

## Modernization, Cultural Integration and Language Modification: A Study of the Potohari Language in Pakistan

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Abstract

*This paper identifies the connection between cultural integration and language modification in Pakistan, with a focus on the Potohari region of northern Punjab. The study has primarily been conducted in the Potohar region, consisting of the three districts of Rawalpindi, Chakwal, and Gujarkhan. The respondents were selected mainly from innate Potohari families to determine and identify the changes in native language. The results indicated that the native language of Potohari has been replaced by the Urdu and English in the present generation. Younger people feel comfortable speaking these languages at their household level. The conservation of an aboriginal language is important before its liquidation. This paper highlighted the pace and extent of the replacement of the native language of Potohari with the national and international language of Urdu and English as a symbol of modernization, and its implications for the cultural integration of society. The Data was collected through formal interviews, group discussion and a survey.*

**Key Words:** Modernization, Cultural Integration, Language, Potohar, Pakistan.

### Introduction

According to [Khan \(2017:2\)](#), modernization has transformed the globe into a worldwide village, which means that modernization is a substantial process of societal change. As stated by [Alam \(2008:555\)](#), modernization is a crucial concept in the process of societal change, and it is generally defined as a new social and cultural pattern due to industrialisation. Industrialisation is a stimulant of cultural integration. Culture consists of two basic components: one is associated with behaviours and attitudes towards social and cultural elements, and the second is associated with humans' lifetime experiences. As [Kuran \(2007:5-10\)](#) specified, the commonality of terminology is the most obvious kind of coordination that enhances interaction. [Lazear \(1999:95\)](#) considered that shared symbols, meanings, and communication rules facilitate both economic and social cooperation. [Bisin and Verdier \(2000:955\)](#) opined that people are empowered with one of the two cultural traits, meaning that cultural integration affects the human socialization process and language, which is a major source of communication, cultural transformation, and cultural integration. According to [Agoya \(2018:11\)](#), cultural integration occurs when people from one culture adopt another culture. As cultural integration is a positive concept in anthropology, society evolves through it, however, it is based on the effective cohesion in any society, and how society is producing and translating it. Language represents an essential part of culture. If any change occurs in culture, it will equally affect words.

### Theoretical Framework

In the theoretical connotation of language and culture, "the principle of Whorfianism" claims that the social organization of language affects its speakers and the way of communication. People's perception is based on the

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Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which focuses on deterministic and relativistic approaches. This hypothesis elucidates that people’s perception of language is based on their environment and the process of socialization. As written in the *Analects* (1997:46), language is determined by the nativity of a child and what it gets in touch with during his or her life. Acquiring language is a learning process and children learn from their antecedents what and how their elders speak and how they were exposed to society. [Emmitt and Pollock \(1997:145\)](#) argue that even though people are brought up under similar behavioural backgrounds or cultural situations, when they learn different languages, their worldview may be very different. Similar things are happening in the Potohar region in the context of the native language, which is changing daily. From a theoretical perspective, language change and cultural integration are linked with two basic theories in anthropology—the assimilation theory and the multiculturalism theory. According to [Algan, Bisin, and Verdier \(2018:35\)](#), in the assimilation theory, three major processes are involved. First, there is a natural process in which different cultures are sharing a common culture that has the same social conditions. The second is based on the favour of a new culture which interacts with society, and the third one is based on the individual who is completely assimilated by other cultures, and it moves irreversibly and inevitably. The multiculturalism theory states that people from different cultures interact with each other in a host society, considering it as a segment of their own society rather than viewing themselves as outsiders. As argued by [Algan, Bisin, and Verdier \(2018:29\)](#), a multi-cultural society is composed of a heterogeneous population of racial and ethnic groups, as well as the dominant group of the majority. This research depicts the relationship between modernization and language with the mediating factor of cultural integration, studying how the native language changed due to the impact of modernization in Potohar.

### Research Hypothesis

There is a relationship between modernization and language. Furthermore, cultural integration mediates the relationship between modernization and language.

