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Of 'khar bachaya' and 'takra jenai': Lexical Pashtoization in *I am Malala* and *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*

ABSTRACT

*The fact that the English language underwent adaptations at various linguistic levels in different parts of the world had been established, and reflected in the bulk of academic works that term it variously as Postcolonial Englishes/englishes, Global English(es), World English(es), the New Englishes, Chinese Englishes, South Asian Englishes, Indian English, Pakistani English, and so on. In the context of Pakistan, the process of indigenization is often termed as "Pakistanization" of English (Baumgardner, 1993; Khan, 2012; Sheeraz, 2013). The works with linguistically narrowed focus on the influence of Urdu as a contact language term this process as "Urduization of English" (Baumgardner et al., 1993; Mahmood & Shah, 2011; Bilal et al., 2012). In order to understand the process of Pakistanization of English, and to map the form and function of Pakistani English, it is imperative to study the influences of other Pakistani languages as well. In this paper, studying the case of two works, namely, *I am Malala* (2013) by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb, and *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* (2013) by Fatima Bhutto, we explore the nature and extent of Pashtoization of English at lexical level. The study draws upon the conceptual frameworks developed in the fields of Linguistic Criticism and Postcolonial Theory, and the structural frameworks developed in the field of World Englishes, and highlights the semantic and cultural contexts which make this indigenization possible and in some cases necessary.*

Key Terms: Pashtoization of English, Pakistani English, Linguistic Criticism, World Englishes.

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Background and Introduction

The arrival of English language in South Asia has been studied by many scholars such as Braj B. Kachru who theorizes its arrival in three different phases, namely the *missionaries phase*, the *demand-from-the-Indians phase*, and the *government-policy phase* (Kachru, 1983, p. 20-22). The demand from Indians to implement English came from Hindus as the early Muslim attitudes towards this language were not positive. They called it a Kafir language that did nothing but produced atheists (Rahman, 2012). Some studies (such as Mansoor, 1993; Mahboob, 2003), however, show attitudinal shift among even the most conservative communities of Pakistan. Studies have also shown how the English language is being culturally appropriated here (Awan & Ali, 2012; Sheeraz, 2013, 2014), and becoming an Islamic language (see Mahboob, 2009). However, many world Englishes scholars (such as Baumgardner et al., 1993; Mahmood & Shah, 2011; Bilal et al., 2012) hail Urdu as being behind this conversion, and indigenization of English, and sweepingly equate its Pakistanization with what they call Urduization. In this paper, we argue that all the Pakistani languages contribute towards indigenization of English in Pakistan. Our focus, however, will be the Pashto language as we study the use of Pashto lexical items in two selected Anglophone works from Pakistan.

To understand [the relationship between Pashto and English], we must first look at the process of indigenization of English began in this part of the world. This has been answered differently by different scholars. Some suggest that the process began with its arrival in the fifteenth century (e.g., Sinha, 1978, p. 1). In works of fiction, it began to happen in 1930s when South Asian writers began experimenting with its lexis and syntax (Muthiah, 2011, p. 1). One thing which is established, however, is that the indigenization of English has happened, as Bapsi Sidhwa asserts triumphantly:

We, the excolonized, have subjugated the language, beaten it on its head and made it ours! Let the English chafe and fret and fume. The fact remains that in adapting English to our use, in hammering it sometimes on its head, and in sometimes twisting its tail, we have given it a new shape, substance, and dimension. (p. 212)

This may be read as exaggeration of a creative writer but systematic studies by linguists such as Riaz Hassan (1983) and Robert J. Baumgardner et al. (1993) also see the process of indigenization as a viable, ongoing process and a natural trend. As far as the indigenization in the creative works is concerned, it has been found to be formulaic (Sheeraz, 2013), as it is not extensive and probably that is why it is sometimes called as chutnification of English (Snell & Kothari, 2011).

