

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING PRACTICES AND THE GROWTH OF PAKISTANI ENGLISH IN CLASSROOMS

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Abstract

This study investigates the linguistic features of Pakistani English (PakE) and examines teachers' teaching practices and language choices promote the use of Pakistani English. Although English is taught without the proper sociocultural context, it is acknowledged as an official language in Pakistan. The research aims to bring attention to the development of Pakistani English in ESL Classrooms and analyze teachers' attitudes towards Pakistani English in classroom teaching. The study uses a qualitative methodology, notably theme analysis of group of seven ESL teachers from a random private school in Karachi were selected, through purposive sampling and four classrooms were observed of the same teachers. Early investigations revealed native language speech patterns, widespread usage of Pakistani English, instances of Urdu-influenced grammar, and frequent code switching used for comprehension and control. The results of this study show that Pakistani English is the most commonly used variation in ESL schools, with teachers using it more often than American or British English. This supports the notion that localized variations develop organically in situations involving second languages. Teachers' positive attitude, compassionate and soft strategies for correcting and frequently making use of code-switching help learners get comfortable and strengthen their knowledge of classroom material. Such tactics illustrate that employing a mix of languages is not a constraint but a useful teaching approach that serves a vital function in defining how interaction occurs in classroom.

Keywords: Pakistani English (PakE); ESL Teaching Practices; English Classrooms; Linguistics Features.

Background of the Study

The territory that is now Pakistan has been using English since before the state of Pakistan was established. When the British began dealing with India under the name of the British East India Company, English was first introduced to this region of the world. From that time on, English's usage and status increased. English was incorporated into the nation's judicial, educational, and other systems once the Mughal Empire fell and India joined the British Empire. English was kept as the official language of Pakistan following its independence from the British Empire, and it has been an important part of the nation's citizens' social, political, educational, and economic lives ever since. English was either acquired through formal education or through in-person interactions. However, the majority of English teachers were locals because there weren't enough native English speakers to match the demand.

As a result, the majority of the input that South Asian English language learners received came from fellow South Asians. In daily life, there was comparatively little interaction with native English dialects. Additionally, local variations of English became an even more

prevalent paradigm for language acquisition after independence and the British evacuation. These processes led to the "nativization" and "vernacularization" of English in South Asia (Kachru 1992; Mahboob and Ahmar 2004; Rahman 2011). It might be stated that between 30 and 40 million individuals in Pakistan speak English to some degree based on a conservative estimate of the country's literacy rate (English being a required subject in schools). Many of them speak English as a second language, with only a small percentage speaking it as their first. People who speak English as a second language vary widely in their level of ability. The speakers' educational background and socioeconomic status play a role in this diversity. Pakistani English exhibits some regional variance in addition to the variation in competence levels (depending on the speakers' first language).

There are currently few reliable studies that look at differences in Pakistani English according to socioeconomic characteristics, education, first language, geography, etc. The majority of research on Pakistani English (e.g. Baumgardner 1993; Mahboob and Ahmar 2004; and Rahman 2011) acknowledges the existence of this variety but does not offer details. It has been stated before; speakers' first language has some influence on their English. This is particularly true for Pakistani English's phonological and phonetic characteristics. The lack of pronunciation and phonology portions in English language instruction materials in Pakistan is one factor contributing to the local language's influence on Pakistani English phonology.

