

## A SURVEY STUDY OF THE COMBINATIONS OF URDU LIGHT VERBS THAT IT IS SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE IN PAKISTAN

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### ABSTRACT

*Urdu enjoys the status of being one of the largest and prestigious languages of the world despite being ignored by those who own it. This paper intends to highlight the significance of the light verbs found in Urdu and after getting public opinion through survey, asserts that these light verbs can be overgeneralized provided the educated class changes its prescriptivist attitude. A questionnaire comprising 25 items was used. Each item was a sentence in Urdu. Among all the 25 sentences 12 were the ones commonly used in everyday speech and the other 13 each carried a lexical variation of a light verb. The respondents were given a choice to tick the choice before each item that suited them. After careful inquiries, 25 respondents belonging to native Urdu speakers and the remaining 25 belonging to native Punjabi speakers but having studied Urdu as a second language were selected as sample out of a population of 110 respondents (fifty respondents in total). The data was collected from different Urdu Speakers. The data was analyzed by using SPSS. The percentage and cumulative frequency were count. It concludes that by relying on the broad-minded attitude of both the native and the non-native Urdu speakers can move towards bigger desired changes at lexical level in the structures of daily use. Deep linguistic analysis of the light verbs changes that were rejected by both groups should be carried out in order to know which linguistic aspects of those lexical items kept both groups from accepting them.*

**Keywords:** Combinations, Urdu, Light Verbs, Socially, Acceptable.

### INTRODUCTION

Urdu is the national language of Pakistan, though officially not used (Farooqi, 2010). It is rich with a vast variety of literature and beautiful thoughts that assert its necessity as a language worth learning and studying (Farooqi, 2010). Like every other living language it too undergoes a process of morphological and phonological changes both diachronically and synchronically. In this paper the authors have taken an empirical view of the light verbs found in various varieties in Urdu and have drawn an empirical analysis of the facts about Urdu light verbs to conclude that their overgeneralization is possible. However, there are certain social checks laid by those who claim to own it. They assert that such overgeneralization is not permissible as it can affect the purity of the language.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Leech (2006) defines a light verb as a common verb semantically weak in its uses and can be combined with nouns in constructions such as 'give a hug' or 'eat the dinner' etc. the whole

construction often seems equivalent to the use of a single verb – take the breakfast = breakfast.

Like English Urdu too has different varieties of light verbs (Lynn, 2010). The following examples testify it:

**Table 1. The Stem of Infinitive نا**

S #	verb	With infinite نا
1	سو	سو+نا = سونا
2	جاگ	جاگ + نا = جاگنا
3	اونگھ	اونگھ + نا = اونگھنا

**Table 2. With Auxiliary Verbs کرنا + ہونا + لینا**

S#	Verb	Verb with Auxiliary
1	کام	کام + کرنا = کام کرنا
2	دعا	دعا + لینا = دعا لینا
3	کرم	کرم + ہونا = کرم ہونا

### Interpretation

Despite the occurrence of such stems with auxiliaries and infinitives, there are certain light verb combinations that can be formed morphologically but they are not in practice socially and their use is considered ungrammatical, such as;

**Table 3. Socially Non-Permissible and Permissible Light Verb Combinations**

S#	Verb	Non-Permissible combination	Permissible combinations
1	تلاش	تلاش + نا، تلاش + لینا، تلاش + ہوگیا	تلاش کرنا، تلاش کر لینا، تلاش کر لیا گیا
2	اچک	اچک + نا، اچک+ہونا	اچک گیا، اچک لیا، اچک جانا
3	لچک	لچک + آ، لچک + لیا، لچک + اٹھی	لچک گیا/ گئی، لچک کر، لچکنا

### Interpretation

It is strange yet true that the well-known scholars in Urdu language do regard these combinations (non-permissible ones) correct in terms of their morphological structures but they do not acknowledge their coinage, usage or practice at the social level (Hashmi, 2011). They rather consider such morphological combinations something close to taboos or overgeneralizations. It may either be due to prescriptive approach towards light verb usage or because they are more focused towards ‘collocative use’ of light verbs.

