An Analysis of Gender Assignment to English Loanwords in Urdu by Shina Speakers

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Abstract

The current research reports the grammatical gender Shina speakers assign to English loanwords while using Urdu. Irrespective of their proficiency level, the current study selected those multilingual Shina speakers who could communicate in Shina, Urdu and English. Urdu and Shina make use of grammatical gender, whereas English is generally devoid of it. Some synonymous words in Shina and Urdu have the same gender while others have different gender. The focus of the study was on the issue of assigning gender to gender-neutral English borrowed/loanwords in Urdu. The 'variation theory' put forward by Poplack (1993) in the study of language contact phenomena with reference to borrowing was used as the theoretical framework for the present study. For the sake of data collection, survey method was employed and the questionnaire prepared for the purpose was administered among the respondents (n: 50). It was done by firstly taking into account the equivalent words of English loanwords which have the same gender in both languages, since gender to the English loanwords is not assigned randomly rather it primarily corresponds to the gender of their equivalent words in Shina and Urdu; secondly, by considering the words which have different gender in Shina and Urdu as it has been observed that majority of Shina speakers assign the gender of Urdu equivalent words to the loanwords. Thirdly, the study investigated the gender Shina speakers assign to the English loanwords which lack equivalent words in Shina and Urdu and it was found that there was no identifiable pattern though most of the words were treated as feminine.

Keywords: Shina, Urdu, grammatical gender, loan words

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1. Introduction

Gilgit-Baltistan, situated in the northern mountainous ridge of Pakistan, has great ethnic and linguistic diversity. Many local languages are spoken in different regions of this area including Wakhi, Burushiski, Khawar, Gojali, Shina and so on. Shina language with different regional varieties is one of the major spoken languages in the region. Astori, one of the most common varieties of Shina, is spoken in Astore as a mother tongue (MT) of Astori people. The educated natives of Astore speak not only Shina but also Urdu and English. In a linguistically diverse situation like this, these languages come in contact with one another which often results in the adaptation of words from one language for use into another which is called borrowing. The current study was carried out in order to investigate what grammatical gender Shina speakers assign to the English gender neutral borrowed words in their Urdu speech. Another aim of the study was to find out which language exerted such an influence- Urdu or Shina.

In daily conversation, the educated natives of Gilgit-Baltistan normally speak Urdu. Nonetheless, their speech also showcases the influence of English since they speak multiple languages i.e. Shina, Urdu and English. For instance, 'spoon kahan rakha/rakhi hai'. 'Spoon' is an English word that is borrowed in Urdu when people speak casually and informally. If a Shina speaker treats spoon as feminine, it is because the Shina equivalent of 'spoon' (khapaen) is feminine; while, in Urdu it is masculine i.e. 'chamach'. Here we see the influence of Shina rather than Urdu at work. The study thus aims at unravelling the potential influence of Shina and Urdu languages in assigning gender to gender neutral English borrowed/ loanwords and exploring as to what gender they assign to the English loanwords in Urdu speech which do not exist in Shina and/or Urdu.

The term 'loanwords', in this research, is strictly used for referring to those English words which do not have any equivalent in Shina and Urdu. The use of the aforementioned term in a more specific sense is solely for the sake of keeping a distinction between the borrowed words which have equivalents in Shina and Urdu and those which do not have such equivalents.

2. Literature Review

The term borrowing has been explained in a number of ways by linguists. Holmes (2000) defines borrowed words as the ones that are adapted to the speaker's first language and usually such words are pronounced in the same way as they were a part of speaker's first language'. Akmajian, Demers, Farmer, and Harnish (2001) discuss two types of borrowing: direct and indirect. The first type includes words that are being borrowed from one language to another. This borrowing is made in order to expand the vocabulary of one's language. The second type revolves around the 'literal translation' of these borrowed words. According to Yule (1996), borrowing is 'taking over of words from other languages'. He mentions loan-translation as 'direct translation of the elements of a word into the borrowing language'. However, the term loan-translation should not be confused with the term loanwords. Borrowed words may or may not have terms in the base language that are equivalent, but loan words are the linguistic necessity for the borrowing language. Keeping this in view, the current study treats the English words having no equivalents in Shina or Urdu as loanwords and the words belonging to the English language that have equivalents in Shina and Urdu as borrowed words. Haspelmath (2009) believes that the fate of loanwords depends on the recipient language. They may be inserted in the recipient language after adoption; in case of the presence of an equivalent in the native language, it may coexist or in the native language, it may be replaced by its synonym when it is left un-adopted.

