

English Language Borrowing in Sindhi Language

Dr. Panhwar Farida Yasmin

Abstract

The hypothesis of the current paper is that in Sindhi language there is extensive usage of lexical borrowing from English, specially, and other languages. The present study explores the percentage of the English lexical borrowing and the reasons of its use in the informal conversations among educated Sindhi speakers in Sindh, Pakistan. Following the established theories on loan borrowing, this paper is poised on the quantitative methodology. The data is collected using audio recordings and the questionnaires and it is analysed using SSPS to know percentage of the lexical borrowing and its reasons. The results reveal the extensive use of English borrowing and a few instances of Urdu and Arabic borrowing. Findings disclose two types of English borrowing, first is the cultural borrowing, also known as loanwords (without equivalent word) and second, core borrowing (in presence of equivalent word). Findings show that to fill lexical gaps is the main reason behind the use of loanwords while English core borrowing is used to achieve many interactive goals including construction of identity, fashion, taboo expressions etc.

Keywords: Loan words, cultural borrowing, core borrowing, lexical gap, identity.

Introduction

Pakistan is a multilingual society where a major population speaks their local language as their mother tongues (Sindhi, Punjabi, Balochi, Pashto, Dhatki, Kacchi, etc.), and national language Urdu; while the educated Pakistanis also speak English, the second official language and medium of instructions after grade 10th in the academic institutions (Rahman, 2006). Due to the multilingualism the code-switching (shift from one to another language) and lexical borrowing (loanwords) are the common linguistic features. The hypothesis of the current paper is that in Sindhi language there is extensive usage of lexical borrowing from English, specially, and other languages. The current study explores the use of English lexical borrowing and its reasons in the informal conversations among educated Sindhis in Sindh, the second largest province of Pakistan. Poised on the quantitative methodology, this research relies on audio recording and questionnaire as the data collection methods. Following are the research question of the current study:

1. What is the percentage of lexical borrowing in the informal daily interaction of Sindhi participants?
2. What are the common types of lexical borrowing used by Sindhi participants?
3. What are common reasons behind such borrowing?

In Sindh borrowing from English is more related to the historical aspects when India was colonized by the British Empire in 1832 and English was declared the official language (Farida, et al, 2018). The colonizer also brought their administrative system in the Sub-continent along with English vocabulary which was penetrated as loan words, despite the presence of equivalent in local languages (Farida, 2018). English borrowing was further facilitated by the elite class to gain favour of the colonizers (Mansoor, 1993). Although on 14th August 1947 Pakistan was declared as an independent but country carries on educational, social and political English administrative systems and its terminology (Farida, 2018). In recent decades the borrowing is further enhanced due the internet, social media, print and electronic media. In the same line the mushrooming of English medium schools is facilitating English borrowing in the local Pakistani languages.

