

## Anglicization of Urdu Proper Names: A Corpus-Based Study

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### Abstract

*This paper aims to explore the impact of English on Pakistani names making them Anglicized. The local names are abbreviated in order to look modern or to show prestige on the part of the users. This phenomenon presents a discrete variety of Pakistani English (PE). The researcher conducted a corpus-based analysis (The Newspaper Analysis of 'The News', September 2017) to show the frequency of the Anglicized names. For the data analysis, the AntConc 3.2.1 was used to handle the corpus. The data were presented in the form of tables to show their frequency and percentage. The study proved that such Anglicized names in the abbreviated forms had their role in creating a new variety of Pakistani English. The results were generalized with reference to the understandability and habitual usage of such abbreviations.*

**Keywords:** Language, Variation, Anglicization, Abbreviations, Frequency, Corpus

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### Introduction

Nouns are the specific words in the language of some specific area or locality. They are the common nouns, proper nouns, material nouns, abstract nouns, compound nouns, and collective ones. A further branch of nouns is called proper names. According to Joseph, E. (2004) the differences among the

individuals help shape national, sub-national, ethnic, and regional identities. The individuals once mark their identities; tend to sustain them in different ways. They take a start from their personal names from their peers and try to justify the meanings to the names. The social and cultural identity of the name is the one direction that is taken for granted and is then justified or

is tried to justify later on. In this way, the names are the signifiers that have social and cultural parameters as the signified ones. On this level, the meaning of one's name is the outcome of a particular idea or concept behind it.

The idea that the names possess identities of the bearers is quite recent and it has attracted so many linguists. The linguists working in this area are called Onomasticians. Names are usually the choices of the parents and the peers, and they stay with the children as their identity markers all their lives but the abbreviations or nicknames have the element of choice on the part of the name bearers. Personal names are markers of identity in groups. They indicate race, caste, ethnicity, class, and even the level of modernization. (Rahman, 2015:3).

Apart from personal names, there are the names of political parties, institutions, organizations, brands, educational degrees, and so on. Their names are also abbreviated partly to be convenient in writing and speaking and partly to look modern. The study of proper names helps in understanding the relationship between names and objects. It is perhaps the shortest route to reach the surface linkage between word and object or the objective reality.

The names are shortened in the form of clipping or abbreviation. Clipping involves the process of shortening a term or a name in three or four letters at the initial position. Both the processes occur for the sake of convenience, modernization, or

Anglicization. The latest trend in SAE and particularly in PE is that the names are abbreviated to look modern and Anglicized. Such sort of mimicry is the result of the colonial experience which still has its imprints on the minds of our people. Moreover, the followings are the objectives of the study:

1. To show that the Anglicized names occur in our English newspapers as an important feature of PE.
2. To show the frequency of habitual occurrence of such names.

### **Significance of the Study**

The present study is important because it finds out how the Anglicized names in the abbreviated forms are contributing to the formation of a new variety of Pakistani English. It particularly focuses on the ways and categories of such abbreviated names. Furthermore, this study will work as an interface between sociolinguistics and onomastic as it will highlight some of the social factors leading to the formations of such names.

### **Delimitations**

The researcher has delimited his research into two ways; Firstly, only the names of persons, places, political parties, academic degrees, and academic institutions and organizations have been selected for research as:

- i. Names of Persons: M. Gohar, T. Singh, Ali, N.M. Rashid, etc.

ii. Names of Places: T. T. Singh, KPK, D.G. Khan, etc.

iii. Names of Political Parties: PTI, PAT, N- League, PPP, Q- League, etc.

iv. Names of Organizations: WAPDA, OGRA, NEPRA, NADRA, etc.

v. Names of Educational institutions: UOG, BZU, PU, UOS, NUST, NUML, etc.

Secondly, The News of September 2017 has been taken for corpus study of such names.

### **Literature Review**

Pakistan is the land of four provinces, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and some tribal areas and Gilgit Baltistan. The estimated population of the country is about 220 million. People from different ethnic backgrounds with their language and culture live here. Many different languages are spoken in the country. About 56 languages are spoken in the country; among them, Urdu and English are the two main official languages, and Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Saraiki, and Balochi are the main regional languages of Pakistan. The remaining are the minor regional languages, and most of the minor regional languages are on the verge of extinction because of the part of the people of Pakistan and the government of Pakistan no steps have been taken to boost the status of regional languages of the country. The educated, elite, and ruling class of the country has attached

massive prestige to English, so the new generation of the country likes to speak English and act according to western ways of living (Rahman 2002 p.1). Hence, the Anglicization of the names of the people organizations, political parties, etc. has become a common practice.

