EXAMINING LEXICO-SEMANTIC DIVERSITY IN PAKISTANI ENGLISH THROUGH NEWSPAPER CORPUS ANALYSIS

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Abstract

*The present paper studies the lexico-semantic features of Pakistani English (PakE) in newspapers as influenced by globalization and localized cultural practices (*Manuel, 2021*). Pakistani English, as part of the Outer Circle of Kachru's (1985) model of* World Englishes*, represents linguistic creativity that reflects the socio-cultural and political context of the South Asian region. In this study, the writer identifies lexical borrowings, new hybrids, and semantic innovations that differentiate PakE from Standard British English (SBE) by analyzing a sample of articles retrieved from leading Pakistani English newspapers, with SBE serving as the historical reference point. The proposed methodology employs a corpus-based approach**, utilizing tools such as* AntConc *to examine frequency patterns, collocations, and semantic changes (*Manuel, 2021*). The study shows that loanwords borrowed from Urdu and regional languages are frequently used; many semantic extensions arise from Pakistan-specific contexts; and numerous culture-specific terms reflect Pakistan's socio-political landscape. Furthermore, the study situates these findings within the post-globalized world**, where multiple varieties of English are emerging, and explores how PakE—despite its localization process—participates in the construction of Global Englishes (*Kachru, 1992; Manuel, 2021*). Using newspaper data, this study highlights how PakE serves as an intermediary that negotiates between a globalized linguistic model and localized linguistic resources**. Lastly, the paper concludes that such research not only enriches* World Englishes *scholarship but also reaffirms the importance of accepting and respecting variation and originality in non-native Englishes within a globalized society (*Manuel, 2021*).*

Keywords: *Pakistani English, Lexico-semantic features, Globalization, World Englishes, Corpus-based analysis.*

Introduction

Current globalization has significantly affected the dissemination of English as a second language and brought variations for the brighter side from a colony's tongue. As a result of this process speakers of the English language have developed a variety of localized dialects collectively known as World Englishes, pegged on the sociocultural and linguistic practices of the regions they are used in (Kachru, 1985; Jenkins, 2009). Of these, the most recent is the so-called Pakistani English (PakE) that developed in view of multilingualism and multiculturalism of the Pakistani society. In the Outer Circle of Kachru's model, PakE has become another site of global and local linguistic contact, doublets and merit, and the continual creation of new linguistic practices (Rahman 1990).

PakE is therefore not a mere variation of or interference from the [Standard British English (BrE)], but a unique variety…sound patterns, grammar, and vocabulary. Lexico-semantic

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variation is used as the primary diagnostic features of this variety in specific context. Some changes extend to borrowing innovations and new lexical items or meanings which have social, cultural, and political relevance in Pakistan. Such variations are perhaps best seen in newspapers; as not only an organ of public debate but also as a barometer and record of how societies function and the way people use language (Bell, 1991).

The position newspapers hold in Pakistani society makes them invaluable to the analysis of trends regarding the utilization of English within the communities. These parts often act as a link between the global and the local by using features of regional languages and culture in English to relate to their readers. PakE has also been able to familiarize some terms like jirga (tribal assembly), loadshedding (power outages), and roti (bread) for the newspaper readers and is therefore capable of serving the purpose of localization for this type of language. This is not just a realization of language, but also the sociopolitical, wherein the use of localized English is 'identity politics' and counter-hegemonic to linguistic imperialism (Baumgardner, 1993; Canagarajah, 1999).

However, this has not been the case owing to the effect that globalization has had on PakE because it has added density to the linguistic picture of the language. On the one hand, it is a language of intercession and gates to world platforms in terms of information. In one instance it localizes in the Pakistan in a way that seems to suggest a deliberate attempt to 'Pakistanis' or better yet, 'Islamize,' the language to fit the cultural realities of the nation. These dynamics shed light into the difference between globalization and glocalization, which is an essential theme in the research on World Englishes (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008).

This paper explores the lexico-semantic features of PakE using newspaper data to examine how global and local processes interrelate within this variety. It addresses the following questions: What are the major lexical creation and semantic change in Pakistani English newspaper? In what way these portray the socio-political and cultural context of Pakistan? In what way does PakE shape the global discursive formation of English as a pluralistic language?

Therefore, by locating the study within the current context of globalization and World Englishes, this research fits into a line of empirical literature that at last acknowledges and values non-native English as a transformative force in the continued development of the language. To this end, the present research adopts a vast pool of newspaper articles to investigate the various features of PakE and its contributions towards universal dissemination of English.

