

Is language part of your identity — or is it your identity?

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله،

Salam,

We began this journey with a question our community has quietly carried for years: *what are we losing, and does it matter?*

Issue No. 2 is our first attempt to answer it — not with opinion, but with evidence.

THE ARGUMENT WE NEED TO HAVE

There is a conversation most South Asian diaspora families avoid. Not because it isn't important, but because it feels too close. Too personal.

It usually surfaces in small moments: a child who understands Urdu but replies in English. A grandparent whose warmth can only be expressed in a language a grandchild can no longer receive. A community gathering where the words of a ghazal or a nazm wash over a generation that feels their beauty but cannot hold their meaning.

We call this a language gap. But research tells us it is something more: it is an *identity gap*.

Rubén Rumbaut's landmark longitudinal study of children of immigrants found that language shift from the heritage tongue to English happens with striking speed — often complete within two generations. And with it comes something harder to measure: a rupture in the sense of who one is and where one belongs.

Language is not just a tool for communication. It is the architecture of memory, emotion, and belonging. English gives you *information*. Your mother tongue gives you *formation*.

THE PASDARI PODCAST — EPISODE 1

with Prof. Dr. Rizwan Ahmad

This is exactly where our first podcast conversation begins.

We sat down with Prof. Dr. Rizwan Ahmad — PhD in Linguistics from the University of Michigan and Professor at Qatar University, where he specialises in the sociolinguistics of Urdu, Arabic, and English — to ask the questions that matter most to our community.

What does language actually do to identity?

What is lost when a heritage language fades — and can it be recovered?

What does the science of linguistics tell us about raising bilingual children in the diaspora?

The conversation is candid, accessible, and grounded in decades of scholarship. It is the kind of discussion our community deserves to have — and rarely does.

Watch it. Share it. And if it resonates — subscribe so you don't miss what's coming.

[WATCH EPISODE 1 →](#)

WHAT'S COMING

The Pasdari Podcast is a limited series. Each episode builds a case — from linguistics, to literature, to lived tradition. Future conversations include voices from Urdu poetry, language scholarship, and the devotional literary traditions that have defined our community for centuries.

We are building something that has never existed in quite this form for our community in the West. Your presence in this conversation — your readership, your shares, your questions — is what makes it real.

جزاک اللہ خیرًا



زبان سے واسطہ، روایت سے رشتہ

Connection through language. Bond through tradition.

Zaib Zaidi

Founder, Pasdari

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