

The Language of Employment: The Case of Pakistan

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The Language of Employment: The Case of Pakistan

Tariq Rahman

Introduction

One cannot find employment in a modern state without being able to read, write and speak (in that order) a certain, standardized, written language. In short, to be part of the salariat in Pakistan one must know a certain language the characteristics of which will be investigated in this paper. First, however, let us look at the concept of the 'salariat' introduced by Hamza Alvi, the Pakistani sociologist, about which more will follow. This concept is very useful for understanding the overall dynamism of South Asian politics and will be used in this paper to understand the relationship between the way language is related to employment and power. The rise of the Hindu and Muslim identities in pre-partition India, the demand and struggle for Pakistan and finally the gory drama of the partition itself is traceable to the struggle of the Hindu and Muslim salariats for jobs and power during British rule and later. Similarly the attention-grabbing language riots – such as the firing on the pro-Bengali students of Dacca University on 21 February 1952 and the horrible Sindhi-Mohajir riots in January 1971 and July 1972 – are also consequences of salariat politics. Less dramatic phenomena which are traceable to ethnic politics i.e the struggle for power between salaraitis are : the resistance to the building of the Kalabagh Dam by Sindh, N.W.F.P and Balochistan; the demand of the Pashto-speaking people to call their province Pakhtunkhwa instead of the N.W.F.P and the alliance of political parties to make all the provinces of Pakistan autonomous states and turn the federation into a confederation (*News* 03 October 1998). Let us then take Hamza Alavi's definition of the salariat as a starting point and then go on to see which language, or languages, does the salariat pursue and for what reasons.

The Salariat

Hamza Alavi argues that the colonial state created a large group of people who depended on the state for subsistence in the form of monthly salaries. In his own words:

That class was the product of the colonial transformation of Indian social structure in the nineteenth century and it comprised those who had received an education that would equip them for employment in the expanding colonial state apparatus for scribes and functionaries, the men (for few women were so employed) whose instrument of production was the pen (Alavi 1987a: 68).

This class, as Alavi emphasizes, is mostly a product of colonial rule. In other writings Alavi includes lawyers, physicians, surgeons, writers, poets, journalists and professionals in the salariat. Some of these people may not be receiving monthly salaries but irregular fees for services rendered. These are people who, as Hamza Alavi tells us elsewhere, are equipped 'with formal education credentials that entitle them to salaried jobs in the colonial state apparatus' (Alavi 1990: 32). And, one might add, such jobs even outside the state apparatus.

This means that the defining characteristic, dependence for livelihood on a salary, is not to be interpreted literally or narrowly. It has to be extended to include people who earn their income through fees such as physicians, surgeons, architects, consultants and writers. However, it excludes those who do receive monthly salaries, such as cooks and gardeners, but do not need skills of numeracy and literacy for their jobs. In short, all those who depend on the printed word are part of the salariat. Moreover, students who aspire to salariat positions, also come under this classification. Dependent relatives, such as retired parents or illiterate spouses, are part of the salariat because their interests are the same as those who earn their living through the printed word. Thus, the salariat is linked with people who do not manipulate the written word. Hamza Alavi calls these linkages ‘organic linkages’ and explains that it is because of them that the Sindhi salariat opposes the Kalabagh Dam although it threatens cultivations and landlords more than the salariat itself (Letter 1998). Some might object that such an extension of meaning, including illiterate relatives but excluding illiterate salary-earners, makes the concept nebulous. However, as an analytical tool, the concept is so useful that it should be retained for analysing the outlines of power struggle in Pakistan. In this paper, then, the salariat is defined as those who can manipulate the written word to obtain a living, social position and power.

Language and the Salariat

The salariat depends on its living on the manipulation of language as we have seen. It was such manipulation which first created a powerful elite whose power did not come from the use or control of physical force. The invention of writing not only created new grounds for inequality but made it more systematic, rationalized it, and finally created it into a condition of human existence. Those who knew how to create signs on a surface and decode them had the key to permanence; to an extended memory. This marginalized the whole world of oral tradition including the myths on which it was contingent. The gulf between the literate and the illiterate grew till now the latter have become synonymous with the obsolescent and the exploitable (Graff 1979: 316). Literacy, of course, is the badge of status and identification of the salariat. In short, the written word created a hierarchical order which posed to be just because its rationale, or central myth, was egalitarian – that everybody can learn to read and write. But, in reality, everybody does not have equal access to the kind of mastery of the standardized language which is used in the domains of power. Struggles between salariats, therefore, revolve around the question as to which standard language is to be used in the domains of power. What is left unsaid is that, even if access is equal, not everybody will master the same literacy skills because of differences in the capacity to learn, or use, language. Moreover, power within a salariat is not necessarily based on linguistic skills though entry to a salariat generally does.

