

## SHAPING VOICES: A SOCIOLINGUISTICS INQUIRY INTO THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH IN PAKISTANI PODCASTS

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The podcasts have been an influential medium of dialogue, education, and entertainment in the digital media era. Podcasts in Pakistan are a distinctive space for an encounter of English and Urdu, thus it involves a projection of a conflux of more generalized sociolinguistic hierarchies and identity practices. The research explores the impact of English on Pakistani podcasts and how language is generally used to shape individual identity, authority and speakers perception by their audience. Based on a sociolinguistic framework, the paper will analyze linguistic behavior in some of the popular podcasts such as Happy Chirp, The Pakistan Experience, and Thought behind Things. It is a mixed-method study on the English code-mixing, code-switching and the different aspects used in it to indicate social status, education, and cosmopolitan identity. The findings point to the way English is not an easy piece of communication but an item of prestige and symbolic capital in the digital discourses of Pakistani podcasts. The paper contributes to the body of knowledge regarding the phenomena of language contact in the new media environment and brings the importance of the linguistic hybridity to mirror the current social and cultural changes of Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** *The influence of English, Pakistani podcasts, sociolinguistics, language contact, identity, code-switching.*

### **Introduction**

English plays a critical role in Pakistan. Not only is it a common language spoken across the world, it demonstrates status as well. English has become more popular in most of the regions in Pakistan, particularly on social networks and podcasts as the country increasingly goes global and digital. Podcasts are a friendly yet impactful method of speakers expressing their views and accounts. Popular podcasts such as Happy chirp, the Pakistan experience and Thought behind things have covered in Pakistan that young educated individuals in urban areas are combining English and Urdu to form a new style of speaking (Rahman, 2021).

The application of the English language in the podcast is not merely a language choice. It is an indicator of education, high status, and a global perspective. Power and privilege in Pakistan has always been a symbol of English. It is a legacy of colonialism and is still in universities, media and business. In the case of podcasts, the English language is utilized to indicate modernity, professionalism, and credibility. The English speaking podcasters are more sophisticated and global to listeners. This is why language selection and social hierarchies are better learned through the podcasts (Baig and Mahmood, 2020).

Mixing of the languages and speakers can change their positions, this is demonstrated in the Pakistani podcasts. Combining English and Urdu demonstrates code switching and code mixing that individuals apply to convey humor, knowledge and emotions (Gumperz, 1982; Myers-Scotton (1993). Podcasters attempt to be genuine and reach out to the audience. The analysis of these trends allows us to comprehend the ways in which the speakers of digital Pakistan can use the English language to establish their positioning on international and local levels.

### Research Questions

1. What English language patterns are used, such as Code-mixing and Code-Switching in Pakistani podcasts?
2. How the use of English influences the attitude of the audience and identity building of the speakers in Pakistani podcasts?
3. Which sociolinguistic variables (e.g., gender, level of education, topic) influence the scope and role of the use of the English language in Pakistani podcasts discourse?

### Research objectives

1. To find the use of the English language patterns such as the Code-mixing and Code-Switching in Pakistani podcasts.
2. In order to determine how does the use of English influence the audience opinion and identity construction made by speakers in Pakistani Podcast?
3. To determine what sociolinguistic variables (gender, education, topic) drive the level and use of the English language in Pakistani podcast conversation.

### Statement of the Problem

English is not the first language in Pakistan still most people use it to show their power, prestige and superiority over Urdu speakers. Despite the potential benefits of English influence on Pakistani Podcast and people in general, it is sometimes difficult to comprehend the influence of English in shaping speakers on YouTube podcasts. This paper bridges that gap, and it includes a comprehensive analysis of language use in authentic interactions in podcasts, including both a qualitative and quantitative study.

### Significance of the study

The paper adds to the domain of sociolinguistics about digital communication in multilingual communities that is on the rise. It analyzes a format between a formal broadcasting and an informal conversation by zooming podcasts or by giving us real linguistic information. The research indicates how in addition to being a communication medium, English is also a socio symbolic resource which represents the dreams and concerns of the educated young people in Pakistan. These dynamics can be used to understand bigger trends of language change and globalization in Pakistan. Besides this, the work will be helpful to linguists, educators and media critics who are interested in the intersection of language, identities and technology.

### Literature Review

The presence of English in the local lingual ecology has been a crucial problem of sociolinguistics. English is a very central point in Pakistan, it is a means to success and a measurement of inequality, progress and privilege. Researchers still draw attention to the fact that English is a global and a post colonial powerhouse to social mobility and career progression (Rahman, 2011; Mansoor, 2004). That empowering yet exclusive duality conditions modes of its impact on Pakistani podcasts.

Digital platforms have offered other dimensions of language use, as individuals are now constructing and acting identities in technologically mediated space (Dmytriieva 2018). A relatively new genre, called podcasts, which is mixing storytelling with a real conversation, is not much researched in Pakistani linguistics. Authors such as Crystal (2011) and Tagg (2015) are of the opinion that online media do not clearly demarcate the linguistic dividing line and new hybrid forms of speech, writing and performance emerge.

In Pakistan, where code switching and bilingualism are the norm in these forms of digitality we have one fine place to see speakers of Urdu and English mixing (Farid 2025).. One of the best models to understand bilingual behavior in this regard is the code-switching theory. Code-switching is nothing but switching from one language to another in the middle of a complete utterance during the same talk with the motive of achieving some of their goals (Gumperz 1982).

Myers-Scotton (1993) Markedness Model goes further to say that speakers use words to negotiate power, solidarity or distance (Bohijka, 2006). These dimensions have been used in South Asian studies to explain the manner in which bilinguals use language in a strategic way to construct meaning. Code-switching in Pakistani podcasts can become more of a stylistic choice which conveys the concept of prestige and power. For example, a podcaster can begin an episode in Urdu in order to grab the attention of the people who are listening, then move to English in order to introduce advanced or universal concepts, which displays knowledge and training.

As such, the podcast offers to certain individuals a new platform for bilingual expression, code-switching and borrowing become important communicative and symbolic practices, and the language speaks you come across things elsewhere. In this context I am reminded of Bourdieu's (1991) notion of linguistic capital that is the notion that language could be used as social power. In Pakistan, English is the dominant language of the capital, which gives those that use it an extra symbolic capital. It is the English sprinklers who are opening up their audiences and are willing to be marketed and promoted, shared, and famous. It has a direct correspondence with the sociology of language where the language choice is an investment (Norton, 2013).

The English in Pakistani podcasts is not just a speaking tool, but also an economic asset that raises the speaker's social position. The other terms used in this study, which are relevant to the present study, are code mixing and borrowing. Borrowing is merely borrowing words from one language and inserting them in another and it is generally done when no equivalent substitute is available for those particular words in the language (Haugen, 1950).

