

# **The Kashmiri Language and Society**

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## **Introduction**

Language and society are closely related. The relationship can be studied in two ways: (i) use of language in society and (ii) sociology of language. Keeping in view the main theme of the volume, it would be relevant and of interest to study the relationship between the Kashmiri language and society from the point of view of the use of language in Kashmiri society. However, certain remarks will be made with respect to the sociology of language. Without going into theoretical aspects of sociolinguistics, we will confine our description and analysis to certain linguistic characteristics of Kashmiri, issues related to its development with special reference to its use in different domains, its standardisation and modernisation. Language is a strong mark of social and ethnic identity in its natural environment. Language identity faces challenges in a situation where the speakers of a particular language group move out of its natural environment to a distant land as a result of socio-economic and political factors. We will point out certain social parameters of the language with special reference to language identity, language loss and language maintenance of Kashmiri by emigrant or displaced children.

Language reflects the society as clearly as the society is reflected in it. To illustrate this point, it would be necessary to make special references to the linguistic characteristics of personal names, surnames and nicknames of Kashmiri. They reflect the socio-cultural, religious, and linguistic patterns of the society. Most of the personal names in Kashmiri represent two main religious streams. Besides some genuine surnames, a large number of surnames and nicknames have developed by the local influences and common socio-cultural patterns characterising Kashmiri society. Well-defined religious boundaries do not seem to have a role in them. Kashmiris are very productive in the coinage of names and nicknames and, perhaps, it is the strong texture with which the concept of *Kashmiriat* is woven. Similarly, in a day-to-day communicative situation, the use of kinship terms, modes of address and modes of greetings represent socio-cultural milieu of Kashmiri society. They are illustrated with special reference to their use. They have an important place in the use of language in society and sociology of language.

## **The Kashmiri Language**

The Kashmiri language is called kA:shur or kA:shir zaba:n by its native speakers. It is primarily spoken in the Kashmir valley of the state of Jammu and Kashmir in India. According to the 1981 census there are 30,76,398 speakers of the language. The census was not conducted in the year 1991. Keeping in view the increase in population, it has above 4 million speakers in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and is spoken by about 0.4 million Kashmiris settled in other parts of India, and other countries.

Kashmiri is an Indo-Aryan language. Its classification has however been debated at length. Grierson (1919), Morgenstierne (1961), Fussman (1972) etc. classify it under Dardic group of languages, which is a sub-family of Indo-Aryan languages. The term Dardic is stated to be only a geographical convention and not a linguistic expression. The classification of Kashmiri and other Dardic languages has been reviewed in some works (Kachru 1969, Strand 1973, Koul and Schmidt 1984) with different purposes in mind. Kachru points out linguistic characteristics of Kashmiri. Strand presents his observations on Kafir languages. Koul and Schmidt have reviewed the literature on the classification of Dardic languages and have investigated the linguistic characteristics or features of these languages with special reference of Kashmiri and Shina.

Kashmiri has two types of dialects: (a) Regional dialects and (b) Social dialects. Regional dialects are further of two types: (i) those regional dialects or variations which are spoken in the regions inside the valley of Kashmir, and (ii) those which are spoken in the regions outside the valley of Kashmir. The Kashmiri speaking area in the valley is ethno-semantically divided into three regions: (1) Maraz (southern and southeastern region), (2) Kamraz (northern and northwestern region)

and (3) Srinagar and its neighboring areas. There are some minor linguistic variations mainly at the phonological and lexical levels. Kashmiri spoken in the three regions is not only mutually intelligible but also quite homogeneous. These dialectal variations can be termed as different styles of the same speech. Since spoken in and around Srinagar has gained some social prestige, very frequent 'style switching' takes place from Marazi or Kamrazi styles to that of the style of speech spoken in Srinagar and its neighboring areas. This phenomenon of style switching is very common among the educated speakers of Kashmiri. Kashmiri spoken in Srinagar and surrounding areas continues to hold the prestige of being the standard variety which is used in mass media and literature. Kashmiri has two main regional dialects, namely Poguli and Kashtawari spoken outside the valley of Kashmiri (Koul and Schmidt 1984). Poguli is spoken in the Pogul and Paristan valleys bordered on the east by Rambani and Siraji and on the west by mixed dialects of Lahanda and Pahari. The speakers of Poguli are found mainly to the south, southeast and southwest of Banihal. Poguli shares many linguistic features including 70% vocabulary with Kashmiri (Koul and Schmidt 1984). Literate Poguli speakers of Pogul and Pakistan valleys speak standard Kashmiri as well. Kashtawari is spoken in the Kashtawar valley, lying to the southeast of Kashmir. Bhadarwahi borders it on the south, Chibbali and Punchi on the west, and Tibetan speaking region of Zaskar on the east. Kashtawari shares most of the linguistic features of standard Kashmiri, but retains some archaic features, which have disappeared from the latter. It shares about 80% vocabulary with Kashmiri (Koul and Schmidt 1984).