### Methodology

This research is anthropological, and it is based on qualitative and quantitative methods. The data have been gathered through previous studies, consultations, group discussions, and participant observation. For the quantitative analysis, the 5-point Likert scale was used to measure respondent opinions. The SPSS software has been used to analyse data, and a thematic analysis has been performed on group discussions and consultations. The coding helped to generalize the data and given results in percentages.

### Quantitative Analysis

The first hypothesis depicts the relationship between modernization and language. This relationship is significant, and it is based on cause and effect. If one element increases, the other will change accordingly. Table 1 depicts this hypothesis.

H1: There is a significant relationship between modernization and language

**Table 1.** Relationship of modernization and language

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
		B	S.E	β		
1	(Constant)	10.732	.851		12.616	0.000
	Modernization	.362	.035	.460	10.331	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Language

Modernization has a positive and significant impact on language. A one-unit increase in modernization ( $\beta=.362$ ,  $\rho \leq 0.05$ ,  $t \geq 2$ ) increases 0.362 units in language. The R square ( $R^2=0.219$ ) explains the overall 21.9% change in the dependent variable due to the independent variable.

$$\text{Language} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

$$\text{Language} = 10.732 + 0.362(1) + E$$

The second hypothesis cultural integration mediates the relationships between modernization and language in the Potohar region analyses the impact and creates a bright relationship between modernization and language. The details are given below in numerical form.

H2: Cultural integration mediates the relationship between modernization and language

**Table 2.** Cultural Integration and language

Coefficients		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
Cultural Integration		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.456	1.021		4.143	.006
	Modernization	.510	.025	.522	5.554	.000
2	(Constant)	.033	.056		1.434	.454
	Modernization	.342	.024	.344	3.313	.000
	Cultural integ.	.187	.021	.190	4.203	.000

a Dependent Variable: Language

Modernization has a positive and significant impact on language. A one-unit increase in modernization ( $\beta=.510$ ,  $\rho \leq 0.05$ ,  $t \geq 2$ ) increases 0.510 units in language. The R square ( $R^2=0.332$ ) explains the overall 33.2% change in the dependent variable due to the independent variable.

Modernization has a positive and significant impact on language. A one-unit increase in Modernization ( $\beta=.342$ ,  $\rho \leq 0.05$ ,  $t \geq 2$ ) increases 0.342 units in language. A one-unit increase in cultural integration ( $\beta=.187$ ,  $\rho \leq 0.05$ ,  $t \geq 2$ ) increases 0.187 units in language. The R square ( $R^2=0.441$ ) explains the overall 44.1% change in the dependent variable due to the independent variable. Cultural integration partially mediates the relationship between modernization and language.

### Qualitative Analysis

Cultural integration and language are in an unstable position relative to modernization and social transformation in the Potohar region. As [Gleason \(1961\)](#) describes, language is not only product of culture but also is the symbol of culture. People's ideas, ways of communication, and lifestyle are immersed in cultural elements. Language competence and culture are intimately and dynamically connected ([Rodrigues, 2000:138](#)). As for the respondents, culture dictates what they need to speak and when they must. The ability to communicate in a language requires knowledge of seeing, explaining, and acting properly, in accordance with the culture associated with the language ([Omaggio & Hadley 1986:78](#)). People thinking and interacting with someone are deeply connected with the cultural dimensions. Language learning is based on socialization, and this socialization indicates which matters are considered social taboos and which are not, as a respondent said, 'if we know the societal taboos of our society, we can interpret the learning and speaking of terminology and according to cultural barriers'. [Kno and Lia \(2000\)](#) describes the inseparable relationship of language and culture, they said culture must be incorporated and it is an essential component of native language.

It has been observed that culture and language have a relationship of cause and consequence. Furthermore, reading about culture is grounded in words. People transform things through language from one generation to the next. According to [Tucker \(1973\)](#), the ability to communicate fully in a second language depends on the degree of non-ethnocentrism of the person. Refinement can be transplanted in many speeches, and native

language is more competent in transferring cultural elements. In the thematic analysis, the given table 3 and 4 depicts a detailed description of the formal interviews. Tables 3 and 4 provide details of the analysis.

