Using English Language as a Source of Good First Impression and a Parameter to Judge Status

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Abstract

This is a survey research investigating using of English language as a source of good first impression and how English is used as a parameter to judge status. Simple Random Sampling technique is used to select the participants and the sample was based on randomly selected 100 students of Department of English, University of Kotli Azad Kashmir. The sample consists 45% of the total population. A well-designed questionnaire, stating a scenario, and on the basis of that scenario the participants were asked 10 close ended questions. The personality traits were Well Educated, Civilized, Modern Personality, Great knowledge, High class, Wealthy family, Fashionable attire, Resourceful, Superior and Honest. As a framework the researcher used a mixture of Big Five Personality Sub-Traits merged with other impression factors according to the needs of the current study. After analysing it is found that use of English language at first meeting have a great effect on impression formation. It is found that people admire individuals who frequently use English in their conversations. That's how it is also used as parameter to judge status.

Keywords: English Language First Impression Status

Introduction

When it comes to making impression, English language plays a vital role in forming good first impression in countries like Pakistan. People use English language not only to communicate but also to show them highly educated, modern and civilized. This research investigates the effects of using English in impression formation. Language is not only a set of specific words. Besides a tool of communication, language is also considered as a symbolic tool that is used to convey our thought, and a representation of cognitive processes. When someone is speaking, his words are the representation of his ideology and thought. Language is a source of communication, but it is seen that language can perform more functions than just simple communication such as forming impression. As English rule people of subcontinent for a hundred years, English was a language of heads of state. Even after the end of colonization English language enjoys the same status in Pakistani society (Mahboob, 2003, p.3). There was an assumption that English is not just a language, but it is a status symbol, and it can also be used to create a good first impression. So, to find out that if there is any relation between language and first impression the researcher conducted this investigation.

Language and impression have a direct relationship. When someone speaks confidently, he/she leaves a good impression on listener. When he/she uses the body language, gestures, pastures, and facial expressions during communication, so he will be able to convey his ideas to the listener. For example, when someone goes for an interview If he is confident in his ideas, it might be possible that it leaves good impression on the interviewer. As compared to those who are not clear in his thought and could not be able to demonstrate his ideas.

It means first impression is essential when someone is communicating to others. As the first impression portrays about someone react in a specific situation. It also helps in choosing a better bond towards another person.

It is said that first impression is last impression. All first impressions are essential. A first impression is often what other person's views about the speaker. When a person meets someone, he

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creates an impression through discussions and talks. So, one can say that language has a strong relation with impression.

Impression:

Impression is a sort of influence that one can (put) by his appearance, dressing style, manners, body language, the way of talking and interacting. It is a feeling or opinion which is formed unconsciously based on a little evidence about a *person*, place, or something. First Impression is a widely considered term. Impression can be both positive and negative. On one side they can make a person, idea, organization, or product, on the flip side they can break them as well. Sometimes the impression can be the beginning of many things that lead one towards success, however, it can be misleading in some cases.

Impression has many characteristics, some of them include Race, culture, gender, physical appearance, accent, voice, posture and yes **language** as well is one of them.

It is a famous saying that "*First impression is the last impression.*" But it is not actually true in every situation. Sometimes circumstances can be different when one interacts with someone, or his perception can be wrong but as the time passes, he understands the exact matter and realizes first impression is not always everything. In this way first impression can have important role in daily life but it can be misleading as well. There is no such research conducted in Pakistan which elaborates the relationship between language and first impression, so, to fill this gap in the knowledge this investigation is conducted.

Research Objective

To find out how use English language forms good first impression.

Research Question

How use English language forms good first impression?

To sum up, language effects first impression, while it is not correct to conclude it by mentioning that impression is good or bad. Any language however it is mother language or target language has a wide effect of first impression. The language being spoken is mother language or target language, the impression is dependent of that language.

