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Sindhi Rhetoric in a Globalized Era: Code Mixing in Bilawal Bhutto's Political Discourse

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Abstract:

This study analyzes code-mixing pattern and English lexical borrowing in political speeches of Bilawal Bhutto through selected Sindhi discourse samples to understand sociolinguistics effects in bilingual political discourse. The research adopts Pieter Muysken's (2000) theoretical framework for code-mixing to classify mixing into three categories: insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization. The research employs a qualitative approach with manual thematic coding to analyze selected public speeches delivered from (2020, December 27) to (2024, January 01). The study shows that containing multiple languages acts strategically in political discourse to connect with manifold linguistic communities and thus portray educational and socio-political progress. Code-mixing became a regular occurrence in government-related domains as well as technology and education sectors to introduce contemporary elements while targeting audiences who speak more than one language. This study mainly analyzes speeches from one political figure yet it recognizes the need for more comprehensive political representatives. The study demonstrates that code-mixing acts deliberately as a rhetorical tool to reach diverse linguistic communities throughout while demonstrating both modern educational systems and political advancement. This explorative study shapes the existing knowledge of political discourse and bilingual identity formation dynamics within South Asian societies.

Keywords: Code-mixing, bilingualism, Sindhi language, English loanwords

Introduction

Language is central to political communication, particularly in multilingual states where leaders must communicate to various linguistic communities. In Pakistan, where English plays significant roles along local languages, code mixing the blending of two languages within one speech



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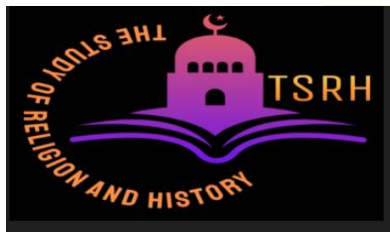
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or conversation is widespread among politicians to communicate to new and old audiences. Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman and Western trained leader Bilawal Bhutto often uses English in his Sindhi speeches. His bilingual mode of speaking reflects broader linguistic and socio-political trends in Pakistan, where English is associated with administration, globalism, and modern leadership. This trend raises salient questions about the use of language and its impact on political participation, audience reception, and the evolving dynamics of Sindhi political discourse. This increasing use of English in Sindhi speeches is not merely an idiosyncratic linguistic tendency but is shaped by structural and historical forces. English was institutionalized by the British colonial government and became the prevailing language of Pakistan's administration, education and law. English words relating to democracy, economics, and administration became embedded in local languages, including Sindhi, over time. This linguistic trend has taken us to the stage where current political discourse relies on English terminology because direct equivalents are not found in Sindhi. Politicians like Bhutto employ code mixing not only to address educated and urban constituencies but also because policy and government terminology are English dominant.

His speeches demonstrate how English words such as "democracy," "investment," "budget," and "parliament" are now part of political discourse and influence public discourse in ways that may not be possible through the use of traditional Sindhi terminology. Bhutto's code mixing practice illustrates strategic language use, as English is most commonly used when speaking of governance, law, and modernization, and Sindhi is primarily used when invoking cultural and emotional appeals. This bilingual mode of address serves various political ends. First, it allows him to address effectively young, urban voters who are accustomed to English use in their educational and working lives. Second, it presents him as a progressive leader who is attuned to international political norms. Third, it makes his speeches sound more authoritative, as English is typically associated with knowledge, authority, and competence when it comes to government. There are, however, costs to this practice. For rural Sindhi-speaking voters, English overuse may create barriers to understanding and participation, and render Bhutto's political message distant or elitist. This is symptomatic of a broader sociolinguistic domain within Pakistan, where English is the language of the elite and regional languages are markers of cultural and national identity.

Integration of English within Sindhi political discourse is both advantageous and problematic. It enables effective communication of complex political and economic issues that do not necessarily have direct equivalents within Sindhi. It is problematic because it instills fears of



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linguistic heritage weakening, particularly among Sindhi nationalists and rural communities who regard Sindhi as an integral part of their cultural and political identity. This is the paradox that code mixing makes political rhetoric modern and disenfranchises sections of the voting population. This contradiction is exemplified through the speeches of Bhutto, who tries to mediate between his Western education and international exposure and the needs of an overwhelmingly Sindhi speaking political constituency. This study aims to analyze the linguistic trends, function, and political significance of code-mixing by Bhutto during his Sindhi speeches. Through the analysis of how and why he uses English in his speeches, the study will enhance understanding of bilingual political discourse in Pakistan. The study will illustrate how language is being used as a tool of political branding, voter mobilization, and persuasive oratory. The study will also reveal how the style of Bhutto's speeches differs from those of other Sindhi leaders, reflecting shifts and tendencies in generational and ideological political communication. Lastly, this study hopes to reveal the evolving role of English within Sindhi political discourse and its impact on political identity, accessibility, and voters' perceptions.

