Teaching and Learning in Pakistan: The Role of Language in Education

Hywel Coleman

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Foreword

The Education Task Force is very pleased to endorse this report for discussion at the British Council/SPELT language policy symposia as part of the on-going consultation on language in education in Pakistan.

In this report, the British Council demonstrates its recognition of the importance that the Government of Pakistan attaches to English, as a tool for individual and national development, and its wishes to support the government in its desire to address the significant challenges that the country faces in the area of English language teaching and learning.

To this end, in early 2010, the British Council commissioned a consultant, Hywel Coleman, to undertake a review of the country's ELT policies and practices. Hywel Coleman is one of the UK's foremost experts in ELT policy and practice, with experience of advising many governments around the world, and with considerable first-hand knowledge of the Asian context. The report that follows is the result of two visits made by Hywel to Pakistan in March and July 2010 taking him to Sindh, Punjab and Azad Kashmir, as well as over six months of desk-based research.

We hope that his findings will stimulate the debate about the role of English in the context of Pakistan's wider language environment. The report, and discussion of it by panels of leading academics and policymakers throughout October 2010 in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, is part of an on-going consultative process, the aim of which is to receive feedback on the report, and to generate new insights and ideas.

Shahnaz Wazir Ali
Chair, Pakistan Education Task Force

Introduction

Through English we can communicate Islam to others, we can learn about Judaism and Christianity, we can achieve harmony, we can learn. (A madrasa teacher from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)

This document is a report on a consultancy visit to Pakistan between 4th and 17th March 2010. It consists of two main parts. The first describes the context in which English language teaching and learning take place, including the demographic, education, language and language in education contexts. The first part then considers the 2009 National Education Policy – the legislative context, as it were. Next, it examines in some detail the consequences of current and proposed language in education policies. The conclusion of this discussion is that English language teaching is frequently unsuccessful, that it does not help children in their educational careers and that it may actually be counterproductive. Clear arguments for wanting to acquire competence in English – such as that given by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa madrasa teacher quoted at the head of this page – are relatively rare. More often than not English is seen as a formal requirement for admission to the civil service or to some other form of employment; English thus has a gate keeping role.

The second part of the report then lays out a proposed strategy for the development of English and English language teaching in Pakistan. The strategy opens with a broad outline derived from the National Education Policy. It then recommends that support should focus on supporting policy development, on pre-service teacher education and on in-service teacher development. Attention should also be given to English language needs in the Islamic education sector and to a small number of miscellaneous issues. A tentative attempt is made to suggest how available resources might be allocated for these different types of activity.

The report concludes with a brief foray into the future and tries to imagine what an ideal language in education policy for Pakistan might look like in the year 2020.

Thanks are due to the many people who facilitated the study, who made themselves available for interview and who allowed me into their classrooms and training sessions. Thanks are also due to David Martin, Tony Capstick and Fauzia Shamim for their comments on an earlier version of this report. The errors and deficiencies are all mine.

PART A : THE CONTEXT

The demographic context

Pakistan's population is large and growing rapidly. But it is unclear exactly how large the population actually is, as Figure 1 shows. For instance, the population estimates for 2007 given by three international agencies differ from each other by as much as ten million, whilst there is a difference of sixteen million between two estimates for the 2010 population.

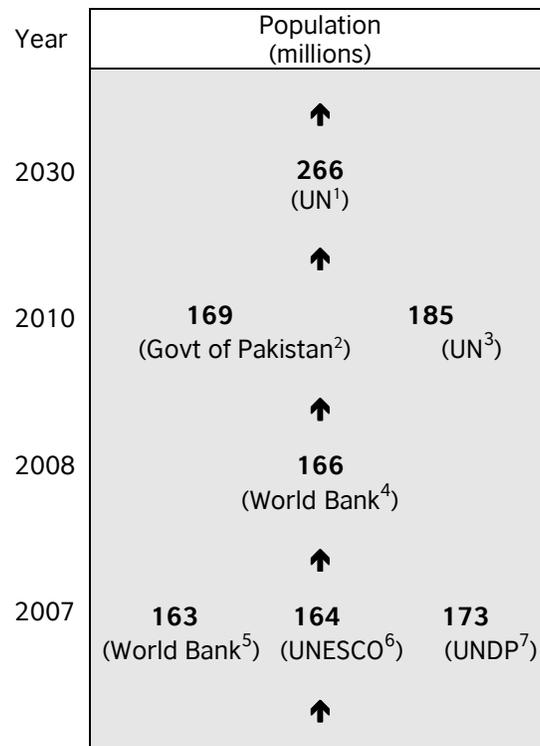| Year	Population (millions)		
	⬆		
2030	266 (UN[1])		
	⬆		
2010	169 (Govt of Pakistan[2])		185 (UN[3])
	⬆		
2008	166 (World Bank[4])		
	⬆		
2007	163 (World Bank[5])	164 (UNESCO[6])	173 (UNDP[7])
	⬆		

Figure 1 : Pakistan's ever growing population :
Current figures are uncertain, predictions even more so

The population of Pakistan is not only very large but it is also very young. A third of the population is aged 0-14 years8, half the population is under 20 and two thirds are under 30.9

Pakistan ranks 141st from 182 countries in UNDP's Human Development Index for 2009, placing it towards the lower end of the Medium Development group of nations. Per capita GDP is $879 and 60% of the population live on less than $2 a day. The poorest 10% of the population have access to 3.9% of the nation's income whilst the richest 10% of the people have access to 26.5% of national income. This generates a Gini index – a measure of the disparity of income between the richest and the poorest members of society - of 31.2. This

in itself is not exceptionally high in international terms, but we also need to bear in mind that the richest 1% of the population of Pakistan have access to 20.0% of national income whilst the Gini index for land ownership, at 0.6151, is extremely high. 10, 11

Rural poverty is not uniform throughout Pakistan : there is considerable variation. Moreover rural poverty appears to be a major factor contributing to destabilisation, although in this respect it has not been given the attention which it deserves. This is probably because of the high priority which American analysts have given to the influence of fundamentalism (rather than poverty) as an element in destabilisation.12

Although Pakistan falls in the Medium Development category, it shares certain characteristics with some of the world's poorest nations. For example, public expenditure on health came to just $8 per person per year in 2006, one of the lowest figures in the world. (Only Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Myanmar spent less per person. Afghanistan spent the same amount.) Many children suffer from inadequate nutrition and more than a third of children aged under 5 are underweight for their age.13 Average life expectancy is 65 years.14 However, people can expect to spend on average 17% of their lives in ill health; this is one of the highest figures in the world, exceeded only by Benin, Chad, Grenada, Sierra Leone and Tanzania.15

In terms of gender-related development, Pakistan ranks 124th from 155 nations. Among several indicators revealing considerable male-female disparities, men can expect to earn 5.4 times as much as women. (For comparison, in the UK men earn 1.5 times as much as women.)16

In summary, Pakistan's demographic characteristics have immediate implications for education. Its huge and burgeoning population needs to be educated, yet more or less half the population is of school age. Three fifths of the population live on less than $2 a day and thus are unlikely to be able to spare funds for their children's education. Moreover, there are very likely to be economic pressures on parents to keep their children in school for as short a time as possible so that they can start working and contributing to the family income.

Poor health impacts negatively on children's schooling; there may be frequent absences caused by illness or by the need to care for other members of the family who are ill. Even

when children are in school they may not be able to concentrate optimally if they are hungry or ill nourished.

A major disparity between male and female earning capacity almost certainly reflects wider gender discrimination. But it may also contribute to a perception that the value of educating girls is markedly less than that of educating boys, since girls will not be able to earn as much as boys even if they are educated.

The education context

This section looks briefly at a number of core education indicators and then considers the four main types of school-level institution found in Pakistan.

Participation in education in Pakistan is low and female participation is especially low. Table 1 shows that only 59% of girls and 73% of boys are in primary school. Of those children who do enter primary school only 60% manage to survive until the final year. [17] Separate data indicate that six million children of primary school age are not in school at any one time.[18]

Table 1 : Participation in education in Pakistan (%)[19]

	Male	Female	Overall
Primary (net)	73	59	66
Secondary (net)	36	28	32
Tertiary (gross)	6	5	5

Of those who complete primary school only 73% then continue into the first year of secondary school.[20] Table 1 shows that only 28% of girls and 36% of boys of secondary school age are actually in school.

Only about 10% of children complete secondary school.[21] Recently, it has been shown that females constitute 60% of the out-of-school adolescents of lower secondary school age in Pakistan.[22]

The illiteracy rate for adults (i.e. everyone aged 15 or over) is 46%, the fifth highest in Asia and the seventeenth highest in the world. But there is a major gender disparity in literacy as 60% of adult females are illiterate, nearly double the rate of 32% for illiterate adult males.[23]

Pakistan has four categories of school-level education:

- private elite English medium schools
- private non-elite 'English medium' schools
- government Urdu medium schools
- dini madaris (madrasas)

Private elite English medium schools

The number of private elite English medium schools is very small. They are extremely expensive and provide education for the children of a small and powerful elite section of the population. They will not be discussed further here.

