



RESEARCH PAPER

Attitudes and L2 Motivation among Burushaski-native Learners of Urdu

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ABSTRACT

The attitudes towards a particular language, be it a first or a second/foreign language, are a potential reflection of its standing in the social hierarchy of languages. The study aimed to investigate the attitudes of young Burushaski-natives towards Burushaski and Urdu as a second language as well as their L2 Motivational Self System. Employing a quantitative approach, attitude and motivation data were elicited through adaptations of Attitude/Motivation Test Battery and Dörnyei's Attitude/Motivation questionnaire. Results suggested that Urdu held a significant instrumental value while Burushaski was considered culturally important. It was also found that both attitudinal and motivational scales included may not have been measuring distinct constructs of motivation for learning Urdu, suggesting invalidity of Dörnyei's model. However, the socio-contextual scale of national interest proved to be an effective contributor in overall L2 motivation.

KEYWORDS Attitudes, L2 Motivational Self System, Motivational Scales

Introduction

Attitudes towards a language reflect the social standing and value of a language as well as the perceived position of the associated linguistic community. Language attitude research, with its roots lying in the field of social psychology (Baker, 1992), can be traced back to the mid-20th century. Along with the language attitude research, motivation to learn a second or foreign language has also been one of the prime points of scrutiny for linguists. The early attitude research led to the formulation of the Socio-educational Model which suggests that four classes of motivational variables are at work in shaping attitudes towards a language: *social milieu*, *individual differences*, *acquisition contexts* and *linguistic outcomes*. According to this model, attitudes influence motivation and motivation affects achievement, which in turn affects attitudes forming a continuous cycle (Gardner 1979, as cited in Gardner, 2001). Further, Gardner (2000) added another idea that along with the previously mentioned motivational variables, wanting to integrate with the target linguistic community and attitudes towards the learning situation are also collectively effective. This motivation, in turn, influences language achievement leading to better competence and performance. To test this model, researchers used many techniques out of which a prominent one was Spolsky's Indirect Identity Scale (1969). It elicits indirect ratings on languages through a list of traits associated with the respective linguistic communities. An Attitude Motivation Test Battery or AMTB was developed to test the adequacy of the theory (Gardner & Smythe, 1981).

With time, the focus shifted to the concept of motivation to learn an L2. A recent advancement in the field is the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). It suggests that that motivational system working in acquiring a second language consists of subsystems of *instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, need for achievement and attributions about past failures in language learning* (Dörnyei, 1990). Later, the concept of integrative motivation was substituted with *ideal self* and *ought-to L2 self*, suggesting that if a learner's ideal self has mastered the target language, the learner himself/herself is also more likely to attain competency. Furthermore, the model suggests that the ought-to L2 self which reflects external expectations for attainment of competency also leads to actual increase in proficiency in the target language (Dörnyei as cited in Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005). To measure these different sub-factors of motivation, Dörnyei formulated an attitude/motivation questionnaire which encapsulated statement-based Likert scale items (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002).

The present study has targeted a linguistic minority, Burushaski-natives of Hunza, within Pakistan to investigate their attitudes towards their L1 and L2 (Urdu). Another aim of the study was to test the L2MSS on the group to establish its validity in the context of Urdu as a second language. One of the four dialects of Burushaski language is spoken by one-third of the population in the district of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan (Kreutzmann, 1993). In this community, Urdu is usually learned as a second language both formally (in school) and informally (through exposure to different forms of media and interactions with tourists). The usage and importance of this language is both educational and occupational for the local community (Harlech-Jones, 2005). This study sheds light on the multilingualistic situation of this community as well as the existence of Urdu as a second language within non-Urdu dominant regions of Pakistan. Using the AMTB and Dörnyei's attitude/motivation questionnaire, it also probes deeper into the minds of Burushaski-natives, exploring their general attitudes towards languages around them, as well as testing Dörnyei's L2MSS in the given context.

Literature Review

After the formulation of the Socio-educational Model, AMTB has been employed to study L2 attitudes across various contexts. Clément, Gardner and Smythe (1977 a; 1977 b) tested the model first in the European context and found attitudes and motivation to be correlated confirming Gardner's propositions. Similar findings were seen in a study on American-Mexican learners of English (Oller, Baca & Vigil, 1977). In the past, the model has been successfully applied on the Asian and several South-Asian contexts (Raza, 2015; Furrakh & Zafar, 2018; Mansoor, 1993). Mansoor's study (1993) is of paramount interest because it investigated attitudes towards English, Urdu, and Punjabi languages among young students in Punjab using AMTB. It connected high instrumental value with English while Urdu and Punjabi seemed to have a greater integrative importance. In case of linguistic minority such as the people of Hunza, it is possible that Urdu plays a different role as compared to that in Punjab.