English language

English no doubt is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, in fact, it is often referred to as a 'Global language' because of how many places it has spread to and how many people speak it. Not only is it the first language of over 400 million people, but there are estimated to be over one billion that use English as a second or foreign language. It is thought that second language English speakers outnumber first language English speakers by 3 to 1. That is pretty much.

English Language is a widely spoken language all around the world. It is the Lingua Franca as it has become part and parcel of every individual and every field of life. It is being used as a means of communication in scientific, academic, and technological domains. It is a source of communication and interaction between different linguistic groups in a diverse language community.

People face difficulties in speaking due to cultural and linguistic differences. People whose native languages are different, they use English as a medium of interaction around the globe. English is an international language that is spoken in every country as official language except some. Almost, in many countries people are learning English as a second language. It is being taught as a part of curriculum in schools. It is necessary whether its academics, business, politics, or any other field.

English is an international language. It is spoken in half of the world. English language has a very influential effect on everyone. This language is given priority in every country. Being an international language, English plays a vital role in the whole world. Speaking English has been prioritized everywhere. Mostly companies judge and select their employees based on their English-speaking skills. Furthermore, not only companies but also mostly jobs holders are being judged based on speaking English. English is the most important subject being taught in schools and in higher level also. English as a language plays vital role in university level too.

English is the most used language of social media. It connects as a bridge between the media and people. Social media is a rich pathway for creating, experimenting, and repurposing new words. The internet nowadays has become one of the important sources of English language and along with appropriate vocabulary, it has given life to a plethora of new words and phrases.

Importance of English as a language

Culturally, English is a language in which many important pieces of literature have been written over the centuries. This includes the works of Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, George Orwell, the Bronte sisters and many more. The English language is an invaluable means for people to communicate stories across the world.

Because English is so widespread, it is also often used as a lingua franca, meaning that two people who speak different first languages communicate through English as a common language. English language has a rich culture in it.

Impression of Using English Language

Impression matters a lot while communicating no matter what language are you speaking. English being a global language, as well is the sweetest of the languages as it connects people.

English is also the language to bridge the gap between people who normally speak different and diverse languages. Therefore, you need to speak English Fluently and Impress with English Communication.

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Another reason for the importance of the English language is the internet. As the internet was originally developed in the UK and USA all the early content was in English. While internet access has become more widespread and accessible, over 50% of its content is in English. And it's often the chosen language used to reach global audiences online. English is also recognized as the leading language in many fields such as business, media, tourism, science, and higher education.

Literature Review

People often make a first impression of a person by their language. For example, someone who speaks quickly might be considered more competent than someone who speaks slowly. Similarly, using slang terns or incorrect grammar can also affect someone's first impression. The effects of language on first impressions can vary widely depending on the situation. However, some experts believe that certain linguistics habits can help make someone seem more competent. For example, speaking in a friendly, informal tone can make people appear friendlier and more approachable. Additionally, speaking clearly and concisely can help people to be more easily understood, particularly if they are speaking in a foreign language (Markowitz, D. M., Kouchaki, M., Gino, F., Hancock, J. T., & Boyd, R. L. 2023, p.109).

In a meeting when a person is speaking English fluently with correct pronunciation, appropriate vocabulary and pauses, it contributes a lot in his first impression. Language is a medium of exchange of information and communication, when it is used to convey the ideas and thoughts, to give opinions and to express emotions in an interaction, it is helpful in impression of a person. Impression is greatly influenced by language. The more effectively a speaker speaks a language the better impression he leaves on this listener or next person (Bustari, A., Samad, I. A., & Achmad, D. 2017, p.98).

It was determined whether linguistic mistakes had a detrimental impact on people's views of attraction and their intention to date and whether this impact is tempered by the existence of visual information, such as the profile image. This two-by-two (Language Mistakes/No Language Errors) by two-by-two (Visible/Blurred Image) experiment showed that language errors negatively affect perceptions of social and romantic attraction while positively affecting perceptions of physical attraction on a profile. Research 2 concentrated on mechanical, rule-based, and informal grammatical mistakes, which can all be connected to various personality types. Low scores on perceived intelligence and attentiveness, respectively, because of mechanical and rule-based errors, lower scores

on attractiveness and dating intention (Zanden,T, Emiel J. Krahmer, Maria B.J. Mos, and Alexander 2020, p.759).