Literature Review

Scholarship on code-mixing and English loanwords in the political speeches of Bilawal Bhutto, particularly in his Sindhi speeches, is an important area of study in political communication and sociolinguistics. Code-mixing, the practice of intermingling two or more languages within a conversation or oration, has been the subject of much study among multilingual South Asian communities where English is the language of government, education, and media. The bilingual mode of speaking of Bhutto, incorporating English terms and phrases within Sindhi speeches, is the result of historical linguistic influences, recent global trends, and political pragmatism. Code-mixing within political speeches has been studied at some depth by academics, examining how political leaders use language to communicate to different audiences, gain trust, and project an image of modernity.

Various code-mixing forms, (i.e., intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching) are recognized by linguists such as Muysken (2000) and Poplack (1980). Intra-sentential code-mixing occurs when English words are incorporated within a Sindhi sentence, as when Bhutto states, “(Asaan khy)strong opposition (*thahin ghurjy*).” Inter-sentential code-mixing is switching between full sentences from various languages, and tag-switching is the incorporation of short English phrases within mostly Sindhi discourse, as when Bhutto states, “(Asaan jee siyosat) for the people (Ahy)!” These linguistic habits are observed within various multilingual

political situations, validating the perception that code-mixing is functional and rhetorical political oratory.

Sindhi use of English loanwords traces their origin to British colonial times when English became the language of administration, education, and law in South Asia. Rahman (1996) says English was institutionalized by the British government, leading to its long-term dominance in formal and bureaucratic situations. Therefore, languages such as Sindhi began adopting English words to label political, legal, and economic terminologies. English words such as democracy, parliament, system, and budget are now readily found in Sindhi usage, particularly political usage. Laghari (2018) also looks at how English words are borrowed by Sindhi media and literature and become entrenched as part of common usage. Borrowing is categorized by Mahmood and Bilal (2017) as direct borrowings, hybrid forms, and semantic shifts. Direct borrowings are words that are borrowed and remain identical to their English counterparts, including parliament and democracy. Hybrid forms are English words fused with Sindhi grammatical forms, as seen in phrases "democracy (*joo matlab*)" Semantic shifts are when English words are given meanings that are exclusive to the Sindhi context, as when the word parliament is taken to refer to Pakistan's National Assembly.

The use of English in Sindhi political discourse follows broader trends of bilingualism observed in political discourse across South Asia. Kachru's works (1983, 2005) show that leaders of South Asia frequently code-switch between English and local languages to gain acceptability and win over educated voters from cities. In Pakistan, Haque and Akhtar (2021) note that political leaders use English strategically to talk about government and economics, but employ local languages when they make cultural and emotional appeals. The bilingual strategy allows leaders to address different constituencies of voters and bridge linguistic and class segregations. Bilawal Bhutto's speeches demonstrate this bilingual strategy, as he deploys English terms when he speaks about democracy, economics, and international relations, and uses Sindhi when he makes identity-based appeals and local issues.

One of the key aspects of Bhutto's linguistic strategy is the impact of code-mixing on audience perception. Research by Rahman (2002) indicates that English in Pakistani political discourse is associated with authority, education, and modernization. Overuse of English may also act as a barrier to lesser-educated rural audiences, who cannot access bilingual oratory. Jamil and Akbar (2020) conducted research on audience perception of bilingual political oratory and found that urban voters positively responded to code-mixing, associating it with progress and global connectivity. Rural voters, on the other hand, viewed excessive use

of English as distancing politicians from their linguistic and cultural heritage. This dichotomy is particularly relevant to Sindh, as Bhutto must balance his Western-educated upbringing and background against the imperative of appealing to voters from the grassroots. His speeches illustrate this fine line, as he integrates English into Sindhi primarily when he is discussing policy and administration, while keeping Sindhi intact in emotionally charged and identity-based statements.