Coming back to our basic argument, let us see how this process has been interpreted by World Englishes scholarship on South Asian Englishes. A cursory look at the literature would show that Indianization of English has been theorized as Hinglish, and Pakistanization as Urdish which shows that only the major languages i.e., Hindi and Urdu, are seen important influences in the indigenization process, which is only partially true. Pakistani English has its share from all its contact languages i.e., Balochi, Brahvi, Pashto, Punjabi, Saraiki, Sindhi, etc. To theorize Pakistanization of English in these terms, we, relying on a small data extracted from two texts, try to explore the nature and extent of Pashtoization of English. The study draws upon the conceptual framework developed in world Englishes and postcolonial theory, and is delimited to the lexical level alone.

A number of works (e.g., Sidhwa, 1993; Chelliah, 2006; Muthiah, 2011; Khan, 2012; Sheeraz, 2013, 2014, etc.) have already explored the indigenization of English in fiction at various linguistic levels: lexical, morphological, syntactic and phonological. Although studies on similarities and differences between Pashto and English are available (see for example, Arshad, 2003; Iqbal, 2010; Khan & Bukhari, 2012), no work could be found on the influence of Pashto on the English language despite the fact that English is being used in Pashto speaking areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan, and if we keep in view the theories of World Englishes and sociocultural linguistics, it is not possible for two contact languages to remain uninfluenced by each other (see Sankoff, 2001).

In this paper, the point of departure was served by the assumption that indigenization of English is also done in fictional and non-fictional creative works that are set in a linguistic context other than Urdu as major language. To investigate this, we studied Fatima Bhutto's recently published novel *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* (2013) that is set in Mir Ali, a Pashto speaking town of Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and Malala Yousifzai's and Christina Lamb's *I am Malala* (2013) that is mainly set in Pashto speaking town of Swat in Pakistan. The study shows the extent and nature of and possible reasons for Pashtoization of English at lexical level in these two works.

Below we give the contextual definitions of the key terms:

1.1 Contextual Definitions of Key Terms:

1.1.1 Indigenization of English: We follow this definition by S. S. Mufwene: "[A] process whereby a language is adapted to the communicative habits and needs of its (new) speakers in a novel ecology" (2009, p. 353), for English.

- 1.1.2 Appropriation of English:** Appropriation, according to Bill Ashcroft et al., is a strategically employed process of reshaping English, the colonial language, in order to enable it to carry the burden of “differing cultural experiences” (2002, p. 38).
- 1.1.3 Pashtoization of English:** Indigenization of English with Pashto as a major influence.

On the pages to follow, we will give a brief introduction of the two works, *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* and *I am Malala*, studied for Pashtoization of language.

1.2 The Shadow of the Crescent Moon

The Shadow of the Crescent Moon is the requiem of life in a war-weary border town of Pakistan, Mir Ali. It is based on a deep digging into the nature of those warring in and around the town: America’s drone strikes, sectarian militancy and military operations. The story opens with three brothers at their breakfast table as they have finally decided to offer Friday prayer at separate mosques as “[i]t is too dangerous, too risky, to place all the family together in one mosque” (Bhutto, 2013, p. 3). With their journey through the day, the interludes into their past reveal that, just like today, the brothers have made separate choices in the past too. The eldest Aman Erum was desperate to travel to America and make a peaceful future. He made it to a college in New Jersey and was able to spend some years in America but at the cost of his beloved Samarra, and his love for Mir Ali. The second brother, Sikandar, is a doctor at a government hospital in Mir Ali, and lives with his wife who, after the disappearance of her son is obsessed with visiting funerals. The youngest of the three brothers, following his deceased father, is an underground freedom fighter, and the one who wins Samarra’s heart as they plan and conduct various anti-state operations together. This novel, as Razeshta Sethna puts it, “is an exploration of Pakistan’s own ‘war on terror’ and a critique of the devastating consequences experienced by a younger generation wrecked by seeping fundamentalism” (2014, para. 1).

