THE EMERGENCE OF URDU ATTRIBUTES AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE: FROM THE GLOBAL EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

S. M. Zafar Iqbal[1], *Mehmood Ul Hassan[2], Muzammila Akram[3], Murad Ali[4]

ABSTRACT

In this article, some peculiar properties associated with the Urdu language have been explored and discussed. The language sustainability depends upon some peculiar attributes and the absence of these characteristics will not support to any language to survive in this era of computer age. This study discusses the attributes of Urdu in the context of the impact of mass media communication and globalization. This study also predicts, that if any language is not supported by the mentioned peculiar attributes of the linguistics then it would be disappeared rapidly. From the evolutionary perspective, the main emphasis is given to the universal attributes of a language that cause to promote a language as an international language. The theme of the current research is deduced from the published literature regarding history and linguistic roots of Urdu. In conclusion, there are many good attributes of Urdu that have set the role of Urdu as a powerful tool of communication since long. In the context of mass media communication Urdu is progressing very fast and playing role to bridging the people in the country and abroad in comparison with English.

Keywords: Evolution of Urdu, Linguistics, Aryan languages, Impact of Urdu

1. INTRODUCTION

Both the history and evolution of the languages have the closest relationship and have nearly equal age with the birth of human beings (Greenhill, 2016), (Knight, Studdert-Kennedy, & Hurford, 2000). According to the latest linguistic survey, the total no. of the world's spoken languages are nearly 8,475 according to glottolog.org (Bakker, 2019) whereas only a small no of languages about (10) has become popular in the world due to different historical and linguistic reasons (Kornai, 2013). Yet, there is no clear picture in literature about total number of languages, but its range may be 6,000-10,000 languages around the globe including dialects. However, some properties and attributes are associated with a language for its long-term sustainability as a live language (Hale et al., 1992), (Knight et al., 2000). If these properties are missing no language can survive for a long time (Kapović, 2017).

2. TYPES OF LANGUAGES

As per writing scripts, there are two main categories of languages in the world. In the first category, languages have their alphabets attributed to peculiar sounds. The combinations of these alphabets form words and also have their phonetic standards. The other category of languages belongs to the pictorial format of the scripts for specific words that attributed to some pictures also. These short notations represent single or combination of words. That is why the pictorial languages have thousands of basic pictorial notations as phonetic symbols. From a historical perspective, it can be observed that these languages have a slow evolution. On the other hand, the process of evolution in the first kind is faster than the other.

---

[1]Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Khwaja Fareed UEIT, Rahim Yar Khan
[2]Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, Khwaja Fareed UEIT, Rahim Yar Khan
[3]Department of Educational Training, The Islamia University Bahawalpur
[4]Department of Chemistry, The Islamia University Bahawalpur

The reasons for evolution have been explained in section 5. These pictorial languages are confined in some geographical regions while the other kinds of languages have spread around the globe. Yet the literature on the attributes of pictorial languages is scarce and has not been being compared by the linguists (García et al., 2014).

3. Families of Languages

There are different groups of languages in the world that are divided into eight clusters (family) and every language belongs to a specific family of languages. Among these clusters, two families of languages are very popular (Kornai, 2013) (Paolillo, 2006).

        1)   Saami family   2)   Aryan family

Arabic and Hebrew belong to the Saami family whereas Urdu belongs to the Aryan family. Most of the Indian, Pakistani & European languages such as Italian German French & English also belong to Aryan's Family (Kapović, 2017). Actually, Aryan's family is the biggest family of the languages and any other family of the languages cannot be compared in the wideness of its linguasphere. The branches of this Aryan family lie in different countries of Asia like Pakistan, India, Iran, and Europe up to England (Kornai, 2013).

4. Language and Dialects

There should be some necessary parameters upon which a language is called a language otherwise it is an accent or dialect of any other language of some language family (García, 2016). The linguistic experts have discussions about these standard parameters which are scattered in literature but these should also be discussed in some integrated manner (Kornai, 2013). Any linguistic student, can easily find out four parameters by deep observation, which are necessary attributes of a language and are listed as under:

(1) Alphabets   (2) Grammar   (3) Dictionary
(4) Vocabulary in Multidimensional fields of knowledge

If these four elements are not present in any language then it will be merely an accent or dialect and should not be considered as a language. However, a living language may have many accents/dialects & sometime these may be unified to constitute a language vocabulary.

The question arises, that how the evolution of any language start? It is believed that when people were divided into groups and tribes then a new language would be evolved as a dialect. In similar way with the passage of time by the evolution started by the mixing of languages and probably some new language would be born. So, it can be assumed that after passing many decades and centuries in the prehistoric era many languages and dialects would be born due to evolution (Paolillo, 2006).

