

Lexical and Syntactical differences in Pakistani and British English

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Abstract- The present study aims to identify the lexical variation in Pakistani English to see how it is used differently with the interference of their own language(s) then Standard British English, as well as the syntactical differences in the usage of Pakistani English and Standard British English. The study uses the qualitative method for the collection of data. Data was collected through informal conversation which lasted for 12 minutes and was recorded on the phone. Six students from first year were the participants of the study. Since the data was verbal conversation; therefore, it was first transcribed carefully, and was further analyzed to get the required data for the study. The results showed that speakers of Pakistani English use different modal verbs then Standard British English; in addition, they tend to incorporate words from their first language into their speech, and are not aware about how to structure a sentence using different tenses.

Index Terms- British English, Lexical, Pakistani English, Syntactical.

INTRODUCTION

English is worldwide recognized and most commonly spoken global language with 1.5 to two billion number of speakers. Due to the globalization of language it is of no surprise that various varieties of language have arisen and are spoken. Some of the significant varieties of English are British English, American English, Canadian English, Australian English, South African English, Indian English, and Pakistani English. Varieties of English language are further divided into different dialects such as: Anglo Cornish, Gallah, Bengali English, and Southern Indian English to name a few. English language is further divided into different dialects such as: Anglo Cornish, Gallah, Bengali English, and Southern Indian English to name a few.

Versatility of English language can be seen from the usage of different varieties of English which differ from one another in terms of accent, vocabulary, grammar, discourse, spelling, pronunciation, tone, intonation, and its variation in sociolinguistics (Han, 2018). It also varies in phrases, linguistic construct as well as in the usage of words (Addo & Atianashie, 2021).

The aim of this paper is to highlight the difference between the lexical variation and syntactical structures used by educated Pakistanis speakers and British speakers.

PAKISTANI ENGLISH

Pakistani English is a non-native variety of English language as it is not the native language of the people of Pakistan and it is different variety then Standard British English (Irfan, 2017). This variety has different features in Morphology, lexis, syntax, semantics and phonology. It is believed that Pakistani English is a distinct variety and will soon make its place as standard variety of English language (Khan, 2012). For a non-native variety to become a standard new variety it has to go through three different stages as stated by (Kachru, 1986) the stages are:

1. In the initial stage a non-native variety is yet to be recognized
2. In the second stage it will be recognized and considered as sub-standard variety
3. In the final stage it will reach at the point of becoming norm-providing language that is standard language.

Mansoor (2004) believes that Pakistani English is at the third stage and will soon enjoy the status of Standard English language.

The variety of English that is spoken in Pakistan is known as Pinlish (PE) or Pakistani English which relates to British English; however, it is different from other varieties of English in usage of its vocabulary, accent and syntactical structures. English is one of the official languages of the country alongside with Urdu, and has become the part of the culture as it is the medium of instruction in elite colleges and universities which has made English a marker of elite status as it is also the language used in the domain of power such as: civil service, language of court, and media (Rehman, 1996). Rehman (1996) relates PE with Anglicized English (BSE) British Standard English which is much similar language spoken as well as written used by people living in Britain. Rehman (1990) has stated multiple dialects of English language spoken across Pakistan such as: Acrolect Pakistani English which is used by educated group of people in schools and colleges as their medium of instruction, Mesolectal Pakistani English spoken by people whose medium of instruction is Urdu in schools, Basilect Pakistani English spoken by group of people who are enrolled in vocational schools.

REASONS WHY PAKISTANI ENGLISH VARIES BRITISH ENGLISH

Standard British English is an original native variety of English language which is norm providing variety; whereas, Pakistani English is among the non-native varieties of English language, and hence it is norm depended variety. It has been observed that a new variety is born when two varieties native and non-native variety come into contact which differ in its features and certain characteristics (J,E & Shamim).

Changes are indispensable part of any language and its varieties a living language always go under changes at different period of time. Pakistani English variety has been and is still going under changes from the Standard British English due to various reasons some of which are interaction with local regional languages, social context, the component of religion which in case of Pakistani English leads to borrow words from Arabic language and culture. As a result some features of Pakistani English have been changed from British Standard English such as Pakistani English speakers pronounce /r/ sound while it is not pronounced in Standard British English.

