

Original Article

Beliefs & Investment of Undergraduate Students Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language

 Muhammad Hassan Abbasi^a, Mariam Aftab^b &  Mehwish Arif^c

^a Department of Basic Sciences and Humanities - English, Dawood University of Engineering and Technology Karachi, Pakistan

^b Department of Sciences and Humanities, FAST-National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences

^c College Department of English Linguistics & Allied Studies, NED University of Engineering and Technology Karachi, Pakistan

Abstract

Considering the global and economic need for foreign language interactions, various educational institutes have incorporated foreign language teaching (FLT) into the curriculum. The languages offered include German, Arabic, Chinese, and Turkish (recently). To reconnoiter different aspects of Chinese language learning in Pakistan, research has been conducted in the context (see for example, Khan et al, 2023 and Aftab et al, 2022). However, the topical surge in learning Turkish as a foreign language (TFL) resulting from the cultural exchange programs, scholarship opportunities, Turkish dramas broadcast in Pakistan, and most significantly the strong Pak-Turk relationships have led education institutions to offer TFL at the undergraduate level. To explore the beliefs, imagined identity, and investment (Norton, 2001) of undergraduate students for TFL, a qualitative study was conducted. Since, the study probed into the beliefs, imagined identities, and investment of the students, narrative inquiries fit the objectives of the research. 4 participants volunteered to retell their experiences cogitating the temporality, sociality, and spatiality of the experience. The findings show that learners enrolled in the TFL course believed and imagined getting a better job and business opportunities, acting as a translator and diplomat with proficiency in foreign language. The learners imagined exploring educational opportunities for scholarships and higher studies in the future. Additionally, TFL learners foresee the Turkish language as a means of cultural and social identity, learning for tourism, and socialization with natives. The participants manifested these beliefs to invest in their imagined identities as TFL for professional identity, multilingual identity, and social identity. TFL beliefs and investment provide insights into learners' perspectives and their future imagined identity in the broader scope of shifting foreign language education policy.

Keywords: Turkish as a foreign language (TFL), beliefs, investment, imagined identity, education policy & centennial institute

1. INTRODUCTION

There has been a shift in Pakistan's foreign language education policy due to economic, educational, and social ties with nation states (Khan et al, 2023 & Aftab et al 2022). Recently, Turkish language has been introduced to be taught as optional foreign language at the centennial educational institute. Pakistan's language policy specifically focuses on English language teaching and research so far has focused on English as foreign language in the global world. (Kubota, 2011& 2016; Shin, 2016 & Warriner 2016). However, the recent initiative of TFL has been introduced and which needs to be explored and investigated; from the viewpoint of Pakistani Turkish language learners whose language beliefs shapes their language investment and imagined identities while opting for TFL.

The geographical location of Turkey as it connects Asia with Europe has gained significant importance in the recent past (Sengul & Sunbul, 2017). Turkey has become a key strategic ally and economic partner of Pakistan owing to its historical ties and relationship with the Muslim world (Rehan & Shafiq, 2020),



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Corresponding Author: Muhammad Hassan Abbasi, Dawood University of Engineering and Technology Karachi, Pakistan

 mhassan.abbasi@outlook.com

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values and traditions of Islamic culture, and Ottoman Empire (Ghangro et al, 2021). A new high-level agreement and framework was mutually agreed by both the Government of Pakistan and Turkey for possible partnership in 71 areas in 2019. As a result of this new partnership, doors for economic, technological, cultural, and social activities were opened for Pakistan. However, the investment and information about Turkish culture in the Pakistani society was manifested by Turkish Dramas (Ghangro et al, 2021).