Private non-elite 'English medium' schools

Densely populated and modestly prosperous areas – both rural and urban - are served by both government schools (see below) and private non-elite schools. The latter have increased very rapidly in number in recent years to such an extent that, by the end of 2005, one in every three enrolled children at the primary level was studying in a private school. Private non-elite schools charge modest fees which are affordable by the lower middle class. They are attractive because of their claims to offer 'English medium' education (even though in reality these claims may not be fulfilled). [24]

Government Urdu medium schools

Government schools, all of which are Urdu medium, are available almost everywhere throughout the country, in both rural and urban locations, except in extremely remote areas. More sparsely populated areas and areas with very poor populations are likely to be considered by the operators of private non-elite schools as offering little potential for student recruitment. Parents in these areas are therefore able to choose only between government schools and madrasas.

In government schools education is free and textbooks are provided. Their teachers are better qualified and better paid than those in the private non-elite schools, their classes are smaller. However, government school teachers are also more frequently absent from the classroom than are their private non-elite school counterparts.[25]

Despite their relative advantages (better educated and better paid teachers and smaller classes), government schools produce poorer learning outcomes than the private non-elite institutions. A child in a government school will need a further 1.5 years to achieve what a child in Year 3 in a private non-elite school has achieved in mathematics in Urdu, whilst the government school pupil needs a further 2.5 years to achieve what a Year 3 pupil in a private non-elite school can do in English.[26]

But despite these differences between government and private non-elite schools it is generally true to say that the learning outcomes of primary schools (excluding the true elite schools) are extremely poor. For example, by the end of Year 3, 90% of children can add single digit numbers together (3+4=7) but only 65% can subtract single digit numbers (8-3=5) and only 19% can divide a three digit number by a single digit number (384÷6=64). They will not be able to write simple sentences in Urdu and will not recognise simple words in English. The authors of the LEAPS (Learning and Education Achievements in Punjab Schools) Report conclude that a child who drops out of school at the end of Year 3 will in effect be functionally illiterate and innumerate.[27]

A separate study came to very similar conclusions. After being taught English for three years, 86% of Year 3 children could write a letter of the (Latin) alphabet when they heard it spoken and 70% could fill in the missing letter in a sequence (D_F) but fewer than 50% could fill in a single blank (FLA_) when shown a picture of a flag or two blanks (BA__) when shown a picture of a ball. Furthermore, by the end of Year 3 :

> ... a bare majority have mastered the mathematics curriculum for Grade I. ... They cannot subtract double-digit numbers, they cannot tell the time, and multiplication and division are beyond reach for all except a tiny minority. In Urdu, they cannot form a sentence with the word 'school' or the word 'beautiful'. Less than 20 percent can comprehend a simple paragraph in the vernacular.[28]

Dini madaris

Dini madaris or madrasas offer an Islamic-oriented education, usually free of charge. They also provide food, accommodation and other necessary care for their students. They are therefore particularly attractive to very poor families, especially in areas where government schools are difficult to access. The madrasas are extremely varied :

- Age range : the majority of *talib* (pupils or religious scholars) are aged between 10 and 28, but some institutions have nursery classes and others accept only relatively mature scholars.

- Size : the number of *talib* in a madrasa may range from around one hundred to several thousand.

- Ideology : madrasas are extremely varied ideologically and cannot be easily characterised. One attempt to categorise them identifies five distinct types, divided along sectarian and political lines : Sunni (Deobandi), Sunni (Bareili), Ahle Hadith/Salafi, Shia and Jamaat-e-Islami.[29] Another says that there are sixteen associations of *dini madaris* of which the three most important are Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia, Rabiat-ul-Madaris and Jamia Naeemia.[30] There is also a Federal Madaris Education Board under the Ministry of Education, but it is not clear to what extent its authority is recognised.

The following assessment by DFID of education in Pakistan can serve as a summary of this overview of the education context :

> Education indicators in Pakistan are the worst in South Asia (setting aside Afghanistan because of data problems) and amongst the very worst in the world.[31]

The language context

Urdu is Pakistan's national language whilst English has the status of 'official language'. However, there are believed to be 72 living languages in the country, not including English.[32] The numbers of speakers of these language range from the tiny Aer language (150 speakers) and Gowro language (200 speakers) up to Western Panjabi with nearly 61 million speakers (38% of the population). Table 2 lists all the languages which have at least one million speakers. There are fourteen of these and in total they are spoken by 134 million people (85% of the population). This means that the remaining 58 languages are spoken by a total of 24 million people (15% of the population). It is important to note that Urdu, the national language, comes in fourth place among the languages with the largest number of speakers; fewer than 7% of the population have Urdu as their first language.

Table 2 : Individual languages with over 1,000,000 first language speakers in Pakistan[33]

No	Language name	Speakers (millions)	Percentage of population
1	Panjabi, Western	60.6	38.3
2	Sindhi	18.5	11.7
3	Saraiki*	13.8	8.7
4	Urdu	10.7	6.8
5	Pashto, Northern	9.6	6.1
6	Pashto, Central	7.9	5.0
7	Balochi, Southern	2.8	1.8
8	Brahui	2.0	1.3
9	Hindko, Northern	1.9	1.2
10	Balochi, Eastern	1.8	1.1
11	Pashto, Southern	1.4	0.9
12	Balochi, Western	1.1	0.7
13	Farsi, Eastern	1.0	0.6
14	Panjabi, Mirpur	1.0	0.6
	Sub-total	**134.1**	**84.8**
	58 other languages	24.0	15.2
	Total	**158.1**	**100.0**

* Also sometimes spelt Seraiki and Siraiki

Some of the language names listed in Table 2 (e.g. 'Northern Hindko' and 'Central Pashto') may be familiar only to linguists. Native speakers themselves may group languages differently, in such a way that the differences which would lead linguists to identify distinct languages may be seen by their speakers merely as dialectal differences.

Table 3 groups languages into 'macrolanguages'[34], where this is possible. Now we find that there are just seven languages and macrolanguages in Pakistan which have at least one million speakers. Between them they are spoken by nearly 135 million people (85% of the population). The remaining 15% of the population speak 55 different languages.

Table 3 : Macrolanguages and other individual languages
　　　　　　with over 1,000,000 first language speakers in Pakistan[35]

No	Macrolanguage and language name	Speakers (millions)	Percentage of population
1	Lahnda (*Western Panjabi, Mirpur Panjabi, Saraiki, Northern Hindko, Southern Hindko, Khetrani, Pahari-Potwari*)	78.0	49.3
2	Pushto (*Central Pashto, Northern Pashto, Southern Pashto*)	18.9	12.0
3	Sindhi	18.5	11.7
4	Urdu	10.7	6.8
5	Baluchi (*Eastern Balochi, Western Balochi, Southern Balochi*)	5.7	3.6
6	Brahui	2.0	1.3
7	Farsi, Eastern	1.0	0.6
	Sub-total	134.8	85.3
	55 other languages	23.3	14.7
	Total	158.1	100.0

The language in education context

During the British colonial era the language in education policy was that Urdu should be the medium of instruction for the masses and that English should be the medium for the elite. This colonial era policy was criticised as early as the 1880s for effectively divorcing the people of Punjab from their sociolinguistic roots : Punjabis in general were not educated in Punjabi and so lost access to the sources of their folk knowledge; meanwhile Hindu Punjabis were not educated in Sanskrit and Muslim Punjabis were not educated in Persian so that both groups lost contact with the literary sources of their cultures. [36]

Table 4 shows how Pakistan's language in education policy has evolved since independence in 1947 but also how implementation has generally failed to develop in line with policy. In effect, then, the colonial era Urdu + English policy has remained in place throughout independence. It has been argued that this Urdu + English policy contributes to a sense of cultural anomie experienced by many people in contemporary Pakistan. Indeed, one informant said, 'Pakistan is a nation of people who don't know who they are.'[37]

Table 4 : How Pakistan's language in education policy has evolved[38]

Year	Event	Policy	Implementation
Pre-1947	Colonial rule	Urdu medium for masses, English medium for elite	As policy
1947	Independence	Urdu declared to be national language	Urdu medium for masses, English medium for elite
1959	Sharif Commission	Primary and secondary education in Urdu, higher education in English	No change
1973	New constitution	English to be replaced by Urdu within 15 years; provinces free to develop their own language policies	No change
1977	Coup by Zia-ul-Haq	Islamisation and Urduisation	English taught from Year 4; schools begin to prepare for complete Urduisation of exams by 1989; private English medium schools begin to grow
1989	Benazir Bhutto elected	English to be taught from Year 1	Little effective change
1998	New education policy	No statement regarding language policy	Private English medium schools flourish
1999	Coup by Pervez Musharraf	English to be taught from Year 1 'where teachers are available'	Little effective change
2007	White Paper	English to be taught from Year 1; mathematics and science to be taught through English from Year 6	Little effective change; in Punjab science taught through English from Year 10.
2009	National Education Policy	Science and mathematics to be taught through English in Years 4 and 5; all science and mathematics to be taught through English from 2014	Punjab declares science to be taught through English starting in Year 4 from April 2009

In contemporary Pakistan, then, Urdu is the medium of instruction in government schools, English is the medium in elite private schools and English is claimed to be the medium in non-elite private schools. Of the 71 other indigenous languages only Sindhi has an official role as medium of instruction in primary schools in Sindh and Pashto is used in government schools

in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. English is a compulsory subject from Year 1. In practice, however, much depends on the availability of teachers; a few government schools have an English medium section whilst in others pupils do not get beyond learning the English alphabet in their five years in primary school.[39]

The current Urdu + English policy carries with it several characteristics, of which the following three are most prominent : 1) English is an examination subject, 2) English teachers do not use English and 3) other languages are marginalised.

