Analysis of Language Variation in Urdu by Punjabi and Pashto Speakers

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Abstract:

Pakistan is a diverse nation, with 77 major local languages and numerous dialects spoken across the country. Urdu, as the national language, serves as a unifying force, allowing communication between people from different linguistic backgrounds. Urdu, the lingua franca of Pakistan, is spoken as second or third language by majority of the population. Interference of local languages can be seen in their Urdu speech such as variation in phonology and grammar. The purpose of this study is to analyze this variation in the female speakers of two local languages: Punjabi and Pashto. This study also investigates sociocultural and economic factors which contribute to develop these variations. The quantitative methodology is used for this study; to find out similarities and gaps of the segmental features of two selected languages Punjabi and Pashto, the phonetic inventories of two said languages have been analyzed. Female speakers of the two majorly spoken languages in Pakistan are selected. Two speakers from each of the two languages (Punjabi, Pashto) have been selected randomly as a sample. The study revealed that Urdu standard varieties are often seen as indicators of education, economic status, and pleasantness, but these variations still face biased attitudes.

Keywords: Pakistan, Urdu, Punjabi, Pashto, multilingual, nasalization, diphthongs, codification

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan is a multilingual country with 77 languages spoken, the majority of these languages belong to Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Indo-European, and Turkic (Gordon, 2005). According to Mehmood (2004), Urdu is the national and official language of Pakistan, however Rehman (2002) states that it varies in accents, lexicon, and prosody based on geographical areas, with Punjabi and Pashto being two prominent accents. Many linguists state that variety of accents is dependent on the time frame

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of a phoneme, pitch, intensity, and patterns of intonation (Yan et al., 2005; Reetz & Jongman, 2008). A standard language is a linguistic variation that has been utilized or has been standardized by people for public reasons. Standardized varieties are typically native dialects that are articulated in government and commerce centers, where variety serves more than local needs.

Historical Background of Urdu

Urdu language is a blend of Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Sanskrit, and Indo-Aryan languages. It has evolved through evolutionary processes. It retains some linguistic features from Indian languages like Hindi. According to Dodds (1991), Urdu has transformed its phonetic and linguistic system by 1800 C.E, suggesting its connectivity with different languages.

Moreover, Urdu evolved some of its unique sounds, like as /RRh, mh, nh. lh, rh, vh and yh/. A double consonant is a consonant letter occurring twice in succession in a word. Here are the examples of doubling consonants in Urdu e.g. Kawwa, himmat. There are a total of ten sounds for vowels, including allophonic differences. They are often divided into long and short sounds. Short vowels ("a", "i", "u") are represented by marks above and below a consonant i.e. zabar ba, zer bi, pesh bu.

Phonological System of Urdu

Nasalization

One of the most important features of Urdu is Nasalization. In Urdu it is marked by nun-e-ghunna. The mechanism for nasalization here is the proper usage of the letter <ن> (nun). This nun-e-ghunna actually implies 'talking through the nose' or 'a sound produced through the nasal cavity'. In this phonemic process of Nasalization in Urdu, the meaning of a word can be altered by changing the position of the corresponding vowels, creating it distinctive and functional for example: kaha کہا and /kahaN - کہاں /. There are eight pure vowels that can be nasalized.

- Front short vowel /i/

  For example: saNg-emarmar - سنگ مرمر (marble)

- /e/ - Front vowel

  For example: maiNdak– مینڈک (frog)

- /a/ - Central vowel

  For example: haNsana– ہنسا نا (to make laugh), bayabaN– بیاباں (Deserted place)

- /u/ - Back short vowel

  For example: muNg - مونگ(Lentil)

- /u:/ - Back vowel

  For example: ghuNt - گھونٹ(sip), (ghuNslaa - گھونسلہ (nest)