The first literate groups, who neither owned land nor used their physical labour or military skills to earn their living, were members of the clergy. They mediated between human beings and the supernatural. In established literate religions such as Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism and Islam, this process involved the recitation of sacred texts, the writing of charms and the invocation of spiritual blessings. The priestly class, then, used language – in most cases a language not used by the common people in daily life – to fulfil an existing need. In the process, knowingly and unknowingly, the clergy sacred language, the clergy took pains to teach it, to preserve it from change (change being seen as deterioration) and to confer a high symbolic status on it. Thus Panini’s grammar of Sanskrit, the holy language of the Brahmins of India, was written to standardise existing usages for eternity (Itkonen 1991: 6). The grammar, being sacrosanct, occupied a central place in the training of the functionaries of the temple and the Hindu state for several centuries (Stall 1972: 11-17). In Europe, the Ancient Church initially opposed written Latin, being the language of *Pax Romana*, but later ‘Adopted the literacy of the empire that its

founders had denounced and defeated' (Pattison 1982: 17). Thus, upto the renaissance, the church and the bureaucracy both functioned in Latin. Apart from military and feudal power, the only other source of power at that time lay in some degree of knowledge of Latin. In medieval India, in common with other countries ruled by Muslims, Arabic was the language of religion. It was the major study of the Islamic *madrassas* and without its knowledge one could not claim to interpret or administer Islamic law, perform the rituals of daily living and provide spiritual solace to the people. In short, from the courts of kings to the mud huts of simple folk, those who knew Arabic had some role, some power, in the affairs of existence.

In some pre-modern societies priests were also bureaucrats. In Muslim India they often controlled the judiciary (*qazis*) and education (as *mullahs* and *ulema*). In England, almost till the end of the nineteenth century, they controlled elitist education. Thus Latin and Greek, both greatly valued by the church, remained part of elitist education in England almost till the first World War. In the university of Cambridge, for instance, the question whether Greek was to be optional or compulsory was put to the vote in 1905 and 'Optional Greek was defeated by a margin of approximately five hundred votes' (Rothblatt 1968: 254). But the process of the separation of the bureaucracy from the clergy was also going on side by side. In medieval India, under Muslim rule, the language of the bureaucracy was not Arabic but Persian. It was used in the king's court; administrative orders were sent in it; it was used in courts of law; and education, especially higher education, was in Persian. Persian, then, was the key to power for feudal functionaries of the state as well as the salariat in Mughal India. It remained so till 1835 when the British replaced it by English (Rahman 1996: 36-38).

English as the Language of the Salariat

English was well established as the language of the domains of power when the British started ruling India. It first started gaining power when 'Offa established his own scriptorium'. Because of this 'written English would take on a *form* that reflected the kings' vested interest in its *uses*' (Toon 1983: 214). However, the vernacular languages of Europe did not become the languages of power, and hence of the salariat, till the renaissance. It was then that print languages became a symbol of national identity. Indeed, as Benedict Anderson argues, they (along with the census, the map and the museum) helped 'imagine' a community; a nation. In Anderson's words:

These print-languages laid the bases for national consciousness in three distinct ways. First and foremost, they created unified fields of exchange and communication below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars. Speakers of the huge variety of Frenches, Englishes, or Spanishes, who might find it difficult or even impossible to understand one another in conversation, became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper. In the process, they gradually became aware of the hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people in their particular language-field, and at the same time only those hundreds of thousands, or millions, so belonged. These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community (Anderson 1991: 44).

Some of these languages appeared to spread without conscious planning. Others were spread by a discernible policy. English, for instance, is an example of the first process while French that of the second. But in all cases corpus planning – the fixing of spellings, grammar and norms of usages (Cooper

1989: 31) – was carried out. And in all cases the salariat, either paid lexicographers and grammarians in universities and academies, or intellectuals living on fees and patronage, did this work.

The Nature of the Languages of the Salariat

The languages made and used by the salariat are different from natural human languages. While natural human languages are used by small, generally face-to-face, communities, the salariat languages are used by widely dispersed communities. Secondly, natural languages are not necessarily written or printed while salariat languages are written and, since the advent of printing, also printed. Thirdly, natural languages vary widely in accent, vocabulary and even in grammatical usage while salariat languages are standardized. Indeed, the more modern and large a salariat is, the more will it use a standardized language. Fourthly, natural languages express the social reality, the world view, of the communities which give them birth or have been using them for a long time. Salariat languages undergo a continuing process of lexical modernization which keeps expanding the vocabulary.

All these are violent processes. When a language is standardized a particular dialect – generally one used by the elite such as Parisian French in the renaissance (Cooper 1989: 3-11) – is elevated while all the others are marginalized. After that the speakers of the non-standard dialects, who were on an equal footing earlier, are relegated to the status of being rough, uncouth, unlettered, rustic, unsophisticated and inferior. This standard variety is called ‘the language’ while all other varieties are ‘the dialects’. Since the dialects are not used in the domains of power – schools, universities, courts of law, offices, media etc – they are not empowering. The standard variety, because it provides access to the powerful salariat positions, is empowering. In short, the spreading of the standard printed language suppresses varieties of the same language, other languages spoken in the country and, therefore, disempowers all those people who do not speak, or study, the standard salariat language. Moreover, the state or private bodies invest in the standard language. They pay for the publication of grammars, dictionaries, textbooks, literature and instructional matter. While this enriches the standard variety, it impoverishes all the other varieties of the same language and the languages not used in the domains of power. Thus, while books on literature and other branches of knowledge proliferate in the language of power, the other languages can boast of no such riches. This, in turn, becomes ground for arguing that since the non-standard languages are poor in knowledge, they can not only be used in the domains of power but must also be intrinsically inferior. This argument, then, is used to enable the salariat which first gets into the domains of power to maintain its monopoly on it.

Demand and Supply of the Salariat Language(s)

The whole process of standardization, as we have seen earlier, is one of the ways by which the state establishes its domination. It is also, as Pierre Bourdieu argues, like creating a monopoly market. He writes:

In order for one mode of expression among others (a particular language in the case of bilingualism, a particular use of language in the case of a society divided into classes) to impose itself as the only legitimate one, the linguistic market has to be unified and the different dialects (of class, region or ethnic group) have to be measured practically against the legitimate language or usage. Integration into a single ‘linguistic community’, which is a product of the political domination that is endlessly reproduced

by institutions capable of imposing recognition of the dominant language, is the condition for the establishment of relations of linguistic domination (Bourdieu 1991: 45-46).

