NAVIGATING THROUGH OBSESSION AND RESISTANCE: PERCEPTIONS AND IDENTITIES OF ESL TEACHERS

by

Aniqa Shah

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and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Education.

Kathy G. Short (Mar 12, 2025 18:53 PDT) Date: Mar 12, 2025
Kathy G. Short

Mary Carol Combs Date: Mar 12, 2025
Mary Carol Combs

Christine Tardy (Mar 12, 2025 20:37 PDT) Date: Mar 12, 2025
Christine Tardy

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I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Kathy G. Short (Mar 12, 2025 18:53 PDT) Date: Mar 12, 2025
Kathy G. Short
Dissertation Committee Chair
Teaching, Learning, and Sociocultural Studies

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DEDICATION

To all the teachers in my country, Pakistan, and everywhere in the world who despite working tirelessly feel unheard.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Pakistan, a country boasting a rich tapestry of languages with around 77 spoken in daily life (Eberhard et al., 2020), experiences a tug-of-war between Urdu and English for dominance in educational and social spheres. English, in particular, elicits two distinct attitudes. The elite, well-versed in English, actively promote it, fueling society's fixation with the language. Conversely, the non-elite, especially the middle and lower-middle classes, regard English as prestigious yet resent its dominance due to unequal access and limited prospects, often leading to resistance. English teachers in Pakistan typically enter the profession for social standing and better financial prospects, often lacking formal training, yet they must navigate these contrasting attitudes and societal dynamics in their teaching.

Teachers' perceptions are profoundly influenced by social realities and circumstances (De Costa et al., 2018), significantly impacting language teaching for both teachers and students. This interconnectedness of English language education with the societal landscape necessitates understanding the deep-seated beliefs about the language in local contexts. Due to evolving global dynamics, language teachers grapple with uncertainties about what and how to teach (Kramsch, 2014), balancing personal perceptions, student needs, social demands, and political landscapes. Given the dominance of the English language in Pakistan and the Pakistani education system, English teaching has an impact on society; and the societal perceptions about English have an impact on its teaching as well.

This dissertation delves into the perceptions of English teachers in Pakistan, exploring the multifaceted factors that shape their identity and thoughts about English teaching. Through

qualitative interviews with five female English teachers from Karachi, the study investigates the formation of English teachers' perspectives about English and looks at how reflective these perceptions are of the obsession with and resistance against English in the society. The findings reveal that the teachers feel pride in their role but face challenges such as intense scrutiny, unrealistic expectations, and a heavy workload. Their identity emerges as a blend of personal experiences, societal perceptions, and external expectations, leading to a constant negotiation between pride and societal pressures. The analysis also reveals complex beliefs about the importance of English, tied to its historical legacy and foreign influence.

Overall, the study highlights intricate connections and relationships between English teaching and the society, offering several implications for teacher education and educational policy in both public and private schools. These implications include a reevaluation of education policy, English teacher expectations and curriculum design.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

English was brought to Pakistan by the British who stayed as colonizers for almost 200 years (Perkins, 2017). As a result, the learning and teaching, and communication in the English language in Pakistan is heavily laden with cultural, historical, and political baggage that often reflects in the thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of anyone who engages with the language in any capacity.

In non-native contexts like Pakistan, two very distinct types of attitudes can be seen towards English. The first attitude is displayed by the elite (Rahman, 2011), who get education in elite English medium schools (a lot of times, they travel abroad for this too) and then use their fluency in spoken English and education to try and change the flaws in the system. This group conforms to the Western notion of "English opens doors" (Roth, 2019) and goes through those doors to become agents of change. Quite ironically, it has mostly been this class of people who challenged colonial powers and initiated movements of liberation (Kachru, 1988) that led to independence. However, once independence was achieved, this group of people began playing the role of native speakers whose job was/is to serve as "guardians of English" (Kachru, 1988, p. 8).

The second class of people are the ones who are indecisive. Although these people have the same beliefs, i.e, they look at English as a language of prestige, at the same time, they dislike its dominance (Attanayake, 2019). There are numerous factors that can explain the double mindedness of this second group. As access to English is not equal for everyone, in most postcolonial Asian contexts like Pakistan, it is the wealthy who are able to get quality education in English or who have access to the social circles that are completely immersed in English. This

second group's dislike towards English can very well be their way of expressing anger towards uneven distribution of resources in terms of everything being available to people who are fluent in English (Coleman, 2010), which results in unfair opportunities for success and prosperity for the elite, locking everyone else in their social class with few prospects for upward mobility. Economic success is often easier for those who sound and behave *English,* that is, Western.

These diverse attitudes can be seen in the way language teachers approach English too. As this dissertation study will show, English teachers don't always choose their profession because of their passion for teaching. In many instances, particularly in post-colonial contexts, English language teachers are often motivated by the societal prestige associated with their role or the comparatively improved financial opportunities it offers. In most cases, the only requirement to become an English teacher at the school level is verbal fluency in English, which results in an influx of teachers with no academic qualifications or certification to teach English. Therefore, the thoughts and perceptions of these teachers do not represent research backed ideas about teaching and learning English but are a reflection of the thoughts and perceptions of the broader society.

Colonized countries like Pakistan treat English as a language of prestige. The opportunities to excel in life and success are often dependent on how competent or incompetent someone is at it (Pennycook, 1998). In such cases teachers' emotions, which trigger certain attitudes, with respect to their own experiences with the language are of special significance (Cuéllar and Oxford, 2018) as emotions are what regulates human behavior (Agudo, 2018), which in this case would mean the way these teachers choose to teach. Teachers, consciously or unconsciously, display certain attitudes towards English which not only contribute to shaping their students' attitude towards it, but also play a part in determining students' achievements.

Teachers' emotions (and by extension, perceptions) are shaped by a multitude of factors, including many "social, institutional, and personal forces" (De Costa et al., 2018, p. 91). With an ever-increasing emphasis and pressure on the teaching and learning of English in Pakistan, English teachers are hardly ever neutral in their attitudes towards this language. Rahman (2005) discusses the divided attitude of people in Pakistan regarding English. There are those who have accepted its superiority; there are those who oppose it and think it's appropriating the culture; and then there are those who have accepted it pragmatically. This division is also evident in the teaching fraternity. There is one group that believes that English must be taught in an effort to enable students to acquire native speaker-like proficiency. There's another group that believes that teaching English is actually harming society as students who become fluent experience a shift in their identities and become Westernized, which in turn affects our culture and society at large. So far, research about teaching and learning of English in Pakistan has focused on; the Pakistani variety of English (Anwar, 2009; Baumgardner, 1995; Jabeen et al., 2011; Khan, 2012;), Urdu/English divide in education and society (Abbas et al., 2018; Shamim & Rashid, 2019;) issues around teaching of English in Pakistan (Rahman, 1997, 2008, 2011; Shamim, 2008; Shamim & Rashid, 2019;). However, no research has been undertaken to investigate English teachers' perceptions about English teaching and learning in Pakistan. This dissertation study sought to fill that gap.

1.1 Rationale of the study

There are many factors that shape teachers' perceptions. Social realities and circumstances impact language teaching by shaping the perceptions and attitudes of teachers and students. The issues in an education system cannot be understood without considering teachers'

perceptions, feelings and attitudes which dictate their behavior and in turn impact the education system. Teachers' perceptions, beliefs and emotions are instrumental to the quality and extent of learning that takes place in the classroom.

Recently, attention has been drawn to the interdisciplinary nature of teaching and learning a new language (Douglas Fir Group, 2016). There is increasing emphasis on the interconnectedness of 'micro levels of action and interaction, meso levels of sociocultural institutions and macro levels of ideological structures in the teaching and learning of English' (Chvala, 2020, p. 3). In order to understand the dynamics on all three levels, it is important to deconstruct what English means to the "stakeholders" (p. 3) which can only be done by an exploration of deeply held beliefs about the language in local contexts (Pennycook, 2010).

Blommaert et al. (2005) discuss multilingualism as a practice not limited to the languages spoken but more as the languages that the social, cultural, and political influences facilitate or hinder in interactions. In this dissertation study, the variations in the perceptions and attitudes of teachers with respect to the differences in social, cultural, and political realities around them is investigated. Kramsch (2014) asserts that in the past decade the "world has changed to such an extent that language teachers are no longer sure what they are supposed to teach nor what real world situations they are supposed to prepare their students for" (p. 296). They must constantly juggle between their own perceptions, beliefs and attitudes, the needs of their students, the social demands placed on them, and the political landscape of the community.

As Cots (2012, p. 124) observed about teachers in Lleida, Spain that 'English is accepted (not necessarily in an enthusiastic way) as the 'default' foreign language and one of the keys to internationalization'. This acceptance comes with reservations. English, as a language, carries with it a long and heavy colonial history and it appears that teachers in communities that place a

significant interest in protecting and persevering their own language and identity are not able to be completely unwary of it (al-Bataineh and Gallagher, 2021; Al Darwish, 2017; Cots, 2012).

Interestingly, a reverse phenomenon can also be seen. Several studies testify to the obsession with the native speaker model of teaching and learning the English language. As Wang (2015) stated, the fact that some Chinese feel embarrassed to talk in bad English shows that it is not only countries that were colonized that put English language on a pedestal, but its linguistic imperialism is a widespread phenomenon. This is so prevalent that in most EFL/ESL/ELF teaching situations, teachers have no understanding about how a second/foreign language is acquired (Rizzuto, 2017). The only understanding they have is that they have to teach this language of power so that students can fit in in the upper-class social circles.

Increasing emphasis on acquiring competence in English puts a lot of pressure on teachers and calls for a need for rigorous training. Dealing with multiple languages in the classroom requires special skills. As Ipina and Sagasta (2017) state, "[i]n a plurilingual system, [pre-service] teachers will need to be competent in several languages themselves and will need to be aware of the process of language learning if they are to identify with their pupils and function in the plurilingual education system in a professional way" (p. 63). This also introduces the issue of navigating different identities because teachers often display multiple identities with respect to the multiple languages they use and associate different languages with different functions and different parts of their identity (Day et al., 2006; Zhunussova, 2021).) This makes their perceptions about, and their attitude towards the language they teach and the ones they encounter in the classroom in a multilingual setting of principal importance. Lippi-Green (2012) argues that judgment about the effectiveness of a language (code) is a judgment on the social identity of the speaker. This suggests that judgments about the appropriateness or inappropriateness of a

language/code by a teacher stem out of the dynamics between their identity and their perceptions about their students' identity.

This dissertation study sought to understand English teachers' perceptions about the English language. It attempted to look at how various factors like; their own experiences as students, the general attitude towards English in the community, specific traits of their identity, various policy decisions, their understanding of students' needs and the global status of English, shape their perceptions and identity. The knowledge gained from this study highlights issues that English teachers face which could inform policy decisions and underscore areas of teacher education.

1.2 Researcher positionality

Growing up in Pakistan, I acquired my education in a system that was constantly experiencing a tug of war between different languages. Pakistan is a highly multilingual country (Haider & Fang, 2019) with over "24 languages and a number of dialects" (Attanayake, 2020, p. 34). Some studies suggest that a total of 77 languages are used in day-to-day life in Pakistan (Eberhard et al., 2020). The national language of the country and principal lingua franca is Urdu. However, every province has a regional language which is used as the primary form of social communication in that province. In the province of Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the local languages are taught in primary schools up to a certain grade (Coleman, 2010). The linguistic landscape in the education system in Pakistan becomes complicated when the English language steps into the scenario. English is the official language of Pakistan alongside Urdu. Education, even on the primary level, is highly influenced by it since most of the textbooks are in English. English is also the language of the elites and thus is the key to social mobility.

I experienced the tug of war mentioned above firsthand. I had to navigate between three languages as a young child. At home, there was pressure to speak in the native language *Sindhi*. Speaking in broken Sindhi would infuriate the adults so I and my siblings had to make sure to speak in fluent Sindhi. However, when interacting with anyone outside the family, we had to speak in Urdu. Speaking in broken Urdu was looked down upon so we had to learn to speak Urdu fluently. Finally, at the school, there was an emphasis on English, and we had to make the utmost effort to learn to speak in English fluently. This led to a confusion and stress that never resolved. This isn't an isolated, individual experience. In Pakistan this is the general experience of all children acquiring formal education. The fact that financial success is almost entirely dependent on fluency in English is known to all (Rahman, 2011). People go to great lengths to send their children to expensive schools. These expensive schools are expensive primarily because they offer an English immersion experience. Children attending these schools develop a personality different from those attending less expensive schools. This creates a division in society.

As a teacher, I knew this reality as a fact, but I didn't necessarily endorse it. In my classroom, I often told my students to not worry about being perfect at English. This was countered by the fact that I was an English teacher who used to correct their errors in English speech and writing. I know for sure that my personal views and perceptions about English impacted the way I chose to teach, which in turn impacted my students and through them, the society.

My interest in teachers' perceptions, attitudes and feelings comes from my personal experience as an English teacher in Pakistan where I taught English as a second/foreign language for over ten years to various grades. I began teaching second graders and progressed to teaching

undergraduate students. During this time, the one constant was the obsession I observed with the English language. Interestingly, this obsession didn't come from students but from parents and institutional administrators. There were times I observed the frustration of teachers over this intense emphasis on English. Teachers of other subjects were frustrated because they thought that valuable content knowledge was discounted. English teachers were frustrated because they knew they were being scrutinized more than other staff. Much like the teachers in Cot's (2012) study, English teachers in Pakistan often feel they are being forced to acquire/display a level of fluency that they don't have. This leads to a constant state of stress and continuous struggle between what they know and what is expected of them. This struggle has an impact on teachers' identities on many different levels. Their identity as an individual teacher, as a member of the teaching fraternity, as a member of society, and as a Pakistani – all get altered. English teachers in Pakistan often face the kind of dilemma Kubota (2014) highlights – where efforts to sound and become more 'English' invite disapproving glances from the community. This further aggravates their frustrations.

Lastly, teachers sometimes also feel that the English language is appropriating their culture and identity. This sentiment is most pronounced in teachers who hold particularly nationalistic values. Al Darwish (2017) talks about the fear some teachers have about losing their Arab identity – Pakistanis usually do not display the kind of pride Arabs do in their heritage – but the feeling that the local culture is completely being overshadowed by Western values and thoughts, is present.

I proposed to investigate the thoughts and perceptions of English teachers' attitudes with respect to the teaching and learning of English in Pakistan. There was little to no research in this area even though teaching and learning English is considered a very important endeavor in

Pakistan. My dissertation is an attempt to fill this gap. Education is central to any nation's success and teachers are central to any education system. In Pakistan, issues in education are directly impacted by the issues surrounding the English language. Therefore, I considered it imperative to understand how these issues affect the way English teachers feel and think about the place of the English language in the education system and the society, and their work as English teachers. Teachers, with the central role they have in the education system, are in a position to impact the attitudes and perceptions of not only their students, but gradually, of the whole society. Teachers' attitudes and perceptions could highlight the areas where a change in education policy is needed. They could also highlight areas of teacher education and reforms in the way schools operate.

My study was guided by the following questions:

1. How do English teachers in Pakistan feel about being English teachers?
2. What is their 'English teacher' identity?
3. What are their perceptions and beliefs about English as a language, the status of English in Pakistan and teaching as a profession?
4. What factors have shaped their identity as English teachers and have influenced their perceptions and thoughts about English teaching?

As a researcher, it was my duty to accurately convey the participants' viewpoints as authentically as possible. Throughout data collection and analysis, I made an effort to not let my own perceptions and ideas interfere by staying mindful. All thoughts and perceptions of the participants have been reported as they were. Furthermore, most of the analysis has been backed up with relevant scholarly literature to increase credibility.

1.3 Overview of chapters

This dissertation is organized as follows:

- Chapter 1 introduces the research and the rationale behind it, along with main questions driving this study. Researcher positionality has been explained in the second section of this chapter. The last section provides an overview of this dissertation report addressing its organization.
- Chapter 2 discusses relevant literature in detail. It is divided into eight main sections reviewing a different theme of literature. This chapter begins with an introduction, followed by a history of the English language in postcolonial Pakistan. The third section discusses the place of English in the education system in Pakistan which is followed by the fourth section laying out the structure of the school education system in Pakistan. In the fifth section, definition and meaning of the term "perceptions" has been discussed and its connection with beliefs and attitudes has been explained. Section six reviews literature establishing the importance of beliefs, attitudes and perceptions in second language teaching and learning. This section is further divided into five subsections. Section seven summarizes empirical research about attitudes and perceptions of English teachers towards the teaching and learning of English. The last section discusses the place of English in the education system of various countries.
- Chapter 3 outlines the research design of this study and is divided into five sections. It starts with an introduction, followed by a description of the research design. In section three, I explain my position as a researcher. Data collection, section four, is divided into five subsections. The fifth section details the methods used to analyze data.

- Chapter 4 provides an in-depth exploration of the participants, focusing on their family history, relationships, social dynamics with family and friends, as well as their educational background and socio-economic status. This chapter aims to offer the reader a comprehensive understanding of how the English language came to occupy a significant place in the participants' lives.

- Chapter 5 presents the analysis and findings from Research Questions 1 and 2. It is divided into two main sections, each focusing on the findings and analysis related to one of the research questions, organized by thematic clusters.

- Chapter 6 presents the analysis and findings from Research Questions 3 and 4. Similar to Chapter 5, it is divided into two main sections, each focusing on the findings and analysis corresponding to one of the research questions, also organized by thematic clusters.

- Chapter 7 integrates the findings and analysis, presenting a detailed discussion that addresses the tensions identified in the study and connects them to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. This chapter highlights the key insights of the study.

- Chapter 8 is the final chapter of this study. It consists of four sections: i) a summary of the entire study, ii) implications of the findings, iii) contributions to the field of global Englishes and teacher identity, iv) future directions, and v) conclusion. The first section covers the study's purpose, major literature review areas, methodologies, research questions, and key findings from chapter 5 and 6. The second section explores implications for teacher training, educational policy and practices in private schools, and educational policy and practices in public schools. The third section highlights how this study contributes to the fields of global Englishes and teacher identity. The fourth section

discusses potential future projects based on the study's findings. The chapter concludes with the researcher's final thoughts on the study's broader impact beyond its initial objectives.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The English language has a long history of dominance and power (Kachru, 1998; Phillipson, 2008; Matsuda, 2012; Canagarajah, 1999) which manifests in the structure of the educational institutions in countries that were former colonies, as well as in their social structure (Kirkpatrick, 2016). Issues arising from this domination often give rise to "elitism" (Hamid & Erling, 2015, p. 28) and create a divide in society. People who have access to English have better opportunities to excel in life (Kirkpatrick, 2016).

Education is central to any society as it is the type of human capital that increases the chances of people for upward financial mobility enabling them to contribute to sustainable economic growth of a country (Dixon, 2013). Teachers are central to any education system as it is only as strong as the competence of its teachers. Countries with a colonial legacy see the English language "as the only language of knowledge and development" (Pattanayak, 2016) making English teachers far more important than other faculty. Therefore, it is important to understand the perceptions, thoughts, beliefs, and experiences of English teachers with respect to their learning and teaching of English to make sense of the tensions surrounding the English language, obsession with it and resistance against it prevalent in that society.

This literature review has three broad aims, to; a) trace the spread of the English language in Pakistan as a historical lens to explain Pakistani teachers' attitudes towards English; b) make sense of the importance of perceptions, beliefs and emotions of teachers in second/foreign language teaching; c) explore the attitudes and perceptions of language teachers around the

world towards English; d) trace the impact of the obsession with English on the education policy of a few post-colonial countries

This literature review is divided into seven main sections. The first section explains the theoretical framework used in this study. The second section discusses the history of the English language in Pakistan and looks at its colonial roots in the region. In the third section, a brief overview of current English teaching and language learning practices in Pakistan has been presented. The fourth section of the review defines ‘perceptions, beliefs and attitudes’ in teaching/learning contexts. The fifth section explores why and how perceptions are important in second/foreign language teaching and learning. The sixth section discusses empirical studies that have investigated teachers’ attitudes towards English around the world. The final section briefly discusses the impact of obsession with English on the educational policy of a few post-colonial countries.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical underpinnings of this study stem from postcolonialism, an interdisciplinary idea that emerged in the mid-20th century. Edward Said laid the foundation for postcolonial theory with his seminal work "Orientalism" (1978). Said argued that colonial powers strategically positioned the West and its culture as superior, while characterizing the East as inferior. The West was presented as the epitome of civilization and reason, while the East was portrayed as unsuccessful and irrational. This gave rise to the concept of "othering" (Said, 1978, p. 56), marking colonized people as different and uncivilized. By labeling them as such, colonizers initiated a systematic takeover of their culture and identity (Said, 1993).

Said (1978, 1993) argued that colonization begins with colonizers instilling the idea in the minds of their subjects that they need to be civilized. The colonized are made to feel that their way of life, ideologies, languages, practices, and culture are all backward and savage and thus need to be replaced with the ways of the colonizers (Said, 1993). Colonization extends beyond political takeover; it also encompasses intellectual domination (Said, 1978). Colonizers insidiously inject their literature, language, and art into the culture of their subjects to gradually shift their identity. This intellectual power over the lives and minds of the colonized lasts beyond colonial rule (Burney, 2012).

Postcolonial theory explains this by expanding on the role of intellectuals. Said (1993) emphasized that Western scholars (the colonizers) and experts played a central role in shaping perceptions about the East. Colonizers controlled the production and dissemination of knowledge, influencing not only how the colonized were perceived by colonizers but also how they viewed themselves. Over time, the colonized began to believe the ideas propagated by colonizers, resulting in the development of an inferior identity. The distorted image created by the West impacted how the colonized perceived themselves and their cultural heritage. These feelings were deeply internalized by the colonized; however, Said (1993) argued that once Western domination was established, the colonized awakened, and a movement of resistance started across the third world. In addition to armed resistances, there was also resistance to the cultural hegemony of the West. Colonized individuals wanted to reclaim their identity and assert their nationalism.

Said's (1978, 1993) work was endorsed by scholars like Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong'o. They challenged the ideas propagated by colonizers and through their work made an effort to stir the colonized into action. Achebe, in his seminal work, *Things Fall Apart* (1958),

attempted to decolonize the narrative about Africa and its people. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, in his book, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (1986), makes a case for the revitalization of African languages, drawing attention to the linguistic and cultural colonization of the African people.

A few other notable scholars like Homi Bhabha and Alistair Pennycook have also contributed to postcolonial theory. Bhabha explored the ideas of mimicry and ambivalence in his book *The Location of Culture* (1994), suggesting that colonized subjects mimic the cultural practices of the colonizer but do so in a rebellious and resistant way, creating a sense of ambivalence. Bhabha also introduced the idea of the third space as the space where the colonized undergo cultural negotiation and hybridity.

Pennycook, a renowned linguist, has extensively discussed linguistic imperialism in his work. According to him, the English language imposes imperialistic rule through linguistic domination. He argues that the English language is heavily laden with inferior representations of non-white people (1998). Pennycook contends that the obsession with English and native-speakerism is a result of linguistic imperialism and advocates for an inclusive and culturally diverse way of communication in English.

In summary, this study adopts a postcolonial theoretical framework, primarily influenced by Edward Said's "Orientalism." It explores how colonial powers, through 'othering,' established Western superiority and systematically imposed cultural dominance. Achebe, Ngugi, Bhabha, and Pennycook also contributed to the framework, challenging colonial narratives, and advocating for cultural revitalization and linguistic inclusivity. Postcolonialism unveils the multifaceted impact of colonization, extending beyond politics to identity, culture, and language. The resistance movements discussed by Said offer hope for reclaiming identity and challenging

colonial hegemony. This theoretical foundation provides a comprehensive lens for analyzing the perceptions and thoughts of the participants within the context of colonial legacy.

2.3 The history of the English language in colonial/post-colonial Pakistan

Languages carry labels – positive and negative. These labels are used by politicians and governments to promote the language that serves their interests best. Languages are used as a means to develop national identity (Smagulova, 2008) or to disrupt the same. Nations and communities are divided on the basis of language and the work to create this divide often starts very early on – right in schools (Kamwendo, 2006).

If the primary purpose of a language is to enable communication, all languages should be equal, but ironically, they do not enjoy the same level of respect. The way a certain language is treated is directly connected to the privilege the native speakers of that language enjoy economically (Lippi-Green, 2012). Language policy is never neutral. All decisions made about promoting certain languages and demoting others are based on the kind of long-term repercussions policy makers desire. Alexander (2004) argues that all policy decisions are often targeted towards segregation in terms of race and an attempt to make sure certain races excel while deterring others. Language policy is often an outcome of political shifts and are often directed to desirable political changes. Language planning is guided by ideologies and those ideologies are political in nature (Kamwendo, 2006). Dominating political parties have a major say in decisions that derive language policy (Kamwendo, 2006). Therefore, in order to understand the linguistic situation in a country, it is imperative to understand its political and cultural history.

Singal (2017) discusses the complicated history history of the English language in the Indian subcontinent[1]. Right at the beginning of colonial rule, the British government made clear their desire to form a class that can serve as intermediaries between them and their subjects and had begun their efforts to promote English as the only language that can enable these intermediaries (and by extension everyone else) to succeed. They did that through a well-planned strategy. Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay's[2] 1835 Minutes indicate so vividly:

> . . . we must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern . . . a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect.

The British insistence to promote English and disregard other languages persisted at the expense of other languages. Religious languages of the two main groups of people inhabiting the Indian Subcontinent – the Muslims and the Hindus -were given a backseat. In the same Minutes of 1835, Lord Macaulay continues:

> . . . we ought to employ [our funds] in teaching what is best worth knowing; that English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic; that the natives are desirous to be taught English, and are not desirous to be taught Sanskrit or Arabic; that neither as the languages of law, nor as the languages of religion, have the Sanskrit and Arabic any peculiar claim to our engagement; that it is possible to make natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars, and that to this end our efforts ought to be directed.

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[1] Until 1947, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh were one country known as the Indian Subcontinent.

[2] Well-known for introducing Western education system in India.

Over seventy years after independence from British rule, English has made roots firm enough to be seen as the primary language of literacy in Pakistan. Although the beginning of the dominance of the English language can be traced back to colonial rule, its persistent domination cannot be completely attributed to the same. In Pakistan, no external power needs to reinforce the idea that the English language is *superior* since it is already firmly established in the minds of the general population. A great majority of Pakistanis believe that the only key to success is acquiring mastery of English. In the words of Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986), 'it is the final triumph of a system of domination when the dominated start singing its virtues' (p. 445). This final triumph can clearly be seen in Pakistan. Association to certain social circles is only reserved for the ones fluent in English and it is a recognized fact that, in order to be included in those circles, one must acquire fluency in English. However, fluency "with an accent" (Lippi-Green, 2012) is not enough, but fluency is needed in the kind of English the elite circles approve of. Pakistan's situation with respect to the English language is the same as discussed by Blommaert (2007, p.14) in his discussion of a case study in a township school in South Africa (Blommaert et al., 2005):

> . . . the situation is tragically clear: the township pupils – overwhelmingly black or 'colored' and poor – pin their hopes for upward social mobility on English; *but this particular English* (the one they *have* and the one they *can get*) is not going to allow them to achieve that goal. It is indeed the English they can get: their teachers also had no mastery of the elite varieties of English.

The prevalence of English in all walks of life in post-colonial countries, like Pakistan, is a reality. The society is divided in terms of access to English. There are schools that serve the elites where not only is the medium of instruction English, but the medium of general

communication is also English. There are English medium schools in every street which vary in prestige only on the basis of how effectively or ineffectively they provide instruction in English. The best schools are the ones that teach English 'the best' and ones that fail to do so do not have the same reputation. The fee structure of the schools also varies with the most expensive schools being those where students are completely immersed in language. Dearden (2015) defines English medium instruction (EMI) as "the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English" (p. 456). In Pakistan, EMI has become the norm, especially in bigger cities. Private schooling system is by and large English medium and - as explained above – it is subdivided into elite and non-elite schools according to the cost of attendance and the facilities offered (Shamim, 2019), with the elite schools being heavily focused on English instruction. In addition, all prestigious higher education institutions have English as their primary language of instruction (Shamim, 2019).

This intense obsession with the English language didn't come to be overnight. As mentioned above, it started with colonialism but did not end with it. "Colonization of territory results in colonization of mind" (Attanayake, 2019) and that is what happened in Pakistan as well. In the beginning, the colonizers injected themselves into the land and the lives of the colonized. Their deliberate and extremely detailed planning presents a moment to marvel. Edward Said (1978) talks about the image building that is often the first task of the colonizers. Through a long and painstaking effort to establish their image as enlightened, literate, knowledgeable and cultured, colonizers present themselves as worthy to rule. Simultaneously, they craft an image for the colonized also. By repeating a narrative that declares the colonized as savage, weak and unknowledgeable, they establish the necessity for the colonized to be civilized.

The colonized are made to believe that they can only be civilized by being ruled by a people that have all the qualities that they lack, and the colonizers possess.

One might question the role of language in the perpetuation of these ideas that eventually turn into a well-established mindset. Language sits at the center of this. As language plays a big role in constructing identity (De Costa et al., 2018; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2018; Ismukhanova, 2020), among the very first things that the colonizers do is to have their subjects doubt the potential of their language. Initially, this is done by luring the subjects to economic success and making them believe how this success cannot be achieved without the language of the colonizer (Graddol, 1997). Gradually, this promise to a better economic life starts impacting all other areas where the role of language is central (which, in a way, is everything). Literature and poetry, art, and music and most importantly, education given in a language other than the language of the colonizer is seen as inadequate and insufficient. This explains the phenomenal spread of English language teaching tuition centers in the post-colonial world (Singal, 2017). In almost all postcolonial contexts, learning the English language and trying to acquire a native-like proficiency is believed to be the only key to success (Massri, 2020).

The imposition of the English language by the colonizers in the lands they ruled is endorsed by many, who see this as a favor. While explaining how the British colonizers' decision to rule India and the imposition of English language worked in India's favor, A. G. Eyre (1971) writes, "English was taken as the official language of education, which opened to the Indians the literature and the universities of Europe" (p. 151). Eyre goes on to argue that the only reason Indians couldn't benefit from such an opportunity was their "ever increasing population and the[ir] deep rooted customs" (p. 151). While Eyre thought so in 1971, the same sentiment resonates in the views of several others in present times. Journalist Simon Jenkins (1995), in his

famous article in *The Times* titled “The triumph of English”, declares English as the key to happiness and prosperity. He believes those who do not speak it [English] are at a universal disadvantage against those who do. “Those who deny [its] supremacy merely seek to keep the disadvantaged deprived”. In 2001, The Economist published another article with a slightly modified title *A world empire by other means – The Triumph of English: The English language* which went on to make the claim of English's superiority even bigger. It started off with the declaration that “the new world language seems to be good for everyone” and ends with looking down on other languages by stating; “of the world’s 6000 or 7000 languages, a couple go out of business each week. Most are in the jungles of Papua New Guinea or in Indonesia.” The superiority of English is supported by claims of its use for many diverse purposes. Proponents of the spread of English as a lingua franca cite its adaptability and openness (Kachru, 1988, The Economist Newspaper, 2001) as characteristics strong enough to qualify it as the international lingua franca. The success of these claims can be seen in the fact that in present times, native speakers outnumber non-native speakers (Kachru, 1988). With 800 million speakers of English only in Asia (Kirkpatrick & Lixun, 2020), it is the most widely spoken second or foreign language. Out of the world’s total population of “7.8 billion, 1.35 billion speak English” (Babbel.com, 2021). Excluding the 360 million native-speakers, the rest have learned it as a second or foreign language.