In case of learners of Chinese (Wang & Du, 2020), it was found that motivation and integrativeness were not two separable entities but rather a general motivational construct. Due to such examples, the concept of integrativeness has received some criticism as well. To test the continued relevance of the socio-educational model, especially the concept of integrativeness, Malaysian high school students learning English was analyzed and results negated the theoretical objections, indicating the presence of integrativeness and its components in this particular L2 setting (Rock et al., 2021). In case of Hunza, the locals' interaction with the Urdu natives/speakers has drastically increased owing to the recent

surge in domestic tourism and hence it is expected that integrativeness may remain a relevant scale to measure L2 attitudes.

A Korean study (Kim & Pae, 2018) on high school EFL learners suggested that the attitudes towards learning English and subjective norms made a significant and independent contribution to the intent to learn. The existing literature suggests an interesting pattern of integrativeness depending on L2. The recent ESL/EFL studies show integrativeness as a separate and independent motivational scale, however, in case of L2 other than English (Chinese and Spanish), the scale loses its independence. In such circumstances, the integrative power of Urdu as a second language in this context may bring clarity regarding consistency of the suggested pattern.

In order to test the L2MSS, the attitude/motivation questionnaire or its adaptations have been employed in both Western and Eastern contexts. Early research done on European populations (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; You, Dörnyei & Csizér, 2016) provided support for the model. When tested on Asian populations, it also provided confirmatory evidence (Taguchi, Magid & Papi, 2009; Papi, 2010; Rajab, Far & Etmadzadeh, 2012; Ghanizadeh & Rostami, 2015; Maleki & Haghani, 2018). Islam, Lamb and Chambers (2013) studied Pakistani undergraduate students' motivation in the light of L2MSS. One of the primary aims was to test the validity of the model as well as to capture context-specific motivational factors. Through results of this study, not only was the model validated in Pakistani context, a new motivational scale, National Interest, was formulated to get an in-depth view of L2 motivation within the research context and was proven to be an important socio-contextual motivational sub-factor. Given the uniqueness of the current context of study, national interest could be a potential motivational factor for Urdu language because it is generally associated with patriotism and national harmony.

Most of the L2MSS research previously focused on ESL but the possibility of its application on languages other than English has recently gained interest. A study (Oakes & Howard, 2019) exploring L2MSS through a cross-linguistic lens suggested that the framework is relevant in case of French as a second language, however, additional motivational constructs (such as Islam's National Interest) may also be at play in case of languages other than English. By far, Urdu has not been studied within the framework of L2MSS but it seems to be valid in case of many second languages other than English.

Material and Methods

The study has used a quantitative approach to investigate attitudes and motivation. Data collected through rating questionnaires has been the most common method used in attitude studies (Agheyisi & Fishman, 1970). This method was befitting as our main research objectives were evaluative and descriptive, focusing on empirical validation for the applied model as well as to provide a general picture of the target community's linguistic attitudes and to shed light on motivational factors behind the acquisition of Urdu.

The target population for this study was defined as the Burushaski-native *educated youth* of Hunza, operationalised as the individuals who lie between the ages of 16 and 30, have higher than secondary level education and are fluent in Urdu. This group was chosen as among the Burushaski speakers in Hunza as it may be the most exposed to Urdu based on both instrumental and integrative reasons.

The process of sample selection was conducted in two steps. First, the *LEAP-Q or Language Experience and Proficiency Questionnaire* (Marian et al., 2007) was administered to

a larger selection of purposively selected sample, and then the sample was filtered based on proficiency levels of Urdu as established by the authors of LEAP-Q (see Appendix A). The purpose behind this was to ensure that the sample is fluent in Urdu and uses it on a regular basis. In the second step, attitude/motivation questionnaire was administered to the filtered sample. This questionnaire was designed to elicit information on the participants' general attitudes towards Burushaski and Urdu as well as their motivation towards learning Urdu as a second language (see Appendix B). Both questionnaires were administered via Google Forms as the research project was conducted during the COVID pandemic and in-person data gathering was not safe for the researcher.

