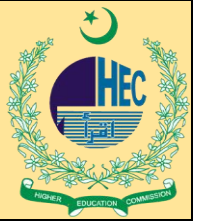


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IMPACT OF HYBRIDIZATION OF AMERICAN AND BRITISH ENGLISH ON LOCAL VARIETIES: A CASE STUDY OF PAKISTANI ENGLISH

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isharazzaq13@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

The globalization of English has produced many localized varieties, created each with different sociocultural and language influences indigenous to the regions they represent. An example of an emergent variety is Pakistani English, which has evolved as a result of the British language as well as that of America. This study looks into the consequences of hybridization between these two varieties of English on the cultural identity of Pakistani English, in association with language hybridization resulting in its linguistic identity. Referring to Kachru's (1992) World Englishes Model, Labov's (1972) Variation and Change Theory and Language Contact and Hybridization Theory, an analysis is made of the sociolinguistic and cultural factors which effect the hybridization of the language in Pakistan. The study is of a mixed-methods nature, combining corpus-based textual analysis of written material with interviews of participants, looking for lexical, orthographic and grammatical hybrid expressions. The results of the study indicate that Pakistani English has a well-founded existence of British and American features with a hydridic result, which serves as a marking of the two-fold standards of hybridity of the global and the local. The role of the media, technology and education is indicative of the important converging influences that the language experiences. The hydridic evidence does not tend to show degradation of the language but rather suggests a creative accommodation, sociocultural adaptation and negotiation. The study has revealed that Pakistani English is a localized variety of English which has now adequately developed to warrant its acceptance in the global varieties of World Englishes and certainly ought to be included in English language education and policy making.

Keywords: Hybridization, American and British English, Local Varieties, Pakistani English.

1. Introduction

English serves as an international lingua franca today, transcending national borders and cultural settings. Its dissemination through exploration, trade, education and the media has produced many local varieties collectively termed World Englishes (Kachru, 1992; Schneider, 2007). Among these is Pakistani English which has developed into a distinct variety resulting from influence of

British English and American English norms. British English was brought to the sub-continent through colonialism and institutionalization resulted from such institutions as education, administration, literature, etc. For a long time, with the onset of globalization and world becoming a cultural hub, American culture and language have greater infusion into Pakistani culture and language which has resulted into a hybrid culture and language in Pakistan. The hybridization of British and American English in Pakistan is the beginning of a construction of a new identity rather than just a linguistic phenomenon. According to Kirpatrick (2020) and Rehman (2021), the coexistence of these two varieties in Pakistan is encouraged which has generated significantly complicated linguistic culture. The speakers have attached a prestigious feel with British English and an international need with the American variety. Therefore, Pakistani English has evolved into a variety having properties of both languages along with an exposure to international media. However, this linguistic hybridity has arisen a question of purity and individualistic identity of Pakistani English in this era of globalized conversations.

Much of the work done so far on Pakistani English has shown the grammatical structures (Mahboob, 2009; phonological patterns Hashmi, 2018 and lexical choices (Anwar et al., 2024), Pakistani speakers make. Very less work has been done on the hybridization of both varieties and identity crisis and linguistic complexities brought by such phenomena has been done. The present study intends to fill this gap by studying the contextual, cultural and societal factors causing hybridization. The present study adopts a mixed-method approach, drawing on the theoretical models provided by Kachru's World Englishes Model (1992), Labov's Variation and Change Theory (1972) and the Language Contact and Hybridization Theory. It is through this perspective that the study has established that Pakistani English is both a product of linguistic convergence and a product which evidences a sociocultural identity, which may effectively underline the concept that hybridization is an indicator of evolution and not erosion in terms of the new paradigms of the global linguistic framework.

1.1 Research Objectives:

- To investigate the social, cultural and sociolinguistic factors influencing the hybridization of American and British English in Pakistani English.
- To evaluate the positive or negative impact of this hybridization on the identity of Pakistani English variety.

