

Hybridity and Cultural Identity in Postcolonial English Literature: A Study of Pakistani English Fiction

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Abstract

Pakistani English fiction has emerged as a significant site for examining hybridity and cultural identity within postcolonial literary discourse. Formed in the wake of colonial modernity, Partition, migration, and global realignments after 9/11, this body of writing cannot be confined within a stable national or generic category. Rather, it reflects a literary formation shaped by historical rupture, diasporic circulation, linguistic negotiation, and shifting socio-political contexts. The present study develops a theoretically grounded framework for understanding how Pakistani English fiction stages hybridity through language practices, transnational settings, contested memory, gendered subjectivities, and narrative resistance. The analysis advances three interrelated claims. First, hybridity in Pakistani English fiction exceeds the idea of simple cultural mixture and instead operates as a structured negotiation among power, belonging, and representation, particularly within diasporic conditions marked by in-betweenness and fractured affiliations. Second, linguistic hybridity, especially code-switching and the creative reshaping of English, functions as both an aesthetic strategy and an ideological intervention, enabling writers to localize global English and destabilize the assumed neutrality of the colonial language. Third, postcolonial identity is repeatedly dramatized through identity crises, stereotyping, displacement, and counter-discursive narration, particularly in post-9/11 narratives where assimilation intersects with alienation. Employing qualitative thematic synthesis of Pakistan-centered scholarship alongside concept-driven interpretive reading of representative fictional clusters, the study demonstrates that Pakistani English fiction transforms hybridity into a narrative grammar through which cultural identity is continually constructed, unsettled, and renegotiated within uneven structures of power.



Keywords: *hybridity, cultural identity, Pakistani English fiction, diaspora, code-switching, postcolonial theory, resistance, in-betweenness*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pakistani English fiction, produced within and beyond Pakistan, has increasingly been read as a postcolonial archive where cultural identity is negotiated under the pressures of colonial inheritance, national formation, and global modernity. A discursive review of Pakistani writers in English emphasizes that this body of writing has grown into a recognizable canon shaped by socio-political events such as 1971 and 9/11, and by the prominence of diaspora writers in the post-9/11 period. (Kazmi, 2022). At the same time, scholarship stresses that Pakistani writing in English is not a neat literary category because it spans multiple authorial cohorts and historical moments, and because “*English Literature*” itself moved from a colonial label to a “*fluid and liminal nomenclature*.” (Kazmi, 2022). Such claims invite a research design that treats hybridity and cultural identity not as isolated themes, but as organizing logics through which Pakistani English fiction articulates belonging, estrangement, and resistance.

Postcolonial theory has long associated hybridity with the cultural and psychological consequences of colonial rule, especially where colonized subjects inhabit a space between imposed colonial modernity and local histories. Pakistani English fiction has been repeatedly positioned within this theoretical field because English in Pakistan carries colonial residue and contemporary institutional power, while the fiction itself frequently dramatizes the uneven encounter between local lifeworlds and global structures. (Riaz, 2022; Kazmi, 2022). In language-focused research, Pakistani English is described as a localized variety where writers engage “appropriation” and indigenization to connect English-language literature to its audiences and social contexts. (Riaz, 2022). In identity-focused research, Pakistani fiction repeatedly foregrounds identity crisis, ambivalence, and stereotyping, especially in narratives shaped by migration and post-9/11 securitization. (Ashfaq, 2022; Rasheed et al., 2023).

Despite a growing volume of Pakistan-centered scholarship, two persistent problems remain visible in the literature. First, studies often isolate single dimensions of hybridity, for example linguistic deviation, diaspora identity, or gendered agency, rather than synthesizing how cultural identity is produced through intersecting registers such as language, space, memory, and political discourse. (Fatima et al., 2023; Riaz, 2022; Tariq & Saleem, 2023).

Second, the Pakistani English fiction field is frequently approached through text-specific analysis without an integrated conceptual model that clarifies mechanisms, for example how code-switching functions as identity work, how narrative memory contests state discourse, or how hybridity produces both agency and alienation. (Rasheed et al., 2023; Salman et al., 2023). These problems motivated an integrative, theory-driven synthesis.

The study addressed three interrelated research concerns. First, it examined how hybridity has been conceptualized in Pakistan-focused scholarship on postcolonial English literature and how this conceptualization redefines cultural identity not as a stable or inherited essence but as an ongoing process of negotiation shaped by power, displacement, and transnational movement (Ameen, 2022; Zubair et al., 2023). Second, it explored how literary studies of Pakistani English fiction interpret the relationship between linguistic hybridity—particularly code-switching, localized idiom, and the creative reshaping of English—and the construction and performance of cultural identity within narrative space (Fatima et al., 2023; Riaz, 2022). Third, it investigated how post-9/11 and Partition-oriented analyses account for recurring themes of identity crisis, stereotyping, alienation, and resistance, and what these critical explanations imply for understanding hybridity not merely as cultural blending but as a politically charged response to historical rupture and global securitization regimes (Ashfaq, 2022; Rasheed et al., 2023; Salman et al., 2023; Munir & Asif, 2024).

