

Dr Intisar-ul-Haque

NATIONAL LANGUAGE AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Urdu is no doubt lingua franca of Pakistan — not only of Pakistan but also, in an important sense, of Indo-Pak Subcontinent and some other parts of the world, where Indo-Pak people have settled and exerted strong influence. Every literate person in Pakistan, in general, who can read and write in any language can understand and speak Urdu as well. Not only this, almost every Pakistani residing in the cities or who has often dealing in the cities can understand and speak Urdu to a reasonable extent. Majority of our population no doubt resides in villages where most of the people may not be able to understand and speak Urdu. Still when the children of those areas grow up in the present—day fast—moving and changing structure of our society and need to earn their livelihood or to have dealings with people in socio-commercial context, they pick up some Urdu. Hence we can safely conclude that Urdu is a lingua franca of Pakistan and it has the potentiality of developing and spreading further and further as an intercommunicable language to be understood and spoken by all Pakistanis in general. From this I may safely draw the conclusion that it has the sufficient strength to be taken as our national language. At our national forums, in our offices and official business and in general public transactions where only internal national interests are involved and where not too much scientific technicalities are implied, our national language Urdu can effectively look after our national interests. Whatever I have claimed above in a cautious and limited way, I think, is true without exaggeration and without inviting controversies.

Controversies start cropping up when we overemphasize our regional cultural interests over national interests, or when we try to handle the question of language in an international forum

and dealings, or when we try to guard closely our academic, scientific and technical interests which are now in general taken care of by English language. Let us take these three broad-based considerations and examine what place or status our various languages, particularly Urdu and English, should occupy.

A Pakistani is usually supposed to know four languages: First, Urdu, our lingua franca or national language; secondly, English to meet the requirements for better or higher education and administration; thirdly, one regional language, say Punjabi or Pashto or Sindhi or Baluchi or Chitrali, because it is spoken in the family or in the milieu where he is brought up or is living; fourthly, some Arabic on religious and cultural grounds. Champions of these languages are not lacking. Some would like that a regional language should be medium of instruction at least at primary education level i.e. upto 5th standard. Some would advocate that Urdu should be medium of instruction and research at all levels even upto M.A. or M.Sc. or Ph.D., and Urdu should replace English both at academic institutions and at national forums and in all administrative offices. Some would react to this proposal and speak for further enhancement and enlargement of English from first standard of primary schools onwards and say that only English should be the medium of instruction at all levels and perhaps be the only official language of Pakistan. A few would like to see Arabic flourishing and would wish to see it replacing English and even Urdu on religio-cultural grounds as early as possible, and so like its introduction and continuation at every step of students' academic life. The question is how to meet the academic needs, and national and socio-cultural and religious aspirations of the people. It is feared that if a regional language is given encouragement, then probably our national language Urdu may be in danger and the regional language may not start replacing Urdu (or even English) in certain areas of Pakistan. This may further lead to certain harmful effects on national integrity and interests. I think such fears are not justified. Urdu originated out of socio-cultural necessity and even now it will spread and progress further and further, even if it is not taught at

schools. Such is the power of Urdu as lingua franca. Now, if Urdu replaces English all over, perhaps academic interests will suffer. And furthermore perhaps certain sections of society whose mother-tongue is Urdu may get undue advantage over others not only in matters of academics but also in finding better jobs etc. Fears are or can be justified in a country like Pakistan where demagogues and political slogan-mongering count more and gain upper hand over all other considerations. We cannot ignore emotions, and aspirations of the people simply in the name of certain personal academic views. We all know that Pakistan does not constitute an absolutely homogeneous people: it is a sort of unity in diversity. We are no doubt Pakistanis, not only because we live in one big unbroken stretch of land but also because of certain common interests, prejudices, views and ideals. But all along some of us are Pakhtoons, some of us are Sindhis, and some of us are Baluchis, some of us are Chitralis and some of us are Punjabis, etc. And we never know when and in what form our regional affinities, prejudices and whims may dominate over being Pakistanis. Furthermore, no doubt Urdu is our lingua franca, but it is not a mother language of any area of Pakistan. Urdu is the mother tongue of certain migrants of India who settled in different parts of Pakistan. In Punjab they got more or less absorbed and their independent entity is either not significant or is more or less lost. But in karachi they are dominantly vocal and significant to a great extent. These facts do not support enough the demand that it be made a regional language i.e. a language of a particular area of Pakistan. Even in karachi quite big junks of peoples from the Punjab, Sind, Sarhad and Baluchistan hail.

