



Exploring the Sindhi-Speaking Students' Perception on the Influence of English Language (L2) on Sindhi Language (L1) at the Public University

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KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

The widely used term borrowing is used to portray a mechanism through which one language obtains new linguistic features from other languages. In the Sindhi speech community, lexical borrowing is a common linguistics feature along with code-switching and mixing. It is sometimes caused by the lack of equivalent lexical items and many other reasons. This research aims to investigate the influence of lexical borrowing from the English language on the Sindhi language. The methodology followed in the current research is qualitative and data was collected through semi-structured interviews (n=8) using convenience sampling. The collected data was analyzed through thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarke's model (2006). The research findings suggest that lexical borrowing is leaving a negative as well as positive effect on the Sindhi language.

1. Introduction

Language is a living entity. It is dynamic and it keeps changing through different means and methods. It has the adaptability to change through cultural transmission. The phenomenon of acquiring and importing linguistic items from other languages is very common (Haugen, 1950). In different speech communities, there is always language contact. According to Treffer-Dallers (2007) the result of contact between two or more languages, lexical items are mixed by the speakers and the words are frequently shared and exchanged. It is natural and believed to happen often in linguistic and social forms. Further, Crystal, (1987) enlightens these changes to happen on different linguistic levels that include morphological, semantic level and phonological levels. Amongst these levels, the most common is semantic and lexical levels.

Gatrovsek (2013) presented in his study that the English language is the only language we are having which is enjoying high by its ranking and also its reputation globally as a significantly lexical items donor. He also added that the English Language is highly and majorly controlling language of lexical items and also all other languages are borrowing words extensively from the English language. It is being in the current trend in Pakistan that people usually do code-switching and adopt many words from English Language in their languages locally spoken. This trend is most accepted and followed by the elite class or well-educated Pakistani people to make them the society. And this is just happening because of the value given to the English language and consider it as a bridge language of power and status in society (Rahman, 2006). The effect of colonization during the 19th and 20th centuries plays a vital role in promoting the English language in Pakistan in its education, offices, business, and bureaucracy.

Problem Statement

Sindhi language is Pakistan's provincial and one of the oldest languages of the sub-continent with rich culture. Sindhi speakers are living around the world. There is a wide variation of words in Sindhi language, but people tend to borrow words in their conversation from other languages and mostly from English language. A major influence Lexical Borrowing from English language has majorly affected the essence of Sindhi Language. The frequent code-mixing has made it casual for speakers to rigorously use English words instead of real Sindhi words. The presented study focuses the lexical borrowing and its effects on Sindhi. The

researcher desired to know the Sindhi speakers' perceptions and awareness of the lexical borrowing from English to Sindhi.

1.1 Research Aim and Objective:

The study aims to examine the perception of Sindhi-speaking students on the effect of lexical borrowing from English (L2) to Sindhi (L1). Based on the aim, the following objective has been created:

- **Ob1:** To explore the perception of the Sindhi speaking students on the influence of lexical borrowing from English (L2) on Sindhi Language (L1) at a public university.

1.2 Research Question

The present study focuses to report the research question to better investigate perceptions and awareness of the influence of English on Sindhi by the Sindhi-speaking students at a public university. Based on the aim and objective following research question has been developed:

- **Q1:** What are the perceptions of the Sindhi-speaking students on the influence of lexical borrowing from English (L2) on the Sindhi Language (L1) at the public university?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study proposes future studies on the theoretical and geographical scope of the use of Sindhi language and lexical borrowing by the users. The policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and Sindhi community can propose this study for the future. The study will direct the need for further studies in the area.

2. Literature Review

According to Lehman (2013) Borrowing could be defined as taking something and using whereas, in language, words are borrowed from another language, it is called lexical borrowing. The outcome after the effect of lexical borrowing is called borrowing. Word shifting from one language to another on temporary need is called code switching. On the other hand, if the shifting of the words is permanent from one language to any other language, the words become working items of the receiving language; this phenomenon is called Borrowing (Grosjean, 2010).

This mechanism of borrowing is accountable for language change. Every language has its own characteristics through which it tends to borrow and absorb features from other languages

(Malik et.al, 2020). English is prestigious and globalized language which is spoken all over the world. It has more speakers as their second language than its native speakers therefore it is leaving an effect on other languages. People can tend to borrow words from another language in their native language even if they are not fluent in it and it happens because of simple stylistics and appropriate use of the word (Styblo, 2007).