The items in questionnaire were adapted from two Pakistan-based research studies (Mansoor, 1993; Islam, 2013), both these studies were conducted on students enrolled in educational institutions in Punjab. Hence, some changes were made in the items to make them suitable for the context of Hunza as well as the range of the sample which included professionals/working persons along with students. A few newly constructed items were also included (see Appendix B) to make the questionnaire befitting to the research context.

Initially, the questionnaire was piloted by administering it to fifteen people from the sample. The first part of the questionnaire deals with general attitudes towards languages and linguistic communities and had to be dealt with descriptive statistics. However, the motivation-related section of the questionnaire required an evaluation on reliability; hence, the pilot data was entered into SPSS for a reliability test. The values of Cornbach's alpha (α) for all motivational elements were calculated are shown in Appendix C. Dörnyei (2007) states that the values of α between 0.6 to 0.7 are sufficient in applied linguistics research, hence this scale was used to evaluate the internal reliability of the questionnaire. The values of α for the scales ought-to L2 self, ideal L2 self and instrumentality-promotion fell in the ideal range. However, for the rest of the scales, the values of *Cornbach's alpha if item deleted* were considered and those items were rephrased to rectify the issue. In case of the scale of integrativeness, where the value of the coefficient was exceptionally low, it was decided to keep the scale in the questionnaire due to its traditional importance in L2 motivational research. However, all three items were rephrased to bring some uniformity within the scale. The attitude/motivation questionnaire was then administered to 301 persons and the collected data was then statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-tests, correlation analyses and covariance analyses.

Results and Discussion

General Attitudes towards Burushaski and Urdu

One of the aims of the study was to investigate the general attitudes the participants have towards Burushaski and Urdu. Table 1 demonstrates that Burushaski was rated highest on usefulness, intelligence and being a cultured language, but it was rated lower with regard to standard of living (2.13). The high ratings of Burushaski and the associated community indicate the possibility that the participants may have a very strong sense of ethno-linguistic identity centered in Burushaski. The Urdu-speaking participants in Mansoor's (1993) study also showed positive attitudes and integrative orientation towards their L1, a possible interpretation of which could have been the existence of a strong linguistic identity. However, the Punjabi students displayed negative attitudes towards Punjabi on both instrumentality and integration in Mansoor's study which may indicate towards non-uniformity in the role of L1 in forming linguistic identities in different regions of Pakistan. A study conducted in Sindh (Khokhar et al., 2016) also suggests that people's identities may be complex where speaking different languages in different contexts may

be an overall reflection of their identities; hence in case of our sample, successive in-depth confirmatory studies may lead to more convincing findings on the linguistic identities.

Table 1
Summary of Mean Scores on Identity Scale Traits for Languages

No.	Traits	Burushaski		Urdu	
		Mean	S. D.	Mean	S.D.
1	Useful	4.14	1.06	4.07	1.01
2	Prestigious	2.96	1.17	2.70	1.04
3	Easy	2.36	1.47	2.61	1.05
4	Honor	3.23	0.98	2.72	0.99
5	Interesting	3.08	1.22	2.81	1.10
6	Rich	2.87	1.17	2.78	1.09
7	Modern	2.91	1.21	3.00	1.08
8	Social Grace	3.00	1.03	2.74	1.04
9	Clear	2.24	1.31	2.42	1.12
10	Successful	3.67	1.04	3.92	0.97
11	Open (frank)	3.98	1.05	3.56	1.04
12	Intelligent	4.09	1.03	3.99	0.93
13	Independent	3.75	1.23	3.71	1.09
14	Cultured	4.09	1.07	4.01	0.94
15	Reliable	2.92	1.16	2.68	1.04
16	High Standard of Living	2.13	0.89	2.33	1.00
17	Attractive	2.97	1.14	2.66	1.06
18	Impressive	4.18	1.01	3.94	0.97
19	Bright Future	2.72	1.15	2.77	1.06

Regarding attitudes towards Urdu, it was seen that the language was rated high on usefulness and being cultured whereas it was rated the lowest on the standard of living (2.33). These results may point towards the participants' association of Urdu with lower quality lifestyle. Urdu has been a source of nationwide connection (Abbas et al., 2018) and has remained a prevalent language in Pakistan after partition (Husain, 2012). Hence, the value the participants seem to attach with Urdu for its usefulness could be explained by the importance it holds as the lingua franca of Pakistan. Abbas et al. (2018) also found that people may associate cultural and literary value to Urdu. The results obtained on the trait of culture in our study ascertain these findings as Urdu was rated high on this particular trait. Mansoor (1993) also found that Punjabi students rated Urdu very high on usefulness and both Urdu and Punjabi speakers attributed positive attitudes to Urdu mostly based on it being cultured and having aesthetic value.