2.4 The place of English in the education system in Pakistan

In Pakistan, according to the constitution of 1973, Urdu received the status of the national language and English as the official language. The relevant articles from the constitution are as follows:

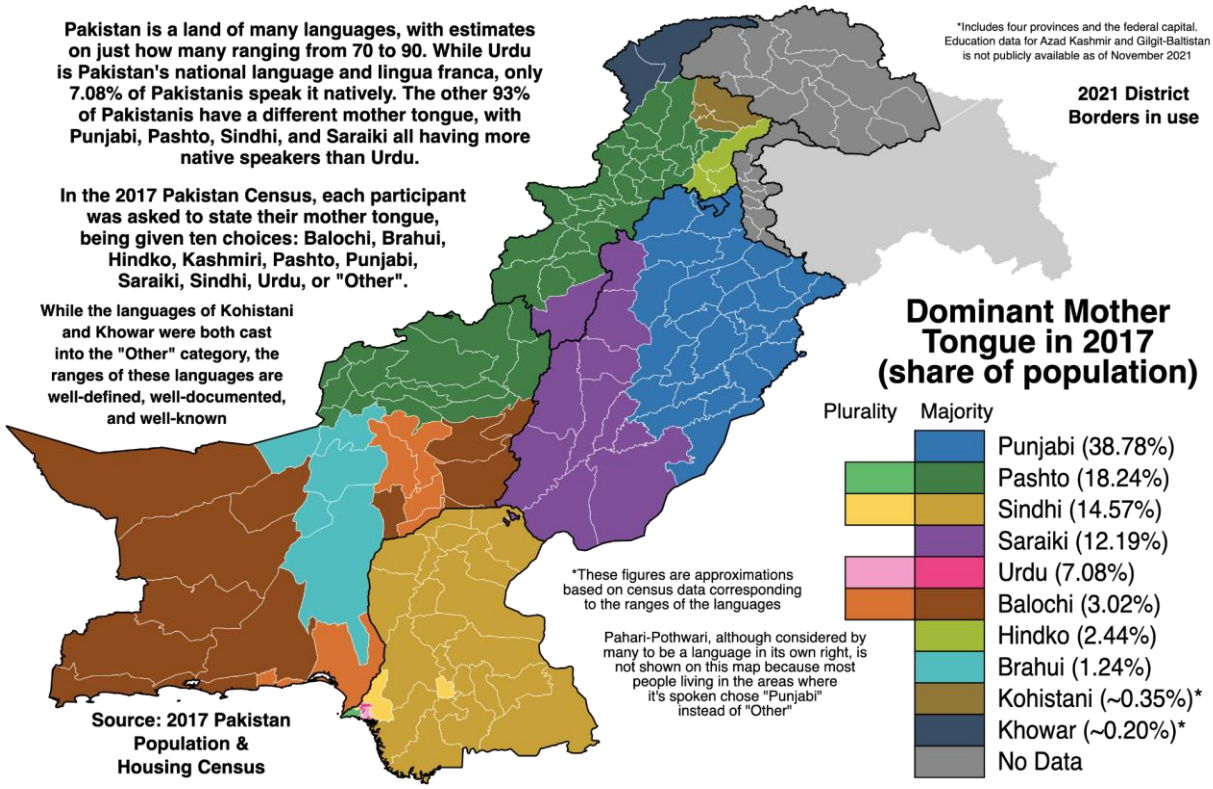
1. The National language of Pakistan is Urdu, and arrangements shall be made for its being used for official and other purposes within fifteen years from the commencing day.
2. Subject to clause (a) the English language may be used for official purposes until arrangements are made for its replacement by Urdu.
3. Without prejudice to the status of the National language, a Provincial Assembly may by law prescribe measures for the teaching, promotion, and use of a provincial language in addition to the national language.

(Constitution 1973: Article 251)

Over the decades after independence, the debate about replacing English with Urdu never subsided (Abbas et al., 2018, Shamim, 2008). Both languages are used in the official space, however, English enjoys the more dominant status in education in the private sector and in higher education (Zaidi & Zaki, 2017). In public sector (government schools), the medium of instruction is Urdu until grade 5. After that, English is taught as a separate subject. In private schools, English is the medium of instruction throughout. In private universities, all lectures are in English. In public universities, professors code switch, but English remains more dominant. There is a debate about the negative and positive effects of the English language in Pakistan. However, despite that, parents seem to accept the superiority of English and do not see it being replaced by Urdu in the foreseeable future (Haier, 2018).

English is considered a threat to local languages and culture (Islam, 2013; Mohanty, 2006). It prevents education in students' L1 which results in them gaining little to no academic literacy in their own languages (Haider & Fang, 2019). Rumnaz (2005) talks about this in her study about nation building in Bangladesh and states that children who attend elite English-medium schools do not develop the skill to read and write effectively in their native language.

The same phenomenon can be seen in Pakistan as well, as a result of which English seems to be a cause of "social stratification" in society (Haider & Fang, 2019, p. 171).



(Wikipedia contributors, 2024)

2.5 Structure of K-12 education system in Pakistan

Pakistan's national pre-higher education system constitutes 12 grades (*Pakistan - Education*, 2024) and is divided into primary (1-5), middle (6-8), secondary (9-10) and higher intermediate (10-12). The last two years of secondary school have board examinations conducted by the respective boards of education of each province. These exams provide a matriculation certificate to students and are generally referred to as the matric exams. Schools that end with granting students a matriculation certificate follow a curriculum established by the provincial school board. As of 2022, there were 152,891 public sector schools nationwide that provided

matriculation certificates (Pakistan Institute of Education, Ministry of Education & Professional Training Government of Pakistan, 2024). However, with a population of 229.22 million, of which 37% is under the age of 24 (Pakistan - Education, 2024), the demand for schools increases annually. The private sector significantly contributes to meeting this demand, with private schools distributed extensively across the country offering matric system education and alternative education systems (Halai & Durrani, 2020).

Student enrollment according to levels in Pakistan		
Pre-primary education	Montessori- Kindergarten	11.35 million
Primary education	Grades 1-5	25 million
Middle education	Grades 6-8	8.75 million
Secondary education	Grades 9-10	4.5 million
Higher-secondary	Grades 11-12	2.5 million

Figure 4.1: Information taken from ***Pakistan - Education*****. (2024) International Trade Administration**

Alternative education systems in Pakistan include the British Cambridge O and A level system, the Federal Board of Education system, and the Agha Khan Board education system. The Cambridge education system is the most popular and prestigious among these alternatives. It follows a curriculum designed by British examination boards in the UK and is offered exclusively by private schools. The Cambridge system provides O and A levels certificates, with O level equivalent to the matriculation certificate and A level equating the Intermediate

certificate of local boards. In the U.S. education system, obtaining an O level certificate would equivalent to completing sophomore year in high school, while an A level certificate would indicate the completion of senior year.

The Cambridge system of education is popular mostly because they offer English immersion to students. They are also popular because students who get their O and A level certificates have better prospects of international mobility in the future. Ever since Cambridge system schools became popular, many private sector matric system schools turned to using books published for the Cambridge system schools in the hope of attracting a large number of students. By doing so these schools are able to enroll more students and manage to avoid the costs of registering the schools with the British examination boards. Notably, the costs associated with Cambridge system schools are not only in the form of regular fees but also include fees for O and A levels exams, which are subject to fluctuations due to currency values and exchange rates.

Due to the perceived shortcomings in public school education, many parents prefer enrolling their children in private schools. However, deciding which private school to choose becomes challenging due to the abundance of options. Typically, the initial consideration for parents is the school's fee structure, closely followed by the quality of education. The primary criterion for assessing quality often revolves around the emphasis placed on English language instruction. Higher-priced private schools typically employ well-qualified teachers proficient in English. The demands and experiences of these teachers differ from those in less expensive schools, a distinction explored further in this study. The final choice of the parents usually ends up being the school that they think will provide their children with the best English education as they see it as translating into a bright future for them in terms of job security (Attanayake, 2019; Banerjee & Duflo 2011; Kirkpatrick, 2016; Rahman, 2015) and make them stand out socially as

Haider and Fang (2019, p. 171) commented, "English [has been] commodified and people's motivation for English learning in fact lies in the social advantages." (Haider & Fang, 2019, p. 171). Private schools are attractive to parents because they promise success in both, present and future.

2.6 Definition and meaning of perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes

Literature on teacher education and practices uses the terms beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes interchangeably (Garrett, 2010). Pajares (1992) in his detailed discussion of teacher beliefs clarifies the relationship and meaning of attitudes and beliefs. According to him, "teachers' attitudes about education — about schooling, teaching, learning, and students — have generally been referred to as teachers' beliefs" (p. 316). Pajares (1992) calls beliefs "a messy construct" as they are referred to with many different terms. To name a few, he includes "attitudes, values, judgements, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, repertoires of understanding, and social strategy" (p. 309).

Qiong (2017) uses the definition from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English as "the way you think about something and your idea of what it is like." The same study explains that perceptions are "culturally determined" (p. 21). The differences in the perceptions of individuals from the same culture come from different beliefs, values, and attitudes.

The International Bureau of Education (admin, 2016) defines attitudes as "[a] learned tendency or readiness to evaluate things or react to some ideas, persons or situations in certain ways, either consciously or unconsciously." Attitudes are underpinned by values and beliefs and

have an influence on behavior. Beliefs are underpinnings of behavior and govern it (Puchta, 1999, as cited in Sadeghi & Nikou, 2012).

In this study, the term "perception" denotes all of the above: beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

2.7 Importance of beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions in second language teaching and learning

There has been extensive research on the attitudes (and motivation) of learners towards a language and how it helps them develop certain patterns which influence their language learning experience but there is very little work on the attitudes of language teachers towards the language(s) they teach and how it impacts their teaching practices (Arwa & Medgyes, 2000). In a typical language learning situation, the attitudes of a lot of people are significant in terms of impacting the attitudes of learners (Getie, 2020). Teachers' attitude is perhaps one of the most important variables that affects the "attitudes of learners as well as the quality and quantity of the learning which takes place and the linguistic outcomes for the learner" (Larsen & Long, 1991, as cited in Getie 2020, p. 11). For the sake of extracting insights about beliefs, attitudes and motivation that could be applied to teachers and students alike, this review will also consider theories and research studies that discuss these concepts with respect to students and use them to understand the way teachers develop attitudes – since they are language learners before they are language teachers and their attitudes are often a reflection of the attitudes they observed during their years as students and how they were taught (Al Darwish, 2017).

French essayist and moralist Joseph Joubert (1754-1824) famously said, "to teach is to learn twice." Given the complexity involved in learning a new language, regardless of how

competent a second/foreign language teacher may be, they will always be in the process of learning the language more. Language learning and language teaching are both multifaceted. Peter MacIntyre (2020) writes, “Beyond issues of competencies, which are themselves complex, using an L2 also evokes cultural, political, social, identity, motivational, emotional, pedagogical, and other issues that learners must navigate on-the-fly” (p. 111). Teachers must navigate these issues on the fly too and the way they navigate them has a direct impact on their students’ learning. Language teaching is multidimensional, also because the job of a language teacher is not limited to teaching a code, but they have to have the skills to handle “complex social situations” (Barcelos & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018, p. 110). In their everyday professional lives, language teachers “invest in their pupil’s skills, beliefs and identities and must constantly respond to different pupils and different situations in a pedagogically meaningful way” (Barcelos & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018, p. 110). In order to be able to do all of this, their own attitudes and beliefs need to be well attuned to the needs of their students.

As complex as attitudes and perceptions are, they don’t emerge out of a vacuum and are often a result of multiple factors. Socio-cultural elements, economic circumstances, political environment, and a person’s own experiences – all play a part in shaping attitudes and perceptions (Zhunussova, 2021). Teachers’ attitudes are multilayered and encompass many dimensions. I will discuss some of these in the next few sub-headers:

2.7.1 Connection between teachers’ attitudes and beliefs

Teachers’ attitudes spring out of their beliefs which in turn affects their practices. Teaching cannot be understood unless the beliefs that shape these practices are understood. “To understand teaching from teachers' perspectives we have to understand the beliefs with which

they define their work" (Thompson, 1992, p. 192). Teachers' beliefs and perceptions dictate the kind of instruction they provide which regulates student outcomes (DeSimone, 2013, Rizzuto, 2017). Without an understanding of their beliefs and perceptions, teachers cannot be encouraged to reflect on their practices, and no change in the education system can be brought about (Rizzuto, 2017). Most importantly, any curricular changes on any scale can only be initiated by teachers - for this reason, it is crucial to explore and make sense of their beliefs (Zhunussova, 2021).

Teachers' beliefs have a great influence on the way they plan and execute their lessons. Every decision they take about including and excluding certain practices from their teaching are an outcome of their beliefs (Pajares, 1992). Beliefs influence how a teacher identifies problems and outlines and organizes tasks which in turn dictates teaching behavior (William & Burden, 1997). Torff (2011) argues that teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching are a product of the culture they have been socialized in and that's what becomes the basis for "their idea of best practices" (p. 22). This makes the connection between attitudes and beliefs even more significant. There is a relationship between attitudes, beliefs, and language ideologies as well. Language ideologies are a set of beliefs that reflect the dynamic relationship between speakers and a language (Zhunussova, 2021). These beliefs are not limited to linguistic systems but are a part of the larger web of speakers' belief system (Blackledge, 2008). These belief systems directly influence teaching practices (Zhunussova, 2021) and beget certain attitudes.

2.7.2 Connection between teachers' perception, attitudes, and learner motivation

There are several factors that affect students' learning experience of a second/foreign language. One of those factors is the attitude of teachers towards the target language (Choe and Bhatti, 2019; Garett, 2010; Gkaintartzi et al., 2019). It has been noted that teachers' positive

attitude towards English has a direct impact on their students' motivation to learn it (Massri, 2020). Negative attitude of teachers alters the perception of students which in turn impacts the effort they want to make (Al-Darwish, 2006; Tegegne, 2016). In foreign language settings, most of the time, teachers teaching the target language have themselves learned it as either a second language or foreign language. This creates the "hybrid teacher-as-learner amalgamation" (Gregerson & MacIntyre, 2018, p. 261) who bears the responsibility of motivating students while navigating through their own motivation. According to Gregson and MacIntyre (2018) this responsibility is twofold and springs out of the teacher's "teacher-as-learner" personality. This would mean their level of motivation as an individual who is still a learner of the language in some way will affect the way they choose to motivate students. Research doesn't say much about this "interplay of teacher motivation and learner motivation" (p. 261) or about the synergy of these two "embodied in the same person" (p. 261) but we can be sure that teachers are themselves learners experiencing self-development constantly (Gregerson & MacIntyre, 2018) displaying certain attitudes as part of their development.

In the second language learning and teaching process, attitude is directly related to motivation and success (Getie, 2020). Garrett (2010) explains that "attitudes to learning a language and to the second language group are features influencing learners" orientations in second language learning, which in turn guide their motivation towards certain goals that are; "instrumental (e.g., getting a better job) or integrative goals (e.g., interacting with members of the second language community)" (Garrett, 2010, p. 128). Strength of motivation towards these goals decides the level of success. Teachers have the ability to engage their students in activities that will not only increase their motivation, but also direct their performance (Dixon et al., 2016;

Karabenick & Noda, 2004). They can "stimulate and maintain students' foreign language learning motivation" and help them achieve "self-efficacy" (Zhao, 2015, p. 2338)

Gardner and Lambert's (1972) research - although quite old now – is very relevant to this discussion. They believed "attitude and motivation as variables [that are] independent from aptitude and general intelligence" (Taylor, 1973, p. 145). According to them, a learners' desire to learn about the target language culture helps him develop a positive attitude towards the language. Additionally, they asserted that learners who want to be accepted as a part of the group that speaks the target language do better at acquiring it than those who do not. In other words, integrative motivation plays a bigger part in language learning than instrumental motivation (Taylor, 1973).

John Schumann (1986) echoes the same thoughts in his acculturation theory. This theory provides significant insights into the various factors (which in turn shape attitudes) that can impact second language learning. While highlighting social variables that affect language learning, Schumann (1986) presents the idea that learners trying to learn a language that has a dominant status in society and is "politically, culturally, technically or economically superior" (p. 380) will do better. On the other hand, if the target language is seen as inferior, learners will show resistance. The same sentiment is reinforced by Tegegne (2016) when he writes, "varieties [of any certain language] are associated with prestige, power, and prejudice of the society they are serving . . . The attitudes towards [these] language varieties can affect their use in education and can have an impact on students' learning and self-esteem" (p. 93). This can be applied to language teachers as well and it can be assumed that teachers who endorse the power of a language will make a different effort to teach it than those who don't.

Schumann (1986) discusses assimilation as the process by which language learners give up their own lifestyle and assimilate into the culture of the target language group. According to Schumann (1986), “this strategy minimizes contact between the two groups and enhances acquisition of the target language” (p. 381). While discussing motivation as one of the affective factors, Shumann (1986) parallels Gardner and Lambert (1972) and believes that learners with integrative motivation do better because they want to “become like speakers of the target language whom [they] both value[] and admire[]” (p. 383).

What particularly stands out in Schumann’s (1986) discussion of integrative and affective motivation is how he declares motivation to be a “complex construct” (p. 384) and integrative and instrumental motivations to be context dependent. According to him, in post-colonial contexts proficiency in the language of the colonizers is considered anti-integrative, which means that a person who masters the language of the colonizers will most likely not have the desire to assimilate with them. This can explain the attitudes of teachers where they see the significance of acquiring English but are very careful to not let their own languages be overshadowed.

Al Darwish’s (2017) findings corroborate with acculturation theory. In her research titled “Teachers’ attitude toward a foreign language: factors affecting the target language teaching process”, she employed questionnaires and interviews to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of 159 English teachers in Kuwaiti public elementary schools. Many teachers in her study expressed their desire to learn and teach about the culture of native speakers as one of the factors that shape their attitude towards English. On the other hand, there were teachers who also saw teaching English as teaching the language of colonizers and expressed their concerns about “los[ing] their identity as an Arab individual” (p. 8).

2.7.3 Connection between teachers' attitudes, their teaching strategies and learner performance

Due to the close relationship between language and identity, it is not possible for language teachers to not project their own attitude towards the language they teach on to the students (Al Darwish, 2017). These attitudes often stem out of their perceptions about various things – including "students, school, administration, curriculum and society" (Al Darwish, 2017). The way teachers approach pedagogical practices that drive classroom actions is a result of their perceptions (Richardson, 1996) too. Research informs us that the choice of instructional strategies is a result of teachers' beliefs and attitudes but the exact relationship between the two is undetermined. What is established is the fact that teachers' style of language instruction significantly impacts "the choices that students make in their efforts to develop effective learning strategies" (Green & Shimizu, 2002, p. 3).

Tegene (2016) discusses the impact teachers' negative attitudes can have on students' self-esteem and education (p. 97). According to Tegene, teachers' expectations are closely related to student achievement. In cases where teachers have a linguistically diverse student body, who don't all speak the same language or dialect, the expectations of achievement that teachers have with different learners are different and these expectations influence learners' achievements a great deal. When students are placed in a lower ability group due to the low expectation of teachers, their low expectation turns into a self-fulfilling prophecy (Hudson, 2001, as cited in Tegene, 2016, p. 96). In such cases, teachers need to be very conscious of their attitudes, since their attitudes can lead to students' failing performance. Torff (2011) calls the same phenomenon "a rigor gap" (p. 22) which he explains as the gap in the expectations of

educators which result in watered-down lessons for some and challenging lessons for others. In language teaching, this can be explained by an attitude where acquiring a second language is believed to be an unworthy enterprise – especially if the language in question is disfavored by the teacher.

Teachers' attitude has a direct correlation with students' performance (Ulag et al., 2011). Language teachers who tend to have a positive attitude towards the target language have been observed to adopt effective teaching practices which result in students' better learning (Al-Darwish, 2017). Educators' attitudes are highly accountable for their learners' responses. Not only does their attitude generate certain responses, but it also predicts students' achievement and contributes to it (Buschenhofen, 1998). Teachers' approach towards the language they teach and their methods – especially lively discussions with students in the target language help cultivate students' positive attitude (Alkaff, 2013). Student performance is highly reliant on teachers' perceptions which are a manifestation of teachers' values (Nieto, 2013). Oroujlou and Vahedi (2011) believe "motivation, attitudes, and set of beliefs" (p. 994) to be among the determining factors of students' efficiency in language learning.

Classroom environment is one of the predictors of students' success (Massri, 2020). This is true for all areas of learning but more so for learning languages since language learning has social underpinnings. Barton et al. (2009) conducted an analysis of the success of a language awareness program in seven schools in the UK. They learned that one of the main reasons behind teachers' apprehension to teach a variety of languages is the feeling of not knowing the language well enough, making "lack of confidence" (Legg, 2013, p. 57) a barrier to effective teaching. If teachers feel unconfident, their attitude towards the language might not be positive enough to create a classroom environment that supports teaching learning.

Success in a second/foreign language can only be measured when learners make an effort to talk/ communicate in it, which SLA terms as a *willingness to communicate* (WTC) (Khajavy et al., 2018; MacIntyre, 2020). This willingness to communicate is influenced by several factors such as motivation, self-confidence, classroom environment, international posture, and attitudes (Khajavy et al., 2018). One of the most important variables for setting a classroom environment is the teacher's attitude. Studies on willingness to communicate show that teachers play a key role in creating an environment where students feel safe and show a willingness to communicate. Teachers' role is very significant in creating a classroom climate that supports students' cohesiveness and task orientations (Khajavy et al., 2018).

Teachers' positive attitudes towards a language have a direct relationship with the kind of instructional strategies they choose. Teachers' positive attitude towards a target language, helps students develop an admiration for the target language culture, develop a positive relationship with the teacher, and most importantly, feel good about themselves - all of which increases their chances of success at learning the target language (Al Darwish, 2006). When teachers have a positive attitude towards the language they teach, they can help their students to achieve a lot more than just linguistic code. With a positive attitude, they are able to understand their students' attitudinal dispositions and identify various barriers to learning. They can then help students develop coping mechanisms to foster personality traits such as hardiness and resilience, while also addressing issues like learned helplessness.

2.7.4 Connection between teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and emotions

Teachers' attitude becomes all the more important when the language in question is English due to its colonial history. Colonized countries like Pakistan still treat English as a

language of prestige and quite often, the opportunities to excel in life and success are dependent on how competent or incompetent someone is at it (Pennycook, 1998). In such cases the emotions of teachers with respect to their own experiences with the language are of special significance (Cuéllar and Oxford, 2018) as emotions are what regulates human behavior (Agudo, 2018), which here would mean the way these teachers choose to teach. Teachers' emotions are shaped by a multitude of factors, including many "social, institutional, and personal forces" (De Costa et al., 2018, p. 91). These emotions have a political dimension too which explains how they are "linked to larger discourses and cultural processes and norms" (Zembylas et al., 2014, p. 77).

In the body of research on teacher beliefs, attitudes, and emotions, these three have been treated as interdependent components of personality that constantly act on one another. Changes in emotions and beliefs results in a shift in attitude. Cuéllar and Oxford's (2018) chapter *Language Teachers' Emotions: Emerging from the Shadows* explains the importance of understanding teachers' emotion in teaching and delineates how these emotions make a foundation for their teaching practices. This work is a case study of a teacher of Chinese in Mexico who was asked "to write freely about her emotions linked to teaching" (p. 60). Their data analysis showed how teachers' emotions are shaped by personal experiences and how they can support or hinder the teaching process. This study makes a case for a sensible use of emotions in classrooms and illustrates how by managing their emotions in a positive way, personal emotions of teachers can actually "serve the learning process" (p. 67). Cuellar and Oxford (2018) argue that there is an emotional reciprocity between the teachers and students in a classroom. When this reciprocity is expressed in a conducive manner, the "emotional influence [can] richly

enhance[] the classroom climate, the quality of language learning, and the lives of all involved" (p. 68).

Khajavy et al. (2018) conducted doubly latent multilevel analysis on data collected from 1528 secondary school students from 65 different classrooms in rural and urban Iran. These students were asked questions that indicated their levels of enjoyment or anxiety in the classroom. Their findings discuss how emotions are central to a successful language learning experience. According to them, "Emotions play a significant role in students' success and performance in the classroom" (607). If emotions play a major role in students' success, it is safe to say they play a major role in a teacher's successful performance of her teaching duties. "A positive classroom environment including a supportive teacher . . . foster communication among the students" (p. 610). A teacher can only be supportive if their emotions allow it.

A very interesting case study by Zembylas et al. (2014) discusses how emotional styles manifest in a teacher's pedagogical practices. The data for this study came from a set of four ethnographic case studies conducted in classrooms of four different schools in a six-week long field work. The lessons observed were mainly literacy and history. This paper focuses on one teacher in one of those classrooms. Looking at the way this teacher handled "emotions and memories during classroom interaction" (p. 73) the authors noticed that even when students were asked to think about their personal emotions and reflect, "the teacher seemed to be gradually leading them toward a specific group of collective emotions" (p. 74). This highlights the role teachers play in inculcating certain attitudes in their students with their emotions and attitudes. Given the spontaneous and automatic nature of human emotional functioning, it can be argued that in most of the cases teachers don't even realize that they are steering the attitudes of their students through their own emotions.

2.7.5 Identity as a determining factor of perceptions in second language teaching

Identity is a multilayered concept. Norton (2013) describes identity as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p. 45). Identity has multiple elements, language being one, that contribute to shaping it and to modifying it over the course of time. "Language is often considered as a symbol of ethnic, cultural or national identity" (Cots, 2012, p. 108). Learning a new language isn't merely a linguistic issue of mind, but a cultural, social, and political one as well (Atkinson, 2002, Frith & Wagner, 1997, Larsen-Freeman, 2007, as cited in Yeh, 2017). Identity development is an on-going process during second/foreign language learning and teaching. It is reciprocal, in a way that an individual's identity will facilitate or hinder the teaching and learning of a language; and the learning of a new language will change the identity an individual has.

Identity – closely related to the concept of self – dictates most of the decisions that teachers make, including decisions about "their teaching practices, the content they teach, the goals they want to attain, the kind of relationships they maintain with their students, and their professional development opportunities" (Yeh, 2017, p. 22). Teachers' perspectives about their own values play into the way they deliver knowledge. Teaching is a highly "socialized and contextualized" (p. 27) process and identity is deeply intertwined with an individual's social realities. During the teaching process knowledge is filtered through and constructed along identity. Therefore, whatever identity teachers believe they have or develop in the process of teaching will have an impact on the way they choose to teach.

The process of learning is heavily laden with culture. Language is an integral part of culture and enables learners to develop a sense of "identity and social belonging" (Castaneda, 2020, p. 31). In his paper, English next, Graddol (2006) asserts that the spread of English is "redefining national and individual identities worldwide" (p. 2). According to him, English has introduced "new patterns of wealth and social exclusion" (p. 2) which have a drastic impact on how people look at themselves and others. Teachers, being at the center of the teaching process, experience a shift in their identities with every social and political change that is triggered by a change in language ideology.

Language is closely tied to identity development. Learners and teachers of a second/foreign language experience a change in their identity as they attempt to make the new language a part of their linguistic repertoire. As discussed earlier, learners are more likely to show positive learning achievement if the language they are learning enjoys a prestigious place in society. Research reports that language learners are "reluctant in pursuing an investment in their own identity through the learning process if they firmly believe that teachers do not respect them, do not like them, and do not display appreciation for their experiences as linguistically diverse learners" (Cummins, 2001 as cited in Castaneda, 2020, p. 35). This is even truer when the language in question is English, as the attitude and actions of ELL teachers tend to "serve to shape students' attitudes towards schooling and their very sense of self" (Harklau, 2000, p. 64).

When it comes to teaching English, teachers receive two distinct kinds of reactions from their community that have a direct bearing on their identity; a) they are appreciated by their peers and society in general because of the prestige English language enjoys; b) they are looked at as people who have betrayed their cultural and national identity by gaining mastery of the language the society doesn't think highly of. English teachers experience othering by their peers and other

members in society because of not speaking the local language(s) with the expected level of mastery (Kubota, 2014). Since English teaching and learning are intricately influenced by external factors like “sociocultural, sociolinguistic and political layers at the macro level” (Zhunussova, 2021, p. 9), tensions at the macro level dictate how teachers teach at the micro level and how they negotiate their language identities and the decisions they make about which languages to use in the classroom in what frequency (Zhunussova, 2021).

2.8 Attitudes and perceptions of teachers towards English globally – Empirical Studies

Teachers’ beliefs have only gained importance in the domain of research recently (Sadeghi & Nikou, 2012). Learners’ beliefs, perceptions and attitudes have been a subject of research ever since second language learning and teaching became an established field of research, but teachers' beliefs were ignored until recently. The idea that teachers’ beliefs are important springs out of a realization that inquiry into their beliefs helps “(a) teachers reflect about their practice and understand some of the conflicts and resistance that may occur in the classroom; (b) researchers understand why teachers act the way they do, how they respond to change, and how they learn how to teach” (Barcelos & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018).

The role of teachers is crucial in molding their students’ attitude towards a language (Gorter & Arocena, 2020; Jenkins, 201; Lasagabaster & Huguenot, 2007; Zhunussova, 2021). When teachers communicate in English in a pleasant and favorable way, it has a direct impact on students’ willingness to communicate in English too, which in turn impacts the way they feel about the language. Students are more likely to develop a positive attitude if their teachers are excited to teach the language (Dewalele, 2019). Teachers play a key role in shaping learners’ attitude towards English (Farrell, 2017).

Research looking at teachers' attitudes, beliefs and perceptions can broadly be divided into three categories; a) research investigating teachers' attitudes to determine whether they conform to the native speaker model; b) research investigating the attitudes of ESL (English as a second) or EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers with a focus on teachers' knowledge of principles of the paradigm of world Englishes and English as an International Language and; c) research looking at teachers' attitudes with respect to English as a medium of instruction and pedagogy in non-native English-speaking countries.

There's been extensive research looking at how teachers perceive themselves against the native speaker (NS) and whether they believe in the ideal native speaker who they encourage their students to look up to (Bayard et al., 2001; Buckingham, 2014; Kesevan et al., 2018; Khatib & Monfared, 2017; Rahimi and Pakzadian, 2013; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005; Wang, 2015). In the same way, there is considerable body of research addressing the relatively recent concepts of English as an international language and world Englishes (Cavalheiro, 2016; Curran & Chern, 2017; Decke-Cornhill, 2003; Gursoy, 2013; Lai, 2008; Monfared, 2020; Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2019; Zhunussova, 2021). Research related to the third category – looking at teachers' attitude with respect to English as a medium of instruction (Cots, 2012, Dearden and Macaro, 2016; Doiz et al., 2013, 2014; Duo, 2003; Garrett and Gallego, 2014; Ipina and Sagasta, 2017; Mahmoudi, 2013; Monfared, 2020; Rahimi & Pakzadian, 2019) is not as abundant as the first two categories but is still substantial enough to provide valuable insights about teachers' attitudes and perceptions and its impact on teaching.

Zhunososva (2021) conducted interviews with 25 teachers in Kazakhstan. This set of teachers didn't represent a typical set of teachers from Kazakhstan since all of them had foreign academic exposure. Out of these 25, twelve had received some education in the US and thirteen

had received some education from the UK. Despite being an atypical sample, their responses regarding adherence with the native speaker model provide noteworthy information. Most of them endorsed the native speaker model in English language classrooms, but quite interestingly they had a lot of regard for their local languages too and believed their local languages to be a source of pride for them. Despite respecting and valuing both their local languages and English, these teachers did not believe translanguaging in classrooms to be a good idea.

The superiority of the native speaker is reasserted by the study conducted by Wang (2015). In this study, a questionnaire was administered to 1589 students and 193 university teachers about their views on the local variety of English i.e., "China English" (Wang, 2015). The stigma associated with the local variety of English could clearly be seen in the responses of these participants. Most teachers and students preferred to follow the native-speaker model of teaching and learning English, however relatively considered, teachers showed more acceptance for China English. One comment by a student particularly shows the intensity of apprehension in accepting China English as a legitimate variety. When inquired about his thoughts on Chinglish, he said, "If we speak English this way, we could only get ourselves despised" (p. 68).

