Exploring Gender Fluidity through Code-switching in ‘Man-o-Salwa’: A Sociolinguistic Study

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Received: 11 March 2022, Published: 30 June 2022

Abstract

The study involves socio-linguistic analysis of code-switched instances in "Man-o-Salwa" an Urdu novel by Umera Ahmed. In doing so, the study analyses the role of linguistic patterns of code-switching in shaping gender identities in the novel. This study follows a descriptive qualitative paradigm. The data comprises of 118 code-switched instances from the selected text as a sample frame and further twenty instances are selected and categorized according to their relevance to three selected headings on linguistic features borrowed from the “Deficit Model”. The researchers analyse these instances using the concept of the fluidity of gender through the ‘Gender Performativity’ (Buter, 1990). The significance of the work involves its ability to make people aware of their liberty in crafting genders through shifting linguistic practices challenging the normalized concept of gender in our society. The study also discusses the socio-economic factors of the selected instances. Results show that characters in the novel through their linguistic choices challenge the normalized concept of gender crafting their new gender identities. This study encourages future researchers to study variations in linguistic features by collecting data from real-life conversations.
Keywords
Code-switching, Gender in language, Sociolinguistics, Deficit Model, Gender Performativity.

DOI Number: 10.47067/jlcc.v4i2.98

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Exploring Gender Fluidity through Code-switching in ‘Man-o-Salwa’: A Sociolinguistic Study

Code-switching is a linguistic behavior of a bilingual or multilingual speaker who consciously or sub-consciously switches from one language to another under certain social circumstances. Code-switching is practiced by bilinguals or multilinguals to express certain meanings through a selection of codes of other languages. Individuals usually switch from one language to the other to attain certain sociolinguistic benefits and such process of switching languages is called code-switching. Spolsky (1998) says, "it is very common that people develop some knowledge and ability in a second language and so become bilingual" (p. 45). Code-switching has won the attention of many researchers, which resulted in the formulation of various theories and principles related to the use of Code-switching but most of this work focused on language switches in spoken data (Sebba, 2012). Code-switching and Code-mixing can be considered as the same phenomenon. Hill and Hill (1980) consider that these terms can be interchanged with one another. The researchers in this study have also considered both code-switching and code-mixing as identical phenomenon placing them under a single umbrella of code-switching.

In sociolinguistics, the researchers investigate the individuals who practice code-switching and the listeners who are the expected targets, and most significantly, the social situation which is the most common factor to produce and affect the phenomena of code-switching. Sapir (1921) was the one who first studied and investigated the cultural aspect of language and to show its cultural nature, he also used the term “linguistic influence” (para. 1). In language and gender studies in recent years, a shift has taken place from an essentialist to the constructive view of gender, Winter and Pauwels (2000) in order to explore the relationship between the use of linguistic choices and gender considering it as complex and social and cultural construction.

Every community has its own patterns of gendered language. Switching of English codes in the Urdu language has many factors behind this practice. English language has become a prestigious language in the modern world because of its historical significance as historically it was the language of the western or colonial powers. This is why English has enjoyed great status in the colonized areas of the world in postcolonial, hence, people in sub-continent also use English codes and lexical during speaking and writing Urdu language to earn power and prestige in society. On the other hand, English language can also be seen accepting Urdu language codes in the Pakistani context. Although English language is considered a prestigious language that lacks any deficiency of language/codes, yet sometimes Urdu idioms/phrases are used in different forms of English discourse in Pakistan considering them as acceptable because
these phrases present cultural meanings and cultural identities instead of posing any harm to the grammatical effect of the English sentence (Anwar, 2009).

The previous researchers mostly studied the phenomenon of code-switching using data related to speech patterns of the language selected by bilingual or multilingual speakers. Some researchers also investigated the phenomena of code-switching, its patterns, and the motivations behind these choices in fiction and nonfiction. On the other hand, a little study is made on Pakistani fiction to analyze male and female characters’ use of CS in a sociolinguistic perspective. Like many other languages, Urdu in Pakistan is prevalent with the discourse phenomenon of Code-switching, where CS can be observed in both speech and writing. This study intends to find the answer to the following questions

i. What socio-cultural differences do emerge in the portrayal of male and female characters through gendered use of code-switching in the selected data?

ii. Whether gender identities of the characters in the selected novel are changing with change in their linguistic choices?