The differentiation between codeswitching and borrowing is another important consideration that needs to be addressed. Scotton (1992) states that borrowing and code-switching should not be seen as different phenomena. Morpho-syntactically, both function similarly when taken to the recipient language. According to Muyksen (1995), first of all, a word is taken from one language into another language. Then, after the increased usage of a word in the recipient language it becomes conventionalized code-switching. Lastly, the borrowed word gets so well adapted in the recipient language that it appears to be a part of that language. Eastman (1992) argues that all efforts to differentiate between code-mixing, code-switching and borrowing are supposed to be doomed.

Keeping in view these aforementioned facts and without any intention of becoming part of the debate, the present research recognizes the words

discussed under this study as borrowed or loan words. Going beyond the basic debate on the status and nature of these phenomena, there is an important issue pertaining to the treatment of borrowed words devoid of grammatical gender due to their inherent linguistic nature by the speakers of a language which heavily relies on the convention of grammatical gender. Guba (2020) in his research explored the gender assigned to English loan words in Jordanian Arabic. The researcher came up with interesting finding that most of the loan words were assigned masculine gender, which depended on the phonological form of the English loan word. In another similar study, Meakins (2019) explored gender assignment process in case of bi-directional borrowing between Australian languages: Mudburra (in which no grammatical gender exists), and Jingulu (in which super classing and four genders exist). The study concluded that the borrowed nouns in Jingulu receive the gender according to their semantics, and the gender assignment process in Mudburra demonstrates understanding of Jingulu morpho-syntax. Another study of the similar nature by Moshref (2010) focused on gender assignment strategies in case of lexical borrowing from French and English to Egyptian Arabic. The researcher reported that semantic factors were primarily responsible for the assigned gender.

How far this linguistic operation upon the borrowed word is systematic and patterned is not known and is, as a matter of fact, hard to grapple with given the large number of languages spoken across and along our planet. According to Haspelmath (2009), loanwords in donor language have certain linguistic features which need to be modified or changed in order to fit in the recipient language. For instance, in case of English when a gender neutral word is borrowed by French, the language that has only masculine and feminine gender, gender assigning of these gender neutral word appears as a problem. Therefore, adjustments need to be made for the 'loanword adaptation'. In situations such as gender system difference, the gender is assigned by default sometimes as the word 'Weekend' in French is gets its masculine gender by default. Likewise, the research conducted by Lee (2016) found out that mostly German speakers used analogical means to assign gender to English loan nouns. In a similar vein, Arndt (1970) reported that the gender assigned to English loanwords was not random in German. When suffix association and analogical gender were absent, the non-feminine gender was assigned to monosyllabic nouns; whereas, polysyllabic nouns

were assigned feminine gender. A study conducted by Fush (2014) investigated the grammatical treatment of English loanwords in Polish. Polish language has both, natural and grammatical genders. However, the gender in Polish is determined on phonological basis. Most of the neuter nouns end in -o, feminine nouns end in –a, and masculine have several different endings. Furthermore, there is a distinction between inanimate masculine nouns and animate masculine in accusative cases. In the study, firstly, it was tested if there was any tension between Polish equivalents of the loanwords and the phonological shape in Polish monolingual's speech while assigning gender. The list of words containing those words which had a feminine equivalent in Polish and the words having endings in -o and –a, was put to test for analysing their gender depending on the phonological shape of the words. The researcher suggested that it was phonological shape rather than Polish equivalent that determined the gender of English words. However, when a phonological marker was absent, masculine gender was assigned by default. Secondly, the treatment of nouns in terms of animacy, specifically in accusative singular case, was studied. A list of six real English words and seven nonce words was tested. The results showed that all inanimate borrowed nouns were treated as masculine animate in accusative singular case irrespective of any phonological conditioning. Furthermore, analogical extensions were considered to be the cause behind such treatment.