No detailed sociolinguistic research work has been conducted to study different speech variations of Kashmiri spoken by different communities and speakers, who belong to different professions and occupations. In some earlier works beginning with Grierson (1919: 234) distinction has been pointed out in two speech variations of Hindus and Muslims, two major communities who speak Kashmiri natively. Kachru (1969) has used the terms Sanskritized Kashmiri and Personalized Kashmiri to denote the two style differences on the grounds of some variations in pronunciation, morphology and vocabulary common among Hindus and Muslims. It is true that most of the distinct vocabulary used by Hindus is derived from Sanskrit and that used by Muslims is derived from Perso-Arabic sources. On considering the phonological and morphological variations (besides vocabulary) between these two dialects, the terms used by Kachru do not appear to be appropriate or adequate enough to represent the two socio-dialectal variations of styles of speech. The dichotomy of these social dialects is not always clear-cut. One can notice a process of style switching between the speakers of these two dialects in terms of different situations and participants. The frequency of this 'style switching' process between the speakers of these two communities mainly depends on different situations and periods of contact between the participants of the two communities at various social, educational and professional levels. Koul (1986) and Dhar (1984) have presented a co-relation between certain linguistic and social variations of Kashmiri at different social and regional levels. The sociolinguistic variations of the language deserve a detailed study.

There is a general consensus amongst historical linguists that Kashmiri belongs to the Dardic branch of the Indo-Aryan family. Kashmiri is closely related to Shina and some other languages of the North-West frontier. It also shares some morphological features such as pronominal suffixes with Sindhi and Lahanda. However, Kashmiri is different from all other Indo-Aryan languages in certain phonological, morphological and syntactic features. For example, Kashmiri has a set of central vowels /I, I:, A, A:/ which are not found in other Indo-Aryan languages. In a similar way, in Kashmiri the finite verb always occurs in the second position with the exception in relative clause constructions. The word order in Kashmiri, thus, resembles the one in German, Dutch, Icelandic, Yiddish and a few other languages. These languages form a distinct set and are currently known as Verb Second (V-2) languages. Note that the word order generated by V-2 languages is quite different from Verb middle languages such as English. In a V-2 language, any constituent of a sentence can precede the verb. It is worth mentioning here that Kashmiri shows several unique features which are different from the above mentioned other V-2 languages.

## **Language Development**

The concept of Language Development or the Development of a Language is usually discussed with reference to the languages of the developing or third world countries. However, the language development may not necessarily be related to the economic development of a country. The models of

the development may also vary and need not be universal. The process of development of a language has attracted the attention of different linguists and language planners lately. There is a broad consensus that the process of the development of a language must take care of three main aspects of the language: Graphisation or script, standardization, and modernization. Language planners have discussed the models of the language development with reference to different languages. These three major aspects form the part of the discussion about development with reference to all languages. Though the process of the development of Kashmiri continues at a slow pace, there has been no serious attempt to discuss the issues involved. Here, we will review the efforts made in the area of language development of Kashmiri; and discuss some of the main issues involved in this area.

Language development primarily involves two aspects related to language planning: Corpus planning and Status planning. It is important to keep in view the existing situation of the Kashmiri language, its spatial dimensions, and its use in different domains. The issues involved in the language development cannot be studied in isolation of these facts. We will briefly present an overview of the Kashmiri language and discuss the issues related to its development.