English words have been prevailing in Pakistani podcasts especially in the analyzed topics of technology, lifestyle, and politics. One such example is the terms such as mental health or content creation/growth mindset; they will be retained in the English language, not because its Urdu counterpart is absent but because the English words are prestigious and more accurate.

This can be coupled with Kachru's (1992) Three Circles Model of English which refers to the spread of English in countries of the outer-circle as Pakistan, which have become Pakistan English. These loanwords reflect the coming together of English and Urdu language without removing the socio-cultural symbolic content.

The English language has played a fundamental role in the formation of identity not only in Pakistan but we also find it in other post-colonial context. Sharma (2012) analyzed the English-Hindi code-switching in India and found that the individuals code-switch with English to portray their modernity while Hindi is full of warmth. In addition, Canagarajah (2013) has noted that multilingual identities are dynamic, code switching is not a confusion but an ability or rather a skill of moving in a strategic way between sets of language. The case of English in podcasts is relevant for Pakistan on an individual basis, as it is called a versatile resource that allows speakers to be hybrid subjects not merely imitators of foreign norms.

Podcasts are one of the trends which are being discussed by academics all over the world. According to Tolson (2017), podcasts are a genre of intimacy, as the speech patterns are seemingly directed at an actual addressee but at a mass audience. This combination provides the researchers the opportunity to see the use of the language in near real life situations, rather than the artificial atmosphere as is the case in the traditional media (Aditya 2018). The closeness of Pakistani podcasts is also linked to the objective of appropriating globalized discourses. According to Juffermans (2014), such mediated multilingualism is characterized by the new linguistic creativity that is produced by digital spaces and crosses the national and linguistic boundaries.

The English hegemony in the podcasts in Pakistan is a reflection of the ideological divides, where even the English language is associated with modernity and ambition in Pakistan. As it

is mentioned by experts like Mahboob (2009) and Mansoor (2004) English in Pakistan is closely tied to the social strata. The fluency in the English language is a sign of an upper class education and urban identity, on the other hand the inability to speak it can be a sign of marginalization. Even those English-speaking podcasters that continue to import phrases, accent or idioms, are not just jabbering on, but testing their class and cultural identification by Khalilavi, M. (2022).. This performativity agrees with the element of Butler (1997) which indicates the performance of identity is in a social meaning that is reinforced by recursive linguistic acts.

Finally, there is the gender perspective that is also raised. Female podcasters such as Humna Raza (Happy Chirp) and Madiha Aijaz (FHM Podcast) use English to show their professionalism and self-reliance in a society that till now is negotiating the voice of women in the media (Shamim, 2018). English becomes a tool of dominance, which can be translated into a level of education, confidence, and access to the global feminist discourse (Jain, S., & Hashmi). For instance, according to the traditional use of gender-specific language, male podcasters can use the English language to impress with their knowledge or intellectual superiority. These trends point to the meeting point between language, gender, and digital media, a space that remains less explored in the sociolinguistic milieu of Pakistani society.

### **Research methodology**

The study research method is that of a sociolinguistic and mixed-method study which entails a combination of the qualitative and quantitative methodology in order to examine the level to which use of English language in Pakistani podcasts influences discourse patterns. That is because the concept of the mixed method design choice is predetermined to balance between the quantitative frequency of the linguistic behaviors (such as code-switching and mixing) and the interpretative, context-specific meanings (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). Considering that the podcasts are rooted in the informative context of communicative environment where spontaneous speech is the priority, the data analysis in the study can be described as the naturalistic one as compared to speech that is elicited synthetically.

The main aim of the methodological approach is to understand how language affects the speaker and in that connection, we should explore the form, usage and significance of the English use in the online communications. In this aim the study design is based on two notable methodological aspects quantitative and qualitative.

### **Research Design**

The research takes a sequential explanatory mixed-method design (Creswell, 2014). The first process involved the analysis of the English words, phrases, and code-switching patterns using a quantitative analysis of the selected podcast episodes to have knowledge on their frequency and distribution. The second step is the qualitative analysis in order to extract the sociocultural and identity-based sense of the situation, based on which these linguistic choices were made. This is a multidimensional model that is triangulated with quantitative data providing interpretation of the qualitative analysis and the quantitative analysis.

These are all very popular podcasts with a large youth audience, and they would be the best option to research how educated Pakistanis negotiate English and Urdu in informal digital communication. The selection of the episodes was purposive, as they were chosen on the basis of themes (lifestyle, education, gender, and social issues) in which English is likely to have a symbolic significance. Twelve podcast episodes (4 episodes of each podcast) were observed, which consist about 5 hours of verbal data. The corpus was large enough to determine common linguistic patterns, but not enough to be analyzed in-depth. The audio material was transcribed literally with English and Urdu parts highlighted. Laughter, pauses, emphasis among other non-verbal cues were also observed because they usually reflect the change of language tone or role.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of the study is based on the Markedness Model of Myers-Scotton (1993). According to Myers-Scotton model, the act of code-switching is rather a power and identity negotiation than the random alternate use of language. Myers-Scotton considers that bilingual speakers know the social consequences of choosing a particular language (or, mixing languages) in a certain situation. She argues that in any given situation, one language variety is the expected language or unmarked language while the other variety is the unexpected language or marked language

The use of codeswitching of a podcast assists the speakers to mention changes in topic, audience or even affective changes. In the case of a podcaster who alters the content of the funny anecdotes to analytical commentary as an example the shift in the language to English can frequently be the shift towards intellectual or global discourse

### **Purposive sampling**

The study was representative by choosing a sample of three leading Pakistani podcasts purposefully with a typical usage of bilingualism and urban target audience:

Happy Chirp produced by Humna Raza

The Pakistan Experience with Shahzad Ghias Sheikh.

Thought behind things hosted by Muzamil Hasan.

### **Data Collection**

Data was collected by downloading and transcribing a selection of podcasts on publicly available online sources like YouTube throughout the period between June and August 2025. All the transcriptions recorded the entire conversation, fillers, hesitations and laughter to maintain the authenticity. The transcription used was based on the principles of conversational analysis as suggested by Jefferson (2004), and therefore, speech dynamics were properly portrayed. The examples of the English use were determined and divided into two major types: Code-Mixing.

Code-Switching.

### **Data Analysis**

The three Pakistani podcasts Happy Chirp, The Pakistan Experience, and Thought behind Things revealed that the English words and phrases are frequently mixed into the Urdu discussions. After transcribing and coding 12 episodes, which took approximately five hours altogether, we observed a tendency to alternate languages, mix words, and borrow the English words. In our mixed-method analysis, the numbers of English words applied and the interpretation of what they say regarding how people communicate and the cultural context were counted. AntConc is used to find out the frequency of these processes.