Aims and scope of the study

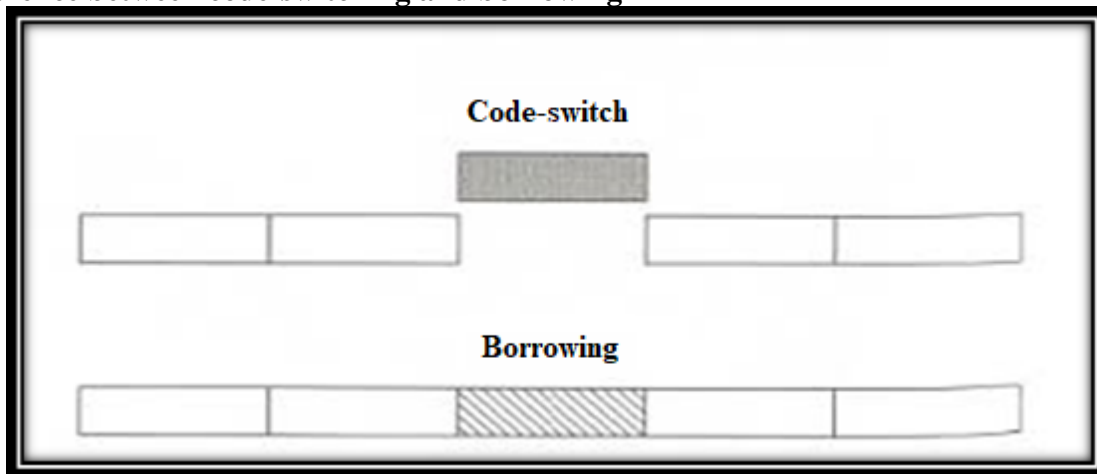
Unfortunately, research on lexical borrowing is still in primary stage in Pakistan generally, and in Sindh, specially. The current research is significant because it is the first study that explores the percentage of lexical borrowing and its reasons in the daily interaction of educated Sindhi speakers. In the previous studies scholars, like Baluch (1962); Panhwar (1988); Allana (1963) etc., have investigated Arabic and Persian borrowing in Sindhi language, however, this study is focusing on English borrowing. In doing so, the intricate, linguistic and sociolinguistic topography of Sindh and significance of borrowing from English or other languages, if any, into Sindhi language will be discovered.

Literature review

The lexical borrowing is defined as the integration of words from one to another language (Romaine, 1989 and Poplack, 1980). Generally borrowed vocabulary is the loanwords and it integrates according to “phonological, morphological and syntactic rules of recipient language” (Muysken, 1995, p. 1990). Hence, to some extent “borrowing involves mixing the [languages] systems” (Hudson, 1996, p. 55).

Some scholars hardly distinguish between code-switching (shift from one language to another) and borrowed items (loanwords). Pfaff (1979) and Auer (2005) Hoffer (2005) assert that if borrowed item has the equivalent then it is code-switching. Poplack (1980) considers that the integration of single word from one language to another is the lexical borrowing but use of stretched items in a single utterance is code-switching. However, Poplack’s definition is not applicable to all languages. For example, in Pakistan, code-switching at word-level, like loan borrowing, is more common than the stretched lexical items (Farida, 2018). Grosjean states that code-switching is the temporary shifting of lexical items that acts as an independent unit in the base language, contrary, borrowing is the assimilation in the recipient language as illustrated in the following figure (2010, p. 58):

Difference between code-switching and borrowing



Same concept is introduced by Haugen (1950, p. 212) as *importation* for loan borrowing and *substitution*. Poplack (1980) considers multi-linguistic competence of the speaker as a fundamental requirement for code-switching, contrary linguistic competence does not necessitate for borrowing.

The characteristics feature of lexical borrowing is that majority of speakers pay no heed to the origins of loanwords due phonological and semantic assimilation in their language (Hudson, 1996, p. 56). Similar is the findings of Farida (2018) who states that Sindhi speaker are ignorant

about the origin of loanwords in their language. Illustrating an example she states the *plate* is a loanword and its equivalent is *raqabee*. Yet, Sindhi speakers consider *plate* as a native due to its assimilation in native language while *raqabee* is an obsolete vocabulary, even not listed in latest dictionaries (Farida, 2018).

Generally lexical borrowing is explored from the diachronic and synchronic perspectives. Gumperz (1982) stresses the diachronic perspective i.e. investigates historical development of lexical items while Myers-Scotton (1993a) and Romaine (1989) stress the social norms of speech communities because. In their opinions power-class frequently switch to lexical items from prestigious languages as a symbol of social status and this language behaviour is followed by lower class. Consequently at one stage the frequently code-switching items integrated into the recipient language as borrowed vocabulary (Bloomfield, 1933).

