especially popular with the younger people of almost all civilized nations, It is categorized as Hard-Rock, Slow-Rock, Jazz, Pop, Classical, Reggae and Heavy Metal, etc. whereas lyrics of songs can be categorized into good songs or bad songs. Songs which express subtle feelings like Celine Dion's THAT'S THE WAY IT IS:

And I'm feeling sorry but I know it will come to you
Don't surrender coz you can win this thing called love
If you want it the most, there's no easy way out,
When you're ready to go and your heart's left in doubt,
Don't give-up on your faith
Love comes to those who believe it,
and that's the way it is

Or songs through which singers try to spread awareness about vital issues for humanity. Like Modern Talking's, 'GIVE ME PEACE ON EARTH' or 'ANIMALS' by Michael Learns To Rock,

Animals, wild rivers and water falls,
I hear the planet call, show a little respect,
Beautiful, to everything
That's beautiful and if you want to save it,

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Show a little respect

are good songs considering linguistic features and lyrics purposeful. On the other hand, Heavy Metal groups which usually emphasize upon music rather than lyrics show the growing frustration of the youth. Thus, only a specific group of young listeners listens to this kind of music and songs. These songs are usually rebel's complaints like song ATTITUDE by Metallica,

Suppose I say, I a'm never satisfied
Just let me kill you for a smile
Ooh! I hunger! I hunger!
I eat! born into attitude!
I eat! when you pull me into fire,
It burns like hell.....
and satisfaction this way comes
and satisfaction gone again!
Ooh! I hunger, ooh! I hunger

While there are songs which seem to be an outlet of aggression and anger in a vulgar expression, like Metallica's, SO WHAT

So what, so what
I say so fuckin' what
Who cares???
Who cares???

Metallica is a proponent of rebellion and sings of even "putting bullets in you" or killing you out of sheer boredom. Is the constant suggestibility of such violence not infiltrating the minds of the listeners? Perhaps the juvenile delinquency and recent episodes of killings in the schools in USA is a reaction to violence induced entertainment.

Methodology

Qualitative method for linguistic variables and data-elicitation was used to evaluate the influence of the various types of literature, English film and Music on the users. There was a need to conduct a large scale survey to obtain the views of the younger generation particularly students, to confirm and quantify the impact. An attempt was made to conduct a broad-based research at the national-level despite limitations, like shortage of available time and resources, and the vastness of the educational environment at the country-level.

The educational environment of Pakistan was divided into two segments conforming to the socio-economic conditions of our society. Thus, a division of the country into urban and rural environments was considered natural and logical.

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The study revealed that apart from the Television, the reading of Popular English Literature and listening to English music had an almost negligible impact upon the rural population due to economic conditions, non-availability of such facilities, and an indifferent and non-intellectual attitude of rural people, where English is taught as a subject from class five onwards. Consequently, the research and survey was then restricted to the urban environment and streams of educational systems i.e. English-medium private schools, English-medium Government schools, Urdu-medium government schools, etc.

Islamabad being the Federal Capital was taken as an index of the urban environment representing big cities like Karachi, Lahore etc, which have an affluent, fashionable and trendy population of all classes with all the resources available and an adequate level of intellect, representing the urban section of the country. The selection of Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansera, Jamshoro, Quetta and the smaller towns, was done to give due consideration to the segment of middle and lower middle-class of our population – a less affluent section but one with an equal level of intellect.

However, no fruitful conclusions could be drawn from groups of government schools and colleges because of low income backgrounds (purchasing-power related issues and availability of cheap internet browsing in the mushrooming net-cafes) and poor educational standards, further restricting the collection of data from elite/ private English-medium schools and colleges only.

Research Method

Two different types of interviews were conducted to assess actual effects/influence of these materials on students' learning and attitudes. In the first set of interviews, a group of ten intermediate and advance level students was chosen from each educational stream of Pakistan. For co-variation students were grouped on the basis of age, socio-economic backgrounds, level of educations, stream of education, gender and were engaged in a candid conversation. Interview questions revolved around the research question to form a conversation, while they were closely monitored to assess the actual level of this subconscious learning; with respect to pronunciation, orthography, use of slang words, sentence structure and their influence on the behavior of students. These group discussions also verified the veracity of their answers.

A second set of interviews was conducted to obtain the views of ELT teachers, linguists and psychologists. The purpose of this data was to reach a viable conclusion through their viewpoints. The varied teaching experiences and similar observations regarding use of AV- Aids contributed immensely for this research. Some of the leading booksellers were also questioned about the reading habits of people and popularity of type of written materials.