English is an examination subject

It is widely recognised that the primary function of teaching English in schools in Pakistan is to prepare pupils for examinations. Passing examinations in English then opens doors to higher levels of learning and to employment opportunities. One informant noted :

> English is a major barrier to entry to white collar jobs. … English is very important for social mobility and entry to quality education. Consequently there is apartheid in education because of language. The poor are excluded.[40]

Repeatedly we are told that English is essential for admission to government service. But ironically there is no discussion of the language or languages which, having become a government officer, one might need in order to communicate with and serve the public. It appears that in daily life for the majority of the population – especially outside the major cities – English actually has no functional value. According to one interviewee, for the population of the Saraiki-speaking area of southern Punjab even Urdu is a 'foreign' language. As for English, he claimed, 'These kids will never in their lives need to speak English. They'll never read a book in English.'[41] Another interviewee, from Islamabad, said, 'The common people don't use English.'[42]

English teachers do not use English

Observers report that the teaching of English in government schools is highly ritualised. For example, a detailed ethnographic study by Fauzia Shamim found that English teachers made a distinction between 'doing a lesson' and 'doing grammar'. 'Doing a lesson' consists of the following stages :

• A text (the 'lesson') is read aloud by the teacher or pupils
• The text is explained by the teacher, often in Urdu or a local language
• The meanings of 'difficult words' are given in English, Urdu or a local language

- Pupils write follow-up exercises in their notebooks.

Meanwhile 'doing grammar' consists of the following steps :
- The form of a grammar item is explained by the teacher
- Pupils write sentences illustrating the grammar item
- The teacher dictates an essay or letter or writes it on the blackboard to be copied by pupils
- Pupils memorise the essay or letter and reproduce it in the examination.[43]

The reproduction of set texts and the provision of memorised written answers to questions about those texts means that the teaching of English neglects speaking, listening and critical reading. Moreover, English teachers – especially in government schools – tend to teach the language through the medium of Urdu or a local language because their own competence in English is poor or because they have so little confidence in their own competence.

Other languages are marginalised

There is a widespread perception that other languages are an inconvenience which prevent people from doing their jobs properly. A senior Pakistani educationist working for an American educational organisation operating in Baluchistan and Sindh said that her organisation experiences no difficulties in Baluchistan 'because they [the population] speak either Urdu or English'. However, in Sindh, she said, 'They're very attached to their local language so it's very difficult [for us to do our work].'[44]

Many teachers feel that their jobs would be easier if children entered school (not only secondary but also primary school) already knowing English. One teacher said that the 'intellectual level' of poor children who speak Punjabi at home is lower than that of (middle class) children who speak English at home and this makes teaching the Punjabi speakers difficult for her.[45] Another teacher suggested that parents should speak English at home so that studying in school would be easier for their children.[46] Yet another argued that children should learn English in nursery school so that she and her colleagues in primary school would not face so many problems. [47]

Not surprisingly when a particular language is given no role to play in the education system, many parents respond by not encouraging the use of that language at home. A very effective way of killing a language is to deny it any place in the education system; parents

themselves will then tend to take the next step of marginalising the local language within the family in favour of the educationally privileged language or languages. The Secretary Schools in the Punjab Ministry of Education recognised that this process is happening in his province when he said, 'Mothers have struck a fatal blow to Punjabi.'[48] This process is not restricted to Pakistan but has been identified in other countries as well :

> Medium of instruction policy determines which social and linguistic groups have access to political and economic opportunities, and which groups are disenfranchised.[49]

The 2009 National Education Policy

Although as we have seen previous policy announcements regarding the roles of English and Urdu in education have had relatively little influence on actual practice, the current state of affairs is likely to be impacted in a significant way by the 2009 National Education Policy.[50] This document actually says relatively little about languages in education in Pakistan. For example, Section 5.4 discusses the importance of literacy and non-formal learning but without saying anything at all about which language or which writing system people are to be helped to become literate in or what functions literacy is expected to have.

However, importantly, the National Education Policy proposes that a comprehensive school language policy should be developed in consultation with provincial and area governments and other stakeholders. It also states that the Ministry of Education - in consultation with provincial and area education departments, relevant professional bodies and the wider public - is to develop a comprehensive plan of action for implementing the English language policy (see below) in the shortest possible time, paying particular attention to disadvantaged groups and regions. Furthermore, opportunities are to be provided to children 'from low socio-economic strata' to learn English.[51]

The policy states that the curriculum from Class I onward shall include English (as a subject), Urdu, one regional language and mathematics.

The new policy also states that provincial and area education departments 'shall have the choice to select the medium of instruction up to Class V' - although this is partially contradicted by the requirement that 'English shall be employed as the medium of instruction for sciences and mathematics from Class IV onwards.' Elsewhere, the new policy requires that 'for five years Provinces shall have the option to teach mathematics and science in

English or Urdu/official regional language, but after five years the teaching of these subjects shall be in English only.'[52] These three policy statements taken together raise a number of questions:

- It is stated that any language can be used in Classes I to V. But there is no explicit statement about which language or languages are to be used in secondary classes.
- Despite the statement that any language *can* be used in Classes I to V it is also stated that English *must* be used for teaching science and mathematics in Classes IV and V. But how can these two requirements be reconciled?
- Urdu and regional languages can be used for teaching science and mathematics between 2009 and 2014. Does this statement refer to both primary and secondary levels?
- From 2014 English must be used for teaching science and mathematics. Again, does this mean in both primary and secondary schools?

The rationale for this policy is that :

> It is not easy to obtain a white collar job in either the public or private sectors without a minimum level proficiency in the English language [and thus] English language also works as one of the sources for social stratification between elite and non-elite.[53]

Consequently, the argument goes, all children must be introduced to English at an early age as a step towards reducing social stratification.

But this rationale can be challenged from a number of perspectives :

- Justifying language choice in primary school in terms of the requirements for entry to white collar employment seems inappropriate if the population is largely rural and unlikely to be seeking office jobs whether in the government or private sectors
- The majority of pupils in the early years of primary school never complete secondary school and indeed many drop out of primary school before reaching Class 5. It would therefore seem to make more sense to equip children with the skills which will be of immediate value to them.
- The commendable democratising sentiment expressed in the desire to reduce social stratification might constitute an argument for improving the quality of teaching English *as a subject* throughout the education system but it does not necessarily imply that English should be used as a *medium of instruction*. In fact a persuasive argument has been made that this 'democratising' approach may ultimately lead to widespread illiteracy, rather than literacy, in general and particularly in English.[54]

There seems to be confusion or disagreement as to how this policy is to be implemented :

- An informant in Lahore reported that the Chief Minister of Punjab wants *all* teachers in the province to be 'trained in English' to support the new English medium policy.[55]

- A senior educationist in Lahore said that Punjab would lead the way in implementing the new policy from April 2010. Science is to be taught in English from Year 4; 35,000 new teachers are to be given four weeks of training in English to help them adapt to this policy; headteachers are to be trained in how to conduct the school assembly in English; CDs containing selected English sentences which can be used in classroom management will be distributed to schools.[56]

- Teachers in three government primary schools in Okara, Punjab, interviewed on 11th March 2010, were convinced that they would be teaching science and mathematics from Year 1 starting from 1st April. They said that they were still waiting for instructions and teaching materials from the government but they were not expecting to experience any difficulties in teaching through the medium of English because they were 'educated people'. (Nevertheless teachers in one of these schools chose to be interviewed through an interpreter because they did not understand my English.)

- An observer in Karachi stated, 'The English medium policy for science and mathematics was announced in 2006. It will be introduced from 2010 over a period of two years. ... The policy is really to start [teaching science and mathematics though English] from Year 1 but in reality schools will start from Year 4 or Year 3. The Textbook Board has not provided books yet.'[57]

Clearly these perceptions and statements are mutually incompatible. It is particularly striking that the teachers interviewed in Okara were confident that they would be teaching science and mathematics to Year 1 children through English in less than three weeks' time whereas the Secretary, Schools, for the Province of Punjab believed that teachers would be teaching science through English to Year 4 pupils. The conclusion appears to be that plans for the implementation of the new language in education policy are still evolving.