In other words, if one wants to buy certain tangible and intangible gratifications, then the possession of the language of the domains of power might be necessary. Under modern conditions, it might well be indispensable. An illiterate person cannot get any job, and may even have to depend on others to apply for social security, in Western countries. In Pakistan, where a big landowner or a tribal chieftain might well be illiterate, they would be denied prestige the moment they leave their traditional domain of influence and move to a city. In the marriage market, for instance, they would find urban drawing room doors closed for them or their children unless the latter know English – the elitist salariat language of Pakistan.

The salariat language has to be bought in Pakistan. It has never been imposed by force or decree in South Asia. Sanskrit was jealously guarded from outcasts; Persian remained restricted because poverty made it impractical for the majority of the population to acquire it and English too has been an elitist preserve for similar reasons. That English would not be given to everybody was the policy before Macaulay's historic minute in favour of it in February 1835. But even Macaulay, ardent Anglicist though he was, never recommended that it was to be taught to the masses. After having argued that the teaching of Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit should not be paid for by the state he goes on to write:

In one point I fully agree with the gentlemen to whose general views I am opposed I feel with them that it is impossible with us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population (Macaulay 1835: 116).

In short, what Macaulay recommended was the restricting of English to the upper salariat while educating the lower salariat through the vernacular languages of India. What he did not say, but what did happen, was that most people were not educated at all either in British times or later. These, then, comprise the powerless and impecunious working masses of South Asia. They do not possess either the power or the wealth to buy any salariat language let alone English.

This particular aspect of linguistic apartheid – locking people out of power by not teaching them the language used in its domains – is an extreme form of 'elite closure' defined as the limiting of the 'access of nonelite groups to political position and socioeconomic advancement' (Myers-Scotton 1993: 149). Aristocratic regimes practised elite closure openly. One had to be a gentleman to buy a commission in the British army till the nineteenth century. Similarly, one had to be white for political office in the United States till even after the Civil War. Modern, democratic regimes are committed to equality, non-discrimination between citizens, justice and fairplay – at least in theory. Thus they cannot close the ranks of the elite in the name of blue blood, sex, race or language. There is only one ground for discrimination which is valid even in a liberal democracy. This is cognitive ability which manifests itself in the form of skills. Linguistic skills – the ability to speak, write and read the language of the domains of power – are

absolutely necessary for most jobs, even menial ones, in a modern democratic state. Hence elite closure is not so much closure as ‘restriction’ and it works through the educational system.

A state may not teach all its citizens. In that case the illiterate are locked out of the power apparatus though they remain part of it as tacit supporters. Another state may teach one language to its common citizens but use another one in the upper echelons of the domains of power. In this case those who are taught the elitist language will have much easier access to power while others will demand it and hanker for it. A third case may be the teaching of the language of the domains of power indifferently for ordinary people while the rich have access to high quality instruction. This is true for schools in the inner cities in the United States where English is taught so poorly that school graduates seldom possess the skills to rise high in the society after leaving school while children in good school districts (i.e richer localities) and expensive private schools are equipped with much better skills.

Elite Language as a Scarce Good

In British India the rationing of English was politically motivated. It was given to the landed aristocracy so as to Anglicize it. Thus Captain F. K. M. Walter, the political agent of the Bharatpur Agency, said in his report of 1869-70 that public schools, on the model of Eton, should be established in India so that the sons of aristocrats become ‘promoters of peace, prosperity and progress among their own peoples and hearty supporters of British authority’ (in Mangan 1986: 125). The famous Aitchison College of Lahore, as well as other elitist chiefs’ colleges, were made in pursuit of this aim.

While the chiefs were not members of the salariat, most others who desired to study English were. Among these, the children of military and senior civil service officers could learn English at concessional rates. They could join state supported English medium schools run by the military, the railways or other state institutions. For them, English was a fruit of their families being in the upper salariat. As this salariat shared and mediated colonial power, it may be said that the colonial state gave privileged access to English to the powerful.

It also enabled the elite of wealth to buy English. The missionary schools and European schools, which charged high tuition fees, did take in Indian students but only as a privilege. The European schools admitted only 15 per cent Indians (except in Bombay where 20 per cent were allowed) (PEI 1918: 185) though more Indian parents desired ‘to send their children to these schools with the object of helping them to acquire greater fluency in speaking and writing English’ (PEI 1939: 236). Thus, by 1938-39 number of Indian students in European schools was as follows:

Indian Students in English Schools					
Boys		Girls		Total	
Boys’ schools	146	Girls’ schools	216	Total (schools)	362
Boys	24,519	Girls	28,322	Total (students)	52,841
Indian Boys	5,590	Indian Girls	6,286	Total (Indian students)	11,876

Source: Edn Ind 1941: 110

The tuition fee of all the elitist, English-medium schools was high. In the chiefs colleges it ranged between Rs. 4,300 per year at Mayo College to Rs 1,250 at Aitchison (Mangan 1986: 128-131). In the other schools it was roughly as follows:

Average Tuition Fees Per Pupil Per Year (Rupees)				
Year	Primary	Vernacular	Anglo-Vernacular	European
1932-1933	Free to 2.0	1.4	22-48	75
1939-1940	Free to 1.8	1.4	24-45	87

Source: Several education reports. Specially see PEI 1939 and Edn. Ind. 1941).