Strategic code-mixing in political speeches has been researched extensively in multilingual environments globally. Chiluya (2007) and Opeibi (2012) examined how African political leaders code-mix English and local languages when addressing different social constituencies. Their findings are that code-mixing makes political speeches more effective as they become more accessible and persuasive. In India, the trend is the same, where leaders code-switch between English and Hindi depending on the audience and context. In Pakistan, Mahboob (2017) reports that young leaders who are educated in the West use more English in their speeches, marking them apart from older leaders who rely significantly on local languages. This linguistic transition between generations can be seen in speeches by Bhutto, where his liberal use of English makes them stand apart from older Sindhi leaders who employ simple Sindhi oratory.

A comparison of the linguistic style of Bhutto to those of other Sindhi politicians places his code-mixing strategy. In comparison to others who use relatively moderate English use in political speeches, or Murad Ali Shah, who uses primarily Sindhi and includes little English, Bhutto frequently uses English loanwords to present himself as a modern leader. This aligns with the research of Haque and Akhtar (2021), who argue that leaders from privileged backgrounds use English more than those from mass political movements. The comparison between Bilawal and older Sindhi leaders indicates a broader trend within Pakistan's political discourse, whereby English is increasingly identified as the language of progress and global interaction. While helpful, code-mixing in political discourse is not without its criticisms. Linguistic purists believe that overuse of English risks stripping native languages of their authenticity and eroding linguistic heritage over time. Rahman (1996) warns that as English becomes more prominent in political and formal communication, local languages risk being driven to the margins. This is particularly relevant in Sindh, where the maintenance of Sindhi as cultural and political identity is of paramount concern to many voters. Hashmi (2019) writes that while the use of English as part of Sindhi is inevitable, political leaders are required to be cautious when linguistic choices affect their image and relationship with different sections of society. Bhutto's challenge is to achieve an elegant balance between his Western-educated

persona and the linguistic and cultural continuity demands of Sindhi-speaking voters.

Bhutto's use of English can also be explained within the broader context of language and power. Fairclough (1989) argues that language is a tool of social control, and powerful languages are usually associated with power and legitimacy. In the case of Pakistani politics, English is an icon of elite administration, perpetuating existing power relations. English used by Bhutto may help make him more acceptable to international communities and urban elites, but it also raises questions about accessibility and inclusiveness of political communication. The issue of linguistic accessibility is particularly relevant in Pakistan, where educational differences mean that not all members of the public can access bilingual political discourse. This makes it imperative to undertake more research on the impact of code-mixing on political participation and voter mobilization.

Typically, recent scholarship provides an extensive context against which to explore the linguistic practices of Bhutto. Scholarship affirms that code-mixing plays several roles within political oratory, including enhancing credibility, broadening audience support, and reinforcing leadership identity. However, it also raises concerns of linguistic accessibility and cultural authenticity. Through the use of sociolinguistics and political communication approaches to the analysis of Bhutto's speeches, this study will shed more light on the effects of bilingualism on contemporary Pakistan politics. The findings of the research will be taken further to the study of language and power, examining the evolving role of English as a language of use and identity within and outside the region.

Research Objectives

The study has the following research objectives that are:

1. To identify and categorize the types of code-mixing (intra-sentential, inter-sentential, tag-switching) and to analyze the contexts in which English loanwords are most frequently used (e.g., governance, economy, legal, technology).
2. To examine the social and political implications of Bilawal's bilingual speech strategy, including how different voter segments (urban vs. rural, educated vs. traditional) interpret and respond to his bilingual rhetoric.

Research Questions

1. What are the structural patterns and types of English code-mixing found in the Bilawal Bhutto's Sindhi speeches between 2020 and 2024?
2. In what thematic contexts and communicative functions does Bilawal Bhutto use English loanwords in his Sindhi speeches?

Significance of the study

The analysis matters because it reveals the deliberate strategy of Bilawal Bhutto who employs code-mixing and English loanwords to attract both city-based educated viewers and countryside people who follow traditional ways. The study demonstrates how bilingualism shapes Pakistani political discourse by determining political representation while optimizing communication between voters. The study has value to sociolinguistics and political communication through its demonstration of English integration within regional discourse which represents shifting cultural values across generations. The study provides relevant knowledge for language policy development while supporting educational initiatives and campaigning strategies especially in the context of multilingual and multicultural states including Pakistan.