Language is an important factor in communication, and it is also an important factor of the interaction. Language whether it is vocal i.e., words or non-verbal i.e., body language effects first impression of a person. When a person interacts with someone, he will start from a conversation and conversation needs a language. The language they a speaker speaks, the way he speaks that language and his command on that language contributes to development of his first impression in the perception of next person. If one is not properly speaking a language for example, the person whose mother tongue is something else and he is speaking English with wrong pronunciation and inappropriate use of vocabulary he will not be able to convey the message clearly to the listener. Listener may misinterpret the message (Mavridis, N. 2015, p.23).

Language and Impression are somehow related to each other. There are several factors that influence impression of a person such as language, voice and speech, nom verbal communication or body language, clothing, accessories, and manners Lewis, H. (2012).

English-speaking and Japanese languages that impression formation and attribution processes can be modelled as arising from a desire to maximise affective coherence in linguistic representations of social events. The replication in German is described in this article, which also reveals small cultural differences. To model impression creation and attribution, a set of regression equations were estimated using the data. The results shows that there is a great impact of language on impression formation (Tobias Schröder, 2011,p.85).

Due to the widespread use of English and its notable, though debatable, sociolinguistic, and cultural repercussions, the effect of English in Europe is a hot topic. Austrian, Armenian, Danish, French, German, Great Britain, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish, and Swiss academics, as well as a sizable international audience, attended this seminar, which drew participants from thirteen different European nations (Turin, A, 2010,Italy).

When a person is interacting with someone for the first time, the language he is speaking contributes to making of his first impression. As in present era English Language is regarded as an international language and speaking English is considered classy. People of the countries with different national languages, learn English as a second language or foreign language (Kirkpatrick, A. 2007, p.2).

Language has a vital role in every society. Language is the way to communicate with each other. Language is also a key to recognize people. Moreover, language plays important role in everyone's personality. The way people speak is their first impression. That is why language effects people's first impression. Language is not only included the words we speak even our body language effects first impression (Stokoe Jr, W. C. 2005, p.10).

Paul, M (2003) claims that the goal of this study was to examine the impact of employing Spanish captions together with an English-language listening comprehension test that consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions. The hearing test findings that were statistically significant showed that the English captions group performed at a level that was noticeably higher than the Spanish captions group, which in turn performed at a level that was noticeably higher than the no captions group. The article's consideration of the educational ramifications of utilising multilingual captions in various contexts to improve second language reading and listening comprehension ends (Paul, M, 2003, p.33).

The four message types vary across dynamism measurements, self- and other-control attributions, and three cognitive reaction categories. Intensifiers are assessed most favourably and hedges most adversely for the speaker evaluation and control-attribution variables. Results for the cognitive-response tests show a more erratic trend. The findings are explored in terms of how crucial they are for comprehending how these four communication types are processed cognitively. Language problems in profile texts affect readers' judgements of the attractiveness of profile owners on online dating websites (Susan A. 2006,p. 37).

Although there is a wealth of literature on the effects of powerful and powerless language styles for impression formation, the persuasive effects of power of style have been underappreciated. The independent variables were carried by a message that was read by the respondents and argued in favour of introducing comprehensive exams for college seniors. Further research revealed that, regardless of relevance, strong arguments were more compelling than weak ones and that the persuasiveness of a person's style had no bearing on this. Conversely, judgements of communicative

competence, control, and, in conjunction with argument strength, sociability, were significantly impacted using forceful vs weak language. The cognitive response data showed that people were more likely to consider the powerless style than the style that was allegedly powerful, among other things (Gibbons,P, Busch,J, and James J. 1991).