Findings

The data collected from two sets of data verified the undeniable fact that these peripheral language learning aids - Non-Standard Literature, films and music; are a source of language learning for the youth of urban society. Moreover, these are also influencing the attitudes of young learners, resulting in creation of sub-cultures and popular-cultures within larger social set-up of Pakistan.

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Finding 1: Language learning & Linguistic Influences

The surveys suggest that a lot of language learning is taking place consciously or unconsciously, for example a young learner is forced to open up the dictionary for a new word which a popular character or singer uses.

Language acquisition and learning are mental activities and such leisure time activities become peripheral learning aid as Prof. Rukhsana S. Javed (during interview) answered this issue, *“these materials are a great source of concept development of young minds, enhancement of imaginative skills and an indirect means of communication with the natives”*

(i) Spoken English

In the multilingual society of Pakistan, the regional and local languages hinder the proper pronunciation of English; it is due to the difference in basic sounds and phonemes of the languages, because vowels and consonants are different in Urdu, Punjabi and some other local languages. English has the basic phonemes divided into two categories of vowels and consonants - it becomes difficult for Pakistani students to learn the language and Received Pronunciation (R.P). Similarly there is assimilation and elision, a tendency to diphthongize vowels, fluency devices and absence of many sounds in the phonological system of some of our regional languages. Common sounds heard in English, /3/, dark /1/, aspiration, etc add to difficulties for our students. Listening to native speakers - in songs or dialogues in the movies, one is introduced to this phonological system of English. Repetition of songs and imitation of the singers not only help in the development of vocal organs; but students are also introduced to the absent sounds, short forms and fluency devices. It is also observed that people who listen to and repeat English songs adopt and adapt the same pronunciation. Thus listening to English music and dialogues of movies, one's accent and pronunciation, whether acknowledged or not, go through the process of metamorphosis.

(ii) Written English

(a) Orthography: Comics and Magazines use onomatopoeic words in illustrated stories to add variety of sensational spellings like Kool, Luv, Coz etc.

(b) Vocabulary: Non-Standard entertainment materials have a positive influence on the learner's vocabulary it contains vocabulary of everyday use.

(c) Sentence Structures: Most students believe that they learn new, exciting phrases and structures from these materials and, use them in their writing as the basic structures of English are the same.

It is considered that slang words and colloquial expressions devalue the language. However, contrary to this belief, slang words are accepted part of language. According to Tariq Rehman, (responding to interview questions) *“slang, colloquial expressions etc. are part of natural,*

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spontaneously used, living English. As such, knowing them increases the repertoire of a user". There is no harm in knowing or learning slang and colloquial expressions, "as long as one knows when and where to use such informal linguistic repertoire," he further comments. Nevertheless, abusive words learnt, do result in the deterioration of language to some extent often resulting in bad sentence structures. According to Prof. Muzaffar Qureshi (during interview), "Trashy literature influences language, imagery, style-mostly in a negative way, but can also popularize some phrases that may otherwise never be learnt. They do up-date the language but Western films develop not only attitudes but also linguistic patterns that represent these tensions."

(d) Semantics & Comprehension: A constant exposure to language helps students to achieve a certain understanding of language. What at the initial stage does not make any sense (sounds gibberish perhaps) gradually becomes comprehensible.

(e) Prosodic Features: English is a syllable-timed language, where variations in tone and intonation can change the meaning of words altogether. Prosodic features are variations in pitch, loudness and rhythm which relate the meaning. Prof. Shelia (interview) is of the opinion that, "As songs are rhythmic, we can use them with our students to use correct tone and stress by reciting and singing songs".

(f) Paralinguistic Features

Other than tone and intonation, facial expressions and gestures give the final meaning to language. John McGovern in Video Applications in English Teaching writes:

"Video aids are effective in teaching paralinguistic features of language, where facial expressions convey additional information". (1983, p.68)

Maley and Alan Duff also believe that watching movies reinforces language learning. In their book Drama Techniques in Language Learning, they write:

"Watching a drama or movie provide the authority of expression to language, it can become a study of language". (1988, p.134)

During the interviews it was found that such influences are adequately recognized both by students as well as teachers. The major negative linguistic influence of these materials is the excessive use of abusive language. Slang words make a major portion of functional language and do not harm language at all. In fact they are a part of Pragmatics. However, such vocabulary definitely prevents students from using correct structures and does not allow accurate construction of sentence and has an enormous impact over those who are passing through an impressionable age. Though reading habits are inculcated, quality reading is amiss. Young readers are not able to differentiate one from another, comprehension skills have increased due to more exposure to language, but appreciation of the finer aspects has not been developed.