In another similar study, Dubord (2004) analysed the speech of Spanish dialect of Southern Arizona to see whether the gender was assigned to English words on the basis of analogical gender, phonological gender or natural gender. The participants in the research included Spanish monolinguals and bilinguals with either English or Spanish as dominating language. As part of the study, 174 noun phrases were analysed by focusing on determiners that indicated gender according to Spanish. It was found that the biological gender of words while assigning gender to English words in Southwest Spanish played a major role. As part of the second phase, nouns having biological gender were eliminated in order to find what roles analogical and phonological genders played. The results showed that masculine gender was assigned to majority of phonologically masculine nouns while some of the phonologically feminine words were assigned the feminine gender. It was also found out that masculine gender was assigned

to phonologically neutral words more than feminine gender. Thus most of the words were assigned masculine gender. Moreover, on comparing the words having different analogical and phonological gender, it was also observed that phonological gender was primarily the determiner for assigning gender. Furthermore, when analogical gender was studied separately it was found that it had the same influence as phonological gender. However, some insignificant variation was observed between phonological and analogical gender.

A study conducted by Clegg and Waltermire (2009) investigated the gender assignment to English loanwords by Spanish speakers residing in Mexico. However, in this study the chosen participants were bilinguals, proficient in both Spanish and English. Study showed that animate nouns were assigned corresponding natural gender. Cases where natural gender was absent, nouns were assigned gender depending on the last phoneme. However, sufficient evidence was not found for analogical gender. The default gender was found to be masculine.

Bronu (2012) by using 'Integrated Construction Morphology Model' studied the grammatical and inherent gender assigned to English loan words in Lithuanian. Nouns in Lithuanian usually acquire suffixes that are markers for their gender, case, number and agreement. Therefore, both the sounds and spellings of the loan words are slightly altered when used in the Lithuanian discourse. The default gender for the inanimate nouns is usually masculine, with a few exceptions. For gender assignment to animate nouns, the pattern followed is same as the one that is used to assign gender to Lithuanian words.

A study carried out by Hamid (2017) reported the process of number and gender assignment to English loanwords in Modern Standard Arabic. Nouns in Arabic are modified for case, gender, number and definiteness. English words in Arabic discourse undergo inflections and this way they are modified morpho-syntactically. For example, ''Radio' has a plural form as 'ra:djuha:t' in Arabic. The findings suggested that the semantic analogy was the basis for assigning gender to the English loan words. It was further found out that animate nouns were assigned gender according to their natural gender. On the contrary, gender of inanimate loanwords primarily

depended on their equivalent words in Arabic. Besides, more than one gender might also be assigned to a loanword in cases where it was used with a different meaning depending on the context. For example: 'Flash' - 'a sudden burst of light' is masculine and 'flash memory' is feminine. However, in plural forms, these loanwords are usually assigned feminine gender irrespective of the referent's gender.

A study carried out by Repetti and Rabeno (1997) investigated if the gender assigned to English loanwords in Italian was taken from the Sicilian dialect of Italian or the Standard Italian. Therefore, their research analysed two dialects of one language where some of the words had two different genders. For instance: fruits are treated as masculine in the Sicilian dialect while standard Italian treats fruits as feminine. They concluded that the gender assignment to the English loanwords was according to Sicilian equivalents.

