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LANGUAGE SHIFT FROM LASI INTO URDU: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION OF LASBELA COMMUNITY IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

This study investigates sociolinguistic changes from Lasi to Urdu in the Lasi-speaking community of Lasbela District, Balochistan, Pakistan. The research examined the primary reasons and trends, along with the conclusions of this change, highlighting economic, sociocultural, educational, and linguistic factors responsible for it. A qualitative analysis was conducted, including semi-structured interviews with 10 individuals who speak Lasi as a native language from Hub and Karachi. Thematic analysis of the data collected identified the primary factors responsible for this change. This research has found that education, cross-cultural marriages, migration, job demands, and the dominance of Urdu in urban areas have contributed to a sustained decline in the use of the Lasi language among youth in these areas. The study suggests that the Lasi language is on the brink of extinction unless necessary measures are taken to preserve it. This study provides insights into broader dynamics of language change in multilingual societies in Pakistan.

Keywords: *Language Change, Lasi language, Urdu Language, Sociolinguistics, Balochistan*

Introduction

Language plays a significant role in shaping cultural identity and facilitating interactions within societies (Abatbaevna, 2025). In multilingual countries such as Pakistan, language change is a common sociolinguistic phenomenon where minority languages are dominated by the preeminent languages (Naveed & Mehdi, 2025). Urdu, as the lingua franca in this region, holds significant value and functional importance across various fields such as media, education, and employment (Raza, Ahmad, et al., 2025). As a result, various local languages, such as Lasi, are steadily declining. This study examines the reasons, degree, and outcomes of the transition from Lasi to Urdu, emphasising the economic, educational, and sociocultural factors that affect linguistic practices in the Lasi community. Language shift is the process or occurrence where a society starts preferring dominant linguistic systems rather than its own regional languages.



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(Wirtz & Pickl, 2025). Language shift is a social phenomenon in which another replaces one language within communities for various reasons (Kulyk, 2024). This phenomenon occurs due to social influence, as people migrate from one area to another for various purposes. There are various reasons behind it.

Language shift refers to a situation in which a local community abandons its native language and adopts another dominant language (Alizai, 2021). This shift may be either temporary or permanent. Language shift is the replacement of one language with another for either social benefit or just under the effect of surroundings (Garret, 2006).

The focus of my study is to analyse the reasons for the language shift that Lasi speakers have experienced in Karachi, compared to the native speakers of Lasi. That is why I need to find this problem of language shift from Lasi into Urdu. For example, many Lasi speakers who lived in different parts of Bela and Uthal have migrated to Hub and Karachi many years ago, including Jamot, Ronjha, Mondara, and Khaskheli. So, it looks like a problem to me why these families have shifted their language to Urdu. Whether they have shifted Lasi into Urdu because of Education, trade or neighbourhood. Need to find out the reason for this problem, and that is the purpose of my research.

Background of the study

Culture is a complex phenomenon that may include knowledge, customs, actions, beliefs, human ideologies, and modes of human lifestyle. People without their culture are like a tree without its roots (Mesthrie, 2006). Pakistan is a land of diverse cultures, including people from different historical periods. The land has been invaded and occupied by many different nations at different times, including Arabs, Persians, Turks, Mongols, and many other groups. They brought different languages that are still used all over Pakistan (Arshad et al., 2012). Language is an essential part of culture that represents the people living in a society. Language is a roadmap of culture, defining where you belong and the actions you take.

Dutkova-Cope (2003) described language shift and language death as the replacement of one's native language with another dominant language. Preventions from the loss of the native language. According to them, language shift is not a day's work; it is a continuous process in which two languages come into contact and the weaker language disappears under the dominant. Banguis et al. (2025) related language death with socio-cultural, sociopolitical and psychological factors. According to his study, the Tarawara community in the village of Danna has replaced their language with Hindko. The communities have totally discontinued using their own languages in favour of Hindko.

Research questions

- What are the reasons for the language shift in the Lasi language?



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- How does the shift in languages affect the Lasi language?
- To what extent do these reasons cause permanent changes in the language shift in the Lasi language?

Literature Review

Language shift has been extensively studied within sociolinguistics. Fishman (1991) defines it as the process by which a community gradually abandons its native language in favour of another, often dominant, language. Holmes (2009) further notes that socio-economic pressures, educational policies, and attitudes toward prestige languages influence such shifts. In the Pakistani context, Rahman (2003) emphasises the dominance of Urdu and English as key factors driving linguistic homogenization. Studies on Punjabi and Sindhi communities. (Nazir, 2013) and Anjum (2016) have reported similar patterns, with younger generations increasingly preferring Urdu. However, limited scholarly attention has been given to the Lasi community, making this research a novel contribution to the field.