Language Development is directly related to the use of the language in different domains. Though all the languages develop as a natural process, it is only the human interruption, which makes the languages develop in a planned manner. In order to channelise the development process, one has to keep in mind its different uses. The primary uses of a language are in the areas of education, mass media, and administration. Certain demands are made for the language development keeping in view the demands of the society. Languages are used as a vehicle of communication in modern science and technology. It is only through the language that knowledge and skills are transmitted from one generation to another.

#### *Use of Kashmiri in Administration*

Kashmiri, though spoken by the dominant majority of people in the valley, has never been used as an official language in its home state i.e., Jammu and Kashmir. Persian was introduced as the official language during the Muslim rule beginning the 14th Century, which was later replaced by Urdu, another non-native language, in 1907, which continues as the official language even after independence.

Kashmiri was listed as one of the major Indian languages in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India. Keeping in view the multilingual character of the country, all the states had the freedom to use any of the major regional languages as the official languages in administration. As expected, most of the states chose languages of their respective regions as the official languages and made provision for their effective use in administration. The state of Jammu and Kashmir decided to continue the use of Urdu as the official language in the state.

Keeping in view the multilingual character of the State, the Constitution of the Jammu and Kashmir state recognizes six languages spoken in the State: Kashmiri, Dogri, Ladakhi, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and Gojri. It is the duty of the state to develop all these languages. The major native languages are Kashmiri, Dogri and Ladakhi. In the three regions of the state, Kashmiri is spoken in the valley of Kashmir, Dogri in the Jammu region, and Ladakhi in the Ladakh region. Kashmiri, though spoken by the majority of population in the state, is not even made an associate official language.

With a higher rate of illiteracy in the State, it is appropriate to use Kashmiri in administration in the valley where it is spoken natively. Kashmiri is not even used in administration even at lower levels. All the official communications are recorded in Urdu, a non-native language. The government officials have to communicate with the people at the grassroots level as effectively as possible. This cannot be done through an alien language. Therefore, there has been a strong movement in favour of the use of Kashmiri in administration in the valley at all the lower levels (Koul and Schmidt 1983).

#### *Use of Kashmiri in Education*

Kashmiri has a limited role in education in the state of the Jammu and Kashmir. Immediately after the independence of the country, it was introduced as a subject of study in primary schools in the Kashmir valley; but its teaching was discontinued in 1955 under the excuse of reducing the 'language load' of

children in schools. Urdu continued to be used in its dominant role in education. It continues to be a compulsory subject of study in schools and also is the medium of instruction at the school level. Hindi was allowed to be used in these roles as an alternative in the Jammu region.

As a result of the language movement in favour of Kashmiri and efforts made by the educationists at the highest level, a department of Kashmiri was set up at the University of Kashmir. Kashmiri was introduced as a subject of study at the post-graduate level in the University of Kashmir in the early seventies. To begin with it offered a post-graduate diploma course in Kashmiri and later switched over to regular Masters, M.Phil and Ph.D courses. There has been an encouraging enrollment in these courses in the beginning.

Recent years have witnessed a language movement in favour of the use of Kashmiri in education in the valley. Intellectuals, literary organisations and educationists have been raising their voice in favour of the use of Kashmiri in education. As a result of this, Kashmiri was introduced as a subject of study in some colleges in the valley and as an optional subject in the secondary schools. Kashmiri is yet to be made a compulsory school subject in schools in the valley, though there is a great demand for it. According to a sociolinguistic survey of Kashmiri (Koul and Schmidt 1983), most of the people favour the use of Kashmiri as a medium of instruction in elementary schools; and also for the teaching of Kashmiri as a school subject right from the primary to the University level. As far as its use in education is concerned, the following areas need immediate attention:

- (i) Kashmiri is to be provided a place in the school curriculum as a compulsory school subject in the valley where the majority speaks it natively. This would require the preparation of basic textbooks in this language.
- (ii) Kashmiri is to be used as the medium of instruction up to the primary level in the valley. This would involve the preparation of textbooks of all the subjects thorough this medium.
- (iii) It is necessary to train the teachers in the teaching of Kashmiri as a subject as well its use as the medium of instruction.