The consequences of current and proposed language-in-education policies

There is now overwhelming evidence that children benefit from receiving their early education through the medium of their home language :

- Children's formation of fundamental concepts takes place more effectively in their mother tongue because there are no barriers to comprehension.
- The ways in which children interact among themselves, the games they play, the television programmes they watch, and so on, can be integrated into and referred to in the classroom.
- Children learn to read and write far more easily in a language with which they are already familiar. Making the connections between the sounds of a language and signs on a written page is within the capability of a young child when those sounds are ones which the child hears around them all the time.
- If children become literate in their home language first then later learning of a second or foreign language (e.g. English) is likely to be more successful than if the second or foreign language is used as the medium of instruction.
- Children are able to relate the education which they receive in school to the lives which they lead in their home environment.
- Parents are able to monitor and contribute to children's education. Not only is what happens at school consolidated by parents but parents themselves can feel involved in their children's school development.

To summarise, for more than half a century research has shown many times that :

> … learning in the mother tongue is the best option for children, enhancing their learning outcomes, social development, confidence, and critical thinking skills.[58]

There are also wider social benefits :

- Parents are more likely to become involved in the school.
- In multilingual societies all communities feel equally respected if their home languages are employed in school.
- Minority languages are preserved and developed.

But if children are educated through a language with which they are not familiar – especially in the first years of primary school – there are likely to be severe consequences.

Firstly, children are far less likely to stay in school if their home language is not used. A survey from 22 countries making use of data from nearly 160 language groups found that :

> … first language had a substantial effect on educational attendance in almost all countries, even when controlling for socio-economic status, urbanization, and gender. Discrepancies between the language spoken at home and the language of teaching were the major candidate to explain over half the differences in school attendance between different groups of local-language speakers. The worst affected children were based in rural areas.[59]

There is also evidence that girls are particularly prone to non-participation in school education if the school language differs from the home language. Mother tongue education can therefore help to get girls into school.[60] A World Bank document therefore concludes:

> Fifty percent of the world's out-of-school children live in communities where the language of schooling is rarely, if ever, used at home. This underscores the biggest challenge to achieving Education for All (EFA): a legacy of non-productive practices that lead to low levels of learning and high levels of dropout and repetition.[61]

A second negative consequence of providing education in a language which children do not share with their teachers is that overall levels of educational achievement are likely to suffer. This should not be at all surprising and yet this fact rarely informs policy decisions regarding language in education:

> The language used to deliver the school curriculum pulls down the educational performance of many of those who do not use it at home, particularly those who do not have regular access to it outside school. International learning outcomes assessments show that for children who manage to stay in education, there is a strong negative impact on achievement if their first language is not used for teaching and learning. What is understood about how children learn in relation to language indicates that for preschool and primary years in particular, teaching in a language which is not familiar to a child is often too demanding for the child to cope with – particularly when they face other barriers to education, such as poverty, hunger and poor learning conditions. Children learn based on linking new knowledge to what is already familiar to them. Sudden shifts into an unfamiliar language sever those links.[62]

As the corollary to one of the benefits of learning through the home language noted above, a third disadvantage of using a second or foreign language as the medium of instruction in the early years of education is that it constrains children's acquisition of that language, counter-intuitive though this may be. In other words, the principal argument for using English (for

instance) as the medium of instruction - so as to improve children's competence in that language - cannot be justified. All things being equal, children are likely to achieve greater proficiency in English if they are allowed to achieve basic literacy in their home language first and are then taught English as a second or foreign language.[63]

The fourth negative consequence of requiring children to learn through a language which is not their home language has much wider repercussions. Expressed frankly, excluding linguistic communities from education because they do not understand the language used in school contributes to political instability and conflict.[64]

An awareness of the benefits of home language education and the risks of education through another language can help us to understand some of the problems which Pakistan is currently facing.

In government schools Urdu is the medium of instruction and yet Urdu is the first language of only 6.8% of the population. In non-elite private schools English is the medium of instruction and in the near future English will be the medium of instruction for certain subjects in government schools as well, yet English is the first language of only a tiny elite in Pakistan. We estimate, therefore, that approximately 95% of children in Pakistan do not have access to education in their mother tongue.[65] Another study suggests that 91.6% of school children are not given the possibility of studying through their first language.[66]

We saw earlier that large numbers of children in Pakistan are not in school and that there are high dropout rates and low transition rates from primary to secondary school. This is exactly what the research on home language in education would lead us to predict.

We have also seen that girls are disproportionately likely to drop out of school. This too is what the literature suggests is likely to happen if education takes place in a language with which children are unfamiliar.

And we have seen that the educational achievements of primary schools are extremely poor. This is also what we would expect if children are not being taught through their home language. (Non-elite private schools produce slightly better results, but this is likely to be because their teachers spend more time in the classroom than do teachers in government schools.)

An important study published recently by CfBT and Save the Children predicts that Pakistan is at risk if it does not prioritise a move towards mother tongue based education:

- Pakistan is one of 44 countries with large numbers and/or large proportions of their population without access to education in the mother tongue. There is a strong likelihood of educational failure for many and there is little chance that children will achieve skills targets in international languages such as English.
- Pakistan is one of 34 less developed countries which also have large rural populations. There is likely to be a 'dramatic exclusion' from education in rural areas and there is little chance of the country achieving its Millennium Development Goals for primary school education.
- Pakistan is one of 19 countries which are characterised by high linguistic fractionalisation. There is thus an additional risk that inappropriate school language will contribute to long term political, social and economic instability and divisions along linguistic and ethnic lines.
- Pakistan is one of 11 countries which have high levels of 'fragility or conflict' with a consequent risk of 'serious interactions of language policy with extended fragility'.

The analysis concludes that countries where deep linguistic and ethnic divisions intersect with high levels of fragility require very careful consideration of their language in education policy and practices. [67]

Summary of Part A

- Pakistan's population is poor, large and growing rapidly in size.
- Pakistan's schools fall into four categories. Private elite schools are English medium. Private non-elite schools claim to be English medium but in practice are often not so. Government schools and madrasas are Urdu medium.
- With the exception of the private elite schools, educational outcomes are generally poor.
- Urdu, spoken as a first language by 7% of the population, is the national language. Apart from Urdu there are six major regional languages and macrolanguages each of which has over a million speakers.
- Since independence – indeed since the 19th century – English has been the language of elite schooling whilst Urdu has been the language of mass education. Various attempts

to bring about change have been inconclusive. English remains a high prestige language; indigenous languages are marginalised.

- The 2009 National Education Policy seems to extend the role of English in education, although many aspects of the new policy remain unclear.
- Early years education must be provided in a child's home language. The dangers of not doing so include high dropout levels (especially among girls), poor educational achievement, poor acquisition of foreign languages (such as English), the long term decline and death of indigenous languages, and ethnic marginalisation leading to the growth of resentment among ethnic minorities. Pakistan is considered to be one of the countries most exposed to these risks.

PART B : TOWARDS A STRATEGY FOR ENGLISH IN PAKISTAN

Broad outline

The context which we have explored in the first part of this report is dire. The risks associated with present policy and practice are very worrying. A strategy for supporting English language learning and teaching in Pakistan must therefore be principled and sensitive to that context.

We have seen that the 2009 National Education Policy stipulates that:
- a comprehensive school language policy should be developed in consultation with provincial and area governments and other stakeholders
- a comprehensive plan of action for implementing the English language policy should be developed
- particular attention should be given to disadvantaged groups and regions
- children 'from low socio-economic strata' should be given opportunities to learn English.

These stipulations should form the core of a strategy for supporting the learning and teaching of English in Pakistan.

The proposals which follow are presented in a sequence from highest to lowest priority.

Policy development and advocacy

Assistance with the development of both the comprehensive school language policy for Pakistan and the subsequent plan of action required by the National Education Plan should be of top priority.

A first step in this process would be to approach potential partner organisations and explore levels of awareness of and interest in the issues raised in the first part of this report. A separate section below discusses in some detail the potential for working with partners.

The next step in the process should consist of intensive advocacy or awareness raising of core stakeholders such as Provincial and Area education authorities regarding the three core issues of a) the desirability of mother tongue education, b) the risks involved in restricting the medium of instruction to Urdu or English, and c) approaches to the Teaching of English to

Young Learners. This can be done through a series of regional workshops. A by-product of these workshops will be the identification of enlightened and innovative practice relevant to the three core issues which may already be taking place.

On the basis of lessons learnt through the regional workshops the third stage should consist of an approach to the Federal Government again with the objective of raising awareness but also offering pointers towards a policy and a plan of action.

Subsequent stages will depend on the degree of success achieved in the regional and national workshops.

It can be predicted that in the initial stages there will be hostility to proposals to develop mother tongue education, particularly with regard to the expense likely to be incurred, the perceived inconvenience of using several different languages in the education system, and worries about ethnic disintegration if local languages are encouraged. (These are the most commonly expressed doubts in other parts of the world where a mother tongue policy has been considered.)

However there is substantial international experience, particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia, which can be drawn upon to allay these fears. [68] Lessons learnt elsewhere provide the following answers :

- Training teachers and preparing textbooks in several languages is clearly more expensive than doing so in just one language. But providing primary education for large numbers of children who drop out early and who acquire almost negligible levels of literacy and numeracy while they are in school is even more expensive.
- Delivering education in a number of different languages is also undeniably less convenient than doing so in just one language. But, a policy of home language education in the early years of primary school does not necessarily imply that every indigenous language would need to be involved. As Table 3 above showed, 85% of the school population in Pakistan would be covered by just seven major languages (or macrolanguages). As greater experience was acquired and as the education system became more confident in adopting a number of different languages the approach could be extended to some minority languages with smaller numbers of speakers – but this would be several years down the line.