### The Bioprogram Hypothesis

This hypothesis states that humans have a separate biological program for language and that the nature of this innate program can be studied through creole languages where children of

the pidgin users develop fully-fledged languages out of inadequate language sources of pidgins (Trudgill, 1992).

### **Overgeneralization**

It is defined as a process in language learning in which a learner extends the use of a grammatical item beyond the boundaries of its accepted uses..., (Schmidt, 2010). Since it is common in the learning of both first and second languages, it is considered a natural and a normal phenomenon in the eyes of the mentalists. This overgeneralization, if left unchecked by social pressures that have a rather prescriptive approach about language, can result in the production of the structures mentioned under the category of socially non-permissible morphological forms in Table 3 above, as socially acceptable and communicable structures of Urdu speech. This gives rise to the following research question;

**How far acceptable are the lexical changes of light verbs in the regular patterns of Urdu structures to the native Urdu and native Punjabi speakers of Urdu language?**

### ***Acceptability In Terms Of Correct and Appropriate Structures***

As the present study is about the acceptability of light verbs in Urdu, investigation at a social level demands acceptability of a sentence structure for an Urdu speaker both in terms of grammar as well as that of appropriateness. This is because some speakers are expected to look upon the rules of grammar whereas others are expected to rely on their everyday knowledge to give their judgments.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Survey**

In order to find the answer to the mentioned research question survey method was used to collect data from the native Urdu and native Punjabi speakers of Urdu via questionnaire.

### **The Questionnaire**

A questionnaire comprising 25 items was used. Each item was a sentence in Urdu. Among all the 25 sentences 12 were the ones commonly used in everyday speech and the other 13 each carried a lexical variation of a light verb. It was ensured that the regularly used and varied ones should fall in different orders so they looked a little jumbled. For the convenience of the respondents the questionnaire was typed in Urdu. Four choices namely correct, incorrect, appropriate and inappropriate were given before each item to choose from. The respondents were given a choice to tick the choice before each item that suited them. The twelve commonly used Urdu structures fell at the following numbers in the items list;

2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 24

The order in which the 13 structures carrying variations of light verbs was thus;

1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23

### **The Respondents**

After careful inquiries, 25 respondents belonging to native Urdu speakers and the remaining 25 belonging to native Punjabi speakers but having studied Urdu as a second language were selected as sample out of a population of 110 respondents (fifty respondents in total).

### Data Collection

The data collected from fifty filled questionnaires were entered in SPSS version 17 as per the following settings:

1. Each item sentence was entered as a numeric scale variable.
2. Each of the four options as chosen by the respondents was given the labels as per the following values;
  - 1 = Correct
  - 2 = Incorrect
  - 3 = Appropriate
  - 4 = Inappropriate
3. The first 25 sets of entries in SPSS belonged to the responses from native Urdu speakers while the remaining 25 sets of entries belonged to the responses from native Punjabi speakers of Urdu.
4. The 25 native Urdu speakers were grouped under the label 1 while the 25 native Punjabi speakers of Urdu were grouped under the label 2 in SPSS to show the overall group results of responses, and
5. Demographics were entered as nominal variables.

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In order to know the responses of the respondents towards the thirteen Urdu sentences carrying variations of light verbs the split data of two groups of speakers were analyzed by calculating the frequencies of the responses towards the mentioned thirteen items. The following tables show the frequency and the percentage of both groups of speakers towards the sentences with light verbs variations:

**Item 1: احمدکانصیبچمگیا**  
**Ahmad kanaseebchamakgaya**

Type of Sampled Respondents		Frequency	Valid Percent	
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	5	20.0
		Incorrect	3	12.0
		Appropriate	16	64.0
		Inappropriate	1	4.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	7	28.0
		Incorrect	8	32.0
		Appropriate	10	40.0
Total		25	100.0	

### Interpretation

20% native Urdu speakers marked it correct whereas 64% marked it appropriate. This means that for 84% of the native speakers it was acceptable.