About 3/4th of the world including Indo-Pakistan areas underwent the British colonial experience which dented not only the socio-cultural and geopolitical fabric of the colonies but affected the lingual patterns of the people. Pakistan is also with no exception. It is a fact that the language of the powerful always imprints its prominent marks on the language of the powerless. Right from the sound patterns to syntax, everything is changed to some little or great extent and the names of the people i.e. the personal names also find divergence in the flow of becoming modern. In this way, a new variety of English emerges in the form of onomastic Anglicization in Pakistan.

According to the constitution of Pakistan, 1973, Urdu was given the status of the national language of the country, with the passage of time along with other regional languages; the national language of the country could not achieve as massive prestige as achieved by English. After the independence of Pakistan, English was given the status of the official language. The researchers like Abbas (1993) argue that English like in many countries that were once British colonies, has become a status symbol in

Pakistan, the educated and elite class of the country use English as a sign of prestige and as a source to enter different power sectors, for example, military and bureaucracy. Abbas (1993) further states that English is thought to be the language of the elite class which is dominant in all the major sectors of the country, such as commerce, judiciary, education, parliament, and business. Moreover, the emerging middle class has also started the following suit in this regard and the people are leaving their mother tongues. Hence, in this regard, the names which are originally part of Urdu or the other regional language of the country are being made English.

Phillipson (1992: 46) states that inequalities such as gender, language, class, race, nationality, and income, are very common in the world. In this regard, he defined Linguistic Imperialism particularly English Linguistic Imperialism. He argues that the western world, the English-speaking countries, has maintained and asserted numerous cultural and structural inequalities between English and other languages of the world. The inequalities are mostly non-material things, for example, it has been maintained by the English the best knowledge exists in English, and without teaching and learning English, people cannot acquire scientific knowledge. Similarly, they have developed pedagogical principles for English teaching to maintain the supremacy of their language over all the languages of the world.

If we look at the study of World Englishes in Asian, South Asian, and Colonial Englishes and particularly in Pakistani English, there have been two levels of studies; macro- and micro-levels. At a macro level, there has been a discussion on the status of Pakistani English and the attitudes of the local and international community about PE variety. And at a micro level, there have been studies concerning the linguistic differences of lexis, syntax, phonology, and pragmatics.

At the macro-level, B. Kachru (1985) talks about PE as a different variety and includes it in outer-circle countries. These varieties in the outer circle are considered as norm developing. Kachru (1992) considers Pakistani English as an 'institutionalized second language variety. According to Kachru, the institutionalized second language varieties have a long history of acculturation in new cultural and geographical contexts; they perform a variety of functional ranges in the local education, administrative and legal systems (p.19). PE is a sub-variety of South Asian English. It shares some of the general features with Asian and South Asian English but is still an independent variety.

Y. Kachru and Nelson (2006) believe that the local usages as the elements of Pakistani are of legitimate interest (p.128). Baumgardner (1987, p.242) is of the view that English in Pakistan is a nativized, institutionalized variety of English. It performs internal as well as external functions like other

SAE South which form a 'pan-regional Variety'. Baumgardner (1990, 1992 & 1993) says, "To be able to read a local Pakistani English Newspaper thoroughly and with complete understanding, the reader must be familiar with both the Urdu language and Islamic culture" (p.242).

At the micro-level, many researchers studied Pakistani English on different linguistic levels. The major work on Pakistani English has been done by Robert J. Baumgardner (1990, 1992 & 1993). He published many articles on this topic. Talaat (1999) studies the 'phenomenon of change' and opines that "Pakistani English is not a stable system". The focus of her study is not the product rather the process of change. Mahboob (2004) has studied the cultural aspect of Pakistani English. He studies the relationship between Islam and English in the Pakistani context. He shows that Islam, being the dominant force in the cultural tradition of Pakistan, is also reflected in the English produced by Pakistanis.