1.3 I am Malala

I am Malala is a memoir of Swat’s teenage Nobel Peace Prize winning activist. The book opens with a dramatic prologue reflecting on the “life-shattering moment” (Arana, 2013, para. 5) when a man with a Colt 45 pistol shouted at the girls sitting in Khushal School’s *dyna* (van), “Who is Malala?” (Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 6) and following girls’ eyes, identified her and opened fire. Co-written with Christina Lamb, *I am Malala* is not merely Malala’s story or her family story. It is an account of post-9/11 Pakistan and the sufferings of its people in the times of terrorism and the so-called global war-on-terror. However, as Fatima Bhutto points out,

“Ghostwritten books pose a constant difficulty—you are never sure whose voice is leading whose” (2013, para. 3). Commenting on the way Malala’s story in general and the book in particular were received in Pakistan, Bhutto says: “there is a genuine concern that this extraordinary girl’s courageous and articulate message will be colonised by one power or other for its own insidious agendas. She is young and the forces around her are strong and often sinister when it comes to their designs on the global south” (para. 10). However, as for the language is concerned, there is a lot from Pashto, probably to add authenticity.

Research Methodology

As stated above, this paper is a linguistic critique of the lexical Pashtoization of English in *I am Malala*, and *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*. The linguistic criticism, a method of inquiry mainly developed by Roger Fowler, is a combination of linguistic analysis and literary criticism for the study of literary texts. For present analysis of the extent, nature and postcolonial meaning of the lexical borrowing from Pashto in the texts under study, we have blended the structural model developed by Kachru (1983) and extended by Baumgardner et al. (1993), with critical framework developed by Ashcroft et al. (2002). The strategy of using “untranslated words” (Ashcroft et al., 2002), and linguistic feature of “native words” (Muthiah, 2011) are also relevant to the present work.

Results and Discussion

In this section, we have tabulated the results interlacing them with relevant descriptive and analytical notes.

Table 3.1: General Statistics of the works under study:

<i>I am Malala</i>	Total number of pages	276
	Total number of words	100,000 approximately
	Number of Pashto words	154 (e.g., nang, lewano, mayena, Woma, etc.)
	Percentage of Pashto words	0.15%
	Major stylistic context for Pashto words	Poetry
<i>The Shadow of the Crescent Moon</i>	Total number of pages	231
	Total number of words	80,000 approximately
	Number of Pashto words	123 (e.g., khog, taroray, Wia, etc.)
	Percentage of Pashto words	0.15%
	Major stylistic context for Pashto words	Dialogues

As Table 3.1 shows, the frequency of lexical Pashtoization in both the books under study is as low as only 0.15%, less than lexical Urduization in Pakistani fiction which is up to 0.5% (Sheeraz, 2013). In some works of fiction, such as Shazaf Fatima Haider's *How it Happened* (2013), set in Pakistan, and primarily written for Sub-continental readers, the language may even be over-Urduized with frequency as high as 3.5%. However, the influence of such contact language as Pashto, and lexical borrowing from it might be slow and slight yet the results show that it is contributing towards Pakistanization of English. The table also shows that in *I am Malala* the major stylistic context for borrowing is supplied by the Pashto poetic verses. This is probably owing to the fact that the writer's (Malala Yousafzai's) father—the major inspiration in her life and a silent contributor to her book—is a Pashto poet. On the other hand, in *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*, the main stylistic context for borrowing from Pashto is the dialogues between different characters.

Table 3.2: Major Semantic Categories for the Borrowing of Pashto Words

Semantic Categories	Examples	Number of Occurrences	
		<i>The Shadow of the Crescent Moon</i>	<i>I am Malala</i>
Kinship terms	Tarbur (cousin); Ror (son); Lur (daughter)	19	04
Food	Rotay (bread); Chaqwartee (a kind of fish)	5	02
Honorific	Grana	10	Nil
Religion	Munz	4	Nil
Endearments	Khaista	Nil	04
Dwellings	Hujra; kor	Nil	11

It is generally believed that indigenization at lexical level happens to fill the gap, which is not the case for most of the words used in the selected texts have their equivalents in English. For example, 'lur' could be translated as daughter, and 'rotay' as bread. Works on world Englishes (e.g., Baumgardner et al., 1993) have suggested that it is done to give shades of meaning. To some extent, it is relevant. If 'rotay' in Pakistan is different from bread in the English speaking countries, using 'rotay' will be more appropriate to convey its distinctive features. Daniyal Mueenuddin rationalizes this process "to give the flavor of the place" (D. Mueenuddin, personal communication, June 18, 2013). But the use of equivalents for words like 'son' and 'daughter' is neither to fill the lexical gap, nor to give a differing shade of meaning. This deliberate abrogation of an English lexical item and using a Pashto word can be defined more comprehensively in

postcolonial framework. We believe that the authors of these texts exploit Pashto lexical items not only to exoticize the texts for the foreign readers but also to write back to the centre. This helps them dismantle the dominant language ideology and endorse postcolonial language ideology as they do not subordinate Pakistani English as non-standard variety. For some authors this postcolonial language appropriation serves to enhance their image as authentic insider voices.