All of the aforementioned studies investigated the linguistic issue of gender assignment to English loanwords in bilingual context. Nevertheless, this study investigates the same issues in multilingual context. Besides, most of the above mentioned researched languages include the study of analogical gender (loan words are assigned gender on the basis of gender of the closest equivalent in recipient language), phonological gender (terminal phoneme or noun endings determine gender) and/or suffixal analogy (the suffix of a noun determines its gender); while, in case of Urdu and Shina, no phonological or suffixal gender can be assigned. Therefore, unlike other languages no phoneme or suffix of a noun in these languages indicates gender. The study thus assumed that if the assignment of gender was not arbitrary, then analogical gender was assigned to English borrowed words. Similarly, if the gender assignment was arbitrary, what was the emerging pattern? If it was not arbitrary, was the analogical gender taken from L1 (Shina) or L2 (Urdu)? Thus the study investigated which gender was assigned to the loanwords having no equivalents in both Shina and Urdu?

Gilgit-Baltistan is a linguistically rich region of Pakistan, yet being a remote area only a handful of significant linguistic researches have been conducted so far. The current study contributes profoundly to the understanding of the linguistic phenomenon of borrowing and gender assignment in case of multilingualism. Moreover, the study uses a highly sophisticated and

comprehensive methodology for the investigation into the research area which can benefit researchers to adopt a similar model to carry out researches in different linguistic contexts.

2.1 Sample

The research includes 50 (n: 50) university level native Shina speakers aged 20-30. In order to ensure homogeneity, Shina speakers studying at university level were chosen for this study, for the trend of using English words in speech of such people is higher.

In the current study total 60 English borrowed/loanwords in Urdu speech were studied in terms of their assigned gender by the study participants. This study takes into account only the gender neutral borrowed/loanwords.

2.2 Research Questions

1: What gender do Shina multilingual speakers assign to words borrowed from English to Urdu?
2: Which language [Shina (L1) or Urdu (L2)] has greater influence on assigning gender to words borrowed from English to Urdu?
3: What is the pattern of gender assignment to the words borrowed from English to Urdu that do not exist in both Shina and Urdu?

3. Method and Methodology

The study uses survey research method. According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) survey research collects statistical data 'to test hypothesis or answer questions'. A survey research analyzes 'preferences' and 'practices' of a group of people.

A questionnaire was distributed among participants of the study to assess the gender assigned to English borrowed words in Urdu Speech. The English words are divided into three categories, and each category has 20 words. The questionnaire used in the study has been adopted from the study of Franco (2018) with slight variations. In the original questionnaire, several sentences with one nominal Anglicism each were given. In order to indicate gender of the nominal Anglicism in each sentence, the research participants had to choose from given articles "de" (common) or "het" (neuter) and personal pronouns, "het" (neuter) or "hij" (masculine) or "ze" (feminine). In the current study, Urdu sentences with English loan words were provided for which the research participants had to choose verbs (two

verbs per sentence indicating masculine and feminine) to indicate the gender of English loan words.

The first category comprises the borrowed words with equivalents having the same gender in both Shina and Urdu. For example, the word 'tomato' is masculine in both Shina (balogun) and Urdu (tamater). The similarity between the assigned and the actual gender of words in this category means that the assigned gender is analogical (i.e. gender of borrowed words corresponds to the gender of equivalent words in the recipient language).

Table 1: Loanwords and their equivalent words with the same gender

Loan/Borrowed Words		Equivalent Words		Gender
		SHINA	URDU	
1	Plate	Tabak	Thali	Feminine
2	Tomato	Balogun	Tamater	Masculine
3	Shirt	Chli	Kameez	Feminine
4	Socks	Kanchay	Jarab	Feminine
5	Egg	Thoul	Andah	Masculine
6	Nose	Noti	Naak	Feminine
7	Blood	lael	Khun	Masculine
8	Stick	Tuli	Chari	Feminine
9	Mountain	Kor	Pahar	Masculine
10	Cup	Koup	Pyala	Masculine
11	Stone	Bat	Pathr	Masculine
12	Lock	Kulop	Tala	Masculine
13	Gold	Soun	Sona	Masculine
14	Ear	Koun	Kaan	Masculine
15	Air	Aoshi	Hawa	Feminine
16	Bread	Tiki	Roti	Feminine
17	Onion	Chong	Pyaz	Masculine
18	Water	Woye	Pani	Masculine
19	Moon	Yuun	Chand	Masculine
20	Meat	Mous	Gosht	Masculine

Second category comprises the borrowed words with equivalents having different gender in Shina and Urdu. For example, 'salt' is feminine in Shina (luni) and masculine in Urdu (namak). This category was analysed to find out which language was more dominant in assigning gender to borrowed English words.