#### *Use of Kashmiri in Mass Media*

Kashmiri has a limited role in mass media. The setting up of Radio Kashmir in the state after independence has played a prominent role in the use of Kashmiri in radio broadcasts. Kashmiri was used as a medium of news and feature broadcasts on the Radio. It encouraged the creative writers and scholars in Kashmiri to write in Kashmiri. It resulted in the development of prose genre and boosted the literary activities in the language. The Srinagar Doordarshan has enhanced the role of Kashmiri in the electronic media. The survey of the use of Kashmiri in the electronic media has shown the popularity of the programmes. There is a demand for increase in the timings for the broadcast and telecast of programmes in Kashmiri on Radio and television.

There is limited use of Kashmiri in the print mass media. No daily newspaper is published in the language. Some weekly newspapers keep on appearing periodically and disappearing after a short while. The government of the state has not made an effort to provide support to these publications. The government of India does bring out a fortnightly periodical entitled Praagaash. It has a limited circulation. Some other periodical journals like Shiraazaa (published by the J & K Academy of Art, Culture of Languages), Anhaar (published by the University of Kashmir) and Baavath are published more or less regularly. Similarly, there are Kashmiri sections in the college magazines published occasionally. The publications of some other journals like Kong Posh have not survived for long. Outside the valley of Kashmir, Koshur Samachar - a socio-cultural journal of Kashmiri Sahayak Samiti, Delhi, and Kashyap Samachar - a journal of Kashmiri Pandit Association Jammu, do have Kashmiri sections. They publish articles and literary pieces in Kashmiri in the Devanagari script. There has been no policy regarding the development of journalistic writings in the Kashmiri language. The technical vocabulary used in the journalistic broadcasts/telecasts and writings are primarily based on the Urdu phrases and vocabulary.

Thus, the use of Kashmiri in mass media has not attracted favorable attention so far. It has a limited use in the electronic media including Radio, TV, films etc. The use of Kashmiri in the electronic media has to improve both, in quality as well as quantity. Kashmiri has a very limited use

in the print media. The language cannot develop fully unless it is widely used in different kinds of mass media. The state has to decide about the policy regarding its use in the mass media.

In the absence of a clear policy of the government of the state, the problems of the development of Kashmiri, with special reference to its use in education, mass media and administration will continue. No language can be developed in isolation of its use in different domains. These challenges are to be addressed by the language planners.

### *Standardization*

There is a scope for standardisation of the Kashmiri language at different levels. The problem of the standardisation of the script is a prominent one. No serious efforts have been made in this direction so far. Several scripts are being used for writing Kashmiri. The major ones are: Sharada, Devanagari, Roman and Perso-Arabic. The question of the standardisation of the script is directly related to the question of its being able to represent all the speech sounds and other phonetic characteristics of the language. The Kashmiri language has certain speech sounds, which are not found in other Indo-Aryan or other neighboring languages. For example Kashmiri has two short and two long central high and mid vowels: /ɪ/, /i:/, /ʌ/ and /A:/, and dental affricates: /ts/ and /tsh/ which are not found in other neighboring languages. Similarly, palatalisation is an important feature of Kashmiri. These peculiar sounds and phonetic characteristics need to be represented in the script to be used in Kashmiri.

The original script of Kashmiri is Sharada. Old manuscripts are available in this script. This script has become obsolete now, and has a restricted use. It is used in writing of horoscopes by Kashmiri Pandits. This script does not represent the signs for all the sounds and other phonetic characteristics of Kashmiri. No special diacritic signs are being used to represent the peculiar sounds of Kashmiri.

The use of Roman for Kashmiri started with the European scholars who transliterated certain texts from Kashmiri into this script. It is widely used in citing the original literary pieces in the works related to literature; and also in the language data in the linguistic works related to the language written in English. No standardisation in the use of the Roman script for Kashmiri has taken place so far. Different scholars have used different diacritic signs for representing the sound system of the Kashmiri language. The Roman script continues to be used in citing data from Kashmiri in the books written in English related to Kashmiri language and literature. In linguistic studies, there is a convention of using Roman phonetic script. Different scholars are using different types of conventions not similar to those suggested in the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) to facilitate easy printing. Though the pace of the linguistic works in Kashmiri is quite slow, there is a need for standardising the Roman phonetic symbols for representing the speech sounds and other phonetic characteristics of the language.