**Literature Review**

During the past two decades, the phenomenon of Code-switching has grabbed the attention of many researchers from the field of anthropology, language teaching, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics. The linguistic behavior of bilinguals has specifically attracted the attention of many sociolinguists, psycholinguists and descriptive linguists which resulted in the formulation of numerous theories and principles for this phenomenon. Manal A. Ismail (2015) has studied sociolinguistic dimensions of code-switching between Arabic and English by Saudis. Ahmed et al. (2015) investigated the gendered code-mixing in cell phones SMS texting in Pakistani society. Findings of that study showed that there exist gender differences in the use of SMS language in Pakistan in terms of frequency, nature and purpose of the conversation. Loubna Bassam (2017) has investigated gendered SMS code-switching in Lebanese undergraduates. This research showed that women switch codes more than men.

Sociolinguists studied the phenomena of code-switching on socio-cultural grounds. They analyzed the factors and motivations involved in code-switching during the conversation. Edward Sapir (1921) noted the sociolinguistic approach to Code-switching, and he presented that every language is having the capacity of interacting with other neighboring languages and sometimes this interaction is more obvious when culturally dominant languages. In the following decades, researchers started studying code-switching with respect to society and culture.

In written discourse, Code-switching involves more consciousness on the part of the writer, unlike oral conversations. African writer, Chinua Achebe also used code-switching in his writings to maintain the local color of African culture in his writings. Minar (1998) investigated two dozen collected headlines from the selected newspapers to analyze code-switching, its functions, and factors behind its use. Pandit (1986) studied patterns and functions of code-switching in critical essays on literature, movie reviews, newspapers, etc. According to Anwar
(2009), code-switching doesn’t affect English syntax grammatically. In previous decades, the stability of sex was naturalized and gender and sex were considered as binary notions.

CS as a phenomenon of language can be associated with a change in gender identities. Judith Butler describes the importance of role-playing through language and actions to define a particular gender. Judith Butler (1999) presents gender as “a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame” (p. 43). She finds it difficult to give a solid statement on the nature of gender and limits it to the social concept of gender roles. Instead, she provides the concept of the performativity of gender which shows that gender is not solid rather it is fluid and changes with new performances and linguistic choices. She states that “Performativity is not a singular act, but a repetition and ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration” (p. 15).

The present study explores the fluid gender identities of the characters of the selected novel under different social situations. CS instances are investigated under three headings of linguistic features borrowed from “DM”. Twenty examples under these headings are selected on the basis of their repetitive occurrence and relevance to linguistic features of “DM”. These extracts are further analyzed under the principle of “Performative Gender” theory, and to investigate the factors under which the variations in linguistic choices occur creating new gender identities.

**Theoretical Background of the Study**

This study analyzes different gendered choices of code-switching in the selected Pakistani Urdu novel ‘Man-o-Salwa’ written by Umera Ahmed. Data for the present study is collected manually after thoroughly reading the novel, and the sample for the study is collected using the purposive or judgmental method. This study is conducted under a descriptive qualitative paradigm. Code-switched items from the novel are observed and then all the 118 code-switched instances are collected. Further twenty relevant code-switched items are selected and categorized under three headings borrowed from Robin Lakoff’s “Deficit Model” (1973). Inferences about the selected sample are made by the researchers on the basis of their repetitive occurrence contributing to the construction of gender identities. These categorized instances of code-switching are then analyzed by following the framework of Judith Butler’s theory of “Performative Gender” to investigate the fluid nature of these code-switched linguistic choices bringing variation in their gender identities. Hence, complimenting and verifying the gender performativity concept presented by Judith Butler through repetitive linguistic acts.

1.1 **Robin Lakoff’s Deficit Model (1973)**

Robin Lakoff (1973) has presented the “Deficit Model” which states certain linguistic features associated them with women, considering them users of the inferior language. For the present study, the researchers have created three headings for analysis, on the basis of the relevancy of the code-switched instances to the linguistic features discussed in “DM”. These selected linguistic features are;

- Empty adjectives i.e. "gorgeous" and "divine", 


In this study, using the above-mentioned concept of female language, the selected sample of switched codes is analyzed to understand their relation to the above-mentioned linguistic features of “DM” in order to see whether the linguistic choices of the characters of the novel are static or show variations creating different gender identities as is discussed in Judith Butler’s “Performativity of Gender” theory.