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Finding 1 a: Psycholinguistic Influences

Psycholinguistic influences are those that affect individuals' psychologically. There are two psycholinguistic influences:

- a. A person whose Mortido instincts are dominant will not only like to watch violent movies, but will also read such literature and will learn words and phrases portraying cruelty and violence and vice versa.
- b. Other than vocabulary, by imitating the style of favourite actors/ actresses or singers' one is likely to develop an idiolect.

Finding 1 b: Sociolinguistic Influences

Where individuals are affected, society also gets influenced by these materials. Ten to fifteen years ago, slang words and colloquial expressions formed the idiolect of a very few of our society. However, with the popularity of these materials, slang words and colloquial expressions are used by almost every person. These words and expressions are now generally, accepted and are used by society. Thus, using colloquial language is no more a style of the elite but the source of fluent communication of the majority of young people.

Finding 1 c: Development of Skills

Linguistic-competence requires a person to be able to use contemporary language as used in its native culture, to be able to read the literature of the target language, write the learnt language and be able to comprehend and speak it. In our case, the target language is English. Command over language requires the development of four language skills i.e. speaking, listening, reading and writing. Non-serious literary works provide up-dated language to its readers, while songs and films add fluency in speaking skills. Listening to different accents and 'Englishes' of the world, one develops listening skills. Hence through these basic skills, one can also develop cognitive and imaginative skills.

Finding 2: The Value Question and Other Socio-cultural Influences

Reading Non-Standard Literature, and enjoying films and music one gets maximum exposure to living or functional English. Many linguists believe that the more one is exposed to written and spoken English, the more he/she is likely to internalize the rules of Language.

These materials can be an indirect source of habit formation. They motivate a student to develop reading habits. Trashy Literature motivates the reader to read till the end comes – quality vs. quantity is though debatable!

Finding 2 a: The Concept Formation

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Learning can be fun when you are enjoying it. But what about the concepts attached to undesirable words that the young learners are developing? It is a known fact that concepts concretize with vocabulary. With bad language, one is exposed to bad perhaps vulgar concepts which may affect a person's behavior and attitude or make him/ her immune to undesirable practices in surroundings. It can be argued that languages like Punjabi have a vulgar vocabulary so children are already exposed to these concepts. Nevertheless, not being a virgin at the age of 14 is a matter of great cultural shock to the Eastern societies when opposite is true for the West etc. Hence the word "boy-friend", is not just a word, it is a concept – not very appreciated in upper-middle, middle and lower classes of Pakistan.

Finding 2 b: Psychological Influences

These relate to the emotional and psychological state of readers and viewers. Hence, such Non-Standard entertainment material is a source of one's emotional satisfaction and feelings. The individual tries to identify the emotions that he/she is experiencing in his/her environment. Watching a film or a drama or reading such literature becomes a natural outlet in such a state.

To further elaborate, these emotions deal with two instincts working on the mind and personality of a person. Josh.R. Gerow in the book Essentials of Psychology, quoting Sigmund Freud says,

“According to Freud, behaviors, thoughts and feelings are largely governed by biological drives or instincts. These are inborn impulses or forces that rule our personalities. These can be grouped into two categories: On one hand are 'life instincts' (eros), impulses for survival. In particular, that motivates sex, hunger and thirst. Each has its own action. Freud, called life energy through which sexual instincts operate LIBIDO. Opposed to life instincts are 'death instincts' (thanatos). These are largely the impulses of destruction. Directed inwards, they lead to depression or suicide; directed outward they result in aggression. According to Freud, life is an attempt to resolve conflicts between, these two natural but diametrically opposed instincts”. (1996, p.353)

It can be assessed, however, that these drives or instincts make Non-Standard Literature and films and songs more popular, attractive and appealing to young people. Eric Berne M.D. in his book A Layman's Guide to Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis further elaborates the idea of young people's inclination towards watching films, listening to music and reading Non-Standard Literature. He writes,

The creative urge gives rise to generous love and giving ardent procreation and joyful building up. The tensions which drive man towards these constructive goals may be called LIBIDO..... The destructive urge activates hostility and hate, blind anger and the uncanny pleasures of cruelty and decay (as teenage boys watching action movies or violent ones). The tension which leads to such feelings may be called MORTIDO. While bodily contact provides the most direct satisfaction of LIBIDO anything which gives the feeling of "approach", whether, it be physical, mental or emotional approach, may help to relieve LIBIDO tensions. (1971, p.77)

