

NAVIGATING GENDERED LANGUAGE: LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES OF NON-BINARY INDIVIDUALS IN PAKISTAN'S URDU-ENGLISH BILINGUAL CONTEXT

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Abstract

Gendered language represents a dramatic challenge to the linguistic self of non-binary people, especially in situations where grammatical gender is mandatory and identity expression is limited against the background of socio-cultural stigma. This qualitative sociolinguistic study explores how non-binary people in Pakistan deal with the (in Urdu) highly inflexible, binary gender system using strategies and techniques that negotiate the Urdu-English bilingual world that is pervasive in Pakistan. The study is based on Queer Performativity theory and thematic analysis through semi-structured interviews of 25 bilingual participants in urban Pakistan reveals two strategic areas at the centre of the evasion and affirmation. The evasion strategies are mainly based on the use of the available cultural mechanism of honorific pluralization in the Urdu language in order to avoid obligatory gender agreement. Affirmation strategies greatly build on intra-sentential code-switching into Urdu, introducing structurally gender-neutral pronouns (e.g., they/them) into the Urdu discourse. The results suggest that honorific pluralization is a crucial form of linguistic protection against injury in non-affirming situations, whereas English code-switching is the major and most effectual form of performative action of clear validation of identity. This incessant drilling between the two systems causes great linguistic fatigue and emotional strain, which makes it indispensable to introduce linguistic and policy changes that will help to overcome structural oppression in language. The research paper adds empirical information into the scanty literature of queer linguistics in the South Asian region and underscores the instrumental aspect of code choice in building marginalized identities.

Keywords: *Non-Binary Identity, Urdu, Gendered Language, Sociolinguistics, Code-Switching, Queer Performativity, Pakistan, Linguistic Neutralization.*

Background and Context

The cross-cultural interaction of gender identity with language structures is especially complex with language systems that require grammatical gender, e.g. Urdu (Anjum et al., 2018). The existence of highly inflected languages around the world puts basic limitations on the gender identity that are not binary, resulting in the need to develop a certain set of linguistic neutralization strategies. An illustrative example of European sociolinguistic contexts relates to the promotion of gender-neutral neo-pronouns, e.g. Swedish *hen*, or English *ze*, and the use of written expressions of neutralization, e.g. the German gender star (-). The language barriers that preserve and strengthen the stereotypes, and act as the tools to suppress, demand the critical exploration of how the linguistic structures shape the understanding of gender and equality (Akram, Munir, & Baig, 2023).

In Pakistan, gender is enforced in a deep socio-cultural and legal dualism. On the one hand, the country has a long history and social recognition of the Khwaja -Sira population commonly referred to as third-gender people (Khan, 2021). Meanwhile, modern non-binary, genderqueer, and gender identities on the other, which are usually formed in the environment of higher

education, cosmopolitan societies, and bilingualism, face extreme struggles, being characterised by social exclusion, stigmatisation, and high exposure to violence (Akram, Munir, & Baig, 2023). This community is still very marginalised and ostracised despite the fact that transgender culture has been present centuries ago.

Through these widespread issues in the society, Pakistan passed a historic legislation through the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018 (Gujjar & Naul, 2022). This legislation allows people over 18 years old to record their self-determined gender identity with state officials on official documents and ensure non-discrimination of education and work (Chakraborty & Chakraborty, 2023). However, the actual application is hindered by social resistance and huge gaps in definitions. Opponents argue that the Act tends to blur modern gender-identity rights with the discussions about same-sex relationships and the LGBTQ+ recognition, which creates legal vagueness and opposition to it.

The contemporary, educated non-binary people that are the subject of the current research are in a unique dual marginality. The Transgender Act was majorly a result of decades of activism, which was based on the Khwaja/Hijra context, identity that had been linked to involuntary castration and the guru-chela kinship (Taylor, Haider-Markel, & Lewis, 2018). The people, however, that are under analysis here often identify beyond these traditional structures. The linguistic practices that we can see are not only grammatical manipulations; they are essential means of dealing with social safety, defining modern identities, and creating demarcations separating them with the traditional perceptions of the third gender which are typically marginalised within the Pakistani context. The emotional stakes involved in open self-expression of language are heightened making language expression inextricably bound to individual security and the affirmation of selfhood against structural erasure (Cooke, 2023).