Research Methodology

The research applies qualitative method to study Sindhi and English terminology used in Bilawal Bhutto's political speeches. This research uses typology of code-mixing by Pieter Muysken (2000) as the lens to analyze the structural forms of bilingual language use. The study requirements for language pattern study along with frequency analysis and contextual evaluation make Muysken's model the most appropriate since it presents an unpolitical analytical perspective focused on language data.

The 20 selected political speeches by Bilawal Bhutto recorded between 2020 and 2024. The researcher selected these speeches from official PPP YouTube channels and news broadcasts such as Geo News, ARY and Sindh TV and verified news archives and PPP social media platforms. The research selected speeches primarily in Sindhi that featured substantial English elements until researchers excluded speeches delivered in Urdu or English to preserve linguistic homogeneity.

Muysken's model helped researchers to identify three main code-mixing categories within the analyzed speeches.

1. *Intra-sentential mixing – English words within Sindhi sentence structures.*
2. *A complete change between Sindhi and English sentences takes place in inter-sentential switching.*
3. *The speech contains Tag-switching which utilizes brief English terms such as “okay” or “so” or “for the people.”*

The study analyzed three public speeches by manual thematic coding that marked each English term along with its mixing type and thematic classification (e.g. governance, economy, law, modernization). The researchers applied this method to perform structured formal studies of Bhutto's bi-linguistic abilities when delivering public statements. The researchers selected this analytical framework because it stands exclusively within sociolinguistics boundaries to classify and explain

linguistic behavior instead of ideological examinations. The research goal receives effective support from Muysken's model which functions as the most suitable framework for analyzing bilingual code-mixing patterns in political discourse.

Data Analysis

Analysis of speeches by Bilawal Bhutto between (2020, December 27) to (2024, January 1) reveals that code-mixing and English loanwords are integral to his political speeches and are representative of linguistic adaptation, strategic communication, and political branding. His speeches are marked by high incidence of English usage within Sindhi sentences, particularly when he speaks of governance, the economy, democracy, law, and technology. Such linguistic practice aligns with broader trends within South Asian political speeches where English is associated with power, modernization, and credibility.

Speech 1: Garhi Khuda Bakhsh (2020, December 27)

Event: 13th Death Anniversary of Benazir Bhutto

Original Text

"(Asaan khy) strong opposition (*thahin ghurjy jeeka awam jy hakn lae awaz utary*)".

(Translation: *We must make a strong opposition that speaks for the people's rights.*)

Analysis

This is a perfect example of an intra-sentential code-mixing where the English adjective 'strong' has been intercalated effectively in a Sindhi sentence. While Sindhi translation equivalent "(*Mazboot*)" exists, Bilawal puts a contemporary assertive tone to his word choice of English term. This term "opposition" also has distinct political connotations in international perspective, and by using the word "strong", Bilawal brings political narrative of his country closer to global democratic standards appealing not only national observers, but also international ones.

Speech 2: Sindh Assembly – (2021, August 18) Karachi

Occasion: Legislative Session Address

Original Text

"(Asaan jee policies myn) transparency (*Huwan zaroori ahy*)."

(Translation: *There must be transparency in our policies.*)

Analysis

Here again, intra-sentential mixing occurs. The English word "transparency" is used instead of the Sindhi word (*shafafiyat*). This lexical choice demonstrates the prevalence of English in the rhetoric within the post of governance, where so many administrative and bureaucratic concepts have no well-established native counterparts. It implies that some of the English terms have become institutionalized in political speech, despite the presence of appropriate Sindhi words.

Speech 3: Press Conference – (2023, January 10) Karachi

Topic: Economic Policy and Inflation

Original Text

"(Asaan khy) inflation (khy control karan lae nawan qadam khaninaa pawanda)."

(Translation: We need to take new measures to control inflation.)

Analysis

Intra-sentential code-mixing is also evident from the use of the word "inflation". Instead of "(Mahangai)", which is the right form in Sindhi, Bilawal prefers the English word. This explains the way economic jargons in Pakistan are mostly cast in English as a language associated with technical skills and international economic debate. The term is also commonly used in media and reports in governments, hence, more relatable and effective among the urban population.

Speech 4: Hyderabad Rally – (2022, November 12)

Event: Electoral Mobilization

Original Text

"We will bring justice to Sindh. (Asaan joo maqsaad qanoon jee hukumrani ahy)."

