Research Article

LANGUAGE SHIFT AND MAINTENANCE BY THE MEMBERS OF URDU SPEECH COMMUNITY IN ALIGARH: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The purpose of this study is to find out the different communicative pattern of the members of Urdu speech community in Aligarh. Another purpose of this study is to examine which language is more powerful and dominated language in a multilingual situation among the members of Urdu speech community in Aligarh.

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study is to posit some points touching to the particular style of speaking by the members of Syed speech community. This study also explains some points that how do they have maintain their identity on different linguistic levels.

This is a pilot research because it focuses a small group of people who belongs to a particular speech community among the Muslim of Urdu speech community in Aligarh.

The objective of the study is to show that how they people are linguistically marked amongst the Muslims which they are living with them but Syeds occupy a special place because of their some phonological distinctive features.

METHODOLOGY

The methods which is used in this research is an observational method. Participant are being observed by the Investigator in different social domains.

Data collection: This study has been conducted in February 2018. It takes six month span to complete the survey. Method which was used for the purpose of collecting the data is Lobov's Observer paradox. Fifty informants were participated in this study, twenty five male and twenty five female. Some tools which were used in the field are as follows:

1. Selection of the informant was not random; there were selected group of people who belong to a particular community.
2. Direct and indirect conversation.
3. Telephonic conversation.
4. Meetings in religious or marriage ceremony.
5. Direct observation method, people were observed by the observer when they don't know that they are being observed.

Data Analysis: data is recorded by the investigator with the help of tape recorder. After listening again and again to find out what are the peculiarities of their speech to make them different amongs Muslims as whole.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Trudgill asserts that (1974:32) "Sociolinguistics is the part of linguistics which is concerned with language as a social and cultural phenomenon. It investigates the field of language and society and has close connection with the social sciences, especially social psychology, anthropology, human geography and sociology."

Wardaugh (1998. p. 12) states that "sociolinguistics is concern with investigating the relationships between language and society with the goal being a better understanding of the

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structure of language and how languages function in communication." while Gumperz in Wardaugh (1998. p. 11} states that "sociolinguistics is an attempt to find correlations between social structure and linguistic structure and to observe any changes that occurs."

Sociolinguistics explores the relationship between linguistic elements and socio-cultural elements as each is capable to influence other. Many sociolinguists like Labav, Gumperz, Fishman, Mirloy etc. have worked to analyse this relationship. The approach of study under Sociolinguistics is differentiated into Micro and Macro- sociolinguistics. Columas (1997) defines Micro –Sociolinguistics as social dimensions of language and Macro –Sociolinguistics as linguistic dimensions of society. In micro- Sociolinguistics research, the emphasis is on language whereas macro- Sociolinguistics studies give importance to society. The present work comes under Macro-Sociolinguistics.

Language shift and maintenance

In language shift, one language is gradually replaced by another language in a minimum of one domain of life (Clyne. 2003; Pandharipande. 1992), an example of which can be seen m the shift from Hungarian to German in Oberwart. Austria (Gal. 1979). Language maintenance, on the other hand, is a term used to describe a situation when a speech community keeps using the language in one life domain or more, although contact occurs with the mainstream language (Pauwels, 2004).A considerable number of language shift studies have focused on ethnic minority communities, where the mainstream language (i.e. the dominant one spoken by the majority) is in daily contact with the language spoken by the ethnic minority communities (the minority one). Clyne (2003) explains the emergence of language shift as "a product of pre-migration and post-migration experiences mediated through culture" (Clyne. 2003: 69). Nevertheless, language shift does not always occur as a result of migration. According to Fishman (1991) and Holmes (2001:51), certain "political, economic and social changes" can cause language shift in a non-migrant community. For example, in relation to the Maori in New Zealand (Fishman, 1991), the shift is a result of the contact between two languages, with one (English) being more powerful than the other (Maori). Michieka (2012) has argued that, in language contact, the language which is spoken by the more powerful speakers is more likely to be maintained than other languages, which gradually decline.

Collecting data in any language shift case is a demanding task for researchers for two reasons. Firstly, because of the "slow and cumulative" nature of the process of language shift (Fishman, 1991: 40), researchers experience difficulties in collecting data before and after the shift occurs (Fishman. 1991). Secondly, censuses, which are systematic procedures to collect personal information from a designated population, and are generally agreed to be an important research data collection method in this field, are often unreliable (Fishman, 1991) because they are mostly managed by institutions with vested interests of one kind 01 another.

The questions, the nature of the interviewees and the data may also serve a particular institution's agenda, and this may influence the accuracy of the data (Fishman. 1991). Moreover, these censuses may not reflect the true language status as they are mostly based on participants' self-estimation of their language practices (Pairwcls. 2004). Questionnaires and participant observation can also be used to indicate language shift in a speech community. Questionnaires may help by examining language use. proficiency and attitudes to the language. In addition, observing language choices in a speech community and the reasons behind these choices is another method of examining language shift/maintenance (Pauweis, 2004).Various classifications of language shift have been made (Clyne. 2003; Tandefelt, 1992). For example Tandefelt (1992) differentiated four types of language shift; partial, total, macro- and micro-level shifts. The first refers to the on-going process of language shift in the community. The second indicates the "point of no return" in language shift (Tandefelt. 1992: 151). Macro-level shift refers to the language shift of the whole community and finally, the micro-level shift refers to an individual's linguistic behaviour (Tandefelt, 1992:151).

