

# **Loss of Culture, Loss of Language: An Afghan-American Community**

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## **Abstract**

This study voices the concerns of Afghan-American parents about the disappearance of the Dari language among youth and provides data for policymakers to consider, particularly as the United States is deeply involved in Afghanistan. In this quantitative study, the researcher argues that when it comes to the decline of their heritage language and the inexorable shift towards mainstream culture, Afghan families experience similar forces of assimilation as other immigrants in the United States. The 27 Afghan parents from different households who participated in the study attribute the decline of their heritage language to Afghan-American children becoming accustomed to speaking English at home and in public, and wanting to fit into the mainstream culture. This study uses a Reversing Language Shift (RLS) perspective to identify factors that have contributed to the slow erosion of Dari within the Afghan community in San Diego.

## Introduction

As the study by Harrison (2007) reveals, heritage languages are declining. Harrison predicts that by the year 2101, half of the 6,912 languages that are spoken worldwide will be extinct (Harrison, 2007). This should cause United States' citizens concern as the United States is home to many immigrants who speak a variety of languages and the number of immigrants to the country continues to rise (United States Census Bureau, 2005). According to a report by the Migration Policy Institute (2013), immigrants represented 6% (14.1 million) of the entire population of the United States in 1980. This percentage increased to 13% (40.4 million) in 2011. The report further revealed that 20% of all immigrants choose the United States, as their country of resettlement (Britz & Batalova 2013).

The first great wave of Afghan immigration to the United States began after the Soviets attacked Afghanistan in 1978 (Human Rights Watch, 2002). According to the United States Census Bureau (2009), there are about 87,000 foreign-born Afghans in the United States with the majority living in Virginia and Northern California, and about 10,000 living in San Diego (Z. Naderi, personal communication, January 2014). These immigrant communities, while finding access to better lives with regards to security and education, risk losing their heritage language and culture. This hypothesis is backed by research which has proven that a country's dominant language, such as English, becomes stronger while others, mostly belonging to immigrants, decline, or even vanish (Baker, 2006; Fishman, 1991).

An expert in the area of heritage languages, Joshua Fishman (1991, 1993) acknowledges the decline of heritage languages and the shift towards the mainstream language and culture. He advises that the causes of the decline in use of heritage languages must be understood, and attempts need to be made to avoid or slow down the extinction of these languages. Fishman (1991) puts forward the theory of Reversing Language Shift (RLS) as a remedy to maintain native languages within immigrant communities in the United States. However, he argues that RLS is mainly an activity for immigrants who are generally powerless and cannot compete with the mainstream language and culture.

Afghan families in the United States, whose native language is Dari, have not been immune to this phenomenon, and language shift is affecting them as it is affecting other immigrant communities. For instance, Afghan-American children have become reluctant to participate in cultural events, watch TV channels in Dari, or listen to heritage culture music.

The disappearance of heritage languages not only makes communication between parents (first generation citizens) and their children (second generation citizens) difficult (Hamers & Blanc, 2000), but it also poses a threat to national security in the United States as the country is facing a shortage of linguistically and culturally competent interpreters and translators (Holt, 2012).

**For clarification:** Dari constitutes one of the two official languages of Afghanistan and every Afghan is expected to understand and speak it. It is the lingua franca for the languages that are spoken in Afghanistan. Dari is an Indo-Iranian subgroup of the Indo-European languages (LMP, 2014) which is also spoken in parts of Pakistan and Iran.

### Literature Review

This literature review specifically addresses the concerns of first generation citizens regarding the loss of their home languages. The review reveals factors contributing to language maintenance and loss within immigrant communities from a Reversing Language Shift (RLS) perspective. The concern is that immigrant languages vanish once they reach the second or third generation of citizens (Fishman, 1967). Native languages and cultures are replaced by the culture and language of the majority, and language shift becomes inevitable (Harrison, 2007).