Language shift basically refers to the term ‘‘death of language’’ or when a group of people no longer uses language in a society. It is a long process which may involve sociological factors. Language shift can be explained when a society shifts its language to a more powerful or dominant language. Nazir (2013) researched language shift in the case of Punjabi in the Sargodha region. Punjabi language is the most spoken language in ok Pakistani community, with 44.15%, while other languages have speakers with 14.10% Sindhi, 10.53% Sirakhi, 7.57% Urdu and 3.57% Balochi (Grosjean’s, 1982). The survival of a language requires more and more speakers. The shift of language to an official or national language can be a threat to the mother language. Moreover, one of the most important problems is the language, which is declared to be more reputable and fluent. Most societies prefer prestigious language over non-prestigious language. There are many Pakistani researchers who have worked on language shift in their own native and non-native languages.

Sumeera Umarni (2016) investigated language shift and maintained a Pakistani–Scottish family based in Scotland. The main theme of the study was to observe the variation of pronunciation, grammar and even word replacement from one generation to the next. The familial dynamic evolved over the last decade, and the academic need has subsequently made the way for the language shift from the native language to English among families. Furthermore, language shift in any language can also be explained on structural and functional levels. Structural and functional elements are exchanged due to the dominance of the other language. The Punjabi language was actually being shifted due to academic reasons in the youth; they preferred to use codes and switch words. Three generations have totally shifted from Punjabi to English.

Sara Khan (2011) conducted research on language use and attitudes of British-born Pakistanis living in Manchester. In her study, she focused on language shift and language maintenance in bilingual communities and immigrants. Language shift (Lasi) is mainly caused when speaker



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of a particular community replace their language with the language of the host country. On the other hand, Lm (language maintenance) refers to the continuity of a heritage language within a community, which leads to a stable condition of bilingualism. The author also mentioned that Pakistanis in Manchester are a minority group. Among which mostly speakers are from Urdu and Punjabi (Pakistani). Manchester is a multi-lingual city. Where immigrants come from all over the world. Therefore, it was a better option for studying and understanding the language shift. The heritage language was less dominant than English. The British-born Pakistanis were more comfortable with English. It was clear from the author's point that all the minorities living in the city were fluent in English. That was causing harm to their native language. After 3 generations, the language had completely shifted to English.

Material and Method

In this analysis, the research design used is descriptive. The research approach is qualitative. To satisfy the need for analysis, the knowledge was thoroughly presented and adequately clarified where possible. According to Creswell (2007) a qualitative investigation has five distinct methods. Narrative, phenomenology, ethnography, case study and grounded theory are these methods.

In order to achieve research goals, this dissertation follows a descriptive analysis approach. This research seeks to find out the second and third generation language shift and the factors that triggered this shift from Lasi into Urdu. The researcher applied various processes to find out the reasons behind language shift by conducting various interviews and group discussions with the related speakers in order to complete this analysis. Questionnaires, formal interviews and observations were used to gather the information used in this study. Backing up the results of the questionnaire with details from other sources provides more weight to the findings. In addition, we are able to get more information about what language is used for what purposes by using such a method. The questionnaire was, however, updated in a way to best serve the intent of this research.

Data Collection

The primary and secondary data and the sources from which the data were obtained for this analysis are discussed in this section. The data were gathered from interactions in everyday life (with Lasi speakers). Most of the information, however, is from routine life conversation, as the necessary data, particularly the Lasi language, is rare in written form. As the researcher himself is a Lasi speaker, he speaks Lasi as his mother tongue.

In addition, we are able to get more information about what language is used for what purposes by using such a method. The questionnaire was, however, updated in a way to best serve the intent of this research. The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain various types of data on the subject's biographical history, language shift, language proficiency, and language attitude



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towards the Lasi language. The body of the questionnaire contains four main parts. The first segment consists of the following questions, such as name, age, gender, occupational and educational backgrounds, etc., intended to obtain some demographic data. There are 11 questions in the second section, the object of which is to investigate language use daily for various functions, i.e. talking to others, and invoking and communicating those personal feelings and attitudes. The third section was intended to elicit some attitudinal data on reasons for the adaptation of Urdu over their native language. The fourth section contains questions about language proficiency in Lasi and in the four main skills. In addition, a pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted prior to the final survey. Some vulnerabilities and limitations were revealed in the pre-test, which required improvements. Data were collected over a period from January to July 2020 via personal communications with the subjects. With the associates of four Lasbela and hub districts, part of the corpus was also collected.