The first step towards the transformation of Turkish culture was first initiated with the broadcasting of the Turkish dramas on Pakistan's mainstream media in 2013 (Rehan & Shafiq, 2020). However, since 2019 more historical dramas were being telecasted on state television. Therefore, Turkish dramas became quite popular among the youth. (Saleem & Sadiq, 2021). This led to an ever-increasing interest and fascination among Pakistanis to travel to Turkey (Rehan & Shafiq, 2020 & Saleem & Sadiq, 2021). Ulas Ertas (2019) mentioned in Express Tribune (2023) that due to the growing influence of Turkish drams, 80% of the youth was interested in learning Turkish language at Lahore Turkish Cultural Center at the Yunus Emre Institute (YEE). The institute has expanded to sixty-countries having agreements with four hundred universities (Butt, 2022). Moreover, National University of Modern Languages (2023) in Islamabad was the first university to teach and offer Turkish Language courses since 1972. NUML has also established Turkish language department in 2012 and launched bachelor's degree in Turkish language and literature. This program provides a cultural exchange opportunity with Turkey as well. Currently, five higher education institutes are offering Turkish language course in collaboration with YEE (Butt, 2022) and Pak-Turk Ma'arif Academia (2022) reported that Turkish is one of the most useful foreign languages learnt by Pakistanis.

Due to the growing popularity of the Turkish dramas among youth, educational, cultural, and economic opportunities, universities have started an initiative to launched teaching Turkish as foreign language at undergraduate level. In this connection, a university in Karachi plans to open a Turkish department in the capital city for educating learners about Turkish culture, literature, and history (Express Tribune, 2023). In the backdrop of this scenario, a century old educational institute in the capital city Karachi-Sindh, Pakistan decided to introduce Turkish as an optional non-credit language course at undergraduate level after an agreement with Maarif Foundation. (Anadolu Agency, 2021). The organization started teaching TFL programs since 2019 worldwide (Mutlu and Gumus, 2022). As Turkey and Pakistan had an agreement to expand the organization's cultural and social activities among the countries, and to launch new educational and language centers in Pakistan (Anadolu Agency, 2021). Hence, it becomes crucial to explore the learners' beliefs, investment, and imagined identities in acquiring Turkish language to inform the policy makers about the contextual realities in terms of time, context, and personal experiences of the learners.

Research Gap

Garcia (2014) explored the foreign language orientations within Pakistan and found out that German and Chinese were the most learnt foreign languages. Recently, due to the economic and social benefits of CPEC, Chinese language is being taught as a foreign language (Aftab, et al, 2022) and introduced as a mandatory foreign language in some educational institutes in bachelor's degree program few years ago (Khan et al, 2023). However, teaching of Turkish language as a foreign language has increased globally (Caner & Kurt, 2021). So far, the focus of research in contemporary literature has been on international students who are learning TFL for instrumental purposes within Turkey for higher education (Sengul & Sunbul, 2017; Göçen & Okur, 2020; Kartalliglu, 2022). Although these studies included participants from different countries, yet the voice of Pakistani learners about their problems, beliefs, and experiences of learning TFL need to be explored empirically. Previous studies have focused on TFL' language learning skills Göçen and Okur, 2020; Karababa, 2011 & Kartalliglu (2022) and perceptions related to writing (Baskan & Ozkan, 2021) and TFL teaching-learning relationship with technology via distance learning (Güngör et al., 2020; Kurt and Güneyli, 2023; Sengul and Turel, 2023 and Ustabulut, 2021). However, insufficient attention has been given to language beliefs and language investment for foreign language learning within a non-native country and Turkish as an optional foreign language.

To address the research gap, this study explored the case of foreign language teaching within the capital city of Karachi, Pakistan. TFL is taught as an optional foreign language course in a non-native environment to undergraduate students. This study intended to gain detailed insights of language beliefs of TFL learners at the university and imagined identities while investing to learn TFL.

Objectives & Research Questions

The main objectives of the study are:

- To explore the language beliefs of undergraduate students learning Turkish as a Foreign Language.
- To identify the imagined identities of undergraduate students investing in Turkish as a Foreign Language.

Therefore, the main research questions of the study are:

- What are the language beliefs of undergraduate students learning Turkish as a Foreign language in Pakistan?
- What are the imagined identities of undergraduate students investing in Turkish as a Foreign Language.