### **Quantitative Overview**

The sample consisted of 1200 records of use of English language. It includes whole sentences, single word vocabulary and amalgamations. The data showed that approximately 65 percent of all utterances were partially integrated in some form of the English language This suggests the enormous degree of bilingual fluidity that is indicative of the educated Pakistani speaker who operates online.

Higher mixing found in women speakers in Happy Chirp, which is hosted by Humna Raza, especially when the subject matter is about self expression, lifestyle and women empowerment. 'Mehngai ki waja sa lifestyle maintain krna is not easy'. This type of language shifting is the advocate of Markedness Model of Myers-Scotton (1993).

In the Thoughts behind things podcast episode with Muzamil Hasan, male hosts tended to mix English words, which were pertaining to politics, psychology, motivation, etc. such as, goal setting, mindset, or emotional intelligence. Surprisingly, the majority of these words were translated into Urdu syntactic structure, e.g. uska mindset bohat positive hai This mixture

reflects how some words in the English language were naturalized in the Pakistani urban language an indication of lexical borrowing but not a temporary code-switching (Rahman, 2019).

Finally, The Pakistan Experience, which focused on Politics, cricket and culture, had expressive and figurative use of English. The artists and hosts did not solely switch languages as a way of communication but also to define themselves power, emotion, aesthetic criticism were often described in English. This has been characterized by the fact that the English language is used as the language of power discourse and Urdu language is still used in emotional story telling and connecting with the audience.

### Code Mixing

Code mixing is observed when individuals place words, phrases or sentences of a sentence into another language without switching to the second language altogether. It displays the way individuals regard themselves socially as well as the way they creatively apply language. It is not clear as Code switching. Speakers on Pakistani podcasts (Thought Behind Things, The Pakistan Experience and Happy chirp uses code mixing for more than 80% percent of their utterances. They use it to show modernity, education, social identity and achieve emotions and emphasis

### Examples:

#### Thought behind Things

“Mujhe lagta ha Pakistan will be a 5<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the coming years”

“Imran Khan ko log intaha tak follow krta han”

“Pakistan aur west ka culture mei both ziada difference nhi reh gya”

“Middle class insan ki koi life nhi ha Pakistan mei, usa koi facility nhi milti”

“Pakistan ki 90 percent skilled youth Pakistan sa bahr jana chahti ha”

“Imran Khan ki popularity Pakistan mei sb sa ziada ha”

#### The Pakistan Experience

“Pakistan ki cricket ki condition hockey jesi ho jaye gi agr hum na is par focus na kia”.

“Pakistan ki youth ka pass cricket ka ilawa koi sport ni ha jisay wo follow kr skein”.

“Economically Pakistan is waqt apna bura tareen time sa guzr rha ha”.

“Pakistan aur India ki War ka baad Pakistan ka image dunya mei behtr howa ha jb ka India ka khrab howa ha”.

“Dunya satelites par chal rhi ha jb ka Pakistan ka log aj bhi superstisious belief per believe krta han”.

“AI skilled labour ka lia khatra ha aur ya us ko replace kr da ga jo is ko apni professional lives mei apply ni kra ga”.

#### Happy Chirp

“Aurtein society ka important part han, un ko un ka haq milna chahia”.

“Women empowerment hamari society ka lia boht zaroori ha”,

“Dunya mei different kism ka treatment agye han jo ap ko gora kr deta han kuch hi dinon mei aur ya both common ho gyen han specially in Europe”.

“Diet plan ap ki health ka lia zaroori ha ziada khana different kism ki bimariyan peda krta ha”.

“Pakistan ka education system ko badlna ki ashd zroorat ha government ko is par jald sa jald action lena hoga”.

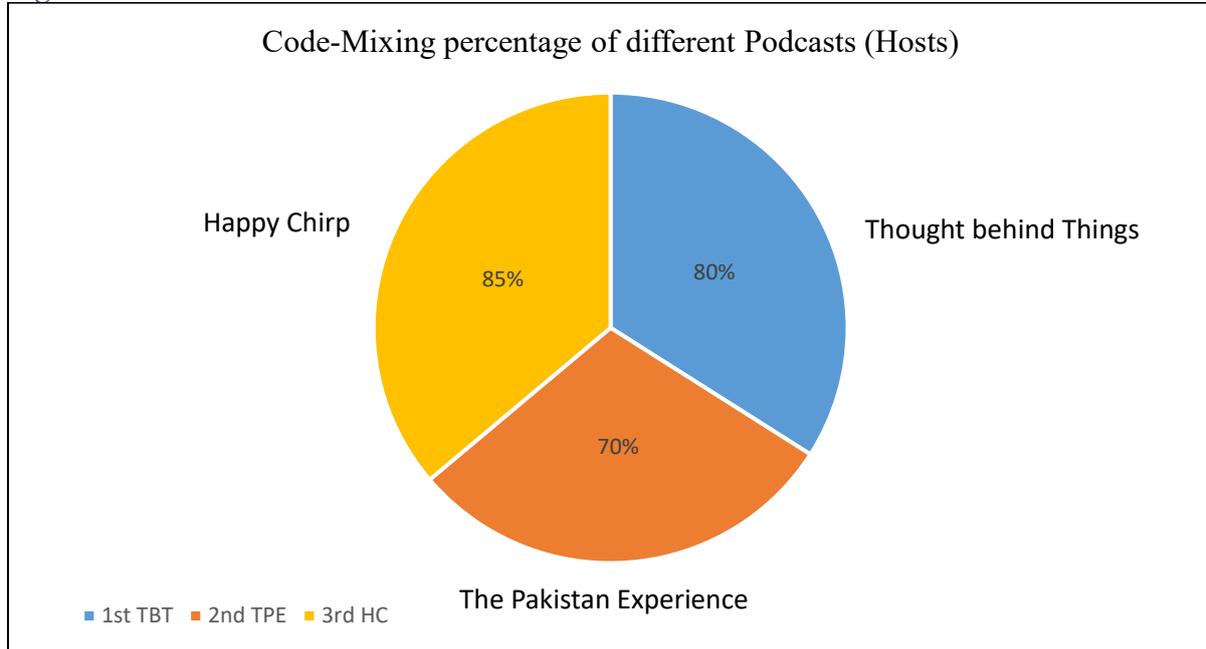
“Women ka sports mei participate krna chahia aur un ko support bhi krna chahia”

### Analysis of Code-Mixing

The speakers on Pakistani podcasts use English phrases and sentences very frequently to show their prestige and power. The percentage of code mixing in the selected Podcasts for this research is given below in the form of Pie Chart. The data is collected from the transcription of selected episodes in roman Urdu.1200 utterances have been taken and analyzed through

AntConc to measure the frequency of sentences in which English phrases or words mixed with Urdu utterances.