Research Gap

After reviewing related literature it is found that there is no such research conducted in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan which examined the relationship between language and impression.

Methodology

This study is conducted by employing survey research methods using quantitative approach of data analysis. As survey method is appropriate for such a study to collect valid and real data. A scenario was given to students before questions, after reading and understanding students were asked to fill up the questionnaire based upon their own reactions. To select the participants for the study they were told about the purpose of this research.

Population

Target population was the students of department of English University of kotli Azad Kashmir. The reason behind selecting department of English as population for this study is that the students of language study are concerned and aware of the importance of English language.

Sample

Simple Random Sampling technique is used for the collect the data. Sample was based on randomly selected 100 students of Department of English, University of Kotli Azad Kashmir who were interested to take part in this research. The sample consists 45% of the total population.

Framework

As a framework the researcher used a mixture of Big Five Personality Sub-Traits and moulding them according to the needs of the current study. All the impression factors and personality traits like honesty, superior and civilized are taken from Big Five Personality Trait theory and some traits are added with impression factors and moulded according to the need of this study. Following are personality and impression traits.

1. Well Educated
2. Civilized
3. Modern Personality
4. Great knowledge
5. High class
6. Wealthy family
7. Fashionable attire
8. Resourceful
9. Superior
10. Honest

Data Collection Tool

A well-designed questionnaire contained 10 close ended questions was used to collect the data. The questions were to be answer by selecting from the five options which were as "Agree, Strongly Agree, Partly Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analysed using simple percentages. The results are drawn from the analysed data and shown in tables and figures for better understanding.

Methods and Procedures

The researcher explains the whole scenario in front of students who were interested to take part in the research. The questionnaire starts with a paragraph which comprises of details regarding following questions. It was a scenario that if somebody message you on WhatsApp or simple messaging app for the first time. And he/she starts conversation in English language using high or difficult vocabulary what would be his/ her first impression on you? To specify the thoughts which comes in your mind please answer the following questions.

The researcher didn't ask the participants to give their personal details as they didn't want to reveal their identity. After collecting the data, the researcher analyses the data by counting responses for each question. And then a detailed and well-informed analysis was made by using simple percentages. The relevant information is discussed in tables and figures bellow.

Data Analysis

After collecting the relevant data from randomly selected students from university of Kotli Azad Kashmir, the researcher analysed data by using simple percentages. Below is a detailed description of collected data and percentages showing in form graphs and figures.

There were 10 personality and impression traits to be rated in a specific scenario explained to participants. Their responses are shown in form of numbers and percentages. Below is a list of those traits: Well Educated, Civilized, Modern Personality, Great knowledge, High class, Wealthy family, Fashionable attire, Resourceful, Superior, Honest.

Results

The very first question asked by the researcher was about education. That if someone message them in good English what would be their first thought about his/ her education. Most people were agree that the first impression for such a person is a thought that he/she is a well-educated person. The percentages for **Well Educated** Agreed **85%,** Strongly agreed **7%,** partly agreed **5%,** disagreed **2%,** Strongly disagreed **1%.** Second personality trait was termed as **Civilized** and the responses were as follow: Agreed **70%,** Strongly Agreed **15%,** Partly Agreed **6%,** Disagreed **7%,** Strongly Disagreed **2%.** For the Personality trait having **Great Knowledge** the percentages of responses were as; Agreed **60%,** Strongly Agreed **15%,** partly Agreed **10%,** Disagreed **14%,** and Strongly Disagreed **1%.** Responses for 4rth category that was **Modern Personality** as Agreed **80%,** Strongly Agreed **10%,** Partly Agreed **5%,** Disagreed **4%,** and Strongly Disagreed **1%.**

