



Pashto-English Contact: The Role of Suffixation in Hybridizing Lexical Items

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Abstract

The study investigates the role of suffixation in Pashto-English hybridization at the word level and the sociolinguistic significance of such hybridization. Data from electronic media, including programmes from Khyber News, representing both formal and informal domains of language use, is used for the study. The programmes selected include Top Stories, News Hour, Mohim Repotuna, Naway Sahar and Sports Mag. Employing content analysis as a research method, a quantitative approach for the investigation of hybridized English lexical category and a qualitative approach for its sociolinguistic significance have been used. The present study employs the framework presented by Kachru (1978), as adapted by Rasul (2006). The findings of the research show that noun is frequently hybridized both in formal and informal domains of language used mostly by the addition of Pashto inflectional suffixes. It is concluded that suffixation got an important role in Pashto-English hybridization that leads to the creation of hybrid forms predicting language shift and the emergence of a new variety of Pashto.

Key Words: Pashto, English, Suffixation, Lexical Items

Introduction

Language hybridization, a very common and at the same time very important phenomenon, refers to the process of mixing two languages. It is the result of bilingualism where two codes from different languages mix to form a third code that contains elements of the two-parent languages in a structurally definable pattern. Code is a “particular dialect or language that a person chooses to use on any occasion” (Wardhaugh, 2010, p. 103). Bilingualism is a natural phenomenon and is the product of language contact. Bilinguals use code-switching and code-mixing as linguistic procedures to switch from one language to the other depending on different factors of the communicative event. In code-switching, “one single utterance in one language is followed by one single utterance in the other” (Titone, 1991, p. 442). Whereas code mixing occurs when during a conversation, speakers “use both languages together to the extent that they shift from one language to the other in the course of a single utterance” (Wardhaugh, 2010, p. 106). Frequent code-mixing leads to language hybridization, that is, a synthesis of two languages. When two codes interact, through code-mixing, a third code is created that possesses structural features specific to the newly created code, known as hybridized word. The present research aims to examine Pashto-English hybridization as observed in Pashto electronic media. Pashto-English hybridization is analyzed at the lexical level.

Pashto is the dominant language of the people living in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) that is used mostly in the informal domains of language use, i.e., in family, with friends, in playgrounds, in *hujra* [community centre], and informal gatherings at offices and educational institutions. Urdu is the national language of Pakistan which is used mainly for communication with people of other localities within the country who do not understand Pashto. Urdu is also the language of media in Pakistan. People of KP learn English to get good jobs and higher social status. English has acquired the status of an official language of KP. The education system and electronic media, formal and informal sources of education, respectively, are the two great promoters of English across the region. Both these formal and informal sources of education have made it easier and attractive for the speech community of

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the region to produce mixed speeches through code-mixing. Khan and Muysken (2014) are of the view that “in KP, especially in the Mardan division, the Peshawar division and the Malakand division, code-mixing (hereafter CM) is the driving force to introduce borrowings in the Pashto speech community” (p. 98). Pashto-English code-mixing is frequent in an accepted model of communication, especially in the Yousafzai dialect of Pashto, in KP. This code-mixing can be at a different level; however, the aim of the present research is investigating intraword code-mixing, i.e., hybridization at the word level.

Significance of the Study

The present research examines Pashto-English hybridization and provides critical insights into the role of suffixation. Furthermore, the concerned research facilitates the comprehension of language hybridization from a social perspective. The present study also investigates a shift from Pashto to the English language. However, the present research predicts the emergence of a new variety of Pashto rather than the complete shift to English or some indigenized variety of English.

Literature Review

Bilingualism is the product of language contact, and Filipovic (1986), as quoted by Macek (1991), classifies it into two categories: direct contact and indirect contact. As an instance of direct contact, the bilinguals speak their languages actively in communication. The impact of this direct contact of languages can be observed at word, sentence and discourse level. On the other hand, indirect contact occurs in mass media. The effect of indirect contact can be observed mostly at the word level, whereas the syntax does not undergo any major change.