1.2 Judith Butler’s Theory of Gender Performativity

Judith Butler (1990, 1999, 2011) presents that gender is not static, instead, it has a fluid nature that changes with change in individual practices. According to her gender acts have no stable gender identity behind them, instead, gender roles, acts and discursive practices help in performance of gender. She states that “words, acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance but produce this on the surface of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle of identity as a cause. Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are performative in the sense that the essence of identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means” (p. 185).

She talks about the fluid nature of gender as she says that gender “ought not to be construed as a stable identity” (Butler, 1999, p. 179). Butler (2011) states “‘being a man’ and ‘being a woman’ internally unstable affairs”. Performative nature of gender means that gender only exists when there are certain gendered actions being performed and without these acts, gender identity doesn’t exist (p. 86). Judith Butler explains that there “is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results” (1999, p. 33).

Using the theory of Performativity of Gender (1990), the researchers have analyzed the selected sample to make inferences about the gendered linguistic choices by the characters, shifting their gender identities through these choices. The present study also connects the socio-economic factors of Code-switching with the construction of new gender identities through linguistic choices.

Data Interpretation and Analysis

Data is collected manually, in the form of code-switched items from the novel “Man-o-Salwa”. The researchers have created three headings by borrowing them from linguistic features of females presented by “Deficit Model” and analyzed these instances under the prism of “Performativity of Gender” using the concept of the fluidity of gender through gendered language. Factors, and functions of these code-switched items are also analyzed to see the role of social factors in changing gender identities through variations in linguistic choices.
1.3 Application of Theory of Gender Performativity Borrowing Linguistic Features from “Deficit Model” (DM)

The idea of socially constructed gender through communication is taken up by the researchers by using “Performative Gender” theory to analyze the fluid nature of linguistic features presented in “DM”, and investigate the role of creating new gender identities through these linguistic choices. Process of making identities is not static, rather it keeps on moving, shifting identities from one to the other according to the context.

Following examples of code-switched instances are placed under three selected headings created taking inspiration from language characteristics, discussed in Robin Lakoff’s “Deficit Model”.

1.3.1 Use of Empty Adjectives

Two examples from the sample, are found relevant to this linguistic feature. In both of the examples, male characters are using code-switching containing empty adjectives. While not a single instance is observed in which any female character uses empty adjectives in their switched codes.

Males Using Empty Adjectives

Extract 1

Great skin, Lovely features. Makeup artist uska makeup krty huay byakhtyar keh raha tha. Your face is a beautician’s delight […] (p. 200)

(Great skin, Lovely features. Makeup artist was saying involuntarily during her makeup. Your face is a beautician’s delight)

In this example, empty adjectives “Great, lovely and beautician’s delight”, are used by a male character, Zaini’s makeup artist, who praises her beauty. Using these adjectives by a male character of the novel is the extract of exchanging roles through language. The makeup artist of Zaini praises her facial beauty by choosing these mentioned empty adjectives. He uses the female behavior of using empty adjectives discussed by Robin Lakoff. In this extract, through linguistic choices (empty adjectives), the makeup artist is showing female attitude according to the situation. His use of these adjectives when analyzed under Performativity theory mentioned in section 3.2, is an example of crafting new gender identities and gender roles through language under certain social situations which harmonizes with the purpose of the study.

Extract 2

Tumain kesy lgrahy hain? Just perfect […] (p. 636)

(How these are looking to you? Just perfect …)

This example is taken from the novel, “Man o Salwa”, in which a male character, Karam Ali is using empty adjective, “Just Perfect” to help his female counterpart to finalize the selection of a pair of shoes from the shopping mall. Karam Ali uses a slogan of empty adjective, “Just
Perfect” to help her female colleague complete a selection of shoes from the shopping mall and to solve her problem. This empty adjective stands very important in the sentence making a male character, Karam Ali use feminine linguistic feature discussed in Deficit Model, section 3.1 of the study, under certain situation, hence complying with the theory of gender performativity by performing his gender according to his linguistic features which helps to answer both of the research questions mentioned in section 1.