Motivation to Learn Urdu among Burushaski Speakers

One of the major aims of this study was to investigate the general strength of motivation in the participants for learning English and Urdu and to make a comparison of various motivational scales in terms of their over-all contribution to motivation. The results of the descriptive statistical analysis (Table 2) demonstrate that the participants show very high levels of motivation (more than 4.00 on the 6-point scale) on all motivational scales for Urdu.

Table 2
Mean Values of Scores on Motivational Scales - Urdu

Scales	Mean	Standard Deviation
Ought-to L2 Self	4.340	1.193

Ideal L2 Self	4.486	1.072
Instrumentality-Promotion	4.495	1.131
Instrumentality-Prevention	4.305	1.224
Cultural Interest	4.523	0.997
Integrativeness	4.643	0.987
National Interest	4.764	1.168

The motivational scales of instrumentality-promotion, ideal L2 self and national interest had the highest mean values (see Table 2). Based on these results, it seems likely that for the youth of Hunza, Urdu has some practical value in their idea of future successful selves and it holds a significant importance to them in terms of its social contributions as the national language. Moreover, Urdu also seemed to be perceived as a tool for creating unity among the diverse ethno-linguistic groups within Pakistan as well as with foreign groups which is in line with the findings of Abbas et al. (2018). Garcia (2015) has suggested that in addition to holding value as a national language, Urdu is also a class-marker and a political language, especially of the right wing within Pakistan. Hence, it would be remiss not to mention that all the factors mentioned above could contribute to motivation for learning Urdu as a second language.

Furrakh and Zafar's (2018) study on motivation in Punjabi students showed that the respondents related integrative motivation with Urdu and Punjabi while instrumental motivation was associated with English. Similar results were found by Mansoor (1993) on attitudes of Urdu-speaking and Punjabi-speaking students towards Urdu. The findings of the present study suggest a high level of instrumental motivation in case of Urdu. The difference between motivational aspects of Punjabi and Hunzai youth towards Urdu may be a result of the recent tourism boost in Hunza which may have led to an increase in the instrumental value of Urdu. Another possible explanation could be that the Burushaski-speaking community is strongly connected to its culture and roots and hence finds it difficult to be able to integrate with other Pakistani communities on a cultural level but is willing to acquire Urdu for instrumental reasons. In addition to this, past research (Flowerday, 2007) has suggested that the population of Hunza is undergoing a major cultural shift because of the rising intercultural transactions, such as exchange of media, with urban populations. Hence, it can be said that there exists a possibility that the Burushaski speakers may associate integrative value to Urdu along with the instrumental value that it already seems to possess in their case.

Interconnections among Scales Measuring L2 Motivation for Urdu

The linear covariances among all scales (see Table 3) were positive and strong which suggests a greater deal of interconnection among the motivational scales involved. The strong covariance values between the attitudinal scales and motivational scales may suggest that positive attitudes towards Urdu language have a role in inclusion of Urdu fluency in future self-image of the youth of Hunza.

The strongest relation (1.00) was found between Instrumentality-prevention and ought-to L2 self which implies that the sample feels an obligation from the society to ensure that lack of Urdu proficiency does not hinder their success. Similarly, the strong relation between motivational self scales and instrumentality-promotion suggests that the population may have a sense of obligation to improve their Urdu fluency in order to meet the internal and external expectations of an ideal self. The higher value of covariance between the two motivational self scales (.801) implies that their ideas of future-self corroborate greatly with the society's expectations of their future. However, this higher value of covariance also indicates an overlap in the components of L2 motivation. This

could be because these two scales tend to measure same aspects of L2 motivational self put forth by Dörnyei. Hence there was a little overlap between motivational self scales in case of Urdu suggesting that the scales may not have been measuring distinct constructs of motivation for learning Urdu. The covariance between all attitudinal scales (Table 3) were very strong suggesting that they may overlap in eliciting attitudinal data on motivation for learning Urdu. However, the higher values of these covariances suggest that the scales may not qualify for being able to measure different sub-factors within the attitudinal scale but may be contributing to it.