- International experience shows that the adoption of multiple languages in primary school education actually tends to strengthen the loyalty of ethnic minorities to the state, rather than the reverse, because all ethnic groups perceive that they are being equally respected. A well-established European example can be found in Switzerland and an Asian parallel, arguably, can be seen in Singapore. Very recent developments along these lines have taken place in Orissa and in Southern Thailand.[69]

The Asia Multilingual Education Working Group (MLE WG) based at UNESCO in Bangkok is a consortium of NGOs, intergovernmental organisations, multilateral agencies and academic institutions which have a common goal to 'remove barriers of access to quality education for ethnolinguistic communities through coordination of technical and substantive support to multilingual education initiatives and related policy advocacy throughout the Asia region.'[70] The MLE WG is in correspondence with similar working groups in the USA, the UK and East Africa.

The MLE WG will be launching a newsletter in the near future. It will also hold an International Conference on Language, Education and the Millennium Development Goals from 9th to 11th November 2010 in Bangkok, in collaboration with SEAMEO, UNICEF, Save the Children and other organisations. It would be highly desirable for significant stakeholders from Pakistan to take part in this event.

Pre-service teacher education

Pre-service teacher education is the second most important area requiring support. The greatest impact on and the most significant contribution to the long-term development of English language teaching in Pakistan can be achieved by accessing the teacher education/training institutions which provide pre-service teacher education. There are 279 such institutions in the country, as shown in Table 5 on next page.

Table 5 : Distribution of teacher education/training institutions in Pakistan
by status and gender[71]

Province	Status			Gender				Total
	Govt	Private	Autonomous	M	F	Mixed	No inf	
Islamabad	5	1	2	0	3	5	0	8
AJK	13	4	0	4	7	4	2	17
Gilgit-Baltistan	4	2	0	0	2	4	0	6
FATA	4	0	0	3	1	0	0	4
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	28	55	0	10	14	59	0	83
Punjab	39	8	17	13	12	39	0	64
Balochistan	18	11	0	6	5	18	0	29
Sindh	48	18	2	11	13	44	0	68
Total	159	99	21	47	57	173	2	279

The database of teacher education/training institutions in Pakistan (Ministry of Education n.d.) allows analysis by type of programme, number of students, number of staff and staff specialisms. However, time has not permitted a detailed analysis to be carried out. A preliminary survey of the database, supplemented by observations and interviews during a visit to the Government Elementary College of Education Qasimabad in Karachi suggests :

- At least half of the institutions offer one year pre-service Bachelor of Education programmes.
- Very few lecturers appear to have a specialisation in English.
- Many of these institutions have very small numbers of students, as few as 130 or even 75. One explanation for this is apparently that people wishing to obtain a B.Ed. certificate which qualifies them to teach can obtain one – for a fee - from a 'mushroom institution'. These are characterised as consisting of little more than 'a table in an office'.[72]

Further in-depth investigation of the characteristics, activities and needs of this group of institutions is required.[73] Nevertheless, it can be predicted that the following needs will probably emerge :

- awareness raising of college principals and academic staff regarding the importance of language in education.

- awareness raising of college principals and academic staff that young learners of English have their own specific needs – and that there is a field of Teaching English to Young Learners.
- training in Teaching English for Young Learners for lecturers specialising in English.
- approaches to assessing English language competence in meaningful ways.
- preparing a college curriculum for English to be shared across several colleges.

If it transpires that servicing the needs of all eligible institutions (i.e. all those currently offering B.Ed. programmes) is too ambitious then a decision could be made to focus on those which operate in poor and disadvantaged areas. It will also be important to check that there is no overlap in any support planned and that already being granted by other agencies.

In-service teacher development

The continuing professional development of teachers should come in third place. The size of the problem is immense and no individual agency is likely to be able to access the resources required to make a substantial impact. In primary schools, in particular, every teacher in the country requires attention because every teacher has to teach English (just as they have to teach every other subject). Some radical focusing will therefore be required. Following the requirements of the 2009 National Education Plan the focus should be on the poorest and most disadvantaged areas. This rest of this discussion focuses on the ETTE programme, on SPELT and, briefly, on the English Language Teaching Reforms (ELTR) Project.

English for Teaching : Teaching for English

An important in-service teacher development activity already exists in Pakistan in the form of the English for Teaching : Teaching for English (ETTE) Programme. Evaluating ETTE was not an objective of this consultancy but it may be worth making some observations about the programme here.

These comments are based on:
- brief observations of two ETTE training sessions in Lahore
- a discussion with a group of ETTE trainers in Lahore
- a visit to an ETTE school in Okara
- interviews with ETTE-trained teachers in Okara

- extended discussions with ETTE trainers and ETTE-trained teachers from Islamabad and Peshawar.
- interviews with various other stakeholders including Provincial Ministry of Education officials.
- an in-depth interview with Roudaba Shuja from the Federal Ministry of Education and ETTE Master Trainer.

It is clear that ETTE has generated a high level of enthusiasm among teachers. This enthusiasm appears to be related to :

- A new sense among teachers themselves that they possess an active competence in English; previously teachers believed that their knowledge of English was mainly passive (One ETTE-trained teacher said that after being trained he 'saw the dreams in English' for the first time.[74])
- A new sense that it is possible for teachers to make their learners active
- A new sense that as teachers disseminate their new skills they are able to win the respect of the colleagues whom they are training (One ETTE trainer said, 'We are famous in our centres. People come and ask us questions. Now I have a wide group of friends, especially new teachers.'[75] Another said, 'We were given courage to face people. Now I am comfortable about how to behave in public. This is the miracle of the British Council.'[76])
- A new sense of professional self-confidence deriving from all of the above.

These are all very significant achievements and they must not be underrated. Nevertheless, as ETTE is built on a cascade system of dissemination it must also be recognised that the programme is subject to all the problems associated with a conventional cascading mechanism. More detailed comments about the programme have been made elsewhere.

Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers

An important contribution to the in-service development of the English language teaching profession in Pakistan can be made by working through teachers' professional associations. There is in effect only one such association in Pakistan, the Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers (SPELT), although it has regional chapters in Islamabad, Lahore and Abbottabad and units in Multan, Sukkur and Okara. SPELT's achievement since its establishment in 1984 is extraordinary and is recognised internationally. Through successive military and civil regimes despite periods of instability in Pakistan the organisation has

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continued to function without interruption, holding its annual conference on a rolling basis across the country and publishing its quarterly journal without fail. It is affiliated to IATEFL and to TESOL.

As an organisation, SPELT has a number of notable characteristics : its democratic nature, its concern for teachers working in less privileged circumstances and – as can be seen through its rolling conferences – its wish to involve teachers from across the country in its activities.

SPELT is a democratic organisation with a highly distributed form of management, both within its head office in Karachi and in its regional chapters and units across the country. Its officers are elected by the members; they serve in a voluntary capacity for fixed periods. The wonder is that despite involving so many different people it manages to function so smoothly. Many SPELT members teach in elite institutions, but the founder of SPELT, Zakia Sarwar, teaches in a government college and many of the organisation's leaders are also employed in government institutions. In recent years the annual conference has had an Urdu strand, catering for Urdu language teachers from government schools. And SPELT has frequently been asked to design teaching materials for government institutions.

SPELT is strongly Anglophile. Several of its most dedicated officers have Masters degrees and PhD degrees in TESOL from UK universities. Furthermore, SPELT has for many years been providing training leading to the Cambridge In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT). In other words, SPELT has been delivering a British 'global product' in Pakistan. The 2008-2009 ICELT cohort had 21 participants and was taught by seven senior SPELT members.

SPELT has an ambition to supplement its current in-service ICELT programme with the Cambridge Diploma in English Language Teaching for Adults (DELTA). It believes that there is a huge market for this qualification in Pakistan and that there would be enough people able to afford the fees or able to obtain sponsorship to justify running the programme. However SPELT will probably require some support from an external body to achieve this aim, for example by providing initial training for DELTA programme managers.

Professional input for SPELT's annual conferences and its quarterly journal would also be appreciated. But SPELT should also be looked upon as a resource – a potential professional

partner – which can be called upon when experienced and professional input is required for workshops and other similar events.

English Language Teaching Reforms (ELTR) Project

At the higher education level, the English Language Teaching Reforms Project or ELTR has been making an important contribution to the improvement of English language capacity since 2004. The Project has been providing in-service development opportunities for the English language teaching staff of higher education institutions : 1504 lecturers were trained during the first phase (2004-2009) and a further 1400 will be trained during the second phase (2010-2013). College lecturers have constituted the largest number of participants so far.[77]

The Islamic sector

As noted in the first part of this report, the dini madaris (madrasas) provide education for the poorest sectors of society in Pakistan. Since the National Education Plan demands that special attention should be given to the poor and marginalised this means that a place must be found for the madrasas in any strategy for English language teaching and learning.