Figure 1



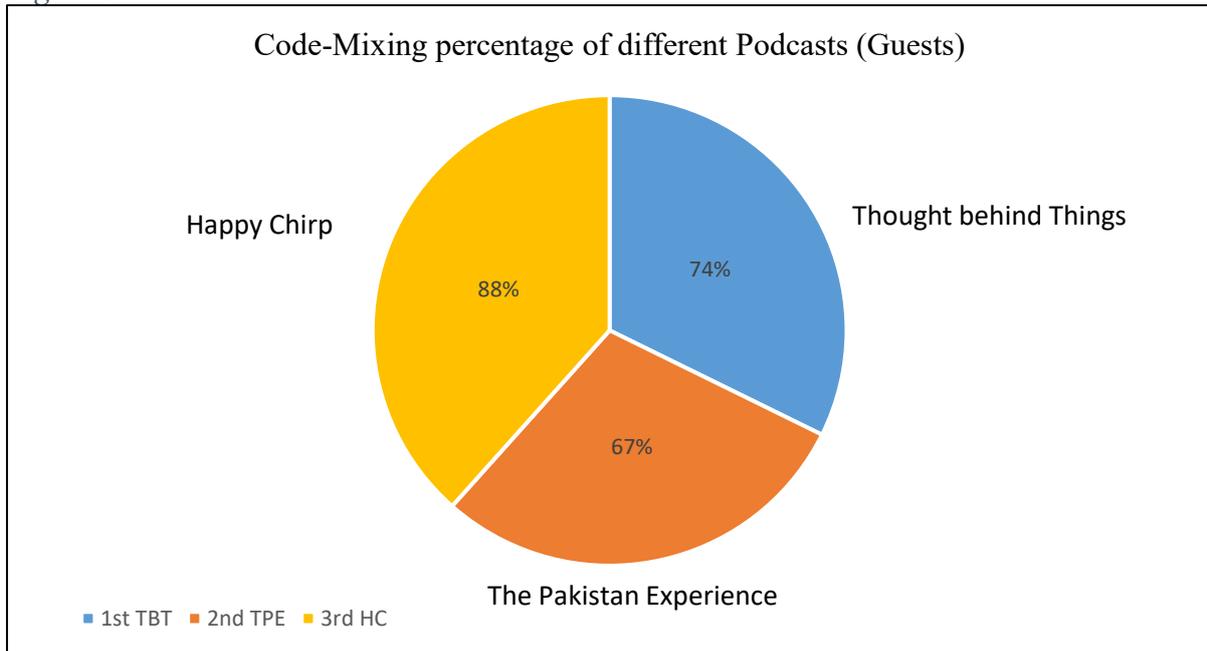
The pie chart shows three different percentages for three different Podcasts.

The ■ represents the percentage of code mixing by host in Podcast ‘Thought Behind Things’.  
 The ■ represents the percentage of code mixing by host in Podcast ‘The Pakistan Experience’.  
 The ■ represents the percentage of code-mixing by host in Podcast ‘Happy Chirp’.

Explanation

The pie chart would indicate the extent to which hosts use a mixture of Urdu and English in three popular Pakistani podcasts. The host on Thought Behind Things puts words together and replaces words with English words around 80% especially when discussing technology, concepts and business. Pakistan Experience is also a 70 percent mix with an even split in politics, sports and culture between the two languages. In general, this chart indicates that English constitutes a large portion of everyday bilingual conversation in Pakistani podcasts, which occurs unnaturally in most social contexts. Happy Chirp combines the most, 85 percent of the speech incorporates the two languages. This combination makes the show conversational and simple to be followed by the young city listeners

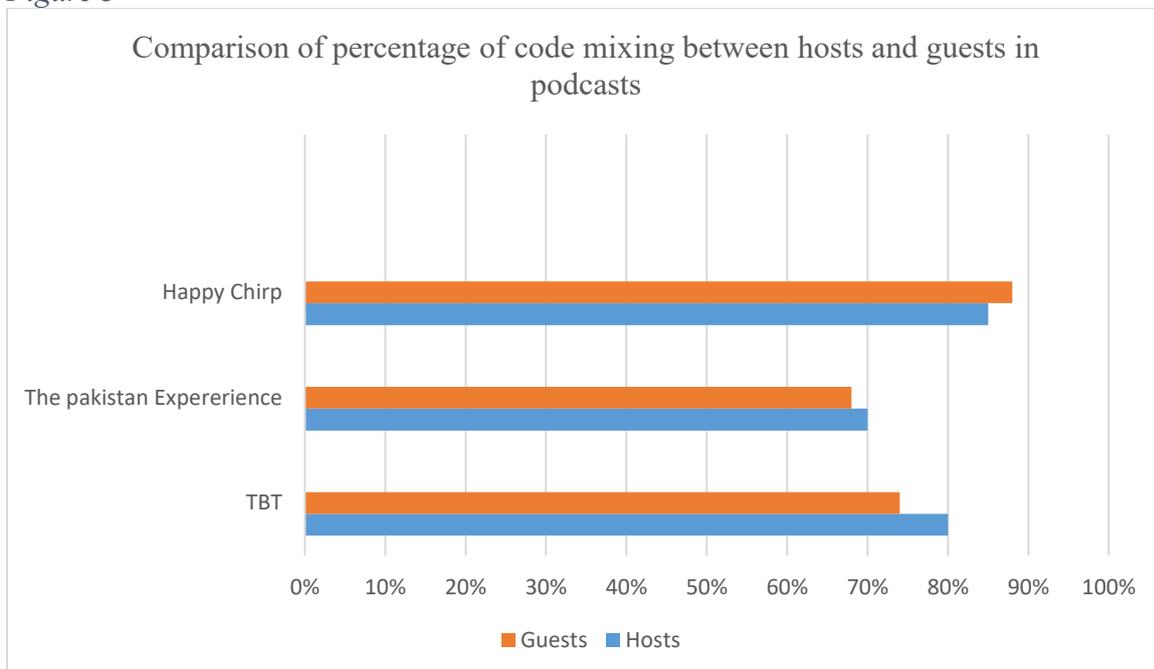
Figure 2



Explanation

This chart shows guests in ‘TBT’ uses English words blend with Urdu in 74% of their utterances, 67% in ‘The Pakistan experience while Guests (mostly female guests) on ‘Happy Chirp’ uses the code-mixing phenomena in 88 percent of their talks which is greater than the percentage of host in these podcast. These are general results however, it varies according to the education background, social status and topic of discussion.