1.3.2 Use of Apologetic Expressions

Females Using Apology Words and Phrases

Women in the examples below, are using apology phrases to keep their relationships intact. 5 examples are discussed below under this heading to show the relevant code-switched instances from the selected sample, where females use apologetic expressions according to different situations.

Extract 1
Ab bs khatm kro baat ko... ok .... I am sorry [...] (p. 13)  
(Zaini: Now end this topic... Ok ... I am sorry)

In this extract, Zaini, a female character is using code-switched apologetic words during conversation with her male counterpart. She uses the phrase, “I am sorry” to show her apology toward Karam Ali, who has got annoyed on her talk about him on giving gifts to other women. She now regrets and tries to seek pardon of her male peer, Karam Ali, as she doesn’t want to ruin her relation with him. In this example, Zaini, a female character performing her feminine identity through masculine linguistic features as are discussed in Deficit Model discussed in section 3.1 of the study. In this example Zaini through her linguistic practice is not proving shift of gender roles as stable phenomenon. Instead, this example verifies the concept of fluidity of gender which makes the individuals free to decide their gender roles.

Extract 2
Sorry main Parizad nhi hun apko ghalat fehmi hui hy [...] (p. 564)  
(Sorry I am not Parizad you misunderstood me ... I mistook you for a friend.)

In this mentioned example, the switching of an apologetic word, “Sorry” is used by Parizad, (Zaini) to clear the misunderstanding of Karam Ali who was considering her Parizad. Parizad (Zaini) refused to accept this identity and says sorry to Karam Ali. In this way the female character Zaini, (Parizad) apologizing to Karam Ali and refuses to recognized him. The apologetic expression by a female character show that similar to the above example 1, this example also shows a female character, maintaining her feminine gender identity according to the situation and circumstances.

Extract 3

Zaini: Sorry main apko nhi janti [...] (p. 565)
Karam Ali: Hello Karam Ali is talking.
Zaini: Sorry I don’t know who you are.

In this example, Zaini, a female character, apologizes to Karam Ali on a phone call with a switched apologetic word, “sorry”, and refuses to recognize him. In this example, the use of apologetic word shows the politeness of the female character as she refuses to recognize him in a polite way, starting her refusal with a word, “Sorry”. Sorry word from Zaini can also be considered as her sign of strangeness toward Karam Ali. It looks a powerful decision on the part of Zaini, a desperate girl, who refuses to recognize a rich man, Karam Ali. Hence, apologetic word by a female in this example, presenting her as a polite person as well as a strong human being according to the situation. This example harmonizes with the concept of fluidity of gender and gender performance, opposite to the notion of stable gender identity.

**Extract 4**

Zaini: Sorry zarurat hy na jaga [...] (p. 542)

(Zaini: Sorry neither I have need of it nor I have space to wear it.)

In this example, Zaini is apologizing to a male character not to show herself weak but to present her as a strong personality who refuses riches (diamond ring) from a man who disrespected her. This refusal is made through apology word, “Sorry” and Zaini says to her male counterpart that she does neither have space to wear it not does she need it. This refusal looks very bold in our society as women a considered usually as the lovers of riches but here in this example, the female character is showing her integrity and strength by refusing the expensive gift of a man who didn’t respect her in the past. Hence, the apology word, “Sorry”, in this example, displaying her as a strong personality as well as the justification for the fluctuating gender roles and gender identity.

**Extract 5**

Karam Ali: Please mujy istarah mat dykhain jesy koi bhoot hun.
Zaini: I, I am sorry [...] (p. 568)

(Karam Ali: Please don’t look at me as if I am a ghost.
Zaini: I, I am sorry.

In this given example, female character, Zaini, says apology phrase to Karam Ali, hesitantly, when he notices her continuous looking at him after Karam Ali’s disclosing of the news of his diseases (Cancer). He says her to stop looking at him as he is a ghost. She in return utters the English switched apologetic phrase, “I, I am sorry” to show her embarrassment on her attitude as well as sympathy that she feels for Karam Ali. Repetition of “I” indicates her mental state as she is hesitant as well as shocked on knowing about her peer’s disease. Here, in the example, the switched apologetic phrase, is showing the female character as a sympathetic, and soft-hearted personality and presenting her as an agent of maintaining feminine gender identity by using gender roles of her choice according to the situation.
Males Using Apologetic Expressions

Following examples having apology words show that males also use apologetic expressions under different circumstances, hence changing their linguistic identities according to the situation and for a specific time frame. These examples are discussed below

Extract 1
Shiraz: Sorry [...] (p. 154)
(Shiraz: Sorry.)