It has been shown that the approach of using associates (Friends and relatives) from the same speech community is a valuable technique in data collection. We thoroughly instructed the associates in advance on how to use the regular questionnaire correctly. The reason we used associates from the same speech group among the interviewees was to secure further cooperation. To eliminate any external interference or bias in their responses, the interviews were conducted individually. Due to the absence of an official population census of lasi people from Hub and Karachi that distinguishes them in terms of age, gender, education, occupation, etc. and due to the fact that people in hub society are generally very worry of outsiders with whom they are unfamiliar or have not, at least, been introduced through a third party, there was no random collection of informants. In addition, we tried to diversify our sample in the best way possible according to the population, residential region, and socioeconomic status of the subject to obtain a representative sample of the Lasi speech group. Both quantitatively and qualitatively, data processing has been carried out. Percentages were used to suggest how often the participants use the language. To demonstrate the communicative tasks carried out using the two codes, qualitative research was also carried out.

Participants

The researcher selected data from native speakers of the Lasi language and particularly from 05 participants of native Lasi from Karachi and 05 participants from Hub. Lasi speakers were easily available. The participants' ages ranged from 32 to 41 years. For the selection of participants, as researchers felt comfortable/easy to use this sampling technique, the convenience sampling technique was used. All the participants were male as well as female, and chosen by convenience sampling technique, in which the researcher selected a sample based on participants who were readily available. The mixture of educated and uneducated participants was selected. We have selected fewer people; this is because of the pandemic situation, which prevented some participants from meeting us. The researcher collected data from the female participants, and because of tribal issues, husbands and brothers did not allow



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the researcher to collect data from each female participant. Because of this, the researcher faced several issues in collecting data from every individual, which compelled the researcher to restrict the data to only 10 participants from each city, Hub and Karachi. There were other domestic issues among people, which is why the researcher did not collect data from other people who have shifted their mother tongue, Lasi, into Urdu.

The sample

The current study is focused on information recorded from 10 respondents, all of whom are from Lasi Lasbela but have migrated from Lasbela in recent years. Most of them have lived for a long time in the district of Lasbela. Some cultural and social restrictions are due to the unequal gender distribution in the sample. In general, male researchers (i.e., strangers) are not permitted to interview female respondents in Lasi culture, so we have chosen female interview associates. Only male family members normally received and hosted male guests in the guest room. The reason behind this is to make it easier to compare the findings of this study with those linked to other minority groups. The data ultimately suffers from shortcomings. The comparatively low number was one of the drawbacks of this analysis. That is because, as said earlier, there was neither a possible nor an available random sample of informants; thus, these results cannot be generalised to the larger Lasi population. And it was not possible to study the usage of Lasbela in all language domains due to the restricted scope of this study. Since the use of Lasi is directly linked to power and solidarity issues, we have only been able to address a few reasons of power and solidarity here. For instance, in areas such as administration, industry, partying, and so on, we could not elicit data on the use of Lasi. Therefore, it seems possible that the data only provide a broad coverage of the linguistic situation among the Lasi speech population. It does, however, provide a valuable source of data on the course of language change and acculturation.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were analysed by applying a descriptive analytical paradigm. Various verbal questions have been asked of local speakers of the Lasi language in different areas of the Lasbela district and Karachi. Since the researcher was also a native speaker of the Lasi language, it was easy to analyse the collected data based on conversations with local speakers. Moreover, there is also some recorded data from the native speakers of Lasi. For data collection, this analysis used qualitative methods. Open-ended, in-depth interviews were the instrument for data collection. The interviews were semi-structured to explore language shift in Lasi.

Stimuli

The researcher examined the logical reasons for language shift and the dominance of Urdu over Lasi. The comparisons of the language shift from lasi into Urdu. The researcher has noticed several reasons behind the shift, and the researcher has gone through all the processes and methods by which the reasons were identified. The researcher also investigated the logic and



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reasons why people shifted their native language (Lasi) into Urdu. And also the participants were told about the benefits and advantages of the native language for the next generations. Because when the new generation was unaware of the native language, their identity would vanish, and they would not be able to adjust to the community. People are identified by the language they speak.

Ethical Consideration

All participants participated willingly and none of them was pressured to do so during the entire research process. However, all the participants were both male and female. In addition, the contributors were completely aware of the study's goals. In addition, none of the participants received any payment for their participation. No harm was caused to anyone's feelings and emotions.