Aspiration

Aspiration is a universal characteristic in all Indo-Aryan languages, including Urdu, with aspirated phonemes found at initial, medial, and final positions in the language, e.g. /ph/ /phal/ 'fruit', /bh/ /bhuk/ 'hunger' etc. Other than these, there are some other phonemes that are aspirated in this

language, such as: /lh/, /nh, /rh/, /, /mh/, however these phonemes are known as consonant clusters by linguist of Urdu. For example: /mh/: /kumhar/ 'potter', /lh/:/dulha/ 'bridegroom'etc

Diphthong

Diphthongs are complex vowels that combine two vowels, presenting the sound of two vowels. They are characterized by movement and change in acoustic pattern due to vocal tract configuration. Diphthongs start from position of low central vowel that is central way between two different vowels rather than beginning and ending with simple vowel.

For example: /aI/ in, 'ai', 'mithai', 'likhai', etc

/aʊ/ in "milao" , "lao", "khao" etc

/ae/ in "aye', 'laye', 'pae', etc

/ea/ in 'piya', 'liya' , 'diya' etc

/ua/ in 'huwa', 'chuwa'(touch) etc

Urdu as a Domestic Language

Pakistan has two official languages, English and Urdu. Urdu is also a national or domestic language of Pakistan. The vast majority of Pakistanis, including urbanized ones, use Urdu as their lingua franca. Although 8% Pakistani people use Urdu as their first language but Majority of people speak Urdu as their second language. It was introduced after the capitulation of Punjab in 1849 and Sindh in 1843, along with the prohibition for using Persian. According Tariq Rahman (2011), Urdu is Hindustani or Hindvi. Furthermore, Rahman also suggests that the Indo-Aryan language likely take in Vhagtai, Arabic, and Persian languages around Delhi.

Codification

Urdu Consonants Phonemes

		Bilabial	Dental/ Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Nasal	Basic	.M.	N.			Ŋ.		
	Articulated a spirated	mʱ	nʱ					
Plosive/ Affricate	Unarticulated	P	t̪	ʈ	tʃ	K	Q	ʔ
	Unarticulated aspirated	pʰ	t̪ʰ	ʈʰ	tʃʰ	kʰ		
	articulated	B	d̪	ɖ	dʒ	g	ɢ	
	articulated aspirated	bʱ	d̪ʱ	ɖʱ	dʒʱ	gʱ		
Fricatives	Unarticulated	F	S		ʃ	X		(h)

	Articulated	V	Z		ʒ	ɣ		ɦ
Flap	Basic		ɾ	ɽ				
Flap	Articulated aspirated		(ɾʱ)	ɽʱ				
Approximant	Basic	ʋ	L		J			
Approximant	Articulated aspirated		(lʱ)					

**E.g.** /p/ in 'pan', 'pin', 'Pakistan' etc

/m/ in 'meri', 'malik', 'mochi' etc

/f/ in 'farq', 'fazool', 'faida' etc

Vowels

Urdu Vowels

According to Saleem et. al. (2002), and Qandeel et. al. (2012), Urdu language contains 3 short and 7 long vowels, For instance, /ʊ/, /ə/ and /ɪ/. Other than these vowels, Urdu further has three medial vowels such as /e/, /o/and /æ/. These medial vowels explain mixed properties of long and short vowels. It indicates that just like long vowels, the medial vowels are noticeable however, their duration is shorter than long vowels and longer than short vowels. Moreover, the medial vowels are accompanied by /h/ sound. Furthermore, Urdu has seven long vowels for instance: /uː/, /oː/, /iː/, /aː/, /ɔː/,/æː/, /oː/ and /eː/ (Oxford Urdu English Dictionary, 2013).
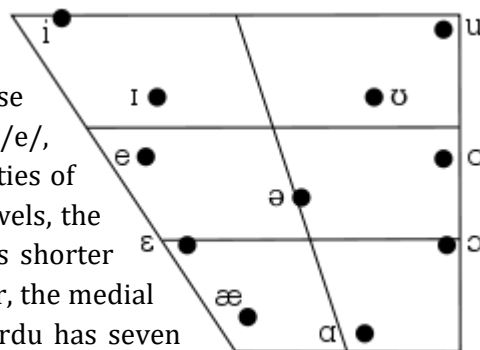
E.g. /iː/ in "fateen" 'yaqeen', 'yateem' etc
/aː/ in 'khaar', 'mar', 'sitaar' etc
/I/ in 'in', 'is' etc

