



Embedding Elements from Foreign Language into The Native Language Through Pashto-English Code-Mixed Speech

Research Article

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Publication Details

Received: July 22, 2023**Accepted:** August 25, 2023**Published:** September 30, 2023

Abstract

An individual's language style may undergo changes based on factors such as the topic of conversation, the passage of time, the interlocutors involved, and the social context or setting of the conversation. During this shift in speech style, various elements from one language may be incorporated into another through diverse strategies. This phenomenon, known as code-switching and code-mixing, involves the embedding of foreign elements into the native language. One crucial strategy in this process is the adjustment of speech style influenced by the context or setting, whether formal or informal. For instance, speakers tend to exercise greater caution in their speech and diction in more formal contexts, and conversely, adopt a more relaxed approach in informal settings. This study aims to explore the strategies of style shift observed when incorporating elements from English into Pashto, focusing on the influence of social context. Primary data for this study were collected from native Pashto speakers, involving spoken corpora from forty randomly selected participants. Each participant engaged in a half-hour conversation recorded via mobile phone, encompassing both



formal academic and informal settings. The data collection occurred in two consecutive stages: the first stage involved gathering data in a formal setting, while the second stage captured speech in an informal context. Following data collection, tokens representing instances where participants altered their speech style were extracted from the recorded conversations. These selected tokens were then analyzed using the cross-comparison technique. The findings reveal a correlation between the level of formality in speech and the degree of attention paid to it, indicating that a more formal speech style emerges when greater consideration is given to the language used, and conversely, a more informal style is adopted with less attention to formality.

Keywords: speech style, social context, code switching, code mixing, imbedding elements, foreign language, native language

1. Introduction

The concept of style was initially introduced to Sociolinguistics by William Labov in the 1960s. He defined style shift as the alteration of speech style in response to the context. Style shifting encompasses a modification in language varieties, involving code-mixing, and is closely linked to cultural, social class, gender, and interpersonal dynamics among speakers. While style shift and code-switching are sometimes used interchangeably, it's essential to note the distinction between these two concepts. Code-switching involves a speaker changing their linguistic code (language or dialect) based on the conversational situation or social context. On the other hand, code-mixing is a related phenomenon where speakers use two languages concurrently, alternating between them within a single utterance. Code mixing occurs without a change in topic and can manifest across various linguistic levels, including phonology, morphology, lexical items, and grammatical structures (Samovar, 2014).

According to Eckert (2001), style shift manifests in various types. Casual to formal style occurs within specific contexts and is characterized by a decrease in the percentage use of certain informal speech features, such as the omission of nonstandard elements and the avoidance of slang words. Another type is the shift from formal to informal style, marked by an increase in informal speech features. Additionally, style shift can involve moving from one recognized speech register to another, and dialect shifts may encompass broader patterns of transitioning between regional or social varieties.

Style shifts serve as a means for speakers to project different social relationships through their stylistic choices and to demonstrate the interplay between speech style and context. Identifying the appropriate speaking context, style shift represents the speaker's response to their audience and is a situational adjustment employed to define the setting (Eckert, 2001, p. 13).

Various factors influence communication shifts. Culture, education, and social class are key influencers, and gender also plays a role in shaping communication styles, contributing to the differentiation of politeness and vocal tone across diverse language codes (Samovar, 2014, p. 4).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Incorporating elements from a foreign language into a native tongue involves various strategies, commonly referred to as 'code-switching' and 'code-mixing.' The exploration of these strategies constitutes a growing area of research in the field. One such strategy involves modifying the style during the incorporation of foreign elements, both at the segmental and supra-segmental levels,

influenced by the communication context, be it formal or informal. This aspect warrants comprehensive investigation. The current study aims to delve into the strategies of style shift when embedding elements from English into Pashto, with a focus on the influence of social contexts.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate embedding elements from English into Pashto while shifting style in formal and informal contexts.
2. To find out the strategies used in style shift by Pashto L1 speakers while using English elements according to the context.