As a result, the speakers' English phonology is influenced by the local accents of their local language or languages, which are further reinforced by their teachers, who likewise have a local accent. On the other hand, there is minimal evidence to suggest that written Pakistani English exhibits a similar first-language influenced variance. One explanation for this is because authorized textbooks are used in English instruction across the nation. Pakistani English morphology, syntax, and discursive elements are used in many of these textbooks, particularly those used in government schools, which are written by Pakistanis (Mahboob 2009). These textbooks have a normalizing role since they are targets of acquisition for English language learners in the nation. (Elite) private schools use imported textbooks (authored by non-Pakistanis) in addition to (or frequently in place of) these textbooks. Standard American or British English usage is typically reflected in these texts. As mentioned in various studies, one reason why Pakistanis' educational backgrounds cause variety in their English is because different Pakistani school systems use different model texts and teaching materials in classroom teachings.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan is one of those countries, where English is fast spreading. According to Botlan (2008), 18 million constituting 11% of total population, speak it in Pakistan making it the third largest English using Asian country. Since Robert J. Baumgardner, an American sociolinguist who visited Pakistan in the mid-1980s and examined the English lexicon of Pakistani newspapers, coined the phrase "Pakistani English," it has gained widespread usage (1987). The morphological and syntactic, lexical, and phonetic characteristics of Pakistani English (Rahman, 1990). Kachru classified Pakistan as part of the "outer circle" of growing English variants that are institutionalized (Raza, 2008), while Baumgardner recognized key characteristics of the indigenized variety, such as loan terms and phonological simplification (Siegel, 2012). Scholars have since categorized lexical, syntactic, semantic and discursive features distinguishing Pakistani English from Anglo norms (Jilani & Anwar, 2018; Mokal & Abd Halim, 2023; Musarrat Azher, 2016). Moreover, Pakistan's diverse linguistic terrain has given rise to distinct local English dialects with multilingual influences. This English variety with local influence, sometimes referred to as "Pakistani English," has emerged as a gateway for global communication and a sense of success (Baumgardner, 1995; Mahboob, 2003).

Employers, parents, and students in Pakistan have a strong demand for English. Multiple surveys have validated this, including those conducted by Sabiha Mansoor (1993; 2005), Rahman (2002), and Ahmar Mahboob (2002). The British Council's reports on English corroborate this preference, asserting that the mother tongue should be utilized for foundational education, while English is to be employed at advanced levels (Coleman 2010).

Nonetheless, the PEELI research indicates that teachers in both the public and private sectors have extremely low English proficiency (PEELI 2013). Even though data indicates that learners should receive a basic education in their mother tongue, parents of students support the use of English as a medium of instruction at all levels. Given that English is the most desired skill for lucrative work in the nation and a sign of elitist social position (Rahman 1996; 2007). However, Pakistani English has received very little attention in Pakistani language education research. Therefore, this research intends to analyze linguistic components making Pakistani English a different variety impacted by local languages in schools.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rise of Pakistani English (PakE) as a distinct linguistic variation has generated debate regarding its impact on Standard English. While some scholars contend that the addition of lexical borrowings, grammatical errors, and code-switching compromises the integrity of Standard English, others view Pakistani English as a flexible and independent language form that enhances communication within the Pakistani context especially classroom teachings. Due to cultural influences of Urdu in classroom usage, English in Pakistan has evolved into a local dialect i.e. Pakistani English. Few studies examine how ESL teaching methods support its development in classrooms, despite the fact that several define its characteristics. Local English forms are frequently used by teachers in the classroom, which may influence how learners acquire and use the language. The goal of this study is to investigate how educators encourage the usage of Pakistani English in the classroom.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the common linguistic features of Pakistani English (lexical, grammatical, and pronunciation) used in ESL classrooms.
2. To examine how teachers' teaching practices and language choices promote the use of Pakistani English.
3. To analyze teachers' attitudes toward Pakistani English in classroom teaching.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the common linguistic features of Pakistani English used in ESL classrooms?
2. How do ESL teaching practices influence and promote the growth of Pakistani English in classroom communication?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research paper is important because of various reasons. This research helps to explore ESL teaching practices to promote the growth and use of Pakistani English in classrooms. Through explorations and identification, the common linguistic features of Pakistani English (lexical, grammatical, and pronunciation) used in ESL classrooms, ESL teachers will be able to identify the common differences between Standard English i.e. British English and new emerging variety i.e. Pakistani English. They can examine teachers' teaching practices and language choices promote the use of Pakistani English in Pakistani context. This also helps to analyze teachers' attitudes toward Pakistani English in classroom teaching.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on Pakistani English is reviewed in this section. Since the 1990s, Pakistani English has been receiving a lot of attention as a linguistic analysis topic. Among the first commentators on Pakistani English were Baumgardner (1990, 1993, 1996, and 1998),

Kennedy (1993), Rahman (1990), Talaat (1993), and Mahboob (2004), who mostly relied on Braj B. Kachru's foundational works. Braj B. Kachru wrote about Indian English, South Asian English, and World English over the course of forty years, from 1965 to 2005. Similar elements of Pakistani English have also been published by several other researchers. In order to provide a conceptual framework for this study, this literature review summarized previous research on Pakistani English.