The main reason for doing lexical borrowing according to Romaine is doing meetings and daily basis interaction with noble or upper-class people. Such people use their language by doing code-switching and borrowing different words English language while doing negotiation to look fancy and give modern look (Romaine, 1989). English language has control power, the status of lingua franca, account, and intelligence level of someone judges according to the use of English language in their conversation. Following this trend, middle- and lower-class people also do so. And now in the 21st century, this borrowing and code-switching have become the result of results lexical borrowing.

Impact of the most dominant language which is English language on the Japanese language was carried out, which suggested that today Japanese could not be spoken without the usage of English language in it (Sowers, 2017). English language is the alone donor language of the world which has its effect on most languages because of being lingua franca world widely and the psyche of people for it is that it is a dominant, prestigious, and superior language. Because of the opportunities the English language offers, different people from every aspect of life and from diverse communities try to use it for the benefits it offers to the speakers and users.

Myers-Scotton (2002) found cultural borrowing and core borrowing as two types of borrowing. Cultural borrowing happens when there is a need for words in a language because of a lack of equivalent words in the first language. Then people feel the need to borrow words from another language. Mostly this kind of borrowing includes new words of technology and science like computer, mobile, radio, CT scan, operation, Wi-Fi, pizza, gas and many other words in Sindhi language borrowed from English language. Sindhi speakers are unable to express new ideas and concepts of science, IT, medicine, and food without borrowing words from English language. Meanwhile, core borrowing happens when native speakers use words from another language even when there are words available in the language. For example, words like; time,

pen, glass, bottle, burger, bed, and bell (Panhwar, 2018) are used by Sindhi speakers from English into Sindhi. The other name for core borrowing is unnecessary borrowing.

The way to identify words as they are loan words is if the words have meaning, structure, and shape that resemble to the meaning, structure, and shape of words of the donor language (Haspelmath, 2009). Glass is an English word but this word has become part of Sindhi language. Jug is another word borrowed from English. Jacket and sweater are English words as well but are used in the Sindhi language with little modification in their pronunciation as ‘Jaaket’ and ‘Suetar’. Bottle is also English word. Switch (plug), button and board with little modification in pronouncing it as ‘Boarad’ are English words and are borrowed in Sindhi language. Verandah (lounge), bathroom is used for both washroom and bathroom; shampoo, sink as ‘Shenk’, shower is used and pronounce as ‘Shaawar’, bath towel is also borrowed and adopted in Sindhi language which is utter out in Sindhi language as ‘Tuwaal’ hanger borrowed in Sindhi language as ‘Heengar’. Furniture is also borrowed from English language and furniture like bed, showcase pronounce as shoocase, table, desk and dresser as ‘Dressing table’ are also borrowed from the globalized language; English. Gas and light are English language’s words but here Sindhi language speakers use light as a substitute word for electricity.

3. Research Methodology

The current research is based on qualitative research methodology. We use qualitative research methods to get knowledge in depth about a particular topic. It is used to know and understand any phenomenon without knowledge (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). The data collected through it is non-numeric and open-ended. It is conversational communication. The semi-structured interviews were designed to collect the required data from participants.

3.1 Sampling and Participants

The significant way to select participants in research is to select wisely according to the nature of the research question. According to Cameron (2005), usually researchers tend to choose participants on account of their knowledge and experiences. Convenience (Accidental) sampling is used in current research, in this type of research sampling researcher took participants which is convenient to the researcher, and the enthusiasm of participants, proposed by Lisa (2008). All participants (n=8) were considered based on their ethnicity i.e., Speakers of the Sindhi language from one of the oldest, public universities located in Jamshoro.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

As the study aimed to know the perceptions of the speakers, the semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the in-depth reasons and awareness of the speakers of Sindhi. The participants used Sindhi as it was convenient for them to think and observe the lexical borrowing as a phenomenon while using their mother tongue. Later, collected data was transcribed into English language from Sindhi (L1). After collecting data, it was analyzed through thematic analysis using Braun and Clarke's model (2006) of thematic analysis following its six steps of analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings suggest that extent Sindhi language speakers use borrowed words from English, which makes Sindhi influence the language according to the native speakers. Three main themes identified are the Extinction of the Sindhi language, the development of L2 i.e., English language not of L1 i.e. Sindhi language and the language is always evolving.