**Table 3.** Thematic findings on the concept of modernization and cultural integration

Themes		Responses/verbatim	Frequency	Percentage
Major themes	Subjective			
Knowledge	Sub-themes	Concept		
		Social Change	12	80%
		Gradually change	7	46%
		Thinking about a change	11	73%
		Readiness for social change	9	60%
		Society		
		Changing society daily	12	80%
		Change in culture	10	66%
		Change via integration	11	73%
		Changing traditions	12	80%

Table 3 shows the findings that indicate a major theme of subjective knowledge of social change and cultural integration in the Potohar region. The frequency of the sub-theme concept shows the maximum number of responses, which indicate that people are observing changes both in society and culture. This change is gradual, and people are thinking about it. Most of the respondents showed that they and other members of society have a readiness for social change and development in society. Similarly, in the case of the social change sub-theme, with reference to cultural change and cultural integration, most responses indicate that society is changing daily via cultural integration. As such, cultural integration changes the traditions of society and eliminates the old traditions.

**Table 4.** Thematic analysis of language change in Potohar region

Themes		Responses/verbatim	Frequency	Percentage
Major themes	Subjective			
Language	Sub-theme	Potohari language		
		Changing language	11	73%
		Effect of change on lang.	12	80%
		Change in Potohar lang.	10	66%

Table 4 indicates the frequency of language change in the Potohar region. Most of the respondents agreed to the change in language in Potohar. The maximum number of people said that modernization is changing the Potohari language and people are speaking national and foreign languages at home. Language is transforming rapidly due to the social and cultural changes. These changes in the Potohari language are consequently eliminating it. Frequency shows 66% people affected by changes in language. As a result, they mix two or more languages, creating a new one.

The evolution of modernization and social transformation in Potohar evidences the alteration in the native language of the region. Today, the language is changing without creating any misunderstandings related to the concept. According to the respondents' views, the Potohari language is now a mixture containing English and

Urdu vocabulary. Urdu and English are replacing Potohari, people feeling more comfortable in speaking both languages. They avoid the use of the Potohari language at their homes as well as in public spaces.

Potohari has kept the action and speaking patterns of the aboriginal language, but the words are being switched into English and Urdu. Furthermore, the language transformation is also influenced by the process of socialization of children at home. The interviews show that, although parents are speaking with each other in native language, but they speak English and Urdu with their children. Cultural integration affects the Potohari language in the region, but it has been observed that 35% of the people feel ashamed to speak the native language and feel comfortable talking and composing in English. According to respondents, they also need to speak English due to the social stratification, as English speaking is a mark of the elite class in Pakistan.

The participants of this study considered that due to cultural integration, market change, trade, globalization, and westernization, the Potohari language is losing its uniqueness. People are hiding themselves within unrealistic things. They experience a conflict in their feelings and actions towards their native language. As the region is living in an age of modernization and moving towards post-modernization approaches, the younger generations demand to compare themselves with other nations. People require learning different languages for their own survival. It is necessary to bring more scientific and modern knowledge for a good future. If people confront the traditions and customs of Potohar, they cannot get an informed perspective on alternation and globalization. Cultural integration is best in opening new ways for scientific disciplines and business. People know that tradition is significant for their ancestors, they do respect them, and they love to speak Potohari; nevertheless, they need to be important within the community, for a better future. As modernization through cultural integration has a privileged status in Potohar, it has been changing and updating everything in the region. Respondents considered that although the concept of modernization was very unrealistic in the beginning, now everyone is involved in this process, as an innovator and agent of change.

When asked, the respondents aged above 60 stated that they had a different concept of modernization with reference to cultural integration. They stated that this change should not occur in any society of Pakistan. The newer generations are forgetting their traditions, customs, values, and native speech. The elderly also consider that the young generations are forgetting their own subculture of Potohar, which was their identity to survive there. The agency of different cultures also links with the major changes in the native language and behaviour of the present generation.