Teachers in this study were divided in their support for China English. Most of them believed – especially the ones who had exposure to varieties other than the British and American – that trying to imitate the accent of a native speaker is unnecessary and gave more importance to communicativeness than perfecting speech like a native speaker. On the other hand, they expressed disapproval for using "English expressions situated in Chinese-featured discourse" (p. 69). Although Wang (2015) states that this dependence on "norms" (p. 69) is typical of expanding circle countries, my personal experience of teaching English in Pakistan suggests otherwise.

Al Nousri's (2013) research suggests otherwise. He surveyed 196 students at a high school in UAE to examine whether students' attitudes are affected by teachers' nativity or not. Students' responses indicated positive attitudes towards learning English irrespective of the teachers' status as native speakers or non-native speakers. He concludes that it is not so much a teacher's nativeness that shapes their students' attitudes but their "teaching methods and the learning atmosphere" (p. 26) that they create. When teachers have a positive attitude towards the language they are teaching, it has a positive impact on their students' attitudes too.

Duo (2003) conducted a dissertation study about elementary school teachers' attitude toward learning English as a foreign language in Taiwan. This study emerged out of his own experiences as a student learning English as a foreign language. He mentions that he had often heard his classmates "complain about how much they disliked English" (p. 4), at the same time agreeing to the importance of learning English. Duo's (2003) dissertation study was an attempt to make sense of the contradiction. He learned that English teachers in Taiwan see learning English as opening opportunities and important for the country in terms of aiding with "political and economic goals" (p. iv). However, some of them believed that teaching and learning English results in Americanization and pulling people away from their local culture – a phenomenon for which Kachru (1988) called this language a "tool for Westernization" (p. 4).

Ipina and Sagasta (2017) conducted a longitudinal study on teacher students' attitude towards English in Basque Autonomous Community in Spain. This community had traditionally been bilingual and was gradually moving towards trilingualism – the third language being English. The researchers learned that student teachers who perceived themselves as competent (to whatever extent) had a positive attitude towards English. Participants in this study "considered English as a language for communication but not for identification" (p. 72). They

associated their identity with their own languages. Teacher students in this research did not take a negative impact of the "sociolinguistic tension" by the move towards trilingualism because they didn't see English as a threat to Basque or Spanish (p. 72). Overall, they reported a positive attitude towards it. In communities like this one, English teachers can also experience othering. If they do not speak the local language(s) with the level of mastery expected by their peers and other members of the community (Kubota, 2014).

Interestingly, two other studies conducted by Doiz et al. (2013, 2014) in the same community reported different results. Doiz et al. (2013, 2014) attempted to investigate the attitude of teachers at another university in the Basque Autonomous Community towards the university's multilingual policy. The participants in this study whose L1 was Basque looked at English as a threat to their identity as they had "a strong interest in preserving and boosting their language" (Doiz et al., 2013, 2014 cited in Ipina & Sagasta, 2017, p. 73).

Cots (2012) reports similar findings. This study was conducted at the University of Lleida, Spain, with the goal "to reveal possible ambiguities and tensions in the language policy of the institution and to better understand its potential for success or failure" (p. 106). This research study uncovers important insights with respect to communities that are trying to make a shift towards English "in order to compete in the global academic world" (p. 107). The study extracts data from three different sources; two white papers delineating university policy, opinions of university academic staff and students collected through a questionnaire and focus group session and observations of a class session. Cots (2012) reports that some teachers indicated frustration with having to teach in English. They felt forced to do it and comply to "survive" (p. 116). However, at the same time, most of them expressed that any attempts to internationalize the institution or make it multilingual would need to include English before any

other language. Some of their responses suggested that they believed English to be the "default foreign language" (p. 116). Instructors in this study showed aversion to English only in the sense of being forced to become fluent in it. Students, on the other hand, showed worry about the "predator power" of English (p. 124).

Garrett and Gallego (2014) offer insights that could explain the discrepancy in the findings of the studies discussed above. In their study about internationalization of minority languages in international universities in Catalonia and Wales, they recorded students' views about the policy. According to them, in higher education institutions in bilingual communities with a majority language and a minority language, the presence of English may be perceived as a threat to the vitality of the minority language. The speakers of the minority language fear that promoting English might result in their own language being ignored. This provides a justification for teachers in Doiz's (2013, 2014) study to feel threatened by English. As opposed to Ipina and Sagasta's (2017), where 80% of the curriculum was still taught in Basque (p. 73), presenting no reason to the teachers for resisting English. This suggests that attitudes to English are often closely linked to the attitudes towards the first language (Galloway, 2017; Zhunussova, 2021)

In contrast to the studies above where instruction in English is not imposed, but gradually introduced in the system, some non-native English-speaking countries force students to take high stakes examinations in English. Mahmoudi (2013) reports one such instance. He investigated pre-university English teachers' attitude towards the Iranian National University Entrance Exam; he conducted interviews to see how the intense emphasis on this English medium exam affected teaching practices. Teachers in this study informed that they were required to focus on the exam and were evaluated based on the performance of their students on these tests which created a pressure that they would not feel otherwise. These teachers expressed frustration with having to

force students to memorize things in English (like vocabulary and grammar rules) especially for this test, since learning English isn't a requirement in Iran other than for this admission test. Teachers' negative attitude in this case can be explained by how they found the requirement unreasonable.

Dearden and Macaro (2016) studied the attitudes of higher education teachers from three European countries, Austria, Italian and Poland, about English as the primary language of instruction in higher education. The contrast in their views (despite all being Europeans) was interesting. Even though most of these teachers were not very fluent themselves and were not able to offer their students the best input in English, they felt that continuing to speak in English is good for their students for various reasons. Austrian teachers thought that exposure to English is good for their students and speaking in English is good for them because it opens more opportunities for mobility for them. Italian teachers felt that speaking in English helps them with an international reputation and perhaps helps the locals gain mastery of a major language of the world. Polish teachers were happy with the fact that English medium institutions help them attract better student quality (Dearden & Macaro, 2016). Although this study was conducted to investigate the sentiments and views of teachers towards English medium instruction and was not particularly concerned with whether the sentiments and views of these teachers affects their instruction, it does hint at the positive sentiments they had towards continuation of English medium instructional practices.

Gursoy (2013) conducted research with 200 pre-service ELT teachers' attitude towards English in Turkey. 98.5% of these participants learned English as a second/foreign language in Turkey. In this study they were asked to report any difficulties they faced in engaging with English in academic and daily settings through a questionnaire. A separate questionnaire that

examined their attitudes with respect to the social and cultural situation was also administered. 79.7% of these pre-service teachers indicated "that they [. . .] had little or no difficulty during their ELT education" (p. 111). The author of this study correlates this finding with the level of motivation for learning English which stemmed directly from the attitude these teachers had towards it. Gursoy attributes this positive attitude of teachers to the collective favorable attitude of the overall Turkish society towards English. He suggests that when a society looks at a language favorably, there is more instrumental motivation for the teachers to learn it which will have a positive impact on their teaching.

Although there is not a lot of research that directly and explicitly informs us on teachers' attitudes and perceptions on English in terms of it being the language of the colonizers, research on the paradigm of World Englishes and teachers' thoughts and opinions about the possibility of promoting a local variety of English offers several useful insights. These studies do not hold a direct relevance to the research questions under scrutiny in this review, but they provide thought-provoking insights in terms of teachers' perceptions about English language teaching and learning.

Monfared (2020) administered a survey to 246 teachers: 122 from countries in the outer circle (India, Malaysia, and South Africa) and 124 from two expanding circle countries (Iran and Turkey) with regards to their thoughts on acceptability of different varieties of English on international tests like TOEFL and IELTS. The findings of this study reveal that most of the teachers were in favor of the inclusion of different varieties if English and "rejected the idea of a linguistic superiority" (p. 9), but when these teachers were presented with examples of test items that featured characteristics of World Englishes, they took them as errors. Eggington (2010) associates this behavior to a mismatch between ideology and practice commitment in the context

of language revitalization which brings in the idea of identity conflict within teachers where teachers construct a pseudo-identity which is more aligned with the supposed superiority of the native speaker to be more easily accepted by their students and the organizations they work for (Petric, 2009).

Rahimi and Pakzadian (2013) conducted interviews with 20 in-service teachers in central Iran to gauge their opinion and views on their changing roles as teachers with the introduction of "English as an international language" pedagogy. Out of the 20 interviewed, 14 teachers preferred American and British English and believed these two varieties should be the standard. One of the comments by a teacher really stood out. She said, "I prefer to speak British English. I think it sounds royal and prestigious. My students really like it and consider me as a powerful teacher" (p. 7). On the other hand, another teacher commented, "I remember I was always encouraged to use American English in language institutes . . . I think the US is the most powerful country in the world, and no one can ignore this reality" (Rahimi and Pakzadian, 2013, p. 8).

Participants in this study didn't see themselves as promoters of culture. Due to unfamiliarity with the principles of English as an International Language paradigm which encourages promoting local cultures (Ellis, 1996; McKay, 2003, Renandya, 2012), most of these teachers were against the idea of trying to inculcate their own cultural values in English classes. One of them commented, "What's the point of teaching our culture in English classes?! Students pay money to learn about the English language and culture. They receive knowledge of their own culture in their history and geography courses" (p. 9).

Phillipson (1992) talks about "educational imperialism" – a concept which explains maintenance of strong ties between local decision makers in the domain of education (like test

taking agencies or education policy makers) with the Inner Circle countries in an attempt to sustain an educational imperialism by reinforcing educational ideologies of those countries. Most of the time, this is done in such a subtle way that the general public just internalize the superiority of educational practices (and language) of the inner circle countries without any realization. Beliefs and ideas of many of these teachers seem to be an outcome of the same educational imperialism. Additionally, studies have shown that teachers in post-colonial countries sometimes try to imitate the native speaker out of a desire to identify as a native speaker as they are more likely to be accepted by language teaching centers/ educational institutions with a great emphasis on English and their students, both. (Khatib & Monfared, 2017; Mofared, 2020).

In stark contrast with the research above, teachers in al-Bataineh and Gallagher's (2021) study discouraged excessive use of English in classrooms. They looked at 22 pre-service teachers' attitudes towards translanguaging in children's picture books in a federal university in the United Arab Emirates. These teachers were grouped up and asked to develop a trilingual picture book. Their thoughts and opinions about these books and the decisions they made to develop it were collected in three different ways: author group interviews, focus group discussions, and online discussion board postings.

The results indicated that these teachers viewed languages as separate and distinct, with distinct features and uses. Not all of these teachers believed translanguaging to be good because they thought encouraging students to practice translingualism might hurt their competence in Arabic. Many participants expressed their concerns for English to turn into "a threat to their local identity and culture" if their L1 (Arabic) is not prioritized because of encouraging translingualism, therefore "boundaries between Arabic and English should not be blurred" (p.

395). One of the participant's comments is particularly interesting, "the person needs to know his/her language better than knowing other languages. Sheikh Zayed [the founder of the UAE] said people with no past will not have a future which means if we did not know our own language we will be lost" (p. 394). Most participants in this study looked at Arabic as their 'own' (p. 396) language and did not see it fitting for them to use any other language in intimate family settings. Researchers of this study attributed this pushback to "ideological, linguistic and pedagogical reasons" (p. 397).

Curran and Chern (2017) conducted a study with pre-service teachers in Taiwan to investigate whether these future teachers had any knowledge of the changing trends in EFL/ESL and the move towards the paradigm of English as a Lingua Franca or whether they prefer sticking to the native speaker model of teaching English. Out of the 71 participants who took part in this study, 36 tilted more in favor of taking the native speaker as the role model, while the rest of them showed more inclination towards learning about the various new trends in the field of EFL and look at English as lingua franca and teach students accordingly. Due to internationalization of English (Sharifian, 2013) and it being the language of the internet (The Economist Newspaper, 2001), people are reasonably aware of different varieties of English (Curran & Chern, 2017). Despite that, an insistence to teach with an adherence to the native speaker model also exists. A byproduct of wanting to teach English with a native speaker model is the focus on the culture of English-speaking countries (Curran & Chern, 2017). Culture is an indispensable part of language learning (Baker, 2015) and this puts students' identity development in question since a focus on native speaker model automatically brings in the culture of the native speaker (Curran & Chern, 2017; Haider & Fang, 2019).

2.9 Obsession with the English language and its place in the education system of various countries

In many outer circle and expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1988; Matsuda, 2012), the obsession with promoting the English language dictates the direction and tone of the educational policy. In post-colonial South Asia, the initial struggle was to find the right place for the national language, the regional languages and English. Over the years, each country came to a decision about the status of these languages depending on the needs of its people and the demands of surviving and progressing in the world. The next few paragraphs detail the language policy in a few South-Asian countries that were former British colonies.

India adopted a "three-language formula" (Attanayake, 2019) where education is imparted in three languages in school: English, Hindi, and the official language of each state. India recognizes 22 languages as official state languages (Jayasundra, 2014, p.4). However, the three-language formula did not succeed as it was expected to and instruction in English became the norm. More and more states have been choosing to switch to English as the medium of instruction as early as in primary state-run schools. Private schools and universities (state and private), English is the primary medium of instruction. Universities, however, do have the option of other languages (Ramanathan, 2015).

Despite the importance English has in the education system in India, there is mixed attitude towards it as well. Attanayake (2019) reports that on the one hand, students believe that learning English is going to give them independence and help them succeed, but on the other hand, they worry about being seen as "show-offs" (p. 45) for speaking in English by the people in the community.

In Sri Lanka, Sinhala and Tamil are recognized as the national and official languages and English is supposed to be a "link language" (Attanayake, 2019, p. 12). In state-run schools, Tamil and Sinhala are the primary mediums of instruction. However, realizing the importance of learning English, a bilingual education act was passed in 2001 which encouraged the use of English in higher education. At the same time, the need to introduce and encourage English at the school level was felt and a parallel policy was initiated to support bi-lingual instruction in schools (English and Tamil or Sinhala). Finally, in 2011, to ensure that Tamil and Sinhala get equal importance, a trilingual policy was introduced which promotes teaching Tamil to Sinhala students, Sinhala to Tamil and English to all. Sri Lanka also has a large number of private schools that specialize in giving education in English. Just like Pakistan, the country has schools that offer the Cambridge curriculum and others that offer the local curriculum (Attanayake, 2019).

The dominance of the English language in Sri Lanka is so established that the locals attach a Sinhala word, "*Kaduwa*" (meaning 'sword') to the English language. Attanayake (2019, p. 22) quotes the locals saying "I need to get my *kaduwa* polished" to say they need to improve their English. Despite its dominance, English is disliked by certain groups and people too and it's not surprising to hear someone use the word *kaduwa* to refer to the "detested" language (i.e. English). Teachers of English in Sri Lanka display a similar attitude. There are some who dislike it for threatening the mother tongue. There are others who find it useful and important and accept its place in the education system. Then there are those who think it is superior to the mother tongue and grants people power and prestige.

Bangladesh recognizes Bangla as the national and official language (Attanayake, 2019). However, the importance of English is not denied, and it is taught in schools at primary,

secondary and tertiary levels as a subject (Ali, 2013 as cited in Attanayake, 2019). In recent decades the importance of English has become obvious with its increased use in higher education. Although it is recognized as a foreign language and not a second language, English is taught as a compulsory subject in schools and colleges. Moreover, education in universities is in English medium.

Bangladesh separated from Pakistan on the basis of a language, however, English is still treated as a "stair of prosperity, a tool of acquiring knowledge and as a sign of sophistication" (Haque, 2008, p. 25). English is perceived as being "more enriched than Bangla" and skill in English is supposed to increase the value of a person at home and abroad (Kabir, 2017). Students in Bangladesh see English as a "weapon" (Attayanke, 2019, p. 94) but the society outside the classrooms and educational institutions doesn't necessarily feel that way. Students in Bangladesh complain that they are not supported for speaking in English, instead they are seen as "mad or abnormal" and are made fun of (Attayanke, 2019, p. 45).

According to Gill (2016), in China it is compulsory for students in grades 3 and 4 to receive at least two class hours of English instruction per week. In grades 5 and 6, the two hours are increased to four until senior secondary school. Students have to score a certain level in English to be promoted to the next stage of schooling. All university students have to study English for one year. Once out of university, college graduates are required to take English proficiency tests before they can qualify for interviews in the job market (Haider & Fang, 2019). Gill (2016) discusses that teachers and students in China still largely believe that teaching and learning English through communicative activities is incorrect and favor rote learning methods instead. China still has the "mindset of native-speakersim" and they deem native speakers to be the standard (Haider & Fang, 2019, p.172).

The dominance of English is seen as a threat to the Chinese language as well. There are concerns that English is affecting the “Confusion tradition” and the Chinese language. Although Chinese is taught in China, it is only one of the “three compulsory subjects for university exams . . . no longer mandatory” (Haider & Fang, 2019, p. 169), which further illustrates the dominant place the English language enjoys.

2.10 Summary

This chapter started with a discussion of the theoretical framework used in this study. The next few sections described the history, the present teaching and learning scenario in Pakistan and the structure of school education in Pakistan. The chapter further delves into the importance of beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes in second language teaching and learning. The last two sections of this chapter discuss empirical studies about English teachers and English teaching around the world.

The review revealed that the status of the English language has played a central role not only in Pakistan but in most of the colonized world. It also revealed that the education policy of many of these countries has been greatly influenced by the dominance of English.

This literature review explored the historical dominance and power of the English language, particularly in post-colonial Pakistan, and its impact on education. It highlighted the link between English proficiency and societal opportunities, emphasizing the role of teachers in shaping language perceptions. The review outlined the theoretical framework, primarily rooted in postcolonialism, with a focus on Edward Said's "Orientalism" and contributions from scholars like Achebe, Ngugi, Bhabha, and Pennycook.

The history section delved into the colonial roots of English in Pakistan, discussing how language policies shaped societal divisions. It also emphasized the lingering impact of colonialism on mindsets, illustrating how language plays a crucial role in constructing identity. The review then shifted to the current status of English in the Pakistani education system, exploring debates, challenges, and its perceived threat to local languages and culture.

The review also discussed the definitions and interrelations of perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes in the context of teacher education and practices. It highlighted the complexity and varied terminology associated with beliefs and emphasizes the importance of understanding these concepts in second language teaching and learning. It also explored how teachers' attitudes impact learners, linking beliefs to teaching practices, and delves into the multifaceted nature of language teaching. Additionally, it discussed the connection between teachers' attitudes, perceptions, and learner motivation, drawing on various studies and theories. The passage also explored the impact of teachers' attitudes on their teaching strategies and, consequently, learner performance, emphasizing the crucial role of teachers in creating a positive classroom environment that supports language learning.

Overall, the literature review provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between language, education, and societal dynamics in the context of post-colonial Pakistan in contrast with other countries.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study seeks to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of English teachers towards the learning and teaching of English in Pakistan. It looks at the factors that have shaped these perceptions and attitudes. Through in-depth conversations with a group of teachers, this study identifies the relationship between certain factors and experiences that contribute to forming teachers' perceptions and attitudes. This project is qualitative in nature with interviews being the primary mode of data collection.

This section explains the methods used in this research and the rationale behind choosing them. I start with discussing my positionality as a teacher and researcher, followed by a detailed description of the research design where I elaborate on the significance of choosing interviews as the sole method of data collection. Next, I reiterate the research questions, followed by a step-by-step explanation of each stage of data collection and analysis. The subsection on data analysis explains how coding was done to generate themes and ends with a description of discourse analysis as the primary tool to analyze data.

3.2 Research Design

This study was qualitative in its entirety. Interviews were used as the primary data collection instrument and the data was analyzed through the principles of grounded theory. This research was designed around four research questions that are as follows:

1. How do English teachers in Pakistan feel about being English teachers?
2. What is their “English teacher” identity?

3. What are their perceptions and beliefs about English as a language, the status of English in Pakistan and teaching as a profession?
4. What factors have shaped their identity as English teachers and have influenced their perceptions and thoughts about English teaching?

3.2.1 Qualitative analysis

Qualitative research concerns itself with the subjective, exploring human realities as seen and understood by humans, instead of concrete realities (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2013). This type of research looks at the complex realities constructed by individuals in the context of their day-to-day interactions. As reality is subjective in qualitative research, it considers the various ways in which people make meaning of their experiences. Human interactions, experiences and perceptions are complex. This complexity often shows in the likelihood of people interpreting an event they experienced together completely differently. Human beings have the capability of coming to different interpretations and meaning of the same event (Crotty, 1998).

This research investigated the perceptions, thoughts, and opinions of English teachers about the teaching of English in Pakistan. In addition to expressing their opinions and thoughts, these teachers were also prompted to share their experiences as teachers of English in Pakistan. They were also encouraged to share their experiences as individuals who grew up in the Pakistani society and studied in the Pakistani education system. Due to the nature of these inquiries, this study warranted a qualitative design.

Interviews were chosen as the primary tool for data collection because the study focused on the perceptions and thoughts of English teachers in Pakistan. Initially, I decided to interview ten teachers in Pakistan in three phases, one hour-long interview in each phase. However,

Gerson (2020) argues that ‘flexibility’ must be a guiding principle in the qualitative interviewing process. They believe that as long as the researcher is able to ‘discover patterns, make key comparisons, include a range of different perspectives, and draw convincing conclusions, there are no rigid rules about sample size’. Utilizing this flexibility, as I started recruiting, I decided to limit myself to five participants because of two reasons: 1) scheduling proved to be more challenging than it initially seemed, 2) after the first interview I realized that each hour-long interview would generate enough quality data with a wide range of perspectives, allowing me to make comparisons and inferences.

Gersona (2020) outlines the key features of a qualitative interview by explaining what it does. They write that qualitative interviews get people talking about things they might not have really thought about or shared with others before. Whether talking about their life journey, a specific time in the past, their current situation, or future plans, these interviews dig deeper than just the initial responses. With follow-up questions, participants get a chance to take a moment, reflect, and give more detailed answers. Talking about personal experiences might make them see things in a new light, and discussions about roles in social or organizational setups could make them rethink things they usually take for granted. So, in a nutshell, interviews give us a lot more detailed and personal insights compared to surveys or observations. The participants of this study were prompted to discuss details about their childhood, adult lives, lives as students and teachers. All of this required lengthy narratives; thus interviews were the most appropriate instrument for this study.

According to Lapan, et al. (2012), qualitative research can be conducted within the framework of four guiding paradigms; positivist, interpretivist, critical and participatory (action research). This study has been guided by the interpretivist school of thought. Interpretivism

dictates that knowledge is created by the interpretation of meanings that individuals assign to events and experiences (Ulz, 2013), following which all analysis was derived by the interpretation of the participants' thoughts and ideas. Similar thoughts and ideas were woven together as themes which were then expanded/expounded on as findings and discussion. This method of generating themes and findings is termed as grounded theory. The analysis and findings reported in this study were developed through the principles of grounded theory.

3.2.2 Grounded theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967) first came up with the concept of grounded theory. The aim of grounded theory as a method of analysis in research aims to generate theory through data. However, it is mostly used as a tool to analyze data rather than generating theory (Urquhart, 2013), and it is in the process of analyzing data that a theory is organically generated. Grounded theory often prevents bias as the researcher lets patterns evolve, instead of forcing them. The evolving patterns are used to generate an analysis which is grounded in data. In other words, in a grounded theory analysis, the data dictates the direction of analysis, instead of the other way around.

In this study, I did not attempt to build a theory, rather used grounded theory as a data analysis tool. Urquhart (2013) explains that when grounded theory is used for data analysis, the first step is to put the data into basic categories. These basic categories are then grouped into larger categories and those categories are used to develop an analysis. Initial coding to put data into basic categories is done by going over written text line-by-line. The next step is to group the initial codes (basic categories) into more interpretive or conceptual codes. These interpretive

codes are then used to generate a coherent analysis. This was the procedure I followed in this study as well.

3.2.3 Case Studies

This study treats each participant as a case study. Hamilton and Cobett-Whittier (2013) draw on Elliot and Lukes' (2008) definition of a case study to emphasize its importance in educational research. According to them, a case study "should be seen as an approach to research ... as a genre that aims to capture the complexity of relationships, beliefs, and attitudes within a bounded unit, using different forms of data collection, and is likely to explore more than one perspective" (p. 7). In the same chapter, Hamilton, and Cobett-Whittier (2013) explain that a bounded unit can be "a person, a group, an institution, or an organization" (p. 8). The detailed interviews with each participant formed separate bounded units, from which I extracted insights into beliefs and attitudes based on their responses.

Using case studies and treating each participant as a bounded unit allowed me to closely examine their thoughts, opinions, and the connections between their experiences. I was able to identify how different aspects of their life experiences interacted, and how one experience led to or influenced another. By analyzing all three interviews with each participant as a case study, I could observe how their thoughts and opinions evolved and shaped their identity.

When using case studies, it is important to focus on a limited number of aspects or concerns related to the case (Hamilton & Cobett-Whittier, 2013), rather than attempting to understand the bounded unit in its entirety. Although this research has implications for teaching, it does not directly address the effectiveness of participants’ classroom teaching. Instead, the focus is on exploring how English teachers' feelings and perceptions influence their teaching

practices and the broader landscape of English teaching in Pakistan. It should be noted that classroom observations are not part of this research. The impact of teachers' perceptions on teaching is discussed based on their own accounts as the primary data source.

3.3 Researcher's positionality

In qualitative research, the researcher is a part of the study and acts like an instrument (Erlingsson, & Brysiewicz, 2013) which makes the researcher's positionality immensely significant. Lapan et al. (2012) assert that qualitative researchers view meaning as context, time, and case specific and therefore meanings in qualitative research are not generalizable. Consequently, qualitative researchers are expected to immerse themselves in the research context and process. This study required knowledge of a number of things; the Pakistani education system - past and present, the culture of Pakistan, its history and the complications and technicalities of being an English teacher in Pakistan and lastly, the dynamics and experience of being a student in Pakistan.

I was born in Karachi, Pakistan and stayed there until my early thirties. Karachi is the New York city of Pakistan (Report, 2023), its business center. People from all over the country move to Karachi to get a better education and to make a living. In Karachi, one can expect people from all regions, sub-ethnicities of Pakistan and that makes Karachi a good representation of the entire country. As far as the education system is concerned, Karachi is that one city where all new initiatives see the light of day. There are public schools in all major neighborhoods and private schools in every part of the city. As explained in the literature review, private schools in Pakistan follow different boards or systems. In Karachi, there are several schools representing each board or system.

I grew up in that landscape and acquired all my education (up until masters) there as well. As a former student, I am highly familiar with the Pakistani education system. I went to a private school that followed the matric system curriculum. After finishing my bachelors, I started teaching in Karachi, and continued for ten years. As a teacher, I only worked at schools that followed the Cambridge curriculum. Having experienced both systems first-hand, I was equipped with the necessary background knowledge that I needed to interact with the participants of this study.

As the primary investigator of this research, I felt qualified to ask them questions because of similar backgrounds in terms of country of origin, education, and work experience. As participants, they felt comfortable answering questions in detail because they saw me as someone who shares their cultural and educational history and has worked in the same settings. They saw me as an insider.

While it is important for the researcher to feel and be treated like an insider and know the context of the research really well, it is equally important to not be too closely connected to the participants to restrict possible bias. I fulfilled this condition by recruiting participants outside of my personal network. I did not know any of the participants personally which gave me a little distance to be able to analyze their comments, thoughts, and experiences. Another source of distance came from my place as a PhD candidate in a foreign university. None of the participants had any education from a foreign university, because of which they saw me as an outsider to an extent. Additionally, my physical absence from Pakistan also separated me from the participants enough for them to consider me an outsider.

To conclude, my position as a researcher was more of an insider than an outsider. As a Pakistani who was born and raised in Pakistan, and had attended school, college, and university

there - I knew the education system inside out. Moreover, as someone who worked there as an English teacher in schools, as well as in higher education, I knew the local landscape for English teachers in terms of policies, experiences, opportunities, and challenges. My familiarity with the research context and shared experiences with the participants enabled me to identify possible points of tension which was very helpful while designing this study and during the interviews as well.

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection took about six months, starting from the point the initial call for recruitment was sent out. The interviews were conducted over a four-month span. The video conferencing tool, Zoom, was used for conducting and recording the interviews.

3.4.1 Selection and description of participants

I am a part of a Facebook group for teachers in Pakistan. The group is used as a platform for schoolteachers to post job announcements and as a professional space for discussing other things. I had been a part of that group from the time I was a teacher in Pakistan. However, I had never posted anything on that group nor interacted with anyone, which made me an inactive member whom no one knew personally (with the exception of teachers I had worked with previously who were also a part of that group).

As the first step in the recruitment process, I posted an announcement introducing myself as a PhD candidate at a university in the United States, introducing my research and asking if English teachers in that group would be interested in participating. I received an overwhelming response with 89 teachers expressing interest in participating and commented on my post. Many

people reached out to me via the private messaging feature on Facebook. As the second step, I designed a google form asking them about their years of experience, the levels they teach, their contact information and their availability. A copy of the google form is attached in the appendix.

A total of 19 teachers filled out the google form. Out of those 19, I contacted 12 teachers on WhatsApp. WhatsApp is a free instant messaging service which I used for various purposes like, 1) initial correspondence with prospective participants 2) scheduling, which included talking about what times and days' work. I and the participants also used WhatsApp to inform each other if we were ever late or if either of us wanted to change the times or days.

After contacting 12 participants via WhatsApp, I scheduled initial phone calls with the ones who responded to my texts. These calls were supposed to be informal with the primary objective of building rapport and gauging suitability of the prospective participants. Although I had texted all 12 teachers that I had found suitable for this study from the google form data, not all of them replied. The ones who did, I scheduled phone calls with them. After the phone calls, I sent them the consent form (appendix 1) via email. Only five people returned the consent forms and thus the number of final participants was five.

My criteria for the selection of the participants were as follows:

i. I wanted all teachers to work in either middle school or high school. I did not want to recruit elementary school teachers because teaching young children has different demands. The issues that elementary school teachers face are very different from the ones teaching middle or high school. Therefore, to prevent any incongruence in data on that account, I confined myself to recruiting teachers teaching similar grade levels.
ii. I wanted teachers with more than five years of experience.
iii. There was no preference for a certain age group.

iv. There was no preference for a certain academic background.

v. Initially, I did not have any restrictions on gender but the people who filled out the google form questionnaire all turned out to be women. A few men had shown interest by commenting on my initial post on Facebook, however, none of them filled out the google form.

vi. All of my participants ended up being from the same city, Karachi.

vii. There were no restrictions regarding ethnolinguistic groups, however, all participants ended-up predominantly Urdu speaking with some ties to Punjab.

viii. Teachers who were comfortable conversing in English throughout the interview were recruited, as the interviews were conducted in English.

Using the criteria above, five final participants were selected. I describe the participants in detail in chapter #4, however, to give the reader a basic understanding of the participants, they are introduced briefly here. All participants have been assigned a pseudonym.

Participant #1 - Umber

Umber was a middle school English teacher in her late twenties. She had been a teacher for seven years. She taught English and also Social Studies in a Cambridge system school. She had a master's degree in international relations.

Participant #2 - Zaynab

Zaynab started teaching full time two years ago. She taught English to 9-11 grade students at a Cambridge system school. She was in her mid-twenties. She had a bachelors degree

in English Linguistics and was getting a Masters of Science in the same at the time of the interview.

Participant #3 - Sidra

Sidra was in her forties and had 22 years of English teaching experience to multiple grade levels. She had taught at several schools, including both Cambridge system schools and matric system schools, as an English teacher. Another important detail about her was that she was a member of the Christian community.

Participant #4 - Bisma

Bisma had 10 years of experience as an English teacher. She taught middle school. She was in her late twenties and had a degree in pharmacy. She had only taught in matric system schools.

Participant #5 - Mahvish

Mahvish had over 20 years of experience as an English teacher. She was in her mid to late forties. She taught grades 8-10 at a very prestigious Cambridge system school.