Theoretical Framework

Language beliefs are a common phenomenon that narrates individuals' perceptions and understanding in foreign language learning (Richardson, 2003 & Spolsky 2004). These beliefs are shaped by macro-level policy, reflecting the state's ideological policy. While meso-level narrates language learners' personal experience and beliefs about different languages during the learning process and classroom interaction (Pan 2011; Cephe & Yalcin, 2015). Language beliefs form one of the most distinct components of language policy. It provides an insight into interactional practices, individual ideology, and experience (Spolsky, 2004). Hence, the present study aimed to explore the language beliefs of undergraduate learners who have opted to learn TFL in an educational setting.

In the recent era there has been a debate about exploring learner's beliefs and identity about foreign language learning. However, Norton's (2001) conceptualization of identity and investment has been specifically explored for learners learning English as a second or foreign language (Gao et al, 2008 & Lee, 2014) and Chinese as a foreign language (Aftab et al., 2022 & Khan, et al., 2023). To examine the imagined identities of foreign language learners (such as Norton & Kamal; 2003; Gao, 2012; Kanno & Norton, 2003). Sato, 2018; & Wu, 2017).

To explore the language investment of TFL learners in Pakistan, the construct of Norton (2000 & 2001) on the theory of investment has been taken. The fundamentals of investment theory are grounded on the modified version of by Wenger (1998) where he introduced the idea of learners' imagination and imagined identities relative to their language learning. Norton (2001) adapted Wenger (1998) viewpoint and focused on the relationship between learner's language investment and imagination regarding their practice of language learning. As an extensive and advanced version of investment model, Darwin and Norton (2015) projected the model based on the beliefs of language learners towards learning a new language. They named the learning process as investment which targeted the imagined identity and perceived benefits of the learner towards the target language. Henceforth, according to their theory, learner anticipates their imagined identity in accordance with the benefits they will gain post learning the target language.

For the present study, the construct of Spolsky's (2004) on language beliefs and Darwin and Norton (2015) investment model have been assorted to investigate the beliefs and language investment of Pakistani TFL learners studying at the Public Sector institution of Karachi.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The growing popularity of the Turkish dramas and portrayal of Muslim heroes through the dramas encouraged the youth to learn Turkish language. Ghangro et al, 2021; Saleem & Sadiq, 2021 & Rehan & Shafiq, 2020). Nur (2019) reported that she loved watching Turkish dramas and to understand the language, she started learning Turkish on her own through educational videos. Meanwhile, Academia Magazine (2022) reported Turkish language is learnt as young students want to explore educational opportunities.

Research on investment and imagined identities have focused on different foreign languages like English, Chinese and Japanese among international students. Lu et al (2022) explored the perspective of investment and identity from international students learning Chinese as a second language (CSL) using Q sorting and interviews from 15 participants. The findings report that the investment patterns are inter-personal and intra-personal (multilingual posture and cultural capital-oriented, economic

capital-oriented, and cultural capital and experience-oriented). As the participants were motivated by their multilingual posture (desire to speak more languages) and multicultural posture to interact with people from other culture and awareness about Chinese values and customs. Hence, their investment for multilingual posture and cultural capital were based on being members of the global society rather than country specific. Secondly, the economic capital investment was based on the ideological belief that Chinese in the contemporary world serves as an important business language and acts as a lingua franca. While investment was driven by the desire to get Chinese culture related benefits and their leaning experience. While the CSL investment is also driven to benefit from scholarships, employment opportunities, educational qualifications, cultural awareness and making friends.

Chen et al., (2020) explored the beliefs of Chinese students towards learning of languages other than English (LOTEs) as language investment or consumption. This qualitative case study collected data through interviews from 23 Chinese students learning Spanish and French. The results showed mixed perceptions as most of the participants reported to learn the learning for leisure time and consumption than investment. The participants narrated that they foresee LOTE learning as a way of getting an opportunity to explore something new and interesting as a way of socialization with peers who speak the language they have learnt and building a personal brand socializing with others. Also, for a positive impression upon the Chinese peers when socializing. While those who witnessed LOTE as investment reported learning it as a means of necessary skill for job or work in professional market and as a beneficial skill for acquiring a job. Furthermore, the analysis identified four patterns of 'imagined identities for language as investment (multilingual identity and plurilingual identity) versus language for consumption (bilingual identity and plurilingual identity for traveling and socializing).