Macek (1991) argues that in the swiftly changing sociolinguistic scenario of the world, “The distinction between direct and indirect contact, bilingualism and monolingualism seems to be fuzzy rather than clear cut” (p. 281). Electronic media has played a significant role in widening the scope of oral communication. Consequently, it has become difficult for sociolinguists to draw a line of demarcation between bilingualism and monolingualism and what Macek (1991) has termed as ‘partial bilingualism’. Monolingualism was regarded as a standard model of language study in society for the last five decades as Fishman (1972) remarks that even Whorf believed in this notion. Nevertheless, to Fishman (1972), bilingualism for the first time received appreciation with the discussions of Weinreich’s *Languages in Contact* (1953) and *bilingualism in the Americas* by Haugen (1956). It is unclear to Fishman (1972) that whether Haugen and Weinreich considered bilingualism as a normal phenomenon or not because both of them took it as “a special, somewhat heightened, state of affairs associated somehow with emigrational trauma, intergroup conflict, and other expressions of man in *extremis*” (p. 58). Fishman (1972) remarks that Haugen (1956) had pointed out the merits and demerits of bilingualism that mean that he did not consider bilingualism as a normal phenomenon whereas, in present times, bi/multilingualism is considered as something natural. According to Romaine (1995), ‘contact linguistics’ has emerged as a separate discipline as a result of the spread of bilingualism.

Languages have come to a closer interaction in the present communicative world due to globalization. Therefore, the phenomena of code-switching, code-mixing, language hybridization and language shift have not only gained momentum but have also attained great importance in the current global context.

If we take the Pakistani context, Urdu-English contact is not a new phenomenon. It dates back to the pre-partition period where new languages emerged as a result of Urdu-English contact. Rangila, Thirumalai, and Mallikarjun (2001) cite Grierson’s 1901 census report on the mother tongues spoken in India that mentioned situations where native speakers of Urdu mixed English words and phrases into their conversation, for example, an Urdu speaker doctor once said, “*kuttay ka saliva bahut antiseptic hai.*”

Urdu became the national language of Pakistan soon after Pakistan won independence. The factors which added to the prestige of English in Pakistan are the colonial past, as a medium of instruction in education, as an official language and rapid globalization. Urdu is used mainly for communication with people of other localities within the country who do not understand the regional languages of Pakistan. Urdu is the language of media. People prefer to read Urdu newspapers and listen to Urdu news channels. Apart from its national language status, Urdu literature is also very popular. People across the country like to listen to Urdu songs, read Urdu poetry and watch Urdu drama. Urdu has also been a medium of instruction in our government schools at the primary and

secondary level. But now it has been replaced by English even in government schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In short, the state uses Urdu as a unifying force to keep the federation united, but from a social point of view, it has no prestige factor attached to it. It is actually English that is considered more prestigious than Urdu.

Presently, English is the medium of instruction in our educational institutions, an official language and the language of media in Pakistan, which has resulted in frequent code-mixing and code-switching and the desertion of certain lexical items of Urdu. Some notable researches on Urdu-English code-mixing have been carried out separately by Kauser (2006) and Rasul (2006). Kauser (2006) has observed Urdu-English code-mixing in FM radio programmes and has examined considerable data regarding Urdu-English code-mixing at different structural levels. Rasul (2006) has observed Urdu-English code-mixing and language hybridization at lexical and phrase level.

Taking Pashto-English contact, let's talk about Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). It is the north-western part of Pakistan which is adjacent to the Durand Line, the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The majority of the people living in this region are Pashto speakers, also called Pakhtuns. The speech community of the region is multilingual. Pashto is the dominant language of the people living in KP, which is used mostly in the informal domains of language use, i.e., in family, with friends, in playgrounds, in *hujra* (community centre), and informal gatherings at offices and educational institutions. English is used in the formal domains of language use. It is used in educational institutions, in offices, in courts, in trade and in politics. Because of the instrumental nature of English, people of KP learn it to get good jobs and a higher social status. Hence, English has acquired the status of an official language of KP. The education system and electronic media, formal and informal sources of education, respectively, are the two great promoters of English across the region. Both these formal and informal sources of education have made it easier and attractive for the speech community of the region to produce mixed speeches through code-mixing. Khan and Muysken (2014) are of the view that "in KP, especially in the Mardan division, the Peshawar division and the Malakand division, code-mixing (hereafter CM) is the driving force to introduce borrowings in the Pashto speech community" (p. 98). Pashto-English code-mixing is frequent, especially in the Yousafzai dialect of Pashto, in KP.