On the other hand the synchronic perspective explores grammar constraints of recipient and donor languages (Poplack, 1980). In this regard Farida (2018) discovers that English functional words such as determiners, pronouns, preposition and auxiliary verbs cannot be borrowed in Sindhi because both languages have different grammar and phonological systems. For instance, English verb is either rarely borrowed or its bare form is borrowed in Pakistani languages due to its irregular nature (Farida, 2018). Combining diachronic and synchronic approaches, Poplack and Sankoff (1984) adopt a midway position and state that one hand, grammatical constraint restricts or facilitates loanword and on other hand, socio-cultural conditions are also pivot to scrounge or reject a word. In a recent study of Windford (2013) explores borrowing from psycholinguistic perspective in which speakers borrow from a prestigious language to construct their high status identity.

Types of lexical borrowing

The various linguistic scholars explain the different types of borrowing using the varieties of terminology. Bloomfield (1933) states two types of borrowing: *dialect borrowing* and *cultural borrowing*. *Dialect borrowing* occurs from 'same speech-area' while *cultural borrowing* occurs between the languages when they come in contact (p. 444). Haugen (1950), using terms *necessary* and *unnecessary borrowing*, states that *necessary borrowing* is without equivalent in recipient language and *unnecessary borrowing* is the frequent use of a foreign vocabulary in the presence of equivalent (p. 220).

In the same line Myers-Scotton (2002) states two types of borrowing: *cultural borrowing* and *core borrowing*. *Cultural borrowing* is the loanword used by the host culture in the absence of equivalents and the *core borrowing* is "more or less duplicate words already existing in the L1" Similarly Poplack and Sankoff (1984) used the terms *established borrowing* and *nonce borrowing*. *Established borrowing* is similar to *cultural borrowing* while *nonce borrowing* is used in presence of equivalent but they are "widely recognised in the community as loanwords" (Poplack et al, 1995, p. 12). In other words *nonce or core borrowing* positioned in-between loanwords and code-switching (Myers-Scotton, 2006, p. 258).

Reasons of borrowing

Exploring the reasons of the lexical borrowing, scholars agreed that the main function of cultural borrowing acts as loanword which is used to fill the gap in the absence of equivalent in the recipient language, while core borrowing performs multifaceted functions, such as economic expression, for greetings, construction of identity etc. (Gumperz, 1980). Farida enlisted another function of core borrowing for euphemistic expressions; specially the vocabulary which, culturally and religiously, is considered as taboo words in Sindhi language. Kachru (2005)

explains two types of hypothesis: *deficit and dominance hypotheses*. The former used to fill the lexical gap and latter is related to carry social prestige.

Unfortunately, there is not any study on the English loan borrowing in Sindhi language except one carried by Farida (2018) that focuses on code-switching and loan borrowing among the multilingual Sindhi women. Some works are written by Nowadays when the world is turning into a global village and English is appearing as the lingua franca, there is an urgent need to study loan borrowing in the multilingual context of Sindh. The current research represents the first step to achieve this goal.

Methodology and research questions

The hypothesis of the current paper is that in Sindhi language there is extensive usage of lexical borrowing from English, specially, and other languages. On this account, a quantitative methodology under the frameworks of Myers-Scotton (1993, 2005), Poplack (1980) and Haugen (1950) is applied in order to explore answers of the research questions

As explained earlier, the current study adopts two data collection methods: (i) audio recordings in informal setting, and, (ii) questionnaire. The data analysis of audio recordings of informal interaction deemed to explore the percentage and types of lexical borrowing. This will answer the first two research questions. The closed-ended questionnaire listed the various reasons of core borrowing and participants were given choice to tick more than one reason, if they like. Immediately after the audio recording a closed-ended questionnaire was filled by the participants in order to know the reasons of the use of lexical borrowing to answer third research question.

For the present research 20 audio recordings of informal interaction were collected from six cities including Karachi, Hyderabad, Dadu, Larkano, Benazirabad, and Kotri. The reason to collect the data from the big cities is that in urban parts the people have exposure of many languages and linguistic communities. As explained earlier, the participant were educated people who have exposure of English and Urdu languages. The duration of every recording was 60 to 80 minutes, making total 21 hours recordings. Total 67 people participated. The participants were the male and female Sindhi students of grade 10th to 12th. The participants' Sindhi ethnicity was a key factor because this study focuses on the use of borrowing in Sindhi language. The selection of the students of grade 10 to 12 was under the assumption that participants have received 10-12 years' of education in Sindhi, Urdu and English and they would use the English loanwords related to current modern technology. All the recordings took place in the informal settings like, canteens, library's social zones, college common rooms, get-together events etc.

