

DIGITAL RACIOLINGUISTICS: THE PERFORMANCE OF IDENTITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY AMONG PAKISTANI MULTILINGUAL VLOGGERS

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Abstract

In this study, one would explore the modern day digital space in Pakistan as a space of contestation and negotiation in terms of language, and how postcolonial anxieties, class boundaries, and ethnolinguistic identities clash in this market. Traditionally, English and standardised Urdu have been over-emphasised and given a greater symbolic and socioeconomic status than indigenous regional languages (Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, etc.) which have been institutionally marginalised and caricatured in the mainstream media. A qualitative digital ethnographic research design is used in this paper to analyse a sample of vlogs and music videos of six major multilingual creators in Pakistan: Irfan Junejo, Ali Gul Pir, Tamkenat Mansoor, Adnan Zafar (Ken Doll), Babar Mangi and Irfan Khan. The study, using Pierre Bourdieu's notions of 'linguistic capital', 'habitus' and the 'linguistic market' and Carol Myers-Scotton's 'Matrix Language Frame Model' maps how these creators use code switching, accent stylization and visual-linguistic semiotics to subvert post-colonial hierarchies. The results show that these digital performances are not only engaged in overt political resistance, such as criticizing feudalism and patriarchy but also in covert advocacy, such as producing a high-status regional habitus that is associated with marginalized dialects with global luxury and modern youth subcultures. But, such a digital democratization is hindered by the digital divide and also by active policing of the audience, often leading to trolling and political backlash of creators. In conclusion, the present study reveals that digital spaces can enable a counter-hegemonic 'plurilingual habitus' which is an important step in decolonizing the post-colonial linguistic space in Pakistan.

Keywords: Digital Raciolinguistics, Code-switching, Linguistic Capital, Plurilingual Habitus, Pakistani Vloggers, Social Justice Advocacy, Digital Ethnography.

1. Introduction

1.1. With a focus on the Pakistani Digital Sphere and Postcolonial Legacies

Contemporary Pakistani digital world is a very contested market of language that is influenced by postcolonial anxieties, class differences and clashing ethnolinguistic identities. It is a language landscape that is shaped in terms of structure by the colonial rule of the British, and which is still responsible for the socioeconomic mobility and symbolic valuation. English occupies the very top of this hierarchy, and is still the language of higher education, bureaucratic power and elite cosmopolitanism in a globalized context (Hajra & Akram, 2025). Under it is the national language: Urdu, and it functions as a crucial lingua franca in the linguistically diverse provinces, even though it is spoken by only about eight per cent of the population as a mother tongue, mainly in urban areas, by the Muhajirs. As a result, those who are unable to speak English and do not have a private school education are derogated as "desi"

which marks them as provincial in relation to the English-knowing, private-school-educated elite often referred to as "Burgers".

1.2. Hegemony, Stigmatization, and Media Caricature

The indigenous regional languages of Pakistan including Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi and Balochi languages are at the most marginal level of Pakistan's structural pyramid, in formal education and state institutions. Historically, this marginalisation has been reinforced by mainstream TV and film media by 'raciolinguistic caricature' (Raza et al., 2026). In the commercial Urdu dramas, the regional speakers are subjected to caricature routinely: For example, the Pashtun speakers are often caricatured as uneducated, barbaric or comically naive watchmen and gunmen and the Punjabi and Sindhi accents are stylized to indicate comedic ignorance or a feudal and backward rurality rather than intellectual authority. But the emergence of social media giants such as YouTube, Instagram and TikTok has paved the way for a change in the paradigm of the old media gatekeepers (Ashraf, 2022). The digital environments offer possibilities for multilingual creators to evade the gatekeepers of traditional media and open up new opportunities to actively challenge postcolonial hierarchies and marginalized cultural identities.

1.3. The theoretical Bourdieu Theory and Raciolinguistics.

This phenomenon can be synthesized from the theoretical point of view by using Pierre Bourdieu's notions of linguistic capital, habitus and linguistic market. In state institutions (schools and companies), the language market is heavily weighted and only those who have Anglo-Western language capital can access it. The rules are different, however, in the digital world in which authenticity and relatability are the currencies. Regional dialects and hybrid code-switching become resources that are sold as cultural commodities – and are thus presented as a new 'plurilingual habitus' on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and TikTok, defying the state policy of monoglossic language ideologies.

1.4. Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to attain three basic academic goals:

1. To identify and analyze the specific multimodal and linguistic strategies (such as code-switching, accent performance, and digital semiotics) that Pakistani vloggers use to construct or challenge racialized and ethnic identities within the digital landscape.
2. To evaluate how Pakistani multilingual vloggers utilize their digital platforms as spaces for social justice advocacy, specifically examining how they contest linguistic hierarchies and promote the visibility of marginalized ethnic or linguistic groups.

1.5. Research Questions

To find answers to these objectives, the study poses two research questions:

1. How is code-mixing, accent stylization and visual semiotics used by the Pakistani vloggers to subvert postcolonial linguistic hierarchies?
2. How are these digital performances available as a space for social justice activities in both subtle and blatant modes in the context of Pakistani sociopolitical sphere?