Table 2: Loanwords and their equivalent words with different genders

Loan/Borrowed Words		SHINA		URDU	
		Equivalent words	Gender	Equivalent words	Gender
1	Spoon	Khapaen	Feminine	Chamach	Masculine
2	Salt	Luni	Feminine	Namak	Masculine
3	Pain	Jouk	Feminine	Dard	Masculine
4	Tree	Toum	Feminine	Darakht	Masculine
5	Shoe	Kori	Feminine	Jouta	Masculine
6	Snowfall	Hin	Masculine	Barafbari	Feminine
7	Fire	Phoo	Masculine	Aahg	Feminine
8	Finger ring	Awaeloh	Masculine	Anguthi	Feminine
9	Broom stick	Low.she	Feminine	Jhadou	Masculine
10	Tea	Cah	Masculine	Chae	Feminine
11	Skin	Choum	Masculine	Jild/cham ri	Feminine
12	Grass	Kach	Masculine	Ghas	Feminine
13	Flower	Pho.ner	Feminine	Phool	Masculine
14	Quilt	Ister	Masculine	Razae	Feminine
15	Sand	Suum	Masculine	Miti	Feminine
16	Sun	Su.ri	Feminine	Suraj	Masculine
17	River	Sin	Feminine	Darya	Masculine
18	Mouth	Anh.zi	Feminine	Munh	Masculine
19	Wood	Ka.tou	Masculine	Lakri	Feminine
20	Walnut	Kha.kaen	Feminine	Akhrout	Masculine

Third category comprises loanwords that have no equivalents in either Shina or Urdu. Thus, the research investigated the pattern of gender assignment to such loanwords.

Table 3: Loanwords with no equivalent words

			LOANWORDS
1	Email	11	Machine
2	Bike	12	Cream
3	Motor	13	Jacket
4	Television	14	Chairlift
5	Fridge	15	Truck
6	Sim	16	Facebook
7	Lotion	17	Graduation
8	Cycle	18	Mascara
9	Powder	19	Battery
10	Hanger	20	Fire brigade

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The application of the 'variation theory' in the study of Language contact phenomena with reference to borrowing was highlighted by Poplack (1993). To justify her view, she came up with the following argument. According to the theorist, variationists are concerned with grammatical structures in connected speech; they explain the apparent instability therein of form and function relations and they also attempt to discover patterns of usage with respect to the relative frequency of the occurrence of structures. The communication structure is determined by the recurrent choices of speakers at several grammatical and interactional level, this is referred to as choice mechanism. The choice mechanism explains different forms in which given linguistic functions are realized. According to the theorist, researchers must identify when, where, and why, they were used and by whom.

The theorists further stated that the variability is not entirely unstructured. The systematic differences tend to depend on factors such as sex, education, age, ethnicity, etc.; however, there is 'an overall pattern of variant frequencies' which tends to be consistent with other members of the same

category. Other than that 'the internal features of the linguistic environment' are also responsible for variant choices. Thus, the social and linguistic context may disfavour or favour the occurrence of a form. The current study thus aimed to explore which language (Shina or Urdu) influenced the gender assignment to English loan words in Urdu, spoken by Shina speakers.

The main target of such variation studies is the individuals' speech that is part of a particular community and has distinct characteristics. The linguistic choices which these individuals make 'at various interactional and grammatical levels' are considered by variationists as some general communication patterns of that specific community. Individual choices let us know that linguistic forms may undergo certain variations.