The primary objective was to produce a rigorous synthesis that clarifies how hybridity and cultural identity operate together as an interpretive lens for Pakistani English fiction, with attention to diaspora, language politics, gender, and narrative resistance. This objective aligned with scholarship asserting that Pakistani English texts reflect both linguistic-cultural diversity and postcolonial political tensions, and that literary discourse can reshape how identity and belonging are understood under pressure. (Tariq & Saleem, 2023; Kazmi, 2022). The significance of the study lies in its contribution to a more integrated research conversation. Rather than treating hybridity as a descriptive label for “mixed culture,” it conceptualized hybridity as a structured field of negotiation where cultural identity can be both enabling and destabilizing, producing counter-discourse and, at times, deep alienation. (Ameen, 2022; Rasheed et al., 2023).



2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section builds a conceptual basis for the analysis of hybridity and cultural identity, as well as to ground definitions and mechanisms in the provided scholarship.

2.1 Hybridity as negotiation and ambivalence

Hybridity in postcolonial thought usually refers to the construction of cultural forms and subjectivities in contact zones articulated in the language of colonial power. In the case of literary analysis of Pakistan, hybridity, on several repeated occasions, is also derived as ambivalent: it may offer unfettered new positions to identity while also amplifying crisis, stereotype, and alienation. In an explicitly Bhabha-grounded reading of *Moth Smoke*, the issues of ambivalence, mimicry, and hybridity are argued as key to postcolonial identity crisis and its formulation is cited as one in which "*mimicry is at once resemblance and menace.*" (Zubair et al., 2023, p. 801). This phrase, which is tied into the theoretical scaffolding of this scholarship, indicates the dual potential of hybridity: the fact that it can appear to mimic the norms while at the same time destabilizing them.

There is also a theme of hybridity in Pakistani fiction scholarship as a structure of unequal access. Characterization in elite global norms may not achieve social security or recognition that can lead to psychic fragmentation rather than empowerment. (Zubair et al., 2023). This conceptualization is supportive for reading hybridity as a process rather than as a stable category of identity.

2.2 Diaspora space and transnational identity

Diaspora scholarship among the references given measures hybridity as intensified by migration by which identity is forged as a struggle space in between cultural and political spaces. Ameen (2022) describes transnational diaspora as "*entangled in the collision of social, cultural and political spaces where no-belongingness and in-betweenness are the outcomes.*" This formulation is very important as it connects hybridity with structural conditions, not merely personal choice.

A trans nationalism belongs to the fiction of diaspora in Pakistan is often characterized by cognitive and affective negotiations (including memory, language and "*from home*" reworking). The theoretical implication is cultural

identity is assembled at cross-boundaries by practices of relating and literature becomes a medium for staging the assembly.

2.3 Linguistic hybridity and the appropriation of English

Due to the colonial language used in Pakistani English fiction in a plural language society, linguistic hybridity is not an ornament, but a mechanism of cultural identity. Riaz (2022) places Pakistani English literary creativity through appropriation by discussing the process of using English language in postcolonial contexts as "retooling" the English language to connect literature to audience and social context. (Riaz, 2022). The language hybridity represented in the writing of Pakistani women is as follows: By allowing for linguistic hybridity to be theorized as identity-work, Pakistani writers encode local idioms, borrowings, and neologisms into English in order to represent culture-bound experiences. (Riaz, 2022).

In parallel register Code-switching scholarship argues that the Anglophone Pakistani fiction utilizes code-switching and code-mixing to signify diversity in language and the cultural hybridity. Fatima et al. (2023) even explicitly relate these techniques to the expression of a culture in that "*CS and CM reflect the diverse linguistic landscape,*" and that they "*highlight the cultural hybridity.*" Within the theoretical framework the code switching is therefore addressed as a semiotic practice, which communicates identity, solidarity, emphasis, and cultural positioning.

2.4 Narrative, memory, and counter-discourse

Hybridity and cultural identity also need the theory of narrative because the postcolonial subject is often faced with state narratives, official histories and representational regimes. In an analysis of a short story named *Karima*, fictional narrative is addressed in terms of fulfilling a deficit due to missing or censored state accounts. The argument of the paper is that "fictional narratives like "*Karima*" fill the vacuum" and explore historical events "uninhibitedly." (Salman et al., 2023, p. 197). Theoretical grounding here positions fiction as counter-archive: in it cultural identity is a form that narrates itself against official frameworks, in which hybrid belonging becomes linked to memory, trauma and displacement.