These figures illustrate that the fees increased as English was added. It was, therefore, a subject to be bought. It was, in a sense, a favour which the colonial power gave to the Indian elite. A number of letters, memoranda and policy statements of British officers during this period confirm that the British policy was, and remained, the restricting of English only to the elite; especially the upper salariat.

The lower salariat learned the vernacular languages which the colonial government recognized, standardized, printed and disseminated through the educational bureaucracy. Thus Urdu, the imposed vernacular of the Punjab, N.W.F.P and British Balochistan (i.e most of present day Pakistan), was promoted at the Fort William College in Calcutta. It was there that Urdu prose was created, grammatical rules were made explicit and codified, and the foundation of Urdu as a print language were laid down (Siddiqui 1979).

Sindhi too was standardized through the adoption of a standard orthography and then the printing of textbooks by the British (Rahman 1996: 104-105). Both Urdu and Sindhi were also decreed to be the languages of the lower salariat which occupied bureaucratic positions in the lower domains of administration, the judiciary and education. In short, by adopting English and vernacular languages in the domains of power, the colonial power created grounds for the differentiation, and hence the splitting up, of the salariat along class and ethnic lines.

As English became the marker of elite status, modernization and urbane sophistication, it became a badge of identity for the upper salariat. Vernacular languages, then, became the mark of medium-income, lower middle class people. This was the class cleavage. As the vernacular salariat groups could also mobilize against other vernacular groups, ethnic cleavage was also possible. What is being argued here is not that these cleavages would not have been there had these policies not been pursued. The cleavages were there but they came to be expressed along new dimensions as far as class was concerned. As for the ethnic dimension, language could not have been a salient symbol of group identity, and therefore ethnic mobilization, in pre-modern conditions. Pre-modern communities are split into groups along kinship lines (Fox 1971) not, in the absence of efficient system of communication and print languages, do not imagine themselves to be a large community of people speaking the 'same' language. Indeed, they have local names for their dialects (Brass 1991: 70). Larger labels, subsuming dialects, become possible when print languages are established.

The Pakistani Salariat and English

As in British India, in Pakistan too the upper salariat preserves its *de facto* monopoly of, or at least privileged access to, English. This upper salariat was created and nurtured by the British colonial regime as we have seen. As the state was overdeveloped, again because of the colonial intervention (Alavi 1983), this section of the salariat came to hold a disproportionately large share of state power and patronage in Pakistan. Khalid Bin Sayeed argues that the bureaucracy came to dominate provincial politics (1960: Chapter 9) and Hamza Alavi adds that this also happened at the centre (Alavi 1958, 1959, 1983: 72-85). Later, the military became a partner of the bureaucracy in wielding state power (Rizvi

1974; Kukreja 1985; Jalal 1990) and, even after the death of Zia ul Haq, ‘military hegemony lingers on and erosion of governmental authority escalates’ (Shafqat 1997: 265). The language which both the higher bureaucracy and the military used, officially and socially, was English. It was also the language of science and the international bureaucracy. Thus, the pragmatic consideration which induced the upper salariat to preserve English were: privileged access to elitist jobs in Pakistan and abroad; easy access to technology, science and other modern disciplines available at first hand in English and avoidance of the cost which the creation of new working rules and educational material would entail. Apart from these instrumental (or rational) reasons for trying to retain English, there were non-rational reasons for it too. English had been an elite-marker and there were snobbish reasons for keeping it so. Bureaucracies are conservative and find change very disconcerting. Thus, out of sheer inertia, they resist the replacement of English by other languages. Also, the question of which language would replace English was a tricky one because it involved the ethnic question too. There was much resistance to Urdu in East Bengal, Sindh, N.W.F.P and Balochistan when it opened up only lower salariat position. But if all salariat positions, especially the elitist ones, were to be opened up by Urdu the protest would increase manifold. One view, which has never been expressed by state functionaries but has recently been expressed by the journalist Khalid Ahmed and the present writer, is that English is associated with liberalism while Urdu has come to be associated with Islam and rightist views. This view, while expressed by very few people, is probably shared by a number of people in the upper, more Westernized, sections of the salariat. As such, it may have been a reason appear to be the reasons why the Pakistani upper salariat, brought up as it was on English, tried to retain it despite the fact that this policy put most other Pakistanis at a disadvantage in securing upper salariat positions.

The story of how English was retained from 1947 till 1958 when the bureaucratic-military complex manipulated with ostensibly democratic civilian governments; how it thrived under the military rule of Ayub Khan (1958-1969) and Yahya Khan (1969-1971); survived Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s promise of socialism (1972-1977) and General Zia ul Haq’s ‘Islamic’ military rule (1977-1988) has been narrated in detail earlier (Rahman 1996: 228-248 & 1997a). It need not, therefore, be repeated here. What bears repetition is that the ruling elite, which includes the higher salariat and allied politicians, had a dual policy as far as English was concerned. At the upper, rhetorical level they appeared to favour Urdu not English. More pious statements about the ‘national’ language and the necessity of teaching it and improving it were made about Urdu than about English. Indeed, next to Islam the Pakistani elite used Urdu as a symbol of Pakistani identity and hence made it a part of the ideological baggage it carried. At the covert, policy-making level, however, English was given privileged treatment. This is obvious from the way the state spent disproportionately large sums on the creation and maintenance of public schools and cadet colleges where English, not Urdu, was the medium of instruction. The *Current Expenditure: Details of Demands for Grants and Appropriations* of various years highlight the fact that English medium state schools cost millions to the public, excluding the tuition and other fees, while vernacular-medium schools cost a mere pittance (for figures of 1994-5 see Rahman 1996: Appendix G).