Mentally, LIBIDO is relieved by reading popular/ trashy literature, watching movies or listening to such agents which give a feeling of approach or indirect relieving of LIBIDO tensions as in seeing or reading trash magazines since the direct satisfaction in our society is neither appreciable, nor easily accessible. While controlling LIBIDO and MORTIDO physically, people try to satisfy it mentally. Prof. Riaz Hassan (during the interview) also believes, *“This kind of literature provides a ready catharsis for the tensions built-up between the true nature of the individual and the heavy social pressures put on him to conform in a certain artificial way. People who read this sort of literature do not normally rush out and start gunning down their neighbors. Literally hundreds of millions of people, some in very high places, read trashy novels and formula fiction. Boys especially need some sort of outlet for their propensity for violence, which is why those wrestling shows are so popular with them.”*

In other words, it can be said that Non-Standard Literature, Movies and Music are the lesser of the evils prevailing in our society. They are certainly better than drugs and guns. Yet Western academia is rethinking the impact of violent video games, movies and music on the minds of users, as such suggestibility can turn into brainwashing and inculcation of extreme tendencies, if exposed to for a longer duration.

Moreover, language acquisition and language learning are mental tendencies and activities, but so is attitude-formation. Recognizing the fact that these materials are basically self-access teaching aids, they influence the tendency of learning and acquiring a language naturally. But is this all? Albert Bandura in Applied and General Psychology elaborates:

Imitative behaviour is a key to language learning, attitude formation and personality development. Imitation and modeling are a result of innate capacity....
A model in front stimulates learning. (1968, p.171)

It is a fact, that people do imitate what they find more appealing and impact making on their minds and personalities. Bandura, studying observational learning and imitating, conducted an experiment on young children watching a movie of an adult wildly hitting a tall inflatable punching toy. Later, when they were provided the opportunity to play with a toy, they displayed the same kind of behavior (language and choice of words show ones attitude, behavior and personality). (ibid)

Finding 2 c: Sociological Influences

The results of the interviews point out that there is an undeniable impact of these sources on the mindset and behavior of those exposed to it. Erotic works, music and films are considered a source of enhanced vulgarity which renders it against the social and moral values and are not appreciated. Think prom-nights and teen-sex in Pakistani cities like Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad.

Dr. Tariq Rehman (during the interview) suggests that, *“some violent or erotic works may be psychologically harmful. As such there are grounds for avoiding the more extreme books, especially of a violent nature. They do not however, harm one’s language but they may make a person insecure, anxiety-prone or callous.”*

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Conclusion

In sum, it is understood that this exposure is irremediable. Consequent to mass communication and awareness, English in Pakistan has become the craze of every ambitious mind. The medium of instruction in quality schools and colleges is English. These peripheral sources are opening up a gateway of indirect communication between East and West. Further, command on English language equates better job, status and salary.

The trend is so vigorous that it can safely be called irreversible. English has snatched all the benefits away from Urdu and from local regional languages; be it education, seeking a job or working successfully in an office! The net result, therefore, is not just drastic changes in regional languages through code-switching and code-mixing and the apparent disregard for Urdu, but also a shift in the attitudes of the young generation leading to counter sub-cultures in conflict with the values of Pakistani society.

With availability of internet there is a decline in the readership of printed material, yet it is being read at a level where minds are easy to take imprints for a long time. An American teen can call his/ her father by name and may walk out to ascertain his/ her wishes and views, but in our society it is neither acceptable nor tolerable. However, the tendency of anomie can be observed in the youth where virtues like respect for adults, decency, manners, honesty, hard work etc. are fading. Western influenced counter sub-culture is dominating the true cultural ideals of Pakistan. The youth is imitating the West in all possible ways. Therefore, the awareness of what to accept and what to reject with the language is very essential. Our own values need to be inculcated and the cultural divide between generations must be resolved for constructing productive fractions of the society, rather than two cultures (east and west) in contrast and conflict creating disharmony within the social order. This new attitudinal change in the value- system is inherited with English Language through internet and television, acting as catalyst in creating a state of frenzy, in every young mind to excel and out-shine others. Our youth is trying to be as fluent as possible and at the same time to acquire liberalism and glamour as his counter-parts in the West, which in our context may not be very advisable.

These non-standard printed and produced materials comprise of abusive words and vulgar phrases, embedded in ordinary sentence structures and lack any stylistic features. Thus other than improper words, a Pakistani reader does not come across good literary items, and does not have much to learn except tawdry colloquial expressions. It is the responsibility of the parents and teachers alike to ensure that the exposure to such materials and medium is not counterproductive to our national traditions, under the guise of maximum exposure of target language to learners.

Although, the word decency is mostly valued by the middle and lower middle classes of the world, yet a vulgar and crude expression is contrary to our social values and is not considered appropriate in any segment of society. At best new classes and popular-cultures are being introduced which create visible divides into an already segmented society of Pakistan.

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