### High and Low Status Language

According to Baker (2006), immigrants' heritage languages can coexist with the dominant language (English in this case) in a community. He refers to this situation as "diglossia." Diglossia includes High Language varieties (H) and Low Language varieties (L). High language is mostly used in high-status domains such as mass media, business and

commerce, and in schooling. Low-status language is used mostly in everyday settings including at home and with family, at social and cultural activities in the community, during religious activities, and in correspondence with relatives and friends. Baker (2006) claims that the dominance of English has posed a challenge for immigrant families in the United States regarding whether to maintain their native language “L” or to shift to the “H” language, English.

### **Language Shift and Language Maintenance**

Baker (2006), drawing from Fishman (1991), states that language shift is inevitable among immigrants. He further explains that language loss occurs mostly as a result of a small number of speakers, lack of mother-tongue institutions, the use of the majority language at cultural and religious activities, little nationalistic aspiration, and other additional factors (Baker, 2006).

The desire for social and vocational mobility also causes language shift among immigrant communities. Although immigrant parents may exhibit a positive attitude towards their heritage language, they also value learning the dominant language as a way to adapt and succeed in their new society (Arnberg, 1987; Lao, 2004; Stoessel, 2002; Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002; Wyatt-Brown, 1995).

### **Language Decline and Shift**

According to a study conducted by Nettle and Romain (2000), an increasing number of languages are dying each year. Their study reveals that about 100 heritage languages once spoken in California are on the verge of extinction. Fishman (1991) attributes the cause of language and culture shift to (1) “physical and demographic dislocation” - causes such as famine, natural catastrophes, warfare, and foreign occupation (p. 57); (2) “social dislocation” - lack of access to resources such as education (p. 61); and (3) “cultural dislocation” - when repressive regimes bar its citizens from practicing their cultural rituals, control their private lives through informants, observe their religious traditions, and assassinate their cultural leaders (p. 63). Fishman further argues that immigrants to the United States need to interact with each other and depend on the same media, educational

institutions, and economic endeavors. The culture of “free access to everyone to everything and everywhere” also puts the culture of the majority at an advantage and causes the language and culture of immigrants to shift (p. 63).

### **Parents’ Language Attitudes Toward Language**

Zhang (2008) found that parents who valued their heritage language were more likely to put effort towards maintaining their native language. Most saw their heritage language as a reflection of their identity. Many parents in the study indicated that they wanted their children to know “where they have come from” (Zang, 2008, p. 103). Some immigrant parents have a strong attachment to their native language. They encourage and reward their children for using their native language, and provide their children with opportunities to visit their home country and to spend time with their extended families. These parents believe that the loss of their native language would be the loss of their native identity (Cummins, 1981; Zhang, 2008).

Harding and Riley (1987) claim that immigrant parents try hard to resist the language shift that is imposed by the dominant culture. However, parents’ efforts in most cases are deemed a failure, as children are surrounded by the culture and language of the majority. In addition, as Parsons-Yazzie (1995) explains, children are sensitive to social approval or disapproval even before starting school, and some immigrant children refuse to reveal their heritage identity in public.

According to Krauss (1992) immigrants have been raising their concerns about the alarming decline of heritage language use and the need to preserve native languages.

### **The Significance of Maintaining the Afghan Heritage Language**

The benefits of having Dari linguistically proficient and culturally competent citizens include: (1) bonding Afghan families together and avoiding the disappearance of their language; (2) increasing the safety of US citizens operating in internationally strategic areas where such languages are spoken, including Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Iran, and parts of Pakistan (OPE, 2011).

Holt (2012), citing a US government report, reveals that after

the 9/11 attacks the government had a 123,000-hour backlog of Arabic language recordings waiting to be analyzed. These recordings might have contained important information about terrorist networks. Just like Arabic, Dari is also a less commonly taught language (LCTL) in the United States. It is also critical for national security to have Dari translators as the United States is involved in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, due to the relatively small number of speakers in the United States and the lack of support within communities that speak Dari, Dari is likely to disappear among second and third generations of Afghan-Americans.

Although previous research has revealed the need to understand the causes of the loss of heritage languages and the significance of heritage language preservation, no research has been conducted on Dari speaking Afghan-American communities. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by assessing the condition of language and culture shifts and analyzing the factors that have led to the perceived decline of Dari in Afghan communities.