In this example, the apology word “Sorry” is uttered by Shiraz, a male character of the novel “Man-o-Salwa”. He says this word when his to be father-in-law (Saeed Nawaz, a senior bureaucrat) has told him about his phone calls to his daughter and he tells Shiraz about his daughter also that she doesn’t receive calls. This made Shiraz embarrassed and he tries to sort out the matter with seeking of his pardon. This shows Shiraz’s struggle to keep the relation with him. This example shows that feminine linguistic features discussed in section 3.1, Deficit Model, are taken up by the male character, Shiraz according to the situation and for socio-economic reasons behind. Apology expression by a male character shows his feminine gender role under certain circumstances justifying gender fluidity and gender performativity through language.

Extract 2
Shiraz: I am sorry. Main kuch jazbaat ma aakr ulti seedhi batain kr gya [...] (p. 292)
(Shiraz: I am sorry... I uttered wrong things in my emotions)

In this example, Shiraz, used the apology phrase “I am sorry” to seek pardon of his father-in-law, Saeed Nawaz, a senior bureaucrat. First Shiraz tells his father-in-law about his wife, Sheena’s ex-husband but when Saeed Nawaz gets annoyed, he seeks his pardon to keep the good relations with him. This example is showing accordance with the feminine linguistic features discussed in Deficit Model, as Shiraz, a male character uses apology expression under certain situation having socio-economic reasons behind as he is having an inferior status to that of his father in-law.

Extract 3
Main Karam Ali hun. Sorry apko intazar krna para [...] (p. 376)
(I am Karam Ali. Sorry you had to wait)

In this example, Karam Ali, a male character of the novel, produces the apology word, “sorry” to a female character, Zaini for coming late. Zaini was waiting for him at his place to talk to him about the film that was being produced by him. On his late arrival he says “sorry” to Zaini to seek her pardon for inconvenience and indirectly to make a positive relation with her. by a male character shows his feminine gender role under certain circumstances justifying gender fluidity and gender performativity through language. In this example, Karam Ali uses apologetic word showing his feminine gender roles according to the situation described above.
Extract 4
Karam Ali: I am sorry. Main nhi janta tha ky meri ammi aur behan is baat ko ap ky ghar walon sy chupain gy [...] (p. 445)

Karam Ali: I am sorry. I didn’t know that my mother and my sister will hide this fact from your family members.

In this example, Karam Ali, a male character in the novel, utters the apology phrase, “I am sorry”, to his wife, Zari. Zari tells him that his parents didn’t tell her family about Karam’s leprosy on which Karam gets embarrassed. He produces an apology phrase, “I am sorry”, to seek pardon of Zari and indirectly to keep their relation. This example shows how, depending upon the situation, the male character Shiraz, exhibits feminine language features indicated in Deficit Model given in section 3.1. Karam Ali, a masculine character’s expression of apologies indicates his feminine gender role under specific circumstances showing gender as performative identity described in section 3.2 of the study.

Extract 5
Karam Ali: I am sorry. Bohat ghalat batain sochti ho tum mery bary ma zaini [...] (p. 595)

Karam Ali: (I am sorry. You think very wrong things about me Zaini.)

This example of apology phrase is related to Karam Ali as he apologizes in front of Zaini for not contacting her for some days. This shows that he is having feelings and emotions and he doesn’t want to ruin his relation with his female counterpart. He takes handkerchief from Zaini’s hand and further explains to her that she takes him wrong. Further explanation that he makes after apology, also shows Karam’s wish to keep his relation with Zaini. Hence, according to the situation, apology phrase is produced by a male character of the novel to save his relation with his female peer, using a linguistic attitude described as female linguistic feature by Robin Lakoff. This proves Judith Butler’s concept of fluidity of gender and gender performativity through actions and practices.

Extract 6
Shiraz: I am sorry... usny byhad nidamat bhary andaz ma kaha [...] (p. 340)

Shiraz: I am sorry.... he said in the very regretful manner.)