1.3 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study specifically examines the style shift observed in Pashto native speakers when engaging in code-switching from Pashto to English. The investigation is delimited to both formal and informal settings. The researchers concentrated on analyzing the effects of stress, the formation of bilingual compounds, the substitution of vowel sounds, as well as the speed and intonation of words and phrases in both formal and informal contexts. Additionally, the study explored alterations in the meaning of words resulting from style shifts. Data collection encompassed interactions with participants in both formal and informal settings. The study exclusively focused on the spoken corpora of participants, recorded through mobile phones, with subsequent identification of tokens for analysis.

2. Literature Review

Contact between two languages occurs when speakers of two or more languages or varieties interact, influencing each other. This interaction can happen at language borders, between stratum languages, or as a result of migration, with an intrusive language acting as either a superstratum or a substratum. Language contact manifests in various phenomena, including language convergence and borrowing, leading to outcomes such as pidgins, creoles, code-switching, and mixed languages. In some cases, the effects of language contact are less overt, resulting in phenomena like loan words, calques, or other borrowed materials (Thomason & Kaufman, 1992).

Languages can come into contact in two ways: direct and indirect. Direct contact occurs when bilinguals actively use their languages in communication, impacting words, sentences, and discourse levels. In contrast, indirect contact occurs through mass media, primarily affecting the word level without significant changes to syntax (Ahmad et al., 2019).

Pashto is the dominant language in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, mainly used informally and occasionally in formal settings like offices and educational institutions. English, on the other hand, is utilized formally in offices, educational institutions, courts, trade, and politics. Due to the high prestige of English, people in KP learn it to attain higher social status and better job opportunities, elevating English to the status of an official language in KP. The promotion of English in the region is mainly attributed to the education system and electronic media (Ahmad et al., 2019, p. 630).

While style shift and code-switching are sometimes conflated, they differ. Code-switching involves shifting from one linguistic code (language or dialect) to another based on social context or conversational situation. Additionally, some people struggle to distinguish between code-switching

and code-mixing (Grosjean, 1982). According to Clyne (2000, as cited in Zabrodskaja, 2007), code-switching is the alternative use of two languages within a sentence or between sentences, structurally and grammatically arranging one language within another.

Muysken (2000) defines code-mixing as cases where lexical items and grammatical features from two languages appear in one sentence, involving the mixing of linguistic units like morphemes, words, modifiers, etc., from two grammatical systems within a sentence.

Style shifts can be either mandatory or optional. Mandatory shifts result from systematic dissimilarities between the source and target languages in syntax, semantics, and cultural patterns. Optional shifts, driven by the translator's idiolect and proficiency level in the target language, may introduce regional variations and colloquial alternatives into the target text. Despite efforts to remain invisible, a translator's voice leaves its imprint on the style of the target text (cited in Al-Qinaj, 2009).

The relevant literature discussed in this study aids in understanding the process of speech style shift in formal and informal contexts, providing valuable insights for future researchers to distinguish phenomena such as code-switching, code-mixing, and style shift.

3. Methodology

The predominant approach employed in this study is qualitative, aimed at fulfilling the research objectives. Utilizing this approach, the researchers focused on two distinct social settings: formal and informal contexts, where subjects exhibited a shift in speech style. The primary data for this study consisted of recorded spoken corpora from native Pashto speakers. Twenty participants were randomly selected based on ease and convenience, and data collection occurred in two consecutive phases. In the initial round, researchers recorded speeches in a formal social setting, while in the second phase, the same participants' speeches were recorded in an informal context. Consequently, a total of forty speeches were recorded using mobile phones.

The collected data underwent thorough examination and analysis in alignment with Labovian theory on style shift. The primary source of data collection remained the recorded spoken corpora of Pashto native speakers. To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, meticulous care was taken during the data collection process. Transcription procedures were repeated to meticulously sort out tokens. The study relies on token identification and analysis through the cross-comparison technique. Following the collection of primary data, various tokens representing differences in speech between formal and informal contexts were extracted from the recorded data.