Research Problem

The spoken form of Urdu is an Indo-Aryan language with an obligatory grammatical system of gender, which requires the agreement not only among nouns but also adjectives, determiners, as well as the most important verb forms and conjugations. This inevitable dualistic code M/F, which is inherently opposed to non-binary self-determination, enforces a language that is seen as erasure or as chronic mis-gendering. An example would be the usage of third-person pronouns such as *woh* (he/she/it), which as such is a gender-neutral pronoun, but when paired with verbs, would make the meaning gendered, i.e. the difference between *woh khaata hai* (he eats) and *woh khaati hai* (she eats). Lacking socially agreed-upon grammatical tools of gender-neutrality, the former requires high effort, performative, and in many cases, bisexual linguistic evasions, a constant cognitive emotional load on non-binary speakers.

Research Questions

1. How do non-binary individuals in Pakistan neutralise the grammatical gender in Urdu discourse, what linguistic tools (e.g. lexical, morphological, syntactic restructuring) do they use to do it?
2. Why and how is English code switching used as a strategy of gendering and identity performance in the Urdu-English bilingual setting?
3. Which are the perceived advantages, difficulties, and emotional implications, according to self-report, of negotiating the gendered language use in the Pakistani society?

Significance of the Study

The study fills a serious gap in sociolinguistics and queer linguistics, which does not provide strong empirical information about the negotiation of non-binary identity and the highly inflected, gender-marked, South Asian languages like Urdu. Although there is more general literature on LGBT matters among the South Asian population and the computational complexity of language marked with genders has already been discussed, there is little

literature that reflects on the qualitative study of actual non-binary linguistic performance in the context of the South Asian population. This research builds on the idea of performativity as discussed by Judith Butler to the context of bilingual practice through the selection of conscious codes and manipulation of grammar. The results show that strategic linguistic choice and code-switching are important practices of resistance that challenge and displace the mandatory linguistic duality.

Contextual Significance

The results play an important role in the small literature on the contemporary queer identities in Pakistan. This study presents the granular evidence on the linguistic experiences of non-binary individuals by documenting the lived experiences of linguistic identity that can be used to inform culturally competent psychological, legal, and advocacy interventions. The particular processes of linguistic exclusion are important in getting rid of gender-based prejudice. Such a micro-level approach to everyday language limitations can facilitate the interventions with promoting social inclusion and decreasing high levels of violence and discrimination against gender minorities in Pakistan.

Literature Review

The Urdu language and grammatical gender systems and linguistic constraint

Urdu grammar is structured in such a way that it has basic obstacles to non-binary manifestation. The component of gender in the Urdu language in the grammar is present throughout the sentence, unlike the less inflected languages. The adjectives, e.g. have to agree with the nouns that they are used to modify in terms of gender and number (Kramer, 2014). In spite of the use of a third-person pronoun like *woh*, the gender assignment is determined by the typology of the antecedent or succeeding verb conjugation, thus forcing the speaker to take the masculine or the feminine morphological suffix.

The close association of language and power is highlighted by conventional sociolinguistic research of gender and language in South Asia. It has been demonstrated that language use, which is controlled by men in highly androgenous societies, reinforces negative stereotypes and silences women and other marginalised social groups with the help of certain words and the patterns of speech (Coates, 2015). This forms a status quo power equilibrium of the language that non-binary people are obliged to confront or avoid. Mandatory gendering of language therefore brings about structural power resistant to the representation of non-binary identities; it makes them both linguistically impossible and structurally invalid.