An apology phrase, “I am sorry”, is being used by a male character, Shiraz, in above example. When Saeed Nawaz, Shiraz’s father-in-law, a senior bureaucrat, gets annoyed on Shiraz’s complaints against his daughter, Shiraz utters the above-mentioned apology phrase to show his regret. In this example Shiraz can be seen as a weak and vulnerable character who finds refuge under the shade of apology to keep his relations intact with a person of high prestige. This example demonstrates how the masculine character Shiraz exhibits feminine language traits as specified in the Deficit Model in section 3.1 for certain socio-economic factors behind.

Extract 7
Saeed Nawaz: Main ny dubara agr tumain kisi aurat ky sath dykha tou wo mery khandan ma tumhara akhri din hoga [...]

Shiraz: I am sorry. I am sorry papa [...] (p. 340)

(Saeed Nawaz: If I see you again with any woman, that day will be your last day in our family.

Shiraz: I am sorry. I am sorry papa.)

In this example, Shiraz is using apology phrase and also repeating it saying, “I am sorry. I am sorry papa”. His apology and its repetition show his weak personality which he shows in front of his prestigious father-in-law, Saeed Nawaz. Saeed Nawaz in this example shows his anger toward him on discovering about his relation with some other woman. Saeed Nawaz’s threatening behavior makes Shiraz more vulnerable and he starts producing apology phrases in front of his father-in-law to escape his anger. This example shows how, depending on the situation, the male character Shiraz exhibits feminine linguistic qualities as defined in section 3.1 of the Deficit Model. In section 3.2 of the study, gender is portrayed as a performative identity, and Shiraz, a masculine character is justifying that concept by displaying apologetic word, hence, demonstrating his feminine gender role under certain settings in the given example.

Extract 8

Zaini: baat tum shuru kro gy ya main karun [...] (p. 531)

(Shiraz: I am sorry usny nidam sy kaha [...] (p. 340)

(Zaini: You would start the conversation or I do start it [...] (p. 531)

(Shiraz: I am sorry. He said regretfully.)

In this example, the apology phrase, “I am sorry”, is used by a male character, Shiraz. He apologizes to Zaini on call for his attitude toward her in the past. He left Zaini to marry a girl of strong background, Sheena. After some years, he talks to Zaini on call and apologizes to him to gain her sympathy and revive his relation with her. This example demonstrates how the masculine character, Shiraz, adopts feminine linguistic traits outlined in section 3.1, Deficit Model, depending on the situation. Under specific circumstances, a male character's expression of apologies reveals his feminine gender role, justifying gender fluidity and gender performativity through language discussed in Gender Performativity, section, 3.2.

Extract 9

I am sorry Karam ny lift ma us sy kaha [...] (p. 575)

(I am sorry Karam said to her in the lift.)

In the above example, Karam Ali, uses apology phrase, “I am sorry”, to seek pardon of his female counterpart, Zaini, for misbehave with her in their last meeting. This example of switched apologetic phrase used by the male character shows that he accepts his mistake and he wants to maintain good relation with Zaini, a female character. This also shows that Karam Ali wants to show his emotions toward Zaini, through his behavior and using words of apology
to show his regret for his misbehave. Hence, a male character here is struggling to keep the relations intact. Use of apology phrase by Karam Ali is in accordance with the feminine linguistic features discussed in Deficit Model which justifies the fluidity of gender roles and performativity of gender through linguistic choices.

**Extract 10**

Karam Ali: I am sorry [...] ma ny tum sy kya kaha mujy kuch samajh nahi aai...sorry [...] (p. 612)

(Karam Ali: I am sorry. What did I say to you I haven’t understood it. Sorry.)

This example shows the apology phrase, “I am sorry”, which is used by a male, Karam Ali, in a situation when Zaini gets angry over his attitude toward her. He then apologizes for his behavior and for upsetting Zaini through his words. He repeatedly says sorry to her, in this example, to show his regret for disturbing her and he uses apologetic words to keep good relation with her. Here, apology words can be seen as a factor to bring people close as this practice is used by Karam Ali to make Zaini happy after upsetting her. Zaini calms down after these words which shows the positive nature of the apology words to make the relations strong. Here, in this example, a male character is again practicing feminine linguistic features given in section 3.1 which makes his identity fluid justifying the concept of gender performativity described in section 3.2 of the study.