2.5 Conceptual model for analysis

To connect these theoretical strands, the study employed a conceptual map that treated hybridity as a multi-layered process.

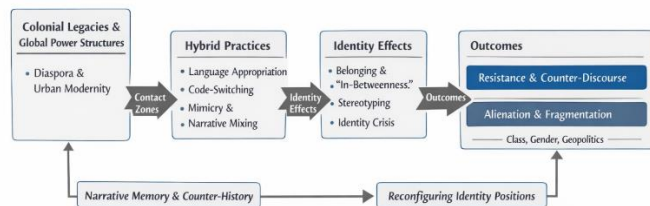


Figure 1: Conceptual map of hybridity and cultural identity in Pakistani English fiction

This model guided the literature synthesis and the thematic analysis in later sections.

The framework brought together postcolonial hybridity theory, diaspora-space thinking and sociolinguistic approaches to literary Englishes since Pakistani English fiction is analysed time and again through the lens of cultural negotiation, transnational movement and language-mixing. (Ameen, 2022; Riaz, 2022; Fatima et al., 2023).

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review was a synthesis of scholarship of Pakistani English fiction addressing hybridity and cultural identity between postcolonial theory, diaspora, language, gender, and post 9/11 discourse. The review has prioritized studies from the list provided and grouped them under analytic strands rather than a single author or text - this focus is a feature in British Pakistani English fiction scholarship due to the emphasis on heterogeneity of genres, cohorts, and time periods. (Kazmi, 2022).

3.1 Pakistani English fiction as canon and historical archive

A basic gesture in the scholarship provided is to place Pakistani English writing in a developing canon and not as single texts. Kazmi (2022) relates the field itself to the contributions of writers throughout the colonial experience, post-Partition migration, and diaspora rising after 9/11, expressly indicating that diaspora writers "rose to prominence in the aftermath of 9/11." (Kazmi, 2022, p. 664). This framing puts in place a kind of macro-historical logic: cultural identity is not an issue that is tackled in a

vacuum but is produced out of structural ruptures that characterize the history of modern Pakistan, and its legibility in the world.

Partition memory of state narrative critique is so important in making in this canon-building lens. Salman et al. (2023) also approach narrative as being a means to address "either the absence or paucity of the state-owned narratives," arguing that fiction gaps could be filled. (Salman et al., 2023, p. 197). This strand of scholarship is suggestive of how hybridity is not merely cultural; it can be historiographical or is mediated by fiction between official accounts and lived memories.

3.2 Diaspora, in-betweenness, and identity crisis

Diasporic hybridity studies focus on themes of identity crisis and "in-betweenness" as recurrent consequences of transnational life. Ameen (2022) defines diaspora as a collision between social and political spaces that create "no-belongingness and in-betweenness." (Ameen, 2022). Although Ameen (2022) focused on South Asian diaspora writers outside of Pakistan, the conceptual apparatus is seen in Pakistani fiction scholarship in which the diaspora subject seems to experience a position of belonging and estrangement interchangeably. (Tariq & Saleem, 2023; Ashfaq, 2022). In the study of Home Boy, the identity crisis is shown to be heightened in the post-9/11 period through the process of othering and stereotyping. (Ashfaq, 2022). The article clearly asserts that postcolonial literature "tries to make individuals and characters reconcile" with ambivalent identity conditions. (Ashfaq, 2022, p. 200). Within the literature review, this contention suggests that hybridity is frequently narrativized as a painful negotiation, and not celebratory multiculturalism.

3.3 Post-9/11 discourse, Islamophobia, and alienation

A thriving strand of Pakistani English fiction scholarship is focused on discourse changes after 9/11, particularly the racialisation of Muslims, ideological binaries and institutional power. Rasheed et al. (2023) argue post 9/11 discourse is characterized by "stereotypical attitudes, ethnic prejudice, cultural variations, power abuse by elites, and resistance by dominated groups." (Rasheed et al., 2023, p. 203). Their work is significant in respect of hybridity studies since it connects identity crisis with discourse power explaining how assimilation can



"transform into alienation." (Rasheed et al., 2023). The implication of this is that hybridity is not only cultural mixture but also a site where hegemonic discourse fixes the identities and produces the marginalisation.

3.4 Linguistic hybridity, Pakistani English, and code-switching

Language-focused scholarship is a way to provide a material mechanism through which hybridity is visible. Riaz (2022) also places Pakistani English into broader conversations on indigenization and on appropriation and documents that writers borrow from native languages, create neologisms, and use idioms that are based on local culture to achieve "unique stylistic effects." Such linguistic innovation is in support of a theory of cultural identity through textual form. Fatima et al. (2023) go further by taking code-switching and code-mixing as systematic features of Anglophone Pakistani novels, concluding that code-switching and code-mixing between intra-sentential and intra-lexical levels are common. (Fatima et al., 2023). According to their abstract, the research made this contribution by "throwing light on the unique linguistic phenomenon present in Pakistani literature." (Fatima et al., 2023, p. 322). In terms of hybridity, code-switching is reduced to a strategy of identity marking, which both reflects multilingual reality but at the same time constructs cultural authenticity for the readers.