1.6. The Significance of the Study

This research is of theoretical importance because it has been instrumental in the developing area of digital raciolinguistics, which takes the interest of studies away from the west towards the postcolonial context of South Asia. Empirically, it identifies and maps the highly specific and hybrid language repertoires of online spaces where class, geography and language intersect empirically, in real time. Lastly, this study has great value for society because it shows how historically oppressed communities can empower themselves in the digital arena through a democratic process and break the cycle of institutionalized linguistic shame. This paper demonstrates the possibilities of digital media to serve as a means of giving

pride to the region, and also as a way to reaffirm cultural agency in a highly hierarchical post-colonial society by recording these performances.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Language Hierarchies in the Postcolonial era in South Asia

The stratification of the structure of language in modern-day Pakistan is directly related to the British colonial rule. Thomas Babington Macaulay's educational minutes of the 19th century are a prime example of the kind of policies colonial regimes implemented to make English the significant language—so to speak—the principal signifier of intellectual and socioeconomic power in South Asia, whereby the goal was to produce a class of masters of the Western linguistic norms (Khan et al., 2025). Urdu was introduced by the new Pakistan government as the only national language to create an identity of Pakistan after its inception in 1947. This nationalistic approach was however, very problematic because Urdu was the mother tongue of only about eight percent of people most of whom were urban Muhajirs and thus it effectively excluded the majority of people whose mother tongue was a regional language.

This administrative and cultural dominance of Urdu and the English language pushed native languages like Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi and Balochi to the bottom of the structural pyramid, biting out of formal governmental institutions, courts and higher education institutions (Shabbir et al., 2026). Sociolinguistic studies show that such institutional marginalization has a strong impact on the “linguistic sense of placement” of regional speakers, often resulting in structural self-exclusion, underpreparedness for education and linguistic embarrassment of the speakers who are unable to speak English or standard Urdu. As a result, the monolingual regional speakers are systematically denied access to professional and social mobility; and the linguistic capital of Anglo-western and Urdu is a well-protected gate towards power elite (Hajra & Akram, 2025). The state apparatus of Pakistan has thus created a linguistic market by organizing symbolic and material rewards around such colonial era administrative languages that have been continuously devaluing its own indigenous heritages, leading to marginalization of the regional speakers within their own native provinces.

2.2. Raciolinguistics and Media Representation (Accent Caricaturing)

Raciolinguistics is a theoretical perspective that is used to analyze how language and race/ethnicity are co-constructed, and that language assessments are never objective, but racialized and classed. In the postcolonial societies, it takes the form of the systematic stigmatization of regional accents, which are equated with lack of education, intellect and refinement. Mainstream TV, commercial films and ads act as effective gatekeepers and help keep these class divisions alive by deftly stereotyping language (Zafar, 2024). Commercial media, which has been dominated by Urdu speakers, has historically been using “raciolinguistic caricature” to maintain the hegemony of the ‘standard’ Urdu and English.

This caricature is very much prevalent in Urdu commercial television dramas where a character speaking with a regional accent is often ridiculed. For instance, Pashtun characters are invariably cast as a negative stereotype of war-oriented individuals or as a comedically naïve uneducated watchmen, gunmen and domestic workers (Siddique et al., 2025). This systematic reduction makes Pashto language devoid of its rich poetic and historical background, and presents it as a language of simplicity or an expression of violent extremism. In a similar way, the use of a Punjabi or Sindhi accent emphasizes a comic stupor, provinciality or rural feudal ignorance and is not a sign of intellectual authority. Such portrayals in media are almost always of characters who speak accentless, standardized Urdu or fluent English, and who are “civilized,” “logical” and “authoritative”. Such repeated association of these accents to subservience and/or “funny ineptitude” in commercial media naturalizes the socioeconomic hierarchy, leaving standard linguistic performance as a precondition for respectability as a

member of the middle class (Tahir et al., 2025). This continued media caricaturization is a form of ideology that contributes to the postcolonial linguistic market by naturalizing socioeconomic marginalization of regional communities, while coding their native languages as signifiers of intellectual incapability. This continuous media caricaturization is an ideology that helps to normalize the postcolonial linguistic market by coding native languages of regional communities as signifiers for intellectual incapability while the communities themselves are sold as socially and economically incapable.

2.3. A Counter Hegemonic Space of Digital Media

With the rise of social media platforms as YouTube, Instagram and TikTok, these traditional media gatekeepers and their associated linguistic ideologies have been seriously challenged. Digital platforms are different from state TV or corporate TV/cinema, here authenticity, relatability and audience engagement are the currencies of the alternative economy. This fluid digital marketplace, in particular, pivots regional dialects and code switching (hybrids of regional dialects), once marginalized in formal physical places, into cultural and economic resources (Siddique et al., 2025). This digital change also allows multilingual producers to establish a new “plurilingual habitus” which actively challenges state policy and traditional media's monoglossic ideologies and linguistic hierarchies.