Significant work on Pashto-English code-mixing has been carried out by Khan (2011). His study focuses on how different social factors like context, topic, style, interlocutors, social status, identity and prestige influence Pashto-English code-mixing. He narrates an interview in which a respondent is asked as to why he mixes English with Pashto. The respondent answers, "I use English while talking to other Pashto speakers for the better interpretation of my feelings and thoughts. I feel easy and comfortable in conversation by mixing two languages" (Khan, 2011, p. 122).

Khan and Muysken (2014) have analyzed how nouns and verbs could more appropriately be incorporated in Pashto-English bilingual communication. English-Pashto Bilingual Compound Verb (BCV) 'play kawal' is taken as an example which shows different functions with different meanings in Pashto.

	BCVS	MCVS	GLOSS
	play kawal	laba kawal	to play
Sports	shot play kəwəl	Ball wəhəl	to play shot
Politics	role play kəwəl	kirdar ada kəwəl	to play a role
Drama	kirdar play kəwəl	kirdar kəwəl	to play a role

Further in the study, a few English singular nouns are taken as an example with Pashto singular definite numeral adjective 'yəw', which means 'one'. 'Yəw cup' means 'a cup', and 'yəw pen' means 'a pen'. But similar to English nouns, Pashto nouns can also be pluralized. Hence, the case of the embedded English singular nouns in Pashto, a matrix language, in this case, is confusing to be termed as borrowing or code-mixing. Khan and Muysken (2014) remark that "the marking of an embedded element into a matrix language does not provide ample proof to determine the embedded word as a code mix or a loanword" (p. 101).

The situation has lead to language hybridization. Hybridization can occur at different levels, e.g., at a word, phrase and sentence level; however, the focus of this study is hybridization, specifically, the role of hybridization at the word level.

Research Method

Data from five various programmes from Khyber News, a prominent Pashto channel, were taken. In this way, two episodes from each programme were taken, making the total number of ten episodes. The Programmes include *Mohim Reportuna*, *Naway Sahar*, *Top Stories*, *News Hour* and *Sports Mag*. The programmes were selected through purposive sampling that cover most of the important domains, for example, education, administration, economy, sports and courts.

The present research uses both quantitative and qualitative research approaches to achieve the objectives. A specific number of television programmes were selected, and the linguistic data was analyzed in detail. The quantitative feature of this research is that the collected data categorized suffixes wise and the items falling under each category were counted and compared to the items of another category. On the other hand, the qualitative aspect of this study encompasses an analysis, elaboration of the categorized data to inquire the motives behind code-mixing, the process of language hybridization and some of the resultant linguistic phenomena. Hence, the mixed approach enabled the researcher to construct a paradigm that provided the opportunity to inquire about the grammatical and structural as well as the sociolinguistic dimensions of Pashto-English hybridization.

As said earlier, the data for the present study has been collected from the media. Therefore, it will be more proper that the method of this research should be considered from the media viewpoint. Hence, it can be categorized under ‘content analysis’, which is a method mostly used in media research. Content analysis is normally considered quantitative, but according to Gunter (2000), “in its purely quantitative form, the content analysis should...be objective, systematic and replicable” (p. 60). Tavakoli (2012) defines content analysis as a qualitative research technique which “is used for analyzing and tabulating the frequency of occurrence of themes, emotions, topics, ideas, opinions and other aspects of the content of written and spoken communication” (p. 101). Thus, both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of this research are covered by content analysis. Content analysis is used for different purposes. According to Mayring (2004), content analysis “focuses on language and linguistic features, meaning in context, is systematic and verifiable (e.g. in its use of codes and categories), as the rules for analysis are explicit, transparent and public” (pp. 267–9). In light of the discussions made by Wimmer and Dominick (1994) on content analysis, the objectives related to the present study are to describe the trends and patterns of media language and to compare them with the real-life situations of language use.