The Lower Salariat and English

The lower salariat resents this privileged treatment of English and its Urdu and Punjabi-speaking members—the latter because they mostly identify with Urdu—have often opposed it. From their point of view it is manifestly unjust that they should be handicapped in the race for goods and services. The highest levels of the salariat, they argue, still function in English. The Inter Services Selection Board of the armed forces, which selects boys as potential officers, still holds the most important tests and interviews in English. The Federal Public Service Commission, which holds tests for the central superior

services, also lays much emphasis on written and spoken English. The most well paying Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs), foreign banks and foreign donors in Pakistan and, of course, institutions abroad, generally function in English. Hence, the elite which has 'bought' English because of its wealth or acquired it because of its power is at an advantage which, in the eyes of the vernacular-educated salariat, is unjust. Moreover, English is an elite marker. It does not provide only tangible gratifications in the form of goods and services; it also provides prestige. It opens the doors of drawing rooms. It gives one confidence; even snobbish arrogance. Those who are not fluent in it, therefore, struggle all their lives against heavy psychological odds. They are given a sense of inferiority which only the most confident can overcome. The vernacular-educated elite calls this an unjust arrangement and argues that it should be done away with. Thus the medium of instruction debate in Pakistan is not only about teaching, or about language alone; it is about conflicting political interests; conflicting ways of life; conflicting histories (Rahman 1997. Also see Rahman 1996: 228-248).

The Salariat and Ethnic Languages

In general the salariat, or at least a very significant portion of it, acquiesces in the prevalent system of the distribution of power, goods and services and non-material gratifications. However, sometimes it may oppose hegemonic power too. If the differences from the ruling elite are not of religion or language, then its opposition takes the form of class struggle of one kind or another. If the differences are of religion, (including sect) or language, then these can become symbols of group mobilization. Such mobilization occurs in modernizing, or even modernized, societies because it is only modernity which provides the possibility of establishing large and widespread networks of contact which can make people feel as if they are part of the same collectivity. Moreover, it is only when people need jobs, and therefore admission in educational institutions, that they need to come together as a pressure group. Above all, and this factor is not emphasized enough, when face-to-face communities break up, relationships become attenuated and people feel deracinated. Under these conditions it may be sustaining to be part of a community, however widespread. The nation is, of course, such a community. But if there is a feeling of being dominated by a different group within the national boundaries, then, quite apart from the rational or instrumental reasons, there are also extra-rational or psychological reasons for seeking ethnic identifications.

Ethnic Or Resistance Language-Teaching

For whatever reason the ethnic identity is sought or emphasized, language is generally a part of the process. The salariat, often in the vanguard of language movements, tries to modernise the ethnic language, use it in formal domains and to reach it. Examples of such kind of language-teaching by an ethnic, or resistant, salariat are legion. Let us mention only a few of them.

During the Irish struggle against English domination Irish Gaelic had such a significance and people did try to learn it though it was not of value as far as jobs and getting on in the world was concerned (Hindley 1990: 37-39). Other cases of Language Teaching, as a form of resistance or political assertion of group identity, are the teaching of Welsh in Wales to prevent it from dying out (Khelif 1976; 1986); the teaching of Catalan in Catalonia, Spain, where Franco's policy of suppressing that language had created tremendous popular resentment (Mar-Molinero 1989; Grant & Docherty 1992); the teaching of Dutch to the Flemish population in Belgium (Swing 1981); the teaching of French in Quebec after 1982 (Martel 1996; Fortier 1994) and the teaching of Hebrew in Israel (King 1997: 31). Success depends on many factors including initial motivation and resources. In the case of Welsh both are not enough to reverse

the trend but, since the English are dominant, the resistance is just enough to keep the movement going. In Ireland, since the English left, resistance became a thing of the past and pragmatism took over. In Catalonia the brutal Franco years having produced a high degree of antagonism, and local jobs being available in Catalan, make the pro-Catalan language policy sustainable. In the case of Belgium the Flemish people, having prospered and become aware of their new power, used their language more assertively. In this case this linguistic assertiveness was not so much a means to power as a reflection of a new balance of power. This, then, is a case of ethnic LT. In Quebec in Canada the intensity of French resistance, based on cultural pride, and the possibility of getting on in French makes LT policies successful. In Israel the success is greater than all other countries because a dead language, which was nobody's mother tongue, has become alive. But it is the only language which unites Jews from all over the world (Rabin 1973: 69) and, as King points out, the holocaust had created such a strong emotional resistance to other languages (as icons) (King 1997: 31) that Israel resuscitated Hebrew through the most successful experiment in resistance LT ever. This experiment was conducted largely in the schools. Indeed, 'what led to the use of Hebrew at home was its prior promotion as the language of instruction at school' (Cooper 1989: 13).

The Failure of Ethnic LT

Ethnic LT fails, however, when the ethnic group is too small to be able to establish a territorial base or create a strong pressure group. In such cases, it may not have the will to resist the larger group and feels that there are no economic benefits from learning their own ethnic language.