Results and Discussions

This study is concerned with the language shift from lasi into Urdu. Lasi is the regional language of the district Lasbela, with the majority of speakers. The problem of the discussion is that the Lasi language is spoken by Lasi natives in the Lasbela district, but the shift of the language from Lasi into Urdu has raised a question in the researcher's mind. Urdu has no concern with lasi language but they have shifted it into Urdu it's because of several reasons. The study deals with sociolinguistics. The research was intended to ascertain the status of the Lasi language in the district of Lasbela, Balochistan, and to investigate whether the Lasi language in Lasbela, Balochistan, is maintained or whether a shift is taking place from the minor language Lasi into Urdu. The reasons behind the language shift were to adjust themselves in many different ways, for instance, the people who had shifted from Lasi into Urdu were those who had so many compulsions. The reason could be the dominance of the Urdu language in their neighbourhoods, the economy or at the workplace. Lasbela is considered to be the most populated area in the province of Balochistan, with the majority speakers of the Lasi language.

The present study discusses the language shift or maintenance of the Lasi language in the district of Lasbela, Balochistan. In view of this sociolinguistic context. The current study explores the magnitude of the reform or preservation of Lasi in the Balochistan province of Pakistan, and examines the language usage in some areas and the logical reasons behind this language shift.

Language shift is a long process influenced by a plethora of factors, many of which are sociological in nature. Language shift is mostly a slow, gradual process in which the cultural and linguistic attitudes of a group of people play a significant role in changing a stable linguistic situation in favour of one or more governing languages. The term Lasi language shift, as we are using it, does not denote the absolute migration of Lasi language speakers to other



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languages, but most often it is a shift in domains of language use with a particular set of practices.

Language shift occurs in the Balochistan province, and the Lasi community has maintained the following areas.

- A. Home domain: The Lasi language is used in homes where people feel ease and comfort while speaking in their mother tongue. Because when there is a shift in any language. It never starts from home; instead, it comes from the outdoor community, where other people do not understand the minor language. Then the shift occurs due to the purpose of communication with other majority language speakers. In the home, the usage of language with parents, brothers, sisters, and relatives does not bring a shift in the language. The same problem is with Lasi language. Some communities migrated to other places, and then their elders were compelled to shift language with their kids.
- B. School domain: People have maintained language in homes and the institutions where they go for study and job purposes. Maintaining language in some areas is more advantageous for the native lasi speakers. Because when a shift occurs, the language dies immediately. Usage of language in school, college, and University.

Workplace domain: Office contact, communicating with the public and correspondence. It is a good sign that some people did not shift their language wherever they work.

Table 1: List of selected cities.

S. N	Name of the city of respondents	Number of respondents	Total
1.	Karachi	5	
2.	Hub	5	10

Table 2Details of the sample size of respondents.

S.N	Professional background	Male Female	Total Selection
1.	Students (college-going and university)	3 male 3 female	06
2.	Household females	2 females	02
3.	Other working	2 males	02

Information of the 10 total respondents representing two districts is shown in Table 1 (5 respondents from each district were interviewed). In various social fields, the respondents were



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selected from both genders. In the study, 6 females and 4 males from each district participated. Out of the 10 respondents interviewed for the data collection process, two of them were female housewives, and 02 were male and employed by the government and private sectors. 06 respondents (3 males and 3 females) were students from different colleges and universities.

Data analysis

The researcher took into account the participants' perceptions of relationships with individuals, their views on local social practices and the resulting identity for the qualitative data study, similar to Norton (2000), in order to answer the questions from the study. A form of graphs that concentrates variables, the information derived from questionnaires is presented. The information derived from the interviews is incorporated into this study to provide the results with further clarity, consistency, and validity.

Table 3: Number of respondents speaking and understanding the Lasi language.