4. Data Analysis

This section includes the presentation and description of the data collected from 50 Shina speaking participants. In table 4, the data of the first category is presented and it has been found out that Shina speakers assign analogous gender to English gender-neutral words.

Table 4: Loanwords and gender assignment

Borrowed Words		Gender in Urdu and Shina	Gender Assigned by the Participants			
			Feminine		Masculine	
			Number of Participants	%	Number of Participants	%
1	Plate	Feminine	50	100	0	0
2	Tomato	Masculine	2	4	48	96
3	Shirt	Feminine	46	92	4	8
4	Socks	Feminine	14	28	36	72
5	Egg	Masculine	4	8	46	92
6	Nose	Feminine	18	36	32	64
7	Blood	Masculine	4	8	46	92
8	Stick	Feminine	50	100	0	0

9	Mountain	Masculine	2	4	48	96
10	Cup	Masculine	2	4	48	96
11	Stone	Masculine	0	0	50	100
12	Lock	Masculine	0	0	50	100
13	Gold	Masculine	0	0	50	100
14	Ear	Masculine	2	4	48	96
15	Air	Feminine	22	44	28	56
16	Bread	Feminine	30	60	20	40
17	Onion	Masculine	14	28	36	72
18	Water	Masculine	0	0	50	100
19	Moon	Masculine	2	4	48	96
20	Meat	Masculine	2	4	48	96

In table 4 it can be seen that the Shina and Urdu equivalents of the borrowed words 'plate and stick' and 'stone, lock, gold and water' are feminine and masculine respectively. All the participants treated, 'plate' and 'stick' as feminine and 'stone, lock, gold and water' as masculine. This shows 100% correspondence of the assigned gender to the gender of the equivalent words. Furthermore, the words, 'tomato, mountain, cup, ear, moon, and meat' are masculine and 96% of participants assigned them masculine gender. In a similar fashion, 92% participants treated 'egg' and 'blood' as masculine and their equivalents in Shina and Urdu are also masculine. 'Shirt' has feminine equivalents and 92% participants treated it as feminine. The equivalents of 'onion' are masculine and 72% participants assigned masculine gender to it. 'Bread' has feminine equivalents and 60% participants assigned it feminine gender.

There are only 3 words that show deviation from the corresponding gender of their equivalent words in Shina and Urdu. The words, 'socks', 'nose', and 'air' have feminine equivalents in Shina and Urdu but 72% participants treated 'socks' as masculine and only 28% treated it as feminine. 64% participants treated 'nose' as masculine and 36% treated it as feminine. 56% participants treated 'air' as masculine and 44% treated it as feminine.

Although a majority of participants assigned these words the gender that differs from the corresponding gender of the equivalent words, yet the percentage of participants who have assigned gender same as those of equivalents is not insignificant either.

Thus 17 out of 20 words were assigned analogous gender by a great majority of participants. And only 3 words show deviation from analogous gender. However, there is non-negligible number of participants who assigned these words the corresponding gender of their equivalent words in Shina and Urdu. Therefore, it can be claimed that Shina speakers assign analogous gender to English borrowed words in Urdu speech.

Table 5 given below presents the collected data and analysis of the assigned gender to category number two. Category two comprises the borrowed words which have equivalents in Shina and Urdu, but the equivalents differ in terms of their gender.

Table 5: Loanwords and gender assignment

English Borrowed Words		Gender in Shina	Gender in Urdu	Assigned Gender			
				Feminine		Masculine	
				Number of Participant	%	Number of Participants	%
1	Spoon	Feminine	Masculine	14	28	36	72
2	Salt	Feminine	Masculine	14	28	36	72
3	Pain	Feminine	Masculine	4	8	46	92
4	Tree	Masculine	Masculine	10	20	40	80
5	Shoe	Feminine	Masculine	24	48	26	52
6	Snowfall	Masculine	Feminine	28	56	22	44
7	Fire	Masculine	Feminine	28	56	22	44
8	Finger ring	Masculine	Feminine	46	92	4	8