The reason for Urdu being lingua franca is historical and the reason to claim and to maintain the supremacy of Urdu language is also historical. The second issue of claiming and maintaining the supremacy of Urdu language is directly relevant for us. Before the partition of Indo-Pak subcontinent the question was which language, Urdu or Hindi, should dominate. Urdu has essentially Arabic script; Hindi Devnagri script, the script used in

Sanskrit. In Urdu we use and try to assimilate Arabic (and Persian) words. In Hindi dominantly Sanskrit words are being used and assimilated. Common-spoken Urdu and Hindi words have largely common grammatical structure and are easily understood by those who know either Urdu or Hindi. But in literature they are increasingly becoming different because of inclusion of predominantly Sanskrit words in Hindi and to some extent further inclusion of Arabic words in Urdu due to religious and cultural aspirations of the peoples concerned. Before partition in 1947 the question before the peoples of Indo-Pak subcontinent was simple and straightforward: which language to choose, Urdu or Hindi. Of course for the Muslims it was Urdu and so slogans were enthusiastically raised for the promotion of Urdu. After the partition, the tussel between Hindus and Muslims no longer remained. Now the question is our internal one. Old rivalries are now shifted to between Urdu and particular languages or simply between Urdu and English. The mentality of Pakistani people is not specifically nationalistic, taking the term 'nationalistic' in a narrower sense. Their mental and emotional outlook is not earth-bound and goes beyond the narrowness of Pakistani geographical and nationalistic boundaries. The ideal outlook of Pakistani nation is either international or human and it is soaked in the idea of Islamic brotherhood. Our people look towards need and utility of Urdu language in the broader context. In the border area of Sarhad some ask for more Pashto in administration and in academics also because in the next neighbour Muslim country Afghanistan it is given much more share in official and in socio-academi life. Sometimes due to, say 'provincialism' a certain regional language may be idealized out of proportion.

It is clear that we are placed in a very complex situation. We cannot master four languages. Learning language is a difficult and time-consuming process. Our students after doing M.A. in Arabic and English, in general, fail to express adequately in them. Of course our method of teaching may be blamed for this, but it is a fact that learning a foreign language is an uphill and

slow process. As far as our regional languages and Urdu are concerned we are better-placed to acquire a certain degree of proficiency sufficient to stand test for being medium of instruction in the subject where sufficient relevant literature is or can easily be available. Urdu and regional languages can serve purpose at certain level in the offices and courts, if certain other conditions are desirable. Again, there is another factor which should be kept in mind in our language-problem. Some subjects, for example, generally called Arts subjects like philosophy, History, Political Science, Literature require much more language ability; whereas some other subjects like mathematical and physical sciences require far less language proficiency. It is for this reason that our scholars in sciences abroad in non-English speaking countries like Germany, Italy, Japan, can do good research work after obtaining certain months' course in the language of the country concerned. Again we need to have courses of comparatively shorter duration in our mother-tongues i.e. in our regional language concerned and in our lingua franca Urdu for acquiring certain level of proficiency required for our particular purposes. Our particular purposes are, for example socio-commercial, scientific and technical, academic and administrative, literary and journalistic. Each person does not have to pursue all these ends. Again our world is a world of specialisation and if a student masters one art or science, it is regarded highly commendable. For certain type of specialization, a certain level of proficiency in certain language or languages is sufficient, and also certain duration is sufficient for that particular specialization. Sometimes a person needs to know more than one language for academic or even for nonacademic reason.

It is often claimed that we should aim at one language only to avoid waste of energy and time. Accordingly our children should learn and use only one language, say, from primary classes onwards, upto master's or Ph.D. level. That is, they want to attain an ideal situation where, without wasting time and talent in learning more than one language, we could attain maximum results in acquiring sciences, technical know-how other branches of knowledge and art, and also could acquire and better

results in commercial and official matters. Some claim that this one language should be English. I don't think, it is possible. our literacy rate is hardly more than 20%. And our literacy rate in English is far less, and we don't have any magic wand or enthusiasm and dedication enough to increase it to much higher ratio. So are we ignoring the major bulk of our population? Again what about our graduates who in bulk become clerks, typists or undertake some other lower jobs. They, after so much training, cannot write a proper application or make a proper draft in English. I regard this approach to favour English as planned or unplanned, conscious or unconscious, conspiracy of the rich and the educated to maintain their privileged status. So, should we say that this one language should be Urdu? Can we ignore English and furthermore what about the people who don't want to lag behind those whose mother tongue is Urdu? So we are back in a mess. We need to evolve a plan which is useful, workable, and acceptable to public at large. Of course we need to keep in view minimum waste of time and energy but with maximum practicable and useful results. The question is how to tackle this problem.

