AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ATTITUDE OF URDU NEWSPAPER   READERS TOWARDS LANGUAGE CODE-MIXING IN PAKISTANI URDU NEWSPAPERS

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ABSTRACT

Language-mixing is a consequent phenomenon of language contact and its occurrence in written discourse manifests the deep-rooted role it has acquired in the linguistic scenario of multilingual countries. Language-mixing is considered "a sociolinguistic phenomenon" whose "social and linguistic characteristics" are linked together (Rasul, 2006, p.11). There is a need to see the occurrence of language-mixing in written, non-fictional writings, such as newspapers as they are read not only by educated community of the society but for the less educated and uneducated people; they are an important source of information. The present study investigated attitude of Urdu newspaper readers towards language-mixing in Urdu newspapers. The objective of the study was to investigate Urdu newspaper readers' attitude towards language mixing in Pakistani Urdu newspapers. The study aimed to explore the attitude of the readers towards language-mixing (in the form of code-mixing and borrowing) in Urdu newspapers. This research is limited to the sample of Urdu newspaper readers to some groups, namely teachers, students and general readers of Urdu newspapers readers belonging to different professions. The population for investigating the attitude of the readers towards language-mixing was the readers of Urdu newspapers. The sampling technique was purposive. The sample for this qualitative study included three groups or strata-teachers, students and general reader of newspapers. The general readers of Urdu newspapers belonged to different professions and had different educational background. The researcher designed the questionnaire and a few items were adapted from Bi (2011). It took data from 150 respondents-50 teachers, 50 students and 50 general readers of Urdu newspapers. The pilot study was conducted before conducting the main study. The findings of the data showed that students, teachers and general readers hold mix attitude towards such mixing. Some of the respondents accepted English words as an inevitable trend, while some were of the view that the excessive use of English words destroys the structure and lexicon of Urdu. The study can be beneficial for applied linguists, socio-linguists and policy makers to determine the impact of English on the status of Urdu. It is significant to see how English has become a part of everyday language; its use in published corpus, such as newspapers, and its acceptance by people.

KEYWORDS: language mixing, attitude, multilingual, socio linguists, corpus, newspapers

INTRODUCTION

Language and society are closely interrelated and each has considerable impact on the other. Whether a society shapes language or language influences the norms, practices and society, are the questions which have attracted attention of the researchers from different fields such as linguistics and sociolinguistics. Wardhaugh (2010) defines sociolinguistics that it "is concerned with investigating the relationships between language and society with the goal being a better understanding of the structure of language and of how languages function in communication" (p.13). Language-mixing is considered "a sociolinguistic phenomenon" whose "social and linguistic characteristics" are linked together (Rasul, 2006, p.11). The present study thus takes its theoretical groundings from sociolinguistics and attempts to explore attitudes of Urdu newspaper readers towards language-mixing. It adapted its framework from Bi (2011) who used questionnaires to explore language attitudes. Print media includes newspapers, magazines, books, etc. Newspapers, in particular, are considered an important source of information as the masses have an easy access to them.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

How a language is used when mixed with other language? How do the native speakers of a language view language mixing, or impurification according to many? These are the areas which need to be explored and

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the present study will aim to fill the research gap. There is a need to see the occurrence of language-mixing in written, non-fictional writings, such as newspapers as they are read by educated, less educated and uneducated persons. Previous studies in the local context have focused on the use of code-mixing and code-switching in spoken corpora, but the present study will focus on written discourse. Despite the ample research in the area there remain substantial gaps in our knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of language-mixing in print media in Pakistan. In the previous studies the focus had been on the patterns and functions of the phenomenon related to language contact (Rani, 2008; Muhammad & Mahmood, 2013; Rasul, 2013; Rafi, 2013; Ehsan & Aziz, 2014). The aspect of attitude towards the phenomenon remains unexplored and it will aim to fill the gaps in the previous researches in Pakistan and provide significant knowledge for future directions in the research. Presently, English is used along with Urdu which is the lingua franca of Pakistan. This language-mixing is accepted by people who hardly notice when two codes or languages are mixed. Only a few would lament the impurification of Urdu due to code-mixing and code-switching in spoken and written language. The present study will be useful not only for the applied linguists and sociolinguists but also for policy makers. This study will provide an insight into the need for language policy in formal, written corpora such as print media. The study aimed to investigate Urdu newspaper readers' attitude towards language-mixing in Pakistani Urdu newspapers to answer the following question:

What is the attitude of the readers towards language-mixing (in the form of code-mixing and borrowing) in Urdu newspapers?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language choice is an important area to be investigated and the choice of code is of significant importance as it "indexes social values and attitudes" (Ho, 2007). Linguistic choices reflect the identity and attitude towards a particular code which is significant from socio-cultural approach. The present study's focus on attitudinal dimension is related to socio-linguistic as well as socio-cultural dimension.

Language attitudes determine the quality as well as quantity of language mixing (Bhatia & Ritche, 2004). The language that speakers choose reflects their attitude towards a particular code. Attitude is generally viewed as an outcome of perceptions and beliefs held by individuals and this attitude receives the great influence from the context in which individuals use language. "Attitudes often are the product of dominant ideology, concepts and opinions and may be divided along the positive-negative continuum" (Jabeen, Mahmood & Rasheed, 2011, p.110). "Investigating language attitudes is a systematic and critical method of exploring the variety of ways in which people behave towards a language" (Jabeen et al., 2011, p.119).

There is evident difference "between overt (conscious) and covert (unconscious) attitudes towards LM/S [language-mixing/switching]" (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2004). "Puritans and self-appointed guardians of language" protest against code-mixing and code-switching and view them "as a sign of the linguistic death of one of the two participating languages and call for action to maintain the "purity" of the linguistic systems in question'"(Bhatia & Ritchie, 2004, p.388). Rasul (2006) investigated "socio-cultural implications of code-mixing and language hybridization in Pakistan". She argues:

> The social aspects of code-mixing, which include various factors ranging from the setting, addressee and addresser to the prestige attached to a language and its socio-historical background; determine the linguistic choices in the process of code-mixing. On the other hand the linguistic choices of items to be code-mixed reflect the socio-cultural context.
> (p. 11)

Noor et al. (2015) states that "in written discourse, especially, in textbooks such switches need to be avoided by all writers or carefully replaced by their substitutes by the compilers of the textbooks" (p.18).

> Pakistani learners learn Urdu (their national language) in schools with the help of textbooks. They perceive these English switches and add them to their Urdu lexicon. In this way, they remain

unable to learn their Urdu equivalents. It harms the enthusiasm towards their national language as well as to the nation's unity. (Noor et al., 2015, p.19)

In a multilingual state like Pakistan, English serves many functions and receives mixed attitude of the people of Pakistan. It enjoys a special place in the country as it is the language used in all the important spheres of life- education, media, science, technology, etc. (Sultana, 2009). Urdu is the national language of the country and has a rich treasure of vocabulary. Mohammad and Mahmood (2013) explored "the variation of Urdu as a result of language contact" (p.134). The findings of their study revealed that language-mixing of English nouns have become a prevalent trend in the written writings of Urdu magazines. While Qadir (2011) states the opposite and argues that the use of English words in Urdu textbooks is imprinting a strong impact on the status of Urdu language.

METHODOLOGY

Research design of a study is a significant aspect which should be given an extensive thought before embarking on any study. Bhattacherjee (2012) defines research design as consisting of the 'data collection process', 'the instrument development process', and the 'sampling process'. (p. 35) The population for investigating the attitude of the readers towards language-mixing was the readers of Urdu newspapers. "Newspapers are as varied as their readers as they comprise multiple socio-economic levels as well as professional and educational differences" (Erwin-Billones, 2012, p. 41). The readers of newspapers belong to different fields and social classes. In Pakistan people from different classes, education levels and professions read Urdu newspapers. As the population is large and to have an access to all the readers of newspaper could be unmanageable for the researcher so the sampling technique was purposive sampling. The sample included three groups or strata-teachers, students and general reader of newspapers. The general readers of Urdu newspapers belonged to different professions and had different educational background.