M a h b o o b ( 2 0 0 4 ) , Baumgardner (1990, 1992 & 1993), Kachru (1975), Rahman (1991), Talaat (1993) have discussed the processes of formation of the lexis of different categories. They have pointed to such novelty which emerged in PE through code-mixing, translation, and retranslation of the innovative lexis of Pakistani English. These unique lexical items show the different socio-political cultures of the country. Furthermore, it was added that code-switching affect

the psyche of its users which lead them to make a certain impact in various task performance. (Gohar, Ashraf, Sarfraz, Nazir, & Javaid, 2020)

Newspapers are the ways of communication at a local level. Their language manifests almost all the linguistic features of the local users of the area (Grover, Nishi, Deepak, 2004). The same is the case with Pakistani English newspapers which carry the linguistic features of the users of the English language in the informal setting. Along with the successful communication of day-to-day news to the people, they depict the cultural and social attitudes of the people. As the names are the most frequent lexical items in everyday communication in the form of newspapers, they can present relatively more appropriate data for the research on onomastics.

The book by Rahman (1999) "Pakistani English" gave a detailed variety of PE as non-native variety. He gave a vivid description of the variety and discussed the features of Pakistani English in comparison with Standard English. He tried to dispel the popular notions about English in Pakistan.

Rahman (2015:107) says, "The process of modernization is not influenced only by Western norms and onomastic fashion. In addition to these influences, it is also influenced by the process of urbanization, ethnicity and contemporary interpretations of Islam". In this way, Rahman discusses the concept of Anglicized names in

their social, ethnic, and religious contexts and states that it is more a fashion than need. He further studies the ethnic and religious contexts of the names but he believes that such a trend is more a fashion than needs. He even does not differentiate between abbreviated and simply westernized names.

The present research is based on the idea that the abbreviated names though used for any reason in society, present a new trend in PE. Furthermore, the researcher has categorized the abbreviated into three heads. In each category, the names have been shown as per their frequency and percentage. These categories have been analyzed through the corpus of English Newspapers.

## Methodology

The data have been observed and divided into three categories regarding their possible patterns of formation such as full name abbreviation, two words abbreviation, and one-word abbreviation. Their total occurrence with full words, their abbreviated occurrence, and their percentage have been calculated through a corpus analysis of Pakistani English Newspapers of September 2017. The analysis has been shown through tables.

## Data Analysis

Data have been categorized into three heads of the abbreviated words marking PE.

### Category I: Full Name/ String Abbreviation

Item/Name	Abbreviated Name	Full word occurrence (A)	Abbreviated Occurrence (B)	Total occurrence (A+B)	% of Abbreviated occurrence
Pakistan Tahkeek-e-Insaaf	PTI	01	8850	8851	99.9%
Pakistan Awami Tehreek	PAT	129	470	599	78%
Pakistan International Airlines	PIA	124	842	966	87%
Khyber Pakhtoon Khwan	KPK	Nil	264	264	100%
Compressed Natural Gas	CNG	23	406	429	94.6%
National University of Modern Languages	NUML	Nil	108	108	100%
Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority	OGRA	76	347	423	82%
National Electric Power Regulatory Authority	NEPRA	102	586	688	85%

The detailed analysis of the table shows that the frequency in the form of percentage ranges between 76% and 100%. It shows that abbreviated names have an important role in communication at a public level. People prefer to communicate in abbreviated forms rather than in full names. We see that mostly the names of political parties, universities, and public departments have a high frequency in their usage.

In the above table eight short forms have been used; two names, such as KPK and NUML, have never been used in their full forms in the newspapers, so their use as short forms is 100%. The name of Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaaf is at the second position in its abbreviated usage which is 99.9% which shows that only once the full name of this political party has been used in that period. If we look at the name of Pakistan Awami Tahreek, its name has been used 599 times totally in that period; in which the abbreviated form has been used 470 times and 129 times the full form has been used. This shows that among eight names the name of this political party as a short form has used less than the short form of other names which is 78%. Moreover, the names of National Electric Power Regulatory Authority Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority Compressed Natural Gas, and Pakistan International Airlines show the following percentage respectively 85%, 82%, 94.6%, and 87%. This analysis clearly shows how rapidly the names in Pakistani English are moving towards Anglicization.

