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AN EMERGING TREND OF THE USE OF WRONG PLURALS BY PAKISTANI BILINGUALS: A SOCIO-LEXICAL EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

English is serving the purpose of linguafranca in most of the situations of Pakistan. This extensive use has been rapidly replacing the identity of national language of Pakistanis i.e. Urdu. The nature of syntactic representation has always been the matter of confusion among linguists. Being unaware of the correct plural forms, the non-natives commit mistakes while making plurals. However, the situation is reverse when non-natives of English irrespective of knowing the right plurals make wrong plurals usually talking in their native language. The observation method was opted to check this hypothesis. The result confirms that Pakistani commit this mistake – /teachron/ instead of teachers, /candian/ instead of candies – though they do this on unconscious level. This leads to a conclusion that they take one syllable from one language and one from another and make new combination i.e. one syllable from English as 'teacher' and second 'on' from Urdu /Ustadon/ as 'candy' from English and 'ian' from Urdu. There might be another reason i.e. the loan words taken from foreign language and then unconsciously amended by the non-natives according to either their L1 LAD system or maybe they learnt it from their society. This emerging trend of unconscious use of wrong plurals is leading Pakistani bilinguals towards a diaglossic situation where they are coining portmanteau.

INTRODUCTION

Urdu started developing in north India around Delhi in about the 12th century. It was based on the language spoken in the region around Delhi, and Arabic and Persian, as well as Turkish heavily influenced it. Urdu shares its origins with Hindi, sometimes referred to as a 'sister' language of Urdu due to the similar

grammar base that they share. During the 14th and 15th centuries, much poetry and literature began to be written in Urdu. More recently, Urdu has been connected with the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, but there are many major works of Urdu literature written by Hindu and Sikh writers. After the creation of Pakistan in 1947, Urdu was chosen to be the national language of the new country. Lexical change refers to a change in the use of a word, or a generational shift in preference for one word or phrase over another. Lexical change is probably the most frequent type of language change and certainly the easiest to observe. There are different causes that lead to change any language such as analogy, language contact, cultural environment and imperfect learning. In this work, we will talk about the lexical change in the Urdu language as well as pluralization under the influence of English. In a journey of a language, 'words' usually migrate from one place to another with cultures, the users of language. Many halts, situations and environments affect the linguistic achievement. In other words, so many linguistic, social, cultural and political variables attribute to the process of linguistic borrowing. Urdu is known as a combination of many languages that originated abroad. It was believed that these foreign languages were mixed and may not be real or genuine; however, Muslims welcomed foreign languages and followed them for some reasons, which led towards the drastic change in Urdu lexicography. This study shows the influence of the borrowed words and the corresponding causes of such lexical changes. A detailed list of English and Urdu innovative plural has been attached. The word 'borrowing' is a common linguistic phenomenon. However, there is no denying the fact that for most lexical borrowing a socio-cultural and linguistic interaction between two or more linguistic communities is essential. Urdu, a member of the Indo- Aryan family of languages, has borrowed most of its lexical item from English. The exposure to the English language and culture has a major impact on the social life of Urdu speakers and their language. This is a descriptive analytical study and the data has been collected from media, meetings, workshops, conferences and TV commercials. It has been found that there are many aspects of linguistic borrowings available in Urdu. No language is exempted from the context of linguistic borrowings and its effect on the natives' L1 and their identity as well.

English syntax provides specific rules of making plural of countable nouns. There are certain rules available with understandable explanation that where, when and how singular noun can be changed into plural nouns. For example, there is a "bag of peanuts" but "all peanuts in the bag" could be counted by saying "one peanut", "two peanuts", "three peanuts" and so on. "Peanuts" could be called as countable noun and usually "s" (suffix) comes at the end of the word to indicate plural form. Singular nouns refer to single thing and plural nouns refer to more than one thing. These are the rules for forming plurals in English language.

However, there is a wrong trend emerging among Pakistanis that they are coining new/wrong plurals either consciously or unconsciously. This endeavor deals with finding the reasons of this emerging wrong trend from both social and lexical perspectives.