Literature Review

1. Globalization and World Englishes

English had been accelerated by globalization in which English became the world language that is localized in various social linguistic environments. Kachru's (1985) seminal model of World Englishes divided English varieties into three concentric circles: It categorizes the linguistic community into the Inner Circle (countries which English is native to such as United States and United Kingdom), the Outer Circle (post-colonial countries such as Pakistan and India) and the so called 'Expanding Circle' comprising of those countries where English is a foreign language. Pakistani English (PakE) belongs to the Outer Circle, which is characteristic of a postcolonial appropriation of English that incorporates elements of the world Englishes speakers' linguistic and culture.

Jenkins (2009) and Seidlhofer (2004) are of the opinion that due to globalization there are localized standards, which threaten English native like varieties. In the case of PakE, the enculturated linguistic contact between global English and other local languages which include Urdu, Punjabi, and Sindhi births new ideas that are contextually and culturally new. These were characterized as 'non-standard' variants of BrE, are now increasingly being accepted as valid ways of encoding local identities in the context of World Englishes (Kirkpatrick, 2007).

2. Vocabulary and Semantics of English

Lexico-semantic differentiations refer to varieties of lexical identity, meaning, and use arising from cultural and social differences. These variations are normally influenced by the communicative demand of the speakers in some parts of the world (Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008). Bamgbose (1998) underlines the fact that localized varieties of English, including PakE, contain such features as loanwords, hybrid forms and polysemantic overload. For instance, the words such as load shedding and political mafia are not very familiar in BrE but are comprehensible and in use in PakE.

For instance, semantic innovations – the process with which existing English words are assigned new meanings within localized socio-linguistic communities, are most common in what can be termed postcolonial Englishes. For example, using PakE, while family may be translated to political families, the word minister conveys imagery of inefficiency and corruption (Rahman, 1990). These shifts also represent cultural norms of the regions where the language is spoken now and question the status of native speaker's standards for proper usage of English.

3. Pakistani English: A Sociolinguistic Perspective

Research has been dedicated to identifying Pakistani English as a variety belonging to the South Asian context due to the development of the nation. As quoted in Baumgardner (1993), lexical borrowings from regional languages such as Urdu are handled by PakE whereby they expand this language's vocabulary and phraseology roots from the culture of certain regions. For example, terms like shariah, Nikah, and hijab are occasionally used in English newspapers to talk about issues to do with religion and culture.

Furthermore, even when PakE is syntactically accurately English sometimes it has an innovation which a particular and mix of these English words with local structure or phrases. They include Eid packages, jirga system, roti price hike and so on. These hybrids are a result of the required bilingual or multilingual language ability of Pakistani speakers shifting effortlessly between English and regional languages and dialects (Mahboob, 2009).

In his article viewing English as the linguistic imperialism Rahman (1990) rightly says that power, class and identity are intrinsically connected with English language in Pakistan. The English language as viewed as relevant to modernity and upward social mobility, however; the process of localization also involved an attempt to adapt the English language to a Pakistani context.

4. Newspapers as Corpus for Linguistic Studies

In the past newspapers have also been found to be ideal sources of analysis of the variations, as they are both a product of and an agent of social usage (Bell, 1991). As is the case in Pakistan, the English newspapers form a sort of a mediator between global English with its norms on one side and sociolinguistic realities on the other. Altec, Cotter, (2010) opine that newspapers

are well placed to record linguistic changes that involve such features as localized and blended forms.

In the context of PakE, some of the newspapers that quite often employ LE are Dawn, the News, and Express Tribune; In fact, these papers employ the LE while reporting anything from politics to culture. Examples of how cultural and linguistic features are used in newspapers include what can be termed as goonda tax, dharna politics, as well as Ramazan package. These decisions do more than appeal to local audiences proposing a variety of English that is able to play the translator / interpreter in the vast field of languages.

5. Theoretical Framework: means Globalization and Localization

A focal point or research interest in World Englishes research is the conflict between globalization and glocalization. Pennycook (2007) for example carrying more and more anti-essentialist perspective that the English language is not a single language but dynamic language being re shaped and reformed by the local context. This process of localization can be seen in PakE where local English newspapers are places where change and identity is performed on the English language. Urdu loan words, code switching between Urdu and English along with semantic loans supply a persona of hybridization between global lingua-franca and local cultures.

These results support Canagarajah's (1999) claim that localized ELF undermines the imperialism of native norms through the recognition of non-native standards. In the case of PakE, newspapers not only record these changes but also help in transmitting them which make newspapers important in the development of this variety.