San Diego was selected for the purpose of this study because (1) the first government-sponsored Dari language summer camp was offered in this city, and (2) San Diego represents about 10% of the Afghan population in the United State (Z. Naderi, personal communication, January, 2014). The results of this study will be forwarded to policymakers to garner support for the preservation of the Dari in the United States.

### ***Research Questions***

1. How do Afghan-American parents view the issue of Dari language maintenance and loss?
2. What are the factors contributing to Dari language shift among Afghan children in San Diego?

### **Theoretical Framework (Reversing Language Shift)**

Reversing Language Shift (RLS) is a process where efforts are made and policies are put in place to keep heritage languages alive in a society. RLS is about communities whose heritage languages are endangered as the numbers of their speakers diminish daily. Immigrant communities have a crucial role in RLS. Based on this theory,

immigrants take the lead in RLS and commit and volunteer their time and resources (Fishman (1991). Example of RLS are setting up free weekend heritage schools and holding culturally relevant events.

State and local governments also play a significant role in RLS by supporting the efforts of the community. Albrecht and Gil-Chin (1986), cited by Fishman (1991), explain RLS as a joint effort between of immigrant communities and governmental institutions to preserve heritage languages and cultures. Fishman (1991) claims that RLS will be unsuccessful if individuals do not actively participate in the process. He further explains that individuals are best convinced to participate in RLS by having it spelled out and people ensured of a “most positive future” (p. 395). The theory of RLS assists members of a community in negotiating difficult priorities in order to reverse the shift or at least slow the erosion of their heritage language and culture.

## Methodology

### *Participants*

The researcher targeted Afghan-American parents, all from different households, whose children had just started attending a Dari language summer camp organized by a language resource center within a public university in San Diego. Originally, 35 parents, native speakers of Dari and Pashto, voluntarily participated in the study; however, due to a small number of Pashto speaking parents, eight parents were dropped from the study. The remaining 27 parents (male=16, female=11) whose native language was Dari (Table 1) completed a Likert-type questionnaire (see appendix A). It is to be noted that only one parent from each household completed the questionnaire about one of his or her child in the program. (Table 1)

**Table 1.** Demographic Information of the Participants

Participant Gender	N	Native Language	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	16	Dari	59.3	1.41	.50
Female	11	Dari	40.7	1.00	.00

The majority of the parents (88.8%) were in their early 40s, and as Table 2 shows, 70.4% of all the parents possessed post high school education, and about 77.8% of them had more than one child at home. It is worth-mentioning that not all of the parents' children were enrolled into the summer Dari program. The parents filled out the questionnaire only for those children who were enrolled in the program. Most of these parents (88.9%) had lived in the United States for over 10 years.

**Table 2.** Demographic Information of the Participants

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Education level	27	1	6	2.63	1.47
Number of children	27	1	4	2.56	1.08
Number of years living in the United States	27	1	4	3.81	.62

These parents had immigrated to the United States between 1980 and 2000. They had at least one financially dependent child at home who was either born in or immigrated to the United States before the age of five.

### *Variables*

The dependent variable “how well children can speak Dari,” was matched with independent variables to answer the research questions. For clarification, the parents perceived their children to be orally proficient in Dari.

### *Instrument*

A Likert-type questionnaire based on the model presented by Zhang (2008) was used for data collection. The original instrument had sections for parents as well as children. This study used only the parent's section to collect data as children were not included in the study.

The questionnaire had four sections. The first section (questions 1-7) collected demographic information about the parents. The second section (questions 8-19) collected descriptive information



about the language characteristics of Afghan parents at home. The third section (questions 20-27) sought parents' views as to what led to language maintenance and loss at home. The last section (questions 28-34) revealed the linguistic attitudes of the parents towards their children learning the Afghan language. The instrument is presented in Appendix A.

### ***Procedure***

The researcher met with the parents at the public university in San Diego, where the summer camp had been offered, and explained, orally, the purpose of the study to the parents. He further asked the parents if they were willing to participate in the study. The researcher, then, explained the consent form to participating parents and assured them of the confidentiality of their responses. It was also explained that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions in the questionnaire. The participating parents signed the consent form and filled out the questionnaire on-site. The researcher was present to explain and clarify any areas that were unclear to the participants, such as the definition of *poor*, *average*, *good proficiency*, *high proficiency* in relation to speaking, reading, and writing Dari. The definitions were provided based on the ACTFL (2012) OPI and WPT guidelines and criteria (Table 3).