9	Broom stick	Feminine	Masculine	28	56	22	44
10	Tea	Masculine	Feminine	25	50	25	50
11	Skin	Masculine	Feminine	48	96	2	4
12	Grass	Masculine	Feminine	42	84	8	16
13	Flower	Feminine	Masculine	4	8	46	92
14	Quilt	Masculine	Feminine	22	44	28	56
15	Sand	Masculine	Feminine	22	44	28	56
16	Sun	Feminine	Masculine	4	8	46	92
17	River	Feminine	Masculine	4	8	46	92
18	Mouth	Feminine	Masculine	6	12	44	88
19	Wood	Masculine	Feminine	4	8	46	92
20	Walnut	Feminine	Masculine	6	12	44	88

The equivalent of 'skin' and 'grass' are masculine in Shina and feminine in Urdu. 96% participants treated 'skin' as feminine while only 4% treated it as masculine and 84% treated 'grass' as feminine while only 16% treated it as masculine. The equivalent words of 'sun', 'pain', 'flower' 'river', 'mouth', 'walnut', 'tree', 'spoon', 'salt', and 'shoe' are feminine in Shina while masculine in Urdu. 92% participants treated 'sun', 'pain', 'flower' and 'river' as masculine while only 8% participants assigned them the feminine gender. The loanwords 'mouth' and 'walnut' were assigned masculine gender by 88% of the participants, while only 12 % treated them as feminine. 80% treated 'tree' as masculine while 20% treated it as feminine. 72% participants assigned masculine gender to 'spoon' and 'salt' while only 28% treated them as feminine. The loanword 'shoe' was treated as masculine by 52% participants and 48% treated it as feminine. 'Finger ring' is feminine in Urdu and masculine in Shina. 92% participants treated it as feminine while only 8% participants treated it as masculine. Similarly, 'snowfall' and 'fire' are

feminine in Urdu and 56% participants assigned them feminine gender while 44% participants treated them as masculine.

On the other hand, 'wood', 'quilt', 'sand', and 'broom stick' were assigned the corresponding gender of their Shina equivalents by the majority of participants. 'Wood', 'quilt', and 'sand' are masculine in Shina and feminine in Urdu. 92% participants treated 'wood' as masculine and only 8% participants assigned it feminine gender. 56% participants treated 'quilt', and 'sand' as masculine and 44% participants treated them as feminine. 'Broom stick' is feminine in Shina and Urdu. 56% participants treated it as feminine and 44% treated it as masculine.

The analysis of the data shows that only 4 out of 20 borrowed words were assigned the gender of their Shina equivalents by the majority of participants, while 16 borrowed words were assigned the corresponding gender of their Urdu equivalents by a great majority of participants. Hence most of the borrowed words were assigned the corresponding gender of their Urdu equivalent words.

The following table shows what gender Shina speakers assign to English loan words which have no equivalents in both Shina and Urdu.

Table 6: Loanwords and gender assignment

Loanwords		Gender		Assigned	
		Feminine		Masculine	
		Number of Participants	%	Number of Participants	%
1	Email	26	52	24	48
2	Bike	48	96	2	4
3	Motor	26	52	24	48
4	Television	12	24	38	76
5	Fridge	16	32	34	68

6	Sim	42	84	8	16
7	Lotion	18	36	32	64
8	Cycle	26	52	24	48
9	Powder	22	44	28	56
10	Hanger	4	8	46	92
11	Machine	40	80	10	20
12	Cream	46	92	4	8
13	Jacket	26	52	24	48
14	Chairlift	42	84	8	16
15	Truck	14	28	36	72
16	Facebook	14	28	36	72
17	Graduation	26	52	24	48
18	Mascara	48	96	2	4
19	Battery	50	100	0	0
20	Fire brigade	28	56	22	44

All the participants treated 'battery' as feminine. 96% participants treated 'bike' and 'mascara' as feminine. 92% participants treated 'cream' as masculine. 84% participants treated 'sim' and 'chairlift' as feminine. 80% participants treated 'machine' as feminine. 52 % participants assigned feminine gender to 'email', 'motor', 'cycle', 'jacket' and 'graduation' while 48% participants assigned them masculine gender. 56% participants treated 'fire brigade' as feminine while 44% participants assigned masculine gender.