As mentioned in the literature review that it is a personal choice of the individual or the organization to be called themselves by the abbreviations, and the second choice to be made either it is an acronym or abbreviation. The difference between the abbreviation and the acronym is that the first letters of the complete name of the individual of the organization are pronounced separately, for example, the name of the organization is Pakistan Tarkeek-e-Insaaf and its abbreviation is PTI and each letter of it is pronounced separately as P then T and then I. On the other hand as an acronym, the whole short form is pronounced as a single unit of the sound of or as a complete word, such the name of the organization is National Electric Power Regulatory Authority and its short form is NEPRA. Hence as an acronym when it is pronounced, it is pronounced as a complete word like any other word of the English language; we do not pronounce each letter separately. Moreover, again it is the personal choice of the individual or the organization to select their short name as an acronym or an abbreviation. Furthermore, it also depends upon the convenience to select the name as an acronym or an abbreviation; in other words, mostly that form is selected which is easy to pronounce. Similarly, the other trend is that if the letters of the short form are less than three or four it's mostly abbreviated. Hence the longer short forms are used as acronyms, such as PTI or PIA are three letters so they are used as abbreviations the other hand NEPRA consists of five letters so it is used as an acronym.

There is another trend in the use of short forms in Pakistani newspapers; where the short form is very common or known to everyone, its first use is a short form with giving the complete name, but when the name is not very common, the newspapers use its complete name when used first in the

script of a newspaper. For example, PTI or CNG is very common; they are used without using their full forms in the newspapers. This trend shows how common English short forms are used in Pakistani English.

**Category II: Two Words abbreviation**

Full Name	Item/Name	Full word occurrence (A)	Abbreviated Occurrence (B)	Total occurrence (A+B)	% of Abbreviated occurrence
Union Council	UC	441	531	972	54%
Bachelor of Sciences	BS	01	382	383	99.7%
Punjab University	PU	23	406	429	94%

The names in category II are mostly related to education. The nomenclature of the degrees in the table is particular to PE and they are not used in Standard English. In the above table total of three names have been used, and all of them do not belong to standard English, but their use is very common in the educational sector of Pakistan. The detailed analysis of the table shows that among these three words the word Union Council is less academic and at the same time the percentage of its usage as a short form is far less than that of the other two words which are purely academic. The word Union Council has been used 972 times in the period, its full form has been used 441 times and on the other hand, the abbreviated form has been used 531 times; this shows the abbreviated usage of this name is 54%. On the other hand,

the percentages of the abbreviated usage of the other two names Bachelor of Sciences Punjab University are 99.7% and 94% respectively. This analysis clearly shows that the educational sector of the country is more tilted towards anglicization than the other people of Pakistan. The percentage of all the names is above 90 which means the people prefer to communicate in abbreviated forms rather than in full names. The newspapers which are the common way of communication at the local level exhibit such names indicating that it is a discrete variety of Pakistani English.



Category III: One Word abbreviation

Full Name	Abbreviated Name	Full word occurrence (A)	Abbreviated Occurrence (B)	Total occurrence (A+B)	% of Abbreviated occurrence
Muhammad ...	M. (Name)	10865	629	11494	5.4 %
.....Ali	Name (A.)	1648	25	1673	1.5 %
Hafiz	H. (Name)	92	08	100	7%
Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz	N.	07	722	729	99%
Master of Commerce	M.Com	00	03	03	100%
Bachelor of Commerce	B.Com	01	50	51	98%

In category III, the lexis Muhammad (M), Ali (A), and Hafiz (H) belong to the political category and their % is relatively low which indicates that the people prefer to use full names rather than abbreviated names. The frequency ratio of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (N) is the highest one in the table which shows that the names of a political category are abbreviated more frequently than religious names.

The last two names as M.Com and B.Com present the unique patterns of shortening names as the first letters are abbreviated but the second words are clipped. Such names set an interface between abbreviation and clipping. This category of the names has so many other words and hence demands separate research.

### Conclusions

The local names are Anglicized through abbreviations in Pakistani English. These names are abbreviated through three different processes such as whole name abbreviation, two words abbreviation, and single-word

abbreviation. Sometimes there is an interface between abbreviation and clipping such as M.Com and B.Com. The abbreviated local names in English are used for the sake of prestige and modernity. Moreover, nicknames need to be explored regarding an important indicator of PE. The religious/sectarian names need to be analyzed as a unique feature of PE. The caste names need to be studied regarding a unique factor of PE. There is an interface between abbreviation and clipping such as M.Com and B.Com. This category demands separate research.

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