According to Mahboob (2004), lexis is the main focus of the majority of linguistic research in Pakistani English. In addition to this, the vocabulary of Pakistani English has grown considerably. Borrowing from Urdu and other languages is one of the main causes of Pakistani English's vocabulary expanding so quickly. Regarding Pakistani English, Baumgardner, Kennedy, and Shamim (1993c) contend that:

"The numerous loan terms from Urdu and other regional languages that have become more prevalent in Pakistani English highlight how Urduized words give the language a distinct linguistic and cultural identity. Pakistani English appears to be strongly shaped by Urduization (42)".

According to research on South Asian Englishes, it is necessary to distinguish these dialects from one another. Pakistani English is a non-native variation of English which uses all the terms available in Standard British English in a relational pattern (Taalat, 2002, p.237). It is heterogeneous because of the socio-economic, educational background, and first languages spoken among Pakistanis (Baumgardner, 1993; Mahboob, 2004). According to Rahman (2011), English in Pakistan is developing its own identity. The strong English-speaking elite in Pakistan, as well as the numerous English mass media, project and maintain this identity. It is also reinforced through instructional materials used in Pakistani schools, because Urdu borrowings as well as indigenous vocabulary and grammatical usages have found their way into locally-produced English textbooks. However, various studies found that teachers of English language are not sufficiently trained as language teachers (Sarwar, Ahmad & Hyder, 2017). The curriculum is not addressing the needs of language learning and a shortage of basic facilities is also seen. These are the reasons which render the acquisition of English as second language inefficient (Teevno, 2011).

According to a international survey conducted in 89 countries from all over the world about the credentials and training of English language teachers, language teachers are not properly prepared to teach English (Emery, 2012). The results of Emery's (2012) study show that the problem is not limited to a certain nation or area but rather exists globally. Therefore, this study is intended to highlight the new emerging variety of English language in the Pakistani classrooms.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore how English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching practice contribute to the development and characteristics of Pakistani English within classroom settings. A qualitative approach is suitable because the study seeks to capture authentic language use, including how teachers speak, how students respond, and how both groups naturally blend English and Urdu during interaction. Such experiences cannot be adequately quantified using only quantitative methods, such statistical tests or surveys. Seven ESL instructors were chosen from a private school in Karachi using purposive sampling. In order to comprehend everyday instructional language practices, four of their ESL classrooms were observed. These educators were in a good position to explain the linguistic habits and communication patterns that surface during regular classroom activities since they teach English on a regular basis.

Population and Sample

Population

The study's population consists of ESL teachers and students from Karachi's private secondary schools. This group was chosen because Pakistani English and Standard English are frequently used in everyday classroom interactions at private schools that use structured English language classes.

Sample

Participants who frequently teach and learn ESL were chosen using a purposive sampling technique. Seven ESL instructors from a private school in Karachi made up the final sample. The same teachers are in charge of four ESL classes. These educators were chosen because they regularly teach English and were therefore in a good position to offer insightful commentary on language use in the classroom. The selected classes reflected standard ESL education, where localized language patterns, code-switching, and Pakistani English elements are all prominent. Using this sample, the researcher was able to look at real-world classroom behaviours, instructional methods, and realistic language practices.

Data Collection Procedures

The data for this study were collected in several systematic steps to ensure accuracy and reliability. The procedures included the following:

Permission and Access

The administration of the chosen private school in Karachi granted approval. Before starting the data gathering process, teachers were told about the study's goal and asked for their permission.

Scheduling of Observations and Interviews

Suitable dates and times were arranged with the participating teachers. The researcher ensured that observations took place during regular ESL lessons to capture natural language use.

1. Classroom Observations

Four ESL classrooms taught by the selected teachers were observed. During each observation, the researcher used an observation checklist to record:

- Classroom interaction patterns
- Instances of Pakistani English
- Urdu-influenced grammatical structures
- Pronunciation and vocabulary choices
- Code-switching used for explanation or classroom management

2. Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews

After completing classroom observations, semi-structured interviews were conducted with all seven teachers. Each interview focused on teachers' perceptions of:

- Their own language use
- Students localized English features
- The role of Pakistani English in comprehension
- The purpose and frequency of code-switching

Interviews were recorded (with permission) to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.