1.2 Research Questions:

1. What sociocultural and sociolinguistic factors influence the hybridization of American and British English in Pakistani English?
2. What positive or negative impact this hybridization has on the identity of Pakistani English variety?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptualizing Hybridization in English Varieties

Hybridization is defined as a mixing of features of different varieties because of continuing contact, globalization and sociocultural interaction. Hybridization in English is often apparent in multilingual or postcolonial environments in which global features interact with local language norms (Kachru, 1992; Crystal, 2012). Schneider (2007) speaks to the emergence of World Englishes, a situation that accounts for the fact that a variety reflects identity and adaptation in each localized situation. In postcolonial states like Pakistan hybridization is not only a linguistic phenomenon, but a point of change politically and socioculturally (Bruthiaux, 2010). Thus,

Pakistani English is a linguistic hybrid of British colonialism, and American cultural hegemony (Mahboob, 2009; Rahman, 2021). The education system still favors British English, but lately the younger generation has taken on lexical as well as orthographic features of American English through electronic media and exposure (Jenkins, 2015; Kirkpatrick, 2020). The various convergences lead to a linguistic identity, which embraces hybridization rather than decay (Canagarajah, 2013).

2.2. Sociolinguistic and Cultural Factors Impacting Hybridization

In Pakistan, hybridization of English is closely linked to first the sociocultural and secondly the media inspired features of exposure. Labov's (1972) Theory of Variation and Change states that social networks, prestige and identity are part of the conditions for a linguistic shift. It is similar with Blommaert's (2010) contention that because of capitalist mobility and consequent digital interactions there are presently rendered into being social environments in which "superdiverse" conditions obtain for the continued dynamic evolution of not only English (but any language). Speakers of Pakistani English receive much audiovisual exposure to American film, sitcoms, news shows and their contemporary online equivalents, so that western phonological and lexical elements from both varieties will gradually find acceptance among the various localized speakers of English (Hashmi, 2018; Nelson et al., 2019). Educational institutions also play an important role. Rahman (2020) noted that British English continues to be presented as a formal standard, but informal linguistic exchanges between students were considered as being more influenced by America. This corresponds to the principle that linguistic preference is both contextually and identity-based (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). In addition, the hybrid linguistic behavior of young professionals reflects the sociolinguistic reality of globalization (Proshina & Nelson, 2020). Anwar et al. (2024) demonstrate that even in grammatical aspects such as verb usage in Pakistani newspapers, the hybrid tendency is manifested which suggests a gradual linguistic convergence.

2.3. Hybridization of Pakistani English and Linguistic Features

Considering the structural features of Pakistani English, it shows a hybrid use of spellings, vocabulary and spellings which is an indicative of the influence of both varieties (Leitner, 2021, Trudgill & Hannah, 2017). With respect to the lexical and phonetic aspects, Pakistani English has many loanwords e.g., matriculation, Biryani, load shedding etc. along with many American words such as gas station. According to Bolton (2021), it is yet another stage of development of language showing the negotiation of global cultures and development of indigenous identity (Pennycook, 2017; Canagarajah, 2013).

2.4. Identity of Pakistani English

Identity construction and legitimacy of the Pakistani English is another issue caused by hybridization in Pakistan. According to Jenkins (2015) and Kachru (1992), Post-colonial varieties of English should be considered as independent and legitimate varieties. Schneider (2018) and Crystal (2012) have considered such situations doubtful and bad for the hierarchy of the native speaker. However, many studies carried out with the contexts of hybrid use of both varieties in South Asia considered the element of empowerment and identity involved into it (Rehman 2013; Canagarajah, 2013). Therefore, Pakistani English is not a mixture of two varieties but an independent and legitimate variety having its own identity (Kirkpatrick, 2020; Bolton, 2021).