S.No	Languages	Number of respondents (speaking)	Number of respondents (understanding)
1	Urdu	9	9
2	Lasi	2	3
3.	Other languages	2	2

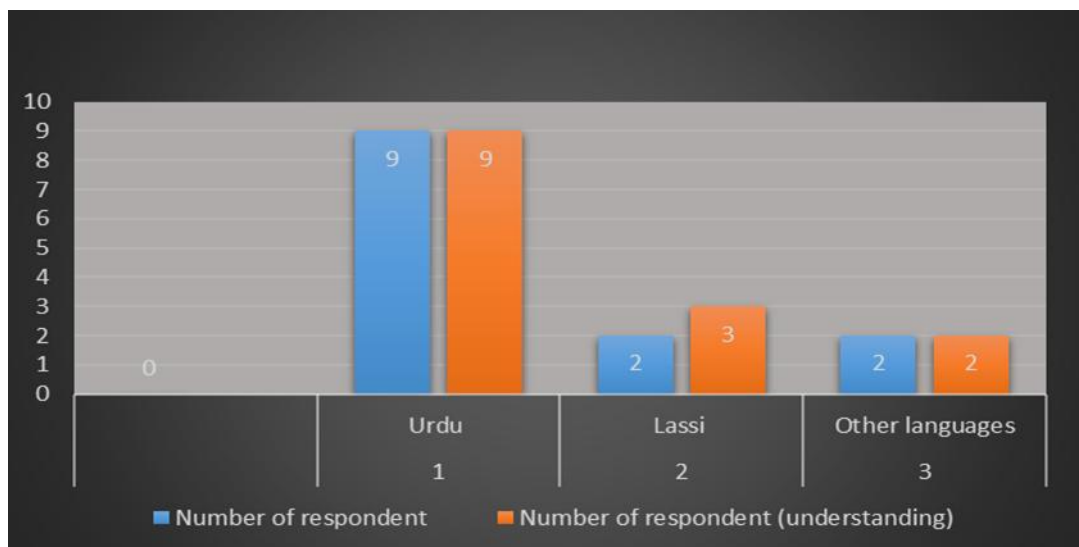


Figure 1: Number of respondents understanding and speaking the Lasi language.

To evaluate the respondent's views on the dominant language in Balochistan, this question was posed. Compared with Lasi, the dominant language in Balochistan, the majority consider Urdu



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to be the province's national language. Very few assumed English and Sindhi were the main languages. The strong role of the Urdu language, which the government's national support has acknowledged, has been acknowledged by the participants. They thought that Urdu is the main language. In addition, it seemed that many respondents had the lowest expectations of the vitality of the language. In addition, a reasonable reflection of the situation on the ground in Sindh province.

Table 3 clearly shows that there were 10 respondents from whom the interviews were conducted. The analysis asked participants whether they could speak or understand Urdu. 10 out of 10 responded that they can speak Urdu well, and they can understand it well. So the researcher came to know that all 10 participants can speak and understand the Urdu language. There were other Lasi speakers who had shifted their language into Urdu, but the researcher could not take interviews from them. It is because of the coronavirus condition, and most of the participants were females, and it was challenging to conduct an interview with all the females.

When the researcher asked the participants about the Lasi language, whether they can all speak or understand Lasi, their response was not negative; out of 10 participants, only two of them said they can speak Lasi. Eight participants said they do not speak Lasi at all. When the same participants were asked about their understanding of the Lasi language, 3 of them said they could understand Lasi well but could not speak it properly. Seven of them said they cannot understand it, which is why they use Urdu over the native Lasi language. Other languages were also being preferred e.g Lasi speakers can speak Balochi and Bravhi language. So out of ten only two participants responded that they can speak and understand Balochi and Bravhi language as well.

Table 4: Language used in the Education domain.

S.No	Languages	Schools, colleges	Universities
1.	Urdu	6	4
2.	English	2	8
3.	Lasi language	8	2



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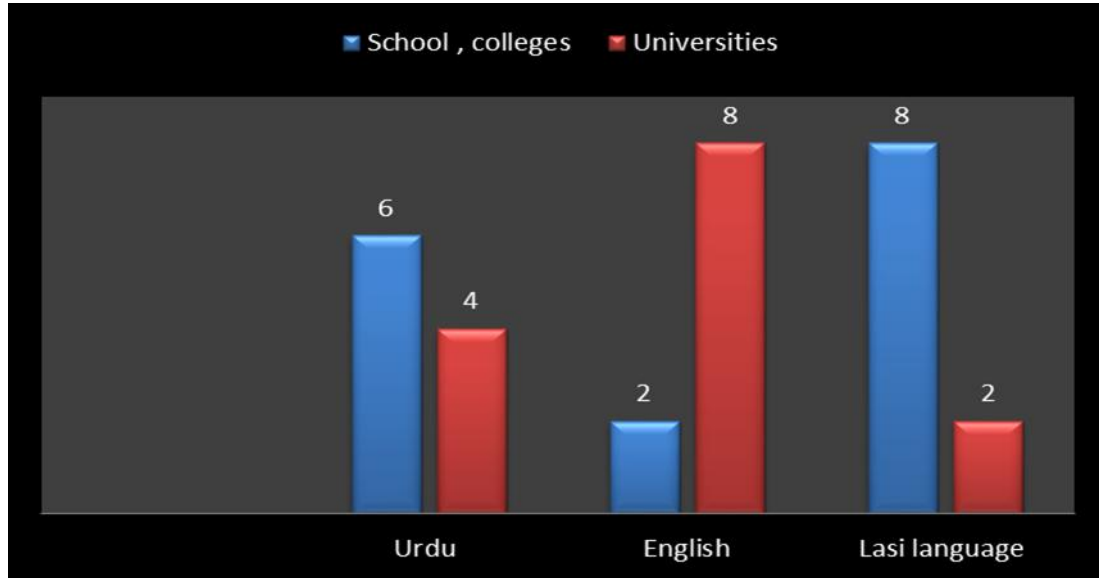