Theoretical readings in the field of digital code-mixing and code-switching have focused on the idea that hybrid speech is a conscious and deliberate language of representation to build identity instead of a linguistic deficit. Researchers use models such as Carol Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame Model to examine the ways in which contemporary digital creators deftly incorporate Urdu or English words into regional matrix frames or vice versa to deal with multifaceted postcolonial identities (Raza et al., 2026). It's this hybridity that enables vloggers to move at the same time between the local realities and the global cosmopolitan aspirations. Creators are successfully diversifying the nationally de facto multilingual repertoire by using broad regional dialects, like Faisalabadi Punjabi, Sukkur Sindhi or Peshawar Pashto, in high production and high status digital forms. As a result, digital media is a very strong counter-hegemonic instrument, which continually and systematically challenges the shame which has always been attached to non-standard accents. Creators do not give in to the pressure of flawless English or Urdu but embrace the fluidity of language and make the digital space a place for democratic cultural reclamation (Khan, 2024). Finally, these online environments enable the marginalised speakers to claim their identity, demonstrating that regional mother tongues are quite compatible with modernity, the Internet, trends and intellectuality.

3. Methodology

3.1. Qualitative and employed Digital Ethnography

In this research, the qualitative digital ethnographic approach is used to explore the multilingual creators' naturalistic language use and their social justice performances in online settings in Pakistan. Digital ethnography is well qualified for such a purpose as it enables the non-obtrusive study and contextually critical analysis of online spaces, communicative practices and identity performances in which users are naturally operating. This design does not only consider the individual language variables, but sees in the digital media a complex, integrated field of culture, in which linguistic acts are embedded in visual, material and social worlds. This means that the selected creators' core digitized content, such as vlogs, musical works and comedy takes the spotlight, but so does the digital culture that is around them. This involves the audience reception, comment-section policing and ideological conflict and community-building that occur in real time and provide an overall picture of the contestation of language policies online.

3.2. A new paradigm of Corpus Selection and Profiling

This study's empirical core consists of six well-known vloggers (in Pakistan) with a wide range of ethnic, regional and socio-economic backgrounds to provide a comparative diversity. Each creator is profiled as a unique case study: Irfan Junejo, an urban youth from Karachi, whose works play with the tensions between English and standard middle class Urdu; Ali Gul Pir, a Sindhi from Dadu District who is based in Karachi and uses political satire to challenge feudal hierarchies; Tamkenat Mansoor, a physician and theatre actor from Lahore and Faisalabad who subverts feminist critiques through the prism of domestic Punjabi-Urdu hybridity; Adnan Zafar, also known as "Ken Doll," a beauty influencer from Faisalabad, now based in Dubai, who preserves regional Punjabi accents within global luxury spaces; Babar Mangi, a hip-hop artist from Sukkur who represents working class Sindhi realities; and Irfan Khan, a Pashtun pop musician and vlogger from Peshawar who challenges mainstream media stereotypes. This diverse collection offers a wide snapshot of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the country, across various platforms (mainly YouTube, Instagram and TikTok) and with a total reach of millions of viewers.

3.3. Data Collection and Analytical Framework

The primary data collection was done by compiling the vlogs, music videos, social media posts and related comments by the audience. A multimodal and racio-linguistic extract mapping framework was applied to these data sources which was specifically created to follow a series of multiple, overlapping, semiotic channels.

Table 1: Corpus Identification and Creator Profiles

This table summarizes the metadata, regional affiliations, and reach of the six selected creators analyzed in the study.

| Creator Name | Digital Handle(s) | Platform(s) | Regional / Ethnic Affiliation | Analytical Focus & Sociolinguistic Context | Primary Reach & Volume |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Irfan Junejo | @IrfanJunejo | YouTube | Karachi / Urdu-Dominant | Explores urban youth culture and the friction between elite "Burger English" and middle-class Urdu; employs English-Urdu code-mixing as an introspective narrative tool. | ~1.48M subscribers; library of over 440 videos |
| Ali Gul Pir | @AliGulPirTV | YouTube, Instagram, X | Interior Sindh (Dadu) / Karachi | Uses highly stylized, rural Sindhi-accented Urdu to perform political satire targeting the moral bankruptcy of feudal lords (waderas) and state authorities. | Over 183,000 subscribers; millions of views on viral satire campaigns. |

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|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Tamkenat Mansoor | @TamkenatMansoor | YouTube, Instagram | Punjab (Lahore & Faisalabad) | Resists mainstream television's caricature of the loud, uneducated Punjabi by reclaiming natural Punjabi-Urdu hybridity to articulate sharp feminist critiques. | Over 142,000 YouTube subscribers. |
| Adnan Zafar (Ken Doll) | @ken_doll_dubaiii | Instagram, TikTok | Punjab (Faisalabad) / Dubai | Operates in the highly Westernized global beauty industry; unapologetically maintains a broad Faisalabadi Punjabi accent to reject the colonial requirement of standard English fluency. | 3.3 million Instagram followers. |
| Babar Mangi | Babar Mangi | Spotify, YouTube | Interior Sindh (Sukkur) | Elevates rural Sindh from a marginalized domestic status by fusing street-level Sindh rap with global Trap beats to demand political and cultural recognition. | Over 23 million views on Coke Studio Season 15 performance. |
| Irfan Khan | @VerifiedIrfanKhan | YouTube | Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Peshawar) | Employs refined Pashto-Urdu-English pop productions to challenge mainstream Urdu media stereotypes of Pashtuns as violent or comically naive. | Over 30,200 YouTube subscribers; millions of global streams. |