Analysis: Hybridization by Pashto Suffixes

This category analyzes the findings presented in the form of nine tables which show how various Pashto suffixes hybridize English words. A suffix is “a bound morpheme added to the end of a word” (Yule, 2010, p. 295). A Pashto speaker mixes English codes in Pashto but, sometimes in conversation, the speaker does not use pure English codes; rather the speaker uses a hybridized code by adding a Pashto suffix to an English word. The following tables present the findings where participants of the selected television programmes have used various Pashto suffixes to hybridize English words during their conversation. This category is concluded with an overall discussion on the data collected from the selected TV programmes. In the following section, the data has been analyzed.

Table 1. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-ona”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Ratona</i>	1	<i>Jailona</i>	1
<i>Groupona</i>	1	<i>Blastona</i>	2
<i>Schoolona</i>	5	<i>Schemona</i>	1
<i>Collegona</i>	2	<i>Casona</i>	4
<i>Operationona</i>	3	<i>Runsona</i>	1
<i>Roadona</i>	1	<i>Matchona</i>	2
<i>Taxona</i>	3	<i>Groundona</i>	1
<i>Chansonona</i>	1		

The above table presents a list of 15 words that have been hybridized by using the Pashto plural suffix *-ona*. The frequency column shows how many times that particular hybridized form has been used during these programmes. The above data has been collected from all the selected programmes. The suffix *-ona* is probably the most frequent form used for the pluralization of singular Pashto nouns. For example, the singular Pashto noun *gul* (flower) is pluralized as *gulona* (flowers), *kitab* (book) as *kitabona* (books) and *qalam* (pen) as *qlamona* (pens).

Table 2. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-ono”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Postono</i>	1	<i>Damono</i>	1
<i>Projectono</i>	1	<i>Collegono</i>	1
<i>Schoolono</i>	1	<i>Dancono</i>	1
<i>Jailono</i>	1	<i>Matchono</i>	1
<i>Operationono</i>	3	<i>Sidono</i>	1
<i>Taxono</i>	2	<i>Clubono</i>	1
<i>Casono</i>	1	<i>Runsono</i>	2

The above table contains 14 words, all of which have been hybridized by the Pashto suffix *-ono*. This suffix is perhaps the second most frequently used Pashto plural suffix. English words hybridized by Pashto suffix *-ono* in the selected TV programmes are; post, project, school, jail, operation, tax, case, dam, college, dance, match, side, club and, run. All these English words belong to the lexical category of noun and, hence, can be made plural. Furthermore, Pashto substitutes are available for all these words provided in the above table. But Pashto speakers mix these English forms with Pashto through the process of code-mixing and hybridize these English forms quite unconsciously by fixing Pashto plural suffixes into these English nouns.

Table 3. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-aan”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Studentaan</i>	2	<i>Agentaan</i>	1
<i>Memberaan</i>	2	<i>Secetryaan</i>	2
<i>Workeraan</i>	1	<i>Judgaan</i>	4
<i>Leaderaan</i>	1	<i>Businessmaan</i>	1
<i>Schoolaan</i>	1	<i>Selectoraan</i>	1

Another Pashto suffix that Pashto speakers use for the hybridization of English nouns during their conversation is *-aan*. The above table provides a list of ten words hybridized by Pashto plural suffix *-aan*. English words hybridized by Pashto suffix *-aan* in the selected TV programmes are; student, member, worker, leader, school, agent, secretary, judge, businessman and selector.