It is revealing to note that it was representatives from several dini madaris in Khyber Paktunkhwa and FATA participating in a focus group discussion who were able to provide the most convincing responses to a question about the value of learning English. As noted earlier, the usual answer given is that English is essential for admission to employment or for moving up through the education system. But the madrasa representatives argued that they needed English for four reasons : as a key to knowledge, to disabuse the West of its prejudices about their region in general and madrasas in particular, to spread the message of Islam and to contribute to the achievement of harmony among nations :

- English is the language of knowledge, the source of knowledge. The Prophet says that we must pursue knowledge and therefore we need English
- We are the people who love knowledge and so we need English in order to access knowledge.
- The whole world blames us as terrorists, so we need English to communicate to the outside world to show them that we are not.

- FATA is a fertile land for everything yet the world sees us only as terrorists. I want to learn [English] from the British Council so that I can help my area by changing views of terrorism.
- How to preach Islam in English – this will be motivating for our people.
- Through English we can communicate Islam to others, we can learn about Judaism and Christianity, we can achieve harmony, we can learn.[78]

These arguments in favour of English were expressed with passion and conviction, but also with some frustration because English language learning facilities are often unavailable in the madrasas. The representatives painted a picture of considerable complexity. They believe that a small number of madrasas have no interest in English, that others will accept help but will say that English teaching should take place outside the madrasa walls, that others will accept enthusiastically and will permit English teaching to take place inside the madrasa, and that a number of others have already started providing English.

Working with the madrasas will therefore require painstaking investigation of needs and likely responses on an institution by institution basis. A possibility which emerged during the focus group discussion was for ETTE-trained teachers to work with the madrasas. Local teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA will experience no difficulties in gaining access to the madrasas and so will be able to explore needs. It may be possible for a number of madrasas to work together to satisfy their thirst for English, recruiting ETTE-trained teachers for that purpose.

Miscellaneous

This section discusses three miscellaneous issues : the possibility of collaborating with KTN, the Kawish Television Network; support for language schools which are preparing candidates for IELTS; and drawing on British-trained ELT professionals.

Kawish Television Network

The Kawish Television Network (KTN), based in Karachi, broadcasts in Sindhi throughout the province of Sindh. It claims to have a viewership of 32 million, mainly in rural Sindh. From April 2010 KTN is planning to broadcast a weekly English language lesson aimed at Years 9 and 10 pupils. The broadcasts will be based directly on the official school textbooks and so

will be immediately relevant to school pupils. KTN believes that their broadcast lessons will be particularly attractive for girls who may find it difficult to leave the house.

This is a simple, practical and interesting initiative. However, when interviewed, KTN appeared to have little idea about exactly how they would convert lessons from textbooks into television broadcasts. The scenarios that come to mind are that a teacher will simply read the lessons to the camera or even that the camera will focus on the textbook with a voiceover reading the content out loud. (I may be completely wrong here, but nobody could explain exactly what was going to happen in these educational broadcasts.)

As a way of accessing a very large number of learners in a mainly rural part of Pakistan, and with a particular focus on girls, the proposed KTN language lessons have great potential. The initiative is indigenous, the technical skills are available in-house and the programme will be self-funded. All that is needed, it would appear, is pedagogical advice on converting a textbook lesson into a meaningful and attractive educational broadcast.

This initiative should be monitored, possibly through a small research study, to look at its impact. There may be important lessons learnt in Sindh which can be applied in other parts of Pakistan, particularly if – as KTN predicts – the programmes turn out to be especially attractive for housebound girls.

IELTS

IELTS preparation and more general English language preparation are provided by 256 English language institutes throughout the country. It appears that many of these centres feel that they require advice or help so that their teachers can prepare candidates effectively for IELTS. They also require advice on the selection of books and audio-video materials.[79] It should not be too difficult to respond to these very specific needs, although it will perhaps be necessary to focus on the highest quality schools among the 256 which have been identified.

Using the British-trained resource

During the consultancy I met a considerable number of people who had studied on Masters and PhD programmes in TESOL at UK universities. These people are without exception very well disposed towards the UK and they are, in effect, another type of 'British global product'. It is recommended that a database of UK alumni in the field of TESOL in Pakistan should be

created and contact with them should be (re-)established. It will therefore be possible to draw on their expertise and contacts and explore other ways in which the English language teaching profession in Pakistan can be supported.

Working with partners

In implementing the strategy proposed agencies will need to consider working in collaboration with partner organisations, both international and local.

In the early stages of the process of policy development, outlined above, it will be highly desirable to make contact with other international agencies which are operating in Pakistan in order to identify to what extent – if at all – they share a concern about language in education issues. The international agencies might include – but would not be limited to – the following :

- British Council
- DFID
- Asian Development Bank
- GTZ
- Aga Khan University (particularly the Institute for Educational Development)
- Save the Children UK
- World Bank
- USAID.

Although some of these agencies may support progressive language in education activities in other parts of the world, it is not obvious that they are doing so in Pakistan. Even these initial approaches, therefore, may require advocacy, patience and tact. The doors will not necessarily open immediately.

Local organisations should also be approached at an early stage, with the same objective of exploring how open they might be to working collaboratively in helping the Government of Pakistan and the provincial governments to develop a new language in education policy. Before approaching any potential local partners, however, an agency should develop a strategy for collaboration in order to guide its selection of partners. It is recommended that the following criteria might be considered :

- The organisation should not be simply a vehicle for a particular charismatic individual (however well intentioned that individual might be). It must have in place mechanisms to ensure sustainability should its present senior management no longer be available.
- It should be non-profit making.
- It should be pro-poor.
- It should already have experience of working successfully with an international partner.
- It should be sympathetic to the possibility of change in language in education policy.

Summary of Part B

- A strategy for supporting the learning and teaching of English in Pakistan should be informed by the National Education Policy's requirement that there should be a comprehensive school language policy and a comprehensive plan of action for English and that these should give special attention to the poor and marginalised.
- A top priority action is to contribute to the development of a national language in education policy and a plan of action for English. This should include awareness raising regarding the importance of mother tongue education in the early years of schooling. Experience elsewhere, particularly Southeast Asia and the UK, should be drawn upon.
- The next most urgent area is pre-service teacher education, which takes place in 279 teacher education colleges. Aspects which require particular attention include raising awareness of the importance of the mother tongue, Teaching English to Young Learners, assessing language competence meaningfully, and preparing a shared college curriculum for English.
- In third place is in-service teacher development. The needs here are too great for any one agency to be able to satisfy. ETTE's achievements are already considerable but careful attention is needed to consolidate what has been achieved. SPELT is an admirable grassroots professional organisation which deserves support for its routine activities (annual conference and regular publications). It should also be aided in its tentative plans to establish a Cambridge DELTA programme in Pakistan. The work of the ELTR Project is significant, particularly with regard to the strengthening of pre-service teacher education carried out by the elementary colleges and colleges of education.
- Madrasa education, by definition, satisfies the National Education Policy's required focus on the poor and marginalised, although, being highly decentralised, it is not an easy sector to establish links with. There is a high level of interest in English in some Islamic

institutions and efforts should be made to satisfy that interest. One possibility to be explored is to make use of the resource provided by ETTE-trained teachers.

- Miscellaneous areas where contributions may be made include :
  - supporting Kawish Television Network's plans for English lessons aimed at Years 9 and 10 pupils
  - providing professional development support to a selection of the 256 private English language institutes in Pakistan which offer IELTS preparation courses
  - creating a database of UK-trained English language teaching specialists and making use of this highly qualified and well connected resource.
- Any agency working in this field will need to work with partner organisations, particularly in the policy development/advocacy programme. International agencies which have experience with mother tongue education in other parts of the world will be particularly helpful. Local partner organisations should also be approached, but it is recommended that collaboration should be considered only when certain criteria have been satisfied.

Conclusion

The strategy proposed in this report derives from an analysis of the complex context in which English language teaching in Pakistan takes place. It argues that the teaching of English cannot be considered in a vacuum but must be examined in its broader social and educational environment. Furthermore, it suggests that there are ethical implications to the development of a strategy for English and that these implications cannot be ignored. The approach proposed here, then, is not concerned with 'reaching the largest number' of learners, teachers or other stakeholders, nor does it strain itself to maximise British 'global products'. Rather, it seeks to identify how the most valuable contribution to the development of Pakistan can be made. If an agency succeeds in having some impact on the national policy on language in education in general and on the English language strategy which will form part of that policy, it may not be possible to quantify that impact. Nevertheless the contribution which it makes will, potentially, be an immensely valuable one.

The task ahead is not going to be an easy one. Even at the international level donor countries and individual donor agencies demonstrate different degrees of awareness of language in education as a crucial element in increasing and maintaining access to education, in improving educational attainment, in poverty reduction and in development more broadly. It has been suggested that the UK and the USA actually fall at the bottom of a list of fifteen of the most important donor nations in terms of the degree of attention given to language in education in development policy and practice. (Finland, Germany and Sweden come at the top of the list.)[80] If awareness raising among donor agencies is going to be tough, the task is going to be even more challenging with stakeholders within Pakistan.