3.5 Gender, class, and counter-discourse

Gender-oriented scholarship among the set of references emphasizes the issues of negotiation of cultural identity through the patriarchal structure and literary strategies to resist monolithic pictures of Pakistani woman. Azeem et al. (2023) suggest that Anglophone Pakistani narratives have the potential to "challenge the hegemonic patriarchal discourses" and provide "a counter discourse" to essentialized depictions of Pakistani/ Muslim women as silent or oppressed. (Azeem et al., 2023, p. 104). This line is central in that it made hybridity not simply East/ West mixture but an intersectional negotiation of cultural identity where they see gendered agency to agonize not only at national but transnational representational regimes. Class and elite culture make hybridity even more complicated. In *The Diary of a Social Butterfly* analysis by appropriation of a Western genre is discussed with the idea of inserting local Pakistani sensibilities to deal with heterogeneous issues and subjectivities. (Azeem et al., 2023). In this scholarship,

hybridity becomes linked to genre as much as to identity - the form of itself become hybrid, use to critique global forces and local social structures.

3.6 Hybridity as discourse in interaction

Some studies come close to hybridity by applying discourse stylistics, where they suggest that hybridity is performed in interactional patterns rather than just in content. Batool et al. (2020) state that their analysis aimed to highlight "how the cultural hybridity which exists in characters is manifested by the linguistic organization of the exchange". This claim justifies a methodological approach that hybridity can be traced in the way the characters talk, argue and negotiate power during dialogues.

4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology was made in terms of requirements of interpretive literary study and with the emphasis on rigor through transparent selection criteria and systematic thematic procedures. The methodological description was written in the past tense with respect to the study design.

4.1 Research design

The research design of the study was qualitative, interpreted based on a combination of thematic synthesis of the scholarship provided and concept-driven close reading of the fiction clusters repeatedly analyzed within the scholarship. This design was consistent with the abundance of qualitative methods in the reference set, factors such as textual analysis, content analysis and discourse-analytical frameworks. (Rasheed et al 2023 Fatima et al. 2023 Ashfaq 2022).

4.2 Corpus and text selection

Text selection was purposeful in terms of selecting Pakistani English fictional titles, authors, and narrative events that were concerned with repeatedly brought into foregrounded space of hybridity and negotiation of cultural identity in the provided studies. The chosen corpus has been used as representative clusters instead of being an exhaustive canon as the aim was analytical synthesis rather than bibliographic completeness. This logic reflected scholarship by using purposive sampling of post-9/11 texts



or for focused analysis a series of selected passages. (Rasheed et al., 2023).

The interpretive corpus focused on the following fictional nodes as they found strong support in the available scholarship given in the research and collectively addressed diaspora, language, gender, and historical memory. Works by Mohsin Hamid and particularly *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Exit West* and *Moth Smoke* as discussing for ecocritical, magical realism, hybridity and code-switching oriented research Abbas, M., Abu Talal, H., Al-Hazwani, N., Al-Salem, S., Al-Shams, B., Al-Sabri, A. (2025). The plays of diaspora and post-9/11 identity Home Boy, *The Blind Man's Garden* in the context of identity crisis frameworks, discourse and fundamentalism. (Ashfaq, 2022; Rasheed et al., 2023; Kolachi, 2024).

Cosmopolitan Diaspora Identity in *The Cloud Messenger* (Tariq & Saleem, 2023). Partition memory and state (narrative) contestation in *Karima*; postcolonial racism and alienation in *BINGO*. (Salman et al., 2023; Munir & Asif, 2024). Linguistic and genre hybridity in *Duty Free* and *The Diary of a Social Butterfly*. (Riaz, 2022; Azeem et al., 2023). Historical-cultural Hybridity under Colonial modernity in *Twilight in Delhi*. (Babar & Ahmed, 2023).

4.3 Data sources and units of analysis

The main data for the present article was in the form of the provided peer-reviewed studies and text excerpts of these studies, conceptual definitions of these studies and their reported findings. Secondary interpretive observations were created through comparing the ways in which these studies described narrative structures, character identities, and linguistic strategies for the selected fiction clusters. Units of analysis included (a) explicit definitions or descriptions of hybridity and identity, (b) reported textual indicators of, e.g., code-switching patterns or discourse binaries, and (c) interpretive claims linking narrative technique to identity negotiation.