Objectives of the study: The main objective of the present study is to highlight the linguistic features of a particular speech community.

- Another objective of my research is to show the linguistic Identity of a particular speech community in Aligarh.
- Members of Urdu speech community shift and maintain their mother tongue as per the different social contexts.
- The topic has not been taken yet.

Background

Historical background: Some historical facts about the Syed families are:

- They have well recorded history of kinship relationship to the Qabila-e-Banu Hashim in Saudi Arabia. They have a great command over the language before and after Islam.
- They occupy very important' post called Servant of Khana-e-Kaba which uplifts their social status amongst all the Muslims across the globe.

Introduction

- Syed Speech Community in Aligarh: A group of people who have come from the different parts of the country live together and share a common language in their community because they maintain their Identity.
- They share a common culture and religious beliefs.
- They are surrounded by different speech communities and languages such as Hindi, Urdu, English, Hindustani and most important dialect is Braj.

Speech community: Gumperz (1964), Regardless of the linguistic differences among them, the speech varieties employed within a speech community from a system because they are related to a shared set of social norms.

Lobov (1972: 120-1) The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the usage of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms: these norms my be observed in overt types of evaluative behavior, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage.

Identity

I think this is not an easy question. Identity is a very packed term that, apart from its literal meaning, can have a lot of connotations. Every person has some personal identity, as well as social and cultural identity, which means that they identify with or follow some specific values, traditions and points of view, not necessarily at the conscious level. As a student of linguistics I should also point out your linguistic identity which defines you as a language user belonging to a particular speech community, a professional group, family background and as an individual who has his/her own unique way of expressing themselves.

Social identity theory

- Social Identity: social identity relates to how we identify ourselves in relation to others according to what we have in common. For example, nationality, locality, religion, ethnicity etc.
- Henri Tajfel and John Turner defines the " social identity theory states that the in-group will discriminate against out group to enhance their self image"
- In-group means "us"
- Out-group means "them"
- According to Hogg & Abrams, self categorization and social comparison produce different consequences. The social categories that individuals place themselves in are designed and constructed by the society and exist only in relation to other contrasting categories.

Cultural identity

(Kohls, 1996) defines culture is an integrated system of learned behavior patterns that are characteristics of the members of any given society. Culture refers to the total way of life of particular group of people. It includes of every thing that a group of people thinks, says, does and makes, its systems of attitudes and feelings. Culture is learned and transmitted from generation to generation.

Linguistic Identity of Syed Speech Community: Some important characteristics of syed family which gives them a linguistic identity amongst the different groups by which they recognize by themselves and others that they have some thing unique identification in a society. A very common sentence which has been used for a long long time by the muslims for syed's family is "ye to bhai sheen qaaf wale log hain". Which tells us many linguistic and non-linguistic meanings, some are as follows**.**

Some expressions are used by the common muslims in Aligarh

- Asslamu alai kum
- Asslawale kum
- Saam ale kum
- Saali kum
- Shukriya
- Thanks
- Khuda hafiz
- Allah hafiz

Above expressions are very much frequently used by different speech communities. These expressions are also acceptable and convey meanings.

Some verbal expression which are used by syed's group. But it is phonetically and syntactically marked

- Asslamu alai kum wa rahmatullhi wa bara katuhu
- Al ham du lillah
- Jaza kumullah kahir
- Masha Allah
- One thing is very important when the members of syed speech community meet them together and get them apart they use only one expression for two different situation is **"Asslamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu".**
- **Some special features by which they are different from out-group**
- Politeness
- Prononciation
- Place of articulation
- Lexical selection
- Syntactic pattern
- Non- verbal signs

Politeness: when they communicate with in-group and out-group they show the highest degree of politeness. They are very polite in nature never show angerness. they believe peace and love and show sympathy always towards the others.They also respect the other's belief .

Pronunciation: they are very highly conscious about the pronunciation of the word. Incorrect pronunciation of the word are not acceptable within this group.

- *Place of articulation:* they feel easy while articulate homophonous sounds. For example, sounds like,
- ظ ز ض
- س ث ص

These are the homophonous sounds, for the common man there is no difference but it matters for the members of the syed speech community.

Syntactic pattern: one very important factor of the members of syed speech community they have only one expression for both singular as well as plural which is "həm" and it is a marked term for the members of syed speech community.

- Some non verbal signs:
- Facial expression
- Jestures.

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

After the analysis of the data in the form recording and participant observation we can conclude that the members of Urdu speech community prefer "Urdu" as a mother tongue. But they use it only in the home domain like talking to their grant parent and parent. They do not use Urdu as medium of Education for their children they shift from Urdu to English or Hindi for the purpose of Education, interaction and communication. But as far as religious practices are concern they use only Urdu. One more thing is very important that young generation of Urdu speech community shift more as compare to the older generation.

The domains of use of Urdu as a mother tongue are shrinking among the members of Urdu speech community in Aligarh. Urdu is replaced by English and Hindi are the most powerful and dominated languages. English is for education and Hindi prefer in media, writing articles and interaction and communication.

On the basis of above discussion, it has been proved that some important characteristics of Syed family which gives them a linguistic identity amongst the different groups by which they recognize by themselves and others that they have some thing unique identification in a society. not only language but there are so many factors some are observed but some are unobserved which is also provide them unique identification to particular speech community popularly known as syed speech community.

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