	Poor	Average	Good Proficiency	High Proficiency
Speaking	Novice Mid- Novice High	Novice High- Intermediate Low	Intermediate Low- Intermediate High	Advanced Low- Advanced High
Reading	Novice Low- Novice Mid	Novice High	Intermediate. Low	Intermediate Mid- Intermediate High

It is worth-mentioning that in this study, the researcher has only considered the speaking proficiency of the children, as perceived by their parents, and not their reading and writing proficiency.

### Findings and Results

**Research Question 1:** How do Afghan-American parents view the issue of Dari language maintenance and loss?

SPSS statistic software was used to analyze the data. To answer the first research question, the parents were asked to indicate what language they use when they speak with their children (Q.10). About 48.1% (n=13) of the parents indicated that they speak English with their children. When they were asked about the language that their children use with their siblings (Q.15), 81.5% (n=22) of parents reported that their children speak English with their siblings. The researcher ran a Chi-Square test and found slight statistically significant relationship ( $p=.008$ ) between the children’s Dari proficiency level, as perceived by their parents, and the language that they use with their siblings. However, the relationship between the students’ speaking proficiency and the language that their parents speak at home was not found to be statistically significant ( $p=.440$ ).

**Table 3.** Chi-Square Tests “How well can your child speak Dari?”

	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square			
Q10. What language do you most often use with your child(ren)?	2.70	3	.440
Q15. Which language does your child use most with his or her siblings?	11.70	3	.008

Not: \* = sig at 5%

\*\*=sig at 1%

To further understand the issues of Dari maintenance and loss (research question 1), the researcher looked to the parents’ responses to question number 17 on the questionnaire “which language is your child most comfortable with at home?” About 85.2% of the parents

(n=23) reported that their children feel most comfortable speaking English at home. In response to question number 16, the majority of parents (88.9%, n=24) reported that their children use English when they interact with their Afghan friends.

These findings demonstrate that the children are slowly shifting to the mainstream language and culture as they feel more comfortable speaking in English, at home and with their Afghan friends.

The researcher further looked into the relationship of children's Dari oral proficiency level, as perceived by their parents, and the number of years that their parents have lived in the United States. Although he did not find a statistically significant ( $p=.971$ ) relationship between the two, he did notice that the longer a child lived in the United States, the greater the child's Dari proficiency level declined. In other words, the majority of the parents (81.4%, n=22) who have lived eleven or more years in the US reported the speaking proficiency level of their children in Dari to be either "poor" or "average." This means that their children are not able to speak beyond the Intermediate Low (ACTFL, 2012) oral proficiency level; meaning that the children were barely able to create with the language at the survival level mostly through a lot of self-correction and frequent pauses (ACTFL, 2012).

**Research Question 2:** What are the factors contributing to Dari language shift among Afghan Children in San Diego?

To investigate the contributing factors to loss and maintenance of Dari among Afghan-American children in San Diego, the researcher conducted a Chi-Square test to determine the relationship of the children's Dari proficiency level (as perceived by their parents) (Q.11 on the questionnaire) and other variables.

The first variable was the children's exposure to Dari (Q. 22). About 40.7% of the parents (n=11) who perceived the speaking proficiency of their children to be "poor" indicated that their children have less than two hours of exposure to Dari. The researcher found a statistically significant ( $p=0.017$ ) relationship between the children's speaking proficiency and their exposure to Dari.

The second variable was the frequency of watching Afghan TV and radio channels (Q.23). The parents were asked to indicate the frequency that their children watch Afghan TV or listen to Afghan

radio channels. Twenty parents (74.0%) indicated that their children do not watch Afghan TV channels or listen to Afghan radio programs. Out of these 20 parents 11 (40.7%) had perceived their children's proficiency level in Dari to be "poor," and 9 of them (33.3%) "average."

The results of the Chi-Square tests demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between this variable and the children's Dari proficiency, as perceived by their parents ( $p=.004$ ).