4.4 Analytical procedure

The analysis was a process of stages.

- First, the sources were coded for the extent of hybridity, as defined (or operationalized), namely ambivalence, mimicry, diaspora space, code-switching, and narrative counter-discourse. (These

are Ameen, 2022; Zubair et al., 2023; Fatima et al., 2023; Salman et al., 2023).

- Second, a list was created to use that included the sources were coded for the outcomes of identities - belonging vs. identity crisis vs. stereotyping vs. alienation with special attention to post-9/11 discourse shifts. (Ashfaq, 2022; Rasheed et al., 2023).
- Third, cross-textual thematic synthesis was carried out to identify recurring mechanisms between clusters, for instance the supporting role of linguistic hybridity in authenticity claims or the role of diaspora memory in creating in-betweenness.
- Finally, results of the current study were grouped into thematic sections based on the conceptual model presented before.

4.5 Quality, validity, and limitations

Analytic validity was enhanced through triangulation in several studies, which explored similar issues of identity problems using different methods of inquiry, such as discourse stylistics, CDA, textual analysis, and content analysis. (Batool et al., 2020; Rasheed et al., 2023; Fatima et al., 2023). The main limitation was still the restriction to the provided reference-set and the requirement to quote only from these sources which has restricted the extent of direct engagement with the novel texts.

5. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The findings are presented in the form of a thematic analysis of how hybridity and cultural identity are staged and theorized in and between Pakistani English fiction scholarship. The analysis is expository and interpretive including synthesizing evidence from the provided sources while clarifying mechanisms that link hybridity to identity negotiation.



5.1 Historical hybridity and cultural identity under colonial modernity

Colonial modernity, for instance, is presented often as a groundwork for hybridity in studies of the English fiction of Pakistani authors even in works which are situated prior to the formalization of Pakistan. In a postcolonial interpretation of *Twilight in Delhi*, Babar and Ahmed (2023) drew that the novel commits with changing "*social, political, and cultural climate post colonialism*." (Babar & Ahmed, 2023, p. 84). Their formulation provides suggestions of how cultural identity is "*made to emerge at instances of cultural intermingling where everyday practices, language and social rituals register the colonial pressure and transformation*."

The hybridity in this strand is based in the conflict of traditional and imposed values of the colonisers. The study brings out the fact that the story represents the Muslim culture under the colonial conditions and questions what effects the foreign culture had on this culture. (Babar & Ahmed, 2023). From the angle of hybridity this scholarship assumes that cultural identity is not just personal but also civilizational or communal that is related to changing public and private lifeworlds.

The analytical implication of this for Pakistani English fiction in general is that colonial modernity is where the first major contact zone emerges in which hybrid subjectivities will emerge even without the importance of migration and diaspora as dominant motifs.

5.2 Diaspora, in-betweenness, and the politics of belonging

Diaspora has the tick-function of Key-engine of the hybridity in the reference set. Ameen (2022) makes a nice theoretical presentation of diaspora as collision-space in which "*no-belongingness and in-betweenness are the outcomes*." This line is analytically important in that as a reference position of cultural identity is refigured as a condition of the process of navigation and not of origin.

Tariq and Saleem in an Analysis of *The Cloud Messenger* talk about the narrative in which characters were scrutinized (Tariq & Saleem, 2023). Their analysis situates cosmopolitan diaspora identity in terms of relationality and mediations of art, of languages and memorialities. Implication of this text is that hybridity in diaspora is not only an identity dilemma, but also an imaginative resource,

through which characters can occupy several cultural archives even if they are still partially displaced. (Tariq & Saleem, 2023).

This synthesis from Ameen (2022) and Tariq and Saleem (2023) makes it clear that a recurring mechanism in diaspora is the production of hybridity-added cultural crossing through the intensification of cultural or local boundary crossing, and then the way cultural identity is narrated - the text is a contested and never" construction of cultural identity through memory, affect and the language.

5.3 Post-9/11 hybridity, stereotyping, and the transformation of identity into alienation

One important contribution Pakistani English fiction scholarship is making is that of focusing on the post-9/11 discourse. In terms of discourse analysis, identity is a contested area, where the hegemonic discourse will try to fix the Muslims as the Other, and where fiction will stage the injury as well as the response.

Rasheed et al (2023) put it in some unusual words that they wrote in the statements are: our findings suggest a post-9/11 discourse of stereotype use, ethnic prejudice, cultural variation, elite use of power, and excluded groups resistance. This statement has a doubly important significance: as it befriends the discursive formation of identity as an ideological process and specifically associates the process of discourse with resistance.