Pashtoization of English also helps in emphatically representing various ideologies and cultural practices. Both the texts represent local religions ('munz' in Bhutto, 2013, p. 173), and socio-cultural ideologies (e.g., 'Pashtunwali', 'nangai', etc., in Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 10) with the help of words from Pashto. Similarly, honorifics ('Grana' in Bhutto, 2013, p.82), kinship ('tarbur' p. 10), and cultural norms and practices (e.g., 'swara' in Yousafzai & Lamb, 2013, p. 54; 'Woma', p. 47—see Appendix for a complete glossary of the words, and the semantic, sociolinguistic, and grammatical categories they come from) have also been expressed using lexical items from Pashto. In contemporary world where language has become the battleground and the words have become the loaded weapons, it is sometimes important to harbor the lines of resistance and exhibit postcoloniality through a deviant lexical choice.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have explored Pashto as a contact language and influence on English, and on the basis of data from two texts examined the nature and extent of indigenization of English under the influence of Pashto. While it was found that the extent of lexical Pashtoization of English is minimal to an insignificant level, its nature is yet not very clear. However, various stylistic and semantic contexts exploited for lexical borrowing from Pashto are indexical to the fact that this process will accelerate in future, and as it is already being suggested in World Englishes scholarship, this will result into linguistic hybridity to trend in this part of the world. The study also shows that Urduization is not the appropriate term to refer to Pakistanization of English or the indigenization of English in Pakistan as Pashto also has its share, though relatively to a smaller scale, in this process. More research on the influence of other Pakistani languages on English in Pakistan is needed to more accurately gauge the nature of Pakistanization of English.

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Appendix: A complete glossary of Pashto words in the texts studied

Pashto words

English Equivalents

[Semantic/Sociolinguistic/Grammatical Categories]

The Shadow of the Crescent Moon (2013)

Kha, kha, p. 4, 44, 47, 82, 93, 170	right-right [Tokens/Minimal responses]
Kahkah, p. 7	Uncle [Kinship terms]
Rotay; rotay, p. 16, 202, 207, 208, 209	Wheat bread [food]
Munz, p. 21	Prayers [Religion]
Zwe, p. 22	Son [Kinship]
Sokidars, p. 24	Watchmen [law and order]
Jaroos, p. 29	Broomes [accessories]
Zwe, p. 4	Son [Kinship]
Morey p.43	Oh mom [Kinship]
zwe, p. 43	Son [Kinship]
zwe p. 44	son [Kinship]
Morey p.45	Oh mom [Kinship]
zoo, p. 45	Lets go [Verb]
Za	I [Pronoun]
tasara	you [Pronoun]
mina	Love [romance/feeling/abstract],
kawam, p. 46	do [verb]
wale, p. 46	Why [tag]
Dreham, p. 49, 64	Third prayer [religion]
Kahkah, kahkah, p. 65	Uncle, Uncle [Kinship]
Ma pasay raza, p. 75	Come after me
Ror, p. 76, 144, 173	Brother [Kinship]
Grana, p. 82, 83, 84, 104, 105, 228, 229	Sweetheart/sir [honorific]
Mafi ghawaram, saib, p.83	Excuse me sir
Malgaray, p. 93	Fellow [verb]
Nah baba za na poygam, p.93	I do not know, sir/father
Zwe, p. 95	Son [Kinship]
Zache zoo, baba, p. 95	Let's go, sir/father
Zoo, p. 96	Go
Kha za ista der mashkoor aim, p. 110	It's okay. I am very thankful to you
Der manana, p. 110	Thank You [Gratitude]
Der kha, grana, p. 130	Exactly right, sweetheart
Apkhal khial sata, p. 130	Take care
Wia, p. 143	speak [verb]
Salam, zama khog , p. 152	Hi, my dear
Sa masla na dey, p. 152	No problem
Zama khog, p. 153	My dear
Bachaya, p. 160, p. 178	My son [Kinship]
Taroray, p. 161	O' Aunt [Kinship]