The Devanagari script is mostly used in the research works related to the Kashmiri language carried out in Hindi for the citation of the data from Kashmiri. It is also used in certain Hindu religious texts, and in a few periodicals like Koshur Samachar, Kashyap Samachar etc. The Devanagari script requires modifications for writing Kashmiri texts. Different types of additional diacritics are used to represent the peculiar speech sounds of Kashmiri. The diacritics suggested by the Central Hindi Directorate in their Parivardit Devanagari have undergone various changes. The signs are not uniformly used in the printing of the Kashmiri text. The VIKALP (Visthapit Kashmiri Lakhak Parishad) - an association of Kashmiri scholars have suggested modifications earlier. Two main journals cited above published from Delhi and Jammu are currently using special symbols to represent additional speech sounds and phonetic characteristics of the language. Efforts are on to reach a consensus on it. Under a proposal of Government of India, the Northern Regional Language Centre conducted a workshop for the standardisation of the Devanagari script for Kashmiri. Based on the recommendation of the workshop, Penfosys, Pune have prepared a software which is expected to be used in the publications using the Devanagari script.

The official script of the Kashmiri language recognised by the Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages is based on the Perso-Arabic script using additional diacritic marks for representing certain peculiar characteristics of the Kashmiri language. The additional diacritic marks have been suggested for writing Kashmiri vowels and consonants and for representing the phonetic characteristics of palatalization of the language. This script is widely used in the publications of the

Academy and other private and governmental publications. There are still inconsistencies found in the use of these signs. The recommendations made earlier are not followed strictly. Koul (1999) has suggested certain measures for the standardization of the use of the Perso-Arabic script for Kashmiri. The conventions of the script need to be reviewed for bringing in the uniformity so that the script represents the characteristics of the language.

### *Standard variety*

As pointed out above, there are certain dialectical (both geographical and social) variations in the Kashmiri language. Kashmiri spoken in and around Srinagar has somehow attained the status of the standard variety. The speakers of other regions tend to switch over to this variety in their use in formal situations and interpersonal communication with the speakers of the standard variety. The variations are mostly reflected in the spoken variety. They are almost non-existent in the written domain of the language. The mass media and the publishers of literary books are playing an important role in the standardisation of the grammatical forms and structures. We do not however have adequate publications in different areas to standardise the use of Kashmiri in different technical and scientific domains. Keeping in view the limited use of Kashmiri in different domains, no serious efforts have been made so far in this area.

### *Modernisation*

With the fast development in the areas of Science and Technology, it is imperative that the language be an effective vehicle for transmitting knowledge, skills, and disseminating information in these areas. Only a limited number of publications are available in the domain of science and technology. Modernisation of the language would demand the preparation of technical vocabulary and phrases to be used in the scientific and technical texts. No effort has yet been made to develop these special registers of the language. It has been a usual practice to adapt the forms used in Urdu according to the phonetic characteristics of the language.

### *The role of Institutions*

The development of Kashmiri has not become a strong movement at the level of institutions so far. Only a limited number of institutions have played some role and are indirectly involved in the development of the language in different ways. Prominent among them are the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages, University of Kashmir, Central Institute of Indian Languages etc.

The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages was established in the fifties and is charged with the responsibility of promoting all the languages which are listed in the Constitution of the Jammu and Kashmir State i.e. Kashmiri, Urdu, Hindi, Dogri, Gojri and Ladakhi. The Academy has made a significant contribution by bringing out quite a few books in the Kashmiri language. The Academy has prepared and published Kashmiri and Urdu- Kashmiri dictionaries in seven volumes each, and two volumes of a Kashmiri encyclopedia so far. The Academy provides subsidies to the authors and voluntary organisations for the publication of their books and also awards prizes for the books. It is due to the financial help provided by the Academy that certain books, especially anthologies of Kashmiri literature, have been brought out.

The Academy also brings out a bi-monthly journal entitled *Shiraza*, and an annual volume entitled *Soon Adab*, in Kashmiri. Both of these have devoted special issues to certain important themes. The Department of Kashmiri of the University of Kashmir has made a significant contribution to the use of Kashmiri in education, and the preparation of some basic text and reference materials in this language. The Department offers regular courses for Master's and M. Phil degrees, and provides facilities for the doctoral research in this subject. The department brings out a journal entitled *Anahaar* in this language. A large number of volumes of this journal has been devoted to different themes related to Kashmiri language and literature. The Department has also prepared and published different text materials, which are used as text, and supplementary materials for teaching Kashmiri as a first language.