Table 4. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-ano”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Partyano</i>	2	<i>Masterano</i>	1
<i>Businessmanano</i>	1	<i>Companyano</i>	1
<i>Studentano</i>	3	<i>Commanderano</i>	1
<i>Leaderano</i>	2	<i>Judgano</i>	3
<i>Agencyano</i>	1	<i>Universtyano</i>	1

The above table provides a list of ten words hybridized by the Pashto suffix *-ano*. All words of the above table are originally English singular nouns and are code mixed by Pashto speakers of the selected TV programmes during their conversation. But Pashto speakers make these English singular nouns plural by adding the Pashto plural suffix *-ano* to these nouns. Furthermore, Pashto substitutes are available for all these expressions. For

example, Pashto substitute for the word ‘leader’ is *mashar*. Now Pashto word *mashar* can be pluralized as *masharano* but Pashto speakers pluralize English word ‘leader’ the way they do it in Pashto language.

Table 5. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-ey”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Numbarey</i>	2	<i>Assembly</i>	
<i>Policey</i>	2	<i>Missiley</i>	4
<i>Formuley</i>	1	<i>Umbrelley</i>	1
<i>Unatey</i>	1	<i>Universtey</i>	1
<i>Projectey</i>	1		1

This table presents a list of nine hybridized words used by Pashto speakers of the selected TV programmes. The originally English singular nouns used in the programmes are; number, policy, formula, unit, project, assembly, missile, umbrella and university. But Pashto speakers of the selected TV programmes used the hybridized plural forms of the abovementioned English singular nouns. Pashto plural suffix used for the pluralization of these English singular nouns is *-ey*, and the above hybrid forms provided in the list seem to be the assimilated forms of the original English singular nouns but, in fact, they are the hybridized plural forms of the original English singular nouns.

Table 6. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-ney”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Copyaney</i>	1	<i>Compyaney</i>	1
<i>Agencyaney</i>	1	<i>Policyaney</i>	1
<i>Partyaney</i>	6	<i>Universtyaney</i>	2

The list provided in the above table contains six hybridized forms used by Pashto speakers of the selected TV programmes. Pashto plural suffix which hybridizes English words ‘copy’, ‘agency’, ‘party’, ‘company’, ‘policy’ and ‘university’ is *-ney* which pluralize the abovementioned English nouns and hence hybridize them. During hybridization, each English singular noun is followed by a /jɑ:/ sound which is further followed by Pashto plural suffix *-ney*. The same rule may not necessarily be applied for Pashto singular nouns pluralized by the same suffix *-ney*. For example, the Pashto word *ghwa* is a singular common noun that means ‘cow’. The plural form of the word *ghwa* is *ghwagaaney* where the final vowel sound of the singular form is followed by /gɑ:/ sound instead of /jɑ:/ sound as it happened in the abovementioned hybridized expressions which may be because each original English singular noun hybridized in this case ends with an /i/ sound.

Table 7. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-o”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Universto</i>		<i>Serieso</i>	
<i>Hostalo</i>	5		1
	1		

The above table provides a list of three words hybridized by Pashto plural suffix *-o*. These words are *universto*, *hostalo* and *serieso*. Pashto substitutes are available for all these three words, but still, their English forms are used and hybridized by the speakers. In addition to the above list of words, Pashto speakers of the selected TV programmes use some borrowed words, for which either Pashto substitute is not available or not in common use, and pluralize them as they do it in Pashto language, i.e., by adding a plural suffix *-o* to the singular nouns. Examples of such words are *helicoptero*, *hotelo* and *wicketo*. But such words are not included in the list because they are loan words and are not considered as hybridized forms which are the subject of this study.

Table 8. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-ae”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Universtae</i>	4	<i>Committae</i>	1
<i>Partae</i>	2		

This table provides a list of three hybridized words pluralized by Pashto plural suffix *-ae*. Sometimes, this sound represents the assimilated final vowel sound of English words code-mixed in Pashto. For example;

- *Sta kum siyasi partae sara taluq day?*
- Which political party you are affiliated with?
- Here the final vowel sound of the word ‘party’ is assimilated, and the word ‘party’ is not pluralized.
- *Zamunq mulk ke dre ghatay siyasi partae di.*
- There are three major political parties in our country.