The third variable was the parents' frequency of reading Dari books to their children (Q. 24). Twenty parents (74.0 %) who perceived their children's speaking proficiency level to be "poor" ( $n=11$ ) and "average" ( $n=9$ ) respectively, revealed that they never read Dari books to their children. The researcher did not find a significant relationship between this variable and the children's Dari speaking proficiency level ( $p=.328$ ).

The fourth variable was the children's exposure to other Dari speaking children (Q. 25). The majority of parents (74.0%,  $n=20$ ) indicated that their children had exposure to other Dari speaking children never or once a week. The researcher found a highly statistically significant relationship between this variable and the level of the children's Dari speaking proficiency as perceived by their parents ( $p=.000$ ).

The fifth variable was the children's attitude toward speaking Dari in public (Q. 27). Interestingly, eleven parents (40.7%) indicated that their children either very much dislike ( $n=3$ ) or dislike ( $n=8$ ) to speak Dari in public. Only twelve parents (44.4%) mentioned that their children like to speak Dari in public. The researcher did not find a statistically significant relationship between this variable and the children's level of Dari proficiency as perceived by their parents ( $p=.193$ ).

The sixth variable was the children's trip to Afghanistan (Q. 28). Sixteen of the parents (59.2%) who perceived the proficiency of their children to be "poor" ( $n=7$ ) and "average" ( $n=9$ ) indicated that they have never taken their children to Afghanistan.

The seventh variable was the children's connection to the community (Q.29). The researcher found a slightly statistically significant relationship between the children's connection to the Afghan community and their proficiency level in Dari ( $p=.069$ );

however, the majority (62.9%) of Afghan parents (n=17) revealed that they were either somehow connected, or not connected at all with the Afghan community in San Diego. Out of the 17 parents, 11 of them perceived the proficiency of their children as “poor” and six of them as “average.”

Table 4 shows those variables that have been found to have a statistically significant relationship with the Dari proficiency of the children as perceived by their parents.

**Table 4.** Chi-Square Tests “How well can your child speak Dari?”

	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square			
Q20. My child Likes to speak Dari at home.	17.59	9	.040*
Q21. The dominance of English makes it difficult for my child to speak Dari.	38.29	9	.000**
Q.22. My child has minimal exposure to speak Dari.	20.15	9	.017**
Q. 23. How often does your child watch Afghan TV/radio channels?	19.15	6	.004**
Q25. How often is your child exposed to other children who speaks Dari?	35.01	9	.000**
Q.29. How connected are you with the Afghan language community?	15.91	9	.069

Not: \* = sig at 5%

\*\*=sig at 1%

## Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a progressive shift in the language choice among the Afghan children in San Diego towards English and suggest that language shift affects Afghan children as they become more comfortable using English instead of Dari. Although the majority of parents (63.0%) indicated that their children speak Dari,

this may be because the children are compelled to do so; for instance, they may be forced to talk in Dari with their parents or other adult members of their home or community. The majority of parents (81.5%) indicated that their children use English with their siblings and 88.9% said that their children speak English with their Afghan friends. This phenomenon indicates that children are feeling more comfortable talking in English. In addition, over 95% of parents in the study believed that the dominance of English has made it difficult for their children to maintain Dari, which shows a shift to the mainstream language.

Other factors such as lack of exposure to other Afghan children has also contributed to the loss of Dari in San Diego. As the findings demonstrate, these children better learn and more motivated to preserve their native language (Dari) if they are within a community of Dari learners.

In addition, the children's lack of interest in Afghan TV and radio channels has contributed to the disappearance of Dari in San Diego. The children may become interested in Afghan TV and radio channels if they know and understand the language and its cultural aspects as Dari language is full of implicit messages that a person unfamiliar with the culture may not be able to decode. In other words, just like the English idiom "it is raining cats and dogs," the Dari language is also full of culturally rich expressions.

Furthermore, the shift to the mainstream culture and language is not only affecting children, but it is also affecting the Afghan parents as they do not read Dari books to their children. Although reading books to children is not common in Afghanistan, lack of children's books and parents with busy schedules have further made it difficult for children to become exposed to Dari reading materials.

