

CHAPTER 3

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Situation Analysis is a detailed study which helps us to identify different factors which directly and indirectly affect language learning. Before implementing or designing something it is important to find out about the different factors involved and to analyze the situation carefully.

This chapter will analyze the different factors in Pakistan which affect learning and teaching English as a second language. It will help us to understand the English language situation as a whole and find out why Pakistani students need to learn the English language.

This chapter analyzes different factors, such as educational, political, social, religious and cultural factors, which in turn will help to build the background knowledge of English, in particular the south Asian region, Pakistan.

3.1 Situation Analysis of Pakistan for the language school

Pakistan is a country with distinctive varieties of languages, cultures and religions. Different regions of Pakistan use different local and official languages. English and Urdu are the so-called official languages of Pakistan. English is in demand the same as Urdu is in demand, but English is mostly used in formal contexts,

and that is why we can call Pakistani nation as Multi modal nations which promote more than one languages. “Multi-modal nations, which seek to promote a bilingual society, English will most likely be used in certain domains, often more formal ones, with the indigenous language used in more informal contexts.” (McKay, 1992:17)

3.1.1 Political factors

Before Pakistan got its independence in 1947 it was part of the sub-continent colonized by the British after 1857. “English was introduced to the sub-continent of South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan) during the second half of the Eighteenth Century” (Jenkins 2005:7). “Persian was the lingua-franca during the Mughal Sultanate in the region, which was later replaced with English by the British as to create a class of persons, Indians in blood and color, but English in taste and character, in morals and intellect” (Mehboob 2002: 05). Rehman cited that Lord Bentinck announced on March 7, 1835 that: “The great object of the British government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that all funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed for English education only” (1996: 224).

After the time of the British Empire English has grown to have a huge demand in these regions and has a strong political background in Pakistan. Most of the official documents, such as ID cards, Passports, official forms, military and media use English. According to Rehman “English remained the language of the domains of power, including the government, bureaucracy, judiciary, military, education, commerce, and media” (1995: 24).

Though recent political changes have caused negative reaction against the western world and the learning a language have created many problems, but still the English language demands are unchanged in this region because of the background of this country and world wide use of English.

3.1.2 Cultural, social and religion factors

Cultural, social and religion has a major part together on the educational field. Education takes place in different cultural contexts in different countries. Culture represents society and their behavior "To define culture is not an easy task, and while countless definitions exist, most of them include the idea that culture entails socially transmitted patterns regarding both behavior and values" (Mc.Kay. 1994:47).

Different countries have totally different cultures from the other countries of the world. Stempleski says "Countries such as Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Thailand have very different traditions and cultural behaviors from the traditional ELT heartlands of Europe and North America" (1998:5). Different regions of Pakistan have their own local culture and regional languages. Pakistani culture is a strong and stable culture in its values, and it is follows the religion's rules.

Religion plays an important role in educational sectors, especially the countries which are strict in religious perspective. Pakistan is a Muslim country, where other religions are also present among minorities. All Pakistani schools provide religious study to all learners and parents also send them to different Madarsas (Islamic preliminaries) too to get religious education. There is a quite large difference in Muslim religion and the western world. Pakistani government system

follows religious rules especially in education. Most of the Pakistani English published books provide religious knowledge. And this difference of western world and Islamic religion cause the problem, most of the majorities of Pakistani don't want their kids know about the western world and adopt it. And that extremist community has created negative thinking towards learning English, especially because of the political and religious bias with some of the western countries. They think that by learning English people may adopt the English culture too because most of the English books portray western culture which is totally different from Islamic culture and most of the English medias, such as English books portray western culture. Thus the negative attitude of society may de-motivate the learner but the needs and demands of the language globally pushes them to learn English. Because of this cultural issue Pakistani learners are still far to cope the language in a communicative way and this problem can only be solved when Pakistani people try to incorporate Pakistani culture with the foreign culture, which would enable Pakistani students, as seconds language learners to communicate effectively not only with English speakers of their own country, but also with English speakers from other countries as well.

Pakistan is a multilingual and multicultural society, in which a variety of languages are spoken, including Panjabi, Sindhi, Balouchi, Pushto, Brohi, Siraiki and Urdu. These languages have a strong literacy and oral tradition. Pakistan was a part of the British Empire until 1947 and inherited from the British massive administrative machinery that used the system, as well as the language, of the empire.

English speaking people occupy a high status in the Pakistani Society and they are given preference for good jobs because most of the organizations use English for

all the official documentations and most of the jobs in Pakistan require applicants to take and pass written and oral exams of English.

All personal and official documents are in English and most of the new technological advancements for example, mobile phones, computer software, newspapers, and TV channels are all in English. "English is the medium of great deal of the world's knowledge, especially in such areas of science and technology" (Crystal. 2003:176).

Pakistani educated society is an adaptable society, and they can adopt the language values and culture but under their religious boundaries. The demand of English shows that it has been accepted by the Pakistani society since the British era. Because of the lack of educated people this language facing some problems nowadays but on the other hand mostly teachers and learners are highly motivated to learn English.

3.1.3 Educational factors

Education is an important subject as it provides mental, physical, ideological and moral training to individuals, to enable them to have full consciousness of their purpose in life and prepare them to achieve that purpose. Practically, this crucial subject has been neglected by successive governments in Pakistan. There is not much investment on education and many people are illiterate, especially women. "The picture of illiteracy in Pakistan is grim. Although successive governments have announced various programs to promote literacy, especially among women, they have

been unable to translate their words into action because of various political, social and cultural obstacles” (Latif. A. N.D:1).

Usually a Pakistani student has to learn as many as four languages: a regional language/ mother tongue to communicate with the family; Urdu, which is the national and official language; Arabic, which is the language of religion; and lastly English, which is the language of modern knowledge, technology, and international communications. English plays a major role in the educational sector in Pakistan because of its use in the country as a whole.

English is taught as a subject either from class 1 or class 6 (4 to 10 years age group). It becomes compulsory from class 6 to the bachelor level. It is also taught as a major subject in some of the universities in Pakistan, such as the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, etc

Since no one can enter into the domains of power without English in Pakistan it has taken a crucial role in the student’s life. Students study English 6-8 years and are unable to communicate properly. They lack in four basic skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening (Jilani 2004). That is mainly due to: first, education in general and English in particular has never drawn the attention of all the governments in terms of the importance of learning a language. Second, the teachers, particularly those teaching English, have not been professionally trained. Third, due to not updating the skills of English language teachers the application of outdated methods has harmed the quality of provision. Fourth, the curriculum used for teaching English in the government institutes has not desired quality in terms of learning English. And finally, a conducive environment supporting the learning of English is lacking in schools.

English occupies the most significant position in education in Pakistan. Due to certain educational system drawbacks and pedagogical shortcomings, students are not fully functional in communicative English and for learning second language they also need enough input. Jilani cited that “According to Van Patten (2005), first language learning and second language acquisition are similar at the core. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that just as child learns a first language through exposure to a vast amount of auditory input, second language will also gain speaking proficiency by listening to both authentic and connected speech in English and by doing oral work” (2007:3).

English is taught and learned in Pakistan with British norms because of its historical background, for instance, there is a preference among the Pakistan educational government that is to teach British English and follow that particular norm and that is why they use books which are published by British Publishers, such as Oxford and Longman, etc. But some of the researchers show that there is no particular norm in Pakistan nowadays. British English, American English have been shared nowadays which then derived to Pakistani norms. (Baumgardner 1995:270).