

## Exploring the Evolution and Implications of Pakistani English within a Socio-Cultural Context

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### Abstract

*The present study investigates linguistic elements of Pakistani English and their sociocultural development. Despite being Pakistan's official language, English is commonly taught without taking into account the sociocultural nuances of the region. By examining the factors that shape Pakistani English and comparing its unique linguistic characteristics to those of British English, this study aims to highlight the development of Pakistani English. Academics with master's and doctoral degrees in English linguistics were given open-ended questionnaires as part of a qualitative data collection process. Major linguistic features of Pakistani English were revealed by thematic analysis of the responses. These included the usage of Urdu idioms and terminology, unique sentence patterns, and frequent code-switching between Urdu, Pakistani English, and other regional languages. These results demonstrate how Pakistani English captures the diversity of Pakistani culture and emphasize how crucial it is to appropriately integrate regional linguistic contexts into English language instruction. According to the study, an expanded approach to language learning that focuses on regional linguistic identity can be supported by an awareness of the features of Pakistani English, which can assist in shaping language planning and policy. Additional social, cultural, and linguistic elements impacting Pakistani English's ongoing development require more study.*

**Keywords:** Academics, Pakistani English, code switching, Urdu, linguistics

### INTRODUCTION

The development of Pakistani English within its socio-social context is an intriguing and perplexing topic that has recently drawn more attention from researchers, specialists, and language-trained professionals. This Pakistani English variety is a fascinating field of study because of the complex needlework of authentic, social, and semantic influences that it represents (Hussain N., 2018). Pakistani English has its hidden establishments in the English trailblazer period when English was acquainted with the Indian subcontinent as the language of organization, training, and business (Kachru B., 1990). Regardless, its improvement didn't stop with the completion of pilgrim rule; rather, it continued to develop through cooperation

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with local dialects, provincial vernaculars, and worldwide English assortments. Subsequently, Pakistani English has obtained particular elements, both concerning elocution, language structure, and jargon, that put it beside different types of English (Ahmed R., 1999). One of the primary credits of Pakistani English is its crossbreed nature, which reflects the multicultural and multilingual society of Pakistan (Malik, 2019). It draws from Urdu, the public language of Pakistan, as well as from territorial dialects like Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, and Balochi. This phonetic combination has brought about exceptional articulations, phrases, and syntactic examples that mirror the social personality and variety of the Pakistani populace. Furthermore, Pakistani English isn't static; it keeps on advancing because of social, political, and monetary changes in the nation (Haque, 2017). For example, the fast speed of progress in contemporary society is reflected in the joining of new words and articulations into Pakistani English because of the rising impact of innovation and virtual entertainment.

The present study investigates Pakistani English sociocultural development and its implications. Drawing on a scope of etymological and sociolinguistic speculations, we will look at how Pakistani English has developed over some time and the way things are utilized in various spaces of correspondence, including writing, media, training, and regular talk. Furthermore, we will investigate how Pakistani English reflects and shapes identity, power dynamics, and social relationships in Pakistani society by examining its socio-cultural implications (Hussain N., 2018). By analyzing language use in different settings, we can acquire knowledge about issues like social class, orientation, identity, and religion, and their effect on the phonetic way of behaving.

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

What are the salient linguistic features of Pakistani English that set it apart from British English standards, and how have these characteristics changed over time within Pakistan's sociocultural context? Furthermore, how do these linguistic variations affect English language instruction in Pakistan, and how may they be considered when developing language plans and policies that support regional linguistic identity?

## **RESEARCH GAP**

Although, Pakistani English has been extensively studied in literature, there is still an absence of knowledge regarding the unique linguistic difficulties, which Pakistani English speakers encounter while switching between their native tongues and English. Furthermore, little is known about how these difficulties affect? How people use language and develop their

identities in the Pakistani environment? By offering a thorough examination of the linguistic dynamics and socio-cultural ramifications of Pakistani English, this study seeks to fill his knowledge gap and advance knowledge of language variety and identity in Pakistan.

## **BACKGROUND**

In light of Pakistan's multilingual population and colonial past, English has a special status as an official language in that nation. Pakistani English is a unique variety of English that has undergone significant indigenization as the official language of the country. However, the socio-cultural context of Pakistani English is usually overlooked in English language education, creating a gap between speakers' actual language experience and formal instruction.