### **Changes in Language**

In reference to language change, culture is a major force to modifying it. Cultural integration is changing the language of Potohar in two ways, one based on external forces and the other based on internal ones, such as people's desire to alter their speech. According to [Taga \(1999-105\)](#), 'cultural characteristics are communicated through language, which is an integral part of the culture'. Sapir (1991:45) states that 'culture and thought are language dependent on account of conveying the implied meaning and inherited pattern of life'. Considering these references, the respondents in Potohar expressed, people are forgetting their native language and modifying it as desire. The given table 5, mentioned the vocabulary of Potohari and compared with modified potohari language. The potohari language structure is changing according to the fresh vocabulary of other speeches. As suggested by [Douglas \(2000\)](#) that each language structure consists of four different fields, one is phonology means how the Potohari respondents talking in specific times, second is linked with semantics, which cases of word Potohari people are practicing in their communication, and the third one is connected with grammar of speech. The data shown, the respondents were using different types of grammar to convey. The fourth one is linked with pragmatics. The respondents were using three languages at different times. All these reflections relate to the interior function of language change. As research indicated that the modification in Potohari language is founded on its structure and initializing.

### **Internal Factors to change terminology**

The data showed the internal component of words change. With Potohar language internal factors are associated with the family language itself. How much language has a capacity of change internally? The respondents written documentation depicted that the 90% respondents cannot read and write Potohari language. People can simply

speak their native language and rest of 10% can write and speak potohari language. The structure of Potohari language is shifting due to internal components. The phonology, semantics, grammar and pragmatics. One affair is important here that is the pragmatic approaches. Sometime respondents said same sentences in three different languages, like English, Urdu and potohari, but the pragmatics were same means and concept, but the strains were different.

### External Factors to change Dialectal

The external components relate to the societal changes and sociolinguistic approach. According to [Herya \(2016\)](#) language can be change and develop by itself slowly. Language can change and grow because of adaptation of Social practices and schemes of society life. It has been visited and observed in Potohar, the external elements are modifying Potohari language. The person communication, social stratification, and educations played a vital part in it. External factors involved when the languages interact with other societal elements. The respondents discussed, the potohari language modification is caused by the social factors and cultural change and now this is a societal phenomenon in our company. The contradiction has been observed when respondent talking with each other during informal consultations. A speech is a social fact, a form of social contract. It lives not in an individual, but in a community ([Bauer, 2007, p. 3](#))

**Table 5.** Changes in the Potohari language

Potohari language	Change in native words
Bahra	Boti
Jhul	Go
Aa	Awo
Saap	Sanp
Buun	Tahlay
Par	Laken
Jal	Pa'rahi
Chand	Chand
Kashak	Chamach
Rakavi	Plat
Manda	Roti
Bowa	darwaza
Po'wa	Phopo

There are many varieties in the native (Potohari) language. The above table describes the different usage of words in Potohar. The Potohari language is changing daily, especially in the pronunciation of words and their significance. Thus, cultural integration is daily cumulative in Potohar and it influences the native languages and their pronunciation.

### Linguistic Communication and Social Factors

As per data analysis, technology is striking on every step of human life, in a variety of tangible and intangible. The technological advancement matter for every pace of life. People are getting mindful about it when they get interaction with it. In the technological advancement includes the most updated technology like, use of internet, media (print and electronic), advance technology in scientific discipline and natural skills. Each single is impacting on human cognitive system and making changes according to human demand. When these things introduced in society, they were simply function of technology, nowadays these are need of human with the citation of the ethnic and societal change.

According to the respondents, through technology we can understand, how and what we need to manage in different perspective of a lifespan. Equally, many people in Potohar are thinking technology is not only changing tangible things it is also changing intangible things like it is changing the manner of talking and considering.