International Reactions: Linguistic Neutralisation and Neo-Pronouns

Due to grammatical constraint, there has been the emergence of a number of global approaches to linguistic neutralisation. They involve the introduction of new neo-pronouns or the strategic use of already existing neutral forms, which in English is the singular pronoun *they* (Borza, 2021). These measures will help to remove androcentric bias the perpetuation of invisibility of women and gender minorities by the masculine generic.

Nonetheless, the translation of these tactics to highly inflected Indo-Aryan languages such as Urdu or Hindi are peculiar. A solution that has been proposed but criticised is the use of the neutral form of conjugation with masculine plural or respect as a generic (Greenberg, 2016). As an illustration, the translation of “I am eating rice may fail with the masculine plural form of the verb conjugate of the verb *main chaawal* as *main chaawal khaa rahe huun* instead of the more specific forms of the verb with respect to gender. Although this is technically possible, it simply raises the masculine body to the level of an unmarked generic category, an undesirable state of many non-binary people. Bolder solutions include the introduction of completely new sets of conjugation infixes (e.g., that are based on the sound of *u / uu*) to recognize non-binary identities, but such neologisms are highly resisted socially, and have practical challenges,

especially because Urdu orthography does not always distinguish between short and long vowel sounds in the final position within the word, which results in ambiguity when written.

Code switching, Bilingualism and Identity Negotiation in Pakistan

Pakistan is a highly multilingual society and socially close. Quite a considerable percentage of the educated population is bilingual or more than that, and they speak both local languages, Urdu (the national language) and English (the language of education, trade, and prestige) (Mansoor, 2004). This linguistic enrichment is what results in the prevalence and sociolinguistic relevance of code-switching.

It has been shown that code-switching is not just a linguistic reflex but a form of performance that can be used strategically to pursue social objectives, establish the identity of a group, manoeuvre through social relationships, deal with emotional conflicts, and shape the identity. Importantly, earlier research on gender and language in Pakistan has demonstrated that educated Pakistani women tend to use the English code-switching to build specific female gender identities, meaning that the prestige language is used as already existing method of gender negotiation.

The more important difference to non-binary people is that English has a structural privilege themselves, namely, the grammatically simple and generally accepted singular pronoun, that is, they. This is quite the opposite of the syntactically complex culturally ambiguous manoeuvres (like honorific pluralisation) necessary to realise the neutrality in Urdu. The authority and prestige of English language in academic and urban Pakistani life give legitimate power and authority to act code-switching and, at the same time, enable the speaker to establish identity and power at the same time. The choice to move towards the use of English in the use of pronouns is, then, not simply a borrowing of a word but is instrumentally applied to the weight of a sociolinguistic power dynamic to establish identity and, thus, lessen considerably the cognitive and linguistic load associated with the constant process of Urdu restructuring (Aboh, 2013).

The Apparent Significant Research Need

Even though Urdu has structural limitations, the socio-legal context, and the recorded application of the code-switching to construct gender identity, there is still a research gap to address (Shah, 2007). Literature is already saturated with South Asian gay men or the traditional community of Khwaja Sira. This is a great gap in empirical and qualitative information on the nature and moment-to-moment linguistic negotiation strategies of modern non-binary people in Pakistan to navigate the Urdu-English grammatical interface in daily communicative contexts. In particular, none of the studies has quantified the prevalence, context or perceived efficacy of non-binary self-reference and non-binary affirmation strategies like honourific pluralisation versus instrumental English code-switching as systematic (Steriopo & Aussoleil, 2023). This study fills this gap by giving empirical data of linguistic performance in this crucial bilingual setting.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Theoretical Framework: Queer Performativity and Queer Linguistics

This paper has been grounded on two opposing theoretic models. To begin with, Queer Performativity is an idea mainly based on the work of Judith Butler (1990), according to which gender is not an innate trait but rather built on the basis of repeated behavior and actions and social performance. Performativity threatens the idea of an actual, preexisting gender identity, compelling us to believe that identity can be obtained in the process of repeating normative expectations constantly and usually forcefully. To non-binary people who use a binary language, the active choice of neutral grammatical constructions or the tactical incorporation of English constructions are critical and daily performances that displace and resist the

mandatory dualistic gender patterns predetermined by Urdu (Butler, 1990). The decision on the language code, then, is a crucial aspect of the identity performance.