Furthermore, a wide variety of languages, including Urdu, regional, and indigenous languages, define Pakistan's linguistic landscape. This linguistic diversity has an impact on the language use, attitudes, and identity development of English speakers in Pakistan. Given these developments, it is imperative to conduct research on the linguistic components of Pakistani English, its development within Pakistan's sociocultural context, and its implications for language policy and instruction. Understanding the linguistic traits and sociocultural dynamics of Pakistani English is essential for fostering linguistic inclusion, enhancing language teaching strategies, and fostering a sense of linguistic belonging among English-speaking people in Pakistan.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To identify and analyze the basic linguistic features of Pakistani English that deviate from Standard English, which includes lexical, syntactic, and clausal components.
2. To dive into the sociocultural elements that affects the development of Pakistani English, like identity formation, linguistic attitudes, and language interaction phenomena.
3. To assess how English language learning strategies and language planning is affected by Pakistan's linguistic diversity, promoting linguistic diversity and cultural inclusivity.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are the basic linguistic features that distinguish Pakistani English from Standard English?
2. How do sociocultural elements influence the development of Pakistani English in a

linguistically diverse setting?

3. How language planning and learning in Pakistan is affected by linguistic differences?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Pakistani English has made an appearance as a recognizable variation of English within the linguistically varied setting of Pakistan. Previous research has identified different linguistic traits that distinguish Pakistani English from normal British English. (Hussain S, 2017), for example, identifies clausal, syntactic, and lexical variations in Pakistani English, such as code-mixing with Urdu and distinctive sentence structures. Similarly, Asma Khan is the researcher and she investigates the impact of sociolinguistic elements in the evolution of Pakistani English, focusing on language contact phenomena, language attitudes, and identity formation (Khan, 2019).

A "linguistic revolution" occurred throughout the world in the latter half of the 20th century (Crystal, 2004). English has spread widely in the world that it is become the auxiliary language for the people and English is now "the global lingua franca" (McArthur, 2001, p. 1). It is the dominant language in the world today, more so than any other in recorded human history. Furthermore, it has genuinely touched the lives of so many people, in so many cultures and continents, in so many functional roles, and with so much prestige (Kachru, Kachru, & Nelson, 2006, p. 5). The migration of British people from Great Britain to America, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as British imperialism from the late sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries, are undoubtedly the main causes of the English language's global dominance and widespread use. The United States emerged as the dominant superpower and driving force behind modern economic and cultural globalization.

The linguistic revolution resulted in more than simply English becoming a universal language. Instead, as a result of various ecological, social, cultural, historical, and linguistic circumstances, English evolved into multiple variations to satisfy people's communicative requirements. Therefore, by "hammering it sometimes on its head, and in sometimes twisting its tail, the ex-colonized, have given it a new shape, substance, and dimension" (Sidhwa, 1993, p. 213) to convey their socio-cultural reality. In this environment, the English language in Pakistan has become Pakistani English. Pakistani English, "a legitimate variety" (Kachru, Kachru, & Nelson, 2006, p. 128) which differs significantly from British English, is a form of English spoken by Pakistanis that reflects socio-cultural reality.

Talaat (1993) highlighted a few vocabulary variations in Pakistani English that are "used in both English and Urdu with a very high degree of speech and writing frequency and are in no sense transitory in nature" (Talaat, 1993, p. 62). Talaat's (1993) research strengthened the cycle of English indigenization in Pakistan by demonstrating how English lexical features were used in Urdu and other national languages, or how they were translated into Pakistani English. She highlighted that English is utilised alongside Urdu and other languages in Pakistan. To accurately describe or interpret Pakistani English, it's important to consider the following factors: He discusses the evolution of this English variety in a multilingual context. Borrowing from Urdu and other languages plays a significant role in expanding Pakistani English vocabulary (Mahboob, 2004). These borrowed terms show how they have been modified to fit within the English grammar. Jadoon (2017) examined the linguistic characteristics of Pakistani English and the contexts in which Kamila Shamsie employed borrowed terms and idioms from her native tongues in her Kartography. She found thirty-one distinct contexts (Jadoon, *Pakistanization of English in Kamila Shamsie's Kartography*, 2017). However, according to a recent study, there are significant lexical differences between the British English and the English spoken in Pakistan. Thus, the extensive use of many phrases and expressions from Pakistani languages gives Pakistani English a distinctively Pakistani flavor (Jadoon & Ahmad, 2022). Consequently, the socio-historical context and a review of the literature on Pakistani English suggest that although the language has borrowed terms, it has also acquired unique characteristics.