Similarly, Kanno and Norton (2003) identified that a Japanese learner living outside Japan and communicating in English invested to be part of the Japanese community. Imagining to be part of the larger Japanese community the learner attended the Japanese classes and maintain his Japanese proficiency for socialization, these standards worked as regulations for the learner. In the same way Sato (2018) also focused on Japanese learners in South Africa. Using Norton (2000), identity construct, it was found out the learners considered themselves to be part of the imagined Japanese community on a foreign land, thus investing profoundly to learn Japanese language in South Africa. While Wu (2017) focused on the imagined identity and investment of three EFL learners in Taiwan. It was found out that the learners had different imagined identities for personal and social investment. These identities varied with the language learning process according to the social settings.

Aftab et al (2022) explored the imagined identities and investment of Pakistani learners who were learning Chinese as a foreign language using qualitative narrative inquiry. The findings of the study revealed that imagined identities and investment of the Pakistani CFL learners were impacted by the institutional influences, foreign language proficiency and experiences of the learners themselves. Considering the need for a detailed insight into student's belief, investment and imagined identities for learning a foreign language within a non-native setting outside Turkey. This study explores the case of Pakistani educational institute where Turkish is taught as an optional foreign language by native Turkish teacher.

3. METHODOLOGY

Context of the Study

The study explored the language beliefs of undergraduate students learning Turkish as a foreign language in the multilingual context of Pakistan. Therefore, the research site selected for the study was a prestigious educational institute located in the center of the city, offering multidimensional bachelor's degree program to students from diverse backgrounds. The institute recently completed its 100 years of glorious service and commitment to provide quality education. The institute has English as a MOI education policy; however, it also offers two mandatory foreign language courses Chinese and Turkish. Students are required to opt for one foreign language course to be completed in two semesters within the bachelor's degree program. Besides, these two compulsory foreign language courses, Arabic, French and German foreign language courses are also offered. This institute has the privileged to start a mandatory Turkish language course for all its bachelor's programs. Turkish language has been offered since Spring 2022 in the educational institute, students have a choice to select the language course either Chinese or Turkish

Method

To obtain the language beliefs of the learners, a qualitative narrative inquiry approach was selected (Mertova, & Webster, 2019). Narrative inquiry is defined as the profound way human experiences can be observed and reflected (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). It comprises of practices which are grounded on stories of individuals. The narrative inquiry assists the researcher in attaining comprehensive data which enables them to explore the ways in which humans experience the world by their stories. Using purposive sampling technique, 4 volunteering participants were approached who have completed both the semesters for Turkish Language for narrating their language learning journey. The participant's profile is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Participants Profile

Participant	Class of Study	Level of Proficiency	Gender	Age
TLF01	3rd Year 5th Semester	Turkish Language-I Turkish Language-II	Female	20 years
TLF02	3rd Year 5th Semester	Turkish Language-I Turkish Language-II	Female	21 years
TLF03	3rd Year 5th Semester	Turkish Language-I Turkish Language-II	Male	21 years
TLF04	3rd Year 5th Semester	Turkish Language-I Turkish Language-II	Female	21 years

Hence, the participants were asked to re-write about their Turkish language learning experience prior to enrolling, while studying and after passing the TFL course. For participants ease, some reflective questions were shared with the students. The students shared their narrative write-ups about TFL. These write-ups were examined for grammatical errors and language mechanics by the first author. For accuracy, the write-ups were double-checked by the two others as well. The participants were assured that these drafts would be used for research purposes only and their identity would be kept confidential.

The narrative data received by the 4 participants was a detailed version about their TFL learning experience. Therefore, to represent the findings of their write-up, a thematic approach was adopted for a collective opinion. Hence, the write-up was thoroughly scanned for detailed information and color coding was done for sentences that match the code/category for language beliefs either syntactically or semantically. The color-coded sentences were then placed under each theme denoting the language beliefs of learners. While data for the imagined identities was collected from the write-up narrating about post-learning experience of TFL. For ethical purposes, the responses of the participants are shown with the codes TFL1, TFL2, TFL3 and TFL4 in the analysis.