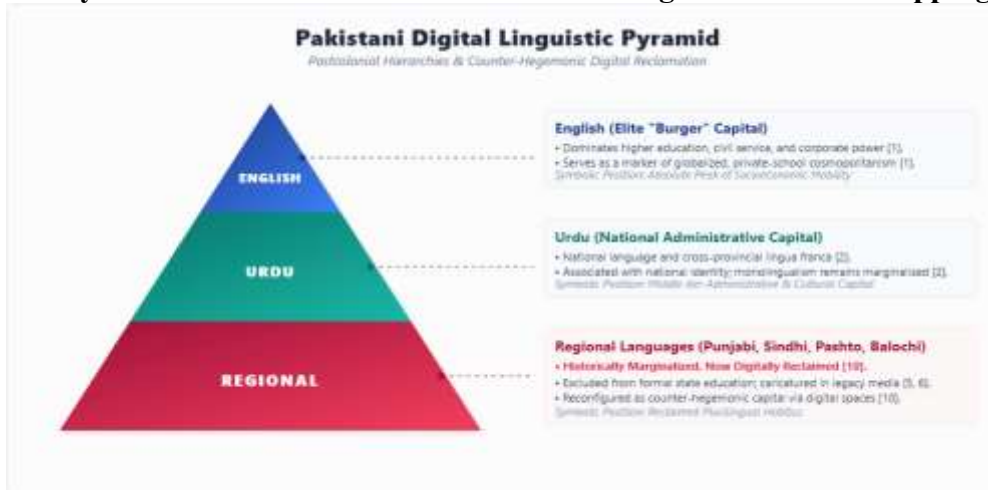
In particular, the framework explores four levels: firstly, Linguistic Markers & Code-Switching, focusing on structural alternation of languages and the blending of Urdu, English and regional mother tongues; secondly, Accent Performance & Stylization, which is the deliberate maintenance, exaggeration or neutralisation of regional accents to perform particular social roles; thirdly, Digital Semiotics & Visuals, which examines visual registers like setting,

dress, framing, camera cuts and on-screen text; and fourthly, Raciolinguistic Alignment, which evaluates whether the overall performance challenges, subverts or reinforces existing post colonial social hierarchies. It is a systematic tool that allows for a coherent evaluation of qualitatively different pieces of data, presented in different languages and on various platforms.

3.4. Ethical Considerations/ Limitations

In an ethical sense, the use of the data in this study is attentive to the public social media data. The written material from the public figures can be analysed, the comments from the audience are anonymous and there is a guarantee of privacy of the participants, unless the account is public and verified. As for limitations the Digital divide in Pakistan is a significant limitation. These online platforms are still very much an urban, middle-class and digitally literate phenomenon and the online democratization of language discussed above does not necessarily reflect structural changes offline in physical institutions. The results of the study are thus interpreted as signs of discursive change and not of systemic institutional change.

4. Data Analysis and Results: Multimodal and Raciolinguistic Extract Mapping



4.1. Code-switching and the emergence of the hybrid in the community

As regards the language use of urban youth, Irfan Junejo offers a good illustration of conscious code switching as a way of challenging the postcolonial hierarchy. One such example is his extract "woh cool log kehte hain na dump, wesa wala!" which highlights many instances of intra-sentential English lexical insertions such as "cool log" and "dump" in a dominant Urdu matrix sentence. This pattern is in line with the Matrix Language Frame Model of Carol Myers-Scotton which has Urdu as matrix language and English lexical items are systematically embedded in it. Instead of being a sign of a weakness in either of the two languages, the use of the hybrid speech in Junejo is a deliberate form of narration. This linguistic choice comes with his mid-range Karachi Urdu accent — which can be said to be neutral. Junejo's portrait of the middle-class is linguistically authoritative, in that she avoids hyper-Americanized "Burger" elite slang and highly caricatured regional dialects.