Additionally, studies have shown that Pakistani speakers struggle with language when switching between English and their original tongues. the intricacy of Pakistani speakers' language use, with an emphasis on concepts like linguistic identity and language change. Furthermore, Ahmed et al. (2018) underscore the significance of incorporating native socio-cultural contexts into language training by examining the effects of linguistic variations in Pakistani English on English language education in Pakistan.

Furthermore, research has revealed how important it is to understand Pakistan's sociocultural context while formulating linguistic policy and teaching approaches. Siddiqui makes the case for legislation that preserves the linguistic history of Pakistani English speakers in his examination of the role that language planning programs play in promoting cultural inclusiveness and linguistic diversity in Pakistan (Siddiqui, 2021). Haq elaborates on the importance of incorporating native cultural and socioeconomic settings into English

language training, arguing that a greater emphasis on linguistic variation can lead to more effective language teaching (Haq, 2019).

The multifaceted nature of Pakistani English and its importance within the broader framework of Pakistani society are highlighted in the contemporary literature. By synthesizing these results, the study intends to offer a thorough grasp of the linguistic dynamics and sociocultural implications of Pakistani English, supporting the creation of educational initiatives and language policies that promote linguistic inclusivity and cultural sensitivity in Pakistan.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The current study employs a qualitative research methodology to investigate the linguistic components of Pakistani English and its historical development within the country's socio-cultural setting. The use of a qualitative method allows for a thorough research and analysis of the language patterns, attitudes, and identity development of speakers of Pakistani English. The purpose of qualitative research is to get an in-depth comprehension of human behaviours and its underlying causes. The qualitative technique emphasizes the 'why' and 'how' of decision-making rather than the 'what, where, and when' (Charmaz, 2006).

## **PARTICIPANTS**

English linguistics master's degree and doctoral scholars participated in the study. To select people who were familiar with the study subject and languages, purposeful sampling was used. Purposive sampling is a non-random selection technique where researchers pick participants according to predetermined standards associated with the study's objectives or topic (Creswell, 2017). Five master's degree students and two doctoral students voluntarily participated in the data gathering.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

To collect data an open-ended questionnaire was used, which was sent out via Google Docs. The questionnaire includes questions designed to elicit participants' opinions, experiences, and perceptions of Pakistani English. Participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire at their free time, including typed responses to open-ended questions.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

Qualitative information obtained from open-ended surveys was analyzed through thematic analysis. This required meticulously identifying, classifying, and evaluating the data's

themes, patterns, and insights. Classifying the responses, looking for recurring themes, and examining connections and differences in the participants' stories were all steps in the analysis process. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the process typically consists of several processes, including familiarizing oneself with the data, developing preliminary codes, searching for themes, assessing themes, defining and labeling themes, and producing the final report.

In addition to contributing to the ongoing study of linguistic diversity and identity in other linguistic contexts, this methodology seeks to offer a thorough grasp of the linguistic dynamics and sociocultural ramifications of Pakistani English.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Use of English Language in everyday life:**

Participants gave a wide range of answers when asked about their experiences using English in daily situations. Some claimed that they only use English in particular circumstances, such as social media and classrooms, while others claimed that English is their major language of communication and that they use it frequently in a range of contexts, including interacting with people and browsing the internet. Additionally, some participants stressed the value of English as a language of instruction at the university level and as a language to be used in social media connections and informal talks.

### **Linguistic Features of Pakistani English:**

A variety of linguistic components and idioms often used in Pakistani English were identified by the participants. These included the adoption of Urdu terms and phrases, such as "inshallah" and "shukriya," into English conversations, as well as the use of regional language-derived cultural expressions and terminology. The examples given by the participants illustrated how the vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation of Pakistani English had been impacted by Urdu and other regional languages.

### **Reflection of Cultural Diversity in Pakistani English:**

The participants agreed that Pakistan's rich cultural diversity is reflected in Pakistani English. To highlight Pakistan's multiculturalism, they used terminology and expressions from several languages spoken across the country. Participants demonstrated how Pakistani English reflects cultural variation through the use of terms related to food (e.g., Biryani, kheer, Karahi, and Kulfi), clothing (Dupatta, Shalwar, Kamet, Sherwani, and Garara),

holidays (Shab e Mairaj, Eid ul Fitr, Eid ul Adha, and Urs), and Islamic terminology (Namaz, Hijab, Wazu, Nikkah, and Roza).