Precisely because there are neither economic benefits for learning Hawaiian nor much active resistance to English-speaking. Americans from the mainland, the LT programme to save Hawaiian from extinction are not a success (Kawamoto 1993). Similarly, the forces of utilitarianism contribute to the failure of Quechua LT. It has been dominated for four centuries by Spanish in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. Recently schools have begun to teach it in order to keep it alive. However, urbanization (bringing more people in the domain of utilitarian motivation) continues to foster Hispanization so that there is little hope of a reversal of roles between Spanish and Quechua (Gleich 1994). Indeed, it was rejected after three years of experimental teaching in Peruvian schools in the nineteen seventies precisely because Quechua speakers did not want to spend time and effort to learn it (Hornberger 1989).

But why do modern states spend time and resources on teaching language which are dying out anyway. One answer is that there are liberal humanists who do not want languages, and therefore distinct human culture, to disappear for ever. But such people, however vocal, can only be very few. When the decision-makers allocate resources for the teaching of these languages they respond to the demands of such people, and members of the language community in question, out of political considerations. In democratic countries the decision-makers consolidate and expand their power base, their vote bank, and get a good reputation for their liberal and fair policies. Thus France, which had actively suppressed all languages, except standardized Parisian French in the past, now gives some measure of protection to Basque, Breton, Catalan and Corsican languages (Laroussi & Marcellesi 1993). In Newzealand, after the marginalization of the aboriginal language, Maori, the Ministry of Education declared some support for it in 1982 (Paulston & Mc Loughlin 1994: 60-61). In Canada, despite some opposition, the languages of immigrants – 'heritage languages' – are supported in some schools (ibid 63) and in Europe too some minor languages are being revitalized (ibid 66). But these effort and resources but also, and much more so, on the motivation for language learning which the speakers of the language manifest.

This motivation, as mentioned before, depends on the speakers' resistance to the dominant language and, even more so, on whether there are chances of any change in the way it will be used in the domains of power both nationally and internationally. Even people who resist the domination of a language, or its speakers, might nevertheless continue to learn it because they feel that it will continue to empower them individually or collectively.

Ethnic Languages and the Saliariats of Pakistan

Let us go back to British India when the Muslim salariat raised the demand for Pakistan before coming to the role of the ethnic languages in Pakistan. The Hindu and Muslim salariats of British India came into being by accepting British Rule, acquiring Western knowledge and English and thus getting into government service. Raja Rammohun Roy (1772-1833), the leader of modernising Hindus, demanded that English rather than Sanskrit should be taught by the government to the Hindus (Sharp 1920: 101). Nawab Abdul Latif (1828-1893) and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-99) demanded the same policy for Muslims. Their reaction was one of acquiescence to the manifest power of the British while Syed Ahmad Shaheed and the revolutionaries of 1857 had fought them.

As mentioned earlier, when salariats become sizable and strong, some of their members resent the idea of being denied power in their own right. These form a revolutionary avant garde, something on the lines of Marx's revolutionary intellectuals, and begin to resist the dominant group. In India the Hindu salariat chose Hindi as an identity symbol while the Muslim salariat chose Urdu. Thus, during the nineteenth century, as Christopher King has ably shown, the process of identity-creation brought about a congruence between Hindu and Hindi (King 1994). For the Muslims too the congruence between Muslim and Urdu took place. While this did not mean that the Hindu and Muslim salariats rose in revolt against English, they did oppose each other and the Urdu-Hindi controversy was part of the pre-partition struggle between the Hindu and Muslim salariat for power (Dittmer 1972; Brass 1974; Rahman 1996: 59-78). In this case the largest sections of the Indian salariat, both Hindu and Muslim, kept using English as before while their newfound linguistic allegiance became part of their struggle against each other. The Muslim salariat of northern India, as Paul Brass has shown (1974: 119-181), was in the forefront of this struggle precisely because it had been in a privileged position and felt more threatened by the rise of the Hindu salariat than the Muslim salariats of, say, Sind, Punjab and the N.W.F.P where there was much less fear of non-Muslim domination. Thus, Urdu was a symbol, a political weapon, rather than a language of actual use for the higher salariat which remained English both during the struggle for Pakistan and later.

The Challenge of the Bengali-Speaking Salariat

When Pakistan was achieved and the fear of Hindu domination was removed, the vernacular-educated salariats of Pakistan could, under certain conditions, favour their own languages. The biggest salariat was that of East Bengal which had acquiesced so far in supporting Urdu as part of the Pakistan movement and its ideology of a common Muslim identity. In 1948, however, it felt dominated by the West Pakistanis (who were mostly Punjabis and Urdu-speaking Mohajirs in those days) and wanted to resist this domination. The Bengalis could not choose religion as an identity symbol this time because it was the same. But language was not. Thus the language, Bengali, became their identity symbol. They raised the demand that Urdu could not be the only official language of Pakistan. That honour, they reasoned, was to be shared with Bengali, the language of majority in Pakistan. They pointed out that the promotion of Urdu alone would adversely affect Bengali cultural and literacy life; make it difficult for Bengalis to find

employment and relegate their language, and hence their way of life, to the periphery. The West Pakistani ruling elite, its collective mind shaped by the Urdu-Hindi controversy and fearful of both Bengali domination and ethnic breakup, refused to accommodate Bengali. Bengali students, the most active aspirants to salariat positions, rose in revolt in 1948 and M.A. Jinnah, the father of the nation, was sent out in March that year to, as it were, 'nip the evil in the bud'. In 1952, however, the students rose again and this time the state used force on 21 February which is still celebrated as martyr's day (*Ekushe*). In 1955 the state compromised. Bengali was accommodated, at least symbolically, as a national language besides Urdu. But Bengali ethnicity had been born and strengthened and, since justice was still denied, it took different forms till Bangladesh was created in 1971 (for details of the language movement see Umar 1970. Also Ahmed 1981; Alam 1991 and Rahmand 1996: 79-102).