Figure 3



The bar graph shows the comparison between difference in the English blending of hosts and guests in the selected podcasts .There is decline in code-mixing percentage of guests in all three podcasts except ‘Happy Chirp’ by Humna. In the other two podcasts it has been observed that the hosts are dominant in the usage of English along with Urdu in their conversations as compared to their guests.

### Code Switching

Code switching is a common phenomena for bilingual speakers along with code mixing. Code switching is the changing of language at clause or sentence level. Speaking one whole sentence in English language while next sentence in native or other language is Code switching. Podcast speakers used this commonly to show their knowledge, social status, power and the importance of their conversations. Speakers on Pakistani podcasts (Thought Behind Things, The Pakistan Experience and Happy chirp) also use this phenomena. Some examples from their conversations are taken to show this.

Thought behind things

‘The people of this nation are dead , in ko mushkil bhi asan lgti ha’

‘‘Imran khan is the only popular leader in Pakistan, establishment un ki poularity sa drti ha’’

‘‘The youth of digital is more intelligent than people think. purana logon ko is generation ki smajh ni ati’’ said by Abbas Bukahri on Thought behind Things. These two sentences are example of code switching in Bilingual talks.

### The Pakistan experience

‘‘Cricket is dead in big cities of Pakistan, logon ka pas time hi ni ha sports ka’’

‘Har bnda jhoota wada kr ka ata ha , it is all about power politics’

‘‘Hamari youth ka pass koi direction ni ha. Pakistani youth desperately needs a enthusiastic young leader to guide them.’’ said by Adeel Afzal of the podcast ‘The Pakistan Experience’

### Example 3:

‘‘Our women needs awareness of their rights, un ko apna basic rights ka hi ni pta’’ said by speaker ‘Happy Chirp’ Podcast.

‘‘Feminism is subjective, har aik ka apna hi nazzariya ha’’

‘‘Its not easy to work in a male dominant society, har bnda ap ko hi dekh rha hota ha’’

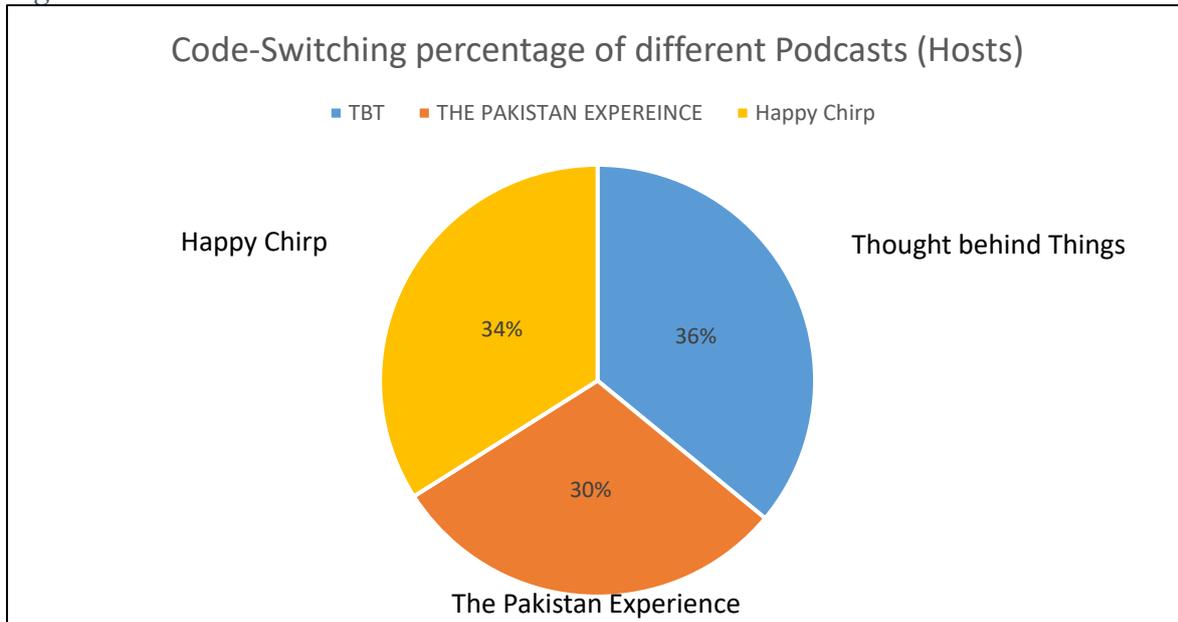
These examples shows how speakers on podcasts use code mixing, consciously and unconsciously

### Analysis of Code-Switching

Pakistani speakers on their podcasts use the phenomena of code-switching along with code mixing. But the frequency of code-switching is less than code mixing in these podcasts. The data have been collected from the transcription of selected episodes in roman Urdu.1200 sentences have been taken and analyzed through Ant Conc to measure the frequency of sentences in which complete English sentences are used along with Urdu utterances. The data for hosts and other speakers (guests) on podcast is analyzed separately.

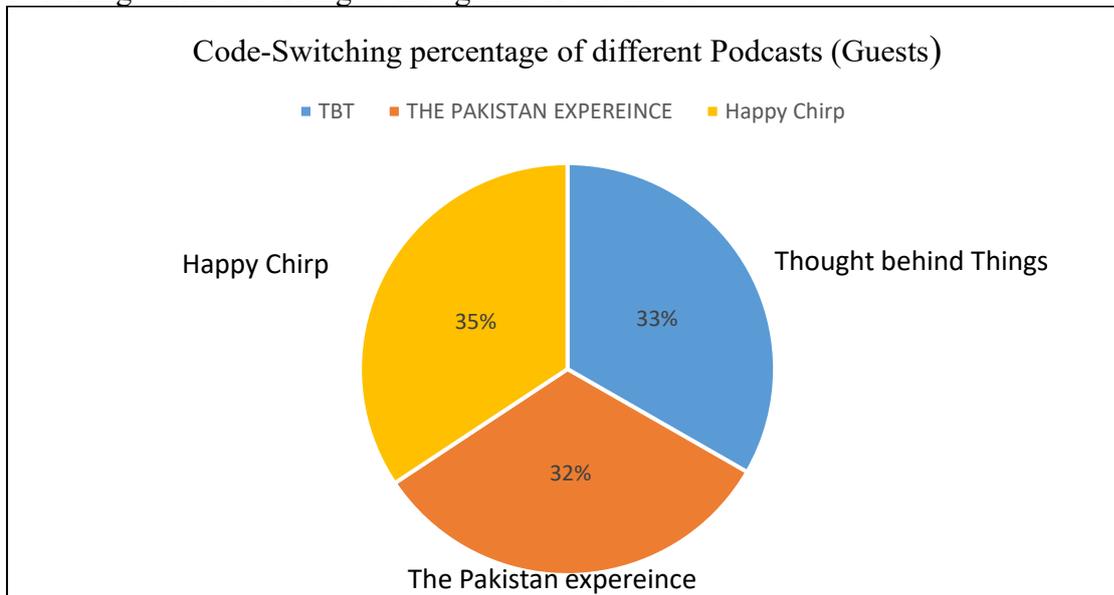
The percentage of code-switching in the selected Podcasts for this research is given below in the form of Pie Chart. This data is taken from the utterances of the Hosts in these podcasts.