		Front		Central		Back	
		short	long	short	Long	short	Long
Close	Oral	ɪ	iː			ʊ	uː
Close	nasal	ɪ̃	ɪ̃ː			ʊ̃	ũː
Close-mid	Oral	(e)	eː	ə		(o)	oː
Close-mid	nasal		ẽː	ə̃			õː

Open-mid	Oral	(ɛ)	ɛː			(ɔ)	ɔː
	nasal		ɛ̃ː				ɔ̃ː
Open	Oral		æː				ɑː
	nasal						ɑ̃ː

Aims and Objectives of the Study

Pakistan's diverse culture includes over 77 local languages and dialects, including the national language Urdu. Urdu is the main lingua franca, spoken as a second or third language. Local languages, such as Punjabi and Pushto, significantly influence Urdu speech, with variations in pronunciations and grammatical structures observed across socio-cultural and economic classes. This study aims to analyze the variation of Urdu in speakers of two target languages: Punjabi, Pashto. This study aims to observe and investigate sociocultural and economic factors that develop these variations.

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative methodology is used to analyze accent variations in Pakistani Urdu, specifically in Punjabi and Pushto languages. The research aims to identify similarities and gaps in segmental features among female speakers of these majorly spoken languages. The phonetic inventories of two said languages have been analyzed. Female speakers of the two majorly spoken languages in Pakistan are selected. Two speakers from each of the two languages (Punjabi, Pashto) have been selected randomly as a sample.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Urdu is an amusing language that has a diversity of different sounds. Rehman (2006) states that Urdu is phonetically alike Hindi language however, it has different historical characteristics and alphabetical script. Its pronunciation and accent differ based on geographical changes in Pakistan. When it comes to exact number of total consonants in Urdu language, we find few controversies. Raza (2009) and Hussain (1997) reported thirty-six consonants, however, according to other researches forty-three consonants are found in Urdu language. According to Saleem et. al. (2002), and Qandeel et. al. (2012), this controversy showed derivative consonants just like; aspirated trill /rʰ/, aspirated lateral /lʰ/, aspirated nasals /nʰ/ and /mʰ/ and aspirated flap /ɽʰ/. Urdu has Uvular stop sound /q/. Qandeel et. al. (2012) and Shakeel (2003) state that Urdu has borrowed sounds /z/, /x/, /f/ and /ɣ/, that are replaced with /dʒ/, /kʰ/, /pʰ/ and /g/ however, such sounds are observed in educated people's speech.

Furthermore, Zahid (2010) highlights the importance of nasalization in Punjabi, where nasal vowels are replaced with oral vowels to alter word meaning. All stressed syllables are accented, although there is a lack of length and pitch in unstressed syllables. Intonation fluctuates in pitch arrangement applied to larger units. Lata et. al. (2011) states that a sentence or a clause is uttered in different ways, that conveys different meaning to the listener. According to Karamat (2012) and Lata et. al. (2011), the phonemes; /v/ and /f/ are labiodental fricatives however Qandeel et. al.

(2012) reported /v/ and /f/ as bilabial fricatives, and Lata et. al. (2011) indicated bilabial approximant /w/. These phonemes have some other confusions also. /tʃʰ /, /dʒ/ and /tʃ/, as palatal stops (Karamat, 2012; Qandeel et. al., 2012) or else according to Lara (2011), as palatal affricates. Just like Urdu, Punjabi too has multiple borrowed phones /z/, /x/, /f/ and /ɣ/ from Arabic and Persian Language (Karamat, 2012; Qandeel et. al., 2012). Qandeel et. al. (2012) and Mahmood (2011) further states that Punjabi has different unarticulated aspirated stops: /kʰ /, /pʰ /, /tʰ / and /ʈʰ /.