TABLE 5.1 DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

Number of:	f	%
Students	50	33.3
Teachers	50	33.3
General readers of Urdu newspaper	50	33.3

Table 5.1 shows that there were 50 (33.3%) teachers, 50 (33.3%) students, and 50 (33.3%) were general readers of newspapers. The rationale for choosing teachers and students as sample was to get an insight into the opinion of the people involved in educational process which might provide pedagogical implications in future regarding the use of English in Urdu corpus and its impact on the status and structure of Urdu. However the category 'general readers' was used to include people other than teachers and students and people belonging to different professions, age group and educational background.

The research instrument for the present study included questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed by the researchers of the present study, but it adapted some items from Bi (2011) with close-ended and two open-ended items. The respondents were asked to fill the questionnaires and return them. Out of the filled questionnaires, 26 questionnaires were rejected due to various reasons as they could affect the validity of the findings.

There can be various ethical issues for a researcher during data collection and analysis phase. Creswell (2007) points out towards the ways of ensuring ethical considerations. What ethical considerations should

be taken in heed in administering survey questionnaires? Creswell (2007) suggests protecting the anonymity of the respondents or participants. (p. 141-142). In administering the questionnaire the respondents were informed generally about the aims of the research to ensure that the study would not bring any harm to them. Their consent was taken which allowed the respondents to participate in the study voluntarily and withdraw at any time they feel uncomfortable. Research instruments can be validated through different ways. Among them, some are self-validation, pilot validation and expert validation. The questionnaire was sent to experts. The experts were language teachers and scholars. The experts were required to go through the questionnaire and give an opinion on it. The opinion of the experts was significant, some changes were made and items deleted from the questionnaire in the light of the opinion. For reliability an inter-rater reliability analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency among raters. In the light of the responses of two raters the inter-rater reliability for the ratters was found to be Kappa = 0.672 which is considered good for the reliability of the tool. The questionnaire was also piloted for pilot validation. The main aim of piloting is to measure the feasibility of the research plan and to identify anticipated threats to the study before embarking on the main study. The pilot study for the questionnaire was conducted on a group of people who were similar to the sample of the main study, but were not the actual ones. The sample for the pilot study was not a part of the main study. They included 5 teachers, 1 student and 2 general readers of Urdu newspapers.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

A survey questionnaire was used to collect opinions of Urdu newspaper readers towards the use of English in Urdu newspapers. There were 150 valid questionnaires used for analysis. The sample consisted of 50 teachers, 50 students and 50 general readers of newspapers. The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0.

TABLE 6.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Gender			
Male		**Female**	
F	**%**	**F**	**%**
29	19.3	121	80.7

Age															
Below 18		**18-25**		**26-30**		**31-35**		**36-40**		**41-45**		**46-50**		**51-55**		**56 and above**	
f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
48	32.0	20	13.3	24	16.0	25	16.7	5	3.3	9	6.0	5	3.3	7	4.7	7	4.7

Education											
Primary		**Middle**		**Secondary**		**Higher secondary**		**Graduation**		**Post-graduation**	
F	**%**	f	**%**	f	**%**	f	**%**	f	**%**	f	**%**
-	-	3	2.0	8	5.3	49	32.7	62	41.3	28	18.7

Frequency of reading Urdu newspapers							
Daily		**Weekly**		**Monthly**		**Whenever I get opportunity**	
F	**%**	f	**%**	F	**%**	f	**%**
43	28.7	41	27.3	11	7.3	55	11.7

There were 19.3% male and 80.7% female participants. 32.0% participants were below 18, 13.3% were between18 and 25, 16.0% were 26 and 30, 16.7% were between 31 and 35, 3.3 % were between 36 and 40, 6.0% were between 41 and 45, and 3.3% were 46 and 50, 4.7% were 51 and 55, 4.7% were between 56 and above. There were 2.0% middle, 5.3% secondary, 32.7% higher secondary, 41.3% graduates and 18.7% post-graduate respondents. There were 28.7% respondents who read Urdu newspapers daily. The frequency and percentage of the close-ended questionnaire responses are shown in Table 6.2:

TABLE 6.2 RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Label	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. I find English words in Urdu newspapers easier to understand.	4	2.7	7	4.7	13	8.7	76	50.7	50	33.3
2. I find it comfortable to read and understand Urdu news due to English words.	6	4.0	15	10.0	25	16.7	65	43.3	39	26.0
3. When I read English words in Urdu newspapers, it helps me understand terms which do not have equivalents in Urdu.	4	2.7	12	8.0	15	10.0	63	42.0	56	37.3
4. The use of English in Urdu newspapers can provide opportunities to learn English.	9	6.0	14	9.3	21	14.0	60	40.0	46	30.7
5. The use of English words in Urdu newspapers is a sign of internationalization.	25	16.7	26	17.3	33	22.0	42	28.0	24	16.0
6. I find English words in Urdu newspapers modern.	18	12.0	22	14.7	28	18.7	51	34.0	31	20.2
7. It is due to English that I am ashamed of using Urdu words.	68	45.3	35	22.0	21	14.0	16	10.7	12	8.0
8. It bothers me while reading English words used in Urdu newspapers.	59	39.3	47	31.3	17	31.3	20	13.3	7	4.7
9. People who do not understand English words in Urdu newspapers will be at disadvantage.	18	12.0	13	8.7	17	11.3	49	32.7	53	35.3
10. It is due to frequent use of English words that I am unable to recall Urdu words.	25	16.7	20	13.3	29	19.3	52	34.7	24	16.0
11. In my opinion mixing English in Urdu leads to the loss of Urdu.	18	12.0	15	10.0	15	10.0	43	28.7	59	39.3
12. I think that English can impurify Urdu.	24	16.0	19	12.7	16	10.7	36	24.0	55	36.2

Table 6.2 provides complete details of the data. 76 (50.7%) and 50 (33.3%) of the participants believe they find English words in Urdu newspapers easier to understand, 65 (43.3%) and 39 (26.0%) agree that they find it comfortable to read and understand Urdu news due to English words, similarly 63 (42.0)% and 53 (37.3%) participants are of the opinion that when they read English words in Urdu newspapers, it helps them understand terms which do not have equivalents in Urdu, like wise 60 (40.0%) and 46 (30.7%)

consider that the use of English in Urdu newspapers can provide opportunities to learn English, furthermore 42 (28.0%) and 24 (16.0%) participants are in favour that the use of English words in Urdu newspapers is a sign of internationalization. 51 (34.0%) and 31 (20.2%) agree that they find English words in Urdu newspapers modern. 43 (28.7%) and 59 (39.3%) of the respondents believe that mixing English in Urdu leads to the loss of Urdu. 36 (24.0%) and 55 36.2%) think that English can impurify Urdu.

On the contrary, 25 (16.7%) and 26 (17.3%) respondents disagree that the use of English words in Urdu newspapers is a sign of internationalization, similarly 68 (45.3%) and 35 (22.0%) disagree that it is due to English that they are ashamed of using Urdu words, likewise 59 (39.3%) and 47 (31.3%) participants are of the opinion that it does not bother them while reading English words used in Urdu newspapers, moreover 25 (16.7%) and 20 (13.3%) disagree that it is due to frequent use of English words that they are unable to recall Urdu words, finally 24 (16.0%) and 19 (12.7%) participants do not feel that English can impurify Urdu.

Through the open-ended questions asking about the advantages and disadvantages, many themes emerged. Thematic analysis of the responses of open-ended questions threw light on the opinion of Urdu newspaper readers about the use of English words. The responses showed that there are many advantages and disadvantages of using English words in Urdu newspapers. The use of English words enables familiarity with English words. R32, "People get familiarity [with] some more English words".

R12, "English is immersed in Urdu and becomes our habit so we see fluency not only in Urdu but in English as well". English words have become so widespread that they help understanding Urdu. R60, "it [the use of English words] can increase our knowledge of English words". The readers get a chance to read and learn English words. R97, "it is better to use English words in Urdu newspaper for such words which do not exist in Urdu". There are many words whose equivalents are not available in Urdu, thus justifying the use of them in Urdu.