The Government of Jammu & Kashmir do not have any department devoted to the development of a language or languages, similar to ones in different states. Most of other states have Language Departments and/or Textbook Boards devoted to the promotion of the language or languages of the state, and their use in education and administration.

The Govt. of India promotes all the languages especially those listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India. The Govt. of India has been providing funds to different states for the development of the languages, preparation and publication of textbooks, preparation of scientific and technical glossaries, etc. The Govt. also provides financial assistance for the publication of manuscripts, and makes bulk purchase of books in Kashmiri as in other languages. Only the Govt. of India under this scheme has supported a limited number of projects.

The Central Hindi Directorate has also brought out Hindi Kashmiri bi-lingual and Hindi-Kashmiri-English tri-lingual dictionaries. They have a very limited circulation. They are useful for the second language learners of Kashmiri.

Kashmiri is taught as a second language to the in-service teacher trainees in the Northern Regional Language Centre of the Central Institute of Indian Languages since 1971. A limited number of the teacher trainees trained in this language at the Center are teaching this language in their respective schools. Teaching of Kashmiri as a second language necessitated the preparation of instructional materials in Kashmiri suitable for second language teaching. The CIIL has prepared and published both text as well as supplementary materials for teaching of Kashmiri as a second language. There is a need for the preparation of additional need-based materials for teaching this language in the second language situation. There are no learners' dictionaries and other reference materials prepared and published in this language suitable for a second language teaching and/or learning situation.

As compared to other major languages listed in the VIII schedule of the Constitution of India, the development of Kashmiri has not been given proper attention due to various reasons. Kashmiri does not have prominent roles in the domains of education and mass media in its home state. It is also not used in the administration in the valley. The efforts made by certain State and Central Govt. institutions, autonomous and voluntary organisations have not been sufficient to develop this language. The problems regarding its standardization and modernization can be resolved only after Kashmiri is provided a proper role in education, mass media and administration. It is only after these roles are specified; that the steps to be taken for the development of this language will be meaningful.

### **Social Parameters**

Language is primarily used as a vehicle of communication by its speakers in a society. It is a strong mark of social and ethnic identity of an individual, a group of individuals and a particular society as a whole. Language identity is a part of a social and ethnic group identity in its natural environment where the language is spoken natively. It is diluted in a situation where various linguistic groups are involved in inter-communication. Language identity confronts challenges in a situation where the speakers of a particular language group have to move out of its natural environment to a distant land as a result of any socio-economic and political factors. Deliberate efforts need to be made to maintain this identity. In the case of Kashmiri, the migrants or displaced persons from the Kashmir valley who have either voluntarily migrated or where forced to do so and have settled down in the Jammu region of the state or other parts of India or abroad are facing challenges in maintaining the language. A sociolinguistic survey (Koul 1997) conducted for the language maintenance and language loss of Kashmiri migrant children in Jammu and Delhi in the age group of 10-20 reveals certain facts as follows:

- (i) The use of Kashmiri is mainly confined in the oral communication at home between the elders and its use has decreased to 50% in the communication between elders and children in Jammu and to 20% in Delhi. Children prefer to use Hindi and English at home.
- (ii) The children do not use Kashmiri even with other Kashmiri children or teachers in schools. It is only in the special schools meant for migrant Kashmiri children in Jammu, Kashmiri is occasionally used in oral communication.

- (iii) The children do not listen to Kashmiri music or radio programmes, and do not watch TV programmes in Kashmiri even if there is an opportunity.
- (iv) The children do not read or write in Kashmiri. About 10% informants reported that they read Kashmiri in the Devanagiri script.
- (v) The children in Jammu have better opportunities in maintaining Kashmiri in their families than in Delhi. The reason being that most of them live in the cluster of houses/camps where they come in contact with other native speakers of Kashmiri.
- (vi) Educated parents prefer to use English and Hindi in communicating with their children.
- (vii) The parents prefer to send their children to English medium schools.