Zache zoo, p. 163	Let's go [verb]
Zama lur, zama lur, p. 163, p. 166	My daughter, My daughter
Chap sha, p. 174, 212	Keep quite
Khar bachaya, p. 175	You stupid
Sa taim dey, p. 203	What's the time?
Der zalim aye, p. 210	You are so cruel
khaza, p. 210	Women [People/gender]
Lokhay;p.220	pot [accessories]
<i>I am Malala (2013)</i>	
Pisho, p. 3, 16	Cat [animal]
Dyna, p. 5, 190, 202, 207	Dyna Bus [transportation]
Sorey sorey pa golo rashey da be nangai awaz	de ra ma sha mayena, p. 7
	It's better, if you come with multiple injuries of fire shots, rather than I would hear of your cowardice.
Pashtunwali, p. 10, 54, 59	An unwritten constitution that encompasses all the norms, values, traditions and practices of Pashtun society as they apply to the family, the clan and the tribe.
Nang, p. 10, 59	Honor [Culture]
Tarbur, p. 10	Paternal cousin [Kinship]
Angrezan, p. 11	English men [People]
Tapey, p. 14, 53, 147, 256	The oldest and most popular genre of Pashto folk poetry [Art]
Khaista dada, p.16	Sweet papa
Hujra, p. 16, 27, 29, 33, 54, 68, 115, 144, 165, 210	It is a common guest house where only the men can sit. It is used for jirgas and other customs, and is specially a place for hospitality
Jirgas, p. 17, 55, 175, 194, 195	A council of elders; it is an ancient institution in Pashtun society [Law and order]
Wesh, p. 18, 19	partition
Lewano pir, p. 22	Saint of the mad
khan dada, p. 22	Grandfather [Kinship]
Woma, p. 47	Seventh/ritual [Customs]
Malala Maiwand wala da pa tool jehan ke da khushala da p. 47	Malala is of Maiwand and she's the happiest person in the whole world
Darae, p. 49	Vallies [landscape]
Tor Ghar, p. 49	Black Mountain [landscape]
Spin Ghar, p. 50, 51	White Mountain [landscape]
Chaqwartee, p. 52	A kind of fish [Food]
Shalgwatay, p. 53	The twenty-fingered man [Myth]
Shashaka, p. 53	Witch [Myth]

Swara, p. 54	A customary marriage held for compensatory a murder [Custom]
Manana, p. 59	Thanks [Gratitude]
Badal, p. 60	Revenge [Law and order]
Khan, p.68, 83, 94, 99	A title of respect /landlord
Rabab mangia wakht de teer sho da kali khwa	ta talibaan raaghali dena, p. 89 Oh my folk music, you could not be played for Taliban have arrived near to village
Tor patki, p. 91	Black turban [clothing]
Takra jenai, p.117	active girl/bright shining young lady
Pakha jenai, p. 117	Wise girl
Dada, p.118	Father [kinship]
Sir de pa lowara tega kegda praday watan de	paki nishta balakhtona, p. 155 Put your head on rock pieces, for pillows or not available in this strange country
Khpal kor, p. 165	My home
Khairey ba waley darta na kram toora topaka	woranawey wadan korona, p. 204 O' black gun! Why you should not be cursed for you are damaging the happy houses
Khaista, p. 221	Beautiful
Watan zama za da watan yam ka da watan da	para mram khushala yama, p. 228 I am living for my country and vice versa. I am scarifying myself for my country.
Ke da zalmo na pora na shwa grana watana jenki ba di gtmi na; ke da zalmo na shwa ke na shwa grana watana jenki ba di gtmi na, p. 250	O' my sweet land! If the boys fail to save you, the girls are ready to save you from enemies.
Gharqa shorma, p. 253	I am drowning