As we know that Pakistani English is different from British English in terms of many aspects such as: pronunciation, morphology, lexis, sometimes in terms of pragmatics, and also in terms of syntactic structures. The main reason behind this variation can be the cultural differences, as language is not something that is or can be learned in a vacuum which means it carries cultural aspects and influences with it. According to (Kachru, Clyne, Tarone and Yule, 1987) the reason that language change occurs is because it enables its new speakers to express their cultural reality conveniently. However, language learning is the process of also learning or adopting the social as well as the cultural part of that specific community, and language begin its integral part (Health, 1983; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2008). When a Pakistani speaker speaks English language he incorporates the words from his own language that can be Sindhi, Urdu, Saraiki, Punjabi or any other native language, but in addition to this a Pakistani speaker uses words from Arabic language which shows his religion and cultural affiliation. As (Mehboob, 2009) in his study has revealed the use of Urdu language while interacting in Pakistani English as well as the borrowings from Arabic language used while speaking in Urdu or English language. Code mixing using Arabic language while speaking English helps to distinguish it from Indian language. According to (Rehman, 2010) Unlike Indian English, Pakistani English is shaped by Islam and Muslim History. By stating this (Rehman, 2010) wants to imply that Pakistani English (PE) is not identical to Indian English because the former derives its terminology from Islamic register; whereas, the later do not. It also shows that depending on the language a person speaks he develops different identity or identities. According to (Gellner, 1983; Peirce, 1995) learning a new language shapes learners' new identities which also contribute to form a national identity. Whereas, socio culture theory also supports the view that social interaction between people also increase cognitive development (Brown, 2007). Furthermore, (Mehboob, 2004) comes up with the results that Pakistani English language has the influence of Urdu, Arabic, as well as other Persian language which shape it as a separate specific variety of English.

Weinreich (1953) also supports this view by stating that when two distinct languages come into contact in a new cultural

reality, they slowly and gradually tend to influence one and other in a manner that they produce a different variety of a language.

Features of Lexical variation in Pakistani English

Lexical variation in Pakistani English occurs due to multiple reasons some of the common reason for the occurrence of variation are borrowing, code-mixing or code-switching, religious and cultural influence, and use of words as honorific expressions.

The concept of borrowing is the introduction of a word from a native language of speaker into the foreign language (Sarfraz, 2021). In Pakistani context Urdu language plays the role of native language; whereas, Pakistani English is the foreign language. Speakers of Pakistani English borrow the words of Urdu language and use them in their speech subconsciously. Code-switching is another reason in the lexical variation of Pakistani English. (Afzal, Nawaz & Zia, 2023) believes that the purpose for code switching to occur is to express emotions and to show cultural relativity. Another similar concept is Code-mixing it is the process of inserting terms of one language into another (Afzal, Nawaz & Zia, 2023). Cultural and religious influence also leads to lexical variation in Pakistan English and Honorific words such as: "JP", "API" leads to changing the words of Pakistani English from British Standard English (Afzal & etal, 2023).

SYNTACTICAL VARIATION IN PAKISTANI ENGLISH

Pakistani English varies from Standard British English at sentence level, clause level, in the use of modal verbs Pakistani English tend to use double modal verbs, word order changes can also be seen. Baumgardner (1993) stated that variation can be seen in British English and Pakistani English as adjectives in Pakistani English are followed by to-infinite instead of preposition or participle clause; whereas, British English follows this structure. Pakistani English also differs in noun complementation in addition, Pakistani speakers substitute main verb with "that" clause. For instance, He wants to go (British English), I want that I should leave (Pakistani English) (Baumgardner, 1993).

Another difference that can be found in Pakistani English is of the use of double modal verbs in a sentence as this variation cannot be found in Standard British English (Imran, 2023) he cites an example: "When this occurs, you may will notice a substantial inflow connected with visitors on your weblog". (Swan & Walter, 2011) stated that there is no such possible feature in Standard British English. Whereas, (Imore, 2016) through her research found out that the use of double modal is used in Scotland and in the North of England, and most commonly used double modal verbs are could and might.

REASONS OF LEXICAL AND SYNTACTICAL VARIATION

According to (Ali, 2016) there is no proper platform given to the learners to speak in public; therefore, the learners feel hesitant and as an outcome local learners can read, write, listen, learn, but are cautious when it comes to speaking. Speaking properly means communicating fluently and accurately as (Mazouzi, 2013) believes that the language learning activities for the learners must be formed on the balance between the fluency and accuracy. In addition to this (Hedge, 2000) is also in a view that fluency is a key aspect because it tends to give coherence to

grammatical/structural elements of sentences, various aspects of pronunciation, as well as supra segmental features.

One of the main reasons why learners tend to switch to the lexis of their language is because the lack of vocabulary in English language, it is when they do not find proper word in the target language and switch to their own language. That's why (Mazouzi,2013) says while developing speaking ability focus should be given to language structures, pronunciation, and vocabulary .Other reasons that lead to the failure of proper speaking are psychological factors such as anxiety, fear, pressure of peers, as well as lack of confidence (Taun & Main, 2015).