3. Research Methodology and Design

The present study has adopted a mixed method research design by Creswell (2018) to quantify the linguistic variations and to explain the contextual, cultural and societal norms attached with

the hybridization of British and American English in Pakistani society. The theoretical underpinning of this research is based on the World Englishes Model (Kachru, 1992) which positions Pakistani English in the Outer Circle of varieties of English showing evidence of institutionalization and localized innovation. Furthermore, language contact and hybridization theory explains linguistic convergence and the hybridization of British and American norms as a consequence of globalization and exposure to the media. The population in which this research is based consists of users of English in Pakistan, in various contexts of communication i.e. media personnel, university teachers and scholars. Sampling was purposive selecting a sample of 20 (10 university students, 5 teachers of English Language and 5 journalists) in order to obtain data from both sectors i.e. the academic and the media. This method of sampling would appear to be appropriate in sociolinguistic research in which the informants take cognizance of particular linguistic phenomena and use the English language frequently (Bryman, 2016). In addition to interviews, data were collected in the form of text on written and digital forms presenting the authentic usage of Pakistani English. In total the data amounted to 1000 linguistic items i.e. words, phrases and expressions, which were collected from newspapers (Dawn, The News International), posts on the media, transcripts from television, and abstracts from university research. This combination of human and text reflects the use of the multidimensional approach which is assessed through the use of the methods of hybridization.

3.1 Data Analysis

The total units of linguistic data were 1000 units of linguistic import i.e. words, phrases and expressions marked out of space, newspapers, television talk shows, social media and study materials used. The analysis is both quantitative and qualitative indicating linguistic habits, sociology of language elements and the incidence of hybridization in the identity of Pakistan English. The methods used are connected with Kachru's (1992) model of World Englishes and the theory of language contact and hybridization. In the quantitative analysis, British English uses, American English uses and hybridized uses will be quantified. The following table (1) gives you a sense of the frequencies of the uses.

Table 1

Category	British Usage	American Usage	Hybrid Usage	Total
Spelling Variants	340	310	50	700
Lexical Choices	120	150	30	300
Total Frequency	460 (46%)	460 (46%)	80 (8%)	1000 (100%)

In the quantitative data there is, it seems, also a pretty even balance of British English and American English characteristics in Pakistan English. Each English element occurs in nearly equal percentages or relative frequencies 46 percent on each side and 8 percent in hybrid form. Hybridized pictures are cited like this 'favorite programme' British spelling the American word, 'colorful apartment' British spelling again with the American word. The effect of these results is an equality of the phases of hybridization of the words and phrases etc. One would be given to think honor to be given a British or American use. It shows that Pakistani are now in the phase of balance of hybridization not the passive either of phonetics in voice training. British spelling is still frequently to be found in printed sources and studies because of institutional standardization but the American spellings predominate in digital media and informal non-study media where the-

imported American default spell-checkers are making the opinion of the writer and consumer. So, Pakistani English is characterized though by duality of product from the same language as its chief factor-being governed by its perspective, the perspective of medium, means and importance.

3.2 Patterns of Hybridity

3.2.1 Graphic Variation

The most visible aspect of hybridity is the mode of spelling employed. In formal newspapers such as Dawn and The News International constructions show that British spellings are always resorted to (labor, organization, defense) whereas in such mediums as social media, blogs and everything relating to technology full-fledged Americanisms (labor, organization, defense) are adopted. This instance of two systems co-existing in a country and sometimes mingled in the same utterance, as "The organization improved labor policies," shows the flexibility of the medium, regulated not by incompetency of the users, but rather by the hybridizing influence of digital and medium influences.

3.2.2 Lexical Blending

The lexical unit discloses something of the nature of adaptation to contact. Of the 300 lexical cases of hybrids examples of British words are flat, holiday, queue timetable, an Americanism being in all cases city, vacation, line, schedule respectively. Hybrids as "semester break" (American. and British) and "mobile phone plan" (British and American) indicate that these media users ignominiously mix both systems, adapting them to their practical convenience, hence clarity. Investigation of the instance shows an inter-existence in the message which is horizontal, indicating the functional type of bilingualism of English, where terms, depending on the opposite degree of hybridism being called for, appropriate the appropriate type of term which may be British or American. British norms are still in evidence in academic and bureaucratic matters, but globally and digitally the American terms predominate.