5. Assumptions about Evolution of a Language

5.1   **First Phase**: The first phase of evolution of the languages belongs to the pre-historical period that could be predicted only by assumptions. In the post-historical perspective, the history of language is related to the birth of mankind. The three divine religions also support this theory (Gray, Atkinson, & Greenhill, 2011). It is believed that in early ages of the initial phases of mankind, there was only one language but the name of that language is yet not known to the historians (Kornai, 2013). It can also be assumed that there may be many dead languages whose scripts or pictographs are not yet known by the historians (Hale et al., 1992).

5.2   **Second Phase**: It is also assumed that after passing many centuries, in the early ages, millions of people begin to migrate to different parts of the world for search of better living. In this way, the natural evolution in the language was started and a new language

was born due to environmental and social changes (Greenhill, 2016). There would be also mixing of the culture of different tribes. So, it can be assumed about dead languages that these languages were in the initial phase of their birth or it was the transition period for the origination of a new language (Hammarström, 2016).

5.3 **Third Phase**: In this phase, different tribes started quarrelling for food and territory and evolution in the language started by the interaction of different nations. From the historical perspective, some languages were disappeared due to the supremacy of one civilization and culture over the other. That is why we have found some of the scripts or pictographs of those dead languages in buried remains of civilization (Hammarström, 2016). So, in this historical and linguistic perspectives, it can be concluded that many languages were born without scripts.

5.4 **Fourth Phase**: Now the world has entered in the current situation of mass media interaction where people are interacting with multilingual approaches. The whole world has become a global village and the development of mass media is playing a greater role in linguistic evolution. One can observe fast evolution in languages and only those languages will survive which have some peculiar characteristics which we want to explore in this study. In this modern era of communication, no one can protect a language to die if it has no potential for its survival (Gray et al., 2011). The whole world is now becoming an internet community and languages are interacting in polite manner. Even the English language has changed into many dialects such as Australian, American, and Indian accent. There is a great need to explore the linguistic parameters which are necessary for a language to promote itself at the national or international level (Hammarström, 2016).

6. Causes of Language Evolution

From linguistic point of view, three causes of evolution are found in the literature (Hammarström, 2016) (i) Natural Evolution (Natural mixing and interaction of languages) (ii) Forced Evolution (deliberate induction of some language into another).(iii) Multi-meaning behaviour of a language (Synonyms)

However, the authors believe, that these are five causes of evolution as given below:

(1) Natural Evolution (Natural mixing and interaction of languages) (2) Forced Evolution (deliberate induction of some language into another) (3) Multi-meaning behaviour of a language (Synonyms) (4) The scarceness of alphabets and phonetic sounds in some Language (5) Hearing deficiency of the listener.

7. Types of Language Evolution

The evolution may be in the forward direction, which enhances the lingua-circle (the circle of language population) of a language and it may be in the opposite direction when lingua-circle squeezes in a small radius. The history of languages, tells us these factors which affect the evolution of a language (Hammarström, 2016). The rate of language evolution is a controversial matter that depends upon many factors such as population size and environmental factors. However, the language evolution is mostly related with the two factors as given under:

(1) Natural Evolution (2) Forced Evolution.

8. Natural Evolution of a Language

The reason for this linguistic change is the natural characteristic of the living languages as they remain to adapt new borrowed words. A living language remains in changing phases due to this adaptation trend and if it is assumed to be complete then that language will be in the deterioration phase. If any language cannot be able to absorb words or adaptation trend then it has

a constant behavior at a certain level of its maturity then its use would be limited in the community and people reject the language due it its rigidity. Hence, the beauty of a living language is to borrow/absorb words and adopt a new language phase. Sometimes the whole shape and its structure of a living language is changed and it remain to reshape itself without any obstruction and remains in modification as a whole. It is possible, that some powerful language can change the whole shape of the other language and its characteristics. It is concluded that no one can apply any restriction on the natural evolution and it is independent upon the environmental factors (Garcia, 2015).

The natural evolution of a language does not depend upon any special environment but remain to continue in every age of civilization (Hammarström, 2016). The evolution speed of a language may be controlled by environmental factors. This type of evolution is free from any hurdles but can change its trend or direction from one trend to another. The speed of the evolution is a variable quantity that changes with the duration of interaction of languages. It is neither a smooth nor a constant process and remains to continue in all phases of a language that cannot be said to be completed at any stage.