Findings

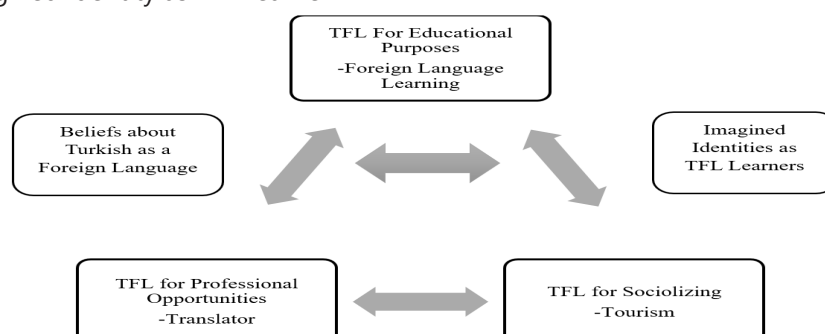
The narrative inquiry enabled the authors to reflect upon the learning experiences of TFL. The narrative data shared by the 04 participants has been represented in the themes below.

TFL Language Learning Beliefs

TFL was being introduced for the first time. Therefore, the themes denote different foreign language learning beliefs held by the participants before registering in the course and while learning the TFL in regular classes. Along with their relevant courses and sharing their post-learning experience which represent their TFL language beliefs and imagined identities as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Language Beliefs & Imagined Identity as TFL Learner



TFL Learning for Professional Opportunities

While analyzing the written narratives of TFL learners. All the 4 participants stated that learning a foreign language has many advantages. As TLF1 said *"these days it's not enough to speak your local language; people are keen to learn other languages especially foreign languages like Chinese and Turkish. These languages help in your professional life. Knowing this fact, I started learning Turkish language; so that it can help me in future to secure a better job."* In the same manner, while narrating about the significance of TFL learning TLF3 said *"I opted for Turkish language because I wanted to avail all the professional opportunities and travel to Turkey for job then Turkish language would be beneficial for us if we are familiar with this language"*. In the same manner TLF2 remarked that *"Turkish language learning potentially offers many opportunities of my interest like entrepreneurship or doing business online"*. While TLF4 said *"with Turkish language; I could explore exciting opportunities like working with Turkish companies, connecting with people globally, and deepening my understanding of Turkey"*. Overall, all the 4 participants narrated that they were learning TFL for professional, business, and economic opportunities in the future. Turkish language offers many professional benefits and future prospects in the global world.

TFL Learning for Educational Opportunities

The participants narrated educational opportunities in foreign countries as a major reason for learning foreign languages. TLF3 said *"our institute has introduced TFL for collaboration and educational opportunities"* While TLF2 says *"one of the agenda of introducing TFL is to provide scholarships and exchange opportunities to undergraduate university students"*. Similarly, TLF1 said that *"beside continuing my bachelor's degree in Pakistan; I wanted to apply for scholarship for master's degree and Turkish language would be beneficial. As I would already have beginner's level proficiency in Turkish and would like to continue learning Turkish language in Turkey as well"*. Similarly, TLF4 while sharing her future about education said, *"I have a plan that after completion of my BS degree, I will apply for master's degree in Sabanci University or Koc University and avail scholarship In Sha Allah"* Also, TLF2 said *"absolutely I will apply for a scholarship in Turkey and one of the reasons for obtaining for TFL is future studies."* Hence, all the 4 participants had a similar viewpoint who wanted to obtain scholarship for future studies in Turkey and acknowledged the role of foreign language learning before travelling to a foreign country. Therefore, participants believed that learning Turkish language would be beneficial for future opportunities especially in the education sector.