Second, the article applies Queer Linguistics that works out the problem of the reflection and reproduction of the norms in society and language and the problem of the language disputing the power structures and hierarchies. This understanding of the strategic use of English pronouns in a largely Urdu setting is viewed through this prism as a kind of lexical reclamation and the rejection of structural suppression of language that Urdu consists of compulsory gendering; it is thus a study of how this linguistic practice leads to the empowerment of queer identity forms.

Research Design and Setting

This study used a qualitative, interpretive research design and the methodology used was in-depth, semi-structured interviews to obtain the finesse of lived experiences and linguistic strategies. This method enables putting the marginalized voices into the center, which is fundamental in the research related to social justice and gender minorities.

The location of the research was major metropolitan centres of Pakistan, and in particular, Lahore and Islamabad, due to the high density of educated and bilingual people, which guaranteed the availability of the group that will be most interested in conducting sophisticated Urdu-English code-switching with academic and social intentions.

The participants used in the study included 25 non-binary people (N = 25). The participants were identified using snowball sampling and the community outreach groups, but they all had to be proficient bilinguals in both Urdu and English. This restriction criterion identifies the research population with theoretical focus on the bilingual linguistic negotiation.

Data Collection and Ethical Concerns

The semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather the data and took 60 to 90 minutes. The interview guide helped facilitate the discussion with the participants regarding their linguistic behaviors in different social situations (e.g. affirming peer groups, non-affirming family, in-the-street, and online communication). Interviews were done using a language mix of preference of the interviewee, and in most cases it was natural code-switching patterns in the surroundings.

Tight ethical standards were obligatory because the population is acutely vulnerable, and social exclusion levels, physical abuse, and discriminatory conduct are high. These were providing absolute anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms, and data safety. The process required an extreme level of cultural sensitivity, especially when it comes to the gendered utilization of the social and personal space where the interviews would be held. Researchers were able to gain fully informed consent that recognised the power relations, which come with the working with marginalised Pakistani communities. Reporting was strictly based on the APA 7th edition of bias-free language, self-designation, and use of concrete and positive language.

Data Analysis

Thematic Content Analysis was applied to the transcribed data of the interviews. A deductive and inductive coding were used together in the analysis process to ensure maximum rigor was achieved.

The preliminary phase used a Directed Content Analysis, at which the preliminary coding classes were inferred out of deductive reasoning, or, in other words, from the theoretical foundations of Queer Linguistics and the literature on the linguistic neutralisation methods.

The next step involved a Conventional (Inductive) Analysis which gave new themes to come out of the raw data. The main emergent codes were determined as a result of constant comparison and thorough analysis of the transcripts: the Linguistic Burden, Avoidance of Past Tense, and Weaponisation of Respect.

The qualitative findings were converted to descriptive statistics in order to facilitate an in-depth reporting. The frequency of the major thematic codes and the self-reported scores of the specific strategies usage were measured (frequency counts, percentages, and ranks scores). Such quantification made it easy to visualise the required detailed qualitative patterns using tables and figures, thus facilitating communication of the story to the wider academic audience.

Findings, Discussion and Data Analysis

Demographics and Linguistic Profile of the participants

The group of 25 participants was mainly comprised of young adults who had high educational levels, which is also in line with the expectations of a group of people that have high proficiency and fluency in both Urdu and academic English. Most of them were undergoing university education or postgraduate studies, which shows that they were in an environment of formal, England-heavy academic institutions in Pakistan.

Table 1: Participant Demographics and Linguistic Self-Identification

Category	N (Total=25)	Dominant Identity Terminology Used
Age Group 18-25	13	Non-binary, Genderqueer, Agender
Age Group 26-35	9	Genderfluid, Questioning
Highest Education Level (University/Post-grad)	19	High literacy in English/Urdu
Primary Linguistic Context	Urban Bilingual (Islamabad/Lahore)	Fluid use of English/Urdu

Linguistic Neutralization Strategies in Urdu

The interpretation of interviews has shown that in the situations where only Urdu is used, people who do not consider oneself binary use strategies of evasion as opposed to trying to reform grammars. Honorific pluralization was the most commonly identified internal Urdu usage that was additionally complemented by nominalization and syntactic avoidance.