Ghai and Singh (2013) state that Punjabi language has ten vowels and these vowels function in pairs for instance, a short vowel and a long vowel. Speakers of Punjabi language revealed relatively prominent nasalization. For instance, /ĩː/, /ɜ̃/, /æ̃ː/, /ã/, /æ̃/, and /ĩ/, nevertheless prominent for short vowel /ʌ/. It has been observed that both high and vowels have been nasalized (Zahid, 2010). In addition to these vowels two semi vowels in Punjabi are /j/ and /w/ as stated by Singh and Ghani (2013).

According to Din and Rehman (2011), Pashto language has five main dialects: Yusuzia (North-Eastern dialect), Kandahari (South-Western dialect), Middle Tribal dialect, Quetta dialect (South-Eastern dialect) and Central dialect (North-Western dialect). Studies show controversy in total of consonants in Pushto language. Din and Rehman (2011) stated that there are 26 consonants in Pashto language whereas Robert (2000) states that there are 30 consonants. The native influence is the main cause in different phonetic inventories that ultimately affect the language. Furthermore, Din and Rehman (2011) stated that labiodental fricatives such as /v/, /θ/, /f/, /ð/ and /ʒ/ doesn't exist in Pashto language, however, Robert (2000) reported presence of labial fricative in Pashto language that is /f/. Rehman and Din (2011) state that /w/ in Pashto glide without roundness of the lip.

Din and Rehman (2011) mentioned nine vowels in Pashto language whereas Robert (2000) mentioned three long vowels and seven short vowels. Fewer number of vowels in Pashto language develops the articulatory gap or space between vowels. Robert (2000) states that mid vowel /ee/ and /o/ converted in /i/ and /u/ by levitation only when following mentioned syllables have middle short vowels and high vowels such as /e/ converting to /u/ and /i/ vowels if they are followed by rounded consonants.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

We have selected 10 female students of International Islamic University Islamabad in order to analyze the variation of the Punjabi (S1, S2) and Pashto (S3, S4) Urdu speakers' recorded speech for this particular study. 4 recording from 4 different speakers have been used for analyzing the variation. The text which was used for recording and analyzing the variation is as below:

Sample Text

ایک کوا بہت پیاسا تھا۔ وہ پانی کی تلاش میں ادھر ادھر اڑ رہا تھا۔ آخر کار ایک باغ میں اسے پانی کا ایک گھڑا نظر آیا۔ وہ بہت خوش ہوا۔ لیکن نزدیک پہنچنے پر اس کو پتا چلا کہ پانی کی سطح بہت نیچے تھی اور اس کی چونچ اس تک نہیں پہنچ سکتی تھی۔ اس کو ایک ترکیب سوجھی۔ اس نے گھڑے میں کنکر ڈالنے شروع کر دیے اور پانی کی سطح اوپر آنا شروع ہو گئی۔ آخر کار اس نے جی بھر کے پانی پیا اور خوشی خوشی اڑ گیا۔

After analyzing the data, we have found out that there are many phonological and morphological variations of Urdu in the speakers of Pashto and Punjabi native speakers. In the sample we have collected, observed, and seen the most prominent variation in Punjabi speaker of Urdu are the omissions of aspirated sounds such as / ہ/, /خ/, /ڑ/ etc. Speaker 2 has replaced low vowel sound /ɔ/ into high vowel sound/ʊ/ E.g. چونچ (chonch into choonch).