The survey also brought out the Kashmiri is maintained to a large extent by parents and other older respondents in their family domains. They have very rare opportunities in using the language in other social domains involving other members of the same language community. Kashmiri is not used in the work environment.

The tests conducted for assessing the language loss indicate that there is a loss of vocabulary related to the culture bound items, food items, typical Kashmiri household items, architecture and environment which are not now in use outside the valley of Kashmir. Similarly, the children do not understand and use idioms, proverbs, and literary terms in Kashmiri.

The results of the survey suggest that the maintenance of Kashmiri among the younger generation is under a serious threat. There is a continuous decline in its use outside the valley. In the absence of its use in education and other economic activities, special efforts need to be made by the parents, Kashmiri community and other agencies to ensure its maintenance in the family and some social domains as far as possible.

Though the Kashmiri language is not used adequately in education, administration and mass media in the Kashmiri valley, maintenance of Kashmiri as a spoken language in domestic and social domains is not under immediate threat. The maintenance of the Kashmiri language by the younger generation outside its natural environment is fast declining. This will certainly result in deepening the identity crisis of the Kashmiri community settled outside the valley in future.

### **Personal Names, Surnames and Nicknames**

The personal names including surnames and nicknames of the people reflect the socio-cultural, religious, and linguistic patterns of the society in any language. A sociolinguistic study of these names has to take into consideration all these factors. Most of the personal names in Kashmiri represent two main religious streams of Hindus and Muslims. Besides some genuine surnames associated with Hindus and Muslims, a large number of surnames and nicknames have developed by the local influences and common socio-cultural patterns characterising Kashmiri society. Two well-defined religious boundaries do not seem to have a role in them. The phenomenon seems to be quite productive. It appears Kashmiris are very productive in the coinage of names and nicknames and perhaps it is the strong texture with which the concept of *Kashmiriat* is woven. Koul (1995) presents a detailed description and analysis of the personal names including surnames and nicknames. Here we will point out certain linguistic characteristics of the derivation of names and coinage of nicknames in non-technical terms.

#### *Personal Names*

Most of the Hindu names of one-word structure were after the names of gods and goddesses in ancient times. Some were after the names of animals, birds and objects of nature: sun, moon, mountains, rivers etc. The samples of such names are preserved in old Sanskrit texts written in or on Kashmir in their Sanskritised form (e.g. Avanda, Bhaskara, Bilhan, Amritlekha, Anjana, Bimbā etc.) There are references of quite a few non-Aryan one-word names in *Nilmat Purana* too (i.e. Oran, Rocan, Nartani etc.). During the late medieval period and particularly after the 18<sup>th</sup> century there were two main developments: (i) personal names derived from Sanskrit and of non-Aryan origin are Kashmirised in



both form and pronunciation, and (ii) single-word personal names became less frequent and were replaced by compound personal names.

The Sanskrit and Perso-Arabic borrowed personal names in Kashmiri have undergone various phonological changes to conform to the phonetic and phonological structure of Kashmiri in their spoken usage but usually maintained their spelling system as per the original written conventions. For instance, the voiced aspirated stops / bh, dh, gh/ are replaced by /b, d and g/ respectively (eg. bhuushan > buushan 'Bhushan', raadhaa > raadaa 'Radha', raghu > rwagI, ). Similarly, the uvular stop /q/, fricatives / f, G and x / are replaced by /k, ph, g and kh/ respectively in Perso-Arabic borrowed words ( eg. qaadir > kAAdir 'Qadir', shariifaa > shariiphI 'Sharifa', Gulaam > gwalaam 'Ghulam', xazar > khazIr 'Xazar').

In the formation of compound or two-word Hindu personal names (mostly borrowed from Hindi), a set of definite second member morphemes used are raam (Ram), kaakh (Kak), cand (Chand), daas (Das), naath (Nath), laal (Lal), krishen (Krishen), and kumaar (Kumar). Whereas the terms naath and kaakh are added to the diminutive first names and others are added to the names borrowed from Hindi (eg. dayI raam/kaakh, shavI raam/kaakh, taaraa cand, krishen daas, brij naath ). The second member terms of the Hindu female names are: maal (Mal), ded (ded), deevii (Devi), vatii (Vati) and kumaarii (Kumari). Whereas the terms maal and ded are used with diminutive forms of personal names, vatii and kumaarii are added to the first names borrowed from Sanskrit/Hindi (eg. erni maal, gwani ded, prabaa vatii, ratnaa deevii, ushaa kumaarii). In recent years, single word personal male and female names (both indigenous and borrowed from Hindi) have again become popular (eg. amit, aashuu, reekhaa, priitii).