3. Organizing and Transcribing Data

All interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, and observation notes were organized systematically. The researcher reviewed and cross-checked the transcripts and observation sheets to ensure correctness and completeness.

4. Preparing Data for Analysis

The collected qualitative data were coded and prepared for Thematic Analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step model.

These procedures ensured that the data accurately represented real classroom practices and teacher perceptions related to the development of Pakistani English.

DATA ANALYSIS

According to Braun and Clarke's (2006) theme analysis, the information gathered through open-ended teacher interviews and classroom observations was analyzed. This approach made it easier for the researcher to identify and examine the themes related to the use and development of Pakistani English in ESL classrooms.

Data Familiarization:

In order to gain a comprehensive grasp of the linguistic patterns and instructional strategies being used, the analysis started with familiarization, in which complete interview transcripts and the observation checklist were reviewed multiple times. Early investigations revealed native language speech patterns, widespread usage of Pakistani English, instances of Urdu-influenced grammar, and frequent code switching used for comprehension and control (Braun, 2006).

Initial Coding:

Once gaining understanding of the data initial coding was conducted. Appropriate parts from the material were emphasized as well as assigned descriptive codes that indicated notable characteristics of language practices in classroom. For example, one teacher noted, *"I mostly use Pakistani English because it matches my students' level."* Another added, *"Students often translate directly from Urdu, so their sentence structure sounds Pakistani."* A third teacher highlighted pronunciation influence, saying, *"Their pronunciation reflects their mother tongue."* Codes like "localized vocabulary, article omission, Urdu influenced structures, instructor support, and intentional language alternation supported organize the data into relevant categories. One respondent described such features clearly: *"Students often skip articles and ignore punctuation while writing."* These codes were afterward thoroughly analyzed to recognize larger structures in each of interviews as well as observations.

Theme Development

The next step of analysis cantered towards organizing related codes into developing themes. Codes related to local vocabulary, grammatical structures shaped by Urdu as well as distinctive pronunciation patterns were combined into forming a theme illustrating the linguistic features of Pakistani English. Likewise, codes showing the repeated switching between Urdu and English were categorized into a theme about code switching as a teaching strategy. Codes highlighting the supportive method teachers addressed to students' language, formed a theme associated to teachers' perspective whereas codes indicating the way in which students imitated teachers' speech patterns contributed to a theme regarding teaching practices influencing student English. These themes represented the significant ideas throughout the data set.

Each emerging theme was then examined to confirm that it correctly represented the underlying data. The themes were compared between the interview responses and observation notes to validate uniformity. This cross-checking enhanced the reliability of the results. For example, teachers stated using locally influenced English expressions as well as the mentioned verbal forms were similarly observed throughout class observation. In the same way both

interview and observation data revealed that code switching appeared often for the purpose of clarification and classroom management.

Once the themes were finalized each was clearly described and labeled to express its central meaning. The analysis revealed several key themes such as the predominant use of Pakistani English in classrooms, the appearance of local linguistic features in vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation levels, the practical use of code switching in teaching, the significant influence of teaching practices on students' English development. As a whole, these themes offered an in-depth insight of how Pakistani English is used, supported, and influenced within academic settings such as Bapsi Sidhwa, Ahmad Ali, Kamila Shamsie etc stated.

The final step of the analysis included developing a well-organized description of the results. The thematic patterns showed that Pakistani English is the most common form used within the ESL classrooms. Teachers make use of localized expressions, student copy teacher speech and Urdu influenced patterns occur commonly in conversation. This was also confirmed in interviews, with one teacher stating, "*Students try to answer in English even with local forms, but they are communicating.*" Another teacher highlighted, "*Code-switching helps them understand concepts faster.*"

Code switching appeared as a useful teaching tool instead of a linguistic weakness enabling students understand explanations more clearly. Teachers showed encouraging attitudes, fixing mistakes, gently while still letting localized English to function communicate goals. In general, the results indicate that classroom interaction a key function in maintaining and shaping Pakistani English, confirming the influence of cultural setting and second language learning circumstances on the language's progression.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that Pakistani English is the most commonly used variation in ESL schools, with teachers using it more often than American or British English. This supports the notion that localized variations develop organically in situations involving second languages. Because it looks more comfortable and easier for students to understand, teachers have started utilizing Pakistani or mixed English. Pakistani English has become the standard classroom language in a variety of educational contexts, as evidenced by the observation of students adopting similar patterns. The research also identified the consistent linguistic features of Pakistani English in the language use of instructors and students.