Figure 2: Language used in the Education domain.

Many participants use Urdu at their educational level. Pupils start to use different languages at the secondary level. Extra languages are not advantageous from an educational point of view; they are preferred and recommended. Increasing phenomena to acquire different kinds of languages. Lasi communities also seem to be aware of the instrumental function of different languages, for instance, Urdu and English. Most people are inclined towards Urdu and English because of their usage; most likely, these two languages are valued for worldly matters and for people's survival.

As shown in Table 4 and Figure 2, the data clearly illustrate the languages employed within the educational domain. The Urdu language was widely preferred in primary and secondary level Education. When the participants were asked about the usage of school and college-level Urdu medium, 6 participants said that they prefer Urdu, because when we use the Urdu language at school and college, it is because the students feel more at ease in speaking. Moreover, when the same 10 participants were asked by university students, 4 of them responded that they use the Urdu language with other students but with less preference. It all indicated that students in their institutions do not use their mother tongues, but rather prefer to use the national language. When it comes to international language (English), only two students of college responded that they prefer to use the English language; otherwise, the medium of instruction or medium of communication is the national language. Nevertheless, when it comes to higher education, 8 out of 10 respondents preferred English. So the ratio indicates that when the children grow up, they leave their national and mother tongue behind, and they prefer international languages. When the respondents were asked about the usage of the Lasi language at the school and college level, the ratio of speakers of Lasi was higher. It was because the students at the school and college levels prefer their mother tongue. Eight students said they



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use their mother tongue at school and college. But at the university level, only 2 participants said they speak the Lasi language; 8 said they do not use it. It shows that university-level students do not prefer their mother tongue, and that is the main reason for language death.

Table 5 Language use with relatives.

S.No	Languages	Speaking	Understanding
1	Urdu	5	5
2.	Lasi	2	8
3.	Other dominant languages	3	4

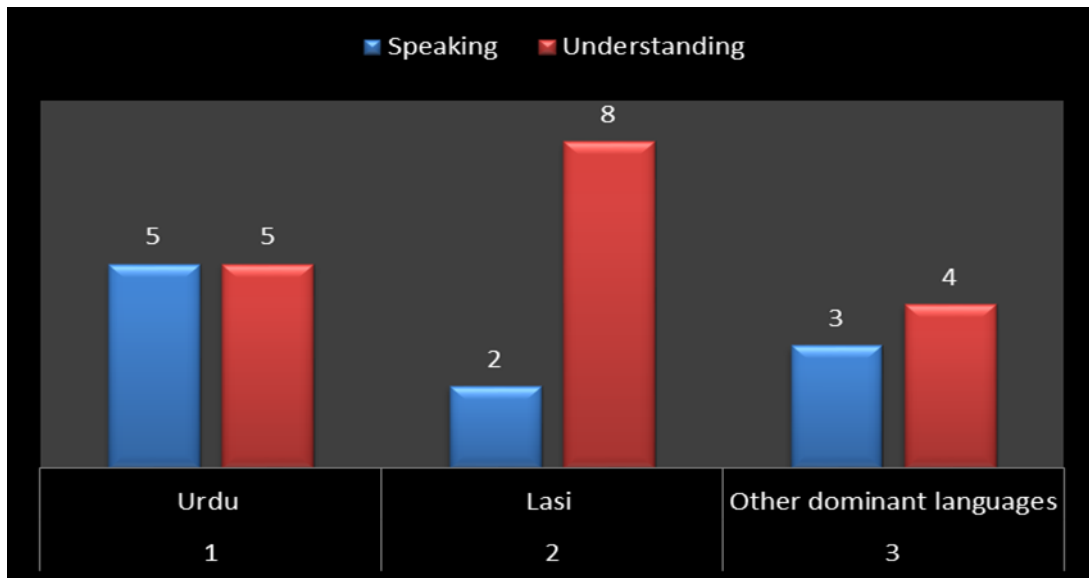


Figure 3: Language use with relatives.