9. Forced Evolution of a Language

From historical perspectives, the Forced Evolution emerged by the invaders nations by implementing their social and cultural rules. The invader nations tried to prolong their government or sovereignty by imposing favourable rules and regulations upon slave nation. In this way, the official language of the slave nation was spoiled or amalgamated by the language of the invaders. In some geographical regions, it was completely replaced by the language of the victor's nation (Paolillo, 2006). This history pf nations supports the philosophy of Forced Evolution and it is a big factor for evolution in the languages around the globe and still continued in many regions of the world. In this historical perspective, the influence of forced evolution could be observed all over the world. The Arabs, the Iranians, the French and the English nations are very prominent examples of Forced Evolution. The influence of the languages of ruler nations were very dominant that still exist in the languages of the slaved nation. However, the influence of forced evolution also has a positive aspect, that languages were enriched by the borrowed vocabulary in all fields of information that can be observed in the colonial states around the globe. Even though, the direction of the evolutionary trend was focused and targeted towards the language of the rulers but it was used for the unification of mass media communication of their army and slaved nation. It was the necessity of the government to act upon forced evolution to communicate with people directly. So, it was planned by the government to monitor the evolution in the proper right direction. In the Indian subcontinent, the Akbar-e-Azam also adopted this philosophy for his army language and cautions. After his government this attitude remained dominant by the other predecessors and the Mughal emperor like Shah Jahan promoted URDU as an official spoken language. This was the glorious period for the Urdu language when it was chosen as government official language (Rahman, 2011).

10. Role of a Language in the Development of Nations

The role of forced evolution is still continued in some purposeful direction around the globe by dominant nations. The idea of an ideal nation or super nation also motivated the national heroes and think-tanks of the government to follow this theory. Some nations have got progress by forced evolution in their language and now marching at the forefront of nations. As a result of the above-mentioned factors, the languages of some nations have been superseded to other languages. Now we see that the influence of English and French languages can be felt upon all the colonial states and countries. In our country Anglo-Urdu is becoming popular in the literate community and academia that also motivate the illiterate persons to feel proud to speak wrong English with the

wrong pronunciation. Even though it happened accidently, but we can observe some benefits of forced evolution in the past colonial countries of Asia and Africa where a great vocabulary of borrowed English and French words is now used commonly. The impact and impressions of Arabic, Persian, English, and French are too much in the local languages including Urdu. A linguistic student can easily observe the induced vocabulary of the said languages in every language of the South Asian sub-continent and also in the languages of the rest of the world (Rahman, 2011).

11. Global Role of a Language

Now it is felt by the linguists of the world that there should be a universal standard language to achieve peace and the idea of globalization is spreading among all nations. A common language will be a good tool for peace and a better understanding can be achieved among nations. This universal language will not only bring the nations close to one another but also be beneficial in knowledge sharing & the environment of brotherhood will be promoted among nations. Considering all these facts a famous linguist Dr. Zamenhof in 1887 introduced a new language (artificial language) "Esperanto" to achieve the goal of global peace . It is hoped that in the next phase of linguistic evolution the Esperanto language will play a dominant role as a universal communication language. It is only possible if it is perceived by the whole world then it could be forecasted that this language may promote an equal depth of knowledge sharing in every sphere of life.

12. Role of a Language in the Socio-Religious Context

Here is another philosophy about language which is still under debate by many scholars that languages play an important role in the division of human beings into linguistic, social and religious groups (Jabeen, Chandio, & Qasim, 2010). It is a great fact that religious scholars have been a great cause of religious sectarianism among nations (Bukhari, 2015). A non-standard translation of some religious book may create great confusion in minds. There are some religious thinking and some theories which are adopted by nations based on linguistic sectarianism (Sohail, 2012). It is also a great fact that no translation can be equal and exactly in meaning recognized by every scholar and no one can translate/ transcribe the same meaning as it was thought or said by the real speaker/scholar of any language. So due to linguistic limitations/ restrictions, one can only translate or transcribe the main idea of the talk so either some things are missed consciously or unconsciously by the translator or transcriber. From the perspective of linguistic limitations and perception, it is also a great fact that every language has meaning duality and multiplicity which produces dilemma, paradox, and confusion in thoughts and meanings. These communicational gap and difficulties produce hurdles in smooth flowing of thoughts and exact transmission of thoughts become difficult. In light of the above-mentioned facts, a language is a big tool that is used to produce conflicts in nations and groups. Also, it becomes very difficult to understand the true philosophy of any nation or religious groups on the basis of linguistic duality. This linguistic duality along with diplomatic word tricks are commonly used by the politicians and diplomats. The philosophers and scholars consciously or unconsciously also used this type of language to misguide the people so that their thinking is deliberately diverted in their chosen direction. But if any language has attributes of high level of understanding and discrete meanings without duality then that language can be used to promote peace and true harmony in nations. The attitude of impartial is the need of the hour for the achievement of an absolute piece of a nation or among nations (Jabeen et al., 2010). The best language has attributes to explain not only universal truth but facilitate to provide impartial communication.