The main obstacle remains the linguistic difficulties such as: the problem in understanding the syntax of English language, not enough knowledge of vocabulary, as well as the mispronunciation of the words. The difference in the syntax structure among different languages is one of the important reasons for having trouble in understanding the target language. As Pakistani speakers of Urdu and Punjabi language faces a lot of problem because the syntax structures of the languages are quite opposite to English language (Gulzar, 2018). However, in spite of these reasons many students are trying to learn English, and are enrolling themselves in English learning courses and department of English language and literature, but this is not enough to learn a language; as the number of students failure in English language at every level is still alarming(Shamim, 2008). Different researchers have found that most of the students lose their interest in their studies due to the reason that they cannot achieve the desired proficiency in language, and as a result they dropout their studies (Khatta, 2012).

The reason why second language learners or speakers of Pakistani English cannot communicate properly in target language (Standard British English), and have difficulty finding and using lexicon from their own language is because they have limited knowledge of vocabulary. According to (Cameron, 2001) having the sufficient knowledge of vocabulary with other areas of language plays a great role for the second language students to

METDOLOGY

This study employed the qualitative method to identify the lexical variation and syntactical differences in Pakistani and British (Standard) English. An informal conversation of 12 minutes was recorded in English from the students of first year of Shaheed Allah Buksh Soomro university of Art, Design and Heritages, Jamshoro. The topic of conversation was "where do they see themselves after 5 years". The total number of participants for this study was 6. With the ratio of 3:3 among which 3 were male participants and 3 were female participants respectively. The sampling technique undertaken was convenient sampling. The conversation was recorded on the phone. The conversation was then transcribed into the written format by listening to it carefully for the purpose of analysis. The data was further discussed in the analysis section.

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to see how educated Pakistani English speakers speak English; the main purpose of this undertaken study is to identify the variation in their speech from the

acquire a language. Dulay (1982) has stated that the interference of vocabulary of first language is what he calls is the automatic transfer of the surface structures of first language on to the surface structures of the target language which is because of the habit.

However, the reason that learners have limited vocabulary is because that have limited exposure to the language, as they do not find opportunities to communicate, also because do not have people to communicate with. According to (Chandrasegaran, 1979) conducted a study on Malay students and found out that there is a quite strong relationship between the extent to which learners are exposed to the environment of English language, and to the proficiency they acquire in a language.

These all various reasons cited above are responsible for having a good command on a target language or not.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study takes two objectives into consideration:

1. The first objective of the study is to identify the variation in speech between Pakistani and British Standard English in terms of the usage of lexis.
2. The second objective of the study is to identify the syntactical difference in Pakistani and British Standard English.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1: What is the variation in the usage of lexis in Pakistani and British Standard English?

Q2: What is the difference in syntactical structure in Pakistani and British Standard English?

standard British English in terms of syntactical structures and to find out lexical variation. "BE" will be used for British English; whereas, "P" will indicate participant. The words or sentences with inverted commas (") are the mistakes committed by participants.

Participant1: After five years I'm glad to see myself as "a" "architecture".

The researcher believes that correct sentence in a Standard British English would be:

BE: After five years I would be glad to see myself as an architect.

P1: I want to get experienced". "To work my responsibility to work my goal". "May I get married tomorrow".

The researcher believes that correct sentence in a Standard British English would be:

BE: In five years I want to get experience, to fulfill my responsibility, and to achieve my goal. I may get married tomorrow.

In these above sentences it can be seen that student is confused between the choice of words as not able to distinguish between the name of degree and a profession, wrong choice of article instead of using "an" the participant has used "a", use of two

verbs together such as: want, have. A simple statement was turned into question by changing the position of modal verb and subject in the sentence.

Participant 2: After five years when I will “pass out”, I will “start startup an architecture office” with my friends.

The researcher believes that correct sentence in a Standard British English would be

BE: After five years when I will complete my degree, I will start an architecture studio with my friends.

P2: And I will get married, “my father also want me” to get married as I’m 26 and it is good age to get married because I’m “architecture and I’m bara admi”, “he want” me to get married to his niece and after some “khuwari” I “have accept” my cousin as my wife.

The researcher believes that correct sentence in a Standard British English would be

BE: And I will get married as my father will also want me to get married. By that time I will be 26 and it is good age to get married. I am a successful architect. He wants me to get married to his niece and after trying my luck I have accepted my cousin as my wife.

The participant used the word “pass out” to show that he graduated from university; either it should be used as “passed out” or with different words, “start a startup” is a wrong expression to say that he would start an architecture studio. No use of inflection “he want”, the correct form would be “he wants”. The words such as “bara admi” and “Khuwari” are lexical borrowing are the participant’s native language Urdu.