28% of non-native Urdu speakers marked it correct while 40% marked it appropriate. This means that it is acceptable for 68% non-native speakers of Urdu.

**Item 5: ڈاکٹر کیمحنت سے عذرا کی طبیعت سنبھلی**  
**Doctor kimahnat se Azrakitabi'atsambhli.**

Type of Sampled Respondents		Frequency	Valid Percent	
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	20	80.0
		Incorrect	1	4.0
		Appropriate	3	12.0
		Inappropriate	1	4.0
		Correct	6	26.1
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Incorrect	3	13.0
		Appropriate	12	52.2
		Inappropriate	2	8.7
		Total	23	100.0
	Missing	System	2	
		<i>Total</i>	25	

**Interpretation**

80% of the native Urdu speakers marked it correct and 12% marked it appropriate. This means that it is acceptable for 92% of the native Urdu speakers.

26.1% of the non-native Urdu speakers marked it correct while 52.2% marked it appropriate. Thus it is acceptable for 78.3% of the non-native Urdu speakers.

**Item 6: عذرا لڑکھڑا کر سنبھلی**  
**Azralarkharakarsambhli.**

Type of Sampled Respondents		Frequency	Valid Percent	
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	9	36.0
		Incorrect	3	12.0
		Appropriate	13	52.0
		Total	25	100.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	3	13.6
		Incorrect	5	22.7
		Appropriate	12	54.5
		Inappropriate	2	9.1
		Total	22	100.0
	Missing	System	3	
		<i>Total</i>	25	

### Interpretation

36% of the native Urdu speakers marked it correct and 52% marked it appropriate. This means that it is acceptable for 88% of the native Urdu speakers. It is important that none marked it inappropriate. 13.6% of the non-native speakers of Urdu marked it correct while 54.5% marked it appropriate. It means that it is acceptable for 68.1% of them.

**Item 9: سعیدکانشانہچوکہوا**  
**Saeedkanishana chook hua.**

<i>Type of Sampled Respondents</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	1	4.0
		Incorrect	11	44.0
		Appropriate	1	4.0
		Inappropriate	12	48.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	2	8.3
		Incorrect	14	58.3
		Appropriate	6	25.0
		Inappropriate	2	8.3
	Missing	Total	24	100.0
	Missing	System	1	
		<i>Total</i>	25	

### Interpretation

44% of the native Urdu speakers have marked it incorrect and 48% have marked inappropriate. This means it is unacceptable for 92% of the native Urdu speakers.

58.3% of non-native Urdu speakers have marked it incorrect while 8.3 % have marked it inappropriate. This means it is unacceptable for 66.6% of the non-native Urdu speakers.

**Item 10: سعیدکانشانہچوکا**  
**Saeedkanishanachooka.**

<i>Type of Sampled Respondents</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	4	16.0
		Incorrect	12	48.0
		Appropriate	6	24.0
		Inappropriate	3	12.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	4	16.7
		Incorrect	5	20.8
		Appropriate	10	41.7
		Inappropriate	5	20.8
	Missing	Total	24	100.0
	Missing	System	1	
		<i>Total</i>	25	

### Interpretation

48% of native Urdu speakers have marked it incorrect and 12% inappropriate. This means it is unacceptable for 60% native Urdu speakers.

41.7% of non-native Urdu speakers have marked it appropriate while 16.7% have marked it correct. This means it is acceptable for 58.4% of non-native speakers of Urdu.

**Item 12: خزانہ تلاش ہو گیا**  
**Khazanatalash ho gaya.**

Type of Sampled Respondents		Frequency	Valid Percent
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	4.0
		Incorrect	44.0
		Appropriate	36.0
		Inappropriate	16.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	20.0
		Incorrect	44.0
		Appropriate	16.0
		Inappropriate	20.0
Total		25	100.0

### Interpretation

44% of the native Urdu speakers marked it incorrect while 16% marked it inappropriate. This means it is unacceptable for 60% of native Urdu speakers.

44% of the non-native Urdu speakers marked it incorrect while 20% marked it inappropriate. This means it is unacceptable for 64% of the non-native speakers of Urdu.