These variations are not due to mother tongue only but due to the exposure to the target language which is Urdu here. The speakers who live in an area where Urdu is spoken more often as compared to their mother tongue, can speak Urdu near to standard Urdu or their accent is refined and native tone interference is less prominent. We have selected all the females from IIUI who belong to different areas and backgrounds. One of the Punjabi speakers (S1) lives in Wah, where Urdu is spoken more than Punjabi, an area adjacent to Islamabad and considered to be one of the most literate areas of Pakistan. Whereas, Punjabi speaker (S2) belongs to an area where Punjabi is spoken more than Urdu and the dominance of Punjabi accent is observed more in the speech of S2. The result of the data collection confirmed that standard Urdu accent is considered as more educated and prestigious as 80% listeners placed Speaker2 as less educated whose Punjabi accent was dominant in her Urdu speech. Though both S1and S2 are the students of BS from IIUI. It also reflects our biased thinking that is attached with various accents associated with Urdu language, instead of considering it normal acceptable phenomena.

Pleasantness is associated with S1 while unpleasant was associated with S2, as S2 has more Punjabi dominant loud accent. Then we have seen the association of economic status and class with accent two. S2 is considered to belong to a low economic status as compared to S1, though in reality both belongs to same class.

Similarly, in the speakers of Pushto, aspirated sounds are totally omitted. E.g. (تھا was pronounced as تا) and (ه) sound. The most prominent reason behind this variation is that there is no / ه / and /ڑ/ sound in Pushto. So mother tongue interference is there. We also observed Pushto speakers to analyze the dominance of their accent over Urdu language. Similar kinds of results are seen in sample of S3 and S4. S3 lives in Islamabad for a long time where Urdu is used frequently in the environment, while S4 lives in Peshawar where dominant language in use is Pushto again, so the dominance of Pushto accent was prominent in the speech of S4. The Pushto accent of S3 was less dominant so S3 is considered as more literate and pleasant as compared to S4, although both have same educational level. Again listeners have associated class, education and pleasantness with less variant Urdu accent.

Phonological variations				
Urdu speaker	Punjabi Speaker 1	Punjabi Speaker 2	Pashto Speaker 1	Pashto Speaker 2
کوا (kawwa)	کوا (kawa)	کوا (kawa)	کوا (kawwa)	کوا (kawwa)
پانی(pani)	پانی(pani)	پاڑھیں(panrinh)	پانی(pani)	پانی(pani)
آخرکار(akhirkar)	آخرکار(akhirkar)	آرکار(aharkar)	آخر کار (akhirkar)	آرکار(aharkar)
خوش(khush)	خوش(khush)	خوش(khush)	خوش(khush)	خوش(khush)

پہنچنے (puhunchnny)	پونچے (punchny)	پونچے (punchny)	پونچے (punchny)	پہنچے (punchny)
بہت (buhut)	بوت (bout)	بہت (buhut)	بوت (bout)	بوت (bout)
چونچ (chounch)	چوونچ (chounch)	چوونچ (choonch)	چونچ (chonch)	چوونچ (chounch)
پہنچ (puhunch)	پونچ (ponch)	پونچ (ponch)	پونچ (ponch)	پونچ (ponch)
اور (aur)	اوور (or)	اوور (or)	اور (aur)	اور (aur)
کر (kar)	کار (kaar)	کار (kaar)	کر (kar)	کر (kar)
خوشی خوشی (khushikhushi)	خوشی خوشی (khushikhushi)	khushikhushi	خوشی خوشی khushik hushi)	خوشی خوشی (hushihushi)
سکتی (sakti)	سکتی (sakti)	ساکتی (sakti)	سکتی (sakti)	سکتی (sakti)

Analysis of ResultS

10 listeners were selected for questionnaire and following is the result on basis of questionnaire.

	S1 (Punjabi)	S2(Punjabi)	S3(Pashto)	S4(Pashto)
Pleasant	8	2	7	3
Less Pleasant	2	-	3	5
Unpleasant	-	8	-	2
Highly educated	2	-	-	-
Educated	6	2	6	5
Less educated	2	8	4	5
Upper class	-	-	-	-
Middle class	6	-	6	5
Lower class	4	10	4	5

COMPARISON OF ORAL VOWELS BETWEEN URDU AND PUNJABI

Urdu Vowels	Punjabi Vowels	Pushto Vowels
i:	i:	I
ɪ	I	ɪ
e:	E	Ee
æ:		Æ
	ɛ:	ə
ɑ:	a:	A
ɔ:	ɔ:	
o:	O	O
u:	u:	U
ʊ	ʊ	ʊ

ə	ə	

The table shown below represents Urdu alphabets, the CISAMPA, and their corresponding symbols of IPA.