Table 2: Multimodal and Raciolinguistic Extract Mapping

This table provides the empirical framework of Phase 2, analyzing the linguistic, acoustic, visual, and political dimensions of the creators' content.

| Creator & Target Extract | Linguistic Markers & Code-Switching | Accent Performance & Stylization | Digital Semiotics & Visuals | Raciolinguistic Alignment |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Irfan Junejo | High frequency of intra-sentential | Neutral, mid-tier Karachi | High-production | Subverts the hierarchy. Normali |

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|---|--|--|---|---|
| <p>"woh cool log kehte hain na dump, wesa wala!"</p> | <p>English lexical insertions ("cool log", "dump") within an Urdu matrix sentence, reflecting Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame Model.</p> | <p>Urdu accent. Avoids both the hyper-Americanized elite "Burger" slang and stylized rural dialects, establishing a relatable middle-class authority.</p> | <p>cinematic camera edits; casual streetwear (hoodies); sneaker collection background; minimal on-screen text. Subtitles blend English and Roman Urdu.</p> | <p>zes natural bilingual speech among middle-class youth, proving that accessing modern digital capital does not require elite monolingual English.</p> |
| <p>Ali Gul Pir</p> <p>"Saeen to saeen hain, saeen ka kutta bhi saeen hai"</p> | <p>Employs the rural Sindhi socio-cultural honorific "Saeen" within Urdu verses to emphasize feudal corruption and absolute systemic power.</p> | <p>Hyper-performance of a broad, rural Sindhi-accented Urdu. The "Akbar Jatoi Jalbani" persona features high-pitched, mocking vocal deliveries.</p> | <p>Wears traditional Sindhi Ajrak combined with Western sunglasses; rides in a high-status Pajero SUV. Juxtaposes political wealth with shots of neglected rural communities.</p> | <p>Challenges the hierarchy. Ridicules feudal power by parodying its primary linguistic and visual markers, stripping the wadera class of its imposing authority.</p> |
| <p>Tamkenat Mansoor</p> <p>"Dadi Watching TV Dramas"</p> | <p>Rapid conversational Urdu-Punjabi code-switching. Integrates highly localized Punjabi lexical items ("halkapun", "ward servant") to contextualize domestic dialogue .</p> | <p>Reclaims a rich, un-sanitized Punjabi "Dadi" (grandmother) accent. Rejects the TV industry's typical caricature of Punjabi speakers as crude or uneducated.</p> | <p>Shot in a simple middle-class living room with natural lighting; wears traditional daily clothing (dupatta). Close-up camera angles are used to emphasize domestic intimacy.</p> | <p>Subverts the hierarchy. Reclaims Punjabi as an authoritative, intellectually sharp vehicle for feminist critique, directly contesting its systemic marginalization .</p> |
| <p>Adnan Zafar</p> | <p>Intermixes broad Faisalabadi Punjabi,</p> | <p>Unapologetically maintains a</p> | <p>Androgynous fashion, elfin</p> | <p>Challenges the hierarchy. Dismant</p> |

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|--|--|--|--|---|
| <p>(Ken Doll) Skincare and global travel vlogs</p> | <p>Urdu, and English cosmetic jargon ("skincare", "concealer"). Uses Punjabi to discuss high-end global beauty.</p> | <p>broad, rural Faisalabadi Punjabi accent . Refuses to modify his accent even during global influencer brand trips in London or Dubai.</p> | <p>jawline, thick natural South Asian eyebrows/lashes. Set against high-end Dubai skyscrapers with sharp, dynamic camera zooms on his face.</p> | <p>les the colonial association of regional Punjabi dialects with a lack of grooming, proving Punjabi is compatible with global luxury.</p> |
| <p>Babar Mangi "Busin Ja Dhika" / "Nadaan"</p> | <p>Gritty, fast-paced Sindhi rap lyrics, mixing street-level Sindhi with modern hip-hop slang. Transitioning to Urdu is used to reach a broader national audience.</p> | <p>Heavy, proud Sukkur Sindhi dialect. Reclaims the regional language from elite feudal associations to represent working-class realities.</p> | <p>Filmed in the gritty, un-glamorous streets of Sukkur, surrounded by local working-class youth. Trap beats are fused with regional instruments like the Surando.</p> | <p>Disrupts the hierarchy. Forces regional Sindhi into the global, resistant genre of hip-hop. Rejects the linguistic hegemony of the Karachi-centered Urdu media market.</p> |
| <p>Irfan Khan "Remix pashto/ Urdu Pekhawar"</p> | <p>Smooth linguistic integration of Pashto, Urdu, and English. Pop verses alternate between Pashto and Urdu to bridge the national divide</p> | <p>Rejects the exaggerated "funny Pathan" accent common in mainstream dramas Performs melodic, clear Pashto-inflected Urdu that signals pride and refinement</p> | <p>Wears traditional Pakol hat and Pashtun attire in historic Peshawar locations like Kissa Khwani Bazaar Cinematic camera sweeps highlight cultural beauty</p> | <p>Subverts the hierarchy. Directly counters mainstream media's negative depictions of Pashtun men as violent extremists or watchmen, substituting cultural sophistication.</p> |

The high production value of the cinematic cuts, the loose Streetwear aesthetic (hoodies, etc.) and the sneaker collection backdrop, coupled with minimal on-screen text makes for a great auditory performance. The subtitled text is a mixture of English and Roman Urdu which makes it both online and offline world of his audience. Raciolinguistically, Junejo's work challenges the hierarchy: learning modern digital capital doesn't need the elite monolingual English skills; his middle class youth speak naturally bilingual English and Urdu.

