

Lexical Variation among Punjabi Dialects as a Marker of Linguistic Boundaries in Pakistani Punjab



Submitted by: Rabia Jamshaid

ID: 13014084033

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DEDICATION

To my dearest parents for their support who did everything for me to achieve my goal.

To my dear brothers and sons who helped me a lot in keeping my spirit up.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the lexical variation among five Punjabi dialects such as Majhi, Doabi, Potohari, Jangli and Saraiki to find out that how far lexical variation marks the existence of regional boundaries. This study specifically examines ten Punjabi variants; Five Functional words (Kiwain / Kidan / Kaistra), (Jiwain / Jidan / Jaistra), (Hanji / Aahoo / Han), (Bhawain / Chahay / Bhalay), (Tohada / Tussanda / Taira) and Five Content words (Laal / Ratta / Suwa), (Biwi / Zanani / Zall), (Nianay / Baal / Bachay / Jatak), (Chhaiti / Jhabday / Jaldi / Trikh), (Bohta / Baon / Ghana). The data was collected from 300 middle aged (30 to 50 years old) educated (primary to bachelor) and non-educated male and female respondents belonging to five regions of Pakistani Punjab namely Bahawalnager, Multan, Lahore, Faisalabad and Khewra. 10 predetermined questions were asked to elicit information. The findings of the study suggest there is a lexical variation among Punjabi dialects. The respondents show linguistic heterogeneity to maintain their identities. Various factors such as region, gender, education, social and political background and ethnicity are also involved in defining individual's identity. Some interesting findings add to our information like female respondents are more likely to use standard linguistic forms in their conversation as compared to men. Same is the case with educated respondents, they are conscious about their choice of variants in their conversation

as compared to non-educated respondents. With these findings we can safely speculate that lexical variation marks off the resident of one region from other region. On the basis of these lexical differences among Punjabi dialects we can mark the regional boundaries between these five specific regions of Pakistani Punjab.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter gives the background of the study. It provides a general overview of the linguistic landscape of Pakistan. It also highlights the phenomenon of language variation. Furthermore it defines the regional dialects. This chapter also gives insight into the purpose, research question, and the significance of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

Language has been studied from different perspectives. In the beginning it was studied in terms of its structure but with the advent of sociolinguistics, it started to be studied in relation to society. Chambers (2003) says that linguists analyzed linguistic variation systematically after the inception of sociolinguistics in 1960's. Sociolinguistics is a vast field and language variation is one of its major sub- fields of investigation. According to Wolfram (2006) if structure is at the heart of language then variation defines its soul. As Sapir (1921) stated for the first time that everyone knows that language is variable. Variability can be observed at every level in language.