Table 5 and Figure 3 clearly demonstrate that when the participants were asked about their ability to speak and understand Urdu. The 5 participants said that they can speak Urdu, and when the other 5 participants were asked about their understanding of Urdu with relatives, they said they could also understand it. Therefore, it shows that the Lasi people who have shifted their mother tongue into Urdu find it very easy when they interact with relatives. When the same participants were asked about the Lasi language usage with relatives, 2 participants responded that they speak Lasi with relatives. Eight of them said that they could understand Lasi when they communicate or interact with relatives, but they cannot speak. The ratio of understanding was higher than the speaking of the Lasi language, with their elders and with younger individuals; most respondents use the Urdu language instead of their mother tongue. However, three respondents said that they can speak other dominant languages in the area, e.g Balochi, Sindhi and Brahvi languages, and 4 of them said that they can understand other languages, in their voice, other dominant languages are also being used with relatives.



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Effects of language shift on the Lasi language

Many effects have affected lasi language. For instance, the new generation has totally shifted their language to Urdu. In addition, the language is almost finished, even though they can understand the language, but they are unable to speak it. Many of them are using Urdu and English in their daily conversations. A language is often declared dead even before the language has died. If there are only a few elderly speakers of a language that remains, and they no longer use that language for communication, then the language that has reached such a reduced stage of use is generally considered weak. Half of the spoken languages of the world are not being taught to new generations of children, who are being socialised into it as their primary language. The process of transmission ends, and the language itself will not survive past the current generation. This is rarely a sudden event, but a slow process of each generation learning less and less of the language, until. Its use is relegated to the domain of traditional use, such as in poetry and song.

Language death can be fast when the reasons are such as work opportunities and social status. Many children are being taught a lingua franca with English. To this end, language shift, also known as language assimilation, is the process whereby a speech community of a language shifts to speaking another language. Often, languages that are perceived to be of higher status stabilise or spread at the expense of other languages that are perceived by their own speakers to be of lower status.

Some general factors that prevent language death are that there must be a dominant culture that favours linguistic diversity. The endangered community must possess an ethnic identity that is strong enough to encourage language preservation. The creation and promotion of programs that educate students on the endangered language and culture. There must be language materials created that are easy for people to use. The language must have written materials that encompass new and traditional content. The language must be used in new environments, and the areas where the language is used, both old and new, must be strengthened.

Language shift denotes the continuing use of a language in the face of competition from a regionally and socially more powerful language. Language gets affected when there is no continuation or maintenance of the native language. The main issue with language shift is that people do not maintain their mother tongue, and when they do not maintain it, then it automatically vanishes. Therefore, the main concern of all local speakers of mother tongues is to maintain their own language so that other dominant languages do not affect it. The same case is with Lasi speakers who have migrated from Lasbela to Karachi, and when they settled there. They did not bother to maintain their mother tongue.

Discussion

This study explores the sociolinguistic phenomenon of language shift from Lasi to Urdu within the Lasi-speaking community of Lasbela, Balochistan, and parts of Sindh, Pakistan. Migration



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for education, trade, health, and employment has significantly influenced this linguistic transformation. When communities migrate, they not only lose their native tongue but also key elements of their cultural identity. Language serves as a fundamental indicator of identity, and its disappearance indicates cultural loss. Numerous Lasi speakers, driven by social and economic influences, have slowly transitioned from their native language to Urdu. Although Urdu serves as a means of national unity and social advancement, the diminishing presence of Lasi signifies a weakening of cultural foundations and linguistic diversity. Throughout the years, younger Lasi speakers have progressively embraced Urdu as their primary language, while the older generations still use Lasi in restricted areas. The results correspond with Holmes (2001), who emphasized how prevalent languages supplant local ones when associated with education, governance, and status.

The study utilized a qualitative methodology grounded in interviews with individuals from the Lasi community in Hub and Karachi. Participants discussed language use, preferences, and the factors influencing their linguistic decisions. Thematic analysis indicated that education, employment, migration, intermarriage, and governmental policies significantly influence language shift. Economic existence is among the most prominent reasons for changes in language. Holmes (2001) noted that career ambitions drive people to learn a second language. This change is apparent among the Lasi in urban areas such as Karachi and Hub, where job openings demand proficiency in Urdu. Phillips (2025) points out that linguistic influence is linked to resource access and social standing. Urdu, being the national and official language, offers such advantages, while Lasi lacks institutional support and prestige. As a result, families frequently speak Urdu at home, speeding up the intergenerational transfer of the primary language.