(Translation: We will bring justice to Sindh. Our goal is the rule of law.)

Analysis

This is an inter-sentential code-switching where full sentence of English is followed by Sindhi. The English section is for emphasis and is likely to please urban bilinguals, while establishing authority in front of media. Return to Sindhi strengthens the link with local electorate. This duality in usage alternates to reflect the audience design strategy whereby the speaker modifies the language used depending on whom he is talking to (Bell, 1984). Nonetheless, in terms of its structure, it can be fitted into Muysken's alternational model.

Speech 5: Youth Convention – 3 September 2023, Karachi

Topic: Youth Empowerment

Original Text

"(Asaan jee siyasat) for the people (Ahy)."

(Translation: Our politics is for the people!)

Analysis

This is a usual case of tag-switching, and the phrase "for the people" is introduced in the sentence for rhetorical effect. Such phrases are usually borrowed without translation due to its symbolic meaning in the world. "For the people" is a political cliché with a long background in the Western democratic rhetoric, which is laden with emotional vibrations and harmonized with the images of the international democratic ideas, belongs to Bilawal.



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Speech 6: Press Conference – Islamabad – (2023, October 15)

Topic: Human Rights and Judiciary

Original Text:

"(Asaan khy) human rights (ty) compromise (naa karan ghurjy)."

(Translation: We should not compromise on human rights.)

Analysis

In this case, there is intra-sentential mixing as well, since “human rights” replaces the Sindhi (*Insaani haaq*). Use of the globally known English word used in the speech gives it universal legitimacy. This can be quite effective in subject areas such as law and justice where the English terms are sustained through the colonial legal set up that is still dominant in Pakistan.

Discussions

The results of the research illustrate how Bilawal Bhutto faces linguistic and political challenges when he employs English borrowings together with code-switching within his Sindhi political speeches. Analytical findings demonstrate how Bhutto mixes English language strategically into Sindhi speech to demonstrate authority while gaining acceptance from various constituents and maintaining a contemporary leadership image. This linguistic strategy leads to both benefits and disadvantages because it questions public comprehension together with national identity alongside English status within Pakistan's governmental domain. The analysis reveals that Bhutto utilizes English language most frequently when discussing governance matters together with democracy and economy as well as global affairs. The bulk of political language in Pakistan follows English-led dominance since English functioned as the administrative and governance language for the elite class throughout history. Through intra-sentential code-mixing Bhutto incorporates English words including *democracy, election, policy, investment, budget* and *reform* into his speeches embedded in Sindhi sentence structures. The study shows Bhutto does not adopt a basic language switching strategy because he incorporates English into his spoken Sindhi while following Sindhi speaking patterns that demonstrate elite Pakistani communicative patterns.

Code-mixing provides Bhutto with several advantages in the political sphere. His inclusion of English elements in his communications signifies at his commitment to modern global leadership which makes him different from conventional Sindhi politicians who speak in only Sindhi without any mixture. His flexible linguistic method provides him with the ability to communicate effectively with two different voter groups: those who understand Sindhi as well as those who primarily understand English. His dual method of communication builds his political image as someone

who maintains Sindhi traditional roots yet understands international diplomatic language. His language flexibility enables him to become a credible ruler in the eyes of urban voters because they link English proficiency to both progressive thinking and governing capacity.

The study investigates detrimental aspects of over extensive code-mixing which affect individuals with limited education in rural locations. Rural Sindhi voters view Bhutto's English-speaking habits as enabling a disconnect from them in spite of urban audiences who accept his bilingual communication. Sindhi functions beyond linguistic use in these communities because it represents both cultural and political roots of the community members. The critics claim that Bhutto risks losing traditional Sindhi voters when he relies heavily on English since they feel left out of the political discourse. In Sindh, the political discourse demonstrates a social distinction between English-speaking elite members and rural voters who favor speeches dominated by Sindhi. The language choices made by Bhutto face comparison with other politicians who represent the Sindhi population. Through his linguistic approach represents a new generation of Sindhi political leadership which integrates English into their discourse more fluently than previous leaders. Demographic transformations in Pakistan are important as the country's youth members have greater access to English through globalization and digital communication technologies.