**1.3.3 Use of Curse Language**

**Females Using Curse Language**

In the three examples below, women use curse words showing various features of their personalities. In these examples sometimes women are using rude and severe kind of impolite language which is very close to curse language, hence, placed under the same heading.

**Extract 1**

Sheena: Shut up. Tum ma himmat thi tou mery samny khary ho kr baat krty [...] (p. 230)

Sheena: Shut up. If you had courage, you would have talked in front of me.)

In the above example, Sheena, the wife of Shiraz uses the phrase “Shut up”, an impolite and rude word, showing her anger on Shiraz because he complained to her father against her which makes her annoyed. When shiraz tries to argue she utters the word, “Shut up” to stop shiraz from making arguments. Her words selection also shows her strong and dignified background and her financial situation that gives her so much confidence of using such impolite words to her husband in our society. This example shows the masculine behavior of Sheena, a female character, through her language selection consisting of curse words against her husband. This use of curse words on the part of a woman is showing diversion from the linguistic features discussed in section 3.1, Deficit Model. Sheena, is showing masculine identity by using curse words in her language hence showing fluidity in her gender identity through her language selection making her identity performative through language. In this way the research question
mentioned in section 1, are answered by considering the variations in feminine language and keeping in view the gender performativity theory as theoretical framework for the study.

**Extract 2**

Sheena to Naseem and Akbar: Now get out aur dubara kabhi mery ghr na aain [...] (p. 308)
Sheena to Naseem and Akbar: Now get out and don’t come to my house again.)

In this example, the bold and underlined word, “Now get out”, looks like a curse of the immorality and degrading nature used by Sheena when she spoke to her poor in-laws when they came to her house. This choice of Sheena’s language, could be the result of her position and prestige, which makes her rude and proud of her behavior towards her poor son-in-law’s. This can be considered as the result of her strong background and her financial status, which makes her rude and proud in her behavior toward her poor in-laws. In this example, Sheena uses curse words toward her husband’s family which shows her diversion from feminine linguistic features discussed in section 3.1, Deficit Model, showing her strong and impolite personality. Hence, crafting her new masculine identity. This change in gender identity through language due to certain factors, justifies the theory of gender performativity presented in section 3.2, through actions or language etc.

**Extract 3**

Sheena to Shiraz: I am sick and tired of hearing about this bloody academy….it stinks... It really stinks [...] (p. 123)

In the above extract Sheena, a female character, uses a curse word, “bloody”, for the Civil Services Academy when Shiraz talks about it. She says in anger that she is fed up with the talks about this academy as she has met many people from that academy, being the daughter of a senior bureaucrat. She asks Shiraz about his life but when he starts talking about the academy she utters a curse word, Bloody Academy” to show her anger toward it. In this example, Sheena a female character is using curse and impolite word for the civil services academy by showing her anger toward that academy because repetitive stories about that academy makes her angry. In this way by showing masculine linguistic features, Sheena is shifting her identity from feminine to masculine under certain situation of frustration and anger toward that particular academy. Hence justifying the theory of performative gender by using specific language choices which changes her identity proving gender fluid and unstable.

The above-mentioned extracts from the novel show that male and female characters of the novel Man-o-Salwa are sharing and shifting their linguistic features under certain circumstances hence accepting and showing their new gender identities as feminine and masculine respectively. The linguistic features above are borrowed from “Deficit Model”, mentioned in section 3.1, on the basis of their relevance to the selected sample. Some features were skipped because variations in their occurrence in the novel is not repetitive and these instances don’t cover the linguistic features of “Deficit Model”. On the other hand, there are certain linguistic characteristics of “DM” under which examples couldn’t be found from the collected sample of code-switched instances. Use of super-polite forms, use of tag questions,
and Hyper-correct grammar and pronunciation etc. are the areas which couldn’t be discussed due to restricted nature of the sample which consisted of only English switched codes.

2. Discussion and Findings

On the basis of the above findings, the research questions of the study are answered through the discussion below. The selected sample of twenty code-switched instances are used to answer these research questions.