We have emphasised repeatedly that external agencies can facilitate and contribute to the development of policy. But of course it is not for international agencies to dictate what such a policy might be. Nevertheless, perhaps the consultant can be allowed to bring this report to a close with a brief fantasy, a 'dream policy' for language in education in Pakistan in ten years' time (Box 1).

Box 1 : A dream policy for language in education in Pakistan, 2020

- Nursery education takes place through the medium of one of seven languages (of which Urdu is one). Children learn to sing, count, listen to stories, respond to stories, recount experiences from their daily lives in their home language. They learn to listen to each other, ask each other questions about their experiences and respect each other's tales and anecdotes.

- The first three years of primary education take place in one of seven local languages. Children are introduced to the alphabet and learn to read and write in their home language. A wide range of reading material will have been published in the seven local languages.

- Once children have achieved basic competence in reading and writing – say in Year 3 of primary school – they are introduced to Urdu. By this point they will experience little difficulty in reading Urdu because they will already be familiar with the writing system from having acquired literacy in their home language, which uses the same (or very similar) script; they will then just have to learn Urdu as a new language. Gradually during Years 3 to 5 the use of the home language as a medium of instruction is reduced and phased out, whilst Urdu gradually becomes more dominant. However, children continue to study their home language as a subject. In particular, it is important for them to maintain and develop their ability to write in that language.

- By Year 6 children are confidently reading, writing and studying through the medium of Urdu.

- In Year 6 children are introduced to English and to the Latin script. They study English as one of their main subjects for four years (Years 6 to 9).

- From Year 10, children learn through the medium of English, but they continue to take Urdu and their home language as school subjects.

- Entrance examinations for the civil service, other employment domains and the universities will require that candidates demonstrate functional competence (not merely theoretical knowledge) in all three languages : i.e. one of the seven local languages, the national language and English. In this way, people will be equipped to serve the public (through their competence in a local language), the state (through their competence in Urdu) and the wider world (through their competence in English). This requirement will oblige the elite schools to develop not only their pupils' English but also their functional ability in Urdu and in at least one local language.

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NOTES

[1] UN 2008.

[2] Government of Pakistan 2010.

[3] UN 2008.

[4] World Bank 2010.

[5] World Bank 2010.

[6] UNESCO 2007.

[7] UNDP 2009:193.

[8] UNESCO 2007.

[9] British Council 2009:8.

[10] The figures in this paragraph are derived from UNDP 2009:197, 195 and eRiposte 2009.

[11] Interestingly, Pakistan's Gini index does not differ greatly from many Western European countries (e.g. Netherlands which has a figure of 30.9) whilst the UK with a figure of 36.0 apparently has a wider disparity between rich and poor.

[12] eRiposte 2009.

[13] UNDP 2009:201, 177.

[14] World Bank 2010; this figure is for 2007.

[15] UNDP 2009:201.

[16] UNDP 2009:183.

[17] UNESCO 2007

[18] DFID n.d.

[19] The figures in this table are taken from UNESCO 2007.

[20] UNESCO 2007

[21] DFID n.d.

[22] UNESCO 2010.

[23] UNDP 2009:177, 183. Some caution is required, however, in dealing with literacy statistics. Official surveys may overestimate literacy rates if they focus on a formal decontextualised ability to read and write but fail to look at functional literacy (the ability to carry out tasks in daily life which require literacy skills). On the other hand, official statistics may underestimate the true literacy rate if they consider only literacy in the national language but ignore other types of literacy (such as an ability to use religious texts) which are widespread in society but which are not acquired through the formal education system. See also Street (1984) who argues for an 'ideological' approach to the study of literacy, in which the meanings of literacy and literary practices are understood to be context-specific and Barton (2007) on the social basis of literacy.

[24] Andrabi et al. 2009.

[25] Andrabi et al. 2009 and David Martin (personal communication, 5th May 2010).

[26] Andrabi et al. 2009:11.

[27] Andrabi et al. 2009:10.

[28] Das et al. 2006:12.

[29] ICG 2002:1.

[30] Madaris teachers from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who participated in a focus group discussion in Islamabad, 13th March 2010.

[31] DFID n.d.:1.

[32] All figures for numbers of language speakers in this section are taken from Lewis 2009. It is important to note, however, that Lewis employs a national population figure of 158 million which appears to be at least five years out of date.

[33] The data presented in this table are extracted from Lewis 2009.

[34] Macrolanguages are defined as 'multiple, closely related individual languages that are deemed in some usage contexts to be a single language' (Lewis 2009).

[35] The data presented in this table are extracted from Lewis 2009.

[36] I am grateful to Tahir Rahman S. Andrabi, interviewed in Islamabad on 15th March 2010, for these insights. He refers to the work of G.W.Leitner (1840-1899), the Hungarian-born education adviser to the British administration in Punjab; see Leitner 1882 and 1884. Leitner unsuccessfully opposed the colonial policy of using only Urdu and English in schools.

[37] Aisha Nauman, Islamabad, 16th March 2010.

[38] The data presented in this table are extracted from Shamim 2008 and Ministry of Education 2009. The 2009 National Education Policy is discussed in the following section.

[39] Fauzia Shamim, email, 3rd May 2010.

[40] Javed Ahmad Malik, Education Advisor, DFID, interviewed in Islamabad, 16th March 2010.

[41] Tahir Rahman S. Andrabi, Islamabad, 15th March 2010.

[42] A participant in a focus group discussion with ETTE trainers from Islamabad, 13th March 2010.

[43] See Shamim 1993:187-188 and 193 and Shamim 2008:240.

[44] Dr Hina Hussain Kazmi, Program Manager (English), USAID, interviewed in Karachi on 4th March 2010.

[45] A teacher in a government girls' primary school, Okara, 11th March 2010.

[46] A teacher in Government Girls' Elementary School Ghazi-Abad, Okara, 11th March 2010.

[47] A teacher in a government girls' primary school, Okara, 11th March 2010.

[48] Aslam Kamboh, Secretary, Schools, Ministry of Education, Punjab, interviewed in Lahore on 11th March 2010.

[49] Tollefson and Tsui 2004:2.

[50] Ministry of Education 2009. The National Education Plan was preceded by a White Paper on language choice in schools; in a trenchant analysis this has been shown by Ahmed-Khurram (2009) to offer little real hope for change despite adopting the rhetoric of mother tongue instruction in the first three years of school.

[51] Ministry of Education 2009:27-28.

[52] Ministry of Education 2009:28.

[53] Ministry of Education 2009:27.

[54] Shamim 2008.

[55] Interview with Qaisera Sheikh, Beacon House National University, Lahore, 10th March 2010.

[56] Interview with Aslam Kamboh, Secretary, Schools, Ministry of Education, Punjab, in Lahore on 11th March 2010.

[57] Dr Hina Hussain Kazmi, Program Manager (English), USAID, interviewed in Karachi on 4th March 2010.

[58] Pinnock 2009:11.

[59] Pinnock 2009:16 quoting Smits et al. 2008.

[60] Lewis and Lockheed 2007, quoted by Pinnock 2009:26.

[61] World Bank 2005.

[62] Pinnock 2009:8.

[63] Pinnock 2009:20.

[64] Pinnock 2009:8.

[65] 93% of the 70% of children in Urdu-medium government schools = 65% of all children + almost 100% of the 30% of children studying in private schools = 95%.

[66] Walter (2009), quoted by Pinnock 2009:20.

[67] Pinnock 2009:27, 54.

[68] Examples include Benson 2005, Clegg 2005, 2007, Idris et al. 2007, Kosonen and Young 2009 and Nekatibeb 2007.

[69] A Multilingual Education Working Group mailing list posting on 29th March 2010 reported that an Indian newspaper, Express News, had recently carried an article on multilingual education under the title 'Orissa shows the way in tribal pockets'. On an initiative in a Pattani Malay community in Southern Thailand see 'Breaking down a wall of Thai language : Pattani Malay, Banprachan School' and 'Going to the third year of bilingual school : The answer of children's education in the Southern Border' in a Multilingual Education Working Group mailing list posting, 7th May 2010.

[70] Multilingual Education Working Group mailing list posting, 26th March 2010.

[71] Data extracted from database published by Ministry of Education (n.d.).

[72] Interview with Haroon Leghari, Principal of Government Elementary College of Education Qasimabad on 9th March 2010. He is also Additional Director, Bureau of Curriculum, Sindh.

[73] A report on the pre-service teacher education sector – with a focus on Azad Jammu & Kashmir – is currently in preparation (Coleman, Forthcoming 2010).

[74] A participant in a focus group discussion with ETTE-trained teachers from Islamabad, 13th March 2010.

[75] An ETTE-trained teacher from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province who participated in a focus group discussion in Islamabad, 13th March 2010.

[76] A participant in a focus group discussion with ETTE-trained teachers from Islamabad, 13th March 2010.

[77] ELTR Project 2010 and interview with Syed Musa Hanan, Programme Development Officer, ELTR Project , Islamabad, 21st July 2010.