3.4.2 Interviews

Conversation or talking to other people is how human beings have always sought to understand each other and obtain information about and from each other. In the domain of research, these conversations, formally or semi-formally set-up, are termed as interviews. Interviews are known to be the most widely used tool in qualitative research (Brinkmann, 2022;

Edwards & Holland, 2013; Gerson, 2020) in social sciences. Social scientists use interviewing as a tool to investigate issues that concern human beings (Rapley, 2002). Interviews are an effective tool in qualitative research because they present an opportunity to the participants (and by extension, to the researcher as well) to reflect more profoundly on their experiences (Gerson, 2020) than is possible with any other method. Through interviewing, people get a chance to tell their stories, share their experiences and thoughts and in doing so, become more aware of their ideas and perceptions and the relationship between these with their experiences.

The specific method of interviewing used in this study was introduced by Irving Seidman in 2006. It has been revised multiple times, with the latest revision released in 2019. Villa (2016) calls Seidman's method a "contemporary narrative inquiry" (p. 3). It is a model of interviewing that allows in-depth exploration of the participants' thoughts, ideas, and perceptions. Because in-depth interviews are crucial for understanding and explaining different aspects of our social world (Gerson, 2020), this model of interviewing looks beyond superficial responses in an attempt to make connections between participants' own thoughts and experiences and between other participants. Seidman (2008) proposes conducting three separate interviews with three connected but different aims. In the first interview, participants are encouraged to share their history. In the second interview, they are encouraged to share their experiences related to the subject of interest. In the third and final interview, they are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of their experiences and make connections (Anderson & Holloway-Libell, 2014). Following Seidman's (2008) model of interviewing, three hour-long interviews were conducted with each participant. A different set of questions was used for each interview.

Seidman's (2008) model of interviewing was significant for this study because of its potential to reveal complex layers of meaning in the interviewees' responses and the connection

between their thoughts and behavior. Seidman (2008) writes that “interviewing provides access to the context of people's behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior. A basic assumption in in-depth interviewing research is that the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience.... Interviewing allows us to put behavior in context and provides access to under- standing their action” (p. 4). With this method of interviewing, meaning is not limited to the facts, but it is a combination of the multiple layers of meanings that arise out of the interaction between 1) the interviewer’s question and how it was asked, 2) the respondent’s understanding of the question(s) and 3) the respondent’s response. Seidman’s method of interviewing invites the interviewer to look at the ways and extent to which the respondents/participants comprehend their experiences and beliefs.

Interview as a tool of inquiry in qualitative research commonly has two types: semi-structured interview and unstructured interview. Historically, a third type, “structured interview”, was also discussed in literature. However, considering the fact that there cannot be such a thing as a completely structured interview as “people always say things that spill beyond the structure” (Parker, 2005, p. 53), recent literature discussing interviews in qualitative research focus on semi-structured and unstructured interviews only. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher develops a list of questions on the themes they want to explore in their study, with a certain degree of flexibility to modify the questions according to the participants’/respondents’ answers. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher also takes the liberty to ask follow-up questions that were not pre-thought out or part of the list of initial questions. Semi-structured interviews leave enough space for the interviewees “to answer on their own terms . . . but do provide some structure for comparison across interviewees in a study by covering the same topics” (Edwards &

Holland, 2013, p. 29) or asking the same questions. This characteristic of semi-structured interviews makes them quite effective in giving a certain structure to both the interviewer and the participants but, at the same time, leaving room for them to adjust to each other's pace.

This study utilized a semi-structured form of interviewing. For each interview, a separate list of questions was prepared so that there was room for the interviewer to ask follow-up or/and clarification questions. None of the interviews sought to build on each other. The first interview attempted to understand the experiences of participants leading them to the subject of inquiry. The second interview focused on their present lives and practices. The third and last interview prompted the participants to make meaning of their experiences leading the researcher to a complete narrative with rich insights into the subject of inquiry. The first and the second interview were designed to extract mostly direct information from the participants. The third interview aimed to consolidate all that information by inviting the participants to reflect and make connections. In the third interview, questions were more abstract and called for critical thinking. Interviews were scheduled with some gaps to allow teachers time to reflect on their answers and the discussion in general. Each interview was recorded with the participants' permission. All interviews were conducted in English, as translating between languages would have lengthened my timeline. As a former English teacher in Pakistan, I knew that most English teachers in private schools are capable of conversing in English, which minimized the risk of bias in selection of participants. Their level of fluency in terms of soundness of grammar was not a consideration at all, as long as they were able to understand and respond to questions in English. The participants were informed that they could code-switch if they liked. Instances where they did, I translated their speech to English.

3.4.3 Questions for the interviews

The questions for each round of interviews were as follows:

1st interview

1. Why did you decide to become a teacher?
2. How did you decide to become a teacher of English?
3. Tell me about any childhood experiences that may have developed a desire in you to pursue teaching as a career.
4. Tell me about your experiences at school as a student.
5. Tell me about your experiences with your teachers, in particular English teachers.
6. Tell me about your experiences with your parents and other elders around you as teachers (since in Pakistan, parents, grandparents and other adults in the family or neighborhood hold certain influence).
7. How did you feel as a learner of English in Pakistan? What was your experience as an ESL student like?
8. Tell me about your experiences in the job market as someone wanting to teach English?

Second Interview

1. What are your experiences like working as an English teacher at your school/college?
2. Tell me about your tasks and responsibilities. What does a typical workday look like for you?
3. Tell me about a time when being an English teacher made you feel proud (tell me about the most outstanding experience you have had as an English teacher).
4. Tell me about the most challenging aspects of your work.

5. In what ways do you enjoy teaching English? Tell me about the most enjoyable aspects of your work.
6. In what ways does teaching English disappoint or frustrate you? Tell me about the most disappointing experiences you have had so far in your work as an English teacher
7. What kind of social implications does being an English teacher have on you and those around you?
8. What are your thoughts about English teaching in Pakistan?
9. If you could, what kind of changes would you make to the way English is taught in Pakistan?

Third Interview

1. What does it mean to you to be an English teacher in Pakistan on a personal and social level?
2. How do you make sense of the work you do?
3. How do you think your experiences as a child and as a student influence your teaching of English?
4. In what ways do you think your work is significant or insignificant? What happens if you stop doing what you do?
5. Do you see any connection between English and the socio-economic situation of Pakistan?
6. The mentality that you need English to succeed, how does it tie into the political landscape of Pakistan?

3.4.4 Researcher's notes

I took notes during the interviews to use for member checks and to consult later on for generating themes. These notes also helped me ask them better follow-up questions or to request teachers to clarify or expand. After each interview, I tried to skim over my notes to help me evaluate the quality of data.

3.4.5 Transcription

Zoom provides automatic transcription which could be exported as an editable file after each session. After each interview, I exported the transcription of each interview and saved it on my computer. The plan was to listen to each interview with the transcription in front of me to see if the transcription and the interview aligned. However, I was not able to start this process until after all interviews were done.

Once I started looking at the transcriptions, I realized that it was extremely flawed. I spent countless hours, in fact months, fixing the transcriptions. Finally, I learned that Microsoft 365 generates a far better transcription than Zoom. I uploaded my data to Microsoft 365 and generated another set of transcripts. These transcriptions were a lot more accurate, but they still needed to be checked against the video recordings of the interviews. I played the video interview and manually corrected the transcriptions to reduce errors as much as possible.

Transcriptions have been slightly edited to enhance clarity and ensure a smoother flow of reading. In instances where they code-switched or used Urdu words out of habit, I have translated their speech.

3.5 Data Analysis

This section discusses the steps followed to ensure trustworthiness in the study and the methods used for coding and generative themes.

3.5.1 Ensuring trustworthiness

In qualitative research, it is also encouraged to collect data from more than one source and method. This study collected data only through interviews. However, since each participant was interviewed three times, trustworthiness in this study was established by triangulation of information within the interviews. I also used member checks to ensure trustworthiness.

3.5.1.1 Triangulation of data

Torrance (2012) explains that triangulation originated as a method to validate research findings by generating and comparing various types of data and perspectives from different respondents on the topic being studied. In this study, data was collected through only one method, which is, interviews. However, the principle of triangulation was satisfied by the model of interviewing used. Despite a small sample size, the three-interview model by Seidman (2019) ensured that themes are generated by keeping in mind the thoughts and perceptions shared by all participants. The results derived from the data in this study relied on the depth of details shared by the participants and on their shared perceptions, thoughts, beliefs, and opinions.

3.5.1.2 Member checks

Member checks refer to involving the participants in the initial process of generating themes through data and getting feedback from them about the accuracy of data and the derived

themes (Torrance, 2012). In this study, I did not wait to collect all data to get member checks, but I kept checking in with the participants while collecting data. I would ask them during the interviews if my understanding of what they were saying was correct or not and fix things in my notes if they disagreed with what I understood.

3.5.2 Coding and generating themes

I used Dedoose as my coding software. Coding took longer than I anticipated. It took six months to code the data well enough to generate a careful and in-depth analysis.

In the first round of coding, I reviewed the transcriptions of all first interviews and highlighted everything I felt was important. Following the guidelines for open coding, I went through the data, line by line and attached codes. At this stage of open coding, researchers are advised to remain open to see what the data might be revealing. This is what I did. After the first interviews, I did the second and then the third respectively. A challenge that I faced throughout the coding process was realizing quite late that something that I should have highlighted right from the first interview of the first participant, I did not. Because of this I had to go back and restart the process multiple times.

Once I had the initial codes, I grouped them into themes. This was the second stage of coding called selective coding. At this stage, I also got rid of repetitive codes and combined them into umbrella codes or bigger codes that were indicative of an emerging coherent analysis. For the last step in the coding process, i.e. theoretical coding, I grouped themes according to my research questions. At this stage, I could clearly see how the data answered my research questions and what theory in terms of analysis was emerging.

3.6 Summary

This qualitative study delved into the perspectives of English teachers in Pakistan regarding English teaching. The research, grounded in interpretivism, employed in-depth interviews to uncover the factors influencing teachers' perceptions and identities. With four guiding questions, the study utilized grounded theory for data analysis, emphasizing categorization without the intention of building a specific theory. The researcher's insider status fostered rapport, balanced with efforts to prevent bias. The aim was to offer nuanced insights into English teachers' perspectives in Pakistan.

The data collection, spanning six months, involved interviews conducted over four months via Zoom. Recruitment occurred through a Facebook group for Pakistani teachers, yielding eighty-nine interested teachers. Twelve were selected through a Google form process, resulting in five final participants meeting criteria such as teaching middle or high school with over five years of experience and diverse backgrounds.

Following Seidman's three-round interview method, the questions progressively extracted direct information about participants' history, teaching experiences, and reflections. Member checks and note-taking during interviews contributed to trustworthiness. Transcription, initially done using Zoom and later refined with Microsoft 365, involved meticulous manual corrections through cross-referencing with video recordings.

In the data analysis process, triangulation from interviews and member checks were used to establish trustworthiness. The coding itself took about six months. The data analysis software, Dedoose, was used to assist with the organization and analysis. Initially, I conducted open coding by going through each transcription line by line, highlighting key content, and assigning preliminary codes. One of the challenges I faced was realizing some important points had been

missed, which meant starting the process several times. In the next phase, I used selective coding to group these initial codes into broader themes, removing any overlaps. Finally, theoretical coding was done to organize these themes in relation to the research questions, which allowed me to see connections and patterns that shaped emerging theory. Overall, the coding process was comprehensive and iterative, ensuring that no key insights were overlooked.

CHAPTER 4. PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Five schoolteachers participated in this study. All of them taught English to students in grades 7-12 in Karachi, the financial center of Pakistan. People move from all over Pakistan to Karachi to find better opportunities, making it a diverse city that inhabits people from all four provinces with different financial and cultural backgrounds. The five participants in this study were all quite different from each other in every aspect. The only common demographic factor among the participants was that they were all English teachers, and they were all females. Since all of them had different backgrounds (financial, social, and cultural), their perceptions towards learning and teaching English differed. The role their varied backgrounds played in shaping their perceptions and attitudes could clearly be seen in their thoughts and opinions.

This chapter presents each participant's profile individually. Understanding their backgrounds is crucial for interpreting the analysis, findings, and discussion. The chapter goes beyond educational qualifications and professional history, focusing also on their upbringing, family dynamics, and social context. In the sections that follow, I provide a detailed description of each participant, including not only their educational and professional trajectories but also the environments in which they grew up. Although the study primarily investigates the perceptions and beliefs of English teachers, it also considers the broader social and economic environments that have shaped these perceptions. Consequently, the social and economic class of each participant is discussed. In Pakistan, where the government does not officially define social and economic classes (En et al., 2022), these categories are defined on the basis of a person’s income and financial background rather than their educational level. Throughout this study, the terms

"social class" and "economic class" are used interchangeably to reflect the social stratification in Pakistan's society.

4.1 Umber

My first participant was a single female in her mid to late twenties from a lower middle class Urdu speaking family in Karachi. She was an only child and grew up mostly playing by herself and with her parents. At the time I interviewed her, she had been a teacher for seven years. She received a Masters in International Relations from the largest public university in Karachi. Although she did not possess a degree in English or teaching English, she was appointed as an English teacher on the basis of her spoken fluency. She started as an English teacher at a neighborhood school which followed the matric system curriculum. After a few years, she switched to teaching in an O level school system. Throughout her teaching career, she had mainly been an English teacher but had also taught Geography and History. She loved teaching and became a teacher by personal choice. She recalled pretend-play with dolls as a child where she used to play the teacher and tried to teach her dolls whatever she learned at school. As she was an only child, she remembers playing by herself as a child.

She mentioned being fond of English movies and reading very early on. Her parents paid a great attention to her education and part of that meant they wanted her to learn English really well. She recalled watching English movies with her father while growing up. Both her parents were college graduates and deemed education to be indispensable. Both of them composed poetry and Umber inherited the art of composition from them with a few differences. Both her parents wrote poetry in Urdu, but Umber composed essays, not poetry, in English, not in Urdu. She stated that she was more comfortable expressing herself in English than in Urdu. Ever since she was little, her mother used to read stories and poetry to her in English. She recalled:

> I remember even when I had not started going to school my mother would buy story books and poem books for the kids. And meanwhile, I was playing she would read those poems again and again and again and again, and I, along with playing, would listen to those poems.

Her parents wanted to make her independent and in their mind being independent meant being really good at English, so they made special efforts to make sure she learned it. They sent her to a school that was expensive for them to afford but since it offered English immersion, they disregarded financial discomfort and sent her there anyway.

> When I was young, we were from the lower middle class, and my father had this feeling that nothing else matters, except for education. So, I was very young, like when we were enrolling in school, the fee structure was very high. And since we were lower middle class my parents couldn't afford it, but my father was adamant that education is a must, so we should move for that. So, it was way out of our league but still thank God they enrolled me in that, and after some time . . . it was all good, all fine . . . they had to make me extraordinary.

Interestingly, Umber mentioned that there came a time when her proficiency in Urdu got negatively affected by her constant effort to excel in English. She said that at one point in her teenage years, she, and her parents both realized that Umber conversed and engaged with English a lot more than Urdu in her everyday interactions. They realized that she watched TV in English, she hummed in English, she read books in English. At this point, her mother began to ask her to read Urdu news bulletin headlines on TV out loud to her in an attempt to ‘improve her Urdu’ but according to Umber “it was too late then”. By this time, she had become so comfortable with English as her linguistic medium of choice that she even began to think in English. She said that

usually “people think in Urdu, some people think in English, I shout in English, I write in English, even if I am writing in my journal, which I do sometimes randomly or sometimes regularly to cope with my thought process I write in English."

Consequently, it makes sense that she ended up becoming an English teacher. She said she enjoyed teaching English and felt that English as a discipline has a lot of room for creativity as compared to any other discipline.

4.2 Zaynab

My second participant was a single female in her early twenties also from a lower middle-class family in Karachi. She was the eldest among three siblings. She had a bachelors in English linguistics and was pursuing a masters in the same, at the time I interviewed her. Both her parents had college degrees. She thought her mother played an important role in developing her reading and writing skills in English. At home, she was exposed to both languages, Urdu and English simultaneously. The family had ties with Punjab (another province in Pakistan) but did not speak Punjabi. As a child, she attended a school that was not too expensive, but they had a no-Urdu policy. Students were penalized if they spoke in Urdu. She claimed her spoken fluency to be an outcome of the efforts her mother made and then her school. Describing her school’s English-only policy she said:

> We had some penalties as well. If you're not going to speak in English . . . this and that amount, you know, you would have to pay (a fine). So yeah, that was the scenario. I remember one of my class fellows, he was somebody who had a lot of difficulty when it came to speaking in English. So, I remember his fees, I mean, his voucher came, and all

> the penalty and the punishment, or what should I say . . . the extra money that he had to pay was more than the actual fee, because he did not speak in English.

Zaynab came from a family of educators. Her grandmother was a teacher. Her grandfather attended a boarding school run by the British before the partition of India-Pakistan and learned to speak fluently and write well in English. During the interviews, she recalled her grandfather as one of her greatest mentors who instilled a love for learning in her.

> He was an inspiration, and he was a very good writer. I am an old school person. I still have his letters that he used to write to his grandfather and what he would do is when all of us would sit together like all of my cousins and we would sit together, he would tell us stories about independence. He would read out loud the letters that he, you know, he used to write and the letters that he had written. So, these small things. I believe that you know that playing a part, like, telling stories, narration, having that environment was very common, when it came to my grandfather but the teaching part, he did not, he did not influence me to be a teacher. But he influenced me to be somebody who enjoys learning. He was sort of a mentor, so maybe that came in, so I would say that I learned, and I was influenced to be a mentor like him. Like I'm a mentor to my students.

She became a teacher by choice too, although her father wanted her to become a doctor. She felt like as an English teacher, she can do new things every day and that aligned with her desire to keep learning.

4.3 Sidra

Sidra was a married woman in her middle to late forties who had taught at multiple schools in Karachi. She had 22 years of teaching experience, most of which had been at a few

famous Christian-community established schools. Although she had a masters degree in English literature, she didn't get into teaching because of her academic background but because teaching was considered to be the only socially acceptable profession for women back then. She mentioned when she was younger, teaching was the only profession women were allowed to go into and that's why she ended up choosing it. She came from a Christian family. Even though Pakistan is still predominantly an Urdu speaking country, the primary language of the Christian community is English. Sidra mentioned that she felt the need to learn English once she started going to the Church and realized she could not communicate with the other members of the community because she was not fluent at that time.

She was the eldest among five siblings. They spoke Urdu at home and Sidra claimed to have grown up with a love and pride for Urdu. She recalled her father encouraged her to watch the BBC and read the newspaper in English. Although himself a mechanic, he realized the importance of education and encouraged his children to read in both Urdu and English. Sidra also came from lower middle class and alluded to her father's hard work as one of the reasons she felt it imperative to excel at studies, she said:

> My father was a motor mechanic by profession. So, we weren't coming from a very good family as such, it was just middle class, I would say. Although you know he was able to provide for us and all, but then his work was really difficult, so my mother always encouraged us, and she always told us how hard our father works. So, I think as an eldest, also it stayed with me and I, I was more sensitive to what my father was doing, so I knew that they were spending a lot of money on us, are paying our fees and all and you know I need to study, that's what I'm being sent to school for.

However, to her excelling at school did not only mean excelling at English. She said initially she felt the need to be good at English because she felt left out at the Church. Later, her love for reading helped her become more fluent. She developed a love for reading because of her father's encouragement to read the newspaper. She said initially she found reading in English very difficult but as time went on, she improved. She mentioned her school's library and recalled borrowing famous English children's book series like Enid Blyton and Nancy Drew to read more and more, which she thought helped her improve English.

4.4 Bisma

Bisma came from a lower middle-class family in Karachi. She was a single, female, in her mid to late twenties. She had a degree in Pharmacy, but she taught English at a middle tier English-medium school. She grew up in a predominantly Urdu-speaking household with three other siblings. Both her parents were college graduates. She shared some painful experiences from her childhood that prompted her to make an effort and learn to speak in English. A few of her family members had moved abroad and looked down on the rest of the family. They felt superior because they lived in the West and were fluent in English. Bisma started learning English as a child because of her father's insistence. Her father encouraged her and the other children to learn English and be good at it. Bisma initially felt uncomfortable with her father's insistence, but as she grew older, she was able to clearly see how people are treated differently on the basis of whether or not they could speak in English. In her words:

> People value other people when they speak in English. You know you have another level of integrity you may get from different people, relatives, teachers or at work. You have a special respect, [you are in a] special pool when you speak in English.

It is worth mentioning that Bisma's father had been in the armed forces. In Pakistan, members of the armed forces are trained to be fluent in English, especially in higher ranks (Rahman, 20025). Although a low-ranking officer, Bisma's father was probably influenced by the culture of the armed forces. Bisma's great-grandfather was also in the army, because of which, she said, her grandmother was quite progressive for a woman her age and encouraged her grandchildren to speak in English. Bisma also mentioned that her mother played an important role in how she learned English. She shared that while her mother couldn't speak in English herself, she understood the importance of learning it. While discussing how her mother was aware of the significance of learning English, Bisma specifically recalled an event where her mother took her and her siblings to the market to buy them some books. When they got there, she instructed her children to buy dictionaries. In Bisma's words:

> One of the incidents is that, like, we went to a shop, and we wanted to buy some books so she gave us a dictionary, purchased the dictionary for all of us, and she said that I will give you one word, and you need to search it out and give the meaning to me every day. So this is like one of the things that's very clicking for [me] that like she does not know fluent English, but she knows its value from the beginning

She grew up with parents who did not speak fluent English, but they were well aware of its status and encouraged their children to learn it.

4.5 Mahvish

Mahvish presented a very interesting contrast to the rest of the participants. She was a married woman in her late forties working at a very prestigious and expensive school in Karachi. She was the only one among the five participants who came from an affluent financial

background. She was raised by a single mother as her father had passed away when she was still very young. Mahvish's mother was an educator and had her own kindergarten school set up in her house. Mahvish grew up in a learned environment. She was also the only one who did her schooling from an elite O level school and also completed A level. After A level, she studied English literature for her bachelors and got a masters in Business Administration. She had been a teacher for more than 15 years, but she took a few breaks in between.

Mahvish never wanted to be a teacher consciously because she saw how hard her mother worked as a teacher. However, she thought she unconsciously had the desire to teach in her as she came from a family of educators. After she got married, teaching looked like the most suitable profession for her. She taught a variety of subjects including Business Studies but ended up progressing as an English teacher and making that her specialty. She mentioned that she always felt like she had a great command of the English language and credited her O and A level education for it.

> First thing was that I come from a family of educators. So, my mother, you know, she was like a Montessori teacher. She had her own Montessori. So that was like for, you know, that's like for the younger kids, like anywhere from, like, 2 1/2 to six years old. So, she trained as a Montessori teacher, like, you know, ages ago. And then she opened her own business. She opened her own Montessori. And she did that for a good, I think, 25 years before she thought that it's time to close it and retire. So, my aunts were both teachers and principals, right? So, I feel like it was in my blood or it was in my family, you know, unknowingly or subconsciously, I did have that teaching desire in me. Secondly, English language for me, because I can only teach English, I felt like I have a

very good base in English language. I did my own A level from Saint Joseph's Convent School.

To Mahvish, English was like her first language, and she felt very comfortable speaking and teaching it.

CHAPTER 5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS 1 & 2

The analysis and findings are organized around the research questions, with each question forming its own section where data is grouped into themes. To fully comprehend the analysis and findings, it is essential to first understand the education system in Pakistan and gain insight into the backgrounds of the participants. Therefore, readers are encouraged to refer back to Chapter 2, Section 2.5, and Chapter 4, as these sections provide crucial context to better interpret the analysis and findings.

5.1 RQ#1. How do English teachers in Pakistan feel about being English teachers?

The five teachers I interviewed, for the most part, took pride in being English teachers. They felt they were different from other teachers and that their discipline/subject is special. They thought that they were making a difference in society by teaching English. However, on the other hand, they felt frustrated too. According to the participants of this study, English teachers have to put up with additional challenges and pressures that teachers of other subjects don't have to deal with. Moreover, English teachers are expected to be perfect in all areas of English. All participants thought that they have to prove their English language skills constantly, even outside the classroom. Sidra said something that effectively conveys the complicated state of dilemma English teachers find themselves in:

> . . . as an English teacher again, you know, like there's a certain . . . there's . . . you always have to show that you know you are at a certain level, and you know, and you have to maintain that identity so much that. Like, even outside the classroom, I would always talk to my colleagues in English and sometimes, if the students heard me in Urdu and they

were like this, you know Urdu, you know, you can speak Urdu I said yes, I can, but you know, I don't want to.

In this section, the data has been organized in three main themes: i) sense of pride, ii) teaching English is fulfilling and, iii) teaching is challenging. The third theme is further broken down into four sub-themes. The section ends with a brief summary of the findings in this section.

5.1.1 Sense of Pride

The importance that the English language enjoys in Pakistan is known to all. Teachers teaching English are more important in schools than other teachers because having a strong English faculty is crucial to the reputation of any school. Umber proudly described English teachers as the “apple of the eyes of school administration." She said that being an English teacher has its perks and it’s rewarding. English teachers have “the upper hand” and other teachers are aware of it as well. Umber’s non-English-teacher colleagues believed English teachers were “the favorite ones."

Administrators know that their school is only going to be as famous and will have as much value as the quality of its English teachers. Educational institutions in Pakistan, especially at the school level, are often gauged on the basis of whether they provide an English immersion experience or not. Teachers of English know that they are important because of how important *English* (as a language) is in Pakistan. Therefore, even though teaching is not considered to be a sought-after profession, English teachers still enjoy great importance and feel good about being an English teacher even if they have a general sense of dissatisfaction with being a teacher.

In Mahvish’s friend circle, teaching was not considered an impressive line of work at all. However, when I asked Mahvish how she felt about being an English teacher, she said:

> . . . so [on a] personal level I feel very good because I feel like, you know, I'm teaching a very important subject. And whether I mean whether somebody is doing the matric system or the Cambridge system, it is important because I mean everything, higher education, everything is in English. So, I feel it's an important subject. So, I feel good about it. I feel like it's a, you know, something which cannot be done without . . .

The third participant Sidra echoed the same sentiment. In a long exchange of thoughts, she complained about the general lack of support for teachers in schools, but she thought that English teachers have "slightly better support" because, Sidra believed that English teachers are "important to any school." Continuing the same discussion, I asked Sidra what she thought would happen if English teachers just decided to quit. The question aimed to gauge the extent to which English teachers thought they are important, she said:

> It would be terrible. It would be terrible, you know, English is connected to all the subjects with a second language, English as a second language like. Imagine the Maths teachers also come running to us, that what you know, what are you people teaching? They cannot comprehend the question, two-line questions and they don't comprehend. So, imagine if all the teachers would stop teaching. It would be, I don't know, globally, if you're saying it would be a disaster . . . in Pakistan, we rely heavily on English and imagine if the English teachers, they just one day decided they're not going to teach. It's going to be a great, great loss.

The sense of pride that these teachers have largely comes from their perceptions about the English language and its importance in the world. As Mahwish said above, English is a subject "which cannot be done without," Zaynab believed that English teachers have a role far bigger than people realize. She emphasized that teachers have a central role in connecting people across

the world. Since English is the dominant language in international research and on a global level, it plays a central role in bringing people together. People from different countries can have a dialogue with each other if they know English. She further linked it with how students can only qualify for and accept highly esteemed scholarships and get international exposure if they know English. Therefore, as an English teacher, she thought her "teaching is significant".

Bisma expressed a similar sentiment and outright confessed that she felt "proud" of being an English teacher. Being an English teacher removed barriers in her life which in turn enabled her to remove the same barriers from the life of her students by educating them. She did not expand on what barriers she was referring to, but I assume she was referring to the barriers in the way of her excelling in the world. To her, teaching English is the "most significant thing" anyone could do for the young generation to help them excel and move forward in this world. It seemed like she connected English with confidence and felt that children growing up in Pakistan lack that confidence if they are not fluent in English. Not knowing English can cause "complications". She insisted that for Pakistanis to lead the world, learning English is of utmost importance, which makes English teachers very significant.

To conclude this section, I quote something Umber said which very vividly demonstrates the extent to which these English teachers believed in the significance of their role. She said having no English teachers would create,

> . . . a vacuum in the society, I believe, because every other subject teacher, they might be a subject specialist in their own subject . . . but you know, if the course book is in English, the planning is in English, everything is in English. Let's say that they are generating a question, that's fine, you understand the point, but it's all over the place. The grammar is all over the place. It's not making sense in English terms. The student

> wouldn't be able to figure out if it's right or wrong, they would be having the information, but they won't be having correct information, you know, like, if you choose a tense, it just changes everything like, let's say, for Science, if you're exchanging something, so it's going to change the end result. So, I think the knowledge factor would kind of decrease, although they would be getting enough information, appropriate amount of information like for the Maths, they would still be understanding Math, they would be understanding other subjects as well. But I don't think they would be understanding it to that level, because if there are no English teachers, obviously no one's teaching them English. No one is working on their English.

Umber's use of the word "vacuum" says it all. She thought without English teachers, students would not be able to succeed in schools as they would not understand their textbooks and would not know how to answer questions. To sum it up, if there were no English teachers, all other subjects would suffer. This testifies to the central place English teachers enjoy in the academic setup in Pakistan which is the basis of the feelings of pride reported by the participants of this study.

5.1.2 Teaching English is fulfilling

The participants of this study reported feelings of fulfillment on both, personal and professional levels. All of them expressed a certain satisfaction and happiness that they derive from teaching English and believed it to be exclusive to teaching. They thought they would not feel the same sense of satisfaction and happiness, had they been in some other profession. They felt like they were making a difference in students' lives and seeing their students do better, kept them from quitting.

These teachers made a distinction between teaching English and teaching in general. They thought that teaching English is more fulfilling than any other subject because of the nature of the English language. English gave them an opportunity to explore a wide range of topics with their students and be creative and imaginative in the classroom. Being English teachers, they did not feel stuck in a classroom doing the same things year after year because with language they felt they could change the techniques and apply new ideas any way they liked. Moreover, listening to what students had to say, opened their own minds (teachers' minds) as well. Umber enjoyed teaching generally, and teaching English particularly, because of her love for listening to other people's point of views. She said that teaching English is unique in a way that it combines a lot of information from different subjects within its realm. She liked the fact that as an English teacher, she was able to talk about morals and ethics in an interesting way. To her, teaching English was not just "giving knowledge", it was "gaining knowledge" as well.

This aspect of teaching English allows teachers to develop a rapport with their students. Many times, that is what makes English teachers fall in love with teaching as in Mahvish's case. Teaching was not her first choice for a profession but as she started teaching English, she liked the feeling of disseminating knowledge. She liked relating to the students' experiences and hearing their thoughts and ideas. According to her, teaching language allows for discussions that help English teachers develop a certain rapport with the students. Teachers of other subjects cannot do that. She stated:

> I feel good in the other sense, and I feel like I can make, I can bond with my students better. I can get to know their beliefs, their values, their, you know their side of life because of the subject I'm teaching. Maybe if I wasn't teaching this subject, I wouldn't have, you know, gotten to know that.

Zaynab echoed the same sentiment. She said that teaching English gave her an opportunity to experience students' creativity firsthand. Students often surpassed her expectations and made her question the extent of her knowledge.

> I think the one thing that excites me and that makes me question even myself some, most of the time, is how innovative, creative and how good students sometimes are with the, you know, language. And they, I mean, it's and they're fearless also at the same time when they are creating something and when they're writing something or when they're speaking about . . . so that is something which has been, which has made me excited all along.

In a similar vein, Sidra said that teaching English gave her a "window" into her students' thoughts. The interactions that being an English teacher allowed her to have with her students opened her mind and broadened her perspective. Teaching English made these teachers want to learn more. According to Bisma, the only way you could stand out as an English teacher is if you kept "work(ing) on yourself." Due to the nature of teaching language as a subject, English teachers have to possess knowledge of many different disciplines to be able to teach effectively (Douglas Fir Group, 2016). Zaynab felt that English teachers need to be a jack of all trades. They need to know "sociology . . . psychology . . . politics" - all of it because teaching English is not just about "vocabulary or phrases but it's multidisciplinary". According to her, language is a subject "without any boundary."