13. Attributes of a Universal Language

Analysing the above-mentioned linguistic perspective of evolution, the Urdu language has some peculiar characteristics that have been deduced from scattered literature as under:

A universal language should have a small no. of alphabets but it should have a good power of communication in every field of knowledge. It should be able to format and construct new words i.e it should have an unlimited vocabulary. By applying the set theory of Mathematics and statistical approach in the field of linguistics, it can be deduced that the total no of words of a language is countable. According to the set theory of Mathematics if a language consists of 20, 26, 36 letters of its alphabet then it can generate 220, 226, 236 words respectively. (But if one applies statistical formulations, he would be able to forecast a virtual dictionary, consisting of many unusable or meaningless words. This topic is beyond the scope of our topic and this subject is under study will be discussed in later studies).

The universal language should have some order and coordination in its grammar and dictionary. A language should follow its grammatical rules and should indicate some rules when there is some deviation from the existing rules. It should also provide rules for new words and borrowed words also and it must have to generate capability in all aspects. The language should have a good ability to adapt and absorb the foreign languages vocabulary, this adaptation property will help to use the dictionary of another language easily for the true and better communication of knowledge and also help to overcome the difficulty in perception/communication.

The universal language should have a deep friendly relationship with other languages of the world. If there will be the maximum percentage of other foreign languages vocabulary then it will be more understandable and familiar to the world community. This familiarity with foreign words will provide an opportunity to use that language in every sphere of life. In this perspective, a language should have the power of absorption in the broad spectrum of knowledge or capability of absorption in the multidimensional fields of knowledge. This property will also be beneficial for knowledge, helpful for global communication and can have a broader impact on global society. The influence of its familiarity will enhance its linguasphere.

A universal language should produce fast teaching and learning capability and should have a maximum influence upon a greater circle of the scientific and technical community of the world. Only in this way a language could be beneficial in research communication and can be able to use a computer and have the capability to reshape its structure for research, computer communication, and modern scientific fields. A universal language might be able to use for a better communication if it has a single mode of meaning instead of dual-mode of meaning (duality). Dual meanings of words produce paradox in communication and the talk produces confusion for the listener. The absence of dual-meaning nature in any language makes that language applicable for global use. The uniqueness attributes of a language enhance the beauty of a language as assumed here for a universal language.

The universal language should have a rich vocabulary in multidimensional field of knowledge and should have the capability to translate/transcribe any language in the closest meaning of the context. It should have the capacity to translate as it is stated in the original context by the speaker/writer. The assumed universal language should have power of translation, transliteration and transcription at an optimum level comparative to the existing languages.

The language should be melodious so that it would have a good learning effect on the audience. It should have synchronization in the speed of speaking & hearing. It should also have a good reading writing speed to transmit maximum communication in minimum possible time. In this rocketing age, the time factor is very important for the four skills reading, writing, speaking & hearing.

14.   Attributes of Urdu Language

Although the literature on this subject is a scarce and comparative study of languages is still a hot topic between linguistic scholars, but by deep hypothetical observation one can evaluate the beauty of URDU language. In the above-mentioned perspective of linguistic characteristics of a universal language one can compare the attributes of Urdu language as under:

The number of Urdu alphabets is near to the famous greater languages of the world. It has more phonetic sounds than these languages. The total number of alphabets of these languages are tabulated below for comparison of the interested reader.

Language	English	German	French	Urdu	Arabic	Persian	Russian
No. of alphabets	26	26	26	52	30	30	30

Urdu dictionary as well as coordination and order according to linguistic rules. Its grammar often follows Arabic & Persian grammar. So, it has a greater capability of adaptation and producing new words than any other language of the world. Sometimes it follows the Sanskrit grammar from which it was originated and sometimes it obeys Arabic and Persian rules. So Urdu grammar consists of a combination of three grammars and this property enhances its beauty and power of communication more prominently in every sphere of life.