For data analysis audio recordings were transcribed word by word and focusing on foreign vocabulary, the loanwords and core borrowing are identified and categorized into their respective groups. The four categories were formulated as indicated in the following table:

English Loanwords	Urdu Loanwords	Loanwords from any other language
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Special care was taken that there should a clear bifurcation between code switching and loan borrowing. Therefore, foreign lexical items which appear in Sindhi-English Oxford Dictionary (2008) are recognized as loanwords. It is point to be noted that Sindhi has borrowed the words from the local languages like Urdu, Seraiki, Pubjabi etc. However in the absence of the Sindhi-Urdu/Punjabi, etc, authentic dictionary, such borrowing is categorized on the basis of researchers' observation, experience and being a linguistic scholar and professor.

Finally, data is analysed using the SSPS to count the total words and then take out the percentage of loanword and core borrowing. In the second phase the questionnaire is analysed using SSPS to identify the reasons behind the borrowing.

Ethical issues:

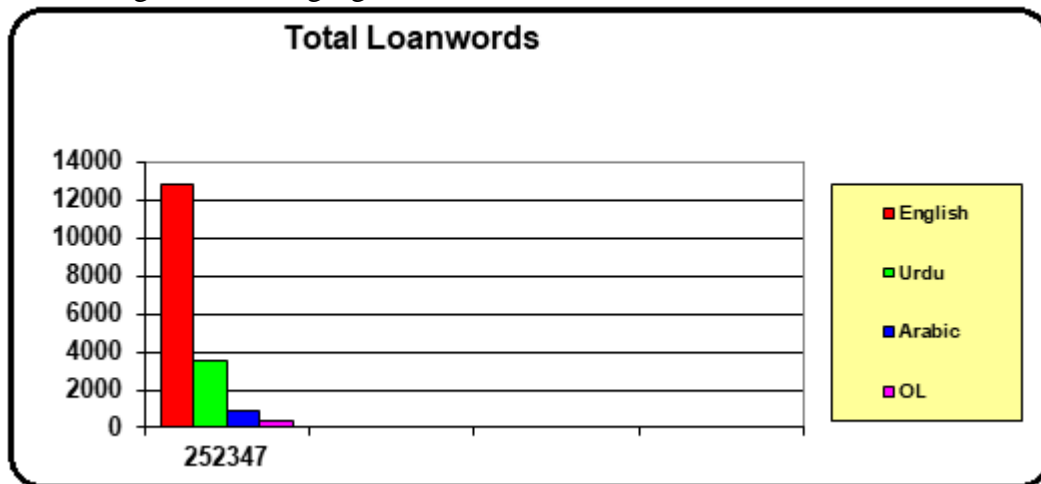
The consent was taken from all the participants before the audio recordings. To maintain the confidentiality of the participants, I have given the assurance in verbal and in writing that data would be used for academic purposes only. Participants were made aware of their right to withdraw at any time or to skip any question in the questionnaire. I provided them with email and contact numbers so they could approach me in case they wanted to withdraw.