The relationship of technology and linguistic process is very significant due to its cause and effective relationship in Potohar. The purpose of technology is making modifications in the native language of Potohar. Potohari dialect and accent are changing day by day. In respondent perspective the different languages are specking at home, like Urdu, Punjabi, Saraiki and Hindi. The English is used as an official language, but this is likewise a region of the native speech as well. Subsequently, the privatization of school, English and Urdu medium schools are also a part to the elimination of aboriginal language in Potohar. This is a social issue of Potohar region and English medium school inked with the social stratification of social order. Elite classes prefer to shift their children in English medium school. They also undertake to speak English at home, which is also eliminating Potohari language in Potohar.

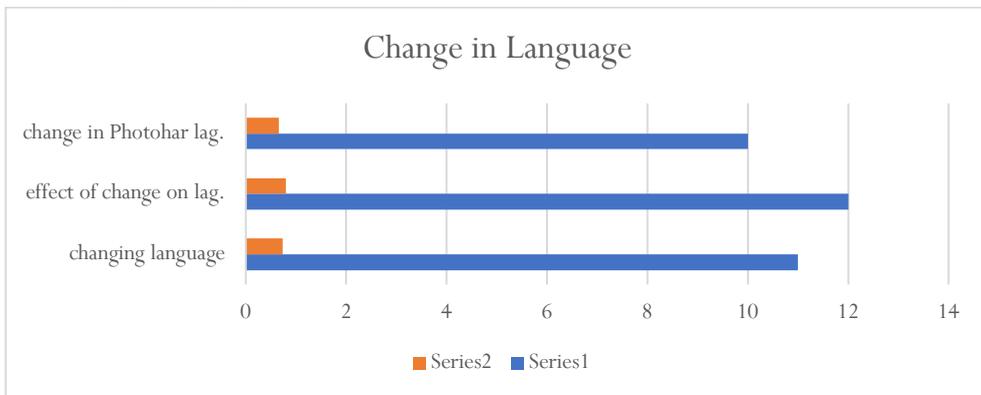
Change is also linked with the social cognition. People learning of linguistic communication and shifting is based along the social cognitive approach. As said by [Gee \(1996\)](#) mentions socio-cognitive approach gives language learners chances to interact in an authentic social context. It intends not only one aspect to effect, technology is affecting on social cognition as well. As read by [Young \(2013, p. 339\)](#) suggests that students raise their language awareness by using on-site games, discussion in different social and cultural background.

Granting to the data, 73% change happened due to the social transformation of linguistic communication. It is moving from native to national and then international language. (Potohari language-Urdu-English) this is a layer of modification in language due to use of technology. As per the thematic data, native language is changed 80% in Potohar region. Remainder of 27% are still speaking the Potohari language in their dwelling.

According to in-depth interviews, the younger generation is happier to speak Urdu and English. As respondents said it look descent and more effective. Research depicted that the respondents are satisfied with the social transformation in Potohar which depends on technology. This is a revolution that a younger generation is unable to speak the Potohari language in Potohar.

As our technology is custom in international languages, thus people are more conscious to learn English language. They are using the internet, data processor, and iPad in their daily life which is changing their way of finding out and altering their social and native life at home. It means technological advancement is not only affecting to educated class it is besides a part of uneducated individuals. They are applied for their emotions and learning new words as well.

**Figure 8.** Change in Language



## Conclusion

Cultural integration does not only affect norms, values, and traditions, it also affects the Potohari language. Cultural integration is linked with the gathering of people where they share their traditions and family values. Cultural integration occurs through education, communication, events, and social interaction. Although it creates harmony between or among cultures, it also changes the way of communication and language. Consequently, the Potohari language is changing due to modernization and cultural changes. Urdu and English have replacing the native language, as a result of the elimination of a Potohar culture. This research provided a brief discussion and

suggested a way to preserve the native language of Potohar. It also generated the concept of cultural preservation through native language instead of replacing it with other languages. Language is a part of social stratification, but the preservation of language is more important.

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