Most of the participants were not in favour of borrowing lexical items from English language but still, they do this. According to them, it is the need for time. Being related to English department they must do it, otherwise, people will start to judge them and their intellectuality. One of the participants made it clear by giving an example.

According to P3.

I can make you clear about it by giving the example that there is clearly written on a cigarette packet that smoking is the cause of cancer and injurious (sic) to health, but people still smoke. In the same way, we know that by borrowing words from English language is affecting the Sindhi language, but we do. (Emphasis added).

Lexical borrowing from English language is replacing the vocabulary of Sindhi language with English language and a time will come when the vocabulary of the Sindhi language will be vanished slowly and gradually by giving priority to English language. According to data collected from participants, it is analyzed that the process of borrowing from English in the Sindhi language is bringing Sindhi language towards extinction. It is very alarming situation, and this is getting worse day by day because the future generation is using English more in their daily conversation. Children are watching cartoons, games and using gadgets in English language.

Today this process is on the word level and slowly it will be on the sentence level. Lexical borrowing can cause language death. It may cause language death in a way that, while an individual is trying to borrow words from another language, the language (L1) of the individual will be dying or fading off (Ankrah, 2018).

The second theme identified is the development of English language through borrowing not of Sindhi language. As one of the participants shared:

I think modifications and simplifications of words in a language from its own words will make a language alive not by borrowing words from another language. Borrowing from another language is of course negative for any language. (Emphasis added).

Borrowing can also be positive; it directly or indirectly affects the language negatively and positively. When a donor language is borrowing lexical items from a recipient language then this process is directly or indirectly flourishing the recipient language's vocabulary and limiting the donor language's vocabulary. As English language is modifying and includes more and more communities, it reaches all languages and speakers. Sindhi language on the other hand is not known internationally and is limited to a particular community globally. The instrumental touch of English language is making it more desirable. Sindhi has been affected by the English lexical use, but not that English is taking any impact on Sindhi language as a donor language. Modifications and simplifications in a language develop it when these are made in its own language not from another language and especially from an international language i.e., English language. According to Gatrovsek (2013), English is the only donor language from which most of the borrowing process occurs and other languages extensively tend to borrow lexical items from it.

The third theme identified through data is that language is always evolving. It is dynamic, not static. It keeps on changing and modifying as time passes. It is impossible to isolate a language and if it is done then that language will die soon. Change is good to the extent of need and anything extreme is harmful. Every language needs new words for new inventions and technology.

One of the participants shared:

I think it is promoting Sindhi language because if we don't borrow these global words then Sindhi language would be considered an outdated language. So, by lexical borrowing we are actually updating and reforming our linguistic system.

Language is not an island and it keeps on borrowing words from other language in absence of equivalent vocabulary in native language (Egbe, 2017). Lexical borrowing from English is promoting Sindhi language by adding vocabulary in Sindhi but it should not be done unnecessarily if words are already present in Sindhi language. For example, in Sindhi language there are words for pen (Qalam), book (Kitaab) etc. Sindhi language would be perceived as outdated language if such words would not borrowed from English. These words are used globally which makes Sindhi language updating itself and reforming in linguistic system.

5. Conclusion

The study focused on exploring the perception of the Sindhi speakers on the lexical borrowing from English to Sindhi. Based on observation and interviews, the study concludes that the users should be able to know the fact that learning English should not affect the Sindhi language. At the rate of knowing and using English, the essence and future of Sindhi should not be taken for granted. Rigidity and excessive use of words of the words both cost language a negative effect. Language lives with modifications and reform, but the reforms should stay natural to the language. Cultural hegemony and extinction of Sindhi Language will be supported by the excessive use of English language and users getting comfortable with English more than the Sindhi language. Sindhi speakers tend to borrow words from English because it has become their need now. Nobody can stop change because it is a natural phenomenon.

The study could be further extended into assessing the general view of the speakers of Sindhi from both academic and local users. The current study is only contextualized to Public Sector University and linguistic students of English department. It can also be done by asking about English language teachers (ELTs) perceptions.

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