Likewise, Tamkenat Mansoor is located in urban Punjab, where Punjabi language is often demeaned in formal educational and administrative, spaces in favor of Urdu and English. When she speaks about Dadi watching television dramas, her conversational Urdu/Punjabi is in a very fast code-switching style, with many lexical items very specific to Punjab like "halkapun" (lightness/crudeness) and "ward servant". She has a rich Punjabi "Dadi" (grandmother) accent with which she plays an active role in reclaiming it. This is an alternative to the conventional portrayal of Punjabis as 'uneducated' or 'crude' by the TV industry. The visual semiotics in Mansoor's work are very mundane: she shoots in the domestic space of a middle class living room in natural light and wears everyday garments (dupatta). Domestic intimacy is emphasized, through close up camera shots. This performance not only challenges the hierarchy, but also recuperates Punjabi as an authoritative, intellectually acute tool for feminist and societal critique, challenging its long marginalisation at home in mainstream spaces. Hence, their digital products challenge the notion of code switching and accent hybridity as a deficit of the academic and social, and reconceptualize it as a rich and natural way of communicating. They thereby prove that regional identity and modernity of the city are not incompatible, but can be in productive and expressive dialogue.

4.2. The use of accent stylization, satire or refutation of stereotypes.

The performative strategies of Ali Gul Pir are the techniques of accent stylization to make satirical commentary. The extract *Saeen to saeen hain, saeen ka kutta bhi saeen hai* ("The lord is a lord, and even his dog is a lord") which appears in the famous track *Wadera Ka Beta*, composed by the late Mehdi Ali Saeen, a celebrated Sufi singer in the Urdu language, exploits the rural Sindhi socio-cultural honorific "Saeen" as part of the Urdu verses to highlight the feudal corruption and absolute systemic power. Pir makes use of a hyper-performance of a wide-spread rural Urdu; this is the voice of Sindhi. His persona "Akbar Jatoi Jalbani" has been delivered vocally in a high-pitched mocking manner which satirises the high pitch of the political elite (Khan, 2024). This linguistic performance is also supported by the visual registers: he rides in a high status Pajero SUV wearing a traditional Sindhi Ajrak, along with western sunglasses. This visual juxtaposition between the symbols of political wealth and the scenes of neglected and impoverished rural communities in the background. Pir's use of these major linguistic and visual cues parodies these, directly challenging the hierarchy, mocking feudal power and eliminating the traditional fear-inducing authority of the imposing 'wadera' class.

In the meantime, Irfan Khan is working in the sensitive socio-cultural setting of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where Pashtun culture is being vilified in mainstream media and linked with negative and war mongering characters. Khan's song "Remix pashto/ Urdu Pekhawar" features a seamless incorporation of Pashto, Urdu and English. He writes his poems in a combination of pashto and urdu as his dual methods of communication, as there is a huge linguistic gap between Pashtuns and Urdu speakers in the country. He clearly refutes the overly dramatic "funny Pathan" accent that is often used in the mainstream TV dramas. He sings melodic, clear and Urdu with a Pashto influence, indicating his pride and refinement. Visually, Khan is wearing a traditional Pakol hat, Pashtun clothes in historic Peshawar places such as Kissa Khwani Bazaar. The use of cinematographic camera sweeps is employed to show cultural beauty, architecture and heritage. Khan's conscious decision through this undermines the postcolonial hierarchy. All this demonstrates a counter-performing of a predominantly negative image of Pashtun men as violent extremists or as the hapless guardians of culture, a role that is emblematic of the mainstream media's portrayal of the Pashtun people and that he refutes through an aesthetic of cultural sophistication, peace, and artistic depth. In both Pir and Khan, accent performance becomes a weapon of resistance, rather than a tool of marginalisation,

using these various aesthetic strategies. Instead of letting the state-approved media portray the regional speaker, the creators use digital media to control their own portrayal, thereby demonstrating that regional accents can have a profound socio-political impact, intellectual satire and cultural beauty, even without falling into caricature by external media.

4.3. A high status regional habitus and global semiotics

The works of "Ken Doll" (Adnan Zafar) clearly illustrate how a high status regional habitus is being built in the globalized digital realm. Zafar's business falls under the very westernized, English dominant, global beauty and skin care industry, headquartered in Dubai. In his skin care and travel vlogs around the world, his linguistic approach is the intermingling of general Faisalabadi Punjabi, Urdu and sophisticated cosmetic English, e.g., "skincare" and "concealer". He has unabashedly retained his wide-spread rural Faisalabadi Punjabi style and vocabulary. What's important is that Zafar does not want to change his accent even if he goes on a brand trip to Dubai or London, as an influencer in a high profile role. In a visual sense, his digital semiotics include the inclusion of high-end Dubai skyscrapers in the background, sharp dynamic camera zooms on his face and androgynous fashion with an elfin jawline, thick natural South Asian eyebrows and long lashes (Shah, 2024). This is a challenge to the postcolonial hierarchy on a racio-linguistic level. Zafar understands that the colonial idea of regional Punjabi dialects being associated with a lack of grooming, beauty and refinement is wrong. Through performance he states that a local, working-class Punjabi accent can be entirely at home with 'high-end' lifestyles, luxury and modern self-care, which were seen as incompatible with anything but standard English.