Urdu has a multidimensional vocabulary in every field of knowledge but due to ignorance and in the availability of trained Urdu experts the familiar terminology could not be explored. In the current situation, all the Urdu experts are hypnotized by the supremacy of the English Language. But the true situation is totally different since because of the unavailability of trained URDU language experts. For a good Urdu expert, the knowledge and expertise of both Arabic and Persian are necessary but only a small proportion of the trained Urdu experts have better knowledge and understanding about these languages. So ordinary URDU speakers can't guess the hidden attributes of Urdu and wrongly estimate that other languages are better than URDU. In this context, Urdu has great potential for the interpretation of science and technology and can be easily used for teaching and learning purposes. This attribute can be easily observed in some good quality translations of technical books.

Nowadays Urdu has many Urdu websites on the internet and Urdu is also used in many Urdu sites without Urdu scripts using roman alphabets in phonetic mode. Osmania University Hyderabad Dakkan (India) has also performed some translation work in science and technology but there is a great need to continue this process continuously for the Urdu community.

Urdu has a great capability to translate knowledge in foreign languages but there should be some monitoring system for familiarity and standardization. It is also necessary to promote the exact and right pronunciation of Arabic, Persian and English words which are commonly used in Urdu as it will minimize the difference between literary and non-literary general public. It will also be helpful in the standardization process. Duality in meaning or multi-meaning should also be eliminated in Urdu by using proper words of Arabic, Persian or any other language of Urdu family easily.

14.1 Conclusions

This study shows that language evolution has a great variation related to national and international political scenario and socioeconomic factors. In the recent decades, the migration of people due to political instability may also drive the evolutionary changes around the globe. Both types of evolutionary changes have enriched Urdu with the borrowed vocabulary of different languages. These evolutionary impact empowered Urdu as a widely spoken language around the globe. Urdu

will have an effective role of communication to bridge language and people till many centuries due to its inherited attributes and the linguistic diversity of south Asia including Pakistan.

Acknowledgment:

REFERENCES:

Bakker, P. (2019). There are 8 , 475 languages that we know of, (august 2018), 1‑18. Repéré à https://sciencenordic.com/denmark-forskerzonen-languages

Bukhari, S. (2015). Comparative Study of Urdu and English Newspaper Headlines of Pakistan: Different Representation, Same News. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *5*(10), 218‑227.

Garcia, M. I. M. (2015). A Corpus Based Quantitative Survey of The Sanskrit And Prakrit Elements In The Basic Vocabulary of Urdu Language. *Pakistan Annual Research Journal*, *51*.

García, M. I. M. (2016). Saraiki: language or dialect? *Eurasian Journal of Humanities*, *1*(2), 40‑53.

García, M. I. M., Virtual, N. D., Conference, I., The, O. N., Between, D., View, S., … Garcia, M. (2014). The Urdu Language Reforms. *Almas*, *15*(2011).

Gray, R. D., Atkinson, Q. D., & Greenhill, S. J. (2011). Language evolution and human history: What a difference a date makes. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, *366*(1567), 1090‑1100. https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2010.0378

Greenhill, S. J. (2016). Overview: Debating the effect of environment on language. *Journal of Language Evolution*, *1*(1), 30‑32. https://doi.org/10.1093/jole/lzv007

Hale, K., Krauss, M., Watahomigie, L. J., Yamamoto, A. Y., Craig, C., Jeanne, L. M., & England, N. C. (1992). Endangered Languages. *Language*, *68*(1), 1‑42.

Hammarström, H. (2016). Linguistic diversity and language evolution. *Journal of Language Evolution*, *1*(1), 19‑29. https://doi.org/10.1093/jole/lzw002

Jabeen, M., Chandio, A., & Qasim, Z. (2010). Language controversy: impacts on national politics and secession of East Pakistan. *South Asian Studies*, *25*(1), 99.

Kapović, M. (2017). *The Indo-European Languages* (2nd éd.). London and New York : Routledge Language Family Series.

Knight, C., Studdert-Kennedy, M., & Hurford, J. R. (2000). *The Evolutionary Emergence of Language: Social Functions and the Origins of Linguistic Form*. CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS. (S.l.) : (s.n.). https://doi.org/10.1525/jlin.2001.11.2.300

Kornai, A. (2013). Digital Language Death. *PLoS ONE*, *8*(10), 1‑12. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0077056

Paolillo, J. C. (2006). *Evaluating Language Statistics : The Ethnologue and Beyond*. *Language*. Indiana University.

Rahman, T. (2011). Urdu as the Language of Education in British India. *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, *32*(2), 1‑40.

Sohail, M. (2012). Origin and Development of Urdu Language in the Sub- Continent : Contribution of Early Sufia and Mushaikh. *South Asian Studies*, *27*(1), 141‑169.