The way the general public and media sectors reacted to Bhutto's mixed-language speaking habits points to mixed reactions. Some people accept English speech from Bhutto as an essential tool for present-day political development yet others fear this practice promotes social linguistic divisions. The use of English language in Pakistani society relates to privileged social economic backgrounds while linking to western educational systems which create access barriers for citizens outside these elite groups. The use of code-mixing during political speech creates compelling questions about how well this practice supports inclusivity when viewed from a voting population perspective.

Findings and Results

The analysis of Bilawal Bhutto's Sindhi speeches demonstrates multiple significant points about how he incorporates code-mixing with English loanword usage. The linguistic analysis demonstrates that Bhutto selects English as his main language for discussing political subject matter and economic discussions along with governance issues yet he uses Sindhi when making cultural or emotional presentations. English and Sindhi combinations within his speeches provide him strong political power yet they create language obstacles for specific voting audiences.

English loanwords play an essential role within Bhutto's Sindhi discourse because he uses them extensively for technical and governance-related purposes. The English words Bilawal Bhutto most frequently uses throughout his speeches belong to these four specific groups:

Terms related to governance including democracy and election appear constantly together with parliament and policy and constitution and opposition. The economy alongside development receives constant attention during economic discussions through terms including budget combined with investment and tax and economy and reform. The engagement and innovation of youth involves discussions about modernization and technology through use of digital, internet along with social media as well as global concepts and modern terminology.

The discourse of law and administration uses words which include law alongside justice and human rights and governance during policy and legal discussions.

Research confirms that intra-sentential code mixing stands as the most common pattern because English terms smoothly integrate into Sindhi language sentences. The research shows that English has gone beyond being a mere external influence as it now exists naturally within Sindhi political discourse by influential leaders. The use of inter-sentential switching remains moderate because it functions to emphasize political slogans yet tag-switching appears most rare to create rhetorical impact. Among Sindhi political leaders Bilawal Bhutto uses code-mixing practices at greater levels than others due to his extensive use of pure Sindhi discourse. As for his father, his English discourse appears in legal frameworks and he uses moderate English integration throughout his speeches. The increasing use of code-mixing by Bhutto demonstrates how younger political leaders, in Sindh, today open up bilingual communication strategies in their discourse.

The audience reactions toward Bhutto's bilingual speeches exhibited disagreement among constituents. Urban middle-class voters see Bhutto's English fluency as a proof of his modern leadership qualities but rural voters believe heavy English usage breaks Sindhi identity and locks out English-illiterate residents. The elitist status associated with English in Pakistan ends up restricting political participation at the grassroots level.

The research verifies that Bhutto's code-mixing techniques provide him with strategic opportunities but also make him face political communication challenges. His bilingual abilities help build credibility with urban voters but at the same time he needs to handle carefully the balance between modernized language and traditional cultural roots to prevent alienating Sindhi-speaking rural voters.

Delimitations

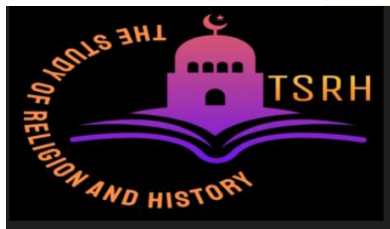
The research examines code-mixing alongside English loanwords in Bilawal Bhutto's selected Sindhi speeches from 2020 through 2024. Political speeches constitute the exclusive scope of this research because the analysis disregards Sindhi communication in all other forms. The study neglects to explore audience's feedback about code-mixing and the clarity it brings to the speeches. The research exclusively deployed Muysken's model while omitting other possible frameworks for analyzing code-mixing and discourse analysis. These results apply only to Bilawal Bhutto and specific Sindhi political figures rather than all Pakistani or Sindhi political figures.

Conclusion

Through application of Muysken's theoretical model researchers analyzed how Bilawal Bhutto integrated English code-mixing elements in his Sindhi speeches and the functions loanwords served in these speeches. Code-mixing operates purposefully as a language system to address audiences who are bilingual while demonstrating societal power and modern political themes at once. The abundance of English political vocabulary shows that political communication is adopting a mixed language dual identity. The study analyzed Code-switching and loanword patterns through a single speaker's speeches while providing foundation for future research on sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistic patterns identified within the research utilizing single speaker data will direct future studies of comparative language research. The research demonstrates that political code-mixing in Pakistan represents an identity tool for multilingual communities rather than a linguistic defect.

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