Table 3
Covariance Matrix of the Motivational Scales for Urdu

Scales	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Ought-to L2 Self							
2 Ideal L2 self	.801						
3 Instrumentality (Promotion)	.944	.935					
4 Instrumentality (Prevention)	1.00	.842	.953				
5 Cultural Interest	.818	.936	.897	.802			
6 Integrativeness	.728	.666	.788	.660	.827		
7 National Interest	.778	.869	.863	.770	.820	.550	

Interestingly, the socio-contextual scale of national interest had strong linear relation with ideal L2 self and instrumentality-promotion which may suggest that learning Urdu to contribute to the development of the country is an aspect of their idea of a better self and a form of moving forward in the society. A relatively weaker relation between integrativeness and national interest may suggest that the youth of Hunza is not as keen on acculturating with the Urdu speakers; however, they may still have a strong sense of nationalism for their country entrenched into their identities.

Furthermore, the two types of instrumentality seem to have a greater contribution to L2 motivation. Since this is the first study in Pakistani context that explores attitudes and motivation towards Urdu as a second language in the light of Dörnyei's Model of L2MSS, a referential study for comparative analysis could not be obtained. However, a greater understanding of Urdu in the light of L2 motivational self can be achieved by repeating the study in other (similar) linguistic communities within Pakistan.

Conclusion

Regarding the research objectives stated at the beginning, it can be concluded that Urdu holds a significant instrumental value for Burushaski natives, whereas a great deal of cultural value is associated with Burushaski. The L2 heavily influences the career orientation and successful selves of the Burushaski natives. In terms of the L2 motivation of the sample, all motivational scales seemed to have strong positive linear relationships with one another suggesting that all scales actively contribute to overall motivation for learning Urdu as a second language.

Another objective was to validate the L2MSS model and to investigate linear relationships among the motivational scales. The study revealed that both L2 motivational-self components, ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self, are reliable contributors in motivation

for learning. However, some overlap existed between the two scales, suggesting that the scales are not independent and do not measure distinct constructs, invalidating the L2MSS in case of Urdu.

The newly constructed scale of national interest was also a strong contributor to overall motivation in Burushaski-speakers to learn Urdu. It is also interlinked with other forms of motivation, both attitudinal and motivational, in Burushaski-native youth's inclination towards learning Urdu. Regarding the motivational constructs, it can be concluded that all motivational constructs included in this study contribute to overall motivation. Instrumentality-promotion and national interest are the strongest contributors to motivation for learning Urdu.

Recommendations

To the best of our knowledge, the current study is the first to investigate language attitudes of Burushaski-natives; hence, it only provides a basic understanding of the linguistic situation of Hunza. In this case, it is inevitable for some methodological limitations to exist. One of the methodological limitations is that the study relies purely on quantitative data, therefore a qualitative triangulation or a mixed-methods approach to investigate the language attitudes within Hunza would provide a clearer picture of the linguistic situation therein. Another methodological limitation was the size of the sample. Hunza is a small district, where only one-third of the population is Burushaski-speaking, due to which a small sample of 200 people appears to be fitting; however, a large-scale survey with the inclusion of more demographic variables, such as marital status, will potentially produce even more reliable and generalizable data on the language attitudes of the region.

Hunza is an amalgam of multiple linguistic groups, and it would be remiss if the comparative linguistic data, both synchronic and diachronic, is not obtained and analyzed. Hence, a comparative study of attitudes of and towards different dialects of Burushaski and a comparative analysis of attitudes towards Burushaski and other languages at different points in time will further pave way for understanding this particular, and other similar, linguistic/ethnic minority communities in Pakistan.

Since this is the first study to investigate Urdu in the light of L2 motivational self-system and to investigate a Pakistani linguistic minority community, successive studies expanding the L2MSS through further validation will provide a new perspective for studying Urdu as a second language within Pakistan.

The present study employed a limited number of scales chosen from an item pool, to assess motivation and motivational self, among which there were two motivational-self scales, four attitudinal scales and one socio-contextual scale. Future research incorporating more scales for assessment of motivation will not only add to the existing knowledge in L2 motivation but will also clarify the ever so convoluted situation of learning second languages for instrumental and integrative purposes among linguistic minorities in Pakistan. Every linguistic community is unique and keeping the conception of the new scale *national interest* for the Pakistani community (Islam, 2013) in mind, it is suggested that Burushaski community-specific scales will have massive potential of providing valid data on the community's linguistic motivations.

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