Zapf & Smith (2010) conducted a six-week longitudinal study on plurality of nouns which deals with question that when children generalize the plural to novel nouns. All participants were given singular form of common noun and novel nouns and asked to produce plural nouns, or given the plural form of nouns and asked to produce singular form of them. The results of this study say that young children generalize the plural to novel forms. Most of the data of this study demonstrate that the young learner of English knows that there is singular and plural form, and they know how they relate to each other. However, this study dealt with English language and only with children.

Julia Miller (2005) worked on this concept that when particularly non-native speakers of English do not find any equivalent structure in their first language they come up with certain problems. Again, this research deals with only English language but from the perspective of non-natives, whereas my research has focused on lexical change in the Urdu especially in spoken context.

Al-Khazaleh, 2020 investigated the interlanguage syntax of native Arabic speaking students of English language at Al al-Bayt University. He studied the problems faced by the students in the use of irregular plural nouns and errors committed by them. It was found that due to the difference between the language structures of Arabic and English, the students frequently relied on their L1 while making irregular plural nouns.

Messer and Kennison (2020) conducted an experimental study to find out the differences in the level of difficulty faced by English language learners while reading plural versus singular nouns when used in unambiguous sentences or in sentences that contained temporary syntactic ambiguity. The reading time consumed by the participants to read both types of sentences was compared. The results depicted that although the sentence ambiguity had a significant effect on reading time, but the complexity of the plural nouns had no influence on sentence comprehension.

The data has been collected by using in-depth observation. It is analyzed by using structural model of Kachru's linguistic feature of South Asian English, hybrid innovation, and their contextual areas, and then applied to South Asian hybrid use of Urdu and English.

Kachru developed the Three-circle Model of World Englishes in 1985 and it remains one of the most influential models for grouping the varieties of English in the world (Mollin, 2006, p.41). Kachru (1985) described the spread of English in terms of three concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle. These circles represent "the type of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages" (Kachru, 1985, p.12). Although Kachru's three-circle of English is still an important initial stepping stone for the division of Englishes, drawbacks and variations have been identified by several authors, including Kachru himself (Yoneoka, 2002). The data have been evaluated from the perspective of one of the Kachru's Three-circle i.e. outer circle.

In Urdu there are numerous plurals that don't follow the standard rules for pluralization. Many of the irregular plurals are often misused which leads towards the creation of variant irregular forms. Interesting enough many of the speakers are ignorant of this common mistake, so do not encounter any resistance. This will lead towards language change, an important and emerging discipline of linguistics. However, this is revolutionary process, but still its effect on language cannot be underestimated because it is linked to the identity of any community as well. The following table shows this innovation:

English / Urdu Plurals

Table 1. Nouns unable to retain their actual forms in Pakistani context

Singular (English)	Plural (English)	Innovative Plurals	Transcription	جمع	Transcription	واحد	Transcription
Leader	Leaders	لیڈروں	Leedroon	راہنماوں	Rehumano	راہنما	Rehnuma
Table	Tables	ٹیبلوں	Tabloon	میزوں	Maizun	میز	Maiz
Movie	Movies	موویاں	Movioon	فلموں	Filmo	فلم	Film
Book	Books	بکوں	Bookon	کتابوں	Kitabo	کتاب	Kitab
Company	Companies	کمپنیاں	Kampiniyan	گروہ	Giron	گروہ	Giro
Sister	Sisters	سیسٹروں	Sistron	بہنوں	Betiyun	بہن	Behan
Mobile	Mobiles	موبایلوں	Mobilun	موبایل	Mobilien	موبایل	Mobile
Head Master	Head Masters	ہیڈ ماسٹروں	Head Mastron	ہیڈ ماسٹرز	Head Masters	ہیڈ ماسٹر	Head Master
Election	Elections	الیلکشنوں	Electiono	انتحابات	Intikhaab	انتحاب	Intikhaan
List	Lists	لیسٹوں	Liston	فہرستوں	Qabristano	فہرست	Qbr
Color	Colors	کلروں	Colron	رنگوں	Rangun	رنگ	Rung
Barracks	Barracks	بیرکوں	Baraykron	جیلوں	Chuntiyun	جیل	Jheel
Cable	Cables	کیبلوں	Cablon	تاریں	Tarien	تار	Taar
Request	Requests	رقویسٹ یں	rikwastien	درخواستیں	Darkhstein	درخواست	Darkhst
Minister	Ministers	منیسٹروں	Ministron	وزارہ	Waziron	وزیر	Wazeer