4. Discussion

4.1 Bilingual hybrids

The shift in speech style prompts individuals to employ words in unique ways, leading to stress alterations, the creation of bilingual hybrids and compounds, modifications in speech sounds, the substitution of vowel sounds, and the careful selection of words. In this context, the table below provides a detailed overview of bilingual hybrids.

Table 4.1 Bilingual Hybrids and Their Formal Equivalentents

No.	Bilingual Hybrids used in informal setting	Correct Form in Formal setting
1	Scholoona	Schools
2	Collagona	Colleges
3	Universitay	Universities
4	Studantan	Students
5	Tabaly	Tables
6	Teacheran	Teachers
7	Copyani	Copies
8	Papery	Papers
9	Bookona	Books

The initial subcategory in this context involves the creation of bilingual hybrids and compounds. It was observed that the initial segments of these tokens originated from English, while the concluding parts were derived from Pashto. The concluding segments in the mentioned hybrids function as bound morphemes, unable to stand alone. Such compounds are predominantly formed when native Pashto speakers create the plural forms of these words. The instances provided in the table above illustrate the addition of Pashto suffixes such as -ona, -an, -yani, -y, -ai, -ly, etc., to English stem words, resulting in the formation of bilingual derivatives.

4.2 Vowel Shift

Table 4.2 Common Mispronunciations and Their Correct Forms

No	Wrong Use in informal situation	Correct form used in formal context
1	Avoid /ævoid/	Avoid
2	Derivei:d /deraivi:d/	Derived
3	Axpord /a:kspord/	Oxford
4	Anternet /æntərnɛt/	Internet
5	opInion /əpi:njən/	Opinion

The tokens listed in the above table illustrate a change in vowel sounds when used in informal situations. It was observed that the subjects altered a vowel sound instead of using the correct vowel in these instances. Examples in this category demonstrate that the substituted sounds encompass both pure vowels and diphthongs. For instance (1) in the table, it is evident that the schwa sound (ə) is replaced by the /æ/ sound. Additionally, the /oi/ diphthong in the same word is substituted with the /ai/ diphthong, resulting in the mispronunciation of the word as /ævoid/ instead of the correct /əvoid/. The second instance in this category similarly reflects a change in vowel sound, where the short /e/ is replaced by the long /i:/, leading to mispronunciation. Another instance (3) in the table was also mispronounced due to a shift in vowel sound. The researchers identified the word /a:xpord/ instead of the correct pronunciation /ɔ:xfɜ:d/, with the /ɔ:/ sound being replaced by the long /a:/ sound. In this token, alongside the vowel sound, a fricative consonant sound is also substituted by a plosive consonant, i.e., 'f' is replaced by 'p,' a common occurrence in the pronunciation of Pashto native speakers. Similarly, instance (4) exhibits a change in vowel sounds, where the short /e/ is replaced by the /æ/ sound. In token (5), the short /i/ is replaced by the long /i:/.

4.3 Metathesis (Insertion of vowel sounds)

Another category related to the previously mentioned one is that of words in which vowel sounds were inserted when used in an informal context. Instances belonging to this category are listed in the following table.

Table 4.3 Common Insertion Errors and Their Correct Forms

No	Wrong use with an inserted sound	Correct Form
1	Paravate	Private
2	Dariver	Driver
3	Paramry	Primary
4	Charager	Charger
5	Littale	Little