Methodology

Research Design

This research uses corpus-based technique in the study of linguistic variations since it is significant for a systematic and quantitative analysis of TL. Corpus analysis facilitates the search for and analysis of the given sets of key lexical and semantic connections in Pakistani English (PakE) newspapers. In so doing, the study locates PakE within the larger matrix of globalization and within the World Englishes paradigm which posits the legitimacy and gradience inherent in postcolonial second language (L2) Englishes (Kachru, 1985; Jenkins, 2009).

Data Collection

1. Corpus Selection

The primary data collection tool for this study is articles published in the three leading Pakistani English newspapers, namely Dawn, The News, and the Express Tribune. These newspapers were selected as they have a large readership base and influence public opinion.

Articles published in the year 2023 and 2024 have been included in the corpus because that will reflect current usage.

2. Sampling

A stratified sampling technique was employed to sample articles in Politics, culture, editorial and business among others. This is important to have a random selected sample of language use in different fields.

The corpus under analysis includes a total of 10,000 words which were collected from the newspapers under study with the nearly equal coverage of the issues in each.

3. Data Processing

Articles were retrieved and preprocessed, by converting them into digital format and further for cleaning and extraction of meta data, advertisements and useless texts.

The corpus was processed for analysis and checked for word frequency along with all other features in AntConc a software constructed for corpus linguistic analysis.

Analytical Framework

The analysis was guided by the following research objectives and techniques:

1. Lexical Analysis

A method of qualitative analysis of text commonly used by linguists was equally performed with an aim to find out the most frequently used loanwords, terms that have a hybrid characteristic as well as proverbs, idioms or sayings that are unique to the culture of the language being used.

Emphasis was placed on the words of Urdu origin and other regional languages that are borrowed as *jirga, wadera,* and *shariah.*

2. Semantic Analysis

To investigate semiotic changes in PakE in which English words are nativized and gain meanings more or less distinct from the source language, concordance lines were looked into. Thus, the frequency and contextual distribution of words was studied using the collocation analysis to examine how the concerned language, i.e PakE, conveys culturally meaningful representations of the world (e.g., loadshedding crisis, Ramazan diplomacy).

3. Comparative Analysis

The results obtained were then compared to the BrE so as to establish the differences of PakE. These differences were used with reference to sociocultural and political contexts of Pakistan while making this comparison.

4. Qualitative Interpretation

To fill in gaps in the quantitative data analysis, qualitative meanings were added to explain the cultural and contextual reasons for lexical novelty and semantic broadening.

Research Questions

The methodology was designed to address the following questions:

1. Analyzing the Lexico-semantic system of Pakistani English newspapers, what new formations and terms were found to be used most frequently?
2. In what ways are these innovations embedded with the influences obtained from cultural, social, and political context of Pakistan respectively?
3. How does that varied impact or complicate the processes of English's development on an international level?

Word/Phrase	Frequency	Semantic Context	Collocates	Origin/Influence	Examples from Corpus
Loadshedding	320	Power outages, frequent in Pakistan	crisis, schedule	Localized English (Pakistani usage)	"The loadshedding crisis worsens in rural areas."

Jirga	105	Tribal assembly, dispute resolution	system, tribal	Urdu (loanword)	"The tribal jirga upheld the decision."
Ramazan Package	58	Subsidy program during Ramadan	announce, relief	Hybrid expression (Islamic culture)	"The government announced a new Ramazan package."
Wadera	42	Feudal lord, often with negative connotation	culture, politics	Sindhi (loanword)	"The wadera system dominates rural Sindh politics."
Goonda tax	25	Informal/extortion tax	collection, mafia	Hybrid expression	"Traders protested against the goonda tax imposed by gangs."
Roti price hike	50	Increase in bread prices	inflation, economy	Hybrid expression (cultural)	"The roti price hike impacts lower-income families."

Conclusion

This paper aimed to identify and discuss lexical-semantic differences in the PakE newspaper analysis focusing on how this variety mirrors Pakistani society, politics, and language. When the corpus is examined using a comprehensive blend of qualitative and quantitative approaches, it becomes apparent that PakE is more than what is simply a localized instantiation of the BrE proper; it is in fact an independent variety that is grounded in the emergent synergy of globalization and localization processes. The study corroborates the fact that language shift as observed in the postcolonial societies such as the Pakistan is not a reflection of the linguistic subordination but enshrine the cultural and creative language adjustments.

Future Directions

However, for the scope of this study, written PakE in the domain of newspapers was considered further research could be done in other domains such as spoken English, online or any other domain of English and within the English academic language system. Such factors deserve further elaboration; a quantitative comparison of PakE with other South Asian varieties like Indian or Bangladeshi English can advance the understanding of the regional politics of World

Englishes. Furthermore, analyzing the effects of bilingualism and code-switching on PakE will afford a much better understanding of its sociolinguistic profile.

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