These teachers also shared how teaching English necessitates staying informed about recent trends and ideas. They believed that in order to be relevant and stir students' interest, they need to keep up with pop culture, movies, and trending things on social media. All of this makes teaching English dynamic and keeps the life-long learner in them satiated.

5.1.3 Teaching English is challenging

While teaching English is fulfilling, the participants of this study reported it being quite challenging as well. They felt that English teachers are scrutinized more than other teachers. The expectations for them are unrealistic and they are often assigned additional tasks that should not be solely their responsibility. All of this results in English teachers having more workload than other teachers. The following paragraphs describe each of these challenges in detail.

5.1.3.1 Intense scrutiny

As per the participants, English teaching is as challenging as it is rewarding. It is rewarding in terms of personal satisfaction and a sense of pride and achievement; however, since English is considered as the most important subject in schools (followed by Math and Science), English teachers are subjected to more scrutiny than other teachers. What makes this worse is that this scrutiny isn't limited to the school leadership keeping a close eye on English teachers and what they are doing, but everyone, including co-teachers and parents of the students. When it comes to an English teacher's performance, even students notice whether a teacher is perfect in terms of her knowledge of the language or not. This puts English teachers in a lot of stress, and they feel like there is no room for mistakes for them or there's no room for them to be imperfect. In Sidra's words:

> [The] English teacher is always under scrutiny. English teachers are always under scrutiny for every little thing. If the child has not written a letter well, the English teachers are at fault. Means like if the child is not good at spelling, the English teachers are at fault, means they are not saying that there are other subjects also which are all in

> English. Why are those teachers not making the changes? Why are they not doing the correction?

Bisma echoed the same thought that English teachers are expected to single-handedly make students fluent speakers and competent writers. She stated:

> . . . [the] administration, they want all, like from the [English] teachers you know . . . teachers are responsible enough to do this, but as far as my concern, everybody is responsible, and everybody should take this responsibility . . .

As stated previously, this criticism and scrutiny does not come from within the school only. The parent community also is very hard on English teachers. Umber talked at length about how many parents were only interested in meeting the English teachers when they came to parent-teacher conferences. She said that many times parents didn't even know which class or section their children were in but they "want(ed) to meet the English teacher, even if they are satisfied or they have any concerns or anything, they just want(ed) to meet the English teacher." A single mistake by an English teacher, no matter how small, stirred the parent community into action. This is true across the board but more intense in schools that have a higher fee structure. For example, Mahvish taught in a very expensive school in Karachi. She discussed how the parents had WhatsApp groups where they talked about issues they had with their children's teachers. She said even the minutest of mistakes enraged parents and they criticized the teacher who made the mistake mercilessly in these groups.

These attitudes combined put teachers in a constant state of stress and made them feel like they had to be on their toes all the time. Teaching is a challenging job because of the

immense accountability factor attached to it. This accountability is increased manifold for English teachers who are scrutinized constantly and are never able to rest.

5.1.3.2 Unrealistic expectations

Closely tied to the previous point, the participants of this study reported feeling incredible pressure being English teachers. They felt like they had to constantly try to fulfill the expectations of everyone around them because of the English teacher label they carried. They were expected to have a vast vocabulary, a native speaker "accent" and perfect grammar. These expectations didn't only come from people connected to the school they taught at, but from everyone including friends, family and even strangers. Umber mentioned:

> I don't know why people, not only the teachers but everyone around me, think, if you're an English teacher, you would know the entire dictionary. Well, okay, I understand that English teachers specifically do have good vocabulary or advanced vocabulary, [but it] doesn't mean they know every single word like this is something people believe that an English teacher should know or must know every single word's meaning.

English teachers were not only expected to know everything, but it was also expected of them to teach in a way that all their students became perfect in all aspects of English language. The general expectation was that their students must score 100 percent marks on English exams - if not, English teachers were blamed. This pressure to make sure students attained high marks in English exams mostly came from the parents. Sidra expressed frustration at this, sharing how unreasonable parents got when they held English teachers responsible for making their children fluent English speakers. In her opinion, the administration was not as "concerned" as the parents.

The parents could not be reasoned with since they thought they sent their children to “English medium schools” and paid a high fee so their children could acquire fluency in English. Sidra expressed disappointment in the mindset many of these parents had; they thought “school is a place to improve fluency” and refused to consider their child’s performance in other subjects, the whole academic picture. She believed that it was these unrealistic expectations that put a lot of pressure on the teachers.

Most teachers saw this pressure from the parents as quite absurd. As English teachers, they understood that language cannot be mastered overnight. As teachers, they also understood that not all students would make the same progress in all subjects. The fact that parents did not understand this was often frustrating for them. Umber said:

> . . . there are some cases where the child was very good in Math and they were like, yes, he's good in Math, but we want him to be better in English. Okay, we understand, but that child is [inaudible], so I would say stop prioritizing English so much, stop focusing only on English or other subjects as well, and let us. I will say that to the parents, and let English teachers breathe.

At another point, Sidra mentioned that the expectation to be perfect in speaking, writing, and teaching English did not only come from the school administration, parents, and the students but also from friends and acquaintances. She informed that even though people were “impressed” with her because she was an English teacher, she never had the luxury to make mistakes, even when she was interacting with someone on an informal, casual medium like Facebook:

> . . . people are highly impressed when they get to know that I'm teaching English and they are very impressed that I'm teaching all levels or I'm teaching grade 10s and 11s and

> there's a lot of expectation from me like I am not a good writer, but still, you know, people think that since I'm an . . . you know, I am a very good writer and I can write like if you ask me to write something . . . on Facebook wall, I can't, it's so difficult. Like, there's a lot of pressure. Like, even if I have to write something to anyone on Facebook, or even if I have to message, I'm constantly, you know, checking again and again through reading.

In the same vein, Zaynab felt that English teachers are considered as a kind of "brand" in themselves and are expected to live up to the numerous labels of expectations they are assigned. These expectations include being "open and comfortable" to not only read but decipher any academic texts, whether or not she had any background knowledge about those texts. They were expected to be open and comfortable to do any tasks that involve the English language.

Due to these expectations, which teachers often find unreasonable and very difficult to live up to, they considered switching to other subjects. Umber, at one point, considered switching to teaching another subject. She thought doing so would give her a break from the never-ending pressures of teaching English. She decided to make a switch from being an English teacher to a History or Geography teacher, as she also had an academic background in History. However, even when she would clearly state on her CV that she was looking for a History or Geography position, schools would get back to her asking her to teach English. Umber believed that there is always a need for English teachers, so anyone who has taught English once gets stuck with English teaching only. English teachers tend to quit their jobs more than other teachers because of excessive workload and unrealistic expectations. However, when they apply to other schools, they are considered for English teaching positions only. This way, they find themselves in a loop they cannot get out of.

5.1.3.3 Additional responsibilities

As English is the main focus of every school, English teachers have many additional responsibilities that other teachers do not have. English teachers are expected to help students prepare for morning assembly presentations. They have the responsibility to prepare students for school events and train them for dramas, plays and skits. Generally, in Pakistan, schools that offer a fully English immersion experience make a lot of effort to organize events like debate competitions, spelling competitions, dramas, and skits. These activities and events are mostly in English since that gives the parents the impression that their children are learning English. Schools do this (usually) to keep the parent community happy. This puts a lot of extra burden on the English faculty. Sidra discussed this in detail while talking about her workload. She said:

> . . . other than academics, there are different competitions that keep happening in [schools] debates, competitions and story writing, creative writing. So, I think, I would say, language teachers, both English language and Urdu language, we both suffer a lot because whenever there are any kind of competitions and we have to cater to the students, we have to select the students. We have to prepare them and most of the time we even have to escort them to the relevant, you know, places where the competitions are held. Apart from this, we are also responsible for having our own internal competitions. Then you know, even when we have, like farewell or bonfire, or any events in school. The language teachers, not only English teachers. But in this case, the English teachers are, you know, always asked to be, you know, to help with the compering and all. And also these are some additional responsibilities that the English teachers especially have to bear and not the other teachers. Like even though the other teachers might be fluent in

> English, but just because we are English teachers, we have to, we are responsible for all this.

While Sidra thought that, with a few exceptions, it's the language teachers who are thrown under the bus every time there is an event within or outside the school, Umber did not think the same. She thought that other teachers did not have to do the same amount of work. She believed that if teachers of other subjects (including Urdu) were asked to organize one or two activities, English teachers were required to plan twice as many because the parents were always more concerned about how many opportunities their children were getting to practice English.

As if it were not enough that English teachers were expected to take a lead on most extracurricular activities, English teachers were often asked to do things that were not related to their job. Zaynab shared that she was often asked by the administration to design pamphlets or prepare marketing materials which was not part of her job. She complained that instead of hiring people for special roles like content writing or graphic designing, school administrators demanded English teachers to do all of that.

Zaynab went on to explain that the additional work English teachers were expected to do that did not fall into the scope of their job, did not not feel challenging because they (English teachers) were not paid more for this work, but she said that it felt challenging because it put them in a lot of mental (psychological) pressure. Her words below convey the frustration clearly:

> I do not see any boundar[ies] and you know. I always feel it's not about the money all the time, it's about the mental pressure also that you're supposed to fill in those gaps as the organization you know itself has, and you know they're saving their money. They're saving their time. They're saving their resources.

To sum up, English teachers were made to do additional work that was not part of their job description, something teachers of other subjects did not have to face. As an English teacher, as shared by the participants of this study, there was hardly ever any downtime. To compound the problem, they were not only expected to do additional work, but they were also expected to do all this work perfectly – which contributed to English teachers' feeling frustrated and eventually burnt out.

5.1.3.4 The nature of the English curriculum results in a heavier workload for English teachers

In Pakistan, the English curriculum is usually taught in two separate chunks. English Language and English Literature. These are treated as two separate subjects and have separate sessions. Additionally, in many schools, the English language is broken down further and branches into composition, comprehension, and language. An English teacher has to prepare for her language and literature sessions separately. This makes the job very time consuming for her. Considering that the average classroom size in English medium schools in Pakistan is 25-30 students, every time the school wants to introduce something new in the classroom - like a new technology or practice - it doubles the workload for an English teacher. Sidra shared her experience when everything had to be done digitally during COVID. She shared that teachers were threatened with salary deduction if they were unable to meet their deadlines with online lesson delivery. They were asked to record their lessons and post them on an online platform. She said that as an English teacher, the pressure was double for them because due to the nature of their subject, they simply had to work twice as much:

Sidra: . . . and I'm someone who always meets deadlines, considered to be a very good teacher, and considered to be an asset and whatever. Blah blah blah. That's what they always claimed. And when I wanted to approach the principal in this regard to tell her that this is something which I was not aware of, they were like we sent the notice that we're going to deduct salary. So I was like, you know, this is you should have allowed me. I already told my head that there is a problem in the family because of which, I will try my best to send them. I did send them some videos but couldn't send them all the videos and then they never reverted the money also. Although I sent them the videos and this was the pressure for us for two years that if we would not submit our recording, they are going to deduct our salary.

Interviewer: Sidra, were English teachers pressurized more than others in any way?

Sidra: No, the pressure was on everyone, but the problem was that not everybody was . . . everybody had the same number of classes.

Interviewer: So English teachers have more workload.

Sidra: They have, I wouldn't say I'm like, I think language teachers, even the Urdu teachers. We have, we have a lot of work like see, we have like two subjects, language and literature and you see literature is very time consuming. There's a lot of preparation that goes into literature, so you are going to the whole syllabus like even before the students have stepped in, you don't know about the class. You don't know how they're going. Just like you know, sitting in front of the monitor. Just recording, just going in a mechanical way. So, it was. So difficult without any interaction to speak for 40 to 45 minutes. Was quite tough and before the term ended, you know, like we were, we were relieved. At least we won't have to record classes.

Mahvish, who otherwise reported enjoying teaching English, also complained about the "sheer" number of students she had in her classes. She explained that being an English teacher, she was required to give students detailed feedback on their work which made her job quite challenging. Since the nature of language classes is such that students are often made to write long essays in creative writing sessions, it is very time consuming and cognitively demanding to read everything and provide feedback. In the excerpt below, Mahvish explains how challenging that is.

> . . . so basically, I'm an English language and literature teacher . . . and my primary responsibility is that I have to take classes in language and literature and handle like five sections. There are about 25 students each, so they are very big numbers that I'm handling . . . so it's quite challenging. And you know, there's a lot of [inaudible] apart from lessons, a lot of corrections and assignments and assessments and feedback and, so there there's a lot of work and also my tasks are not only to take, you know, good lessons with the students, but also to, you know, collect their work, mark them, and give them feedback. So that's quite a task because it works out to 125 students, and to give them quality, you know, feedback, corrections and making sure that everybody knows where they stand . . .

Excessive workload makes it difficult for teachers like Mahvish and Sidra who want to make sure they are doing their job as effectively as possible. These teachers are left with the feeling that they are not doing enough. If they try to work with the quality they want to uphold, it burns them out.

5.1.4 Conclusion: How do English teachers in Pakistan feel about being English teachers?

Participants of this study felt pride in their work. They felt teaching English fulfills them because of how it allows them to be creative and develop a rapport with the students. However, at the same time, they reported finding it challenging to teach English. The intense scrutiny that English teachers face, unrealistic expectations and excessive workload, make teaching English challenging. English teachers are more at risk of burnout, but the salaries are not higher for them. In most schools, English teachers are paid the same as other teachers (The Labour Market for Teachers in Pakistan: Pay and Effectiveness, 2017). The schools where English teachers do receive higher salaries are usually high-paying schools that pay all their teachers well. Therefore, the little difference in salary that English teachers receive does not necessarily take into account their higher workload, leaving the English teachers feeling resentful and exhausted. These challenges and pressures take away from the joy of teaching and teachers find themselves struggling to maintain motivation and passion for the work they do.

5.2 RQ #2: What is their "English teacher" identity?

Identity is best defined as an amalgam of the perception of self and the perception of others about this self (Williams, 2013). Considering the fact that our perception of self is intertwined with the perception of others, it is safe to say that our identities are shaped by major events, things, and people around us (Stangor et al., 2014b). From the interviews, I gathered that the identity of these teachers as English teachers had been shaped by many different factors too. First and foremost, their experiences as members of the Pakistani community with certain widespread beliefs about English and English teaching seemed to have had the greatest influence. Following that, the circumstances, and conditions - financial, social and familial - they

grew up in had an impact on how they viewed themselves as English teachers. All five of them shared profound experiences as children learning English in Pakistan. These experiences did not necessarily begin in schools, but at their homes through interactions with parents and extended family. In this section, I explain how these five English teachers see their role as English teachers, that is, what is their identity as they feel and experience it - and as people around them perceive their identity to be.

The perception of identity of these five English teachers was significantly shaped by external factors such as the prestige of the school where they were employed and the level of recognition, they received both within and outside the school as English educators. In a nutshell, their identity might be encapsulated as, "I hold great significance, and without me, the education system, and consequently, society, would struggle to operate." These teachers felt that they were agents of change in society. They were the link between the Pakistani society and the outside world and without them, Pakistan would be isolated and cut off from the rest of the world.

They gave several examples throughout the interviews about the ways in which they contributed to connecting Pakistan to the West and of making it possible for the youth in Pakistan to excel in life. These teachers believed that if it weren't for English teachers, the people of Pakistan, especially the youth, would not be as present in the online world. It seemed that these teachers believed that without them, the Pakistani people would lack awareness, which in turn, would result in fewer opportunities in life.

While talking about how she felt about her role in society, Zaynab gave the example of Queen Elizabeth's passing and how Pakistani youth participated in discussions online and how they were able to draw a line between propaganda and truth. She said if it weren't for English

teachers and the efforts they made, that would not have happened. Consider the short excerpt below:

> . . . raising consciousness amongst people is something which English language teachers or indirectly, if I may say, English language, does, right. You know . . . when Queen Elizabeth, she died. I don't think . . . that if English teachers would have not taught us well, you would be able to find out the truth, you wouldn't be able to find out how and what and when things happened, so yes, they were the initiators and inauguraters [sic] of this change that has happened. And I think they will continue doing it, and the changes that would be there in future as well. English language teachers would be people who, you know, will be providing the foundation of that.

The participants of this study appeared to perceive their identity in light of the difference they thought they made as English teachers in society. This aspect of their identity made them proud. However, they seemed to also perceive their identity in light of the challenges they faced as English teachers because of the never-ending expectations and assumptions of the people around them. These assumptions included ideas people had as to how English teachers are supposed to be.

There are several widespread perceptions as to how an English teacher should be. The English language is associated with modernism, westernization, and often non-religiosity (Haq & Smadi, 1996). Therefore, people expect English teachers to be a certain way. These expectations, as reported by the participants of this study, included perceptions about how she should look and dress. Zaynab’s comments about how an English teacher should be according to people were very profound and revealed a lot about how the Pakistani society associated fluency in English

with being Westernized in every way. Zaynab, who wore a hijab (head covering) herself, shared that people expected an English teacher to not wear a hijab. She was supposed to be very pretty and have a native-speaker accent. Additionally, as typical of Pakistani society and its obsession with a fair complexion, an English teacher was supposed to be fair. In a nutshell, according to Zaynab, an English teacher was expected to be "modern, if not Western." She further added that it was not just the English teacher herself that people had preconceived notions about, they also had ideas about how the family of an English teacher should be. Their assumptions were not limited to the profession itself but also about the family dynamics of the English teacher. Zaynab believed that people judged her parents as well because of how simple she was. They expected her to be "fashionable" and were surprised to see that she was not.

This assumption that people who are fluent in English are Westernized is also linked to a lack of expertise in Urdu. As Umber explained, it was generally assumed that people who teach English or speak in English fluently did not know "proper Urdu". It was as if expertise in one language guaranteed a weakness in the other. Umber contested this idea and asserted that she knew many people who were equally fluent in Urdu and English. According to her, excelling in English did not mean that "you would be terrible in Urdu." She complained that she had to suffer because of this assumption in her social circle despite it being completely wrong.

In addition to people in general, co-workers assumed that English teachers were smarter and more creative. Umber shared that her colleagues often said that "English people are more creative. So, whenever we're having discussions [they say] . . . you guys are the creative ones, you know, you guys should answer first." English teachers were believed to be "more creative" and they were supposed to "know the entire dictionary" (Umber, Interview 3). Umber agreed that language teachers needed to display a vast vocabulary but at the same time thought that the

expectation that they should know every single word was quite frustrating. When I asked Umber if the expectations were the same outside of work, she answered in the affirmative that even in her friend circle, it was assumed that she would know every word and be willing to help her friends with their assignments. Umber complained that people did not realize that English teachers are not supposed to know technical jargon from other disciplines. She wanted her friends, and by extension, everyone, to understand that "she is an English teacher and not a thesaurus."

In the same vein, Sidra made a connection between people's expectation that English teachers must know all words and the assumption that English teachers must only be good in English (and not Urdu). She used the word "identity" specifically without being prompted to explain how it is a part of the English teacher's identity to speak in English only. She said:

> . . . as an English teacher again, you know, like there's a certain, there's always, [you] have to show that you are at a certain level, and you know, and you have to maintain that identity so much, even, even outside the classroom, I would always, I always talk to my colleagues in English and sometimes, if the students heard me in Urdu and they were like, oh you know Urdu, you can speak Urdu I said yes I can, but you know, I don't want to.

5.2.1 Conclusion: What is their 'English teacher' identity?

To conclude, the data indicated that the identity of the five participants was a complex mix of their own thoughts, perceptions and experiences and the expectations and perceptions of people around them. There were aspects of their identities that these five teachers seemed to take pride in; but on the other hand, there were aspects that they felt were imposed as labels on their

identities by people who did not understand what it took to be an English teacher. These teachers found themselves to be in two alternative states of mind when it came to their identity: one of pride, where they experienced feelings of being indispensable; the other of dilemma trying to live up to the labels and expectations other people have put on them as part of their identities.

The identity of these English teachers seemed to be a nuanced blend of personal experiences, perceptions, and external expectations. While they took pride in their role as indispensable contributors to society, they grappled with the labels and expectations imposed on them by those who may not fully comprehend the complexities of being an English teacher. This dual state of mind reflected a constant negotiation between feelings of pride and the challenges associated with societal expectations.

CHAPTER 6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS 3 & 4

6.1 RQ#3: What are their perceptions and beliefs about English as a language, the status of English in Pakistan and teaching as a profession?

The terms attitudes, beliefs and perceptions are used interchangeably in scholarly literature on teacher education (Garrett, 2010). Pajares (1992) asserted that beliefs are referred to and denoted by many different terms, including opinions and perceptions. Beliefs and perceptions dictate human behavior which makes them significant to be studied and understood. In this section, the perceptions, and beliefs of the participants of this study with respect to English as a language, the status of English teaching in Pakistan and teaching as a profession have been consolidated. The five teachers interviewed in this study had an interesting range of thoughts and perceptions about the teaching of English. While there were nuanced differences in their perceptions and thoughts,the similarities were more pronounced. This section is divided into eight subsections that discuss a different set of beliefs and perceptions. Albeit presented as separate subsections, themes discussed in them intersect and build on each other.

6.1.1 Obsession with English is justified

There is an obsession with the English language in Pakistan. English teachers are aware of this since the pressure they feel at school(s) from administrators and parents originates from that obsession. One would think that teachers would be against it, however, quite interestingly, these teachers seemed to believe that the obsession is justified - although they believed so for different reasons. One of the reasons was their understanding that without English, students cannot succeed in the Cambridge system of education. Mahvish, in particular, stressed this point.

To her, the Cambridge system of education was superior (explained in detail in the last section of this chapter). She was convinced that the only way to succeed in the Cambridge international exams is by being obsessed with English. In her opinion, the alternative to this obsession would be to go for the matric system of education which, according to her, was "failing in standard (quality) literally everyday" leaving people no choice but to "put their kids in the O level (Cambridge) system. And when they put their kids in that system, everything is in English and you have to be obsessed with English, I feel. So I don't think it's a wrong thing. It's something which is a requirement of the system."

The basis of this perception could be traced to Mahvish's financial, social, and professional background. As someone who attended a Cambridge system school and taught at Cambridge system schools, it is understandable that she felt that the English language "cannot be done without." However, the other four teachers who had not attended Cambridge system schools as students and came from a social background different from Mahvish echoed the same thoughts, though citing different reasons. The other four teachers felt this obsession was justified because they realized how the education system of Pakistan is dependent on English. With exponential growth in English medium schools that use books written in the English language, teachers are required to deliver their lessons in English. Therefore, if the obsession with English is curbed somehow, education in Pakistan will see a decline. I gathered this from the way these teachers expressed concern at the idea of English teachers failing to do their job well.

Reflecting on why and how English became so important in Pakistan, Umber explained that she thinks it was all because of how the British structured our system when Pakistan was a British colony. She seemed to think that when Pakistan came into being, "people were not that

obsessed with English because they focused more on, you know, improving Pakistan" - but as time went by, she said,

> I don't know what happened in between that, I think people just got really impressed or obsessed or influenced with [the] foreign language, with English. Or maybe it was something that the British, when they were ruling, they anglicized every single thing, so that left something on the minds of the people, our forefathers, our predecessors, that you know, and the rulers over the general public, they anglicized everything they made English the ultimate goal, that if you want to be a [public] servant or anything . . . If you want to become a civil servant, you have to, you know, . . . have to know English or prepare for exams, so that set up the bar, and I think subconsciously that was transferred. I think, mainly because, no matter how much it is changing, no matter how many different politicians we are having, some still try to work for government schools, or setting up the education system, or improving the education system, but we cannot see any improvement, because it all again depends on the parents.

She thought that the obsession initially was a result of colonialism but in the present, it's because of what the parents want, who pay the fees and keep schools in business. An overwhelming majority of parents are only focused on English. Umber felt that "most of the parents just force their kids to just speak English, no matter like, you know, like their obsession with their English-speaking child."

In Pakistani society, much like in many other developing countries, English is associated with intellect and literacy. During the interviews for this study, all five participants/ teachers made this association. However, the intensity and type of this association varied according to the

individual circumstances in which each of these teachers grew up. For example, Bisma grew up in an environment where English was taken as a very expensive, not-easy-to-acquire skill. She believed that “the people who speak English, their level of thinking gets changed”. She went on to say that this change in thought process (which she referred to as “level of thinking”) could clearly be seen on news channels and talk shows between people who speak in English and those who do not. Deeming the ability to speak in English as literacy is what sits at the heart of this obsession with English. The depth and intensity of this connection is hinted at throughout this study.

6.1.2 English opens doors to the rest of the world

Learning English is the key to all the doors that connect Pakistan to the rest of the world. The participants of this study repeated this idea numerous times. They believed in this so much that, to them, the biggest significance of learning English is that it allows people to engage in interactions with the world outside of Pakistan. This was also one of the reasons why they thought their jobs were important.

Bisma believed that her job was very important because what she was doing for her students (and by extension for Pakistan) was crucial to her students’ success and the country’s growth. By teaching English, she was helping her students “meet the criteria of the rest of the world." She thought of her work as a service essential to draw children out of their comfort zone and push them to speak in English without feeling the guilt of mindlessly following the West. It appeared that due to her personal experiences as a child, of being mocked and ridiculed by extended family members, she repeatedly clarified how speaking in English is not about imitating the Western culture. To her, it was “not about the [other] countries, it is basically how

confident you are . . . to get [to] that position where people are leading the world. So this is not a big task. Everyone can easily learn and get knowledge about this language."

Bisma also continually spoke about “removing barriers” and believed that not knowing English is a barrier that stopped people from getting ahead in the world. She talked at length about how not knowing English stands in the way of upward mobility in one’s own country as well as in the international context. She emphasized the connection between gaining confidence as English speakers and the opportunity to become leaders in the world and time and again repeated the necessity for Pakistanis to go abroad to travel or for education. To Bisma, the only way to achieve this was by mastering the English language.

The idea that English opens doors isn’t restricted to physical doors; participants also talked about how being fluent in English enabled people to interact with others in the online world. According to Bisma and Zaynab, if people in Pakistan didn’t know English, they would not be able to take an active part in cultural, political, and intellectual conversations on the internet. Zaynab argued that if people did not know English, they would stay in the dark and would not be able to find out the truth about international events. She gave the example of Queen Elizabeth’s passing and explained in detail how English enabled the youth of Pakistan to actively participate in discussions about it and contest the narrative being pushed by the West. She said:

> . . . when Queen Elizabeth . . . died . . . since all of us are now using social media and we are one click away to find out the facts and figures . . . I don't think that if English teachers would have not taught us well, [we] would be able to find out the truth. You wouldn't be able to find out how and what things happened. So yes, they were the initiators and inaugurates of this change that has happened. And I think they will continue

> doing it. And the changes that would be there in future as well. English language teachers would be people who are, you know, providing the foundation of that.

Zaynab also believed that learning English helped people actualize their "big dreams" of traveling and experiencing what is out there in the world. She thought that her role as an English teacher was important because it allowed her to help students make those dreams a reality. The short excerpt below lays this out clearly:

> I know that a student who has big dreams and who wants to travel the world, who wants to see what is out there and you know if I'm somebody who's teaching him at a very basic level, from preprimary to you know his O level or his matriculation -then I'm somebody who's very significant and my role is very, very much impactful, you know, for his future, for his future. So, with respect to that and in my own personal capacity as well, I would believe that my role is very significant.

Zaynab further said that English teachers "directly or in the longer run open[] windows and [] opportunities" for their students. Umber echoed a similar sentiment by citing a call center that expressed willingness to offer three times the salary to individuals proficient in English for handling calls from international customers, in contrast to those who could only respond in Urdu. She mentioned an advertisement that she saw on Facebook by a call center that was offering "domestic workers, like people who catered to domestic calls, as in, in Urdu" about 25 thousand Pakistani rupees, whereas people who were able to speak in English and cater to international customers were being offered upwards of 80 thousand Pakistani rupees. Umber pointed out the difference emphasizing that removing English from the equation completely changed everything. She thought that naturally people want to be able to earn better - which leaves them no option but to learn English.

Mahvish compared India and Pakistan, and deemed the success India has made in the international landscape as a result of how the country had made an effort to help its people become well versed in the English language. She thought that India is “progressive” and successful in the field of information technology because they “speak good English." Her exact words from the conversation are as follows:

> . . . they couldn't have done that IT progression without English. You think they do it in Hindi, they don't and then all the call centers of the world literally are based in India because they know, they speak good English and you know the, the call centers like all over the world [are] in India, you know they're being run over there and they have like lots of employees, lots and lots of people with very good English, OK, like [they] speak to international . . . clients all over the world.

To wrap up this subsection, I draw from the insights shared in the third interview with Sidra. She highlighted the challenges faced by individuals who lack proficiency in English, noting that despite their impressive qualifications, such as holding a doctorate, many struggle to progress in life. Sidra emphasized encountering numerous individuals aspiring to go abroad but facing obstacles due to their inability to pass the mandatory English language proficiency tests required for studying or relocating internationally. She remarked:

> . . . a lot of people don't get a chance or they struggle, for example, that if someone is really talented, right academically, and struggles in the language or doesn't know English maybe the opportunities would be very much restricted for that person, like we have a lot of people, you know, who plan to go abroad but I have seen so many people, you know, they're doing their M. Phil, they've done their Ph.D. and when they want to give, when they have to give IELTS they you know they say, we want to go to places where they

don't have IELTS, where they don't demand IELTS so they struggle in that so maybe for them the opportunities would be lost . . .

In conclusion, participants in the study strongly emphasized the pivotal role of learning English as a key to unlocking opportunities and connecting Pakistan to the global stage. This belief is grounded in the conviction that proficiency in English is not merely about imitating Western culture but is essential for engaging with the world, both physically and online. English is seen as a tool for breaking down barriers, fostering upward mobility, and participating in international conversations. The significance extends to economic opportunities, with examples cited of higher-paying jobs for English speakers. The narratives underscore how English proficiency is perceived as crucial for personal growth, national progress, and global competitiveness. Furthermore, the participants highlighted the challenges faced by those who lacked English proficiency, emphasizing its impact on opportunities for education, employment, and international mobility.

6.1.3 A switch in dominance from English to Urdu is not possible

One recurrent opinion in the interviews was that English was the dominant language of the Pakistani education system and would remain dominant for an unforeseen period of time. All five teachers agreed that a switch from English to Urdu was either not possible or not a good idea. They felt that way for different reasons though. Mahvish, very directly, said that we (as Pakistanis), cannot deny our “colonial roots” citing the fact that more and more higher education institutions are attempting to offer world class education to Pakistani students, exclusively in English. She believed it was “idealistic” of the former Prime Minister of Pakistan to want to

make Urdu as the superior language in Pakistan. The detailed excerpt below explains her thoughts fully:

> I mean, we can't deny our colonial roots. We are very much, you know, connected with English. We can't, we can't get out of that. I mean we can't say like, unless there's a lot of work and development which is done in Urdu and developing [the curriculum] and everything. Where is it? I mean nobody can come and say . . . I'll just say this new university in Karachi [has been] established, which was like one of the latest ones made, they're teaching English, and they are supposed to be very world class. They have got international faculty, and you know, it's really like, you know, it's a very new kind of not like the typical . . . you know, it's like a very modern and very progressive university, and the subjects you teach there . . . they have a very international faculty . . . So, we would be fooling ourselves to say, OK, you know, OK English can be eliminated like a problem. Yes, Imran Khan was too idealistic. That's why he didn't last. He didn't last like he could have stayed this whole term, but his idealism got the better of him. So, if you wanna do that thing and you know become, like, doing everything in Urdu, we need to work on it a lot. And you know the mindset of people also has to change and be that mindset.