### **Code-Mixing and Code-Switching:**

The responses of participants gave common patterns, used among Pakistanis, of code-mixing and code-switching between Pakistani English, Urdu, and other languages due to bilingual and multilingual speakers. Participants gave examples of how various linguistic components were smoothly incorporated into regular talks, such as when regional or Urdu words were used to support or elucidate English words.

### **Predilection of Language Use:**

Contexts for Language Use and Preference: Participants indicated which situations, such as giving a lecture in class or having casual discussions, they preferred to use Pakistani English in. In more informal or casual environments or when speaking with those who did not understand English well, some participants preferred to use Urdu or other regional languages/dialects, while others preferred to use Pakistani English in formal settings.

### **Views on English Language Education in Pakistan:**

Participants offered a range of opinions regarding the function of English language instruction in Pakistan in addition to recommendations for how to enhance it to better represent the linguistic diversity of the nation. Among the recommendations were teaching instructors to teach in multilingual environments, promoting bilingualism and cultural appreciation in language education programs, and including local languages alongside English in curricula.

These answers raise significant issues about language instruction and inclusivity while highlighting the vital function that English plays in Pakistan's multilingual society as a bridge between other cultures and languages.

## **DISCUSSION**

The current study provides a thorough explanation of Pakistani English's language dynamics and sociocultural ramifications for MS and PhD students. A careful examination of the participants' answers revealed a number of significant themes that shed light on cultural variety, code-switching habits, language preferences, linguistic traits, patterns of language use, and implications for language instruction in Pakistan.



It was discovered that the participants' varied experiences with English language use in daily life reflected Pakistan's complex linguistic landscape. Some scholars reported using English extensively across a variety of fields, whereas others mostly utilized it in certain contexts, such as social media interactions or classrooms. Given that English and other languages coexist in Pakistan, this heterogeneity emphasizes how complicated language use is there. The usage of Urdu words and idioms was one of the several linguistic traits that participants identified as being connected to Pakistani English. Pakistani English gains depth and the country's cultural diversity is mirrored through this linguistic blending, creating a unique linguistic identity that mirrors the varied society of Pakistan.

The recognition of Pakistani English as a representation of Pakistan's rich cultural variety emphasizes the significance of language as an identity marker. By combining words and expressions from the various languages spoken across the country, Pakistani English honors Pakistan's linguistic diversity and serves as a bridge connecting diverse cultural and linguistic groups. Code-switching between Urdu, Pakistani English, and other languages was regularly noticed by participants, illustrating how language use is dynamic in a variety of sociolinguistic contexts. The importance of linguistic flexibility and communication ability was highlighted by the participants' deft use of a variety of language aspects to convey their thoughts and ideas.

The participants' varied language preferences highlighted the intricate relationship that exists between language, identity, and social context. It is important to adjust language use to different communicative contexts because some scholars felt most at ease using Pakistani English in formal settings, while others preferred to use Urdu or regional languages/dialects in more casual settings. The need for language curricula and teaching methods to more accurately reflect the linguistic diversity of the nation was highlighted by participants as their recommendations for enhancing English language education in Pakistan. Language education programs can support inclusive language practices and encourage cultural appreciation in students by integrating local languages alongside English and training teachers to teach in multilingual contexts.

This study provides valuable insights into the ways in which master's and doctorate students in Pakistan's individual and social identities are influenced by Pakistani English. The findings demonstrate how important it is to embrace linguistic diversity and advocate for inclusive language teaching strategies in order to foster social cohesiveness and an

understanding of culture in Pakistani society.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study shed insight on the language dynamics and socio-cultural consequences of Pakistani English for MS and Ph.D. students. This study examines language use patterns, linguistic traits, cultural variety, code-switching habits, language preferences, and their implications for language education in Pakistan.

According to the findings, Pakistani English reflects Pakistan's rich cultural diversity by combining vocabulary and idioms from a range of languages spoken across the country. The various ways in which participants used the English language in daily life demonstrated the complex interaction that occurs between language, identity, and social context. It was common to see code-switching between Urdu, Pakistani English, and other languages, demonstrating the flexibility and adaptability of communication among multilinguals.

The study also highlights the importance of promoting inclusive language teaching practices in Pakistan to better reflect the country's linguistic variety. By integrating native languages with English and preparing instructors to teach in multilingual environments, language education programs may foster cultural awareness and inspire students to embrace their linguistic identities. This study advances our knowledge of how Pakistani environments impact the formation of both individual and collective identities. Pakistan may promote a more welcoming and courteous community that honors the language history of all of its residents by acknowledging and appreciating linguistic variety.

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