Our next-door neighbour Bharat has tried to solve the language problem by declaring all the major provincial languages as national languages. They are taught in their respective provinces. But all along these peoples of India are taught Hindi for the basic reason that it is more or less a lingua franca of India. They are also taught Sanskrit for cultural and religious reasons, although it is no longer a living language. Although Sanskrit is not the root—language of all the provincial languages, abundant Sanskrit words are present and used in them. So Sanskrit serves as a cementing link between all these languages. So linguistically, culturally and religiously Sanskrit provides a binding force in Bharat. It means Bharat has accepted the burden of having four languages at their academic institutions compulsorily and concurrently viz one provincial language, Hindi, English and Sanskrit. I think, we can lessen the burden of learning several languages compulsorily, though we cannot

completely ignore it by simply adopting one single language. This is not only because ours is geographically a much smaller country and hence comparatively easily manageable. It is primarily because our mind and mentality looks above the land we live in and the languages we speak.

My first suggestion is to avoid teaching regional language as compulsory subject as long as possible. If at all it is to be taught, it is to be taught only to the extent of enabling the person concerned to read and write that particular regional language, which he already speaks as his mother tongue; that is, to make him literate. If he wants to improve his efficiency in that language let him do so on his own or by taking some optional courses in that direction, say, at the academic departments or academies of the regional languages concerned. I have made this allowance of some learning of the regional language at schools for those who do not know other languages viz Urdu, English. The literacy rate of our villagers and especially of female villagers is too low. Moreover, they may not be exposed to the atmosphere where they could have facility to converse in lingua franca Urdu. The purpose behind this allowance is to provide opportunity to the village illiterates to become literate in at least one language as early as possible. On this principle a Chitrali or a Kohistani should not be obliged to learn Pashto or any other regional language. On this principle, I think, a Karachiite or any other citizen of Sind should not be compelled to learn Sindhi in the schools. We may establish Academies to promote regional languages or may introduce them as optional subjects in certain curricular. But it is another matter to teach a regional language as a compulsory subject or to regard it as medium of instruction and examination.

Sometimes certain groups clamour for the introduction of regional language to be taught compulsorily at schools. Some days back I saw a photograph in a newspaper, where people were raising banners and posters to introduce Punjabi at schools. I am sure, if they are asked to send their own children to a Punjabi

medium school, not only even, 1% will do. They would rather send their kids to Urdu and English medium schools. It is now a socio-cultural necessity to do so or they would lag behind race.

It may be objected that with such a policy regional languages will ultimately die out. My mother tongue is Punjabi which is not taught at schools. Many Punjabi literate families don't bother to teach Punjabi to their children, rather they would prefer to speak with them in Urdu so that they grow to learn Urdu. This is the case in my family too. I agree that with the passage of time Punjabi may not remain the mother language of Pakistani Punjab. Punjabi is probably the nearest kin to Urdu. Other regional languages particularly not belonging to Northern Indo-Aryan like Pashto and Chitrali may take much longer period to such bleak future. This is a slow historical process and we have to accept it. Ultimately humanity will have to live with only one or with a very few languages. Peoples on the earth will ultimately have to learn how to live as one people, as one big human nation, as one unity having certain other diversities within it. Emphasis on regional languages is not going to be of help and of use to the region in question. No language is sacred to us as Pakistanis except in a certain sense Arabic, depending on how much they put faith in the holiness and truthfulness of the Quran. So it is easier for us Pakistanis to look beyond our certain narrowly-marked, short sighted, territorial or regional interests. Especially in the case of language-issue we need to follow what is most useful and practical for all of us as residents of Pakistan and to the region we belong to. So, I propose that a regional language may be taught for at most first three years in certain villages where children are not exposed sufficiently to lingua franca Urdu. For purpose of increasing literacy, the village adults or even children of certain age in question may be given a course in their regional languages for at most one year.