Mahvish, Sidra, and Umber all believed that the biggest problem with trying to make Urdu the more dominant language in education is how the curriculum is set up. All three of them gave examples of other countries to argue that Pakistan is just not equipped to make a switch from English to Urdu as English is the language of instruction for all other disciplines as well. Mahvish talked about her son, who is attending a university in Turkey, highlighting the differences in their education system and ours. She explained that the university her son was

attending catered to international students and delivered instruction in English as well. However, most of the universities in Turkey teach in Turkish because of how they have everything they need to deliver instruction in their own language. In Mahvish's words:

> They have a proper curriculum, syllabus, systems, up-to-date models [but] we don't have that . . . unlike other countries, you know, like for example in Germany . . . they don't like to teach in English, like you know somebody was like, 'ohh the masters in Germany is free', Yeah, it's free, if you learn the language and do it in their language. We don't have that right now. We will not. We are not there. So, I don't think we can do that.

Sidra seconded Mahvish's thoughts, speaking at length about the problem of not having a well-developed national curriculum. Reflecting on the importance of English teachers, she said if English teachers stopped trying to teach English effectively, "everything would be affected." She emphasized that English is that one subject that if taught ineffectively or not taught at all, would have an impact on all other disciplines as the language of instruction for all disciplines/subjects is English. However, if all other subjects were being taught in Urdu, whether English teachers are doing their job correctly or not would not make much of a difference. Like Mahvish, Sidra also gave the example of other countries. She said:

> . . . everything is in English, even Islamiyat is in English . . . so because, see in like, in a lot of countries, it's, you know, your curriculum is in your native language . . . so in that case it would be a different situation, right? But in Pakistan, we rely heavily on English and imagine if the English teachers, they just one day decided they're not going to teach. It's going to be a great, great loss.

Umber resonated Mahvish's and Sidra's thoughts about the education system in Pakistan being heavily dependent on English. She also gave the example of other countries that value their own language more than English and explained how that's not the case with Pakistan. She spoke about China and France and how "they're so self-sufficient with their language and consider their language as a rich language, like French - those people wouldn't care for English that much". Umber believed that these countries fought the inferiority complex we generally see in our country Pakistan where English is considered as the "ultimate result of being an educated person." In countries like France and Germany, no one thinks of a person as "illiterate" if they are not fluent in English – whereas in Pakistan, they do.

Zaynab made a very telling statement about the future of both languages in Pakistan. In a discussion about what teachers should do differently with respect to teaching English to be more effective, she said that they need to be careful as to what they say because any error that a teacher, and in turn the student, might make in English can be a big problem. Below are her exact words:

> . . . you need to understand that whatever you say has an impact in English. And in English, the impact somehow is multiplied because, what you say today the person is going to repeat in his social gatherings in his social circle, you know, for the coming years because English is going to stay there. Urdu may not be there as much as English is in the coming years.

Lastly, Bisma seemed convinced that anyone interested in a leadership position to represent Pakistan in the world must have a good command of English. She believed that it is very important for politicians to be able to speak in English. It seemed from her comments that

anyone representing Pakistan in an official capacity does not have the luxury of making mistakes as far as English is concerned. If they spoke in Urdu or if they made errors while speaking in English, she thought, that is embarrassing for the whole nation.

> If you're [the] Prime Minister, suppose uh or you're [the] President [and you] go in like any kind of seminars or any kind of conferences around the world. If they have their language barrier, we always see [such acts] from our like you know, the top positions and the leaders . . . so I always feel that why they are representing Pakistan over there I'm not saying like they are having any kind of negative impact . . . obviously they carry the translators with them. But this impacts so negatively on the minds of the rest of the world that if you are a Prime Minister of someone's country then you are not able to deliver a proper message.

In conclusion, the interviewed teachers unanimously believed in the enduring dominance of the English language in Pakistan's education system. They asserted that a switch to Urdu is impractical due to colonial ties, inadequate curriculum, and the current heavy reliance on English across all disciplines. The teachers acknowledged the challenges but saw English as a pragmatic necessity for global standards and academic excellence. They also stressed the importance of English in leadership roles and international representation. Overall, the teachers perceived English dominance as a practical reality rather than an insurmountable issue.

6.1.4 Speaking fluent English is not enough of a qualification to be an English teacher

The participants in this study discussed how other people have fixed ideas about the way English should be taught and they raised a strong objection to that. All five teachers pointed out interactions they have had with other people, including school administration, parents and other

members of the community where they were *told* how to teach. They expressed frustration at the beliefs that have been imposed on them about how English should be taught. All participants touched on issues such as the qualifications of English teachers, the need for licensing and certification, the importance of communication skills for educators, and the general perception of teaching as a profession. They expressed concerns about the quality of English teaching and a lack of subject specialization among English teachers.

In Pakistan, it is relatively easy to become a teacher. Private schools do not have any requirements for teacher certifications in general - and for English, they do not require candidates to hold academic degrees in the subject as well. In the public-school sector, candidates are required to get a B. Ed certificate before they begin teaching, however, the quality of institutions awarding those certificates is sub-par. Therefore, as far as English teaching is concerned, anyone with spoken fluency is considered qualified enough to teach it.

Sidra spoke in detail about the criteria of appointing English teachers in Pakistan and emphasized how flawed they are. Below is an excerpt from the third interview with her:

> In Pakistan, actually the thing is that . . . someone who can converse in English, is supposedly an English teacher. So, first of all, the mindset, like if I speak . . . about English, it's very important, it's very important that you know, first of all the teachers, need to have some I would say, you know, they, they need to do their B. Ed. first. They need to understand how to go about things like now they have, I have seen like my friend also said, there's something that introduced B. Ed. in English language teaching. So you know they have an English language teaching certificate, there's some universities offering it here. So, I think it's very important that first you need to know how to teach the language . . . In Pakistan, this is not the case, even for B. Ed. you know they don't

> bother. Anyone can teach English which is actually not the case. Someone who's fluent in English may not necessarily be a good teacher, may not necessarily understand.

Sidra, for one, also commented on her own qualifications and learning journey and humbly admitted that she does not think she knows English well enough to claim to be a perfect teacher. She said that since she had a masters in literature, she felt she taught literature quite well but when it came to the grammar aspect of teaching English, she struggled too. She humbly admitted that since English is a second language to her, she cannot have the native-speaker command in it. However, she believed that she had a willingness to learn and that was something she did not see in all English teachers across the board.

Zaynab voiced concerns about the ease of becoming a teacher in Pakistan and repeatedly emphasized the need for a licensing system to ensure quality teachers. She felt that employing just about anyone who is fluent in English as an English teacher affects the quality of education. She proposed implementing a licensing system similar to that for engineers and medical doctors and believed doing so would require aspiring teachers to study and prove their qualifications. The excerpts below are from different parts of the interview and show how strongly she objected against inducting just anyone as an English teacher:

> [E]very other person is a teacher. It's very easy to get into this job. This is something that really, really, it saddens me a lot. It upsets me a lot when you don't have any other option, you have this option to become a teacher . . . there should be some licensing done the way we have for engineers, the way we have for medical students. So that way maybe we would filter out and we would have good quality teachers.

At another point, she said:

> [An] engineer with a good command over the [English] language could be an English teacher. This is what I have seen. This is what I, you know, I have experienced of course the quality would differ, being somebody who's a subject specialist is something different and somebody who doesn't have the background knowledge is completely a different thing . . . [if] there is a license that you need to get. every teacher will start studying to get that license. I'm pretty sure in Pakistan, the way medical students study hard, the way engineering students study hard, they would because they don't have a choice. They [teachers] would be proving themselves no matter what, and automatically the system would improve.

Umber shared her experience of being hired as someone who did not have a degree in English or English language teaching. She recounted her interview and pointed out that the school leadership usually 'checks [a candidate's] vocabulary along with [their] grammar' and anyone who has sufficient vocabulary and sound grammar is hired - so she was hired because the school leadership found her fluent in English - which to her, was a flawed criterion.

In summary, the data revealed frustration among English teachers in Pakistan regarding imposed beliefs on English language instruction. Concerns included flawed criteria for teacher appointments, a lack of subject specialization, and the ease of becoming a teacher without adequate qualifications. Participants advocated for structured approaches, like certifications and licensing systems, to address these challenges and improve the overall quality of English education in the country.

6.1.5 Teaching is neither respectable nor financially rewarding

School teaching is not something that warrants a lot of respect in Pakistan (Nawab & Zada, 2022). All participants seemed to acknowledge that. They expressed a sense of being undervalued, especially when compared to friends in other professions, such as doctors, engineers, and artists. They recognized that being a teacher, especially at the school level, doesn't invite the same level of admiration or prestige as other careers. According to the prevalent belief in Pakistan, people go towards teaching when they have nothing better to do or when they have no other opportunities. Nawab and Zada (2022) discuss this in their study, "If there is nothing else there is teaching." This puts schoolteachers in a socially not-so-ideal position with respect to their profession. This is also tied to the low salaries schoolteachers receive. Since financial wellbeing in terms of the salary someone is drawing from their job and the respect society gives them is interconnected (Nawab & Zada, 2022), schoolteachers stand at a loss. All the participants in this study unanimously reported feeling not as respected as they would like.

Bisma discussed that when someone decides to become a schoolteacher, they have to be willing to compromise on the salary because of how low the salaries are "as compared to other professions." She thought that the only reason why someone would choose to stay in this profession (granted they have better opportunities), is if they love to teach. She argued that money is a basic need and people need it for everything: to entertain themselves, to fulfill their desires and dreams - but since it's not possible to make money as a schoolteacher, the only way to continue to be in the profession is through intrinsic motivation.

In relation to the kind and extent of respect and prestige schoolteachers get in Pakistan, Mahvish compared herself with her friend circle that has engineers and doctors. She said that when she is with them, she feels like she has the least respectable job of them all. In her words:

> I can't say teaching is that much of a respectable job . . . I mean it's not impressive like you telling somebody, oh, I am a teacher, and they will be like, oh okay, so you know it's like, the other professions are much more appreciated

This sentiment is so prevalent that schoolteachers often find themselves at the receiving end of a lot of unsolicited advice by people in the community. People express surprise about why anyone who is fluent in English would be satisfied with being a teacher, as teaching is neither respectable nor monetarily rewarding. Zaynab and Sidra spoke about this at length. Quoting Zaynab first, who shared that even her students believed that teaching is not really a "real job."

> . . . when you enter a class and when the student is inspired by you - if some student is inspired by you, they would definitely ask, 'Miss, you're studying. English? But what would you become? What would be your end product?' and you tell them that I am a teacher, and they'd say, 'Okay, now you're a teacher, but in the end, what would you be?' And if I were to say that I'm a teacher, 'No, but what else?' So, you know, . . . It's disappointing to see also because I feel that I don't know what are the factors that are responsible for making them realize that teaching is not an option, right? And they could not be teachers.

In this excerpt, Zaynab highlighted the general social perception about teaching, wherein the teaching profession is often seen as a steppingstone or a temporary choice, rather than a long-term career. It suggests that teaching is perceived as something one does until a more financially rewarding opportunity comes along. In another instance, she said:

> There are days when I don't take very much pride in this profession in a sense that there are days when I realize that I have potential to do something else. Why am I wasting so much time and putting so much energy when the outcome is not that rewarding?

Sidra reported something similar that she has been told by well-wishers several times as to why she is wasting her time and energy in a profession that doesn't give much in return. The following excerpts are part of a longer exchange in the second interview where Sidra tried explaining the treatment teachers receive in terms of prestige and financial compensation both. The reason, Sidra stated, and other participants echoed the same in their interviews, that makes them stay committed to teaching is the personal gratification they get by imparting knowledge and the feeling that they are making an impact in their students' lives. Sidra shared:

> I have been told multiple times that what are you doing in this profession? You are so eloquent, and you speak so well and you're so confident, why don't you join the corporate sector? You can be a good secretary and all, and this is something which I, when I actually started off, when I wasn't that much, at that this is something when I was in my in my third, second or third year of teaching 2003, 2004, it was at that time when people encouraged me, or I should say they discouraged me from teaching and they were like, you know, you're so qualified and you're doing so well and you know, you can speak so well because it's actually 10 to 15 years only, where we see a lot of females joining the corporate sector, otherwise the situation was very different in Pakistan . . .

A few seconds later she said:

> . . . there are a lot of times when there's this low point and, yes, you know people tell you and even like I felt many times that OK I should switch. But whenever I'm teaching, whenever I'm with kids, whenever I get that regard, that respect and the satisfaction, you

know, I dismiss that thought. That's just a fleeting thought. It's something which I see because it is not, it's not just - yes, it is not giving me that monetary benefit that is very important for me, I run the house - it's not that I belong to an elite class and I have a business, I don't even own my own house or my car, that money is very important to me, but for me, it's the satisfaction which I get from the profession, so I don't pay any heed to it because I know deep down in my heart this is a profession which gives me the utmost satisfaction

She described herself as someone who could keep going regardless of how insufficient the salaries are and how unimpressive school teaching is considered. However, she clarified that not all teachers feel that way and given the amount of work teachers are expected to do day in and day out, they feel exhausted and burnt-out.

But same as you said, not everybody shares the same passion for most of them, they, it would be like extra work there. You are being paid peanuts. You are being paid, they're nothing and you are expecting so much work from the teachers.

Despite all these grievances, the participants in this study believed that English teachers were comparatively in a better position making English their saving grace. For example, according to Zaynab the general perception that people have about individuals who choose to study English to become English teachers is that when they see one, they think, “poor little thing, she could not get into a Medical University, so she has studied English as a substitute, as a compensation part, so her parents would not be disappointed." Although this statement does not convey high levels of respect, it shows the comparatively better respect English teachers receive. Similarly, Umber argued that not all teaching roles are treated equally. She emphasized that

being an English teacher carries more prestige than other subjects like History. Comparing English teachers to History teachers, she made the following remark:

> If I am being honest, because I am taking history as well . . . for English teachers comparatively . . . way different . . . as a history teacher, it's different. You know [as a history teacher] you're important, but not that much. And being an English teacher, you're always at the top . . .

While Umber referred to the school administration and how its treatment of English teachers is better in terms of respect and importance, Mahvish expressed the same about people in her friend circle, that she receives slightly better respect than a schoolteacher of another subject would. However, the distinction does not necessarily translate to better compensation in terms of salaries, therefore teachers have to, oftentimes, resort to giving tuitions. Mahvish spoke at length about the trend of teachers opening up tuition centers as an attempt to make money. Tuition centers specialize in providing tutoring to students who are not able to learn enough at schools. These are private institutions that students attend after school, in the evening or on the weekend. Many teachers choose to work at centers like these to make extra money. Some teachers offer tutoring services at their houses; sometimes to a large number of students, other times just to a few. She felt negatively about it and believed doing so puts a bad light on all teachers. She said that when people learn that someone is an English teacher, they go “oh, you are an English teacher” and give them respect but then there are other people who look at an English teacher and think that “they are out there to make cash."

To conclude this part, the teachers in this study believed that they were able to stay in this profession only because of the intrinsic reward and internal satisfaction they found in teaching.

Highlighting the not-so-lucrative nature of the profession, they suggested that anyone whose motivation is purely financial would be better off going into another profession.

6.1.6 Cambridge curriculum is superior to the local curriculum

In Karachi, a few different education systems or curriculums operate side by side. The two most common curriculums are the Cambridge O level curriculum and the local Sindh education board curriculum. Schools that follow the Cambridge curriculum get licenced with Cambridge curriculum board in the UK. These schools are more expensive and have an enhanced focus on English. The books these schools use are also published abroad. Additionally, when students get to the 10th and 11th grade, they have to pay fees directly to the Cambridge board in the UK to be able to take ICE exams. Many of these students choose to do A level after, which is equivalent to the two-year college in Pakistan (high school in the US).

The Sindh board matric education system is simpler in terms of fee structure and has scores of public and private schools running under them. Students or schools don't have to register with any outside authority or education board. Private schools register with the Sindh board of education to get their license. When it's time for students to take their board exams in grade 9th and 10th, they do pay an extra fee but it's very minimal. Public schools are opened and governed by the government and are completely free.

The quality of education each of these systems offer is vastly different. Schools that follow the Cambridge system provide better quality education. However, even in these schools there are different classes, with the most expensive ones providing a hundred percent English immersion. Also, the fees differ according to the location of the schools (Andarabi et al., 2002). The more expensive ones are usually in expensive neighborhoods, but there are plenty spread

across the entire city. The ones that are not-so-expensive, do not always provide a high-quality education.

This division in the school systems sits at the heart of any conversation about education in Pakistan. The mushrooming of Cambridge schools in every street has set the already-suffering matric system of education back. As a result, schools that don't operate with the Cambridge curriculum, try to incorporate textbooks that Cambridge system schools use. This results in the cost of affording these schools going up as well.

The most prevalent perception is that Cambridge schools are superior, and students who attend these schools are smarter and more competent. One would think that this perception must only be endorsed by non-educators. However, that is not true. The teachers in this study referred to both systems over and over again, siding with the Cambridge system. What is surprising is that only two of them actually attended Cambridge O level schools as students. Sidra, Zaynab and Bisma went to matric system schools for their own schooling, however, Sidra and Zaynab had experience teaching at various Cambridge system schools. Bisma, on the other hand, had no first-hand experience with schools that follow a Cambridge curriculum, neither as a student or a teacher.

Zaynab, although someone whose views did not display any inferiority complex, was quite convinced that students in schools that follow a Cambridge curriculum are smarter. In a discussion about classroom routines and introducing new and creative practices, she said that her "students are Cambridge students, they are smart enough, they would instantly grasp what I'm talking about." At another point she said that the reason she enjoyed teaching so much was that she was teaching Cambridge students whose basics were strong and she didn't have to "go back to the foundation."

Sidra shared the same beliefs. Just like Zaynab, her perceptions and views emanated confidence but when it came to a comparison between Cambridge system and matric system schools, she was clear on where she thought the quality lay. She mentioned an incident where the vice principal of the school she was working at at the time asked for her opinion on two sets of books they were considering for their school. Sidra picked the one that she thought matched the quality of books used in the Cambridge system and called the other one "substandard." When I asked her what she meant by substandard, her response was:

> . . . the book wasn't substandard. I may have used the wrong word, but it was like it was not challenging. It was too childish for that particular age group for that particular level. For example, we are, we have a lot of, you know, like in Cambridge schools and even in like, yeah, Cambridge school like, you know, like, even like in matric schools, they started using Cambridge books a lot. So, the quality, the language is far more superior and challenging, relevant to that particular level.

Umber and Mahvish went to O level schools for their own education and got O level. As graduates from Cambridge system schools, they had no doubt about the superiority of the Cambridge system of education. Umber was sent to a Cambridge system school as a "representative of the Cambridge system" to the family. On the other hand, for Mahvish, going to a school that followed a Cambridge curriculum was more like a norm. She attended a highly esteemed school as a student and, at the time of the interview, was teaching at one of the most prestigious schools in Karachi. She was very clear in her mind about the excellence of the Cambridge system. Interestingly, to her the comparison was not between Cambridge system schools or the matric system, it was between the different caliber of schools that all follow the Cambridge system of education. To her, the superiority of Cambridge schools was a fact. As

discussed in the section English opens doors to the rest of the world, Mahvish was convinced that to get anywhere in life, learning English was imperative and thought that the future of students attending Urdu-medium schools (public schools) is quite hopeless. Her words below convey her beliefs fairly clearly:

> I think so. I think so because how far do these Urdu medium school students, who are . . . studying even in the smallest government schools . . . they'll be teaching some kind of English? And like later on also when they, suppose, they never learn English in school when they come into working lives, they will be struggling and they will be trying to catch English from here and there and try to speak it or, you know, use it in their presentations or something or the other. So how can they aspire for anything else? Like I don't know which profession you can take up unless you're like a shopkeeper or something. Even there you have to use English sometimes, right? I mean, so what, how, how are they to do, what, what profession is there without it? Even the maids these days. So, like among my younger friends, you know who are smaller children and they're hiring the local Pakistani maids, they want to speak English to the kids. You know they're not Sri Lankan or Filipino, they're normal Pakistani ones, but they know English. Yes, it's very common. Now it's not, you know, one off thing.

This excerpt strongly conveys how Mahvish and the social circle she belonged to view public schools. She believed that children who go to public schools are at a disadvantage because they are not able to learn much English there. As a result, they are stuck in their economic class, unable to “aspire for anything else."

The last participant, Bisma, did not speak about the Cambridge system much at all. In her family and friend circle, probably no one went to a school that followed a Cambridge

curriculum. The schools she worked at as a teacher were also all Sindh government matric system schools. However, she mentioned that when she was younger, there were a few children in her neighborhood who attended a school that offered English immersion and all the children in the neighborhood, herself included, thought highly of those kids. This suggests that the superiority of the Cambridge system was well established in her mind as well.

6.1.7 Feelings of being more competent than other teachers

The five teachers interviewed for this study all expressed, in some way, opinions and thoughts that revealed underlying feelings of being better teachers than their counterparts. While all of them insisted they did not think they knew it all but at the same time expressed frustration at the caliber of English teachers they kept encountering and suggested ways to improve the state of English education and teaching in Pakistan.

Out of all five participants, Zaynab was the most vocal with her objections and suggestions. She articulated a series of concerns pertaining to the general state of the teaching profession in Pakistan. While she did not make any direct claims of superiority to other teachers, she pointed to a few teacher observations where she noticed practices which, according to her, were not correct. To her the fundamental issue was the ease with which individuals could enter the teaching profession without adequate qualifications or background knowledge. She advocated for a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system for teachers before their placement in classrooms, particularly emphasizing the need for such measures in the case of language teachers. As an English teacher with a college degree in linguistics, she understood the importance of code switching and making room in the classroom for students' native languages (even other than Urdu), but at the same time by citing an example of another teacher who used

informal language and Urdu fillers, she criticized the same, expressing the view that a more academically appropriate language should prevail in the classroom setting.

Zaynab considered herself to be in a position to comment on other teachers' teaching and present suggestions because of possessing an academic background in the field. Similarly, Sidra and Mahvish had academic degrees in English, although in Literature and not Linguistics. Their voice came more from their decades of experience backed by academic background. Both these teachers shared instances where they interacted with other teachers in the field and were disappointed. Mahvish expressed surprise, shock, and disappointment at the low level of scrutiny and requirements when appointing English teachers. While Sidra did not cite specific examples, she believed that there was "a dearth of good English teachers in Pakistan" and that whenever she had the chance to meet English teachers, she felt bad for the students.

Umber and Bisma did not directly criticize other schoolteachers, but they expressed similar sentiments to the other teachers as well. Bisma spoke about teachers at language institutions and how they were only out there to mint money and did not know how to teach at all. On the other hand, Umber expressed frustration at the school administrators and parents trying to dictate how English should be taught. Although she herself did not have an academic background in English teaching, her frustration suggested she preferred her own way of teaching and considered it effective.

6.1.8 English has a commercially/economically profitable aspect to it

While unanimously asserting that the teaching profession is neither highly regarded nor financially rewarding, the participants also suggested that within the field of education, English teachers have better prospects for financial success than teachers of other subjects. Schools are

often willing to pay higher salaries to English teachers. Additionally, in an attempt to maximize their income, English teachers often offer private tutoring sessions at their homes. Mahvish spoke about this at length and explained how this practice of private tutoring sessions has "commercialized" the profession and has brought disrespect to all teachers. She said:

> I'm sorry to say, a lot of the teachers in my profession have become very commercialized and they feel like they don't get paid enough. So, the best way is to give tuition even to your own students who you are supposed to be teaching in class, but you are calling them to your house, and you know, giving them a so-called advantage now.

This commercialization is not limited to private tutoring sessions. Bisma mentioned language institutions that lure people with promises of making them fluent English speakers in no time but employ incompetent teachers. These language centers, according to Bisma, charge thousands of rupees and do not provide quality instruction. However, due to the prevalent obsession of English, people willingly spend all that money in the hope of becoming fluent in English. Language centers are a trap for people from the lower middle class, or lower class of the Pakistani society. On the other hand, for the upper middle class and upper middle class, there is a different version of language centers.

Recently, in the last decade, institutions have opened up that offer an alternative to the Cambridge CIE exams, called foundation year diploma. Mahvish spoke about the institutions offering this diploma and thought they are doing a disservice by degrading the high quality of education that the Cambridge system offered. The foundation year diploma is particularly hailed by the rich with a political background. Usually, these families see it as an easy route to get their children (mostly sons) a certificate that will bolster their political future. According to Mahvish, these students often could not even construct grammatically correct sentences, but since they had

money, they could afford to obtain this diploma. The owners/administration of these schools knew this and thus they marketed these schools as a hope for students who were unable to succeed in the regular CIE exams.

Additionally, as far as the economic benefit is concerned, English teachers had better job prospects and they could switch jobs relatively easily. There were more job openings for English teachers, especially in bigger cities. They were also paid better salaries than other teachers. Teachers are aware of this and consequently, Sidra believed, most of them opt to choose English because of better salaries. The passion for teaching is missing in most cases.

There are other opportunities for English teachers to make money as well. Zaynab complained about English teachers being assigned duties that are not part of their job description. They are frequently asked to design, develop, or edit marketing material for school events or craft written pieces for school magazines. English teachers often capitalize on these skills and take-up side jobs to make money. According to Zaynab, widespread internet access has opened many new opportunities for English teachers like content writing, blogging, and playing the role of the “English specialist”.

English teachers do not only have better opportunities in the field of teaching or academia, but they also have better chances of switching careers and doing something entirely different. In Pakistan, as discussed before, fluency in English is given more importance than educational credentials. Due to this, English teachers have better prospects of entering a different field if they choose to and do something other than teaching.

6.1.9 Resistance by family members, colleagues, and other divisions of society

English teachers, and by extension other English speakers in Pakistan, face a dilemma. While there is a societal pressure to learn and showcase proficiency, there is a simultaneous criticism for perceived showing off as well. In social situations, speaking in English is deemed as unnecessary unless in a professional or formal setting. This presents a challenge for English teachers as the workplace imposes expectations to speak in English within the school premises, but these same teachers are criticized by their colleagues for speaking in English in the staffroom or during the recess.

The participants of this study shared experiences of being criticized for speaking in English. However, the intensity and nature of criticism was different in each case. The perception that people speak in English to show off is more prevalent and intense in the social and financial class that does not have access to high quality English medium schools and universities. Therefore, it appeared that people from the lower middle class who were able to speak in English were criticized more by their social peers. This suggests that generally fluency in English is associated with financial affluence and people from the struggling financial class generally take anyone speaking fluently as a show-off. For example, Bisma narrated her experience of moderating live conversation sessions on social media. Attendees of her live sessions often thought it was unnecessary for her to speak in English since she was neither a celebrity nor was she hosting a television show. They thought that she should only be speaking in English if her live session was being recorded and often got aggressive in their objection, deeming it as an “exaggeration” and “show off” to respond in English to something asked in Urdu. They even went so far to ask her what her problem was. This was the situation in informal

settings with friends, family and other members of the community, however at work, she faced a different kind of criticism.

At work, Bisma said, she was criticized for not speaking in English all the time. It was a problem if she made errors while speaking in English even when she was sitting with colleagues informally during recess or after dismissal. They believed that English teachers should be speaking in English constantly even when they are outside the classroom and thought it was incompetent of English teachers to be speaking in Urdu at any time during the workday. Umber shared an interesting contrasting experience. She and another English teacher were speaking in English when they were overheard by a few members of the other teaching faculty. They objected and said that being an English teacher did not mean "they would always be talking in English." These teachers thought that it was "boring" to argue in English and asked Umber and her fellow English teacher to stop speaking in English as it gave them a headache. Umber explained that it was common for English teachers to be a target of sarcasm and ridicule.

Resistance, many times, came from students as well. Zaynab's experience in school as a student confirmed this. She shared that her classmates in school were okay with using English for "communicative purposes" but "they did not enjoy writing [or] participating in debates or speeches.'. In Zaynab's school, students were supposed to speak in English at all times. As mentioned previously, the school imposed a fine on students who did not adhere to the "English only" policy. Zaynab's friends did not find this policy reasonable and voiced their objections. They asked their teachers as to why English is given so much importance when the national language is Urdu. When students expressed such opinions, many teachers agreed with them and promoted the idea that English should only be treated as a functional language and not the primary language of communication. This resulted in a never-ending debate and dilemma for

everyone: the school administration, teachers, and the students, leaving everyone confused and double-minded about the rightful place and use of English and Urdu.

Another form of resistance appeared to come from family members. In families where parents have different financial means and not everyone can afford sending their children to Cambridge system schools, there is a constant debate as to whether there should be so much emphasis on sending children to expensive schools. This debate usually boiled down to an argument about whether the English language should be given any importance at all or not. Umber shared stories about being criticized by various family members for her parents' choice to send her to a Cambridge system school. They felt it was unnecessary for her parents to spend so much money on making sure she learned English. From how Umber explained the dynamics of her family, the objection did not seem to come from a place of genuine concern but from a place of envy.

It was not always the extended family that was criticized and ridiculed - sometimes members of the one’s immediate family also felt that it was wrong to speak in English all the time. In these cases, usually, criticism was more of a concern about being misaligned with social peers. Zaynab gave one such example. Her mother felt like she was speaking in English way too much and feared it gave other people the impression that she was showing off and being pretentious. Zaynab argued that the perception that people speak in English to show they are more worthy was not always true and it certainly was not true in her case.

Part of the reason why people criticized is because they felt they were being looked down on. As English is associated with intelligence, the data suggested that inadequate or imperfect competence in English made people nervous. Thus, criticizing others who were more fluent

seemed like an attempt to manage feelings of inferiority. The following incident narrated by Zaynab provides a good example:

> I have this friend who's in Canada, and you know, I was talking to her on the phone. And though I have stopped doing that now, she told me, you're an English teacher, you're very particular with the punctuation, you're very particular with your spaces and pauses. So, she mentioned that you are a grammar Nazi, I cannot deal with you, and at least you should stop doing this to your friends and this that, you know, this part hit me very hard.

Zaynab's friend called her a "grammar Nazi" for being particular about the grammar of sentences and for unconsciously helping her friends by pointing out their mistakes. Comments like this are common not only for teachers of English, but also for other people who choose to speak in English in situations where they are expected not to.

6.1.10 Conclusion: What are their perceptions and beliefs about English as a language, the status of English in Pakistan and teaching as a profession?

To sum up, the data in this section revealed a variety of perspectives on the role of the English language in Pakistan. The participants acknowledged the pervasive importance of English, attributing it to factors such as the influence of the Cambridge system and its interconnectedness with the broader education framework. It seemed that the participants believed that the historical ties to colonial legacies further strengthened the societal perception that proficiency in English equates to intellectual acumen.

A common thread among the participants was the endorsement of English as a global tool, crucial for international opportunities and personal growth. Despite not being given adequate respect or financial compensation, they emphasized the intrinsic rewards and

satisfaction derived from imparting knowledge. Although not being happy with their salaries, participants also acknowledged that as English teachers, they are still compensated better than teachers of other subjects.

The data also unveiled a complicated resistance that English teachers face in the form of criticism from colleagues and family members, which tied into the divide between the Cambridge and local education systems, with a prevailing inclination toward the perceived competence of individuals educated in the Cambridge system. Furthermore, subtle expressions of self-perceived competence emerged, indicating participants' frustrations with the current state of English teaching. They called for elevated standards and improved scrutiny in teacher appointments, underscoring the urgent need for systematic improvements in English education across Pakistan. In summary, the data uncovered intricate viewpoints from these teachers, reflecting broader societal attitudes towards English and its instruction in Pakistan.

6.2 RQ #4: What factors have shaped their identity as English teachers and have influenced their perceptions and thoughts about English teaching?