Findings and Discussion

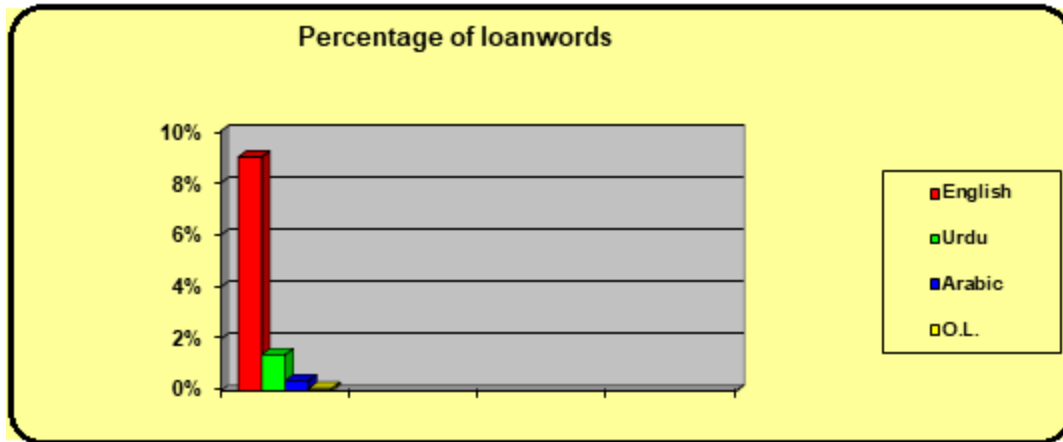
The findings of the current study explore the percentage and reasons of English and other, if any, lexical borrowing in Sindhi language. The findings of current audio recordings highlight the occurrence of two types of lexical borrowing: (i) cultural borrowing, also known as loanwords (henceforth loanwords) and (ii) core or nonce borrowing (henceforth core borrowing). As explained earlier, loanwords are borrowed vocabulary from one to another language in the absence of equivalent in the recipient language while core borrowing is foreign vocabulary items which are extensively in use in the presence of equivalent in the recipient language (Myers Scotton, 1993 and Treffers-Daller, 2007).

Loan borrowing

As explained earlier, using the SSPS the data is analysed to get the percentage of the borrowed items in the daily interaction of Sindhi speakers. This will answer first research question of the current study. The findings reveal the extensive instances of English loanwords which are used to fill the gap in the absence of equivalents in Sindhi language. Findings also indicate a few instances of loanwords from Urdu, the national language of Pakistan, Arabic, the religious language of the state, and local languages. Participants uttered total 252347 including 21859 English loanwords, along with 511 from Urdu, 9055 Arabic and 326 words from local languages as illustrated in figure following figure:



The data analysis reveals that English loanwords constitute a noticeable portion around 9%, Urdu 1.40%, Arabic 0.4 %, and 01% are loanwords from indigenous languages as displayed in the following figure:



The above figure displays that English is the generous loanword donor which are related to new concepts and terminology in medicine, technology, business, diplomacy, education, administration etc. Although to investigate the syntactic and phonological integration of lexical borrowing was not in the purview of the current study, but as an ELT teacher and being the native Sindhi speaker, I noticed that English loanwords are syntactically and phonologically integrated in Sindhi language as indicated in the following examples (English loanwords in bold):

1. Moonkhe **messaga** aeen **calloo** na kando kar.
(Don't send me messages and calls.)
2. Cha **caallage** khulio ahe?
(Is college opened?)

These examples display that English loanwords /*messaga*/ (messages) and /*ka:loo*/ (calls) are pluralized according to Sindhi grammar rules. The loanwords are also pronounced as /*ca:l*/ (call) and /*ka:la ʒe*/ (college) instead of /*kɔ:l*/ and /*kɔl.ɪdʒ*/ respectively.

The data analysis also reveals the hierarchy of nouns, adjectives and verbs loanwords while absence of functional English words i.e. auxiliary and modal verbs, preposition, pronoun, etc. English noun is the most common loanword used by Sindhi participants followed by adjective and verb. Poplack et al. (1995) state that noun is the most flexible item to borrow compared to other parts of speech. The current findings also indicate that English verb is less borrowed as loanword in Sindhi language. Explaining the main constraint to borrow the English verb Farida considers the difference in word-order between English and Sindhi languages, “as English follows an SVO (subject-verb-object) word order whereas Sindhi follows SOV (subject-object-verb)” (2018, p. 201). Other reasons include the irregular nature of English verb and its participle and affixes forms (i.e. brows, browsing, browses) which restricts its borrowability because “verb in Sindhi is regular and it designates the tense, number, and gender” (Farida, 2018, p, 200). One such example is illustrated below:

Iha **practice** kandee ahe.
(She does practice.)