**Item 14: گلکیتھ نیلچکی**  
**Gulkitehnilachki.**

Type of Sampled Respondents		Frequency	Valid Percent	
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	31.8	
		Incorrect	27.3	
		Appropriate	27.3	
		Inappropriate	13.6	
	Total	22	100.0	
	Missing	System	3	
Total		25	25	
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	28.0	
		Incorrect	20.0	
		Appropriate	32.0	
		Inappropriate	20.0	
Total		25	100.0	

### Interpretation

31.8% native speakers of Urdu have marked it correct while 27.3% have marked it inappropriate. This means it is acceptable for 59.1% of the native speakers of Urdu.

28% of the non-native speakers of Urdu have marked it correct while 32% of them have marked it appropriate. This means it is acceptable for 60% of the non-native speakers of Urdu.

**Item 16: خرمنے و بانجانے سے گریزا**  
**Khurram ne whanjane se gureza.**

		Type of Sampled Respondents	Frequency	Valid Percent
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Incorrect	10	40.0
		Appropriate	1	4.0
		Inappropriate	14	56.0
		Total	25	100.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	3	12.5
		Incorrect	14	58.3
		Appropriate	4	16.7
		Inappropriate	3	12.5
	Missing	Total	24	100.0
	Missing	System	1	
		Total	25	

### Interpretation

None of the native speakers of Urdu marked it correct. 40% marked it incorrect while 56% marked it inappropriate. This means it is unacceptable for 96% native Urdu speakers.

58.3% of non-native Urdu speakers marked it incorrect while 12.5% marked it inappropriate. This means it is unacceptable for 70.8% of the non-native speakers of Urdu.

**Item 18: اسے تلاش لینا ضروری ہے**  
**Use talash lena zururi ha.**

		Type of Sampled Respondents	Frequency	Valid Percent
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	1	4.0
		Incorrect	11	44.0
		Appropriate	3	12.0
		Inappropriate	10	40.0
		Total	25	100.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	3	13.6
		Incorrect	12	54.5
		Appropriate	7	31.8
		Total	22	100.0
	Missing	System	3	
		Total	25	

### Interpretation

44% of native Urdu speakers marked it correct and 40% marked it incorrect. This means it is unacceptable for 84% of native speakers of Urdu.

54.5% of non-native speakers of Urdu marked it incorrect while none marked it inappropriate. This means it is by no means acceptable to 54.5% of non-native speakers of Urdu.

**Item 20: اسکے باتھ سے رومالاچکا گیا  
Us kehaath se rumaaluchkagaya.**

		Type of Sampled Respondents	Frequency	Valid Percent
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	2	8.0
		Incorrect	14	56.0
		Appropriate	3	12.0
		Inappropriate	6	24.0
		Total	25	100.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	9	36.0
		Incorrect	9	36.0
		Appropriate	4	16.0
		Inappropriate	3	12.0
		Total	25	100.0

### Interpretation

56% of the native speakers of Urdu marked it incorrect while 24% marked inappropriate. This means it is unacceptable to 80% of the native Urdu speakers.

36% of the non-native speakers of Urdu marked it correct while 16% marked it appropriate. This means it is acceptable to 52% of the non-native speakers of Urdu. This seems to be a disagreement among the native and non-native speakers of Urdu in terms of acceptability.

**Item 22: ویکچہدیر اونگھتاریا پھر سویا  
Who kuch der unghtarahaphir soya.**

		Type of Sampled Respondents	Frequency	Valid Percent
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	5	20.0
		Incorrect	4	16.0
		Appropriate	14	56.0
		Inappropriate	2	8.0
		Total	25	100.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	8	33.3
		Incorrect	5	20.8
		Appropriate	6	25.0
		Inappropriate	5	20.8
		Total	24	100.0
	Missing	System	1	
		Total	25	

### Interpretation

20% of the native Urdu speakers marked it correct and 56% marked it appropriate. This means it is acceptable to 76% of the native Urdu speakers.