TFL Learning as an Additional Foreign Language

The participants were enrolled in a BS English program; hence they were already learning about English language, culture, and literature. Additionally, they had to learn a second/third language as well which requires motivation. All the four participants narrated that they enjoyed TFL learning process, teaching methodology which in most of the cases is complex due to age and level of learners. TLF4 narrated that the *"TFL content was being taught through books, multimedia, and different sorts of videos, which I found quite engaging to develop interest in a foreign language"*. Similarly, TLF3 said *"I enjoyed this course a lot because of the environment of class, teaching methodology, native Turkish language instructor and his way of teaching which made Turkish language learning fun and engaging."*

The learners narrated that they were able to gain proficiency in the Turkish language as TLF2 said *"we learnt through practical workbooks and content was engaging. It included content like alphabets, numbers, tenses, grammar, and style of greeting. We were also able to communicate in the Turkish language and demonstrated how to greet, introduce, and meet people and memorized vocabulary for. Countries, Cities and Professions"* Similarly, TLF1 said *"I enjoyed learning about Turkish language; now I can understand most of the words in Turkish; some of these words are similar to Urdu language but the spellings are different."* TLF2 while showcasing her dedication to TFL and importance of acquiring Turkish language said that *"as a teenager, from the age of 14 till now, I have watched many Turkish series all the time including the famous Ertugrul. And after some time, I noticed that I am learning many things from that series and have generated love for Turkish language, their acts and obviously with the beauty of Turkey."* TLF1 shared the importance of TFL from the point of view of a future linguist about TFL as *"Our course is very suitable and easy that we have no difficulty in studying about Turkish language. In this foreign language course, we are not only taught about the vocabulary but also about syntax and how to form sentences in Turkish. As a result, I am quite comfortable in speaking this language."* Overall, the participants considered themselves as proficient in Turkish language and considered it as an additional language learnt during their bachelor's degree program which has an advantage in their future roles.

TFL Learning for Social Networking

The learners reported that TFL learning can be best utilized for socializing in the global world. TLF4

narrated that *"I opted for the Turkish language because most of the words are familiar to Urdu language; this will enable me to easily have communication across the two cultures."* Similarly, TLF2 said *"It was not so difficult to get familiar with Turkish language as it includes common words from other languages. In this way, we would be able to communicate across different languages, cultures, and natives in the society."* While TLF1 said *"before I started learning Turkish, I was curious about Turkish culture, history, and connecting with locals. I also wanted to become skilled in a unique language. As I learned Turkish, my speaking skills and communication improved, and made it easier to communicate in Turkish language and interact with locals and get around"*. While TLF3 narrates the holistic vision of utilizing TLF for social purposes

"My main goals were to understand the culture, make friends, and broaden my knowledge. The goals for learning a language were diverse. In addition to learning about Turkish culture and history, I also wanted to make friends with people who spoke Turkish. Once you have these objectives, one begins to enjoy TFL and put efforts to broaden my network and knowledge base. Even though I was aware of the difficulties, over time I noticed an improvement in my language skills."

Consequently, all the four participants had interest in Turkish culture and history. As a result, they were motivated to acquire Turkish language which sounded familiar to them due to exposure.

Turkish Imagined Identities

Turkish Imagined Professional Identity

Participants imagined opting and learn Turkish for professional purposes. While learning Turkish all the four participants imagined learning Turkish as an additional language with certain benefits. These benefits include learning the Turkish language for availing job opportunities, travelling; entrepreneurship, business and working with Turkish companies. Hence, all the four participants imagined that by learning Turkish language, they have an additional advantage and proficiency in the language. They imagined themselves as future employees in the Turkish companies and doing business and thought that communication would be easier with their skills in Turkish language. As TLF1 said *"we learnt formal ways of greeting and learning to speak in Turkish with the natives"*. Similarly, TLF3 said *"we learned the basic vocabulary for professional purposes; so, we can connect with them easily"*. While TLF4 imagined that *"when you have basic proficiency in Turkish language, one can easily connect with Turkish people and enjoy practical benefits like translation, international business, and enjoyable trips"*.