3.2.3 Patterns of Grammar and Meaning

The grammatical hybridism is less palpable but nevertheless exists. Such locutions as "on the weekend" (American) and "at the weekend" (British) are intermixed. The word also, the younger users resort sometimes to such words as "gotten" (American), instead of "got" (British). Semantically a difference exists, for through the medium which has been adopted, phrases occur such as "give an exam" which is a South Asian adaptation, which co-exists with "take an exam" (American). These instances, go further and indicate that the hybridism in Pakistani English is more far-reaching and extends beyond the realm of terms to the region of grammar and meaning, constituting an evaluation induced by foreign influences, and to some extent obliterating the typical English.

3.3 Qualitative Analysis

3.3.1 Sociolinguistic Effects

Twenty interview subjects, students, teachers, and media professionals revealed the effects of vintage, education, and exposure as the key variables that produced hybridization. Younger speakers of English, ages eighteen to twenty-five, revealed a predilection for American English because of the consumption of American films, YouTube broadcasts and online education. Older respondents, ages twenty-five to thirty-five, showed a preference for British norms expressing that such forms were formal and correct. This predilection for British usage was deemed as the result of a colonial educational system. Respondents attending private universities, international schools, or engaged in internet-based occupations revealed more American influence, while those

students in public institutions or traditional learning environments revealed a preference for British usage. This reflects the stratification of education as sociolinguistic determinant of language use. American English was viewed by the respondents as modern, fast, and world-wide, while British English connoted genuineness and an academic prestige. However, the respondents for both forms contribute to a hybrid form of linguistic community which strikes a balance between global reach and self-identity.

3.3.2 Effects of Culture and Media

The exposure of respondents to media was found to occupy an essential position in the realization of linguistic preferences. American film, T. V. and Internet usage dominate the means of entertainment and communication worldwide, that being the norm for the use of American forms of vocabulary and pronunciation among younger Pakistanis. The words like movie, elevator, trash, etc. are found to be the words that are coming into more common use than the earlier existing words film, lift, rubbish, etc. However, certain main stream media outlets have, retained the British spellings of words, to adhere to concepts of traditional respectability and norms of journalism. This state of affairs reveals a linguistic duality in that the speakers internalize the two forms and move between them according to the setting and audience expectations about what is the proper English to be used. Instead of causing confusion, this phenomenon suggests that the speakers have a strong linguistic awareness about laughable involvement in culture and adaptability in the language.

3.3.3 Interpretation of Themes

a) Globalized Communication

Hybridity is the direct essence of globalized communication, advancement in mass media and international forums of education. Multiple standards attached with the varieties in question has marked a clear boundary between the two. So, Pakistani speaker carefully chose between the two varieties according to the contexts and settings.

b) Hybridization and Negotiation of Identity

An increased hybrid use of both varieties by Pakistani speakers is an indicator of Pakistan's contribution in global communication and competence its speakers have. However, it might be a threat to the independent identity in future. Such hybridized Pakistani English illustrates the double identity. On the one hand, it is their colonial inheritance, on the other, it is their experience of globalization.

c) Domain Sensitivity and Functional Variation

The linguistic selection of words in Pakistani English is domain sensitive. Formal academic prose, Government writing, the print media are British English bound. Informal speech, electronically based writings and the advertising media hardly ever follow British usage. The domain-based code-selection shows a greater awareness of choice on the part of readers rather than an inconsistency or vagueness. The result is that this hybridization is functionally determined, manifesting the adaptation of that which is addressed the audience, the subject and the medium.