Identity is an amalgam of how we perceive ourselves and how others perceive us. Scholarly literature sometimes makes a distinction between identity as an understanding about how we are perceived socially and identity as the idea of self. In this dissertation study, the term identity refers to both things: our perceptions about how and what others think of us and how we perceive ourselves in terms of who we think we are and what we think we are. The self is said to be ‘in a continuous, dialectical relationship with the social and physical worlds’ (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), therefore the concept of self, and in turn our idea of our identity changes with our experiences. Williams (2013) argues that the development of the self “cannot be separated

from a person's past and present social contexts." The importance of life histories and the individual tendency to reflect on one's past and present cannot be left out in discussions about identity construction (Law et al., 2002).

This chapter discusses the factors that contributed to shaping the identities of the five teachers interviewed in this study. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section focuses on the family history of participants and the impact their family's perception of English had on their own perceptions. The second section looks at the childhood experiences of the participants in relation to forming their English teacher identities and perceptions. The third and last section of this chapter considers the financial background and the social status each participant grew up in and how it impacted their identity as an English teacher and their perceptions about English teaching.

6.2.1 Family's level of literacy and their perception of English

Family literacy seemed to have the strongest influence on all five participants' thoughts and perceptions, but in different ways. Despite varying levels of English proficiency within their families, there was a common perception about English being highly valued. The first participant (Umber) spoke in detail about people in Pakistan being super obsessed with English. She believed that the general perception in Pakistan is that everyone who is fluent in English is educated. She repeatedly suggested that in the mind of the common man in Pakistan, English equates literacy. If we consider the details that Umber shared about her childhood in relation to early literacy, we can clearly see how these perceptions of hers were shaped.

She grew up as an only child because of which she received a lot of attention from her parents. Part of this attention was the emphasis her parents placed on her learning to speak in

English - which they equated with quality education. Both of them had college degrees and believed “education is everything”. She mentioned that her mother used to read to her in English in an attempt to ensure Umber knew more words in English than other children her age. She was sent to a school that was expensive for her parents but one that would give her a fully English immersion experience. Explaining the thought process behind her parent’s decision to enroll her in such a school, she said that they wanted to make her extraordinary as they thought “for impressing others [and] for being independent, you have to, you know, be a good English speaker . . . people do get impressed if you speak in English." Reflecting on this, Umber asserted that this was not only true for when she was younger but was equally true at present as well.

The second participant, Zaynab, shared very valuable insights about the perceptions people have about the English language and English teaching. Her thoughts and perceptions can also be traced back to the way she was raised, and the importance English was given in her family.

Zaynab recalled her grandfather as a central figure in her childhood. She shared that her grandfather, who attended a boarding school in India before the partition of India and Pakistan, made a deliberate effort to create an English-speaking environment for the children in the family. He was a discerning man and as someone who had worked under the British in the armed forces, he could see the place the English language would occupy in Pakistan in the future. Zaynab’s grandmother was a teacher and was well educated, however, her grandfather took the lead in all literary correspondence. He was a skilled writer and inspired Zaynab, her siblings and cousins with stories and letters about independence. She said that although he didn’t directly influence her to become a teacher, he definitely instilled a love for reading and writing in her.

Her father, not a college graduate, wanted his children to choose career paths in science. He believed that science subjects have a greater scope and better prospects in terms of both financial success and job security. However, Zaynab did not want to become an engineer or a doctor. She wanted to become a teacher so that her love for imparting knowledge would be realized. She explained that, interestingly, her father did not object to her pursuing English as her major in college as he was well aware of the importance of English in Pakistan. In other words, her father felt that she was making the right choice as far as non-science fields were concerned. She put Mathematics and English side by side as two disciplines that indicated intelligence and a high level of literacy:

> Both these subjects there is this preconceived notion that this person is a literate one or somebody who is, you know, he's somebody who's intelligent, if I say if, I may say, so yes, implicitly, that was there and I think that is why my father not did not even question it because in his inside he also had this vision and this thought that maybe OK, she's choosing that, that's not questionable.

Sidra grew up in a lower middle-class family. Her father was a mechanic and worked really hard to pay the school fees for Sidra and her siblings. As the oldest child of the family, she said she never forgot how hard her father worked to be able to send his kids to school, so she always made sure that she gave her best at school. She mentioned that her parents encouraged her to read the newspaper and watch BBC news on TV. This was where she acquired her foundation of English. Additionally, as a member of the Christian community, she realized that she would need to learn to be fluent in English to be able to interact with people at the Church. Although she pursued a bachelor's degree in English literature, she did not say that she had taken it up because of consciously realizing the worth of an academic degree in English in Pakistan.

However, the only other profession she said she wanted to pursue as a little girl was becoming a newscaster on TV, which I assume came from her watching BBC news as a child and also required fluency in English.

Sidra's family background with respect to literacy showed up in the way she thought about English as a means to an end, as just a language. In her household, Urdu was the dominant language. She and her siblings learned English as an academic requirement and as the language of the church. It is important to note that probably because of this, Sidra strongly believed that Urdu should not be forsaken or ignored. In addition, she showed a humbleness that was different from the other participants. For example, she was the only participant in this study who confessed without any hesitation that she did not think she was good enough or fluent enough in English when she started teaching and she learned a great deal from other teachers at a Cambridge school.

The fourth participant, Bisma, shared interesting facts about her family that strongly reflect on her perceptions about English learning and teaching. Her grandfather was not educated, whereas her grandmother was. People in her grandmother's family treated her grandfather differently because he couldn't pronounce English words correctly. To make sure his children were not made fun of in the same way, Bisma's grandfather wanted them to study and learn English.

Her grandmother was the daughter of a government official. People in public service back then when India and Pakistan were ruled by the British were very fluent in English. Thus, her grandmother grew up in an environment where learning to read, write and speak in English was important. In order to create the same environment for her grandchildren, she used to organize friendly competitions among the children at family gatherings where the children had to

display their knowledge of the English language. Bisma also mentioned that her mother, albeit not being so educated herself, understood the importance of learning English. She used to buy story books and dictionaries for her children and encouraged them to read those, learn words and practice. In her family, the persistent message was learning and being fluent English stood between being literate or illiterate.

The last participant, Mahvish, grew up in a family very different from the other four participants. She grew up with wealth and attended highly esteemed educational institutions in Karachi. She did not have to make an effort to learn English as in her family and friend circle that was the default language of communication. She learned English as she learned Urdu, without taking any special measures. Her perceptions about English learning and teaching reflected this. She was the only one among the participants in this research who did not seem to treat English as a foreign language at all. Having grown up with privilege, she saw English as an inseparable part of life, the primary medium of communication. She came from a family where English was more dominant in everyday interactions than Urdu, thus she accepted it as a natural part of life.

In summary, a study of family literacy and perceptions revealed diverse influences on participants' perceptions of the English language. Umber associated English with education and social status. Zaynab's family emphasized its strategic importance that she seemed to reiterate in her opinions. Sidra viewed it as a functional tool. Bisma's family linked it to societal acceptance and her thoughts show an internalization of the same idea. Mahvish, from a privileged background, saw it as an inherent part of life. These narratives highlight the intricate interplay between family dynamics, socio-economic status, and individual experiences in shaping attitudes toward English proficiency in Pakistan.

6.2.2 Childhood experiences with extended family, friends and at school

Examining childhood experiences of extended family, friends, and school settings unveils varied perspectives on English among participants Each participant; Umber, Zaynab, Sidra, Bisma, and Mahvish, navigated unique pathways shaped by family dynamics and educational environments. These participants had diverse childhood experiences that shaped their adult views on English, illustrating influences that extend beyond formal education.

As Umber was an only child, she had no siblings to play with. She spent most of her time either by herself or with her parents. She recalled that her mother used to buy storybooks and poem books for her and remembered her mother reading these books out to her even when she would be playing. Additionally, she described her father as a movie fanatic, and he would have Umber sit with him and watch English movies together. As a result of this, when she went to school, she knew more words than other children her age. She shared that when they had guests or friends from foreign countries visiting them, they would be impressed and say, “wow she is pretty young, and she is conversing in English."

As mentioned earlier, her parents took great pains to be able to afford a school that followed the Cambridge O level curriculum and where their daughter became fluent in English. She shared that people in her extended family used to think it was unwise of her parents to send their daughter to an expensive school, one that they couldn’t afford conveniently. Her parents didn’t care about what people thought and said as to them, sending their daughter to a Cambridge system school showed high standards. There were no other children in the family who were attending a Cambridge system school. Although her parents were unaffected by the objections of family and friends, Umber said she “felt intimidated” and felt like she had to prove herself. Other

people tried to test her as if there was an on-going competition. This sense of competition and criticism that she experienced as a child manifested in her perceptions about English as an adult.

Zaynab went to a school that was not expensive but offered good quality education. The quality of education was determined by the fact that the school focused on making students fluent in English and had a policy of penalizing students if they were found speaking in Urdu. She said that the school tried to "maintain quality" by hiring teachers who could speak in English well and pointed out that other things that a school should do to maintain quality, like making sure they have a playground to have students do exercise, were not paid heed to.

She recalled her classmates being against the policy of all-English. They felt like they were being coerced into speaking a foreign language at the cost of their national language. Zaynab did not feel that way because her parents had already made efforts to teach her enough English that when she went to school, she didn't struggle. However, an important thing to note here is that her parents did not ask her to ignore Urdu. She shared that while her mother used to coach and assist her with homework and tasks that were English focused, her father used to help her with Urdu.

These experiences of learning English organically and growing up in a family where English was not seen as the end of this world, reflected the way Zaynab approached teaching English. She associated it with education and research and believed it's essential to excel in education. She didn't think people should make it an end-all and argued that it should only be treated as a means of communication and not a sign of intelligence or social status.

The third participant, Sidra, was a quiet child. Her father was a strict man and made sure the children were disciplined. As a result, Sidra and her siblings had, what she called, a "confined life." She developed a love for reading because reading books exposed her to a wider

world. Though in her household, Urdu was the primary language of communication, the books she developed a fondness for were in English. She loved reading famous book series for children and young adults, like Enid Blyton, Nancy Drew and Sweet Valley High. This was in the early 90's when most people did not have access to international channels on TV and the internet was rarely heard of. It was common for people to learn English through books and the English they learned was very formal. Although that's not the case now, because of how Sidra learned English, she expected her students to learn the same way and speak the same way.

Additionally, the church played a great part in exposing Sidra to English. Typically, in Pakistan, the Christian community speaks in English. There are also some very old and famous Catholic schools in Karachi that give priority to children from a Catholic background. Sidra attended a Catholic school where teachers spoke in English and were very strict. She remembered her English teachers being so strict that her notebook would come back to her full of red marks. She said this pushed her to do better. She manifested this in the way she expected her students to do their best and helped them by pointing out their mistakes. She shared that her ex-students reached out to her to thank her for being strict and that that made their grammar perfect.

As far as her perceptions about the place of English in Pakistan were concerned, Sidra seemed fully cognizant of the fact that English enjoys an unparalleled position in the education system in Pakistan. However, having learned English organically from books and not due to pressure from her environment, she didn't seem to think that English equates to literacy, or a lack thereof signifies illiteracy. Additionally, as someone who came from a humble background and worked hard to get education and to move up the economic ladder, she deemed teaching and learning English as a means to succeed economically and not an end in itself.

Bisma had unique experiences with the English language as a child. During the interviews, reminiscing about her childhood, she constantly brought up the negative interactions with her family members who lived abroad and took great pride in their ability to speak in English. They made fun of anyone who did not speak in English. Not only that, but they also claimed an ownership of English and took offense when they saw someone else trying to excel at it. From the account Bisma gave, it seemed like these family members felt superior on the basis of their access to the Western world and the English language and wanted no one else to have this access.

She also mentioned that there were a few children in the neighborhood who went to a Cambridge system school and were more fluent in English than other children. Therefore, everyone in the neighborhood used to be impressed with them. Bisma recalled that out of a desire to improve her English, she always wanted to spend more time with them. She also mentioned that these children who used to attend a Cambridge system school received special treatment from all other children.

These childhood experiences appeared to have played a major role in the way Bisma thought about learning and teaching English. As someone who was subjected to mockery and made to feel like she was confined to Pakistan only and would never have any international exposure, she made the connection between learning English and the opportunity to break the barrier between Pakistan and the Western world over and over again. She also frequently suggested that the ability to converse in English grants people respect and prestige.

Mahvish, the last participant, did not share any major experiences centered around English from her childhood. As discussed earlier, she grew up in a well-educated family in which English was the dominant language. Her mother, a single parent, used to run a private

kindergarten school in a posh area in Karachi. Most people in that side of Karachi are very fluent in English. The most expensive schools in the city happen to be on that side as well. Hence Mahvish grew up surrounded by English speaking people and to her, being able to speak and write English (English literacy) was a default.

She never aspired to become a teacher when she was younger. She saw her mother working tirelessly as an educator and felt resentment for it. She also had a few other female family members in academia, but she didn't think they inspired her either. She ended up becoming an English teacher because she thought she had a strong foundation in English since she did A-levels from a well reputed, 'exclusive' school. There was an enhanced focus on English at this school which made Mahvish fall in love with literature. This love for literature manifested in her responses during the interview when she spoke about proper English and that the present generation are doing a disservice to the language by using abbreviating it excessively.

Exploring childhood experiences with extended family, friends, and school settings sheds light on the diverse perspectives and attitudes towards English among the study participants. Each participant, Umber, Zaynab, Sidra, Bisma, and Mahvish, navigated unique pathways shaped by family dynamics and educational environments. From Umber's early exposure to English through books and movies to Zaynab's upbringing emphasizing English fluency without neglecting Urdu, these narratives offer insights into the participants' early language development. Sidra's exposure to English through books and the church, coupled with strict schooling, contrasts with Bisma's negative encounters with family members who claimed superiority based on English proficiency. In contrast, Mahvish's affluent upbringing surrounded by English speakers shaped her perception of English literacy as a default. These diverse childhood

experiences lay the foundation for the participants' adult perspectives on English learning and teaching, showcasing a range of influences within their respective social circles.

6.2.3 Financial background and socioeconomic status

In Pakistan, like other third world countries, access to education varies according to social classes. People decide which school to send their children to, considering their financial status. The rich are able to send their children to expensive schools. These expensive schools are expensive generally because of the complete English immersion experience they offer by following the British/Cambridge O level curriculum. The other schools follow the local board curriculum. This socially and economically divided environment segregates people in terms of the educational institutions they attend and consequently the opportunities they have in life. The five participants in this research show this perfectly. When a correlation is made between their economic backgrounds and their perceptions about English learning and teaching, we can clearly see how the latter shaped their views about English.

Umber came from a middle-class family, but since she was the only child, her parents went out of their way to provide her quality education in English. When she was a child, her family was divided into groups on the basis of people who could afford and send their children to Cambridge O level schools and those who could not. Schools that followed the Cambridge curriculum had higher tuition fees than the ones that followed the local curriculum. So, although Umber did not belong to a wealthy family, her parents gave her an education that only the financially well-off could afford. This instilled in her confidence and humility at the same time. She believed that learning English is important, but the parent community should not be obsessed with it and ignore all other subjects. She thought it was just a language and should not

be turned into something that induced inferiority complex in people. When I asked her if she would feel the same confidence if she did not know English. She said “No! I would have had an inferiority complex than." This sentiment seemed to stem partly from the rift she observed between her extended family and her parents because of decisions around sending their children to English-immersion schools or not.

Zaynab identified with the lower middle class. She attended a school that did not follow the Cambridge O level curriculum but due to its English-only policy, was able to make students quite fluent. Financially, she didn’t say they were affluent, but her parents appeared to not have any feelings of inferiority probably because they themselves came from highly educated and well-off families. Zaynab’s father had to discontinue his own education due to having to become a provider for his siblings at a young age, but after his marriage and children, when he felt like he could spare some time for education, he went back to take English language classes. Keeping this financial background and social status in mind, it is safe to say that Zaynab grew up with modest financial means but in a household where acquiring literacy both in English and Urdu was considered imperative; thus, her thoughts and perceptions showed a high degree of practicality. She seemed to be aware of the importance of learning the English language but also stressed treating it like a “functional language” and not a language one cannot survive without. She was the only participant who made connections between learning English and access to scholarly literature around the world. The examples she gave in favor of excelling in English literacy mostly highlighted its practical use which is indicative of the kind of school she attended which was not for rich children but was able to offer English immersion because of their pragmatic measures.

Sidra maintained that she was from ‘the lower rung of the middle class’, but she did not think that held her back in any way. Being a Christian, she was able to attend a high-quality Catholic school. Moreover, as a frequent Church goer, she was able to mingle with people who used English for everyday interactions. Despite not belonging to a financially well-off family, she was able to get ahead in life. Sidra learned English by interacting with people at the Church and at her school. In her social class, people did not look down on others for not being fluent in English, instead they were well attuned to their Pakistani Christian heritage. The Christian community in Pakistan, for the most part, do not like to be overly visible. As a minority, they are a close-knit community who like to make progress quietly. Therefore, her opinions and thoughts gave off a sense of grounding and composure that was not seen in other participants. She emphasized not losing touch with Urdu and took pride in being able to speak in Urdu fluently. She came across as someone who encouraged learning English only as a means to an end, not to gain prestige or a standing in any way.

Bisma came from the lower middle class as well, but she was the only one among the participants of this study who did not attend a school known to offer quality education in English. Furthermore, with extended family settled in the West, she saw a lot of rifts because of differences in economic stability and financial resources. The way she approached the subject of mastering the English language vividly showed the connections she made between literacy and English and respect in the world. Her opinions and thoughts underscored the gap she saw between the rich and the poor with education in English widening the gap.

The last participant, Mahvish, was the only one who grew up in affluence. She never had to face the problems that people who do not have access to good schools and an English-speaking environment face. Therefore, she did not speak about whether speaking in English

brings respect or not, instead she compared the esteem of one Cambridge school to another. The concerns she voiced were completely different.

6.2.4 Conclusion: What factors have shaped their identity as English teachers and have influenced their perceptions and thoughts about English teaching?

Umber came from the middle class. Zaynab, Sidra and Bisma came from lower middle class. Mahvish came from the upper class. The three teachers that came from lower middle class, had different experiences because of the differences in their social environments and family literacy. The schools these teachers were able to attend as students was dictated by the level of literacy of their family, their financial background and economic status. In turn, these schools decided the kind of experiences they had as children. These experiences shaped their thoughts and ideas to a great extent.

Sidra, being a Christian in Pakistan, had a different life to begin with. However, her comments and opinions did not reflect the general issues that children from the lower middle-class face. Since she was able to receive good schooling, her experience was different from other lower middle-class people who are either stuck with public schools that are known for their devastatingly low-quality education or have to send their children to low or average quality neighborhood schools since they can only afford those. On the other hand, Bisma is an example of someone who had to attend a neighborhood school that did not offer a high-quality education. Her perceptions and opinions are replete with feelings of inadequacy from the maltreatment she and her family members received because of not being like the people who could speak in English fluently. She constantly associated English with confidence and insisted that people need

to learn English to become more confident and get more respect in Pakistani society and by extension, in the world.

Umber and Zaynab believed that they were fortunate enough to be able to get a good education in English despite not being from the upper class of society. The confidence they developed from being fluent in English at a young age reflected in their thoughts and perceptions. Although they did believe that in Pakistan learning English is the difference between literacy and illiteracy, they did not encourage that mindset.

The first four participants: Umber, Zaynab, Sidra and Bisma, took pride in being English teachers and seemed fully aware of the special place English teachers enjoy. They felt that they were making a difference in Pakistan as teachers of a subject that occupies a central position.

Mahvish, the fifth participant presented a stark contrast to the first four. Her family, social and financial background could clearly be seen in her thoughts and opinions about the English language and English teaching. As previously discussed, she saw English as a part and parcel of life and did not think that any focus on it was undue. Moreover, when it came to teaching, she was the only one who repeatedly suggested that teachers do not have the same respect as other professions. The social environment she grew up in appeared to be far more competitive than the other participants in this study. Therefore, the comparison in her social circle was not between people who knew English and those who did not, but it was between people who had impressive careers and those who did not. In her social circle most people knew English better than they knew Urdu.

This exploration revealed an intricate interplay between family dynamics, childhood encounters, and socioeconomic status in shaping perceptions of English in Pakistan. Family literacy emerged as a strong influence, with parents shaping their children's beliefs about the

value of English. Umber's childhood emphasis on English fluency, driven by her parents' desire for her to stand out, reflects a broader societal perception in Pakistan associating English proficiency with education.

Zaynab's family, rooted in a lower-middle-class background, prioritized an English-only environment for their children, emphasizing its significance. Sidra's exposure to English through the church and education in a Catholic school highlights the role of communal and educational contexts. Bisma's negative encounters with family members abroad fueled her determination to break barriers associated with English learning. Mahvish's affluent upbringing positioned English as a default language, with her concerns revolving around comparisons between prestigious schools.

These childhood experiences seemed to extend beyond family dynamics, influencing participants' views on English learning and teaching. The perceived link between English and economic success became evident, with participants viewing English as a means to open up opportunities and bridge gaps between societal classes. Sidra's emphasis on English as an economic tool for upward mobility contrasted with Umber's childhood competition, reflecting diverse perspectives shaped by unique experiences.

Socioeconomic backgrounds further shaped participants' access to quality education, with disparities evident in school choices. The association of Cambridge O level schools with higher financial standing underscored the societal division between those who could afford complete English immersion experiences and those who could not.

The participants' narratives underscored the broader societal significance of English, its ties to educational opportunities, and its role as a determinant of economic mobility. Recognizing

these multifaceted influences is crucial for understanding the complexities surrounding English education in Pakistan.

CHAPTER 7. DISCUSSION

This study was designed to investigate the perceptions, thoughts, opinions, and attitudes of English teachers about the teaching of English in Pakistan and the status of English in Pakistan. It also sought to explore how teachers perceived their identities. The aim was to understand the factors that have shaped their perceptions and identities and to gauge the extent to which their perceptions reflect the tensions in the society around issues pertaining to the English language. .

The data revealed invaluable insights into English teaching and learning, offering a comprehensive perspective of five English teachers in Pakistan. Participants openly shared their thoughts and concerns, leading to the discovery of both straightforward revelations and nuanced issues. While some findings were readily apparent through participants' explicit comments and opinions, others were multilayered, unveiling intriguing connections, tensions, and dilemmas within the discourse. This section begins with a summary of explicit findings derived from participants' open expressions. Subsequently, it delves into the complexities, tensions, and dilemmas by establishing connections across various data sections and synthesizing insights from the discourse of the five participants.

The data suggested a complex interplay of emotions, encompassing a sense of pride, fulfillment, and enthusiasm alongside intense scrutiny, unrealistic expectations, and a significant workload. The participants expressed a strong sense of pride in being English teachers, perceiving themselves as integral to the academic setup. English teachers, according to the data, enjoyed a special status within schools, with their subject considered pivotal for a school's reputation. The importance of English as a language in Pakistan amplified the significance of

English teachers, even if they experienced a general sense of dissatisfaction with the teaching profession. The participants believed that without English teachers, a void would be created in the society, emphasizing their perceived indispensability.

The participants further linked their pride to the broader impact of teaching English. They acknowledged the role of English in global communication, academic success, and international exposure. This sense of pride, rooted in the perceived significance of their profession, acts as a motivating factor for English teachers in Pakistan. The study revealed that English teachers find fulfillment in their profession, both personally and professionally. Teaching English allows them to engage with students on a deeper level, fostering rapport and understanding of students' beliefs and values. The dynamic nature of the subject enables creativity and discussions that extend beyond the realm of textbooks. The participants highlighted the joy derived from witnessing students' creativity and the continuous learning process associated with teaching English.

The multidisciplinary nature of language teaching was emphasized, with English teachers considering themselves as contributors to various fields such as sociology, psychology, and politics. The participants acknowledged the need for continuous learning, staying informed about current trends, pop culture, and evolving language dynamics, contributing to a lifelong learning experience.

Despite the pride and fulfillment, English teachers in Pakistan face significant challenges. The data identified intense scrutiny as a prominent issue, where English teachers are held accountable for students' language proficiency, spelling, and writing skills. This scrutiny extends beyond the school leadership to parents and students, creating an additional layer of stress and pressure. The unrealistic expectations placed on English teachers emerged as a major challenge. The participants expressed frustration over being expected to possess an extensive vocabulary,

impeccable grammar, and the ability to ensure all students achieve perfect scores in English exams. The study illuminated societal pressure, including criticism from parents and friends, leading to a constant feeling of being under scrutiny. Additional responsibilities were identified as a substantial challenge, with English teachers often burdened with extracurricular activities, event organization, and tasks unrelated to their job description. The data highlighted the psychological pressure associated with these additional responsibilities, creating frustration, and contributing to the teachers' burnout. Moreover, the participants reported a higher workload for English teachers compared to other subjects. The division of the English curriculum into language and literature, along with the expectation to provide detailed feedback on extensive written assignments, contributed to an increased cognitive load.

The summary presented above lays out the findings that were straightforward. However, as stated previously, the data shed light on additional issues and facts about the Pakistani society in relation to English and its teaching that the participants did not clearly identify. The first of these issues was the double mindedness of the government as reflected in their policies towards the English language.

English is the official language of Pakistan alongside Urdu. In the public education system, it is taught in schools as a compulsory subject right from the beginning in pre-primary until the second year of university. It is also considered very important for government officials to learn English (Coleman, 2010). The two main exams for getting into civil services, i.e, Central Superior Services (CSS) and Public Civil Services have English as a mandatory subject. All other courses are also in English, with the exception of Islamiyat which can be taken in Urdu. Everything else must be studied in English and the exams must be taken in English as well. This is not the case in public schools and public colleges (college in Pakistan is equivalent to high

school), where students can opt to take all other disciplines, bar English, in Urdu. However, for people interested in getting into the civil services, English is the primary medium.

Considering the central place it is given in civil services, the government makes no effort to ensure students are learning English well. Teachers appointed for teaching English in public schools lack fluency in most cases. Although getting a B. Ed diploma is compulsory for public school teachers, the colleges offering B. Ed programs lack expertise. Therefore, teachers with a B. Ed diploma are not always effective teachers. To compound the problem, the quality of books used in the public school system is not impressive. As Sidra recalled an incident where she was asked by her headmistress to choose between two sets of books, telling her that their school was tasked by an external agency to vote on the books that should be chosen for certain grades in public schools. The books that the government was pushing were subpar in terms of their effectiveness in teaching English. When I asked Sidra why she thought the government was insistent on using those books, she believed they did so to keep the people of Pakistan "ignorant and illiterate". She thought the government doesn't want people to make progress, so they try to take away their education. Here, the correlation between English, literacy, and enlightenment must be noted. Deliberate efforts to hinder quality English education was seen as a means to perpetuate ignorance.

However, other information shared by Sidra and Mahvish suggested something deeper is at play. Imran Khan, the last and former President of Pakistan, tried to introduce policies that aimed at reviving interest in Urdu with the, apparently, long-term goal being to replace English with Urdu. Sidra informed that Imran Khan's government came up with the decision to ban writing Urdu in Roman English (BOL News, 2022). She thought that this is a move towards giving more importance to the national language Urdu.

In addition to making efforts to ban writing Urdu with the English alphabet, Imran Khan attempted to introduce the idea of a unified curriculum (The Economist, 2021) that put Urdu at the center and sought to replace English with Urdu over time. However, according to Mahvish, his idea was met with immense resistance. This resistance, she said, was due to the fact that Pakistan does not have a well-established curriculum in Urdu unlike other countries like Germany and Turkey - where they have a whole education system established in their own language. Although many people believe that Pakistan does not have a curriculum in Urdu, that is not true. Pakistan has a curriculum in Urdu, however, that curriculum is outdated and insufficient for use on all levels and types of educational institutions (Badal, 2023; Mahboob, 2009).

Imran Khan's policies seem to contradict the general state of the country, including how the whole government machinery operates. As mentioned before, English has a central place in the public service commission preparation and examinations, as well as in the private school system and higher education. On top of that, one of the reasons Imran Khan had gained popularity with the youth of the country was because of him being an Oxford University graduate. The youth and educated people were impressed with the way he used to speak and represent Pakistan abroad. Given this context, it makes sense that his efforts to replace English with Urdu were not received with the enthusiasm one would expect.

This double minded attitude that stems from a misalignment between the place that English actually occupies in the system and the effort made by the government to promote it is also reflected in the public at large, whether they can speak in English or not. The data uncovered, what appeared to be, contradictions in the opinions and beliefs of the participants of this study.

Throughout the interviews there were many instances where it seemed that participants contradicted themselves. In those instances, it could clearly be seen how the pressures and the expectations of the society, and the confusion and double mindedness that generally surround Pakistanis are reflected in a state of dilemma among these teachers. These dilemmas centered around the idea of correct and incorrect English, right and wrong way of teaching English, how important or not English is and the place of Urdu.

Zaynab was the most eloquent of all the participants. She spoke at length about what she thought the current place of English language is, and what, according to her, it should be. However, her comments and opinions suggested contradictory meanings. For example, she emphasized that English should only be treated as a functional language, and not "a survival language". She said, "it's not something that . . . your money is dependent on" but then went on to say that we need to understand that "whatever you say has an impact in English, and in English, the impact somehow is multiplied because what you say today the person is going to repeat in his social gatherings, in his social circles, you know, for the coming years because English is going to stay there, Urdu may not be there as much as English in the coming years". It appeared that teachers were not able to put all the pieces together and come to a clear and coherent conclusion about the place of English in education and outside of it. This could very well be a representation of the confusion they experience as Pakistanis everyday with respect to the English language.

Sidra sounded like an introspective person and seemed to weigh her opinions carefully before saying anything. Despite that, her thoughts seemed contradictory at times. For example, she insisted that English and Urdu should be given equal importance, and that English should not be allowed to completely take over. When she was asked if she was able to see how the English

language could contribute to improving the economic situation of Pakistan, she did not think there was any connection. However, in another place, she asserted that since Pakistan is an important country in the world that contributes internationally in various ways, English is necessary in Pakistan and cannot be done without. There is a clear connection between the contribution highly educated, exceptionally-fluent-in-English Pakistanis make in the world and the economy of Pakistan but apparently, Sidra did not make that connection. Additionally, when she was asked if she thought that English teachers are contributing to a social divide, she thought that personally she was not contributing to division, but observed other teachers, particularly English teachers, tend to foster a mindset of superiority. She recounted instances where English teachers had insulted students for speaking in Urdu, portraying a dismissive attitude towards the native language. However, she also mentioned that one day her students heard her conversing with another teacher in Urdu and was startled that she (Sidra) could speak in Urdu. She told them that she could, but she did not want to. She went on to explain that she thought once the students were allowed to speak in Urdu, it was difficult to get them to speak in English. Considering that she herself did not allow her students to speak in Urdu, she thought it was wrong when other teachers did the same. It can be argued that Sidra's objection to students speaking in Urdu in the classroom were intended to encourage students to speak in English and improve their fluency, but there was no way to be completely sure that the intention of other teachers who discouraged speaking in Urdu in the classroom did not have the same intentions. Similarly, Mahvish insisted that fluency in English should not be a mark of competence. She thought excessive concern with accent and making fun of anyone with a non-native accent is absolutely wrong. However, she was quite critical of the fact that in many English medium schools, teachers are not able to construct "grammatically correct" sentences.

When a language is associated with power, speaking in it becomes a performance. In some capacity, probably everyone in Pakistan speaking in English or learning to speak in English feels like they are performing. This explains why for people, teachers or not, making an error is such a big issue. It is seen as a flaw in the “performance". Teachers are not excluded from society, therefore although well-educated and aware, they display attitudes that reflect the attitude of the society.