In the first instance provided in the table above, a vowel, specifically the schwa sound /ə/, is inserted after the consonant ‘p’ where there is no original vowel sound. Consequently, the term "private" was pronounced as ‘paravate’ instead of "private". In addition to the process of metathesis in this term, the subjects also introduced the /ei/ diphthong before the final ‘T’ sound, which is typically pronounced with either a short /e/ or schwa /ə/ sound. This change increases the number of syllables from two to three. Similarly, a schwa sound was inserted in the second instance after ‘d’ in the term "driver," resulting in the word being pronounced as ‘dariver’. Furthermore, this word was mispronounced as the /æ/ sound was added in place of /ai/, replacing a diphthong with a pure vowel. Therefore, it becomes /dərævə/ instead of /draivə/. Similar to the first instance, the number of syllables is increased from two to three in this token as well. Additionally, along with the addition of the schwa sound in the term "primary," where the schwa sound is added after 'p' at the beginning, the /ai/ diphthong is replaced by /a:/. Similar to instance (2), the /ai/ diphthong is replaced by /a:/ sound, resulting in the word being pronounced as /pəra:mry/. Another token in the table is "Charger." Similar to the aforementioned instances, a schwa sound is inserted here as well, specifically after the ‘r’ sound. The term "charger" was noted by the researchers as ‘charager’ with the schwa sound added to it. Moreover, in instance (5), the schwa /ə/ sound was inserted.

4.4 Deletion

In contrast to the previous set of words, the tokens in the current category were employed in a manner where portions of them were omitted. Due to the respondents feeling more at ease or less cautious in their speech within an informal context, they omitted segments of the English words during their naturally occurring conversations. The following tokens are discussed in detail below.

Table 4.4 Informal Misuses and Their Formal Equivalents

No	Misuse in informal setting	Correct Form
1	Follow by	Followed by
2	Structure interview	Structured Interview
3	Intervi	Interview
4	darec	Direct

The first two instances in the table above are characterized by the omission of the last parts, where 'ed' and 'd' were excluded, respectively. The first instance is used in a passive structure where 'ed' is added to the main verb, "follow," in this example. In the second instance, the term "structured" functions as an adjective, formed from a noun by adding the suffix '-ed' to the root word. In the third instance, "interview," the last part 'ew' was omitted, resulting in the term being pronounced as 'intervi.' Similarly, the final 't' in "direct" was omitted, and the word was shortened to 'darec.' In this instance, in addition to omitting the last part of the word, the vowel also shifted from a diphthong /ai/ to a pure vowel sound /a:/.

4.5 Violation of Subject-Verb Agreement

The table below includes terms that were used in the plural form instead of the singular and vice versa.

Table 4.5 Common Grammatical Errors and Their Correct Forms

No	Wrong use	Correct Form
1	Rule	Rules
2	Younger	Youngers
3	Types	Type
4	Phenomena	Phenomenon

Due to a lack of attention to their speech, the subjects neglected subject-verb agreement in their conversation, resulting in the incorrect usage of verbs with the subjects. Consequently, the previously mentioned words were used in the singular form where they were supposed to be in the plural, and vice versa.

4.6 Stress shift

Stress shift is a phenomenon in which emphasis is moved from one syllable of a word to another. In this process, sometimes the grammatical category of a word is also altered. For example, a noun may transform into a verb, or an adjective may take on the role of a verb due to stress shift. Instances are provided below.

Table 4.6 Identifying and Correcting Capitalization Errors

No	Tokens used in informal context	Correct form in the related situation
1	PREsent	PreSENT
2	ObJECT	Object
3	ConTRACT	CONtract
4	EnTRUST	Entrust

The first instance in this context involves the term 'present.' Morphologically, this term consists of two syllables. When the first syllable is stressed, it is grammatically used as a noun. The researchers observed that the respondents stressed the first syllable in a context where the stress should have been on the last syllable. Consequently, both the meaning and grammatical category were altered. The second term in the table also exhibits stress shift. In contrast to the first instance, the participants stressed the final syllable in this token. Although they were referring to this term with stress on the

first syllable, they shifted the stress to the last syllable. Similar to the first instance, the meaning and grammatical category of this token were changed. The next term in this context is 'contract.' It was noted that the participants were referring to 'CONtract' with stress on the first syllable, but they produced 'conTRACT' where the stress was placed on the last syllable. The fourth token is also an example of the same phenomenon. When the first syllable of the term 'entrust' is stressed, it functions as a noun, whereas shifting the stress to the final syllable results in a change in grammatical category from noun to verb.