Babar Mangi's work of pioneering Sindhi hip-hop music is also a powerful performative act, which takes a marginalised regional language to the world of global music genres. Mangi uses street-level Sindhi mixed with modern hip-hop slang in his gritty and fast-paced Sindhi rap lyrics, such as "Busin Ja Dhika" and "Nadaan". His language is an amalgam of Urdu and Sindhi, and sometimes he moves from Sindhi to Urdu to be able to communicate with a wider national audience, though his basic language is heavy and proud Sukkur Sindhi dialect. With this option, the regional language is brought back in from the top-notch feudal associations and made a part of the working class, gritty realities. His videos are shot in the unsavoury alleys of Sukkur, with him encircled by local working class young people. Modern Trap beats are "combined sonically" with the traditional instruments of the region, such as the Surando. The performance invites a regional language that is normally marginalized to defy the postcolonial hierarchy by making itself a part of an international genre such as hip-hop that is resistant to marginalization. Mangi challenges the linguistic dominance of the Urdu media market, which is concentrated in Karachi, by demonstrating that Sindhi can be more than a domestic or folk media, and that it can be a vibrant, modern and youthful media medium. Zafar and Mangi together demonstrate that the regional dialects are able to be re-anchored to high production global semiotics, which requires political and cultural recognition on global stage. All these are a blend of local culture and global subculture, leading to a stunning synthesis. Both creators' refusal to sacrifice their linguistic authenticity for the acceptance of the elite class of modern globalized capital shows that regional dialects have in themselves the vitality to negotiate, challenge and enrich the most exclusive realms of globalized capital today.

5. The class will discuss the concept of social justice, resistance, and audience friction.

5.1. People of the same body: Feudal Tearing Down and Feminist Action

These analyzed creators do not just practice linguistic diversity, but they use their respective online platforms to carry out explicit social justice advocacy, without relying on conventional corporate and state media structures. Through his satirical music and online presence, Ali Gul Pir has always been criticizing the oppressive system of the wadera nizam

(feudalism). Pir also posted genuine video of the feudal politicians requesting luxury treatment even as the Sindh flood victims were sitting on the ground during the devastating floods. He openly challenged flood affectees to "kick the waderas out" and to demand their basic rights, thus facing head-on the political class which was exploiting them in the name of traditional authority. Moreover, in one of the collaborative works, "Ghareeban Ja Khwab" (Dreams of the Poor), both the artists Babar Mangi and Mosharraf Hussain directly point out the wealth inequality system, and the condition of the marginalized working class in the feudal system, demonstrating how music can be a tool to criticize classes.

In the same way, both Tamkenat Mansoor and Ali Gul Pir have tried to challenge the conservative patriarchy in Pakistan through their platforms. Mansoor's online presence is used as a medium to propagate feminist ideas. She creates high production video series that are relatable, and openly dissects very toxic scenarios, like "Desi Women Idealising their Toxic Fathers!" "Shaadi After Divorce aur Rishtedaar!" is ridden with the social stigma associated with divorce in. She manages to make these intricate structural critiques available to everyday households through her relatable Punjabi-Urdu hybridity, and thus critiques the patriarchy from within the house. Similarly, the female rapper Eva B featured with Ali Gul Pir on 'Tera Jism Meri Marzi' (Your Body, My Choice). This song was meant to be a direct defence of the physical autonomy of women, it received a lot of attention in society and was viewed negatively by the conservative. The following examples illustrate how digital spaces can provide creators with an opportunity to voice verbal opposition to structural oppression, class inequality and gender discrimination explicitly.

5.2. Constructing high status regional habitus through Covert Resistance.

Explicit political statements, in contrast, are contrasted by the subtle yet radical nature of covert resistance, which occurs by the use of the marginalised regional languages and non-standard accent in high production digital spaces. This performative advocacy contests the colonial notion of the incompatibilities of regional dialects with modern globalized capital. Importantly, Adnan Zafar (Ken Doll) is able to make a covert advocacy by speaking in Faisalabadi Punjabi when he reviews luxury cosmetics, and attends high-profile events for 'grandmafluencers' in Dubai and London. Zafar's refusal to switch to a hyper-refined Urdu or sterilisers English language, is a disruption of the postcolonial expectation of high-end beauty and self-care being for the English-medium elite. His performance suggests that a regional and working-class Punjabi dialect is no less than global luxury, and thus legitimises the identity of millions of regional speakers who feel marginalised in these high status contexts.