Now, we move to the teaching of Urdu. Being a lingua franca, it is not so taxing on children to improve their efficiency in Urdu. Most of the kids particularly in cities already can speak

and understand the spoken Urdu to some extent. It is a matter of common observation that language is easily and better learnt when it is spoken. Hence, I may safely conclude that after a few years' training in Urdu language a student of 8th class is able to learn Urdu in such a way so as to express himself for academic purposes both in writing and speech, and also can read, say, a newspaper. What we need is functional Urdu. If anyone wants more of Urdu or one wants to read Urdu literature or wants to be an Urdu writer or literary figure, let him have additional optional courses in Urdu after 8th or 10th class. To be on the cautious side I suggest that there should not be compulsory Urdu after matriculation, and even at Matriculation level the Urdu course may be considerably reduced and it should be at functional level. I would rather see compulsory Urdu stopped after 8th class. But I hesitated to say so, because matriculation examination is generally the first standard Board examination, and also because the literacy rate is poor in our country particularly in certain village areas where Urdu is not understood. I may here point out that our older generation according to their old syllabi had been learning Urdu as a compulsory subject upto 8th class only, and had learnt it sufficient enough for all functional purposes.

It is now time to say something about learning linguistic skills. In general, the younger, the child or student is, the faster and better he will learn the language. Hence it is better, in principle, if the child is trained to learn those languages in earlier stages of his education, which he is required or is supposed to use later in his academic career. English language is a MUST for plurality of reasons e.g. for academic, scientific and technological reasons and for other international purposes. Those countries where people are using their own national language for academic and scientific purposes, are obliged to introduce English as their second language, whether that country be Russia, China, France, Germany or any other European or Asian country. We have been carrying the burden of English language for the last one and half century. The current period is amazingly important for scientific and technical developments and to shift over this burden to some

other language, say, Urdu in a shorter interval of time is beyond our national capacity or strength, whether in the sense of motivation or in the sense of academic know-how. So my suggestion is that English may be introduced from the very beginning of children's academic career, i.e. preferably from the first primary class, or if this is not feasible then latest from the third primary class. It should be left to different schools when to start English. Schools in villages and in mosques or in some other poor localities may not be able to start English earlier than third primary class, because of non-availability of proper teachers or for some other reasons. But governments and other schools must start English not later rather earlier than, third primary class. And English teachers must be given proper training and education in English, say, on district-wise basis, especially for the courses they have to teach in schools. I would have preferred to say that compulsory English should be continued only upto matric level. But seeing the academic level of our teachers and the general conditions prevalent at our academic institutions I propose that compulsory English should be taught only upto Intermediate level. Again, teaching of English should be geared to fulfil the scientific needs of the student and to enable them to speak, write and read simple English. If the students further wishes to improve his English, he may do so by self-learning and by taking further advance optional courses in English. Again, teaching skill to teach functional English should be maximised by adequate training and inspection. Television and audio-visual aids may liberally be used for this specific purpose.

But how so much we may teach English, it cannot become our lingua franca, a language of the masses for intercommunication. We cannot own it; it will always remain a foreign language with us, an academic language, a language for scientific and technical purposes mainly. We accept it, not out of pleasure, but because we need to carry an historical, academic and internationally communicative burden. The very fact that English is not and cannot become our lingua franca leads us to rethink our future attitude and planning towards English

language. The present position and status of English and its future are two different things. Who can predict that in some distant future the most important scientific or academic language would not be English, but say Chinese or German. So long as we stick to foreign language only, here English as medium of instruction we cannot develop our culture as scientific culture, productive of science and technology. We need to have language say lingua franca, which may continue as ally to English as scientific and technical language. This leads to the problem of medium of instruction at our academic institutions and the problem of official language at our governmental, commercial and other offices.

It is not at all necessary to have an homogeneous policy in the case of Medium of Instruction. Our country is not homogeneous: culturally, linguistically, economically and even religiously we are heterogeneous. I think, it is a folly to adopt an homogeneous educational policy in a democratic poor country with lingual and economic diversity. Even at M.A./M.Sc. levels, where we have medium of instruction English at the University of Peshawar, we have to sometimes bank upon our own languages to make our point clearer and better understood. At lower levels the problems get all the more acute and confusing. So I advocate a heterogeneous policy of medium of instruction in a systematic way as follows:- My first suggestion is that upto, say, Sixth class we shall primarily concentrate on teaching and improving linguistic skills. There is a certain period in the life of a man in which languages are learnt easily and in a better and faster way. This period starts from, say two years onwards and I should say that the earlier the kid learns the language or languages the better it is. As already suggested, Urdu and English may be started at the earliest stages of academic life and their linguistic skills should be progressively improved as much as possible. Upto 6th class other subjects like Mathematics, Geography, History, Sciences should be taught as less as possible. Again, subjects like History, Geography or even some scientific topics may be taught as curriculum of both languages i.e. as lessons of Urdu and