This state of dilemma appeared to not necessarily be a result of personal ignorance. It seemed like it was more a result of numerous contradictory forces pressuring teachers all the time. Haider and Fang (2019) discuss this in their work stating, “In Pakistan, it seems that people are facing the dilemma of whether English will empower them in society or create unequal social stratification” (p. 172). One example of this dilemma came up when I asked Umber if she thought English teachers were contributing to the destruction of Pakistani culture and values in any way. In her response, where she attempted to analyze the current situation with respect to English teaching and English teachers' role in it, it can clearly be seen how she swayed between two different positions. She said that looking at the teaching profession, especially looking at English teachers from a distance, they seemed to have a somewhat negative impact on society. She compared English teachers to doctors and thought that the majority of teachers appeared to be just going through the motions, lacking genuine dedication. She felt most of them were working for the sake of working or solely for the paycheck, without a clear end goal or a focused plan for each lecture. According to Umber, this lack of genuine commitment might be unintentionally fostering an inferiority complex in some students and a superiority complex in others, based on their skills. Here, Umber seemed to be weighing the positive and negative impacts English teachers have on the Pakistani society. On the one hand, it looked like she

thought that English teachers trigger superiority or inferiority complex in students. On the other hand, she attempted to reason that English teachers do not really have a choice because of the pressures they are surrounded by.

These tensions in the participants' thoughts and perceptions presented themselves as contradictions. These contradictions could be attributed to the multifaceted nature of the issues surrounding the English language in a country with a colonial past. The participants seemed to struggle making clear connections between different things. For instance, Busra associated the ability to speak in English fluently with an enlightened mindset. She thought that people who speak in English think differently. However, she did not make any connections between the fact that most of the time people who speak fluent English are affluent and are able to attend relatively expensive schools. These people are able to travel, have more access and exposure to the world than others, and are consequently able to learn more. So, their different mindset could be a result of having access to resources that other people do not.

These contradictions could also be explained in terms of internalized colonization. Internalized colonization, also known as internalized oppression, refers to the process by which individuals from a colonized or oppressed group come to accept and internalize the values, beliefs, and prejudices of the colonizing or dominant culture. This phenomenon occurs when members of the oppressed group start to believe and act in ways that align with the perspectives of the dominant group, often to the detriment of their own culture and identity. Internalized colonization can manifest in various ways, including cultural inferiority, language shift, assimilation, negative self-image, and power-dynamics. The participants of this study seemed to show signs of internalized colonization in some ways, not all. None of the participants said they find their local culture inferior or advocated assimilating into the Western culture. However, they

shared expectations that other people have of them as English teachers, to dress a certain way or not look too religious, that were indicative of a widespread internal colonization in the Pakistani society at large.

Language shift, as a sign of internal colonization is what sits at the heart of this study. As English teachers, they had to constantly do a balancing act between their duties as an English teacher and their duties as patriotic Pakistanis. The struggle to maintain a perfect balance was evident in their beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes. All participants agreed that English is central for the prosperity of the education system of Pakistan and to its survival on the international front, but they seemed to struggle to maintain a balance between their identity as Pakistani and their identities as English teachers. As Pakistanis, it was their patriotic duty to make sure they are not pulling their students away from the culture and language, but as English teachers, it was their duty to make sure their students master English. It seemed like this tension never resolved for the five English teachers in this study, which reflects the never-ending tension in the Pakistani society regarding the status of English, and its learning and teaching. Rehman (2013) discusses the concept of "hybrid identity" (p. 129) which explains that people with a colonial history often develop a hybrid identity that dangles between "the East and West, the local and foreign and the self and other" (p. 129). In this study, we see some of it in the perceptions and beliefs of the participants.

The discrepancies in the participants' opinions and beliefs and some of their struggles can also be explained in terms of what they learned latently (Wang & Hayden, 2021) from the environment. Lortie (1975) introduced the idea of "apprenticeship of observation" arguing that the thousands of hours that the teachers spend as learners in the classroom make the experiential base of their teaching. These experiences transform into a set of "de facto beliefs" that are

difficult to alter (Borg, 2006), whoever, teachers do not always make the connection between what they approve as good practices as English teachers and their own experiences as students. The failure to make this connection can also result in dilemmas and inconsistencies in beliefs and perceptions.

It appeared that the participants in this study either did not believe in or were not aware of the concepts of linguistic hybridity (Blommaert, 2013) and translingualism (Canagarajah, 2012). Their insistence on segregating English and Urdu inside the classroom could either be unfamiliarity with these concepts or an outcome of the pressure they faced as teachers to make sure their students master English as fast as possible. Glasgow & Paller (2016) discuss the English-only initiatives in Japan started by the government to "enhance opportunities for students to be exposed to English" (p. 162). Similar policies exist in schools in many other countries like Nepal, India, and Pakistan (Kirkpatrick, 2016). Although the English-only or English-medium-only policies in Pakistan do not come from the government, teachers tend to adhere to it like an unbreakable law. Whether the displeasure of teachers for the use of Urdu inside classrooms comes from a lack of knowledge about second/foreign language learning and teaching theories or from the pressure of school administration and the society, the practice highlights an area of teacher education that both new and experienced English teachers can benefit from.

Another major underlying theme that surfaced throughout the discourse of all five participants was the idea that in Pakistan, fluency in English and literacy are the same thing. In Pakistan, people who do not know English are considered uneducated (Bourdiue, 1991; Haider, 2018; Tamim 2013) and intellectually inferior. Fluency in English is correlated with intelligence. Lippi-Green (2012) addresses this issue in her book *English with an Accent: Language,*

Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States with discussions about how a native-like accent in English is considered a marker of performance and capability by employers or how accent is often associated with level of intelligence.

This perception and attitude of the teachers can also be explained in terms of reflecting the mindset of the society. Fluency in English is considered the same thing as being literate, educated, and enlightened. It must also be noted that this fluency pertains to spoken English only. As Attanayake (2019) discusses with respect to Sri Lanka that "speaking is the most desired skill among learners of English in Sri Lanka (p. 24) as the common assumption is that "if someone speaks a language . . . they know the language, irrespective of whether they know how to read or write" (p. 24). In Pakistan as well, the distinction between spoken English and the ability to write well is often not made. As educated individuals and experienced teachers, the participants of this study were aware of the difference between verbal fluency and other aspects of fluency, but they did not make that distinction while emphasizing on the importance of learning English. It appeared that on the social front, they went with the definition of fluency that the society had, but in their capacity as a teacher, they were aware of the different aspects of the English language their students must master to qualify as being fluent in English. Perhaps this is where their frustration with the excessive workload stemmed from as well.

The data also shed light on the social divide that is triggered by whether or not people have access to good quality education that helps them master English. The fact that the participants who grew up in the middle class or lower middle class (Umber, Sidra, Zaynab and Bisma), all received messages in their schooling years that they must learn English to excel in the world testifies to how deeply established this idea is in Pakistani society. Access to education in English decides the opportunities people have in their lives (Haider & Fang, 2019). It also

decides what social strata people fall into which means that in order to belong to a certain social class, not only does one need to learn to speak in English but also conform and maintain the standards of the social class that converse in English in their everyday interactions. English is associated with wealth and thus the struggles in not only to speak in the language but also pretend to either have wealth or be in the pursuit of the same.

In conclusion, the data showed that the five participants grappled with balancing and making connections across many things: the expectations imposed by others, their conscious and subconscious perspectives, the societal power dynamics concerning the English language, the lingering effects of colonization, the progression of English education in Pakistan, the global standing of English, and the present state of the education system. It became evident that teaching English transcended mere classroom performance; its complexities extended far beyond the school environment. The English language is surrounded by issues of identity, power, resistance, and politics which these teachers had to wrestle with on an everyday basis as English teachers and that made the teaching of English more complicated than other subjects.

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This final chapter is divided into four sections: 1) summary of the entire study, 2) implications of the findings of this study, 3) future directions and 4) conclusion. In the first section, I restate the purpose of the study, followed by a summary of the major areas of the literature review. I then summarize the methodologies used in this study. After reiterating the research questions, major findings from chapter 4 have been summarized.

The second section, *Implications,* is further divided into three subsections: Implications for teacher training, implications for educational policy and practices in private schools and implications for educational policy and practices in public schools. The third section of this chapter, *Future Directions,* discusses a range of future projects that could be built on the findings of this dissertation study. At the end of this chapter, I state my final thoughts about this study and what it offers as a takeaway beyond its initial objectives.

8.1 Summary

This dissertation study sought to understand English teachers' perceptions about the English language. It attempted to look at how various factors like; their own experiences as students, the general attitude towards English in the community, specific traits of their identity, various policy decisions, their understanding of students' needs and the global status of English, shape their perceptions and identity. The knowledge gained from this study highlights issues that English teachers face, informs policy decisions and underscore areas of teacher education.

A review of literature suggested that the situation in Pakistan with respect to the teaching and learning of the English language is not an isolated situation. Countries that were previously

colonized, in some or the other, have seen problematic policies in their education because of the dominance of the English language. Literature also indicated that this dominance was established in these countries systematically before the colonizers left them. Additionally, studies suggested that the dominance of the English language has spread all over the world, beyond the countries that were colonized. Teachers of English all over the world display a variety of attitudes based on their perceptions. Some teachers endorse the superiority of English, while others only pragmatically accept it.

This study utilized a qualitative design, with interviews as the primary means of data collection. The sample size was five, and the participants were female schoolteachers of English from Karachi, Pakistan. The only demographic characteristics that were kept uniform were their gender and city. Each participant was interviewed three times using Seidman's (2019) three-model interview method. Each interview was an hour long. All interviews were conducted via zoom and were recorded. Transcriptions were generated through Microsoft 365 and were uploaded to Dedoose, the coding software used in this study. Coding was done in three stages; open coding, selective coding, and theoretical coding, until major themes became clear which were clustered under the relevant research question.

For the first research question, that is, "how do English teachers in Pakistan feel about being English teachers?" three major themes came up highlighting a unique aspect of the teachers' feelings. The participants felt a sense of pride for being English teachers because of the importance they get inside and outside the school. They also found teaching English to be fulfilling because of the opportunity language teachers have to build a rapport with students. However, at the same time, they found teaching English to be challenging because of the intense scrutiny they face at work, unrealistic expectations that everyone has of them, additional

responsibilities that are imposed on them because of being English teachers, and because of the heavy workload that the structure of the English curriculum puts on them.

The second research question was, “What is their English teacher identity?” In response to this question, the data revealed how these English teachers perceived their own identity, as well as the perceptions of the people around them and how that contributes to their identity formation. The identity of these English teachers seemed to be a nuanced blend of personal experiences, perceptions, and external expectations. While they took pride in their role as indispensable contributors to society, they grappled with the labels and expectations imposed on them by those who may not fully comprehend the complexities of being an English teacher. This dual state of mind reflected a constant negotiation between feelings of pride and the challenges associated with societal expectations.

The third research question was, “What are their perceptions and beliefs about English as a language, the status of English in Pakistan and teaching as a profession?” This question generated the longest analysis. The perceptions and beliefs of these participants showed an interesting range of thoughts. The participants acknowledged the pervasive importance of English, attributing it to factors such as the influence of the Cambridge system and its interconnectedness with the broader education framework. It seemed that the participants believed that the historical ties to colonial legacies further strengthened the societal perception that proficiency in English equates to intellectual acumen.

A common thread among the participants was the endorsement of English as a global tool, crucial for international opportunities and personal growth. Despite not being given adequate respect or financial compensation, they emphasized the intrinsic rewards and satisfaction derived from imparting knowledge. Although not being happy with their salaries,

participants also acknowledged that as English teachers, they are still compensated better than teachers of other subjects.

The data also unveiled a complicated resistance that English teachers face in the form of criticism from colleagues and family members, which tied into the divide between the Cambridge and local education systems, with a prevailing inclination toward the perceived competence of individuals educated in the Cambridge system. Furthermore, subtle expressions of self-perceived competence emerged, indicating participants' frustrations with the current state of English teaching. They called for elevated standards and improved scrutiny in teacher appointments, underscoring the urgent need for systematic improvements in English education across Pakistan. In summary, the data uncovered intricate viewpoints from these teachers, reflecting broader societal attitudes towards English and its instruction in Pakistan.

The last question was, “What factors have shaped their identity as English teachers and have influenced their perceptions and thoughts about English teaching?” Three main influences emerged, namely, family’s level of literacy and their perception of English, childhood experiences with extended family, friends and at school, and financial background and socioeconomic status. Each of these had an effect on the perceptions and thoughts of the five English teachers interviewed in this study.

This study has implications for teacher education and educational policy in both the public and private sector of schools in Pakistan. It offers ideas about rethinking the expectations of English teachers. It also offers insights into the restructuring of English language curriculum and departmental setup in schools.

8.2 Implications

Extensive scholarly and research work has been done on the school education system in Pakistan (Halai & Durrani, 2021) and its different aspects. Studies have been conducted about the quality of education in public versus private schools in Pakistan (Alderman & Paterno, 2001; Asadullah, 2009), the rise of private schools in Pakistan (Andrabi & Khwaja, 2002; Andrabi et al., 2007; Andrabi & Khwaja, 2008; Ferguson et al., 2014), and the gender gap in school enrollment (Aslam, 2007; Bizenjo, 2020; Hussain et al., 2003).

Considerable research has been done on issues surrounding the English language in Pakistan. So far the focus has included: English language teaching (Manan et al., 2016; Raza & Coombe, 2022; Shamim, 2008), the Pakistani variety of English (Anwar, 2009; Baumgardner, 1995; Jabeen et al., 2011; Khan, 2012), the status of English in Pakistan (Mukhtar et al., 2021; Rahman, 1997, 2008, 2011; Shamim & Rashid, 2019; Zaidi & Zaki, 2017), and Urdu/English divide in education and society (Abbas et al., 2018; Ashraf, 2022; Shamim & Rashid, 2019). Some insightful comparative analysis about English teaching practices and the status of English in Pakistan also exists in collaboration with scholars from other countries as well (Attayanke, 2019; Farrell et al., 2011; Haider & Fang, 2019; Kirkpatrick, 2016; Shoro, 2019). There has also been some research focusing on English teachers in Pakistan (Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Bashiruddin & Qayyum, 2014; Dayoub & Bashiruddin, 2012; Khan, 2012a; Nawab & Zada, 2022; Yasmin & Islam, 2018). However, no research has been undertaken to investigate English teachers' perceptions about English teaching and learning in Pakistan with respect to the obsession and resistance prevalent in Pakistani society. This dissertation study fills this gap and offers a number of implications.

According to an International Trade Administration report, Pakistan is the fifth most populous country in the world, with 55% of its population under 24 years of age. With such a big percentage of young people, education is among the government's top priorities. Considering the importance and place the English language has, it is imperative that attention be given to English language ideology, English teachers and the structure and curriculum for English teaching. Manan et al. (2016) attribute the failure of the English language teaching policy in Pakistan to the "unavailability of qualified English teachers, poor pedagogies, sociocultural dynamics, and overall institutional weaknesses contribute to the failure of the policy" (p. 219). This study confirms the same and offers the following implications.

8.1.1 Implications for teacher education/ professional development

An examination of teacher perceptions, attitudes and beliefs often reveals areas where teacher education can be very useful. This study uncovered multiple areas where teachers, especially the ones only starting their careers as English teachers, can benefit from teacher education. English teachers in Pakistan, just like English teachers in Bangladesh do not only "have limited education in English, but many of them are also teaching with very little pre-service teacher training" (Hamid & Erling, 2016, p. 28), therefore, teacher education, as indicated by the findings of this research, will be immensely helpful in terms of preparing teachers for the challenges they will face as teachers of English. However, regular professional development (PD) is important as teaching practices and demands keep evolving.

It is very important to help pre-service English teachers gain an understanding of what constitutes English teaching. Participants of this study repeatedly highlighted that teachers are inducted without any formal pre-service education or PD and therefore the way they approach

English teaching is not always correct. Since licensing is not a requirement for the recruitment of English teachers, teacher education can potentially fill the gap and educate teachers on what to focus on in English lessons. Carefully planned pre-service PD can give new teachers the theoretical and methodological springboard to develop practical skills on (Cochran-Smith, 2005: Northcote and Lim, 2009).

Another area for teaching education highlighted by the findings of this study was multitasking and productivity skills. English teachers have more workload than other teaching staff and often find it difficult to do justice to every aspect of their jobs. This puts them at a physical and psychological disadvantage whether or not they are able to perform their duties as a teacher. If they try to perform as per the expectations, their work-life balance is disrupted. On the other hand, if they do not try to do their best, they feel guilty for not serving their students right. The ideal solution for this is to change the policy about English teachers' workload. In the meantime, productivity training would be helpful for both new and experienced teachers.

It is a challenge for English teachers to deal with the parent community with their obsession with English. Veteran teachers learn to handle it by trial and error and years of practice. However, pre-service teachers can benefit greatly from PDs on how to deal with overly critical parents. Participants of this study narrated incidents where parents of their students wanted to meet the English teacher specifically. Since parents are very focused on whether or not their children are learning English, they are often very critical of English teachers and subject them to endless questions and criticism. Pre-service teachers and new teachers can benefit greatly if they are mentally prepared for what they would face in an encounter with the parents. Professional development sessions on interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution can help these teachers and alleviate the challenge of dealing with difficult parents to an extent.

Lastly, as evident in this study, teachers are often not aware of their own beliefs and perceptions or how they came to be. Stroupe and Maggioli (2018) argue that pre-service teacher education can provide a foundation to teachers which can help them reflect on their own experiences as students and see how these experiences have shaped their perceptions. This study showed that the tensions prevalent in post-colonial contexts like Pakistan, make it difficult for teachers to find a balance between what they see and have experienced and what they believe as teachers and individuals. Coaching teachers to be aware of these tensions and find a middle ground between their own experiences and perceptions and the demands of their profession in the Pakistani society can help teachers and subsequently the education system as well.

As Haider and Fang (2019), in their comparative analysis of English teaching in Pakistan and China, suggest that "English teachers should be provided with opportunities to study applied linguistics with applications in ELT" (p. 172). Professional development sessions and teacher education should focus on and introduce the latest theories on the spread of English language including information about teaching English as a lingua franca (ELF) (Kirkpatrick, 2010). This would help new and veteran teachers to meet the demands of the international educational landscape without negatively affecting local languages and culture.

8.2.1 Implications for reforms in policy and practices in private schools

Participants of this study spoke at length about the issues and problems they faced at schools and indicated several areas where teachers can benefit from a change in policy which usually dictates general expectations. Private schools, with their ever-growing emphasis on promoting English, often end up overburdening English teachers. The five teachers interviewed in this study expressed frustration with the school administration and the parent community for

having unrealistic expectations. They were expected to make sure to teach in a way that their students become fluent English speakers. They were also expected to make sure they were preparing them for extracurricular activities in English. They were expected to also make sure they are providing detailed feedback on students' written assignments. Additionally, they were also expected to know the meaning and use of every single word. These expectations, as discussed in the analysis section, were unrealistic and gave teachers a lot of stress. In order to alleviate teachers' stress, the administration of private schools can take the following steps:

8.2.1.2 School administrators need to educate themselves and the parent community that education is more than just learning English

Teachers are bound by the rules and policies of the schools they work for, therefore even when they know that a practice, belief or expectation is wrong, they cannot do much about it. Teachers in this study clearly understood that the expectation of the parent community for their children to become experts in the English language is unrealistic. They also understood that this idea affects students' performance in all other subjects. However, in order to be able to change the mindset of the parent community, school administration needs to be willing to take initiatives and promote change. School administrators should make efforts to educate themselves to understand that education is more than just learning English. They also need to take initiatives to educate the parent community. Schools can hold programs to discuss the merits of multilingualism. They also need to make sure they are organizing events showcasing other subject areas.

8.2.1.2 The need for licensing

Private schools in Pakistan do not require teachers to get a teaching license. This means anyone who can speak in English can become an English teacher. Participants of this study discussed how important it is for schools to only recruit teachers who have subject expertise backed by academic credentials or teaching certificates. They emphasized that fluency alone is not enough to become an effective English teacher. They expressed concerns that students were not getting quality education in English classes because many teachers do not know how to teach English and what to focus on. Therefore, according to the participants, private schools must change their recruitment criteria and only employ teachers who possess the right qualifications for teaching English.

8.2.1.3 Change in policy regarding average workload of teachers

Private schools are not only excessively focused on English, but the workload for English teachers is significantly high too. Teachers in this study complained about having more workload than other teachers. They explained that school administrators do not realize that teaching English is more complicated than teaching other subjects and called for a change in the expectations regarding workload. They emphasized that it is not only unrealistic to require English teachers to manage everything well, but also how stressful it is for them to try to live up to the requirements.

8.1.2 Implications for reforms in policy and practices in public schools

The teachers in this study went to private schools as students. They also only had teaching experience at private schools, therefore none of them had first-hand experience of

teaching or learning at public schools (called “government schools” in Pakistan). However, two of the participants, who had over 20 years of experience, were well familiar with the structure and quality of education of the public school system in Pakistan and compared the public and private school sector at length to explain why people choose to send their children to private schools. All participants, as Pakistanis and teachers, expressed the need for the overall education system in Pakistan to improve. There was also unanimous agreement about the fact that the primary reason why English enjoys such a dominant place is because of the prevalence of Cambridge system and private sector schools which promise making students fluent in English. This in turn causes the social divide to deepen. The solution is to improve the education in public schools. According to the statistics provided by the Pakistan Institute of Education's annual report, there are 152,891 public sector schools spread country wide. Therefore, any reforms in education cannot leave out the public school system. The findings in this study suggested the following reforms in the public sector school system in Pakistan.

8.1.2.1 Stringent system of teaching certification and change in curriculum

Dilsahd (2010) and Khan (2011) identified poor quality of teachers as one of the major causes for the low quality of education in public schools (government schools) in Pakistan. Although the public-school sector requires teachers to get a B. Ed. certification to be able to teach, many teachers obtain this certification from low-quality institutions and, therefore, do not have the skills needed to teach effectively. The B. Ed curriculum is outdated (Gul & Shah, 2019) and does not meet the needs of present times. The ESL content in B. Ed curriculum focuses heavily on the grammar translation method of teaching English (The Academy for Educational Development, n.d.). Any efforts to improve the quality of education in the public sector requires

a stringent system of teacher certification. The government needs to change the requirements for teacher certification in a way that the B. Ed they accept must only be from accredited institutions.

Closely connected to the need for quality teachers is the need for a change in curriculum and the textbooks. In the public sector of school education, the curriculum has not been changed in decades (Badal, 2023; Gul & Khilji, 2021). Therefore, the education imparted in these schools is outdated and does not prepare the students to compete with the world. Proper research should be carried out to gauge the needs of students going to these schools against the current trends of education globally and curriculum and textbooks must be revised accordingly.

8.1.2.2 Effective supervision and monitoring of public schools

Corruption is rampant in the education system just like any other facet of the governing machinery in Pakistan. The system of supervision and monitoring is ineffective with mostly incompetent people heading the education department. Most public schools keep running without any supervision, at the whims of the school head and the staff. For any change to be effective, the government of Pakistan needs to establish a thorough system of supervision of public schools. Teacher education and change in curriculum and textbooks will only come into effect properly if the supervisory body is competent and committed to positive change.

8.3 Contribution to the field of Global Englishes and Teacher Identity

This study contributes significantly to the field of global Englishes and teacher identity by shedding light on the tensions and complexities faced by English teachers in Pakistan, as well as the ways in which these teachers navigate the intersection of local and global influences in

their teaching practices. Through its findings, this dissertation extends the current scholarship, confirming several key trends while also offering new insights that may inform future research in this field.

The field of global Englishes has long emphasized the diverse ways in which English is used across the world and the social, political, and educational implications of its spread. The findings of this study align with and extend the work of scholars who have highlighted the linguistic imperialism associated with English, especially in postcolonial contexts (Phillipson, 1992), and its role in perpetuating inequalities within non-native English-speaking societies (Canagarajah, 2012).

In particular, the study confirms Glasgow & Paller's (2016) findings on the English-only policies in countries like Japan, which attempt to immerse students in English as a way to improve their international competitiveness. Similar to Japan, Pakistan has policies and practices that promote the use of English in educational institutions, even though these are not formalized by the government. The study suggests that English teachers in Pakistan feel an overwhelming pressure to adhere to an English-only approach in their classrooms, driven by societal expectations, administrative policies, and the perceived economic and social advantages of English proficiency. This aligns with Kirkpatrick's (2016) observations on English language education policies in South Asia and their emphasis on English as a marker of success and progress.

Furthermore, this study engages with the concepts of linguistic hybridity (Blommaert, 2013) and translingualism (Canagarajah, 2012), revealing that the teachers in this study either did not believe in or were unfamiliar with these theoretical frameworks. The teachers' strong preference for segregating English and Urdu inside the classroom contrasts with the increasingly

common belief in the fluidity of language use in global contexts, where the boundaries between languages are more porous. This provides a unique contribution to the literature by illustrating how the concept of linguistic hybridity, while gaining traction globally, still faces resistance in certain educational settings, particularly where the stakes of English proficiency are perceived to be high.

Another key contribution of this study to the scholarship on global Englishes is its exploration of the social divide between those who have access to high-quality English education and those who do not. As the study reveals, English proficiency in Pakistan is not just about language skills but is tied to social class, with those who speak English often regarded as belonging to a higher class. This social divide, as discussed in the findings, aligns with Haider and Fang's (2019) assertion that English proficiency is a determinant of access to better opportunities and higher social mobility. The teachers in this study, especially those from lower middle-class backgrounds, were acutely aware of the privileges and opportunities that came with learning English, which further reinforced the connection between education and socioeconomic status in Pakistan.

This insight also contributes to the broader discussion in the field of Global Englishes, where English is often seen not just as a lingua franca but as a tool of social differentiation and discrimination. This study contributes to the growing recognition of the neocolonial effects of English and how its dominance perpetuates global inequalities (Canagarajah, 2012). The teachers' internalized views of English as a marker of education and intelligence reflect broader societal attitudes that equate fluent English with prestige and success, while those without it are marginalized.

In terms of teacher identity, the study contributes to the growing body of research that examines how language teachers' identities are shaped by both personal experiences and external pressures. Lortie's (1975) concept of the "apprenticeship of observation", in which teachers develop beliefs about teaching based on their experiences as students, is clearly reflected in the data. Teachers in this study expressed a deep-seated belief that their role was to ensure students' proficiency in English, even when they acknowledged the complications this created regarding their cultural identity as Pakistanis.

This study also deepens our understanding of how colonial legacies continue to shape teacher identity in postcolonial contexts. The teachers in Pakistan, as explored in Rehman's (2013) work, demonstrate a hybrid identity that reflects the tension between their professional roles as English teachers and their national identity as Pakistanis. These teachers, much like those in other former colonies, often found themselves caught between embracing English as a tool for advancement and resisting it as a symbol of colonial oppression. This study reaffirms the notion that English teaching in postcolonial contexts is not simply an academic task but is entangled with issues of identity, power, and politics.

Additionally, the study confirms and extends previous research (e.g., Haider, 2018; Bourdieu, 1991) which suggests that fluency in English is often seen as synonymous with intelligence and education in Pakistan. This perception creates a dichotomy where those without English proficiency are often viewed as uneducated, a notion reinforced by teachers themselves. In this context, English fluency becomes a significant marker of social and economic status, further entrenching class divisions in Pakistan, as observed in the study's findings. This reaffirms Lippi-Green's (2012) argument that English language proficiency is intricately linked to societal power structures, where linguistic capital determines one's place in the social hierarchy.

In conclusion, this study contributes significantly to the scholarship on global Englishes and teacher identity by confirming existing patterns of linguistic imperialism, hybrid identity, and the sociopolitical significance of English in postcolonial contexts. It offers new insights into the complexities of teacher identity in a globalized world where the expectations for English proficiency often conflict with local cultural values and national identity. By exploring the lived experiences of English teachers in Pakistan, the study highlights the challenges faced by educators in navigating the pressures of global English while simultaneously maintaining a sense of local and national identity.

The study's findings also point to practical implications for teacher education programs. There is a clear need for training programs that help teachers navigate the tension between English as a global language and the importance of local language preservation. Additionally, this study encourages further exploration of linguistic hybridity in classrooms where English is taught as a second language, suggesting that such approaches may better reflect the realities of multilingual societies like Pakistan.

8.4 Future Directions

This study can serve as a springboard for many future studies. Pakistan, as a developing country, needs extensive research in the field of education. One of the first steps any developing country must take towards progress is to focus on improving the quality of education. This study highlights the issues in the teaching of English in both the private and public sectors of schools in Pakistan. It also highlights the general issues with the education system in Pakistan. Scholars and researchers in Pakistan and abroad interested in studying the gaps in school education in

Pakistan can build on this research and design studies to look into specific areas that this one did not address.

The sample size of this study was small. A similar study could be conducted with a much larger sample size using different methods for data collection. The perceptions of English teachers in Pakistan is not a well-researched area. As stated previously, with the importance and dominance English has in the country, for any educational reforms to be effective, the perceptions and beliefs of English teachers must be considered. A longitudinal study with a larger sample size investigating English teachers' perceptions and beliefs will be very helpful in thinking about educational reforms.

Additionally, this study can also be used by those interested in educational policy and reforms thereof. The findings of this study underscored several issues in policy that need attention. Local researchers in Pakistan can use the findings of this study as a starting point to ask questions about educational policy to look at factors that are contributing to dividing the Pakistani society more in terms of access to quality education. In a similar vein, researchers studying the progress and development in developing countries can also use the findings of this study as a starting point for their investigations about the state of the education system in Pakistan in general, and of teachers' satisfaction and challenges to be particular.

This study could also be used to explore correlations between issues surrounding ELL education and policies in the United States, where, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, 5.3 million students in the public school system are designated as ELLs (2021). Moreover, the ratio of minority students to teachers is 52:21% across the nation (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). While considerable research has explored the perceptions of ELL teachers in general, studies that examine the teaching and learning of English

in developing countries alongside those in the United States could highlight the global persistence of linguistic imperialism.

8.5 Conclusion

On the surface, this study identified issues surrounding English language teaching, the challenges English language teachers face, and problems within Pakistan's education system. However, on a deeper level, it revealed profound issues within Pakistani society that extend far beyond the mere teaching and learning of a language. It illuminated how the people of Pakistan view themselves, in relation to one another and the wider world. The study uncovered the deep cracks in the social fabric and structure of the country, where thoughts, perceptions, expectations, and practices often do not align.

In this context, English teaching and learning emerge as a metaphor for the pursuit of power and prestige in a society where power and prestige make the rules. This dynamic has contributed to a vicious cycle that seems inescapable. On one hand, there is a widespread obsession with English - seen as a marker of success, social status, and access to global opportunities. English, in this sense, is more than just a language; it is a symbol of social capital, a means of affirming one's position in a hierarchical society that places immense value on linguistic proficiency as a gateway to power.

On the other hand, there is a deep resistance, both overt and subtle, to the dominance of English within families, schools, and the larger society. This resistance manifests in various ways: in the refusal to fully embrace English at home, in the reluctance to endorse the English-only policy in some schools, and in the tensions that arise when the pursuit of English proficiency conflicts with cultural and social identities. While most see English as a necessary tool for upward mobility, there is also a palpable sense of alienation, where people feel

disconnected from their own roots, history, and identity when forced to conform to global linguistic norms. This creates a pull and push dynamic between the desire for social advancement and the need to preserve cultural heritage, resulting in a duality of obsession and resistance that permeates many aspects of life in Pakistan.

I believe that, in light of the issues highlighted by this study, Pakistani teachers, teacher educators, education administrators, and policymakers must begin to think critically about measures that could redirect this dynamic in a more equitable and sustainable direction. The obsession with English cannot be dismissed, but it must be balanced with an understanding of its social implications. At the same time, the resistance to English must be acknowledged, not as a rejection of progress, but as a call for a more inclusive and contextually relevant approach to language and education.

I am well aware that the problems identified in this study are not isolated to Pakistan alone. As summarized in the literature review, many other developing countries, especially former colonies, face similar issues. Scholars from these countries have already started to collaborate and raise awareness about these concerns. It is now time for policymakers in these countries to come together and engage in dialogue about how to address these systemic issues. The goal should be to ensure equity, justice, and inclusivity in education, while also recognizing the importance of cultural preservation in the face of globalization.

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