In the above example, the word *partae* is a hybridized plural form of the original English singular noun ‘party’, which is hybridized by Pashto speakers by adding the Pashto plural suffix *-ae*.

Table 9. Simple Hybridized Words Ending in Pashto Suffix “-a”

Words	Frequency	Words	Frequency
<i>Pointa</i>	1	<i>Runsa</i>	1

This table provides a list of two hybridized words pluralized by the Pashto suffix *-a*. In the Pashto language, the final *-a* sound is mostly added to the feminine forms of certain masculine nouns. For example, the Pashto word *ustaaz* means a male teacher, but *ustaaza* means a female teacher. This final *-a* sound is also added to Pashto nouns when they are used in the vocative case. This suffix is the least used Pashto plural suffix, but still, it pluralizes certain Pashto singular nouns. And in most cases, Pashto singular nouns pluralized by this suffix can also be pluralized by other Pashto plural suffixes. For example, the Pashto word *kitab* means a single ‘book’, but Pashto word *kitaba* means many ‘books’. But the word *kitab* can also be pluralized as *kitabona*, i.e., by adding Pashto plural suffix *-ona* to *kitab*.

- *Ta so kitaba waghastal?*
- *Ta so kitabona waghastal?*
- How many books have you purchased?

Findings and Discussion

Findings of this category indicate that there are nine Pashto suffixes that pluralize, and hence hybridize English simple words. The order of frequency of Pashto plural suffixes is; *-ona*, *-ono*, *-aan*, *-ano*, *-ey*, *-ney*, *-o*, *-ae*, and *-a*. The most frequent plural suffix used to hybridize English simple words is *-ona* whereas *-a* is the least used plural suffix. Unlike English, rules for the pluralization of Pashto singular nouns are not very strict. Different Pashto suffixes have been used for the aforementioned purpose. Pashto speakers of the selected TV programmes use these suffixes to pluralize and hence hybridize English singular nouns exactly in the same manner as those speakers do in Pashto. Furthermore, a particular Pashto singular noun can be pluralized by the addition of more than one plural suffix. This category of analysis further validates that the lexical category, which is more frequently hybridized in the process of Pashto-English code-mixing, is the category of noun.

Each table of this category provides a list of simple words hybridized by a certain Pashto plural suffix. Unlike English, rules for the pluralization of Pashto singular nouns are not very strict. Different Pashto suffixes are used for the aforementioned purpose. Pashto speakers of the selected TV programmes use these suffixes to pluralize and hence hybridize English singular nouns exactly in the same manner as these speakers do in Pashto. Furthermore, a particular Pashto singular noun can be pluralized by the addition of more than one plural suffix.

For example, Pashto singular noun *gul* means ‘flower’. Now this noun can be made plural in more than one way by a Pashto speaker;

- *Di tasveer ke so gula di?*
- *Di tasveer ke so gulona di?*
- *Di tasveer ke so gulaan di?*

English translation for all the above Pashto sentences can be;

- How many flowers are there in this picture?

Conclusion

In the current scenario of media globalization, code-switching and the resultant issues of language hybridization and language change have gained immense importance. According to Sebba (1997), “The phenomenon of code-switching was ignored for a long time, even by linguists, because of the analytical difficulties it presented”. But recently, it has been observed and studied and “has attracted a great deal of interest” (p. 12). Media, particularly electronic media, has brought different languages into contact. English which enjoys an international status, has influenced many languages of the world. Pashto-English code-mixing is also a consequent phenomenon of Pashto-English contact, which has further resulted in the process of Pashto-English hybridization. The very important point, suffixation has got an important role in this whole process of hybridization at the word level were because of different types of suffixes, hybrid Pashto-English words are formed. Similarly, The role of Pashto electronic media is significant in this regard which, on the one hand, contributes to the enrichment of Pashto but, on the other hand, leads to change in language. Furthermore, hybridization has significance from a sociolinguistic aspect as well. Some terms deal with different domains of the society, and some traces show that the colonial legacy in terms of politics and administration, etc., have an impact on the selection of words from Pashto, thus resulting in hybridization.

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