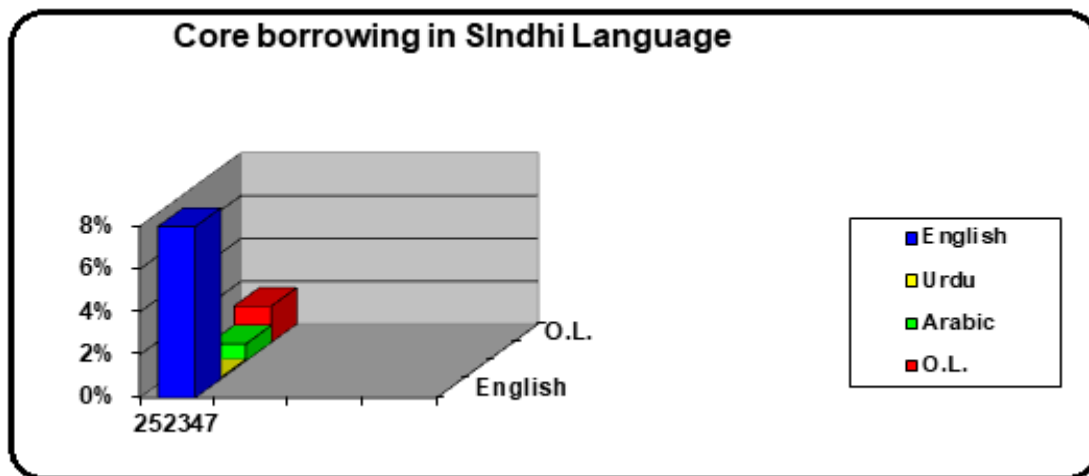
In this example the participants used *practice* as bare infinitive verb form along with compound auxiliary verbs from Sindhi [*kandee ahe*] to designate gender and tense.

Interesting finding is the less use of loanwords from Urdu and local languages which are similar to Sindhi in terms of grammar and phonology. Most such loanwords are related to customs, culture and food items. It indicates that Urdu as well as indigenous languages lack the terminology related to technology, medicine, politics, education etc. The findings also suggest

the use of a few Arabic loanwords comprising greetings or Islamic religious expressions as sign of speaker's Muslim identity. The findings of the current study are more prevalent in single as well or compound loanwords rather than larger constituents such as phrases or clauses.

Core borrowing

Findings of the current research indicate that Sindhi participants frequently rely on core borrowing from English, followed by a few instances from Urdu, Arabic and local languages. Total 18723 English core borrowing is used followed by 202 from Urdu, 11 Arabic and 45 words from local languages as illustrated in the following figure:



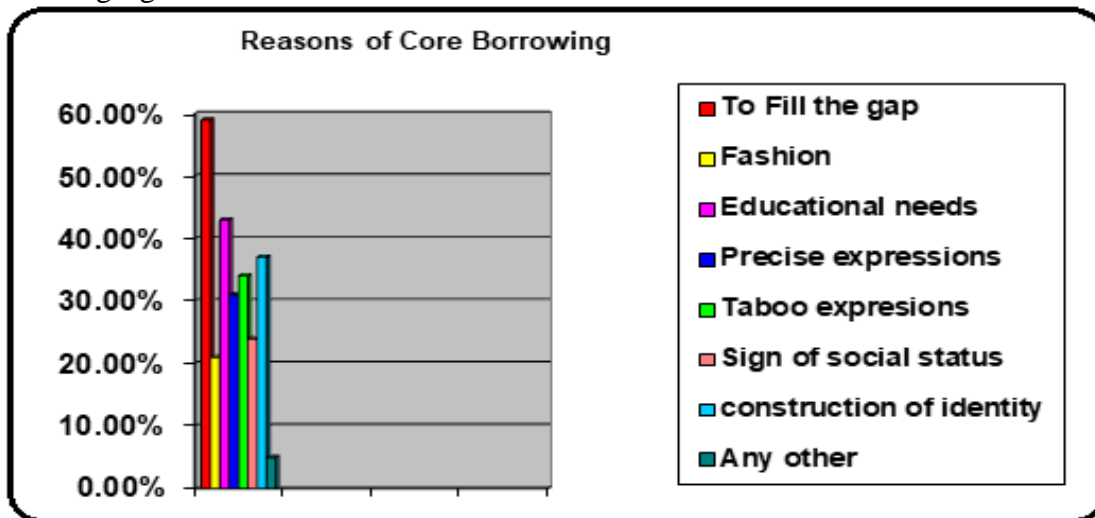
This figure displays the rampant English core borrowing is making 8%, while Urdu constitutes 0.08%, Arabic 0.008% and other languages are making 0.017%. These other languages, which are making an untocibal insertion in Sindhi, are the local language like Seraiki, Punjabi, Balochi, Burahavi, Makrani, etc. The reason of borrowing from these languages is based on the close cultural ties with theses languages communities who are settled in Sindh since centuries. Interesting finding is that the core borrowed from local languages is high compare to Arabic. The reason may be that the language-contact of Sindhi is close with indigenous languages compare to Arabic which is a distance language.

As explained earlier, in some cases it is hard to distinguish between core borrowing and code-switching. However, the researcher, being the ELT teacher as well as the member of Sindhi speech-community can easily distinguishes the core borrowing from code-switching keeping in view the ratio of the use in the daily interaction and their morpho-syntactical phonetical integrated in Sindhi language. For instance, English core borrowed vocabulary like *student*, *teacher*, *table* etc, is more frequently in use compare its Sindhi equivalent *shagrid*, *ustad*, *maiz* respectively. Although core borrowed words are not included Sindhi dictionaries as lemmas but findings show that linguistically and culturally they are widely accepted.

The data analysis shows that most English core borrowing constitutes the greeting words like *hello*, *thank you*, *sorry*; the academic vocabulary *examination*, *teacher*, *student*, *fail*, *library*, *school*, *practical*, *college*, *university*, *pen*, *copy* etc.; the romantic and taboo expressions such as *I love you*, *sweet heart*, *breast feeding* etc.; the conjunction: *yes*, *no*, *and*, *but*; and other common words used in daily interaction such as *mood*, *bore* etc. The Urdu core borrowing is related to tag words and interjections, such as *Acha* (ok), *Halanke* (although) etc. The core borrowing from other indigenous languages related to cultural and customs in nature while Arabic core borrowing constitutes greeting and islamic expressions.

Reasons for borrowing

To answer the third research question of this paper, the questionnaire is filled by those 67 participants who contributed in 21 audio recordings. The closed-ended questionnaire listed the various reasons and participants were given choice to tick more than one reason, if they like. The findings indicate that the various factors are contributing in the use of borrowing as indicated in the following figure:



The results show that most common reasons of borrowing is the lack of equivalent in Sindhi language, as 59% participants affirms. There is discernible paucity of the vocabulary related to new scientific socio-economic concepts in Sindhi. Same is vacuum exists in other native languages, thus, English acts as generous donor in Sindhi language.

Next 45% people believe that educational need is the reason of borrowing. In Pakistan educational system follows the American and British models. English is petering out the local educational vocabulary. Nowadays, students are ignorant that the *library*, *pen* and *copy* are equivalent of Sindhi *kutubkhano*, *qalam* and *bandee* respectively (Farida, 2018).