The same study puts the focus on the novels depicting Muslims as "*legitimate targets of hate crimes*" as well as racial discrimination, as well as that "*assimilation transforms into alienation*." (Rasheed et al., 2023, p. 203). For the theory of hybridity, words assimilation transforms into alienation make it clear that cultural mixing does not ensure belonging and that hybrid identity could be reconfigured by political events and institutional discourses into stigmatized position.

In Home Boy focused scholarship, Ashfaq 2022 also placed the issue of identity crisis at the center and suggests that in the writing of the postcolonial, an attempt is made to make the characters come to terms with this ambivalence, rather than to resolve it. The explicit declaration of postcolonial literature "*doesn't pose any solution*" but "*tries to make individuals and characters reconcile*" makes hybridity an inheritable condition. (Ashfaq, 2022, p. 200).



The above collection of evidence lends credence to an interpretive conclusion: Pakistani English fiction scholarship views hybridity post 9/11 as politically volatile. Hybrid identities are pressured into the external acts of stereotyping, and the practice of narrative representation becomes a counter-discursive practice with the aim of challenging fixity and restoring complexity. (Rasheed et al., 2023; Ashfaq, 2022).

5.4 Mimicry, class, and the moral economy of hybrid modernity

Hybridity in Pakistani English fiction is often discussed in terms of the moral economy of class whereby the elite proximity to the global creates desire and instability. Zubair et al. 2023 *Moth Smoke through Ambivalence and Mimicry* - In the article, the authors emphasized the entanglement of hybridity in terms of westernized lifestyles and class privilege. (Zubair et al., 2023).

Theory of center of gravity is impressed in their integration of the statement that "mimicry is at once resemblance and menace." (Zubair et al., 2023, p. 801). Within the analytical framework, this line is supporting a reading of elite hybridity as unstable: characters can mimic global norms, but the mimicry is also subject to slippage and contradiction.

The discussion of social conditions in the study implies that the perceived cultural norms, as they are, can be disrupted by the hybridized Western values and give rise to the narrative results framed as moral decline or social fragmentation. (Zubair et al., 2023). Although the particular moral frame does vary according to different critics, the larger pattern is that of the Pakistani English fiction scholarship reading hybridity as aspirational and corrosive simultaneously, particularly through the mediation of consumerism, global elite education, and metropolitan desire.

This theme also connects to the post 9/11 identity when the benefit of Western affiliation does not secure characters from racialization, creating the paradox that closeness to Western modernity does not guarantee ontological security. (Ashfaq, 2022; Rasheed et al., 2023).

5.5 Linguistic hybridity through code-switching and Pakistani idiom

Linguistic hybridity forms one of the most empirically based aspects in the reference set as several studies define the mechanisms and forms of linguistic hybridity. Two complementary approaches seem to emerge, which are as follows: (a) stylistic deviation and Pakistani idiom as creative appropriation, and (b) code-switching and code-mixing as patterned multilingual practice. Riaz (2022) maintains that Pakistani English literary writing entails "retooling" English to provide connections between literature, audience and situation and that there are several examples of deviation, such as borrowed words, neologisms and idiopathic innovation. (Riaz, 2022). This approach to issues of hybridity is not just a matter of theme but is formal: language itself is reformed to express culture-bound constructions of reality. (Riaz, 2022). Fatima et al. (2023) offer a parallel, but more typological approach: using content analysis, they examined the use of code-switching and code-mixing in Anglophone Pakistani novels, that is, they reported on the intra-sentential switching and on the intra-lexical mixing, which were frequent in the novels analyzed. (Fatima et al., 2023, p. 322). They also write specifically that code-switching and code-mixing "highlights cultural hybridity" in an interesting way that reflects the complicated social structure of Pakistan. (Fatima et al., 2023, p. 322).

The analytical synthesis of these studies makes several interpretive claims.

- By "*linguistic hybridity*" it mean that: - First, linguistic hybridity serves as cultural indexing. Borrowed lexical items in Urdu, local idioms and code-switched phrases identify the setting and the identity of the culture, the communal belonging and the social register. (Riaz, 2022; Fatima et al., 2023).
- Second, linguistic hybridity is an act of linguistic hegemony resistance. By appropriating and transforming the "*language of the centre*" and making it local, postcolonial writers can symbolically decolonize English even as they use it. (Riaz, 2022).
- This is also true because of linguistic hybridity, which may also reveal stratification and insecurity. Code-switching may be employed to carry out such functions



as status, concealing origins or negotiating power in the urban multi-class context, which implies that hybridity is influenced by class and social hierarchy. (Zubair et al., 2023; Fatima et al., 2023).