It gives awareness about different terms. R36, "[It] helps to create awareness about international, scholarly, political and social terms". It has the advantage of the ease of use. R18, "some words in Urdu are difficult and news can be understood with English words only". R39, "There are many words whose Urdu translation is complex. There are many disadvantages as well. It destroys the beauty of Urdu. R4 opined:

> [it is of] no use, just to explain the point of view in easy words, English vocabulary could be used, if most essential, otherwise it is destroying the sweetness of Urdu language. Urdu newspapers are the biggest source of promoting and learning Urdu. The use of English words unnecessarily is destroying the real language.

R8, "impurifies Urdu". English words destroy the purity of Urdu. According to some respondents the use of English words should be limited to its use only when necessary, otherwise it can affect vocabulary as well as the structure of Urdu.

R26, "[The] use of English can make us addict of this habit. Switching during our conversation from English to Urdu is also the outcome of such bad habits. It leads to inability to recall equivalents". The excessive use of English affects speaking of the readers and they tend to switch quite often and use English words that they have often read in Urdu newspapers. The use of English words in Urdu leads to the loss of identity. R25, "[it is also causing] distance from national language".

The national language of a country is a part of a nation's identity and this identity is not given sufficient importance. Urdu words are marginalized and English words are given preference over Urdu words. People have a negative attitude towards their own language due to frequent use of English and its acceptance in society. R139, "people feel ashamed talking in Urdu and the use of English in print as well as social media

has a negative impact on people". Language is associated with attitude that people hold towards that language. R147, "people perceive that using English make them modern and in effort of using English they are pacing far from Urdu language."

Some respondents suggest that Urdu newspapers should be in Urdu and frequent use of English words ought to be discouraged. R34, "Only one language should be used at a time to make long lasting effects on readers." The findings of the data showed that the readers of newspapers hold mixed attitude towards language-mixing or English-mixing. Some view it as a natural by-product of English/Urdu contact while others take it as a sign of impurity for the structure and lexicon of Urdu language. The mixing of English words in Urdu has taken many forms and they belong to different syntactic and semantic categories.

DISCUSSION

Language contact results in linguistic phenomenon such as "language mixing", "code-switching", "borrowing", "language hybridization", "synthesis", etc. (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2004; Rasul, 2006; Sebba, 2012. The process of the mixing of languages can take many forms and some of them are code-mixing and code-switching. Code-mixing is specific to intra-sentential mixing, therefore it has been focused in the analysis of written discourse while in order to analyze spoken data the term code-switching is used. The study attempted to explore the attitude of the Urdu newspaper readers towards the use of English words.

English in Pakistan has acquired a role so deep-rooted that an uneducated person can understand English words such as "party", "corruption", "policy", "sports", "target-killing", etc. If words are used with their equivalents, it helps learning more. These findings are in line with Bi (2011) who found the positive role of English in e-discourse (internet). Cuc (2012) also found out that the prevalence of code-switching in newspapers manifests its acceptance by Filipino people who regard it as "function of multilingualism" (p.49). Similarly, Urdu newspaper readers accept English words in Urdu newspapers.

English is a flexible language and tends to be easily mixed with Urdu. The readers get a chance to read and learn English words. The respondents of the questionnaire believe that they find English words in Urdu newspapers easier to understand and comfortable to read and understand Urdu news due to English words. The use of English in Urdu newspapers can provide opportunities to learn English. The participants are in favour that the use of English words in Urdu newspapers is a sign of internationalization. They find English words in Urdu newspapers modern. Thus, they have a favourable attitude towards the use of English words in Urdu. Mushtaq and Zahra (2012) also concluded that English-mixed items symbolize modernity and attract favourable attitude from the people.