Babar Mangi's efforts in pioneering Sindhi hip hop are also a strong performative intervention in a similar fashion. A medium of resistance that is spread all across the globe, hip-hop is adopted by Mangi and made use of the traditional instruments and regional Sindhi verses. Coke Studio's performance of Mangi in "Aayi Aayi" (based on the Sindhi folktale of Umar Marvi, which represents the struggle to resist being forced into captivity), marked the rise of the Sindhi language to a huge, worldwide cultural product. This performance challenged the educational and economic system in Pakistan that view Sindhi as a low prestige language which is purely domestic. Moreover, Urdu-English code mixing in the deliberate and creative use of Irfan Junejo's brings a performance based leveling in the hands of urban youth. In the past, the lack of perfect English has been a great embarrassment and social stigma for middle class Pakistanis. Junejo's vlogs create a smooth linguistic space, where code switches are embraced as a creative and innovative activity, enabling the users to move through local and global identities at the same time. This lowers the linguistic anxiety of his audience and legitimises their lived reality of being spoken, not by denying them the possibility of modern digital participation but by demonstrating linguistic assimilation is not required.

5.3. Ideological Friction: Linguistic Policing, Backlash and the Digital Divide

How these creators, and their linguistic and cultural choices, were received in the comments section, shows a very active digital audience that often linguistically polices, culturally validates or heavily politic pushes back. At the same time, the majority of the audience is very appreciative of creators who celebrate regional identities. Many of her comments on Tamkenat Mansoor's videos, which showcase her Punjabi "Dadi" image, confirm the warm nature of her use of Punjabi language. One of the users said, "The Punjabi mixx with Urdu language is relatable for the Punjabi household, the way he speaks Punjabi mixx with Urdu language". In the same way, there are numerous comments on Babar Mangi's and Irfan Khan's YouTube videos expressing pride in their "own" actors and criticizing the usual portrayal of their communities in the mainstream media.

But when creators reach out to or question existing social norms or linguistic boundaries, they often become subjected to extreme trolling. Adnan Zafar (Ken Doll) was first subjected to a lot of hates and attacks on his gender identity as he promoted the idea of skincare for men. Zafar came under immense criticism and was seen as a target of a boycott campaign after he published a video on a local issue, praising the fashion of a politician and mocking other "small content creators" in 2026. This controversy is a reminder of the policing of the audience of influencers when their online presence changes from being relatable and representing the region to being arrogant and seen as belonging to the political elites. Moreover, Ali Gul Pir is a highly political satirist, often a victim of organised cyber-harassment. According to Pir, the most vicious online trolls are often his own supporters from the dominant political parties who have abused him and filed FIA cases against him to muzzle his satire, he says: "I've dealt with fundos, FIA cases and threats, your typing don't phase me". This trend shows that, when a less powerful political entity uses regional language to oppose more powerful entities, it faces a very intense and aggressive response, with comment sections becoming a very fierce battleground of ideologies.

6. The Conclusion and Future Directions

6.1. Empirical and Theoretical Contributions to Research

The present study has investigated the appropriation of the contemporary multilingual vloggers in Pakistan as counter-hegemony linguistic markets. Empirically, the research shows that the creators of such films as Irfan Junejo, Tamkenat Mansoor, Ali Gul Pir, Adnan Zafar, Babar Mangi, and Irfan Khan contest postcolonial hierarchies in a deliberate way through the use of code switching, accent stylization, and hybrid visual-linguistic strategies. They are able to transform low prestige regional dialects and non-standard accents into effective means of cultural reclamation and social justice advocacy. Theoretically the phenomenon has been synthesized, with Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of linguistic capital, habitus and the linguistic market. The analysis reveals that there is a different set of rules for digital platforms, and that authenticity and "relatability" are the predominant currencies there. As part of this digital economy, regional dialects and hybrid code switching – once considered as a sign of a lack of educational qualification – become extremely valuable cultural resources. These creators also challenge state policies and traditional media, which are based on a monoglossic language ideology, by creating a new "plurilingual habitus". Finally, their efforts are a huge leap towards the linguistic decolonisation of Pakistan and the modern, authentic and socially conscious Pakistani in the digital age.

6.2. Policy and Practical Implications

In practical terms, the results of this study are significant for the reform of the media and education. First, the mainstream TV and film industries should stop relying on lazy and harmful caricatures of regional speakers who are often raciolinguistically stereotyped as being

less intelligent and less culturally sophisticated than the orthodox language. Secondly, the regional languages which are validated in high status digital forms could be used to make more inclusive and multilingual educational policies in Pakistan. The use of mother tongues (regional) along with English and Urdu in educational institutions can minimize the language anxiety and structural disempowerment faced by the regional speakers.

6.3. Limitations and Future Research

Notwithstanding such promising changes, this digital democratisation has its limitations. Presence in these platforms does not necessarily result in a change in actual institutions because the digital inequality is entrenched in Pakistan and access to these platforms is limited to urbanized, middle class or digitally literate groups. Further studies are required to fill these gaps by extending this analysis to underrepresented regional creators of Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan. Furthermore, mixed method studies might also be able to quantify changes in audience attitudes and linguistic confidence of the youth in longer-term exposure to regional content, and thus measure the impact of digital decolonisation in the real world.

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