[78] Madaris teachers from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province who participated in a focus group discussion in Islamabad, 13th March 2010.

[79] Information in this section was provided in an interview with Darrin Vardon, Director, Business Development Examinations Services, British Council Lahore, on 12th March 2010.

[80] Pinnock 2009:33.

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APPENDIX : ORGANISATIONS VISITED AND INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED

Date	Organisation visited (and venue)	Individuals consulted
4th March	EDLINKS, USAID	**Dr Hina Hussain Kazmi**, Program Manager (English)
	British Council Karachi	**Mark Stephens**, Deputy Director **Nabeel Alvi**, Head of Programmes Sindh & Balochistan **Sunil Iqbal**, Projects Officer
5th March	British Council Karachi	**David Martin**, Director, British Council Pakistan
	Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers (SPELT) at SPELT House	**Prof Zakia Sarwar**, Honorary Executive Director **Fatima Shahabuddin**, Committee Member **Bushra Ahmed Khurram**, Committee Member **Prof Fauzia Shamim** **Khalida Saadat** **Saulat Majid**, 25th Conference Coordinator **Batul Raza Ali**, Programme Coordinator (also Senior Editor, Oxford University Press) **Lubna Panjwani**, Working Committee Coordinator
6th March	Department of English, University of Karachi	**Prof Dr Munir Wasti**, Head of Department **Kaleem Khan**, senior lecturer **Ferhana Khan**, senior lecturer in literature **Prof Fauzia Shamim** **Bushra Ahmed Khurram**
	City District Government, Karachi (CDGK), Karachi Educational Development Centre (KEDC), Committee on Monitoring & Improvement of Schools (CMIS), The Education Foundation (TEF)	**Farhana Iqbal**, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and Chairperson, CMIS **Parveen Mehboob**, Member, CMIS **Syed Asif Hussain Jafri**, FPCCI and Coordinator, CMIS-CDGK **Muhammad Zahid**, Academic Coordinator, KEDC **Syed Sagheer Hussain Shah**, Programme Coordinator, TEF **Mahmood Ali Khan**, Administrator, TEF
	Institute for Educational Development (IED), Aga Khan University	**Dr Muhammad Memon**, Professor & Director, IED **Dr Sadrudin Pardhan**, Professor & Director Outreach, IED **Dr Graeme Cane**, Head, Centre of English Language **Dr Thomas Christie**, Director, Examination Board **Fariha Hayat**, Senior Instructor & Coordinator e-learning, IED
	Educational Resource Development Centre (EDRC)	**Salman Asif Siddiqui**, Director
8th March	Education & Literacy Department, Government of Sindh	**Muhammad Siddique Memon**, Secretary, Education & Literacy Department **Nadeem Irshad Kayani**, Programme Director, Directorate of Staff Development, School Education Department **Ghulam Nabi**, Deputy Programme Manager, Reform Support Unit **Raisa Adil**, Deputy Programme Manager, Reform Support Unit
	Sindh Education Foundation	**Prof Anita Ghulam Ali**, Director
	Teacher's Development Centre	**Abbas Husain**, Director

	Kawish Television Network (KTN)	**Ali Qazi**, Chief Executive Officer **Athar Kazi**, Director Marketing & Finance **Asghar Soomro**, Consultant for education broadcasts
9th March	Government Elementary College of Education, Qasimabad	**Haroon Leghari**, College Principal and also Additional Director, Bureau of Curriculum, Sindh
	Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry, *followed by* visit to Mehmoodabad Community Centre	**Muhammad Siddique Sheikh**, Chair 2009-2010, Standing Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility **Mahmood Ali Khan**, Member 2009-2010, Standing Committee on Education, Literacy & Non-Formal Education **Farhana Iqbal**, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and Chairperson, CMIS
	Pre-Service Teacher Education Program in Pakistan (Pre-STEP), USAID	**Ratna Salem**, Provincial Director
10th March	British Council Lahore	**Mark Stephens** **Tanveer Hassan**, briefing on ETTE
	Ali Institute of Education	**Dr A.H.Nayyar**, Director **Naima Qureshi**, Continuing Professional Development Coordinator
	Directorate of Staff Development, Government of Punjab	**Nadeem Irshad Kayani**, Director
		Observed 2 ETTE training sessions
		Brief lunch and discussion with **Farid** and **Saheefa**, recently recruited ETTE Masters Trainers, with ETTE trainers and with **Roudaba Shuja**
	Punjab Education Foundation	**Tanvir Ahmad Zaffar**, Deputy Managing Director (Operations)
	Beacon House National University	**Qaisera Sheikh**, Acting Dean & Head, English Department
11th March	Government Primary School (GPS) Saddiq Nagger, Okara	**Atif Muneeb**, teacher at GPS Saddiq Nagger and ETTE trainer **Asia Naheed**, teacher at GPS Saddiq Nagger **Sameena Salida**, teacher at GPS Bagiana Shah Baig **Soqura Begum**, teacher at GMP/S Arazi Shankar Das Sub tehseel, Gogera District, Okara **Rashida Naseem**, teacher at GMP/S Lalafar Colony, Okara **Kalsoom Akhtar**, teacher at GMP/S Lalafar Colony, Okara **Khalida Parveen**, teacher at Government Girls' Elementary School (GGES) Ghazi Abad, Okara **Khalid Mehmood**, teacher at Government High School 32/2R
	Government Girls' Elementary School Ghazi-Abad, Okara	**Khalida Parveen** and 13 other teachers
	A government girls' primary school, Okara	Headteacher and 6 other teachers
	Ministry of Education, Punjab	**Aslam Kamboh**, Secretary, Schools (at his home)
12th March	British Council Lahore	**Darrin Vardon**, Director, Business Development Examinations Services
	Kinnaird College for Women	**Prof Dr Bernadette L.Dean**, Principal

	Department of English Language & Literature, University of the Punjab	**Prof Shaista Sonnu Sirajuddin**, Department Chair 3 other academic staff
	British Council Lahore	**David Martin**, **Adrian Odell** and **Steve McNulty** by teleconference **Nasir Nazir**
13ᵗ March	Islamabad	**Umar Farooq**, Academic Coordinator, SPELT Islamabad Chapter (and Lecturer, Department of English & Applied Linguistics, Allama Iqbal Open University)
		Arif Khan, British Council Peshawar (embedded in Supported Open Learning Centre, University of Peshawar) **Muhammad Muttahir**, Deputy Director Planning & Development E&S, Department of Education, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa **Nusrat Jabeer**, ADO Matani, Department of Education, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (and ETTE Master Trainer) **Muhammad Bilal**, madaris teacher, Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa **Wajid Ali**, madaris student, Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa **Mohammad Yunas**, madaris teacher in Tangi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa **Maseehullah**, teacher in madaris, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa **Ghunchagul**, teacher in jamia, Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa **Nasir Khan**, teacher in GCM High School, Turangzai, Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (and ETTE trainer) **Fazli Wahab**, teacher in Government High School, Raghogan Bajaur Agency, FATA (and ETTE trainer) **Shahzad Khan**, teacher in Government High School Ekkaghund, Mukmad Agency, FATA (and ETTE trainer) **Zahoor-ul-Haq**, teacher in Government High School Tarkha, Nowshehra (and ETTE trainer)
		Ihsanullah, Federal Government (FG) Boys' Junior Model School, Humak **Rufin Iqbal**, FG Boys' Primary School, Pind Malkan **Naseem Jan**, FG Girls' Higher Secondary School, Golra **Noreen Fazal**, FG Girls' Higher Secondary School, Khanna Islamabad **Sajid Ali**, FG Boys' Secondary School, Khanna Dak **Summaira Aslam**, Islamabad Model School G7/3-4 **Farah Naz**, FG Girls' Government Secondary School, House 20, D5, Tarmari, Post Office Terlai, Islamabad
15ᵗ March	Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi	**Prof Dr Saeeda Aasadullah Khan**, Vice Chancellor **Prof Dr Samina Amin Qadir**, Professor of Linguistics
	British Council Islamabad	**Nishat Riaz**, Head of Programmes **Aisha Nauman** **Martin Daltry**, Programme Development Manager
	Public Affairs Section, US Embassy (meeting held at British Council)	**Micah Risher**, English Language Manager **Shahid Waseem**, Outreach Coordinator
	Children's Global Network Pakistan (Guarantee) Ltd (CGNP)	**Mehnaz Aziz**, Chief Executive & Founding Director **Tahir R.S.Andrabi**, Professor of Economics, Pomona College, Claremont, CA, USA (adviser to CGNP)
16ᵗ March	Fort Alice	**Roudaba Shuja**, Federal Ministry of Education and ETTE Master Trainer
	Federal Directorate of Education	**Dr Tanvir Kayani**, Director, Training & Coordination
	National University of Modern Languages	**Brig (R) Dr Aziz Ahmad Khan**, Rector
	Higher Education Commission	**Dr S.Mahmood Raza**, Adviser Quality Assurance & Learning Innovation **Prof Dr Mukhtar Ahmed**, Member (Operations & Planning)
	Department for International Development (DFID)	**Javed Ahmad Malik**, Education Advisor