5.6 Gendered hybridity and the production of counter-discourse

A most important contribution of the reference set is the articulation of gendered hybridity, where Pakistani women have been represented negotiating both patriarchy and global discourses of Muslim womanhood. Azeem et al. (2023) suggest that contemporary anglophone Pakistani narratives can expose women's experiences "in marginalized as well as in resistant positions" and that they resist hegemonic patriarchal discourses by offering "a counter discourse" to essentialized images of Pakistani women as oppressed. (Azeem et al., 2023, p. 104). The critical importance of this claim is that it places cultural identity in terms of it being in a state of contestation: internally, and externally. Hybridity is not just East-West mixture, it is also brokering of gendered cultural norms in elite, national and transnational contexts.

In the same study, genre hybridity comes to be a way of critique. By taking hold of a genre of Western origin and infusing Pakistani sensibilities, the form of the narrative itself becomes hybrid, and this hybridity becomes an instrument to express local specificity and resist monolithic global representations. (Azeem et al., 2023). This gendered dimension also helps explain why cultural identity debates in Pakistani English fiction are often fraught with the local patriarchal structures as well as the global hegemonic discourses, with hybridity working in-between to open space for agency. (Azeem et al., 2023).

5.7 Narrative resistance, state discourse, and competing histories

The relationship between fiction and official discourse is central when thinking of hybridity in terms of politics. Salman et al. (2023) explain what an important mechanism might be: in places where official narratives do not exist or are censored, fiction is able to "fill the vacuum" and depict historical occurrences in ways impossible for state narratives. (Salman et al., 2023, p. 197). This view concurs with postcolonial conceptions of narrative as counter-history. Here, hybridity becomes historiographic in that the story acts as a mediator between state discourse and lived

experience over which identity is produced in the rupture between what has been officially said and what can be narrated or remembered. (Salman et al., 2023). Munir and Asif (2024) adding another dimension to the topic, there is postcolonial power reproducing itself internally after independence, where the power shift of West Pakistan from being colonized under British rule to becoming the ruler of Bengalis is foregrounded. They characterize the work with an examination of scenarios of "West Pakistan's power shift from being under British raj to rule over Bengalis." (Munir & Asif, 2024, p. 1). This formulation is suggestive that hybridity and cultural identity are not simply in interactions with colonizer-colonized binarities but with intra-national hegemonies replicating colonial logics. Together, these studies help us discover that narrative resistance in Pakistani English fiction is often directed at several targets: colonial legacy, postcolonial state ideology, global stereotyping, and domination within. (Salman et al., 2023; Munir & Asif, 2024).

5.8 Hybridity as interactional discourse

Batool et al. (2020) propose that hybridity is read out in the way that characters interact, not just what they represent. They indicate that the analysis intended to present "how the cultural hybridity which exists in characters is manifested by the linguistic organization of the exchange." (Batool et al., 2020). This approach is responsible for contributing micro-level logic, i.e. the logic of hybridity is done in speech acts, turn-taking, politeness conflict, and conversational power relations. This insight is significant methodologically because it indicates that cultural identity in Pakistani English fiction may be examined pertinent to the pragmatics of dialogue, as well as the language used by the characters themselves in negotiating authority, intimacy and belongingness. (Batool et al., 2020). This interactional approach, then, in a broader synthesizing sense, complements more macro-level discourse analyses for example Rasheed et al. (2023): Both approaches deal with language as power, but at different scales.

5.9 Comparative thematic synthesis across fiction clusters

Thematic analysis leads to the suggestion that "hybridity" in Pakistani English fiction scholarship is best dealt with as a multi-dimensional construct. Table 2



presents a synthesis of the main dimensions of hybridity and the identity effects accentuated in the provided studies.

Hybridity dimension in scholarship	Illustrative mechanisms emphasized in studies	Cultural identity effects emphasized
Spatial and diasporic hybridity	Boundary navigation, displacement, cosmopolitan rootedness (Ameen, 2022; Tariq & Saleem, 2023)	In-betweenness, belonging quest, memory-driven identity
Discursive hybridity under global politics	Post-9/11 binaries, stereotyping, power misuse (Rasheed et al., 2023; Ashfaq, 2022)	Identity crisis, alienation, resistance formation
Linguistic hybridity	Retooling English, Pakistani idiom, code-switching typologies (Riaz, 2022; Fatima et al., 2023)	Cultural marking, authenticity, social stratification effects
Gendered hybridity	Genre appropriation, counter-discourse to monolithic images (Azeem et al., 2023)	Agency, resistance to patriarchal and Eurocentric frames
Historiographic hybridity	Fiction as counter-archive to state narratives (Salman et al., 2023)	Identity as memory-work, contesting official history
Internal postcolonial hegemony	Colonial logics reproduced within national structures (Munir & Asif, 2024)	Fragmented national identity, racialized sub-national others

The table substantiates the main contention of the article as hybridity works as a conceptual bridge linking language, diaspora, discourse, gender and memory in a singular analytic field for the negotiation of cultural identity within Pakistani English fiction.