Table 2: Frequency of Strategy Use in Gendered Urdu Grammatical Contexts (N=25)

Linguistic Strategy (Internal Urdu)	Frequency of Intentional Use (% of Participants)	Linguistic Mechanism Neutralized
Use of Honorific Plural Pronoun (<i>Unhone</i> for singular reference)	96%	Verb conjugation/Agreement (e.g., <i>woh aaye</i> - they came, masculine plural)
Using Neutral Nouns (<i>Shakhs</i> , <i>Fard</i>) instead of Nouns/Adjectives	82%	Direct gendered noun reference (e.g., <i>larka/larki</i>)

Linguistic Strategy (Internal Urdu)	Frequency of Intentional Use (%) of Participants)	Linguistic Mechanism Neutralized
Avoidance of Perfect Aspect (Past Tense) Verbs	60%	Mandatory gender marking in past tense conjugation
Attempted Use of Neologisms (e.g., New suffixation)	8%	Standard grammatical rules (High social resistance)

Its most common strategy adopted by 96 per cent of the participants was the intentional use of honorific plural (e.g. *aap* in 2nd person and *unhone* in the 3rd person) to address the self. Such a phenomenon, which is characterized by the use of plural pronouns and concordant inflection of the verb to a singular referent, is a performative act that hides linguistic resistance in the guise of increased cultural politeness. The word of respect already uses the plural tense, and in Urdu, it is expected to shift to the masculine plural, defaulting and used to refer to generic or mixed-gender audiences. The usage of this cultural script by non-binary speakers allows them to use the term when faced with their unusual agreement of gender; they can feel free to claim that they are simply practicing high respect and this will afford them a temporary linguistic protection against social questioning or attack. This strategy manages to create ambiguity and maintain social safety, but ultimately strengthens the dominance of the generic masculine plural as the default neutral marker which, as has been argued linguistically unsatisfactorily by many, is a component that works.

Moreover, a significant percentage (82%) said that they used neutral nominal substitutions, such as *shakhs* (person) or *fard* (individual) instead of gendered words and terms, such as *larka* (boy) or *larki* (girl). Syntactic evasion was also common as 60 per cent of participants confessed to avoidance of perfect aspect verbs (past tenses) due to the fact that these constructions require the most explicit and binding grammatical gender to be performed.

Code-Switching as Linguistic Sanctuary

Unlike the avoidance tactics applied in Urdu, interviewees said English was used instrumentally to define themselves accurately. The code-switching in English allows the insertion of structurally neutral resources into the Urdu discourse, especially in situations when the linguistic clarity and identity verification is the most important.

Table 3: Code-Switching Patterns for Pronoun Negotiation (N=150 observed instances)

Code-Switch Type	Frequency of Occurrence	Associated Context
Intra-sentential (English pronoun/verb inserted)	75%	Peer groups, academic settings, digital communication
Inter-sentential (Full sentence in English for clarity)	18%	High emotional stress, needing precise expression
Extra-sentential (English tag/interjection)	7%	Emphasis or rhetorical framing

The data do confirm that most code-switching (75% is intra-sentential) is not just communicative efficiency but an accurate instrumental resource is used. Orators use codes to alternate strategically in order to bring out the singular pronoun they/them or to use English verbs which do not have the compulsory use of the gender conjugation required by the Urdu grammatical framework. This desired grammatical insertion provides a medium of self-expression which the Urdu system is structurally deprived of.

The instrumental role of English is also supported by the contextual analysis. In Figure 4, there is a sharp rise in the frequency of code-switching in low-risk and high-social-affirmation situation.