English. In this way the technical and scientific vocabulary in both languages may be introduced. Where Urdu equivalents are not easily at hand, English scientific and technical vocabulary may liberally be used. One more point I want to emphasize is that whenever any non-English scientific and technical vocabulary in any field is employed at any stage, whether in lower classes or higher ones, it should be derived from Arabic root-words or vocabulary. On this point I shall say more when I come to the introduction of Arabic language at academic institutions.

After 6th class i.e. in 7th and 8th classes other subjects both of Sciences and Arts may be taught as independent subjects and not as lessons in Urdu and English languages. But students should not be overburdened with books and excessive home-work. My suggestion is that the medium of instruction in these classes (7th and 8th) should be both Urdu and English, of course exceptions are languages. If in certain schools, say English Medium Schools, English Medium of instruction is followed then a special short course should be evolved to acquaint students with Urdu (i.e. Arabic) technical vocabulary equivalent to English technical vocabulary used for the subjects in question. If in other schools Urdu Medium of instruction is followed then English technical vocabulary and other related idioms and phrases must be taught as well. In fact at all levels it is mainly the question of writing in English in the examination that matters most. As said earlier, even at Master's level we may have to resort to Urdu in order to make our arguments clearer. Again different subjects demand varying degree of proficiency in English. Mathematical sciences need a little language ability, some others like Biology require more, Social Sciences need quite a lot. Another simple point is also to be kept in mind that if we know the language but don't know the technical vocabulary in that language then we cannot express the scientific subjects in that language. Once we learn the technical vocabulary in that language we shall have no difficulty in expressing ourselves the subjects in question in it. It means, if we know the technical vocabulary in Urdu, we shall be able to speak, read and write in Urdu the scientific subjects in

question. The wisdom behind the suggestion, that Urdu and English should both be the medium of instruction and the subjects and books on them should be in both the languages upto 6th class is that the students get familiarize with the scientific vocabulary, idoms and style of expression in both the languages. Sometimes the same scientific topic may get repeated in both languages. But this is not a big flaw as compared to the bigger advantage that lies in mastering the linguistic skills in both the languages. The same advantage is carried on by mastering technical vocabularies in both the languages in later higher classes.

Now I turn to Matriculation and Intermediate levels. These academic stages are really very significant because on them we lay scientific and technical foundations and of higher education in general. In our educational scheme the results of F.Sc. are the most important because that decides whether or not students can join Medical or Engineering. Without disturbing or criticizing such an academic scheme I proceed to suggest that the medium of instruction (examination) at F.Sc. (Pre-Medical and Pre-Engineering) must be English. The successful students are to go to medical and Engineering where the medium of instruction cannot but be English. At Matric level (i.e. in 9th and 10th classes) the medium of instruction should be optional. English medium schools and other schools including certain governmental schools may conveniently adopt English as medium of instruction for certain or for all sciences and if they want also certain Arts subject. Mathematics may conveniently be taught in English in all schools. In certain other schools Urdu may be adopted. But even in such cases a student may be permitted to write both in English and in Urdu in certain science subjects in the same answer sheets. After all, the real purpose is to communicate the knowledge concerned and not the language. Again, at Intermediate level (with the exception of Pre-medical and Pre engineering) the same policy may be followed. Again all along at both levels including Pre-medical and Pre-engineering scientific and technical glossary for each subject should be taught and examined in both English and Urdu languages. The same policy

should be pursued at Degree levels. I may even suggest a special necessary course at all these levels viz Matric, Intermediate and Degree levels, for equivalent English and Urdu technical vocabulary and phrases used in it in all general Arts and Sciences. This is in addition to special Urdu and English vocabulary appended to separate subjects. At Master's level a student must choose which would be his medium of instruction and examination. He may not be allowed to mix up Urdu and English languages together in the same paper except in the section where he is supposed to be examined for Urdu and English equivalents for scientific and technical vocabulary.