4. Theoretical Interpretation

According to Kachru's (1992) model of World Englishes, Pakistani English occupies the position of Outer Circle. It is characterized by institutionalized local norms as well as being the product of post-colonial evolution. The equalized distribution of British and American features suggests that nativization is passing phase and that hybridization has begun, which is indicative of an advanced stage in the development of the Outer Circle. The Language Contact and Hybridization theory

suggests that the cause of the mixing of the linguistic features is constant exposure to different varieties of English because of schooling, electronic media, and the media in general. This contact leads to creative forms such as "favorite program", "semester break", which show merging of features of different systems. It shows that hybridization is not a breakdown of the norms, but rather a creative innovation in the language which has its cause in the globalization which has occurred and the need to construct identity.

5. Findings and Conclusion

- There exists a balanced hybridization of both varieties in Pakistan.
- Lexical changes and orthographic variation are the major reasons along with a lesser hybridization of semantic and grammatical features.
- Social variable (age, gender, education) plays a vital role in this process.
- Hybridization might be a symbol of identity construction with the language of colonialism.
- Pakistani English is a variety having plural nature with a blend of domain-specific and creative use.

The study has approved the hybridization of the two varieties in Pakistani linguistic environment. Quantitative analysis has shown that the Pakistani speakers make use of 42% of vocabulary of British variety and 36% of American variety with a mixed use of 22%. The increased use of British vocabulary indicates the colonial influence and educational system using the British variety. At the same time, mass media and globalization are also leading to the greater use of American variety gradually. Examples such as 'favorite programme' and 'organizing center' are included to show how unconsciously they mix orthographic and lexical standards. The responses to the interviews conducted indicate that the greater number of respondents felt that British English was more impressive in respect of formality or academic correctness, while American English was regarded as more modern, informal, or media-influenced. These attitudes are in keeping with Labov's (1972) sociolinguistic theory that language change is determined by a change in social prestige and communicative need. A further point of corroboration is found in the consistency of the results with Fairclough's (1995) current perspective on talk as discourse, that linguistic selection of hybrid forms is not random, but rather representative of a larger negotiation of identity within a post-colonial situation. For many speakers the concurrent mixing of forms, represents inwardly global effect in terms of emerging forms and outwardly local forms as indicators of authenticity. This hybridizations in vocabulary and forms, underlines the evolving adaptability of Pak English, placing it somewhat consciously in the ever-moving continuum of World Englishes (Kachru 1992). The conclusion may be reached that Pak English hybridization is indicative of a new trajectory, novel and flexible, the result of current media, global and personal.

This study concludes that the hybridization of American and British English forms in Pakistani English is a necessary linguistic outcome of globalization, media exposure and changing socio-cultural dynamics. The reason British English is still the preferred institutional norm is due to the legacy of colonialism and the educational policy that is pursued, but increasingly American English is becoming ascendant as a result of the media, entertainment and electronic communication. The combination of the two forms has resulted in a hybrid form of Pakistan English that is a result both of linguistic innovation and a process of negotiation over identity. This hybridization should not be construed as a corruption of the language but rather as a natural outcome of the evolution of languages in post-colonial societies. It shows how in a creative way the Pakistani speakers of the two varieties combine global and local language practices to express while they belong to two

cultures: one related to the colonial experience and the other contemporary global culture. On the basis of these results, it is suggested that the language policy and pedagogy in Pakistan should recognize the legitimacy of Pakistani English as an emerging and localized variety of English which should not be bolted in the native forms of the language. The methodologies of the English language teaching curricula should be prescriptive for contextually relevant materials representing the authentic usage of Pakistani English. Future research should investigate the hybridization of English across the modes of spoken discourse, electronic communication and youth language by the use of larger corpuses in order to trace the long-term trends. The research carried out shows the hybridization to be dynamic in terms of the sociolinguistic process which will strengthen Pakistan's contribution to the general World Englishes framework and its linguistic identity on the world linguistic discourse level.

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