For the impression of having a Wealthy Family the responses were as follow. For Agreed **65%,** Strongly Agreed **2%,** Partly Agreed **5%,** Disagreed **16%,** and Strongly Disagreed **12%.** As the scenario given to the participants was having a conversation with somebody for the first time on text message. So, that was a worthwhile question to ask about their imagination or image built in their minds about the personality and attire of a stranger who is using high vocabulary of English. So, for **Fashionable Attire** the researcher gets responses as for Agreed **70%,** Strongly Agreed **3%,** Partly Agreed **7%,** Disagreed **17%** and for Strongly Disagreed **3%.**

The next question was about honesty, responses for having an impression of being honest while speaking English were as follow; Agreed **10%,** Strongly Agreed **8%,** Partly Agreed **7%,** Disagreed **60%,** and Strongly Disagreed **15%.** The next category was having an impression of **Superior** personality has responses as for Agreed **15%,** Strongly Agreed **2%,** Partly Agreed **8%,** Disagreed **55%** and for Strongly Disagreed 20%. The second last personality trait to measure was **Resourceful.** And the responses were as follow; Agreed 30%, Strongly Agreed 5%, Partly Agreed 15%, Disagreed 45%, and Strongly Disagreed 5%. The last impression to judge was High class and the responses were as follow; Agreed 60%, Strongly Agreed 10%, Partly Agreed 24%, Disagreed 5% and for Strongly Disagreed 1%.

All the results are shown below in Table No. 1.

Table Number. 1

| Sr.	Impression Factor	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Partly Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
1	Well Educated	85%	7%	5%	2%	1%
2	Civilized	70%	15%	6%	7%	2%
3	Great Knowledge	60%	15%	10%	14%	1%
4	Modern Personality	80%	10%	5%	4%	1%
5	Wealthy Family	65%	2%	5%	16%	12%
6	Fashionable Attire	70%	3%	7%	17%	3%
7	Honest	10%	8%	7%	60%	15%
8	Superior	15%	2%	8%	55%	20%
9	Resourceful	30%	5%	15%	45%	5%
10	High class	60%	10%	24%	5%	1%

Discussion

After analysing above mentioned results it is found that language usage at first meeting have a great effect on impression. As English is an international language and it is considered a prestigious language in many countries, people admire individuals who frequently use English in their conversations. Pakistan is also one of those countries in which speaking English has become a status symbol. The population of this research was students at University of Kotli Azad Kashmir. Below is an in-depth analysis of above-mentioned results.

As far as the first impression trait that is related to education is concerned the participants of this study were of the view that if a person can speak good English there is no doubt that he or she would be highly educated. In Pakistan English is not just a language of a medium of communication but it is a certificate that the speaker of English is highly educated. The next category was Civilized. Yes, language is directly connected to civilization so when somebody speaks good English, he/she is considered as civilized that was the view of majority of participants of this research, only few were of the view that it is not necessarily true that a person who is good at English is a civilized person. Many research participants i.e.,60% were agree that obviously if a person can speak good English using high vocabulary must have a great knowledge. As far as having wealthy family for a good speaker of English most participants were agree because they were of the view that only wealthy families in the country can afford expensive schooling for their kids, which results in good communication skills in students. But 12% to 16% participants were of the view that there is no need to have a wealthy family background for having a good command at English. As far as having impression traits like modern personality, fashionable attire and high class is concerned majority of responses were in agree with the idea that a good speaker of English must have all these traits. Whereas a minority was of a different view. The next impression factor was honesty. Unlike the other factors responses for honesty were mostly in disagree or strongly disagree. Because the participants were of the view that it is not necessary that a person who can speak good English is honest. The responses for thinking that person superior to their own self were like that of honesty many were not agree to that point. Because the participants of the view that nobody can be superior by speaking any specific language. All the results shows that how English language is used as a source of good impression and how it is used as the parameter to judge people.

For better understanding the results are shown in chart number.1.