In the selection of medium of instruction students, should be made party to it. Students must not be ignored and they are to be taken into confidence. Even at Master's level I have observed students complaining about medium of instruction being English. In my own subject Philosophy students stop us while delivering lectures only in English and we have to use Urdu quite often. The purpose is that students should understand the subject. Again, after understanding, students find awful difficulties in expressing themselves in English at the examination. I remember, in the academic council the then chairman of History Department University of Peshawar mentioned the difficulties which History student face with because of English. He proposed that History students should be allowed to write in Urdu in the examination. Here we have a genuine problem and it needs a solution. Simply by forcing English medium of instruction on students will not solve the problem, rather it will unnecessarily complicate and aggravate it. At present English subject is compulsory upto B.A. level and upto F.Sc. level. I think, this should be so. The reason is obvious that for arts more English is required. But even after studying English for so many years an M.A. student finds hard to express himself in it. I think, it is sheer one-sidedness and short sightedness to go on advocating English as medium of instruction. At college level we must ask students about it: they are primarily concerned. And there is no harm in using two languages as mediums of instruction and students should be given option to

choose English or Urdu in the examination. Let the time decide which language ultimately wins the game. In this connection I regret to say that our teachers try to force students to use English because they are trained in English medium of instruction. Again they are either too busy or too lazy to learn even the necessary Urdu technical vocabulary even of the subject which they are teaching. I like to narrate a story with due deference and apology to one of our colleagues who happens to be a Ph.D. and a good scholar in his specific field and is also a poet, writer and orator in Urdu. He was asked to set a question paper for an Intermediate subject. It was a simple matter for him to set the paper in English but he was also required to write its Urdu version. He came to me requesting for previous examination question papers in Urdu, so that he could know the technical vocabulary for that subject. I am sure, once he knows technical vocabulary in Urdu, there is no difficulty for him to express the subject or set the question-paper in Urdu. What we need is to educate ourselves as teachers with technical vocabulary in Urdu for the particular subject concerned.

I favoured English as medium of instruction for F.Sc. (Pre-medical and Pre-engineering) because they have to enter into higher training in medicine and engineering. But all don't succeed and most students have to proceed further to B.Sc./B.A. or to join some technical training institutions. Unfortunately we have very few technical training schools-schools for training for particular jobs e.g. for air-conditioning, for becoming motor-mechanics, for repairing radios and television sets. The basic education for admission in them is Matric. At Matric and F.Sc. levels one learns some rudimentary facts and know-how about the scientific basics of such technical education. Now-a-days mostly the above-mentioned jobs are done by untrained persons and even by the illiterates. Now, every Pakistani, particularly villagers, cannot master English enough so that the medium of instruction could only be English at these technical schools. We need abundant of technical schools for various purposes. This is another reason we cannot have only English as medium of instruction.

Again in matters of administration, in our official and business affairs and at our judicial institutions, I strongly recommend both languages viz English and Urdu. In the selection of staff and other officers we need to see that they must know Urdu's technical vocabulary and before they are selected they must pass a test to show that they are well-conversant with technical vocabulary in both languages. Our administration or judiciary is meant for public and our government servants or officers are to be in a sense "public men" and for the benefit of public. Again we should never forget that our literacy rate is miserably low and there is no magic wand to improve it at a galloping speed, especially when English is made the medium of instruction. Public grievances and requests are made by common men when their voices are made to reach in our lingua franca Urdu. For foreign services and for certain other services, of course, more emphasis may be made on English. But acquaintance with technical vocabulary in Urdu and its further improvement may not be ignored even in such cases. All this change cannot be made overnight. But we can make a start to enable our next generation to achieve certain goals in the direction I am advocating.

Now I move to higher Education. By higher Education I mean that which necessarily involves fresh research work. Accordingly, according to my view, our Education upto Master's Degree is just a preparation for higher Education. My suggestion would be that the medium of instruction or examination for post-Master's degreeeie. for M.Phil and Ph.D. should be English except for languages and Islamiat where the medium should be the languages in question and Arabic. This is because qualitatively higher literature may only be available in English (or in other languages of advanced nations). Of course the principle of equivalent technical vocabulary of Urdu (i.e. in Arabic words) as suggested earlier should be followed here as well. And as an appendix to these equivalent Urdu technological terms as glossary should be added. It is only through our principle of equivalent technical vocabulary that we van achieve a notable

and scientific status for Urdu in a gradual and systematic way. The position of medium of instruction may be revised, say, after every decade and the opinions of both students and teachers be sought for making appropriate revision. Rather the majority decision of the student community in question after matriculation should count more than anything else.