Furthermore, the findings reveal that 37% participants confirm the use of borrowing for construction of identity. Hence, they are using borrowing for self-ascription and social identities like social class (i.e. educated, elite, etc.), as well as for polite expression to construct their cultural identity. In the way 34% state they use borrowing for taboo expression. By using the foreign language for taboo expressions such as *sex*, *pregnant*, *breast feeding*, *toilet*, *child birth* etc., participants have constructed implicit cultural identities that they avoid the use of culturally considered impolite or naked vocabulary. This figure displays that 31% people use English borrowing for precise expressions because “English is known as the precise language (Bloom and Gumperz, 1971, p. 424). In the same line 24% people related borrowing with status symbol. It confirms the findings of Rahman (2006) and Farida (2018) that in Pakistani context English is the code of power and elite community and they use it as symbol of status. The use of borrowing for the fashion is the new trend among the educated Sindhi people and 21% consider borrowing under the compulsion of fashion. As explained earlier, the electronic and print media is projection the new English terms and vocabulary as sign of new repertoire and people are adapting such trend for the fashion. Last is use of borrowing for other reason is only 5%.

Finally the findings of the current study demonstrated that the Sindhi participants triggered multilingual lexical borrowing according to their linguistic and motivational needs in order to express themselves in an appropriate language.

Limitation of the study

The current data is collected from the cities of Sindh which are presenting the diversifies from linguistic perspectives. The people are generally multilingual and have exposure of various linguistic communities. Hence, the linguistic borrowing is common phenomenon in the repertoire of urban people. Moreover, if the data were collected from rural areas the results could have been different because in rural parts of Sindh the less is the exposure of other languages and also rural people maintain the virginity of the language. However, for authentic results there is a need to investigate the rural repertoire to know the comprehensive loan borrowing phenomenon.

Conclusion

The present study is conducted to identify the percentage, kinds of borrowings and its reasons of usage. The participants' use of multilingual code-switching can be understood as being a product of 'contact and necessity', where Sindhi tends to function as their L1, Urdu as their lingua franca, English as the language of officialdom and academia, and Arabic as the language of religion (Edwards, 2011, p. 39). The findings reveal lexical borrowing in four languages: English, Urdu, Arabic and indigenous languages. It reveals the linguistic history of the Sindhi language which came in contact with English as language of colonizers, Arabic as code of conquerors and Urdu as the lingua franca of Pakistan.

The findings suggest that there are two types of lexical borrowing: loanwords used in the absence of equivalent and core borrowing which is extensively in use in the presence of equivalent Sindhi vocabulary. English is a major loanword-donor and it is phonetically and syntactically integrated according to Sindhi grammar rules. This result confirms the notion of 'categorical hierarchy' of Poplack, et al. (1988) that some word classes, specially nouns and adjectives are more easily borrowed because they demonstrate a greater propensity to be integrated in the recipient language than functional words. Contrary, Urdu is lingua franca and taught as compulsory subject in the school but the ratio of Urdu loan words are very fewer. Most Urdu loan words are related to culture, food, and tradition indicating deficiency of technical terms or modern science and business concepts in Urdu. Similarly the use of Arabic borrowing participants constructed implicit Muslims identity. Hence, lexical borrowing is not simply a language needs but it also expose linguistic intricacies of the Sindhi language.

The current paper has demonstrated the innumerable linguistics and sociolinguistics reasons of borrowing including filling the lexical gap, identity construction, taboo expression fashion, social status, educational needs etc. However, the psychological factors cannot be ignored because the use of core borrowing is more related to speaker's intentions for such language behaviour.

The exceptional contribution of this study is that it investigates the use of borrowing in four languages i.e. English, Urdu, Arabic and local languages which is providing the opportunity to analyse borrowing not only as a language behaviour but as a social phenomenon where at one hand loanwords are enriching and filling the gap in Sindhi language in the absence of equivalent, on the other hand the extensive use of core borrowing rendering a potential threat of fossilization to a large number of Sindhi vocabulary (Farida, 2018). If the situation remains that it is assumed that significant Sindhi vocabulary may be replaced by English loanwords.

Finally I would say that borrowing is the extraordinary language characteristics indicating "the power of a, rich and fertile language that has the ability adapt and adopt the foreign terminology for emerging concepts and augmenting itself" (Farida, 2018, p. 172).

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