Ground	Grounds	گراونڈیں	Groundien	زمینوں	Zamino	زمین	Zameen
Tip	Tips	ٹیپوں	Tipon	-		-	
Policy	Policies	پالیسیاں /پالیسیوں	Policiyan	حکمت عملی	Hikhmat e amli	حکمت عملی	Hikhmat e amli
Bus	Buses	بسیں	Busien	بسیں	Busien	بس	Bus
Wagon	Wagons	ویگنیں	Wagien	موٹر کاریں	Motor karien	موٹر کار	Motor kar
Terrorist	Terrorists	ٹیررسٹوں	Terrositon	دہشت گردوں	Dehst giron	دہشت گرد	Dehisht gird
Road	Roads	روڈوں	Roadon	سڑکوں	Sarkon	سڑک	Sarak
Line	Lines	لاءنوں	Lainoo	لکیروں	Lakiron	لکیر	Lakeer
Viva	Vivas	واءوے	Vivey	زبانی امتحانوں	Zubani Imtihanoo	زبانی امتحان	Zubani Imtihano
Conference	Conferences	کانفرنسیں	Conferencien	کانفرنسیں	Conferncien	کانفرنس	Conference
Society	Societies	سوسیٹیاں	Societien	معاشرے	Muhaahrey	معاشرہ	Muhaashra
USB	USBs	یو اس بیاں	Yu as biyan	یو س بیاں	Yu as biyan	یو س بی	Yu as bi
Email	Emails	ای میلیں	E mailun	ای میلیں	E-mailien	ای میل	E-mail
Page	Pages	پیجوں	Paijon	صفہے	sahfey	صفہا	Sahfa
Team	Teams	ٹیمیں	Temien	ٹیمیں	Temian	ٹیم	Team
Jeep	Jeeps	جیپں	Jeepien	جیپں	jeepein	جیپ	Jeep
Gun	Guns	گنیں	Ganien	بندوق	Bandookien	بندوق	Bandook
Cane	Canes	کینیں	Canie	بالٹیاں	Baltiyan	بالٹی	Balti
Captain	Captains	کپٹنوں	Captono	کپتان	Kaptaan	کپتان	Kaptaan
Demand	Demands	ڈیمانڈوں	Demandon	مانگ	Maang	مانگ	Maang
Customer	Customers	کسٹمروں	Kastamron	گاہکوں	ghaghun	گاہک	ghaagh
Family	Families	فیمیلیاں	Familiyan	خاندانو	Khandano	خاندان	Khandaan
Ball	Balls	بالوں	Baalon	گیںوندں	Gheindun	گیند	Ghiend

Dealer	Dealers	ڈیلروں	Dealron	ڈیلروں	Dealron	ڈیلر	Dealer
Technique	Techniques	تاکنیکوں	Takhnikiyun	تاکنیکوں	Takhnikiyun	تکنیک	Takhniki
Pin	Pins	پنوں	Pino	پنوں	Pino	پن	Pin
Branch	Branches	برانچیں	Branchhien	شاخوں	Shakhiyein	شاخ	Shaakh
File	Files	فائلیں	Filien	فائلیں	Filien	فائیل	File
Court	Courts	کورٹوں	Korton	عدالتیں	Adaltien	عدالت	Adalat
Slide	Slides	سلایڈوں	Silaydon	سلایڈ	Slide	سلایڈ	Slide
Guarantee	Guarantees	گیرنٹیاں	Guranteeyan	ضمانتیں	Zamaantien	ضمانت	Zamanat
Teacher	Teachers	ٹیچروں	Teachron	اساتذا	Usastaza	استاد	ustaad
Bubble	Bubbles	ببلیں	Bubblien	چنگمیں	Chinghamien	چنگم	chingum
Candy	Candies	کینڈیاں	Candiyan	ٹافیاں	Taafien	ٹافی	Taaffee
Ward	Wards	وارڈیں	Wardien	وارڈز	Wards	وارڈ	Ward
Seat	Seats	سیٹیں	Seatien	نشستیں	Nashistien	نشست	Nashist
Warden	Wardens	وارڈنوں	Wardon	وارڈن	Warden	وارڈن	Warden