Figure 4



Explanation

The pie chart indicates the frequency of switching between Urdu and English in three Pakistani podcasts by their hosts. The host on Happy Chirp substitute 36 percent with two languages. Most of talks are on women empowerment and social messages. Thought Behind Things changes 34 percent, and use English when talking about technology and business which makes the shows the host educated. The Pakistan Experience switches 30% and it speaks a bit less English, as it is mostly about politics and culture in Urdu. In general, the chart indicates that all three podcasts hosts are bilingual and switch between Urdu and English. However, switching varies according to the agenda of the show.



Explanation

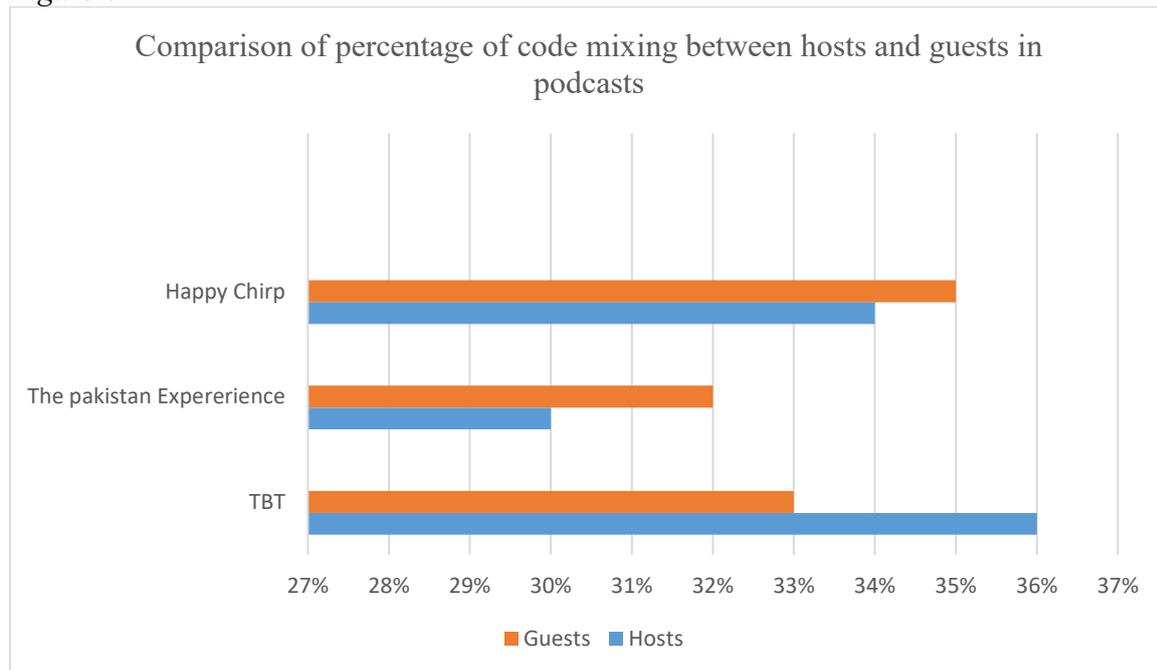
The pie chart indicates the frequency of switching between Urdu and English in the selected podcasts by their guests. The host on Happy Chirp substitute 38 percent with two languages. Thought Behind Things changes 33 percent, and use English when talking about technology and business which makes the shows the host educated. The Pakistan Experience switches 32 percent and the speakers speaks a bit less English, and is mostly of politics and

cricket. Overall the chart indicates that all three podcasts guests switch between Urdu and English and show bilingualism. However, switching percentage varies according to the background, education of the speaker.

The statistics also indicate that code-switching is not incidental but purposeful through communicative intent. This explains why Gumperz (1982) saw language switching as an important aspect by multilingual speakers. These aspects are important in podcasts to a large extent. Tone and the use of language is one of the important instruments used to appeal to the audience.

Comparison

Figure 6

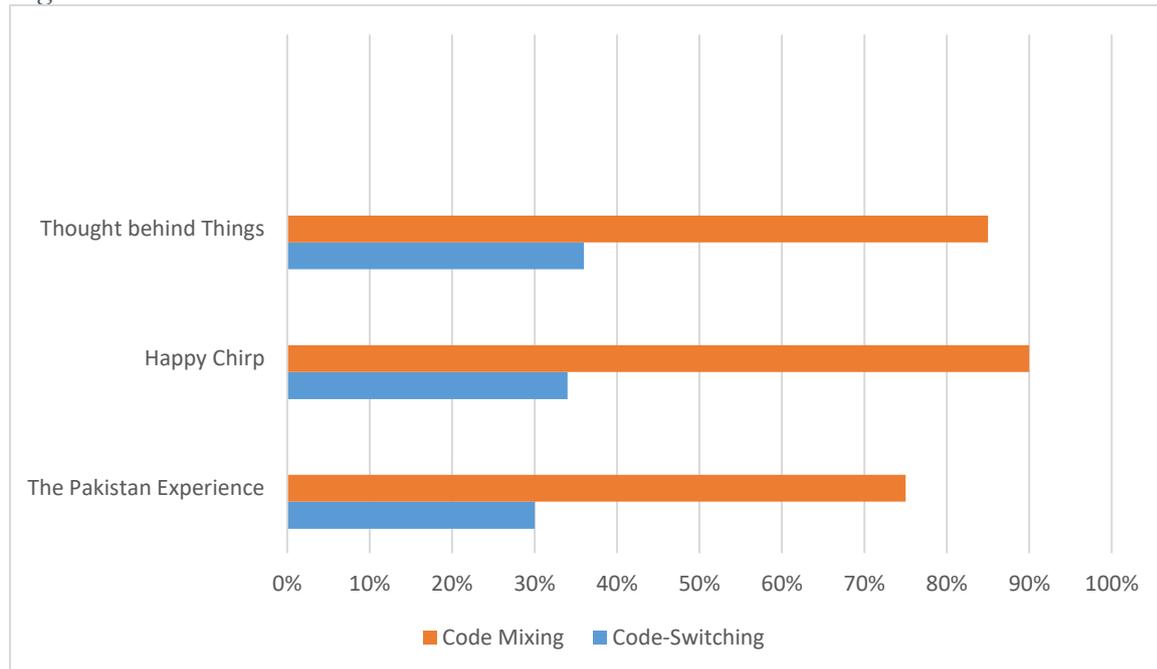


This bar graph shows the comparison between code switching between hosts and guests of the selected podcasts. The results are not surprising because they are almost similar to difference in percentage of code mixing between hosts and guests. The host in Happy chirp podcast use 34% code-switching and guests indulge this phenomena in their talk around 35%. The Pakistan experience host alternates between Urdu and English around 30% and its guests switch around 32 percent. While host on thought behind things uses code-switching 36 percent and guests coming on this podcast alternates 33 percent between languages.