4.7 Consonant change

This category contains instances where consonants were replaced by the nearest sounds.

Table 4.7 Common Sound Replacement Errors and Their Correct Forms

No	Words with replaced sounds	Correct Forms
1	Conpedence	Confidence
2	Pemale	Female
3	Preedom	Freedom
4	Wery	Very

The table above showcases instances where consonant sounds were substituted with their nearest counterparts. It is a common occurrence among native Pashto speakers to interchange the fricative sound 'F' with the plosive sound 'P.' Similarly, the fricative sound 'V' is often replaced with the bilingual sound 'W.' In the first instance, the word 'Confidence' is highlighted. The researchers discovered that participants pronounced the word as 'Conpedence' instead of its correct form, 'Confidence.' Similarly, 'Female' and 'Freedom' were articulated as 'Pemale' and 'Preedom,' respectively, where the 'F' phoneme was substituted with 'P' in each case. Another example of this process is the word 'Very.' In this instance, the fricative 'V' sound was replaced by the bilingual sound 'W,' resulting in the term being uttered as 'wery' instead of 'very.'

4.8 The Use of Wrong Words

Another category involves instances where a change in meaning occurred due to mispronunciation in informal situations. These specific instances are discussed in detail below.

Table 4.8 Impact of Sound Exchange on Spoken Word Recognition

No	Tokens produced	Targeted words
1	Heart	Hurt
2	Front	Print
3	Pull	Full

The respondents intended to use the correct words but mispronounced them, resulting in the utterance of entirely different words from the intended ones. The first instance in this context is the word 'heart,' which was produced instead of the intended word 'hurt.' Consequently, the token underwent a complete change in meaning. Morphologically, the number of syllables is the same in both terms, but semantically, they are entirely distinct. Similarly, the term 'print' was pronounced as 'front.' As in the first instance, here again, the produced and intended terms are completely different

in meaning. The third token in the table is also an example of the same process where 'pull' was spoken instead of 'full.'

5. Conclusion

During the execution of the proposed work, the researchers were guided by Labov's theory, which posits that an individual's speech style can be influenced by the level of attention devoted to the speech. The formality of speech tends to increase when more attention is given in formal social settings. Through the technique of token identification and analysis, the researchers concluded that due to less attention paid to speech in informal social settings, informants made various errors related to phonological, morphological, and semantic patterns. In informal situations, they inserted certain sounds, omitted sounds, or replaced some sounds with others. Unlike communication in formal situations, communication in informal settings was characterized by various features of style shift. These features encompassed the formation of bilingual hybrids, vowel shift, insertion of vowel sounds, phonological changes, omission of word parts, violation of subject-verb agreement, stress shift, consonant replacement, semantic changes, and the selection of incorrect words.

Future Research

The researchers suggest several directions for future studies. Firstly, investigations similar to the present one could be conducted with larger sample sizes. Secondly, additional models related to style shift could be employed. Additionally, research efforts might explore strategies beyond code-switching for embedding foreign elements into one's native language.

Funding: This study was not funded in any shape or form by any party.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

Bio-note:

Dawood Said is a dedicated scholar with a Bachelor of Science degree in English from the University of Malakand, Pakistan. His academic journey has equipped him with a comprehensive understanding of the English language and literature. Through his studies, he has developed a passion for exploring the nuances of language, and his contributions may reflect a keen interest in the diverse aspects of English studies.

Ramla Ahmad is an accomplished scholar holding an MPhil in English from the Department of English Literature and Linguistics at Northern University Nowshera, Pakistan. Her academic pursuits have delved into the intricate realms of English literature and linguistics, suggesting a depth of knowledge and analytical skills. Her work may bear the mark of her advanced studies and a nuanced perspective on the subject matter.

Shahab ur Rahman is a graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in English from the University of Malakand, Pakistan. His academic journey has laid the foundation for a solid understanding of the English language and literature. His work may reflect his commitment to the field and his unique insights gained through his undergraduate studies in English.

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