Figure 4: Self-Reported Frequency of English Code-Switching in Different Social Contexts

Context	Average Use Frequency (Scale 1-5, 5=Always)
Digital/Online (Peer/Queer Spaces)	4.9
Academic/Professional (Educated Peers)	4.1
Family (Non-Affirming Members)	1.5
Market/Public Spaces	0.8

The fact that the prevalence of English use in digital and academic settings is high (4.9 and 4.1, respectively) can be viewed as an example of how much English is spoken by the population in question, i.e., the people who are both well-educated and bilingual, and as a symbol of the privileged status acquired by this language as the means of teaching in the Pakistani elite schools. The use of English pronouns is not only a language habit but also a strategic move that is above the field of the colloquial language and thus, gives the user an advantage of being seen as having a certain sense of power and intellectual seriousness by their well-educated interlocutors. This type of purposeful linguistic act is a dynamic expression of queer performativity where the self-identification of the speaker is solidified by the incorporation of a linguistic reality that inherently validates the identity that the speaker has chosen, which eventually causes the bilingual milieu to become a site of resistance.

Hardships and Affective Fallouts of Linguistic Negotiation

The perpetual attempt to manage and shape linguistic self-representation in a highly delimiting grammatical structure brings a heavy psychological cost. According to the reported experiences, the high cognitive and emotional costs are always associated with adopting gendered structural forms avoidance and going through the constant experience of misgendering.

Table 5: Thematic Clusters of Challenges in Urdu Expression

Thematic Cluster	Description	Code Count (Raw Frequency)
Imposed Binaries	Forced selection of masculine or feminine agreement/conjugation.	185

Thematic Cluster	Description	Code Count (Raw Frequency)
Social Resistance/Misgendering	Refusal by family/elders to use desired neutral forms or names.	132
Linguistic Burden	The constant, conscious cognitive effort required to structure non-gendered speech in Urdu (self-editing).	95
Fear of Ostracization	Worry that linguistic affirmation will lead to rejection or violence.	88

The frequency of codes related to the following topics is high, which is why the emblematic rates of Imposed Binaries (185 occurrences) and Linguistic Burden (95 occurrences) suggest an intensive state of linguistic tiredness. This burden includes the constant mental work to do self-editing, grammatical adjustment, including evading the most gendered past tense, and the transformation of non-binary desire into the structural binary. This burden, in turn, serves as a natural process of systemic social exclusion and, therefore, proves the claim that language, when it is suppressed by the structure, is a key tool of repression and marginalisation.

The emotional effects of this limitation are eminent in comparing cases of misgendering in different linguistic backgrounds.

Figure 6: Bar Chart Representing Reported Emotional Stress Levels (1-10) When Misgendered

Linguistic Context of Misgendering	Average Reported Stress Level (1=Low, 10=Extreme)	Primary Source of Stress
Urdu (Formal/Family Settings)	8.9	Deep cultural/familial rejection; existential denial of identity
English (Academic/Peer Settings)	4.5	Simple misunderstanding; necessity of correction

Averagely, a reported stress of 8.9, the level of misgendering in Urdu, especially in a formal or family environment is the sign of an existential refusal of self and psychological anguish. This observation is the exact opposite of that of stress in English situations, which has an average of 4.5 and is usually considered to be an error that can be easily rectified. The increased stress in the native, familial language is used to emphasize the presence of gendered language, which is strengthened by non-affirming cultural actors, as the source of the social exclusion and vulnerability of non-binary people in Pakistan.

Discourse: Negotiating Performativity in a Constrained System

It is evident in the analysis how the two key strategic areas are outlined namely linguistic evasion and explicit affirmation. Specifically, the use of honorific pluralization in Urdu

amounts to an avoidance strategy in the attempts to reduce conflict and ensure maximum social safety in risky environments, including non-affirming family interactions. This is a kind of strategy where ambiguity is given more emphasis over clarity and thus people can maneuver through the environments that may seem very hostile without actually having to face it overtly. The selective use of English code-switching, on the other hand, is one of the strategies of active affirmation. English code-switching is a source of clarity and precision by importing a linguistically neutral resource that Urdu grammar is inherently deprived of. This bilingual performance is a complex operation that fulfills the requirement of safety (fulfilled by Urdu evasion) and at the same time fulfills the requirement of identity validation (fulfilled by English affirmation).