The words 'television, fridge, lotion, hanger, truck, face book' and 'powder' were treated as masculine by the majority of people. 92% participants treated 'hanger' as masculine. 76% participants treated 'television' as masculine. 72% participants treated 'truck' and 'face book' as masculine. 68% participants assigned masculine gender to 'fridge'. 64% assigned masculine gender to 'lotion' and 'powder' was assigned 'masculine gender by 56% of participants.

Thus, the data shows that most of the words are assigned feminine gender as 13 out of 20 loanwords were assigned feminine gender by the majority of participants and only 7 loanwords were assigned masculine gender by the majority of participants.

5. Findings and Conclusion

5.1 Findings
The study aimed to find answers to the following questions:
1: What gender do Shina multilingual speakers assign to words borrowed from English to Urdu?
2: Which language [Shina (L1) or Urdu (L2)] has greater influence on assigning gender to words borrowed from English to Urdu?
3: What is the pattern of gender assignment to the words borrowed from English to Urdu that do not exist in both Shina and Urdu?

The findings of the research are as under:
1- Shina speakers do not assign gender to the English borrowed words randomly rather they assign analogous gender to the English borrowed words in Urdu speech as 17 out of 20 words were assigned gender by the majority of participants, which corresponded to the gender of their equivalents. Thus in case of the English loan words having equivalents with same gender in Shina and Urdu, the assigned gender corresponds to the gender of their equivalent words.

2- The research found that Urdu has greater influence on assigning gender to the English borrowed words in Urdu speech as 16 of the 20 borrowed words studied in this research were assigned gender same as the gender of their Urdu equivalents by majority of the participants.

3- Other than the fact that most of the loanwords studied in the current research were assigned feminine gender, there is no particular pattern seen in the way Shina speaker assign gender to the English loanwords which have no equivalents in Shina and Urdu as words belonging to same category were assigned different gender. For instance, 'email' and 'face book' are both applications but the former was treated as feminine and the latter was treated as masculine by the majority of participants. 'Cycle', 'bike' and 'truck' are all means of transportation, but the first two were treated as

feminine and the third one was treated as masculine by the majority of participants. Similarly, 'cream' was treated as feminine and 'lotion' as masculine.

5.2 Recommendations
1. In future, researchers can inquire into the areas of variation in the speech of men and women.
2. Future researchers may conduct a comparative study of the gender assignment to English words by speakers of different languages spoken across Pakistan. For example, Punjabi, Shina, Pashto etc.

6. Conclusion
In the current era where the world has turned into a global village languages frequently come into contact giving rise to many linguistic phenomena such as borrowing. In this scenario, the research contributes to better understanding of the linguistic phenomenon of gender assignment to the borrowed words. The study presents a sophisticated understanding of the influence of the mother tongue (Astori) and second language (Urdu) on the borrowed/loan English words in Urdu.

The study thus finds that Shina speakers assign analogous gender to the English borrowed words in Urdu language. Furthermore, while assigning gender to English borrowed words, Shina speakers mostly use the gender which corresponds to the gender of borrowed word's equivalents in Urdu language. Thus, Urdu has greater influence on the process of assigning gender to gender-neutral English words in Urdu. In addition to that, Shina speakers mostly treat English loanwords as feminine.

The study is a significant contribution to the existing stock of research since Gilgit-Baltistan is a linguistically diverse region and a very few significant linguistic researches have so far been conducted, especially in the context of language borrowing. The study can be further extended by conducting a research on the similarities and differences of gender assignment to the borrowed words by men and women. Furthermore, the comprehensive research model of the current study can be used to conduct researches in other languages. Additionally, researchers, teachers, and Urdu language

learners can benefit from the research by getting an insight into the phenomenon of gender assignment to the borrowed words.

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