Similarly, all the 4 participants imagined to at least gain one job as a translator by learning TFL. Translation skill was seen as a special skill for future job with Turkish language. As TLF1 imagined to be a bureaucrat in future and wished to serve in Turkey or Pakistan as a diplomat. In this case, Turkish serve as an additional qualification. While TLF2 imagined working in different multinational companies and wish to serve the Turkish people when communicating with the Pakistanis. The participants imagined that learning a foreign language would maximize their linguistic identity from monolingual to bilingual to being a multilingual speaker in the Pakistani context. As TLF2 said about investing to learn Turkish language that *"Yes, I have advantage over other language speakers as I learnt Turkish because I feel Turkish will become a main asset language in future and it will be beneficial"* Similarly, TLF4 said *"I think I have an advantage over other language speakers. I have a benefit when I talk to native speakers"*. The participants imagined having multilingual identity (L1 mother tongue, L2 English and L3 Foreign language). As TLF1 said *"these days it is not enough to just speak your local language, people are keen to learn other languages as well because it helps you a lot in professional life knew that learning Turkish language can help me in my future life, so I opted for it."*

All the four participants imagined that learning Turkish language would provide them a new identity. They imagined enjoying prestigious position as compare to other multilingual speakers as they were learning foreign languages. Participants imagined that their new Turkish identity would be beneficial for their future beside their local and national identity.

TFL Learning as a Translator in Future

Most of the participants also narrated that they were learning TFL as they imagined securing the job of a Translator in future. As TLF2 narrated *"I can use my expertise in different firms to be able to communicate with Turkish people and also being able to translate"* While TLF3 reported *"one of the core advantages of learning Turkish language is translation which can be utilized for international business and enjoyable trips"*. Similarly, TLF4 narrated that *"Pakistan is already a multilingual country where students are already exposed to two or more languages;*

while Turkish will serve as an additional foreign language” In the same manner TLF1 said *“I wish to be bureaucrat and join the foreign service and as a diplomat, it would be an advantage to be able to speak Turkish and translate the messages and conversations of high dignitaries to Pakistanis and Government”*. TLF2 also communicated that *“we can serve as translators in the different organizations within Pakistan; we can also serve at Turkish Consulate and also be a representative of Pakistan or our institute.”* Hence, all the participants foresee themselves as Turkish language translators in the future. It is also one of the core reasons for selecting TFL.

Turkish Imagined Social Identity

Learners invested in Turkish language for socialization purposes. All the 4 participants believed that in the global world today, it is important to know about the different cultures and their social values. Hence, participant imagined that by learning Turkish language, they would be able to socialize with the natives. The participants narrated that *“it would be easier for us to network, communicate and talk with the Turkish language”*. Hence, the participants by learning TFL invested in their social identity. Turkish social identity would be beneficial for tourism and travelling purpose. All the 4 participants imagined visiting Turkey for different reasons and explore the culture. As TLF1 said *“I wanted to learn about their culture, traditions, and history. Therefore, I wanted to visit the different historical places like The Blue Mosque, and Hagia Sophia and uncover the lesser-known cultural aspects as well”* Similarly, TLF2 narrated that *“I have always been attracted to Turkey because of its beauty; so I wanted to learn the language people speak there and visit the beautiful country”* While TLF3 narrated that *“I would love to visit Turkey because Pakistan and Turkey have a brotherly relationship among them and Turkish people are very friendly and hospitable as learnt in the TFL classes”*. While TLF4 said *“I am happy after learning Turkish language because now I have an advantage to travel to Turkey and communicate with the native people easily. I would love to avail the opportunities offered in Turkey like scholarship, exchange programs, educational or cultural tour.”*

Discussion

Language beliefs state that participants invested in TFL for multiple academic and social purposes. The foremost belief was to invest to learn Turkish for educational purposes, higher studies, scholarship, and exchange programs. Lu et al (2022) while exploring the imagined identities of Chinese learners found out that CSL motives are educational like for educational qualification and scholarship. Educational investment served as one pillar; however, learners imagined gaining proficiency in Turkish language for professional purposes and they want to acquire a job. Few of them wanted to join the diplomatic staff and serve as a Translator within or outside Pakistan. Lu et al (2022) uphold a similar view that international students learnt Chinese for employment opportunities. Similarly, Turkish was learnt for socializing for tourism and connectivity purpose as well. Lu et al (2022) while analyzing the cultural identity identified that Chinese learners hidden aim was to learn about Chinese cultural and for making friends. In the present study, socialization is for tourism, higher education, and cultural assimilation not for being friends.