33.3% of non-native Urdu speakers marked it correct while 25% marked it appropriate. This means it is acceptable to 58.3% of them. These results show that the slight change in the colloquially used verb in the secondary clause was either unnoticed or acceptable to both groups of speakers.

**Item 23: ویکچھدیر اونگھاپھرسویا**  
**Who kuch der unghaphir soya.**

		Type of Sampled Respondnts	Frequency	Valid Percent
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	14	56.0
		Incorrect	4	16.0
		Appropriate	3	12.0
		Inappropriate	4	16.0
		Total	25	100.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	3	12.5
		Incorrect	6	25.0
		Appropriate	10	41.7
		Inappropriate	5	20.8
		Total	24	100.0
	Missing	System	1	
		Total	25	

### \*Interpretation

56% of Urdu native speakers marked it correct while 12% marked it appropriate. This means 68% sample native Urdu speakers have accepted it.

12.5% non-native Urdu speakers marked it correct while 41.7% marked it appropriate. This means it is acceptable for 53.8% of non-native Urdu speakers.

**Item 25: قدیم عرب نوز انید بلڑ کی کوگاڑنے کے حق میں تھے**  
**Qadeem Arab nozaidalarkiko garn eke haq main the.**

		Type of Sampled Respondnts	Frequency	Valid Percent
Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	3	12.0
		Incorrect	16	64.0
		Appropriate	6	24.0
		Total	25	100.0
Non-Native Urdu Speakers	Valid	Correct	7	28.0
		Incorrect	5	20.0
		Appropriate	12	48.0
		Inappropriate	1	4.0
		Total	25	100.0

### Interpretation

64% of the native Urdu speakers have marked it incorrect but none have marked it inappropriate.

28% of non-native Urdu speakers marked it correct while 48% marked appropriate. This means it is acceptable to 76% of the non-native Urdu speakers.

This sentence too shows a considerable disagreement among the native and non-native Urdu speakers.

#### Acceptability Percentages for both groups

<i>S #</i>	<i>Native Urdu speakers</i>	<i>Non-native Urdu speakers</i>
1	84	68
5	92	78.3
6	88	68.1
10	-----	58.4
14	59.1	60
18	-----	54.5
20	-----	52
22	76	58.3
23	68	53.8
25	-----	76

#### Unacceptability percentages for Both Groups

<i>S #</i>	<i>Native Urdu speakers</i>	<i>Non-native Urdu speakers</i>
9	92	66.6
10	60	-----
12	60	64
16	96	70.8
18	84	-----
20	80	-----
25	64	-----

## CUMULATIVE INTERPRETATION

Though considerably different in percentages but agreement regarding acceptability of light verbs variations used in Urdu sentences of daily use is found among both native and non-native Urdu speakers in sentence items 1, 5, 6, 14, 22 and 23 for acceptance and 9, 12 and 16 for inacceptance. However, a disagreement seems to occur among the two groups for accepting or not accepting 9, 10, 12, 16 18, 20 and 25.

## CONCLUSION

As discussed above in the Bioprogram hypothesis the process of creolization demands that the children of the speakers of a pidgin should be allowed to filter from the structures of the pidgin used by their parents, agreeable and socially acceptable rules of the language that can be termed a creole (Fromkin, 2005). Overgeneralization, as mentioned above, is a natural phenomenon that every early learner of the first or second language uses in order to learn the language. The acceptability of light verbs at lexical level in structures of daily use seems to be acceptable to both native and native speakers, as proved through the analysis of data available, except for a few exceptions. Thus the researcher concludes that by relying on the broad-minded attitude of both the native and the non-native Urdu speakers can move towards bigger desired changes at lexical level in the structures of daily use.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of this study the researchers recommend that:

1. Reasons for disagreement among both groups of Urdu speakers be sought. It may open the gates for new horizons in the relevant area.
2. The same research with the same question should be carried out on a larger sample of both groups, and
3. Deep linguistic analysis of the light verbs changes that were rejected by both groups should be carried out in order to know which linguistic aspects of those lexical items kept both groups from accepting them.

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