In addition, 48.1% of parents indicated that they mostly speak English with their children, which could be another reason for the disappearance of Dari among Afghan families in San Diego. Although the majority of parents (96%) indicated that they want their children to learn Dari, they have not necessarily made the effort to preserve their native language and culture. For instance, as this study revealed a statistically significant ( $p=.069$ ) relationship between the children's Dari proficiency level and their connection to the Afghan community; most of the parents indicated that they were either somehow

connected to the Afghan community in San Diego, or not connected at all. As Fishman (1991) argues, community connection is a major factor in reversing language and culture shift among immigrant communities. Afghans have a community center in San Diego, but they rarely attend events sponsored by the center or network with each other. Although the Afghan Community Center has more than 400 members, less than 30 Afghan-American children attend Saturday schools (Z. Naderi, personal communication, January, 2014). Further research is needed to understand why Afghan-American parents and their children are not closely associated with the Afghan community in San Diego.

In addition, Saturday schools focus on religious education, which is mostly delivered to children in English (ICIC, 2008). Teaching Dari is not the main component of their curriculum. Not delivering lessons in Dari has contributed to the decline of the Dari language among Afghan-American children in San Diego.

### **Limitations and Future Studies**

It is hard to make generalizations based on this sample population. First, the data has been collected from a small sample of 27 parents. Second, the Afghan-American children were not directly included in the study. Third, San Diego is a very diverse city in comparison to other places in the United States. In other words, the result of this study may not apply to Afghans in other cities of the United States. Future studies are needed with data collected from a larger sample. A revised instrument needs to be developed with different variables to assess the loss and maintenance of Dari from different perspectives. Future studies must include children's voices and also be triangulated with other sources of information. Interviewing children and parents could be one of the methods used in a future study.

### **Implications**

The study's findings have at least two immediate implications: 1) the findings offer information about the status of Dari languages in San Diego and alert Afghan families and the United States policymakers about the erosion of Dari in San Diego, where a large population of

Afghan-Americans reside; and, 2) this study highlights factors that contribute to the potential extinction of Dari in immigrant communities. These factors identify preventive measures that Afghan-American families can implement and United States policymakers can support to slow the disappearance of this critical language at a time when the United States government faces shortages of linguistically and culturally competent citizens in Dari (Hold, 2012).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The findings indicate a slow erosion of Dari in Afghan-American families as their children shift to the mainstream language and culture.

Although there is no easy remedy, Zhang (2008) recommends promoting the use of heritage languages, at least at home. For example, just like the Chinese sample in Zhang's research, Afghan-American parents can use Dari exclusively at home so their children continue to learn and utilize the language.

Fishman (2001), Toth (1990), and Wiley (2005) all indicate that native language education has a long history in the United States. According to Fishman (2001) 1,885 ethnic community schools are functioning in more than 10 languages. He predicts that after 20 years the number of heritage language schools will rise to 6,553 involving 145 languages. His estimate is based on 228% growth from 1960 to 1980. If Afghan-Americans want to preserve their heritage language and culture they must establish, at the very least, weekend schools and include Dari in the curriculum so that their children can have some exposure to the language and Afghan culture. It is crucial for Afghan-Americans to work on building a strong community to promote and advocate for their language and cultural values.

The findings further provide data to policymakers to consider and to take actions in order to preserve Dari language among Afghan-American youth in San Diego in particular, and in the United States in general.



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## Appendix A

### Questionnaire Questions

#### Section 1: Demographic information:

1. Age
2. Gender: (1) Male (2) Female
3. Education level:
  1. Post BA (2) BA College, Degree (3) Some college, (4) Completed High School (5) 9 to 11 years , (6) Less than 9 years (7) No schooling
4. Number of children: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and more
5. Age of child: (1) 1-3, (2) 4-5, (3) 6-10, (4) 11-15, (5) 16 and above
6. Native language: (1) Dari, (2) Pashto, (3) English, (4) Other \_\_\_\_\_
7. Number of years living in the United States: (1) 1-3, (2) 4-7, (3) 8-10, (4) 11 and more years