On the other hand, the respondents believe that mixing English in Urdu leads to the loss of Urdu. English can impurify Urdu. It is due to English that they are ashamed of using Urdu words. It is due to frequent use of English words that they are unable to recall Urdu words. Bi (2011) also identified that people in China regret the use of English in Chinese as it can lead to the loss and decline of Chinese. English words in Urdu newspapers manifest the immense impact that English is holding on Urdu writing. There are many words whose equivalents are not available in Urdu, thus justifying the use of them in Urdu. It gives awareness about different terms. It helps to create awareness about international, scholarly, political and social terms. It has the advantage of the ease of use. There are many words whose Urdu translations are complex, in comparison English words are easier.

The use of English words destroys the beauty and purity of Urdu. According to some respondents the use of English words should be limited to its use only when necessary, otherwise it can affect vocabulary as well as structure of Urdu. The question of the impact of code-mixing of English on the status of Urdu is an important one: "...how far this code-mixing adds to the richness of Urdu or affects is beauty; and what implications does it have with reference to the issues of globalization and Identity" (Rasul, 2013, p.71). Muhammad and Mahmood (2013), on the contrary, claim that "Urdu is a flexible language" and is

"absorbing" words from other languages, particularly English in such a way that its own structure is not "distorted". They contend that English words are used "at the expense of their Urdu correlates" (p.134). The increase in the use of English words in Urdu writings is mainly due to the emergence of novice terms and innovations.

The use of English words in Urdu causes loss of Urdu vocabulary. The excessive use of English affects speaking of the readers and they tend to switch quite often and use English words that they have often read in Urdu newspapers. The use of English words in Urdu leads to the loss of identity. The national language of a country is a part of a nation's identity and this identity is not given sufficient importance it can suffer declining. Despite being the official language, Urdu cannot develop. Due to excessive use of English, Urdu is losing its identity. Urdu words are marginalized and English words are given preference over Urdu words. Kachru (1986) has called this phenomenon "Englishization". Hsu (2009) stated that English enjoys the status of being prestigious language as it asserts "modernity, progress and globalization". The people who have neutral attitude towards code-mixing of English see it as an inevitable demand of modern age and an 'international trend' which attempts 'to internationalize Taiwan's market when used in advertisements'. On the other hand uneducated participants of the study and particularly old people hold negative attitude towards code-mixing of English. There is also the realization that once they have learned English they will be empowered but if their mother tongue is at stake due to English they will have negative feelings towards English.

People have negative attitude towards their own language due to frequent use of English and its acceptance in society. They feel ashamed talking in Urdu and the use of English in print as well as social media has a negative impact on people. People perceive that using English make them modern and in effort of using English they are pacing far from Urdu language. English is associated with prestige.

Some respondents suggest that Urdu newspapers should be in Urdu and frequent use of English words ought to be discouraged. Only one language should be used at a time to make long lasting effects on readers. The readers of Urdu newspapers hold mixed attitude towards mixing of English words in Urdu. Some respondents accept it as a positive addition to the language, while some see it (code-mixing) as a negative phenomenon. Bi (2011) concluded that there should be some regularization to watch the frequent insertions of English words in Chinese. Bi (2011) calls for a need to devise balance in the use of more than one language whose result is code-mixing so as to avoid 'cultural interference' (p.60). The readers of Urdu newspapers hold mixed attitude and show a degree of acceptance towards English-mixing in Urdu.

CONCLUSION

In a multilingual country such as Pakistan language-mixing is a common linguistic phenomenon. Many researchers in Pakistan have investigated this phenomenon from multiple aspects. The present study investigated the attitude of Urdu newspaper readers towards language-mixing of English words in Urdu written text, particularly in formal and published corpora such as newspapers. The findings of the data showed that students, teachers and general readers hold mix attitude towards such mixing. Some of the respondents accept English words as an inevitable trend, while some were of the view that the excessive use of English words destroys the structure and lexicon of Urdu. The study can be beneficial for applied linguists, socio-linguists and policy makers to determine the impact of English on the status of Urdu. It is significant to see how English has become a part of everyday language and its use in published corpus, such as newspapers, and is accepted by people. The future research can be focused on formal written texts such as textbooks to see how language-mixing of English words has affected Urdu language and how the native speakers of Urdu view this mixing in textbooks.

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