Chart Numer.1
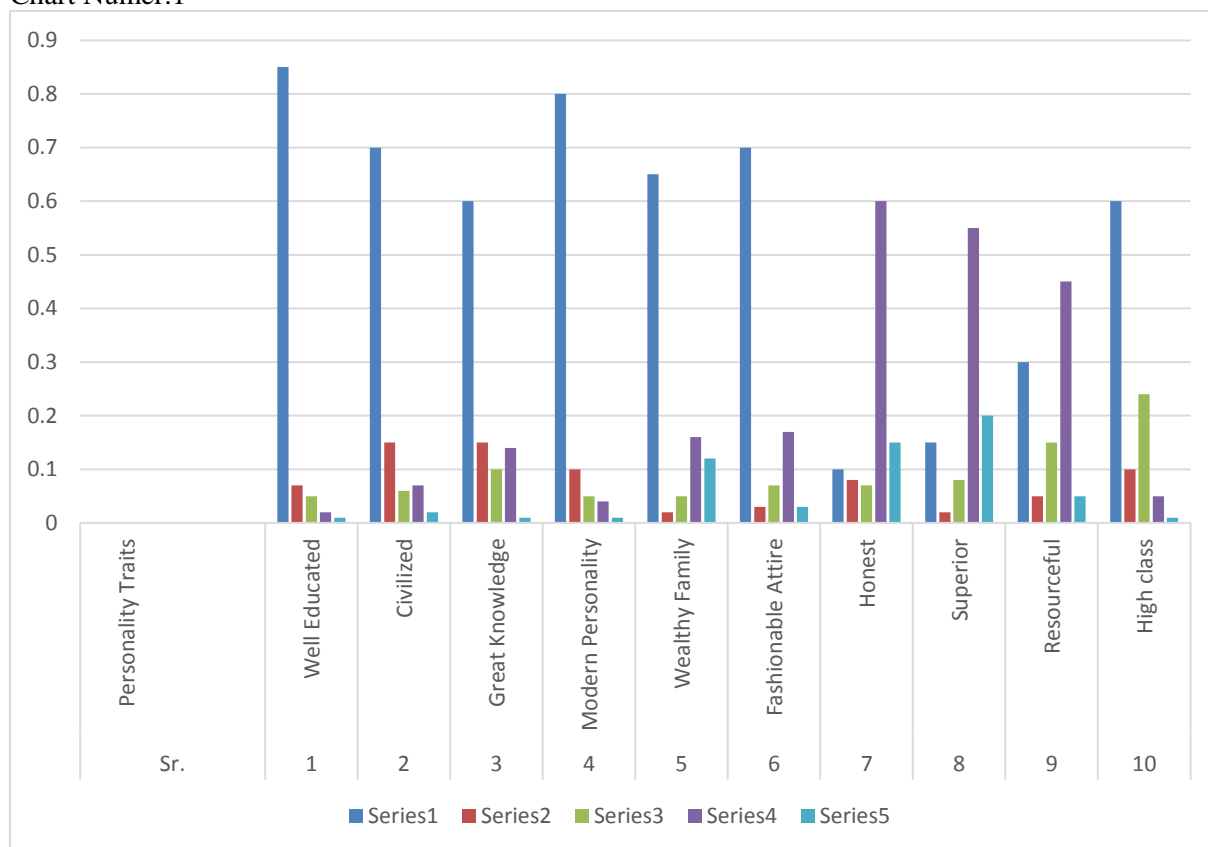
Conclusions

After the careful investigation including gathering relevant data, a cautious analysis of the data, this research concluded that there is an unfathomable relationship between language and first impression. During chat if an unknown person or a known person message for the first time using good or high vocabulary English, there would be a different impression on the other person. The data shows that texting in good English has a huge impact on the first impression. Research also concludes that people

think that if a person is good at English he/she is well educated, civilized, fashionable, modern personality, having great knowledge and wealthy family background. So, this is how speaking or texting in good English form impression. This is all because Pakistan is one of those countries where English is not just a language but a status symbol. So, it is concluded that speaking or texting good English forms good first impression.

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