Urdu Letter	IPA	CISAMPA	Urdu Letter	IPA	CISAMPA	Urdu Letter	IPA	CISAMPA
پ	p	P	خ	x	X	قَ	q	Q
ﭖﮭ	pʰ	P_H	غ	ɣ	G_G	ع	ʔ	Y
ب	b	B	حہ	h	H	ف	f	F
ﺏﮭ	bʰ	B_H	ل	l	L	و	v	V
م	m	M	لﮭ	lʰ	L_H	ت،ص،س	s	S
مﮭ	mʰ	M_H	ر	r	R	ذ،ز،ظ،ض	z	Z
ت،ط	t̪	T_D	رﮦ	rʰ	R_H	ش	ʃ	S_H
تﮭ	t̪ʰ	T_D_H	ڑ	ɽ	R_R	ژ	ʒ	Z_Z
د	d̪	D_D	ڑﮪ	ɽʰ	R_R_H	ٱ	ʊ	U
دﮦ	d̪ʰ	D_D_H	ی	j	J	ٲ،ء	ə	A
ٹ	t	T	ﭔﮭ	jʰ	J_H	ٱں	ĩ	I_N
ٹﮭ	tʰ	T_H	چ	ʧ	T_S	آ،ا	ɑː	A_A
ڈ	d	D	چﮬ	ʧʰ	T_S_H	ا،آں	ɑ̃ː	A_A_N
ڈﮪ	dʰ	D_H	ج	ʤ	D_Z	ی	iː	I_I
ن	n	N	جﮭ	ʤʰ	D_Z_H	یں	ĩː	I_I_N
نﮭ	nʰ	N_H	وُ	uː	U_U	ﮮ	eː	A_Y
ک	k	K	وُں	ũː	U_U_N	یں	ẽː	A_Y_N
کﮭ	kʰ	K_H	و	oː	O_O	ﮨٱ	E	A_Y_H
گ	g	G	وں	õː	O_O_N		E	A_E_H
گﮭ	gʰ	G_H	ؤ	ɔː	O	ٱٵ	ũ	U_N
ن in نگ , نک ,نکﮫ ,نگﮫ	ŋ	N_G	وٴں	ɔ̃ː	O_N	ٱٲ	ə̃	A_N

CONCLUSION

The process of language variation has always been an area of interest for different socio-linguists. Urdu has been a Lingua Franca in Pakistan right from the beginning. Therefore, throughout the country people understand and speak Urdu language along with other first languages such as Punjabi, Balochi, Sindhi, etc. speak Urdu which is often spoken under the influence of their L1. The influence however varies in degrees and the difference can be felt in the person's speech at the levels of accent and pronunciation.

The purpose of this research was to find out different accents of Urdu language in Pakistan. Though Urdu is one of the two official languages of Pakistan, and it is widely spoken throughout the country, but it has been observed that due to multilingual system of Pakistan, Urdu is spoken with multiple accents. To contribute, students of IIUI have agreed for recordings of their speech corpus (Story text). We have adopted the quantitative methodology to find out accent variation. The result shows like English, Urdu standard variety is considered to be the sign of education, economic class and pleasantness. Though there is a change in traditional thinking about standard varieties throughout the world including Pakistan and people have started accepting variation positively, but still these variations faced biased and conservative attitude.

From the above text, we come to know that Urdu is spoken with different sound patterns such as accent and pronunciation of different words. This proves that Chomsky's idea of dominance of L1 over L2 is correct and such influence can be observed in the examples given above. Hence, it can be said that dominance of L1 cannot be completely ignored or removed from the speech by the speaker. However, other socio- economic factors also effect these variations.

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