The above given chart shows that many of the words have been incorrectly used by Pakistani bilinguals. For instance, the word 'leader' is 'leaders' as plural in English whereas in Urdu it is used as 'hukamran' and 'hukamranon' as plural. Most of, if not all, Pakistani bilinguals use it as 'leadron'. This word was used by Irfan Khosat, a Pakistani star in a show where he was called as a guest, as Hamary *Leadron* ne mulk ko itan nuqsaan pohnchaya hain'………….. (Our leaders have harmed a lot to our country). In Urdu this word is pronounced as 'hukamran' with its plural as 'hukamranoon'. Now, look at the interesting combination of the two different lexemes. The first chunk is taken from English as 'leader' and second part 'oon' from Urdu 'hukamranoon' which becomes ultimately a hybrid word 'leadron'.

Postmodern age played an important role in this hybridization. Living in postmodern age, especially colonized countries have lost or losing their identities. This does not end on losing identity rather losing culture, norms, values and language as well. The post-modern generation is confused about everything because living in this age of science carrying religion in one hand and society in another. If they want to keep abreast with the society, religion will hinder their way and if they want to follow, the religion modernity will attract them. If they do not follow branded as 'conservative, orthodox and extremist. Having no identity, dress, language, culture & norms, like wine is

added into milk, leads them towards a hybrid / mule identity. He becomes /bateetar/ neither 'teetar'(partidge) nor 'batair'(quail).

The second important factor is played by the influence of code-switching and mixing see, Ferguson and Joshua Fishman for detailed reference. Ferguson talked about H (high) and low (variety), where indigenous language is taken as low and foreign language is as high variety. Water always flows from upward to downward but here the case is topsy-turvy. The low variety will follow the high variety, which leads towards this innovation. This mixture of two parts of two different languages in the case of pluralization is one of its offshoots.

Another example is of 'table' used /tablain/ in Urdu instead of tables. The first two syllables are from English 'ta & ble'whereas the last syllable 'ain' is taken from Urdu and there is coinage of a new innovative wrong plural as 'tablian', likewise, book-ain, chair-ain, cabl-ain. In Urdu the word 'کتابیں' is used for books, here in in the above quoted example, book is taken from English diction and 'ain' is taken from Urdu lexicology. It is the case with other examples.

Some of the examples are quoted below with reference of mass media and from other from formal sources like meetings, workshops, conferences. The words, colors, grounds, and conferences were used as 'coloroon' combination of color + oon from رنگوں (Urdu). 'Groundoon' from English word groud and 'oon' from Urdu word 'میدانوں'. The word conferences used as conferensoon.

Table 2. Use of wrong Plurals by Media Personae

Exact English Plural	Coined Plural	Transcription	Exact Urdu Plural	Transcription	Media Personae	Dated
Colors	کلروں	Kalron	رنگوں		Sohail Ahmed (Hasb-e-Haal)	12/05/16
Grounds	گراونڈیں	Groundien	زمینوں	Zameeno	Sohail Ahmed (Hasb-e-Haal	17//07/16
Conferences	کانفرنسیں	Conferencien	کانفرنسیں	Cinferencien	Sohail Ahmed (Hasb-e-Haal	22//01/17
Branches	برانچیں	Branchien	شاخوں	Shakhien	Sohail Ahmed (Hasb-e-Haal	22/01/17
Team	ٹیمیں	Teamien	ٹیمیں	Teamien	Sohail Ahmed (Hasb-e-Haal	23/0218