The imagined identities of TFL learners are categorized as professional identity, multilingual identity, and social identity. The learners foresee TFL learning for professional purposes to gain job and kickstart their business with natives. Hence, they imagined having a different professional identity than other Pakistanis working in Pakistan. As in the words of TLF2, *“With Turkish language comes an extra tag, an additional skill, qualification and most important a foreign language that would work perfectly in the professional world”*. While reporting about Chinese learners investing for foreign languages, Lu et al (2022) said that the investment was foreseen for important business language and acts as a lingua franca. Chen et al (2020), witnessed that learners when learning a foreign language envisioned and considered it as an additional skill for professional job and work in the global market. While Wu (2017) narrated that learner invested in English language in Taiwan for different personal and professional gain as per the societal needs. Aftab et al (2022) that investment of CFL learners were institutional oriented and the learners wanted to work and do business with the Chinese community.

The learners also imagined having a multilingual identity after being exposed and learning Turkish language in the academic settings. They believed this identity is unique and it would be beneficial in the future for education, job, and tourism purposes. Lu et al (2022) also share similar findings about multilingual identity that the participants were motivated by their desire to learn more languages and become multicultural. Chen et al., (2020) also narrated that learners invested to have multilingual identity for multiple purposes for consumption and investment. However, the study draws a distinction between multilingual and plurilingual identity based on proficiency. In the present study, multilingual

identity terminology suits the imagined linguistic role of learners. Kanno and Norton (2003) in their study showed that it was important for Japanese learners to invest in the Japanese language to be the part of the Japanese community. They considered proficiency in the Japanese language as a standard for holding Japanese identity. A similar imagined identity was explored by Aftab et al (2022) for CFL learners in Pakistan, who paid key attention to Chinese proficiency for better language experience with the natives.

The participants also imagined having a social identity for socialization especially tourism and travelling. Ghangro et al, (2021), Saleem & Sadiq, (2021) and Rehan & Shafiq, (2020) in their studies that the youth got influenced by the Turkish dramas; learnt about the culture and shifted their attention to Turkish language learning. Hence, the present study reflects on this result which reports that learning about culture was one of the objectives for learning Turkish language and investing in their social identity for future. Both, Kanno and Norton (2003) and Sato (2018) explored that the learners invested in Japanese for socialization and being the part of Japanese community. Hence, the imagined identity focus on social needs of the Japanese learners on a foreign soil.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the beliefs and investment of TFL learners in an educational institute. The participants narrated that they were interested in investing their time, attention, and motivation to explore the opportunities that TFL offers. They learnt TFL for professional opportunities seeking a job, diplomacy, and business. Consequently, most of them imagined identity as Turkish language Translators and mediators between Turkish and other languages spoken in Pakistan. They also desired to explore future educational opportunities in Turkey, therefore imagined themselves in the identity of international students for scholarship, exchange, or higher studies. Learning Turkish language would provide them an easy opportunity to secure a scholarship in the Turkish university. Similarly, they believe that two semesters of teaching in TFL and teaching methodologies adopted by native Turkish teacher has enabled them to easily communicate in Turkish and consider themselves as proficient speakers in TFL. While the participants also believed that due to exposure to Turkish culture via dramas; they learnt TFL to explore further about the language and socialization with the natives. Tourism seemed to be one obvious reason for learning TFL. All in all, it is concluded by examining the language beliefs and language investment of Pakistani TFL learners that they believe to invest their resources to learn the Turkish language as they foresee themselves as international students, entrepreneurs, professionals, multilinguals, and tourists. Acquiring a foreign language for future prospects shows a positive mind shift of our youth towards languages and openness to different cultures. This openness would help Pakistan achieve a tolerant and peaceful nation.

Competing Interests

The authors did not declare any competing interest.

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