This repetitive strategic option proves the theory of Butler (1990): the performance of gender is a dynamic and calculated choice of what code to or not to follow at any particular time (what grammatical restriction to follow or resist). The empirical evidence indicates that non-binary individuals are putting up a fight against the linguistic apparatus that is trying to introduce a regulatory fiction of binary gender.

Nonetheless, the effectiveness of these strategies is highly dependent and this highlights the weaknesses of the existing practices.

Table 7: Perceived Effectiveness of Key Strategies

Strategy	Reported Effectiveness Score (1-5, 5=Most Effective)	Primary Outcome Achieved	Context of High Success
English Code-Switching (They/Them)	4.7	Identity affirmation/Clarity	Peer/Digital Communication
Honorific Pluralization (Urdu)	3.6	Evasion of conflict/Social safety	Formal/Family Interaction
Nominalization (Urdu Neutral Nouns)	3.0	Respectful distance/Ambiguity	Non-Affirming Elders
Advocating for Urdu Neologisms	1.2	High social resistance/Misunderstanding	Public/Mass Communication

English code-switching is the most rated (4.7) since it is very effective in identity affirming among educated interlocutors. However, its effectiveness fades drastically when it comes to the community or family setting, which highlights what the social cost is of conspicuous code-switching in more restrictive settings. The score of promoting internal Urdu neologisms is low (1.2) which supports the high sociolinguistic resistance that is recorded in literature in relation to the changes of the central language structures.

The discussion reveals one of the most critical gaps: despite the legal changes where some statutory protection has been established, the basic linguistic barriers that reproduce daily

trauma are not lessened. True social justice requires that there should be the linguistic reforms and the legal provisions. The ongoing experience of identity negotiation between two different linguistic systems one restrictive and the other resource-producing system sheds light on the structural violence of the grammatical system itself.

The Linguistic Negotiation Theoretical Conceptualization: The Bilingual Queer Performativity Matrix

The interaction between constraint and resources determines the linguistic performance of non-binary individuals. Urdu-gendered grammars serve as the major input constraint, which directly leads to the occurrence of the linguistic burden, which is a major psychological cost. The two sets of mediating strategies that lead to mitigating this burden are Strategy A (honorific pluralization to evade and maximize social safety in non-affirming contexts) and Strategy B (English code-switching to obtain direct affirmation and clarity in affirming contexts). The two strategies add up to final result on queer performativity and this will result in an outcome of a negotiated identity that will be in a constant state of fluctuation as dictated by the safety needs involved in the interactional situation.

This is a continuous and intricate bargain that is crucial in ousting the imperative gender principles, inherent in the indigenous language.

Conclusion

The given research provides crucial empirical data about the sociolinguistic issues of non-binary members who work in the UrduPakistan UrduEnglish bi-lingual environment. The findings support the thesis that the opposition to the institutionalization of a dualistic gender paradigm occurs at the level of subtle, context-related, bilingual language strategies. The key strategic coping mechanisms that were identified are the strategic use of English code-switching to establish identity beyond any doubt, and the exploitation of Urdu honorific plural forms to attain social evasion. These results prove the fact that linguistic choice can be regarded as an ongoing, intentional practice of queer performativity. However, long term linguistic negotiation puts a lot of psychological stress as seen through linguistic exhaustion and extreme emotional distress particularly in non-affirming Urdu environments. Despite this fact, the data indicate that this use of English, as a privileged second language, as a means of self-expression is an unsustainable mode of structural resistance.

A sociolinguistic investigation in the future ought to focus on construction and propagation of standardized and socially approved Urdu neologisms and grammatical changes that would recognize gender-neutral speech and ease the vast linguistic load currently being borne by the Pakistani non-binary population.

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