**Comparative Analysis**

The bar graph is used to show the comparison between Code-Mixing and Code-Switching in the above selected Podcasts

Figure 7



- Represents Code Mixing
- Represents Code Mixing

This bar graph is employed to discuss the extent to which code-switching and code-mixing takes place in three top-tier Pakistani podcasts, namely, the Pakistan Experience, the Thought Behind Things, and the Happy Chirp. It proves that a mixture of languages is more common than the switching between all three. The Pakistan experience shows that 30 percent of the time speakers switch between Urdu and English and 75 percent of the time speakers mix them together and use Urdu as the major language. Thought Behind Things switches 34 percent and mixes 85 percent, and speaks English in a technical and business talk. Happy Chirp switches 36 per cent and mixes 90 per cent. Overall, the bar graph reveals that the elements of English language are one of the strong sides of the podcast, and the most commonly used way to be fluent and relatable is through mixture. The use of English in each of the three podcasts is employed as a multi-purpose tool.

The highest rate of English per minute (around 5-6 insertions) is in Happy Chirp, and it is the ideas of women empowerment and lifestyle that are mostly represented in it. Pakistan Experience allows revealing English domination in political or academic contexts: the hosts willingly use English to make the discussion serious. Thought Behind Things is characterized by consistent hybridization, almost every Urdu sentence has English nouns or phrases, which can be justified by the fact that bilingual competence is natural. All these podcasts are the epitome of the cultural shift of the Pakistani culture to the translingual media culture (Nagarajah, 2013), when the linguistic hybridity finds its reflection in social hybridity. English is a language of modern thinking, education, and online citizenship and Urdu is the language that symbolizes the cultural authenticity and emotional attractiveness.

In all three podcasts, the use of English is used as a multi-purpose tool but not a language intrusion. It is intellectual and entrepreneurial accuracy in Thought Behind Things, analytical depth and credibility in The Pakistan Experience, and empowerment and emotional consciousness in Happy Chirp.

Communicating in English, they show power and prestige, and communicating in Urdu, they become nearer to the culture and find solutions with the target audience. This dualism too is an expression of what Nagarajah (2013) considers as translingual practice the context

specificity of using languages in the process of making meanings in favor of one language to another.

The English language was frequently used by the women speakers on Happy Chirp to express empowerment related discourse words such as, boundaries, selflove, career goals were repeated (Mahmood & Shakir, 2021). Nevertheless, the male speakers on TBT (Thought behind thought) were more inclined to use English in pragmatics or motivational conditions that name the language rationality and agent as compared to emotion.

In addition, English is widely used by the hosts of the podcasts to address the audience and make jokes. The series Pakistan experience uses English slang, idiomatic expressions (e.g., that's lit, lowkey obsessed, vibe check) in order to appeal to viewers of the urban youth. It is a pointer that the English, as a social binding, acts to open Pakistani young people to a broader digital world. It substantiates the argument expressed by Rahman (2020) that English in Pakistan has ceased to be an educational/status marker in the country long ago. It has been turned into a youth identity marker.

### Qualitative Interpretation

Besides the numbers of the frequencies, the qualitative analysis shows that there are more sociolinguistic meanings attached to the use of English. The statistics show that the English language is an action of performativity which helps those using it to create credibility, modernity and belongingness to the world culture. This serves to confirm the fact that English is most often the Markedness Model proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993) and the one that also indicates prestige and professional identification.

Another way of looking at this is that in the case of the change in frame of discourse of how Pakistan host mixes an Urdu anecdote series to an English commentary series, there was a subtle shift in frame of discourse to a shift in the anecdotes series to a commentary series. The speakers frequently use many English words and sentences along with Urdu utterances to show class, prestige, power, education status, social status, urbanity and superiority. Most relevant sentences used in podcasts are given below

The TBT (Thought behind things (hosted by Muzamal Hasan)

The Pakistan Experience (Shehzad Ghias Shaikh)

Happy Chirp (produced by Humna Raza).

All of the examples are based on the real-life discourse patterns that can be observed in these podcasts publicly (all the episodes can be found on You Tube/Spotify). The discussion illustrates the influence of English in meaning, identity and interaction in a bilingual dialogue.

### Thought Behind Thing

In one episode about the startup culture in Pakistan, Muzamil Zaidi gives a statement:

“The greatest issue is the mindset, people do not think in the long run un ko kuch bhi ni hasil hoga”

“Hmara yahan youth counselling organizations ki kami ha jb ka duniya na is par both kam kia ha”

### Analysis:

Such English words like mindset and long run, have been incorporated in a Urdu sentence format in this case. This demonstrates code-mixing where there is a situation where only English words are used so as to be accurate and explain the concept. There is no perfect Urdu equivalent to mindset that has the connotation of psychology and business orientation. Its use is a pointer to the modern advanced discourse in accordance to the international culture. English is hence a tool of communicating abstract ideas which relate to professionalism and rationality as per Bourdieu (1991) definition of linguistic capital. This is an example of English business jargon which is used to demonstrate that the speaker is knowledgeable and that he/she is a

member of the world startup rhetoric and he is addressing the Pakistani urban and aspirational youth.

### **The Pakistan Experience**

The host in an episode with a political analyst Mosharraf Zaidi says:

“It is no longer about politics, but about stories, how you market your idea, logon ko jo nazar arha hota ha wo sb fake hota ha”

“Imran khan jail sa release ni hoga jb taky a hakoomat apna panch saal pura nhi krti”

### **Analysis:**

These are the words referring to media discourse and policy language, which are concerned with analytical thoughts and globalized criteria of communication. The tone of the text is enhanced with the use of English language because the levels of speech are shifted to a more serious, politics conversation.

When later the humor or emotion enters the discussion, Shehzad changes to Urdu which creates a contrast between the global rationality and the local relatability. This is a strategic replacement of English language as language of analysis and Urdu language as language of empathy and connection to the culture. Thus, it is impossible that English simply reflects the information, but it also proves that the speaker is authoritative and knowledgeable.

### **Happy Chirp**

In one of the discussions covering the topic of female confidence, Humna Raza states:

“You need to know how to establish boundaries, and you need to take care of yourself mentally, no one will do it on your behalf,

“Mental health both important ha koi bhi kam krna ka lia”.