Lexical Features of Pakistani English

Local or culturally adopted vocabulary such as

Local words

"Finish your copy,"
"Do the paper,"
"Give me a favour"
"open your register"
Take the attendance
Sit properly
Repeat after me

Standard English

Finish your workbook
complete the test
Do me a favour"
open your notebook
Record the attendance
Sit up straight
Say it after me / Repeat the sentence

Urdu-influenced Sentence

"I am taking your test"
"I'm taking tensions"

Standard English

I am giving you a test
I am getting stressed

*“Open the light
Close the fan
I will give you a call
Keep quiet*

*Turn on the light
Turn off the fan
I will call you
Stay silent*

Article omission includes “He is good teacher, Class will start after break, Student is late again, She is honest woman, Teacher is calling students, I am reading interesting book, They went to school. I met friend yesterday.”

Native language accent were commonly noticed such as pronouncing

Local Pronunciation

*“wision”
“COM-fort-able”
“iskool”
“Schedule”
ve-ji-tables
for-in*

Standard Pronunciation

*“vision”
“com-FORT-a-ble.”
“school”
“schedule”
ve-ji-tables
foreign*

“vision” as “wision” or stressing syllables differently “were also noticeable. These features correspond with research on World Englishes, which suggests that emerging English forms show regular linguistics patterns rather than random mistakes. The appearance of these features in classroom settings reveals that the Pakistani variety of English represents local identity and the multilingual setting where it is spoken. (Ashraf, 2021)

Teachers attitude also have a significant part in the spread of Pakistani English. The majority of teachers expressed encouraging and positive attitude towards students localized English forms. They commonly addressed errors gently, encourage students to speak confidently, and allowed locally formed phrases to appear naturally in classroom interaction. Such attitudes validate Pakistani English and help reinforce it as a recognized and practical language variety. Since teachers’ belief and practices shape classroom practices, their acceptance of Pakistani English directly supports its ongoing development.

To collect relevant and in-depth data two tools were employed, interview and classroom observation checklist. The interview consisted of open-ended questions about the type of English teachers use, characteristics of Pakistani English they observe among students, the way they reply to localized forms, and how frequently language mixing happens. The classroom observation checklist helped confirm teachers’ statements by noting real examples of lexical choices, grammatical structures, Urdu influenced structures, and local accents. Employing both data sources enhanced the results by enabling the researcher to cross-check teachers’ responses with observed practices in the classroom (Gubrium, 2002).

The research also indicates teaching style greatly affects how students pick up and produce English forms. Students were seen imitating their teachers words choices, and accent, showing that in class communication is an effective means for transferring Pakistani English features. Teachers’ manner of speaking, examples, and ways of correcting mistakes thus have a direct influence in determining linguistic practices that students adopt and continue to use.

Overall, the findings show that the Pakistani variety of English is commonly used, linked to local culture, and supported through teaching in ESL classrooms. Teachers’ way of using language, supportive attitudes, and frequent language shifting all play a role in the

preservation and the growth of Pakistani English. This indicates that Pakistani English is not only a variation from standard norms but a consistent, developing variety influenced by classroom behaviors.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the way ESL teaching practices affect the growth of Pakistani English in classroom settings through teacher interviews and classroom observation with the help of checklist. The results show that the Pakistani English has emerged as the most commonly adopted and widely used variety of English in these contexts. (Ramzan, 2025).

Teachers depend on it more frequently than the standard English, and students often adopt similar patterns showing the significant impact of classroom communication on language learning. Linguistic patterns such as culturally rooted words, grammar shaped by Urdu and use of direct translation from native language, and mother tongue influenced pronunciation were commonly seen, showing that the Pakistani English has stable language patterns. Rather than considering such linguistic patterns as errors, the present study reveals that these forms reflect a culturally grounded and language significant form of the English Language. Teachers' positive attitudes, gentle and soft ways of correcting and frequent use of code-switching help students become comfortable and increase their understanding of classroom instruction. Such strategies show that using a mix of languages is not a limitation but a useful teaching approach that serves a significant role in shaping how interaction occurs in classrooms.

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