

Linguistic variation as marker of regional identity:

A sociolinguistic perspective



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## **DEDICATION**

*To My Mother who made me what I am today*

&

*To My Husband who continued my journey of enlightenment!*

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the differences existing among three distinct dialects of the Punjabi language at phonological and morpho-syntactic level. The dialects of Majhi, Jhangvi and Saraiki are spoken in the Punjab Pakistan in Lahore, Jhang and Multan as their central cities respectively. The speakers of these dialects are adhered to the features of their dialects which strongly mark their identity. This research focuses on the phonological and morpho-syntactic differences existing among Majhi, Jhangvi and Saraiki; thus it is first of its kind in interrogating the dialectal differences among the three dialects under study. The aim of this study is to describe the prominent features of speech of Majhi, Jhangvi and Saraiki. This research hypothesizes that each of the three dialects under study carry salient phonological and morpho-syntactic features which are strong identity makers for their speakers. This study also provides useful information about the Punjabi language and its different dialects with special focus on the investigated dialects. The differences in the linguistic features of these dialects were investigated by the recording of unstructured conversations of 5 men aging 50 years or above for 30 minutes. These conversations were based on the topic ‘What will be the future of our country?’ The use of specific linguistic features was differentiated in the analysis. All the differences occurring in the phonetics and morpho-syntax of each dialect were compared and contrasted. The findings render the presence of salient phonological and morpho-syntactic features in the three dialects which in turn prove to be strong identity markers for their speakers as well as their speech communities.

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Chapter Overview**

This chapter unfolds with an overview of the study and the key factor which is manifested in the purpose of the current study. It spotlights the research objectives, bringing forth the research questions set for the study. It confers background of the study and introduces language as dominant identity marker. This chapter discusses the phonetic and morpho-syntactic examples of Maajhi, Jhangvi and Saraiki varieties which are the main focus of the current study. The last section summarizes the whole thesis.