6. DISCUSSIONS

The discussion is an attempt to synthesize findings of the thematic analysis and clarifies theoretical and literary contributions along with limitations and implications for future research within the boundaries of the available reference set. Across the reviewed scholarship, hybridity is

seldom used as a kind of celebratory, multicultural slogan. Instead, what is consistently associated with it is conflict, ambivalence, and unequal power, whether the latter is colonial or global, or located within the postcolonial nation-state. This is evident in diaspora theory where collision gives rise "no-belongingness and in-betweenness," (Ameen, 2022) as well as in post-9/11 CDA where assimilation turns into alienation under hegemonic discourse. (Rasheed et al., 2023). The implication is the hybridity is a structured field of negotiation where cultural identity is continually produced through representation.

The synthesis suggests that cultural identity in Pakistani version of English fiction is more processual and multi-sited: that is that cultural identity is constructed across languages, geographies and discursive regimes. The diaspora studies focus on negotiation across boundaries and a quest to belong. (Tariq & Saleem, 2023). The language studies focus on the fact that cultural identity is embedded in texts in the form of code switching and Pakistani idiom. (Fatima et al., 2023; Riaz, 2022). The historical and memory studies highlight the theme of identity as a narrative conflict with official history and the state discourse. (Salman et al., 2023). This convergence helps to support an interpretive argument that Pakistani English fiction is especially well-suited for a cultural identity analysis due to how Pakistani English fiction's very medium, English, forces work on the level of form for identity creation, while the themes of Migration, political violence, and representational contestation will often come to the foreground.

Several studies particularly those concerned with state narratives and post-9/11 discourse point to some ethical dimension: Pakistani English fiction may constitute counter Discourse showing the experiences marginalized by dominant narratives. A clear connection between discourse analysis and resistance among dominated groups is directly made by Rasheed et al. (2023) whereas Salman et al. (2023) believe that fiction helps fill narrative voids produced by the state. (Salman et al., 2023). However, the ethical potential of counter-discourse is also complicated with the possibility that hybridity and cultural representation may also be commodified or cannibalized for global markets, which was one among many issues that were raised in Pakistan-centered discussion about representation and re-Orientalist risk in the extended reference list, even where it was impossible to pre-arrange full-text access to some of the re-Orientalist studies at the time of this synthesis. (Khan & Farwa, 2023; Karim, 2023). The theoretical contribution



here is to take hybridity as a double-edge mechanism: because it can allow subversion and agency, but also it can be co-opted by dominant representational economies.

7. CONCLUSION

Pakistani English fiction scholarship in the form of the researched body of work brings hybridity to a forefront analytical point as a main issue of cultural identity in postcolonial conditions. The synthesis dealt with the research questions in three overarching findings that together reify identity as a dynamic and conflicted process as opposed to a stable cultural essence.

First, hybridity was conceptualized as a structured negotiation that was influenced by colonial legacies and contemporary formations of power among nations in the world. It was shown to foment ambivalence having at the same time a possible double-faced functionality as an agency resource and source of instability. Mimicry thought of in this way was not seen as simple imitation but as disruptive resemblance that disbands authority even while seeming to peripherally replicate it. Such ambivalence makes any one-sided reading of hybridity as either purely emancipatory or totally disempowering difficult and presents hybridity as a site of tension in which the twin poles of belonging and threat combine.

Second, cultural identity was seen as an outgrowth of linguistic practice as much as representation thematically. The creative rewriting of English including taking up Pakistani idiom and stylistic deviation was read as an exercise in localization that charges the supposedly neutral language of the colonial. Patterns of code-switching were found to serve not only an ornamental role of multilingualism, but to serve as structured mechanisms of cultural positioning. Through these linguistic strategies, writers inscribe hybridity with their narratives directly into the form of the narrative, becoming a medium through which to perform, negotiate and contest cultural identity.

Third, diaspora and the post-9/11 geopolitical context emerged as critical contexts where hybridity enhances the experiences of identity crisis and alienation but also produces counter-narratives and resistances to them in the form of resistant subjectivities. Conditions of in-betweenness and fractured belonging were often portrayed as consequences of cultural collision zones by cultural migration, securitization, and racialized perception. At the same time, fictional narrative functioned as a counter-

archive that has the potential to challenge hegemonic state-centered histories and rearticulate submerged or marginalized histories. Through narrative memory and counter-discourse, fiction restructures the positions of identity as well as reclaiming interpretive agency.

Overall, the study contributes to the building of an integrated conceptual model connecting linguistic, spatial, discursive, gendered and historiographic dimensions of hybridity, in one interpretive field, for a case of Pakistani English fiction. Within this field, cultural identity, rather than being inherited, is manifested as a running narrative practice of power, mobility, and representational struggle.

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