What is relevant for us in the context of this paper is that when the salariat feels that it is being unjustly treated; that it is being denied its due share in goods, services and power, then it can use language a symbol of identity to mobilize as a pressure group. However, in such cases there is generally another language which the salariat keeps acquiring because it must work to earn a living and acquire power and prestige and that language is used in the domains of power where such work is to be found. In the case of East Bengal this other language was, of course, English. The revolting students of Dhaka University could, and did, find employment through English. Indeed, for pragmatic reasons, even the language being actively resisted, in this case Urdu, was learned by the Bengali salariat when it was necessary. However, the sentiment for Bengali was very much kept alive both by the English and the Urdu-using members of the Bengali salariat.

An interesting example of how a salariat need never learn the symbolic ethnic language is provided by the Irish case. Here Irish Gaelic was the identity symbol, the ethnic language, of the Irish. However, the urban Irish spoke English. Gaelic was used only in remote rural backwaters where the anti-English movement was weak. Thus, the anti-English salariat supported Gaelic in words but kept using English anyway. Even now, when Ireland is free, the Irish language is slowly dying despite much show of supporting it through language (Hindley 1990).

The Challenge of the Other Saliariats

The Bengali ethnic assertion changed the theoretical foundations of Pakistan. The change was one of the basis of identity. Whereas Islam was this basis when Hindu domination was to be countered, now it was language when Punjabi domination was apprehended by the ethnic salariats of Pakistan. The state reacted to this by making cosmetic concessions (quotas in jobs in proportion to population; symbolic accommodation to Bengali at the national level; acceptance of mother-tongue as the medium of instruction at the primary level in principle etc), but the distribution of power did not change. To this the Sindhis, Pashtuns and Balochis reacted by asserting their ethnic identities. The details of these ethnic movements are traced out by Tahir Amin (1988), Hamza Alavi in several articles (1987a & b), Feroz Ahmed (1998) and the present writer with special reference to language (1996). Since the salariats led these ethnic movements, at least the Bengali, Sindhi and Pashtun ones, Hamza Alavi is right in calling them the fracture of the salariat along ethnic lines for political gain (1987b: 226).

In the case of the Sindhi language was the most important focus, and symbol, of Sindhi identity. Sindhi was used in the domains of power since the British period and the centralizing ruling elite had decreased its importance since 1955 when Sind became part of the 'one-unit' of West Pakistan. Later, Ayub Khan's military-bureaucratic regime had sought to decrease its hold even further. As always, Sindhis aspiring for

salariat positions had learned both English and Urdu. But the educated members of the Sindhi salariat were at the forefront of the Sindhi nationalist movement. Their position was complicated by the fact that they were in conflict with the dominating Punjabi-Mohajir ruling elite at the centre in addition to being in conflict with the Mohajir salariat, especially the lower salariat, in the province of Sind itself. The latter conflict was exacerbated when, following the restoration of the province of Sind in 1969 during Yahya Khan's regime, the Sindhi leaders tried to give their language a pre-eminent position in Sind. When the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education and Sind University tried to do that in late 1970, the Mohajirs resisted and there were Urdu-Sindhi riots in January and February 1971 (Rahman 1996: 120-123). Later, when the Pakistan Peoples' Party government in Sind tried to do that in July 1972, this time making a legal provision that people not knowing Sindhi would not be employed by the Sind government, there were riots again (ibid 1996: 123-127).; In both cases it was a question of conflict between the interest of the two salariats: the Mohajirs and the Sindhis. Languages, in this case Urdu and Sindhi respectively, served as the identity markers of the two salariats. Later, in the eighties, the experience of migration from India was also made part of the Mohajir identity. However, Urdu as a mother tongue remained in place. Indeed, Altaf Hussain, the leader of the MQM, gave Urdu the central place in the definition of the Mohajir 'nationality'. He said: 'We are clearly recognised by our language [Urdu], culture, interests, and way of life, which are manifestly different from others' (Husain 1988 in Saleem 1996: 166).

Here too what is worth noting is that both the Mohajir and Sindhi salariats kept acquiring English, even at rising cost, while they declared their allegiance to the identity-determining languages. Moreover, in the case of the Sindhis, the salariat never ceased acquiring Urdu either however much it might be detested. In general, this strongly suggests that the salariat, even while struggling against the perceived domination or salience of a language of power, does not stop acquiring it because it owes its power to the manipulation of such a language – even to oppose that very power.

The case of the Pashto-speaking salariat illustrates this tendency more clearly. Khan Ghaffar emphasized Pashto as an identity marker of the Pashtuns as part of anti-colonial resistance. He opened Pashto-medium schools and launched Pashto publications and a section of the rising Pashtun salariat in urban areas, with all its allied groups, took up the cause of Pashto. But, since Khan Ghaffar and later Wali Khan (whether in the National Awami Party or the Awami National Party), were perceived as demanding independence or provincial autonomy from Pakistan, the central government suspected Pashto. Thus Pashto was controlled, rationed out under state control, and generally kept on a tight leash.