Migration and settlement trends also play a vital role. Romaine (1994) and Nahir (2003) describe how migration breaks linguistic continuity, with newcomers adjusting to the prevailing language in their new surroundings. Coulmas (2005) discovered that immigrant families generally transition to the language of the host country within three generations. This trend is evident among Lasi migrants, as first-generation speakers maintain fluency in Lasi while their children and grandchildren mainly communicate in Urdu. In city environments, parents frequently use Urdu with their children to promote social integration and academic achievement, resulting in slow language loss. While older individuals might maintain Lasi, the younger generations' encounters with Urdu via education and media reduce their skill and emotional bond with their heritage language.

Exogamous or mixed unions additionally aid in the transition. Holmes (2001) notes that intermarriage frequently speeds up language shift, as partners choose a shared language for everyday conversation—usually one that holds more prestige and wider understanding. In cities such as Hub and Karachi, the majority of Lasi-non-Lasi couples communicate in Urdu, leading to children who become monolingual in Urdu. Saville-Troike (1989) emphasises the



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importance of women in language preservation: uneducated and housebound women generally maintain their first language, while educated, socially engaged women encourage bilingualism and frequently support the dominant language. Within Lasi families, this latter trend is noticeable, as educated mothers choose Urdu to improve their children's educational and social opportunities.

Government political elements also have an impact. State policy ensures that Urdu prevails in official communication, education, and media, sidelining regional languages such as Lasi. This supports Ali's 2025 claim that Pakistan's language policies favour Urdu and English, thereby strengthening linguistic hierarchy. Lasi continues to be marginalized from institutional spheres without state acknowledgement or educational inclusion. As a result, its speakers link Urdu to prestige, opportunities, and modernity. Conversely, Lasi is seen as a representation of rural backwardness, which further deters its adoption by young people. The decline of regional languages has therefore been sped up by the Pakistani government/s disregard. If regional languages were backed as in Malaysia, where several languages are officially acknowledged (Malay, Chinese, Tamil, and English), communities such as the Lasi could have preserved greater linguistic vitality.

Education serves a crucial factor in language evolution. Urdu and English primarily govern education, leaving regional languages out of the curricula. In Lasbela, students cannot progress in their studies without proficiency in Urdu and English. Holmes (2001) and Ali (2025) assert that these language policies pressure parents to emphasize dominant languages for their children's achievement. Additionally, the lack of a written script and educational resources for Lasi worsens its deterioration. Children who encounter Urdu in school and through media frequently experience embarrassment about their mother tongue, viewing it as lesser. Disciplinary actions in certain schools against using local languages strengthen these beliefs. Consequently, the intergenerational passing of Lasi is deteriorating, with only a handful of elders still skilled. Authority and status also influence language options. Individuals are drawn to languages that hold social status and practical importance. In Pakistan, the prevalence of Urdu in administration, education, and media has established it as a status symbol, whereas Lasi's absence in official contexts has led to its marginalization.

Religious impact also has a profound effect on language perceptions. (Trudgill 2000) Various sociolinguists stress that religion can create either linguistic uniformity or diversity, influenced by the cultural context. In Pakistan, the Arabic language is considered extremely important as the language of the Quran, while Urdu, the lingua franca of the country, acts as the common language for religious discussions across the country. In this way, Urdu language is associated not only to education and advancement but also to religion and ethical power, overshadowing regional languages in both religious and cultural areas. This intensifies the belief that Urdu is superior, causing many Lasi speakers to shift to Urdu from their native language.

The combined effect of these economic, religious, social, and political factors paves the way for a significant shift from Lasi to Urdu. The shift shows a wider culture of language uniformity



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in Pakistan, where small languages are at risk of extinction. Regardless, there is still hope for preservation. Initiatives for revitalization of languages driven by the community, bilingual schooling and the recording of oral traditions of regional languages can help preserve Lasi in the future. Fishman (1991) and Crystal (2000) stress that reversing language shift is possible when both the community and the government institutions work together for the revitalisation of regional languages with dedication. Without intentional efforts and actions, the Lasi language might continue to deteriorate, jeopardising an essential element of Pakistan's linguistic and cultural landscape.

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