#### Section 2: What are the language characteristics of Afghan parents at home?

8. What language do you speak at home?  
(1) Dari (2), Pashto, (3) English, (4) other \_\_\_\_\_
9. In what language does your child speak at home?  
(1) Dari (2), Pashto, (3) English, (4) other \_\_\_\_\_
10. What language do you most often use with your children?  
(1) Dari (2), Pashto, (3) English, (4) other \_\_\_\_\_
11. How well can your child(ren) speak Dari?  
Poor, Average, Good Proficiency, High Proficiency
12. How well can your child(ren) speak Pashto?  
Poor, Average, Good Proficiency, High Proficiency
13. How well can your child(ren) read and write Dari?  
(1) Poor, (2) Average proficiency, (3) Good Proficiency, (4) High Proficiency
14. How well can your child(ren) read and write Pashto?  
(1) Poor, (2) Average proficiency, (3) Good Proficiency, (4) High Proficiency
15. Which language does your child use most with his or her sibling?

- (1) Dari, (2) Pashto, (3) English, (4) other\_\_\_\_\_
16. Which language does your child use most with his or her Afghan friends?  
(1) Dari, (2) Pashto, (3) English, (4) other\_\_\_\_\_
17. Which language is your child most comfortable with AT home?  
(1) Dari, (2) Pashto, (3) English, (4) other\_\_\_\_\_
18. Which language is your child most comfortable with OUTSIDE of home?  
(1) Dari, (2) Pashto, (3) English, (4) other\_\_\_\_\_
19. Has English changed the communication between yourself and your child since first arrival in the U.S.?  
(1) NO change, (2) Some change, (3) Change (4) Strong change  
(2)

**Section 3: What are Afghan parents' perceptions of conditions that lead to home language maintenance and loss?**

20. My child LIKES to speak Dari or Pashto at home?  
(1) Very much, dislikes (2) Dislikes, (3) Somewhat likes  
(4) Very much likes
21. The dominance of English makes it difficult for my child to speak Dari?  
(1) Very difficult, (2) Difficult (3) Somewhat Difficult  
(4) Not Difficult
22. My child has minimal exposure to speak Dari?  
(1) No time at all, (2) Less than an hour a day (3) Less than 2 hours a day, (4) Three or more hours a day
23. How often does your child watch Afghan TV/radio channels?  
(1) No time at all, (2) Less than an hour a day (3) Less than 2 hours a day, (4) Three or more hours a day
24. How often do you read Dari books to your child?  
(1) Never (2) Sometimes once a week, (3) About 2 to 3 times a week, (4) More than 3+ times a week
25. How often is your child exposed to other children who speak Dari or Pashto?

- (1) Never (2) Sometimes once a week, (3) About 2 to 3 times a week, (4) More than 3+ times a week
26. How often is your child exposed to adults who speak Dari or Pashto?  
 (1) Never (2) Sometimes once a week, (3) About 2 to 3 times a week, (4) More than 3+ times a week
27. My child dislikes to speak Dari or Pashto in public?  
 (1) Very much dislikes (2) Dislikes (3) Somewhat likes (4) Very much like

**Section 4: What are the linguistic attitudes of the parents towards their children learning the Afghan language?**

28. In the past five years how many times have you taken your child(ren) to Afghanistan for a visit: (1) Never, (2) one time, (3) two times, (4) three times or more
29. How connected are you with the Afghan language community:  
 (1) Not connected, (2) Somewhat connected, (3) Connected, (4) Very connected
30. How important do you think Dari or Pashto is for the success of your child(ren) when s/he grows up as an adult:  
 (1) Not important, (2) Somewhat important (3) Important, (4) Very Important
31. How important do you think is that your child(ren) speak Dari or Pashto: (1) NOT important, (2) Somewhat important (3) Important, (4) Very Important.
32. As a parent, what degree of effort have you made to support the maintenance of the Afghan language:  
 (1) No effort (2) Some effort (3) Conscious effort (4) Very strong effort
33. How important do you think it is for your child to spend time in Afghanistan with his or her extended family living there:  
 (1) NOT important, (2) Somewhat important (3) Important, (4) Very Important
34. As a parent, how important is it for you that your child speaks Dari or Pashto and English?

- (1) Not important, (2) Somewhat important (3) Important,  
(4) Very Important