Participant3: what “change come” in to my life after some years, “thora sa” confuse “hoya hu” a little moment can change a life of an artist. I “hard work in my field with the rest of my heart” and I’m sure after 5 years I’ll become “an” great artist and I’m sure because of “that hard work will never waste”. Someone do something with his inner soul it will shine. After “got” a great success I’ll support my family’s expanse and I’ll go to “Hajj” and “Ummarh” with my mother.

The researcher believes that correct sentence in a Standard British English would be

BE: what change can possibly come into my life after some years, I’m bit confuse and have no idea. As, little moment can change life of an artist. I work hard in my field with bottom of my heart and I’m sure after 5 years I’ll become a great artist and I’m sure because hard work is never wasted. Someone do something with his inner soul it will shine. After getting/achieving a great success I’ll support my family’s expanse and I’ll go to pilgrimage with my mother.

The participant used wrong article “an” instead of “a”. Incomplete sentence such as what change into my life after some years. Moreover, the words “thora sa” and “hoya hu” are lexical borrowing from Urdu language, words such as: “Hajj” and “Ummrah” are words of Arabic language and it is due to religious influence.

Participant4: I’m a very beautiful child of my parents. They have one son and three “daughter”. I’m very “ladla” child of my mom and father, and “there are very kindly in my life”. I do “chid” “char” in class and “bahir” going class “sy”. I’m enjoying the reading and “today my all friends my beautifully” class student, and Ma’am very “sweetly” “soft heart because I’m proud ma’am excellent”.

The researcher believes that correct sentence in a Standard British English would be

BE: I’m a very beautiful child of my parents. They have one son and three daughters. I’m favorite child of my mom and dad, and I’m very kind to have them in my life. I create disturbance in the class and always go out from class. I’m enjoying reading, today all my friends, beautiful class fellows and Ma’am are very sweet, and soft hearted. I’m proud of ma’am, excellent.

The participant didn’t use inflection in the “daughters” as it is the plural “s” needs to be added to make it plural form, adjective “beautiful” is used as an adverb “beautifully”; similarly the word “sweet” is also used as an adverb; though, it should be used as adjective. Words like “ladla”, “sy”, “bahir”, “chid char” are lexical borrowing from Urdu language.

Participant5: “Ab sawal ye hai k” what I will do after 5 years.

After my graduation I’ll “joined to” another university to do my masters.

The researcher believes that correct sentence in a Standard British English would be

BE: Now the question is what I’ll do after 5 years? After my graduation I’ll join another university for the degree of masters.

The phrase “Ab sawal ye hai k” is from Urdu language, and participant has done code-switching. Instead of using the word “join”, “joined” is used which past tense; however, the participant is talking about future.

Participant6: After 5 years I see myself at the top of “my sky of my dreams” in 5 years. I’m going to struggle with my family, my brother, my sister, my mother and my “papa” “inshallah” “support me very well”. They are supporting me right now and they’ll support me “ever and ever and ever”. And help me to complete my dreams “fulfill my dreams”. My biggest dream is to complete my graduation because this dream is “sees by mother’s eyes.” After completing my “architecture” I’ll “be make” a little home where I with “I’ll live with all memories from childhood” and I’ll be a good “architecture” then I will be “thanking” to my mom in my heart because “she were never beat me” “I never on that stage.”

The researcher believes that correct sentence in a Standard British English would be

BE: After 5 years I see myself at the top of sky of my dreams. For this I’m going to struggle with my family, my brother, and my sister. My mother and my father will hopefully provide me a good support. Though, they are supporting me right now, and they’ll keep supporting me always. And help me to accomplish my dreams, to fulfill my dreams. The biggest dream of my life is to complete my graduation because this dream is seen by my mother. After completing my architecture degree, I’ll build a home where I can live with all memories of my childhood, and I’ll be a good architect, then I will pay my gratitude to my mom in my heart because if she had never been hard on me I would have never been on this stage.

The participant is confused about the usage of tenses and their usage within the sentences. Inflection is used in the word “sees” whereas; it should be used in the past tense “seen”. “The” article is not used with the superlative degree “biggest”. The word “papa” is cultural influence of participant’s culture it used for

“father” in Pakistani culture. The word “inshallah” is the word from Arabic language it is due to the religious influence.

CONCLUSION

The analysis showed that Pakistani English and Standard British English have syntactical and lexical variation. Many reasons were brought up in the light such as lexical borrowing, cultural and religious influence, code switching, use of double modal verbs, using articles inappropriately or not using at all. It is because Pakistani English is spoken by multilingual speakers and their culture and features of first language such as vocabulary, sentence structure, and pronunciation plays role in their quality of speaking English. Due to such reasons Pakistani English varies from Standard British English and is considered wrong in academics and speakers are considered having low knowledge of the language, and are not termed as fluent speakers of English language.

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