Roads	روڈوں	Roadun	سڑکوں	Sarkun	Hamid Mir (Talk Show)	02/02/17
Grounds	گراونڈیں	Groundien	زمینوں	Zameeney	Imran Khan (Talk Show)	10-/12/17
Ministers	منیسٹروں	Ministron	وزارہ	Wuzraa	Imran Khan (Talk Show)	10/12/17
Tips	ٹیپوں	Tipein	-	-	Irfan Thakur (Mazakk Raat	20/12/17
Grounds	گراونڈیں	Groundien	زمینوں	Zameeney	Irfan Thakur (Mazakk Raat	20/12/17
Demand	ڈیمانڈوں	Deamandon	مانگ	Maang	Stage Play	24/02/18
Customer	کسٹمروں	Customrun	گاہکوں	Ghaghun	Stage Play	24/02/18
Cain	کینیں	Cainey	بالٹیاں	Baltiyan	Discovery	21/02/18
Jeeps	جیپں	Jeepien	جیپں	jeep	Act of Valor (Urdu Dubbed Movie)	14/02/18
Guns	گنیں	Gunien	بندوق	Bandook	Act of Valor (Urdu Dubbed Movie)	14/02/18
Team	ٹیمیں	Teamien	ٹیمیں	Teamien	Force (Urdu Dubbed movie)	23/02/18

Table 3. Use of wrong Plurals in Meetings, Workshops & Conferences

Exact English Plural	Exact Urdu Plural	Transcription	Coined Plural	Transcription	Meetings, Workshops, etc.	Dated
Files	فائلیں	Filein	فائلیں	Filen	Brig. Tanveer	21/12/16

					in Meeting	
Vivas	واوے	Vivey	زبانی امتحانوں	Zubani Imtihano	Dr. Nawazish (Chairperson LLU)	21/12/16
Courts	کورٹوں	Courton	عدالتیں	Adaltien	Dr. Nawazish (Chairperson LLU)	21/12/16
Teams	ٹیمیں	Teamien	ٹیمیں	Teamien	Tabish (Director, LLU)	06/0217
Slides	سلایڈوں	Slidon	سلایۂ	Slide	Brig. Tanveer in Meeting	10/01/17
Terrorists	ٹیررسٹوں	Terroristun	دہشت گردوں	Dehast Ghiron	General ISPR	05/12/17
Guarantees					TV Commercial	07/12/17
USBs	یو س بیاں	Yu as bi	یو اس بیاں	Yu as biyan	Dr. Azhar (HOD, LLU)	23/01/17
Societies	سوسیٹیاں	Socitien	معاشرے	Mahshrey	Dr. Azhar (HOD, LLU)	26/01/17
Emails	ای میلیں	E-mailein	ای میلیں	E-mailien	Dr. Azhar (HOD, LLU)	26/01/17
Lines	لاءنوں	Liney	لکیروں	Lakiron	TV Commercial	24/01/17
Teachers	ٹیچروں	Teachrun	اساتذا	Ustaadza	Dr. Shahzad (UCP)	12/05/17
Bubbles	ببلیں	Bubblien	چنگمیں	Chinghumien	Kids	17/05/17
Candies	کینڈیاں	Candiyan	ٹافیاں	Taafiyian	Kids	22/7/17

Policies	پالیسیاں/پالیسیوں	Policiyan	حکمت عملی	Hikhmat e amli	Workshop	19/11/17
Pages	پیجوں	Paigun	صفہے	Sahfien	Workshop	02/02/18
Wards	وارڈیں	Wardien	وارڈز	Wards	TV Commercial	05/02/18

CONCLUSION

It is apparent that no language is exempted from lexical borrowing. It has been found that there are many aspects of linguistic borrowing available in the context of Urdu. This borrowing is leading to the coinage of new words where the combination of two dysphoric syntactic system plays a vital role. The evidence presented here suggests that learners use these words "randomly" and 'unconsciously'. The paper reveals the fact that there are many borrowed words actively used in Urdu, which are influencing their original lexicography. Nevertheless, it is possible, for teachers to make a positive contribution to learners' knowledge in this important area.

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