- Socio-cultural factors in the portrayal of the characters through gendered use of code-switching

There are certain socio-cultural factors that encourage male and female individuals to change their usual linguistic choices which further shift their gender identities. This linguistic change can be discussed by using the headings below;

**Apologetic expressions**

There are 15 apology expressions found in the novel, “Man-o-Salwa” as 5 examples are from female characters and 10 examples of apology expression are produced by male characters. This shows that male characters are producing more apologetic expressions than women in the selected novel which shows the change in stern masculine attitude of male characters in particular circumstances.

In Man-o-Salwa, only one female character, Zaini has seen making apologetic expressions toward her male peer, Karam Ali under five different circumstances. Most of the times she uses these expressions to keep her relation intact with him. Excessive use of apology phrases on her part shows her soft-hearted nature and her feelings toward Karam Ali.

10 instances of code-switched apologetic expressions used by male characters are found in the novel. In the novel, five apology expressions are used by Karam Ali and five are used by Shiraz but their intentions behind these expressions differ according to their situations. Karam Ali uses apology phrases to keep good relations with others while Shiraz uses apology words and phrases to save his relation with his prestigious wife and for materialistic gains instead of having regret of losing relations or considering the worth of these relations.

**Use of empty Adjectives**

In the selected novel, two examples of code-switched instances consisted of empty adjectives are produced by male characters. In the examples under this heading, only males are using these adjectives and showing their polite personalities and presence of feelings in them which shows a shift in their masculine, egoistic and stern attitude.

**Use of Curse language**

In the selected novel, three English switched curse words are used by female characters of the novel which shows that females are shifting their identities toward masculinity through their emotionless, impolite and rude language. In the novel, curse words of lighter intensity, “Get out and shut up” are used by a female character, Sheena, while once in her intense anger, she uses the curse word “Bloody”. While, not a single male character in the novel can be seen using
curse words. Female use of curse words can be seen as an unexpected change in their linguistic features according to particular situations. Sheena the only woman using curse words in the novel is shifting her identity from delicacy to rudeness. There are certain factors behind her rudeness, including her prestige and confidence in her strong financial family background. Her husband’s shameful attitude also makes her use such expressions.

**Exceptions in “DM” based on gendered linguistic choices found in the sample**

Analysis of the selected sample under the framework of “Performative Gender Theory” shows that variations in language choices occur by male and female individuals, helps in changing gender identities according to the specific social situations as

- Men use empty adjectives at 2 code-switched instances of the sample, while no example of female using empty adjectives through CS is found in the sample.
- Males and females use apologetic expressions in 10 examples. Women produce 5 apology expressions while men produce apology expressions in 10 examples.
- A female character, uses curse language in three examples.

**Creating new gender identities in society based on changed linguistic choices**

The analysis of the twenty selected examples under three headings displays that gender identities can be recreated through variations in linguistic practices. As gender, language also changes with the change in situation or because of certain social factors behind. In the above examples it is clear that male and female characters use code-switched linguistic choices shifting their common gender identities and creating new feminine and masculine identities respectively. A female character creates her masculine identity in society in specific social situations by using code-switched curse words during her conversation. On the other hand, male characters by using code-switched empty adjectives, and more apologetic expressions than women, create their new polite feminine identity under specific social circumstances. Hence, change in identities through selection of uncommon code-switched linguistic features occur in the novel.

**Conclusion**

On the basis of the above discussion, we can infer that certain socio-cultural factors and situation bring variations in language which can further change the gender identities of the individuals. The study shows that characters of the selected novel are shifting their gender identities through particular code-switched linguistic patterns i.e., use of apologetic expressions by male character, Shiraz etc. proving that neither linguistic choices nor gender identities are static. Under three selected headings, two males are using emphatic words, ten are using apology phrases and no code-switched example of curse language by male characters, is observed. On the other hand, in the sample of 20 code-switched instances, five examples of women code-switched apologetic words are observed. While under third heading three females are using curse language. This practice shows that linguistic choices cannot be considered as stagnant as these can be shifted from one character to the other according to the situation and the socio-economic factors behind. Hence, verifying Judith Butler’s idea of performative gender,
and proving it relevant to the individual’s changing linguistic practices, roles and acts for construction of new gender identities in the selected novel in specific, and in Pakistani society, in general. To conclude, after knowing the fluid reality of genders, individuals by performance of certain acts, and discursive practices, can shift and craft their genders and challenge the normalized concept of gender identities in our society.

References