Now I turn to the introduction of Arabic language at our academic institutions. My reasons for this are cultural, religious and academic as well. I have already mentioned about Bharat's introduction of Sanskrit, although it is a dead language in the sense that is no longer spoken, It is one of the national languages of Bharat and it is introduced at academic institutions, for culturo-religious reasons and for the reason that all regional i.e. national languages have lot of Sanskrit vocabulary in them and it serves as a cementing factor among the language and hence the peoples concerned. Our languages are rather more influenced by the inclusion of Arabic words.

For example, I think, all our regional languages, rather all or majority of the languages of the Muslim World contain and use the following Words:

1. عِلْمٌ 2. عَالِمٌ 3. عَالَمٌ 4. مَعْلُومٌ 5. مَعْلُومَاتٌ 6. عُلَمَاءٌ 7. عِلْمٌ
 8. عَالِمِينَ 9. مُعَلِّمٌ 10. مُتَعَلِّمٌ 11. مُعَلِّمَةٌ 12. مُتَعَلِّمَةٌ 13. تَعَلِيمٌ
 14. عُلُومٌ 15. عَلِيٌّ 16. عَلِمَتْ 17. عَلَامَاتٌ 18. عَلَانَةٌ 19. عَلِيمٌ
 20. عَلَامٌ

These Arabic words are used in our languages, e.g. in Urdu and Pashto. They are all derived from the Arabic root containing three letters of the Arabic alphabet-ع-ل-م by adding certain letters of the alphabet in a certain systematic way. Each word has different meaning or certain shades of meaning but each meaning is relevantly desirable from the basic meaning of the root-word. I think over 99% Arabic words go back to the root-

words consisting of three letters of the Arabic alphabet. Others may have roots consisting of four or five letters of the alphabet. Now from one Arabic root (consisting of three letters) we can build, say, about seventy nouns or adjectives (apart from verbs) with varying meanings, although words in actual use may be far less. No other languages can be compared with Arabic on this process of word-building. It is for this reason that the Arabic language is very much suitable for evolving scientific and technical vocabulary. This may be regarded as one academic reason for adopting Arabic vocabulary in Urdu language. But my another major reason is its harmonizing and unifying effect on the whole of Pakistani nation or even on the whole of Muslim Ummah. Even simple language bond binds and brings people together. The more we use Arabic words and Arabic scientific and technical vocabulary in different field, the closer we become for the cultural and religious reasons as well. To bring home my point still clearer, take the Arabic root with three letters of the alphabet. مَظَنّ We daily use many derived words in our language like.

نظامی، نظام، انتظام، مستظم، تنظیم
مستظم، مستظم، منظوم، ناظم، نظم

A person who does not know Arabic grammar, he will commit several language mistakes and may confuse them. A very good debator once started his speech by saying **مُحْتَرَم**. The word here should have been **مُحْتَرَمٌ** (i.e. respected) and not **مُحْتَرِمٌ** which means 'he who respects' i.e. here the president who respects others. For learning better Urdu, in fact any Pakistani languages and in fact, I think, any language where Muslims are over-whelmingly dominant, Arabic is essential. Hence I advocate the teaching of Arabic language as compulsory subject at our schools. Once again I point out that where-ever I talked of scientific and technical vocabulary in Urdu, I should be taken to mean Arabic vocabulary or where is not conveniently possible English vocabulary as it stands. Experts in relevant fields should satisfy themselves about the appropriateness of the Arabic technical words developed by relating them to their root-meanings of the roots in question and by seeing how they are related to other words especially derived from the same roots. It is not easy to develop technical vocabulary but given time, patience and ability this is achievable. I think those who ignore Arabic language they ignore Urdu and our other

regional languages willingly or unwillingly. They must realize the importance of Arabic for our other languages, if not for other cultural reasons.