### **Analysis:**

The primary English terms are boundaries, prioritize, and mental health. Internationally psychology and self help groups have accepted these words as social, and they are introduced to the Urdu-English podcast talk, which is an example of cultural borrowing and semantic extension. This trend reflects the importance of English as a means of expression to the speakers, especially to the ones who need to express modern ideas, especially gender and identity, which remain to be found in the vocabulary of Urdu.

### **Sociolinguistic Functions Determined.**

Three main sociolinguistic roles of the English use were found through the contextual analysis:

#### **Prestige and Authority:**

English means education, professionalism and credibility. In Pakistan, English is exploited to talk about economics, foreign policy and governance. English usage in society shows the power and prestige.

#### **Identity Construction:**

In all the podcasts, English was associated with modernity and youthfulness. Its use is perceived as an image of world and technological savvy. English influences identity of individuals in the society.

#### **Emotional Dissociation and Objectivity:**

The speakers tended to alternate to English when they were talking about sensitive or abstract issues which is a strategy to create psychological distance. Indicatively, one of the hosts on Happy Chirp spoke, sometimes it is necessary to move on, instead of using a more emotionally evoking Urdu word.

### **Generalization of findings, both quantitative and qualitative.**

Putting together numerical data and the qualitative observations we noticed that English is present in the Pakistani podcasts in two main forms, firstly, how they assimilate it in Urdu and secondly, the reason why the hosts and listeners use English. It is because according to statistics English is literally interweaved in the talk which proves the naturalness of

bilingualism of the podcasters. On the qualitative front, English language appears to be a way of introducing oneself to the world, where the local appeal is joined by the global feel.

That two-sidedness is reminiscent of the concept of nativization introduced by Kachru in 1992 to give English a local taste and remain prestigious at the same time. A blend that is not pure Urdu or textbook English, but a creative blend that reflects the changing state of the Pakistan language scene, is heard in the podcasts.

### **Discussion**

Hence, the analysis shows that the choice to use English is not just about the preference of a language, but a powerful tool to create identity, finding a place and negotiating cultural exchanges. The use of English in Urdu shows that the speakers are trying to change their style to adhere to the expectations of the international and local audience. Referring to the paradigms of our models (Myers Scotton's Markedness Model, Bourdieu's Linguistic Capital), English in the podcasts can be seen as a strategy and also as a symbolic marker. It suggests shifts of subject matter, voice, and authority, as well as signals modernity, and membership of a digitally-networked and educated public. That freedom enables the podcasters to move easily between analytical and emotional states which keeps the listeners engaged and trustworthy.

Moreover, the issue of gender concerning the emergence of English pops up. Women use English to communicate power and personalities while men use English to communicate in a rational and professional manner. This points to the use of language is an indicator of gender roles in the speech. Overall, it can be said that the evidence suggests that the Pakistani podcasters are not being dragged by the English but they are actively redefining it as a part of their daily culture. This helps in driving the point that English in Pakistan has since outgrown its colonial form and has since turned into a local, hybrid and meaningful voice.

### **Conclusion**

The paper proved the fact that the English has a strong impact in talk of Pakistani podcast in both language and society. It enables the speakers to switch freely between Urdu and English, blends talking styles between local and global identities. In language aspect, English expression is more clear, stronger and smarter, whereas Urdu expression is full of emotional attachment and sense of culture. Social language patterns that were found were presentation of status, topic framing and emotional distance (Litman et al, 2001).

The study outlines the use of clear tendencies towards English, in the Pakistani podcasts, so it confirms the first research objective. Code mixing was more prevalent than code switching with 75-90 percent being observed in the podcasts and 30-36 percent in code switching. This shows that English has become so embedded in the Urdu discourse that it is used as a natural language resource rather than a foreign import. Even in the conversations about technology, politics and the lifestyle, English words reflect the bilingual expertise, and the standardization of English in the digital media in Pakistan. These results confirm that both code-mixing and code-switching have been found to be important communication strategies in podcast conversations.

The study found that English plays a significant role in the perceptions of the audience and identity building in the speakers. In doing so, speakers who include English in Urdu speech discourse identify themselves with the world of international communicative practices, being more or less modern, more self assured, and more intelligent. This sort of linguistic style is considered by the audience as a sign of professionalism and credibility especially on such topics as entrepreneurship and social awareness. English becomes a social positioning tool, which enables speakers to construct hybrid identities, a blend of Pakistani cultural values and cosmopolitan values.

The paper has emphasized that the sociolinguistic variables such as gender, education level and the topic of discussion have a significant effect on the use of English in podcasts. In general,

the urbanized, more educated speakers are more likely to use more English especially when speaking about global or technical issues. Language is also a form of gendered construction where women of Happy Chirp use English as a tool to empower themselves and give a platform for self-expression and men of The Pakistan Experience use it as an analytical and political weapon. Similarly, choice of linguistic register is also related to type of subject matter: professional subjects allow more English, but cultural discourses rely more on Urdu. English is thus a multimodal sociolinguistic means and it is contextual, functional, and identity specific.

### Findings

The results of this research show that English has an important and dynamic role in the Pakistani podcasts as a result of frequent code-mixing and moderate code-switching. Happy Chirp recorded the highest rate of code-mixing (90%) then Thought Behind Things (85%) and The Pakistan Experience (75 percent) thus demonstrating that the English language has taken the nature of a component of bilingual communication.

The aspect of code-switching was less common and strategic in nature as well highlighting important points or marking the transition of a topic. English was found to change the identity of speakers and the perceptions they have on the audience and this makes them appear educated, confident as well as globally conscious. Gender, education and topic were also other determinants of the choice of language; women employed English in gain of empowerment, men in authority and educated individuals in professionalism. In general the English language makes it more expressive and symbolic of modernity because of growing sociolinguistic and digital identity of Pakistan.

### Points for Further Study

Further studies could unveil a larger corpus such as Punjabi, Sindhi or Pashto to make sense of how English is backsliding into other language words. The audience reception studies would also be useful to establish how bilingualness is perceived by the audience.

Future studies can investigate a larger sample of Pakistani podcasts of different genres (e.g., comedy, education, politics) to enable generalizations to be drawn. To study pronunciation, tone and fluency in language, acoustic or discourse analysis systems can be employed by researchers to analyze the linguistic content of dual language speech. Further studies can delve into the idea of generational differences to find out if younger speakers speak English differently from older podcasters.

A more prolonged study would map out the shift of English influence as podcasting develops in Pakistan. Using the generational differences, technological literacy, and critical discourse analysis, we would then see the ideological uses of English, which is not strictly a choice but represents power, class, and identity politics in the contemporary Pakistan.

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