The Pashtun salariat, however, demanded Pashto and the name Pakhtunkhwa for their province for reasons of identity and self respect. In practice, like all salariats, it acted pragmatically towards Pashto. Thus, in 1929-30 the Primary Education Committee carried out a survey of Pashtun opinion towards teaching Pashto. After the survey Sahibzada Qayyum Khan reported as follows:

Among the Pushto-speaking people, we came across a remarkable solidarity of opinion in favour of instruction being given in Urdu rather than in Pushto. Pushto was recommended to be used only colloquially in the lower classes of the school in the course of explanation by the teacher (LAD-F 12 October 1932: 132).

Later, when Pashto was made the medium of instruction in selected schools in 1984 in the Pashto-speaking areas, there was resistance to this policy. The evaluation committee which reported on the Pashto Textbooks Translation Project in 1991 pointed out that parents feel that their children waste their time and energy in studying Pashto (Edn Dept-F 1991: 38-40).

In any case, the children who do study Pashto are not from the elite or even the middle classes. They are generally from the rural masses, the peasantry, who do not have an advantaged access to salariat positions anyway. The other members of the salariat, even if they are leaders of Pashtun nationalists, empower their children by teaching them English and Urdu. Resistance to Urdu, then, is at a symbolic level. It does not bring about any significant change in the way the Pashtun salariat acquires the languages of power. Pashtun nationalism has decreased as the Pashtuns have joined the larger network of business as well as the salariat in Pakistan (Ahmed, F 1998: Chapter 10). This has made the Pashtuns less inclined to break away from Pakistan but they still desire that symbolic importance be given to Pashto and their province be named Pakhtunkhwa. These are matters of psychological importance falling in that category of desiderata which Francis Fukuyama calls 'recognition' (Fukuyama 1992: 146). The Pashtuns want to be 'recognized' in their own right as a distinct collectivity. This makes Pashto symbolically significant but, power being accessible through English and Urdu, the Pashtuns keep acquiring those languages.

In the case of the Baloch, and in this ethnic category the Brahvi speakers are included, the salariat was and is still very small. The Baloch society was an armed, war-like, tribal society controlled by chieftains. Hence the ethnic assertion was militant in 1948, 1958 and in the seventies (Harrison 1981). Language did, however, become an identity-marker for the Baloch salariat both in Iran and Pakistan and was suppressed in the former country (Harrison 1981: 95-103) and patronised in the latter (Rhaman 1996: 163-164). The Baloch salariat, proficient in Urdu itself, wrote in Balochi and Brahvi to strengthen their feelings of cultural solidarity and to strengthen their identity. Among other things the Baloch nationalists wanted Balochi and Brahvi to be taught in schools and at other levels. This effort bore fruit when 'The Balochistan Mother Tongue Use Bill, No. 6 of 1990' was passed in the Balochistan legislative Assembly (LAD-Bal 21 June and 15 April 1990). Balochi, Brahvi and Pashto were supposed to be taught in classes 1 and 2 in certain schools in Balochistan. All elitist schools were exempted, as in the N.W.F.P in the case of teaching Pashto, and the languages of the domains of power remained Urdu and English. Thus, when the experiment was discontinued on 8 November 1992 by the Muslim League (and hence centrist) government of Taj Muhammad Jamali, parents did not protest against the decision. The Baloch nationalist intellectuals did (Rahman 1996: 169) but for the salariat, as in other cases, the crucial question was one of access to power. This, of course, the indigenous languages did not give and the salariat, therefore, continued to acquire the languages which did.

In short, the salariats of dominated collectivities use their ethnic languages as identity markers. These languages provide them with a focal, emotive, issue which helps mobilize them as pressure group. In the process literature, especially identity-emphasizing literature, is produced in the language and there is a demand for teaching it. However, if the language is ghettoizing (i.e if it confines one to a low-powered social niche), then the salariat honours it only on the rhetorical plane without actually acquiring it to any significant degree. Indeed, in some cases, the mother tongue may be rejected in favour of the language of power. Thus, in South Africa the blacks resisted the attempt to teach them through their own tongues because, they argued, this would disqualify them for the best jobs (Reagan 1987; Janks 1990). Indeed, this was an attempt at linguistic and educational elite closure – the strategy of preventing people from entering an elite – and the indigenous South Africans understood how the white salariat would continue to block them out in the name of teaching them their indigenous languages.

Conclusion

The salariat, depending as it does on print languages for jobs which are the source of its power, chooses to acquire the languages of power even if that is the language it opposes politically. This apparently

contradictory policy of opposing a language(s) while learning it too becomes explicable with reference to the dimension of power. It creates bonds of solidarity which create a mobilized pressure group which can wrest power, or goods and services, from a dominant group. The language which is preferentially learned is that language which enables individual members of the ethnic group to procure power under the existing arrangements by entering the salariat. The former process, that of learning one's ethnic language to create a pressure group, is based upon the hope that the present unjust system would come to an end. The latter position, that of learning the language of the domains of power, assumes that it will continue to exist. Thus, the fear of being ghettoized by their ethnic languages makes sections of the salariat subversive of their own overall desire for change. Under these conditions revolutions, such as the creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh, are rare events. They only occur when dominant elites do not accommodate the discontented ethnic counter-elites and these counter-elites are large in size and are willing to turn militant. When there is accommodation, as in Canada and Belgium, the ethnic languages do become the alternative languages of the domains of power. Thus in French Quebec and Flemish-speaking Belgium one can get jobs in French and Flemish respectively. But there too the salariat learns English and French respectively because those two languages help the salariat to get more jobs even outside their own linguistic areas. In conclusion, then, the language of the salariat is the language which helps it acquire power.

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