Besides linguistic and cultural reasons we have genuine religious reasons for learning Arabic. For Indians religion is a geographical and cultural matter. This I am saying with some discussions with some Indian intelligentsia. Again, for a European, religion may be just curative psychological matter. But for us religion i.e. Islam is a matter of truth as well. We believe in the authenticity of the Quran. But we don't have direct access to the Quran, because for one reason that we lack the essential knowledge of Arabic. We have blind following what is in the air and have outmoded and conservative outlook on Islam. Ignorance leads to blind following, which eventually either leads to fanaticism or revolt against Islam. We have religious beliefs in harmonious with our scientific findings and out of tune with the modern requirements. And we are satisfied with all this and say that religious affairs belong to our religious scholars and Mullas. But this won't do, if we want to probe deep into the truth. Thus we have the responsibility to teach some essential Arabic, which means Arabic grammar as well, to enable our generation to understand the Quran as it is. We need to study Arabic roots of words and derival words used in the Quran. We need to study Arabic words, idioms and phrases as they were used during prophet Muhammad's times and not what time has given them meanings because of certain culturo-religious leanings. By connecting derived words with their corresponding roots and comparing other derived words from the same root we can appreciate the Quran better. The problem is how to devise such courses. We must not hand over this task to our religious scholars and Maulavees. The work has to be done by Arabic language scholars, and not by religious people, otherwise we shall be led into intellectual mess. It has to be a language course. The Quran, I think, does not have more than, say, 1800 root-words used in about, say, 8000 words including the conjugations of verbs. And it is difficult task to introduce Arabic stepwise in our academic

institution to include Arabic vocabulary of, say, 8000 words. This will be classical Arabic which is understood and written all over Arab countries. We don't need to learn any of the Arabic dialect as an essential course. The purpose behind the above exercise is to enable the students to evaluate the authenticity of the Quran on some good reasons.

It may be objected that we have already heavy courses and the introduction of Arabic language will make the situation all the more burdensome. I am not at all in favour of increasing academic burden. I want to replace useless or superfluous subjects by Arabic. I opine that Islamiyat must not be taught as essential subject beyond 8th class. Again Pak-Studies may not be taught beyond, say, Matric. Again, I have suggested that till 6th class we shall pay exclusive attention to improving linguistic skills and even upto 8th class very little other subjects may be introduced. Again at Intermediate level there must not be any Urdu compulsory course. I suggest that Arabic should be introduced as compulsory subject from 5th class onwards till graduation level. Of course the proficiency of Arabic language cannot be made equal to, say, English, but necessary Arabic grammar and structure can be taught and some objectives outlined above may be achieved gradually and slowly. The courses should not be heavily burdened. If certain schools can start Arabic earlier, they may do so. Specially if mosques are made as one of the means to increase literacy in our country, then in such places simple spoken Arabic can be introduced earlier. Arabic is a difficult language and we cannot hope that students will be able to speak and write Arabic with such courses. Even persons with M.A. Arabic don't fare well. Again if students take up some harder optional Arabic course, we may avoid duplication by offering them some other language course such as of Persian, French, Russian.

In the end I would like to point out that on ideational and valuational level there are two great motivational forces. They are moral and religious. Our people have great religious motivational force, which can be used for various purposes, for

morals and for academics. I am sure that the introduction of Arabic language will achieve what Islamiyat could not achieve in our country, and even far more we shall achieve culturally, linguistically and religiously. It will also serve as unifying and cementing force not only within Pakistan but also for all the Muslim World.

As a reminder I like to say that the question of medium of instruction for us is very complex and only time will show which direction we would be moving. There is no hurrying to shift from English to Urdu. The process should take due course and both languages viz Urdu and English should continue till some visible signs or benefits are observed for the change-over. Ultimately what counts is our intellengentia, our people. If they become greater thinkers or scientists, the change would automatically come. It may be worth noting that Jews in Israel have revived their religious language to the extent that even Ph.D's in various sciences and fields are done in Hebrew and the theses or books in Hebrew are later translated, say, in English by British and American Publishers. In matters of medium of instruction we need to look to what is pragmatic and not what one regards absolutely right.

I sum up the results of my discussion as follows: English should remain medium of instruction and it should be taught as early as possible at schools upto, say, Intermediate level as a compulsory subject. But all along Urdu (Arabic) equivalent technical vocabulary for all subjects may be developed. If the students find difficulty in adopting English as medium of instruction (examination), option may be given for Urdu. But all along they must know English technical vocabulary. Urdu should be taught as compulsory subject at the most upto Matric level. Instead of Islamiyat and Pak-Studies (as compulsory subjects) Arabic grammar and language should be taught upto Degree level. Urdu technical vocabulary should be derived from Arabic or from English. There is no need to teach, in general, regional languages as compulsory subjects at schools. The promotion of

regional languages for cultural and literary reasons should be left to respective academies of regional languages. The position of English as medium of instruction may be re-examined, say, after a decade or two.