Most of the Muslim personal names are of compound structure which may or may not be followed by surnames. Earlier names are chosen strictly on the basis of religious texts. The ninety nine names of the God in the Islamic literature. These names have undergone various phonological changes. In certain case only the second member of the compound name is retained in its Kashmirised spoken form. (eg. aahdI < abdul ahaad 'bdul Ahad', aziizi < abdul aziiz 'Abdul Aziz'). The diminutive or short forms are not compounded and are used in informal speech only (Aliyi < Alii mahmad 'Ali Mohammad') As in case of Hindu personal names, there is a trend of the use of single word personal names (mostly borrowed from Muslim names prevalent among Muslims outside the valley ( eg. hasiib 'Hasib', shabiir < 'Shabir'). Among the Muslim female names only a few traditional names as 'Fatima' are chosen on the basis of Muslim religious texts, a large number of other female names are after the names of objects of nature, nice qualities and objects of beauty. Most of these names are borrowed from other languages which are Kashmirized in their pronunciation.

### *Surnames and Nicknames*

The practice of using surnames along with the personal names was not followed in ancient period in Kashmir. Rajatarangni mentions the use of some nicknames. The practice of using the surnames along with the personal names has become popular from the late medieval or early modern period.

The study of surnames and nicknames is important from socio-semantic point of view. The nicknames used as surnames among both communities are related to the person's profession, occupation, personality, locality to which a person belongs, particular incidents occurred in one's life, abnormal or extraordinary physical characteristics or temperament of the person concerned. The nicknames originally associated with particular persons have continued for generations in particular families. In certain cases the original incidents have been forgotten and it is not possible to explain why a particular name is associated with a particular person. Some of the surnames and nicknames (used as surnames) are common for Hindus and Muslims and others are different. A large number of nicknames are associated with person either for taking up a particular profession or occupation or for working for someone whose profession or occupation is known by the same name (eg. aarum 'vegetable grower' Aram, kraal 'potter', Kral, bazaaz 'cloth merchant' Bazaz).

A large number of surnames and nicknames are related to the name of locality or the place of residence of a particular person or family (eg. trIsII 'Trisal', kilam 'Kilam'). In certain cases, the persons of such families have actually migrated from their original places of their residence years or generations ago, but the families are still known by a surname or a nickname related to their original place of residence.

The married women in their in-laws, mostly in villages, are known after the names of places of their parent's residence (eg. buga:mic 'of Bugam).

A large number of nicknames are associated with peculiar incidents which must have occurred with the persons concerned. It is not always possible to speculate such incidents and their association with these names (eg. thapal 'snatcher' Thapal.).

A good number of nicknames are associated with abnormal or extra-ordinary physical characteristics, handicaps or temperaments of the concerned persons (eg. bombur 'black bee' Bambroo, kaav 'crow' Kaw). These nicknames once coined appropriately for a particular person, have continued for generations.

Besides the above types of nicknames prevalent among both communities, a large number of surnames of Muslims are borrowed from Persian and Arabic languages, and are related to certain religious sects of Muslims (eg. ashaayii Ashayi, kAadrii 'Qadri).

A large number of Kashmiri surnames and nicknames have undergone some phonological changes. These terms are generally Hindi-Urduized or Anglicized in their written form and also in pronunciation eg. guur < guuruu 'Guru', vaazI < vaazaa 'Vaza'.

As explained above, the oldest forms of personal names of Hindus can be traced from the written texts which do not provide the authenticity of their exact use in spoken form. The available references of personal names in Sanskrit texts composed in and on Kashmir, however, do help us to determine that most of the Kashmiri personal names were closely related to their Sanskrit origin. The structure of two-word personal names of Hindus seem to be a later development. There are both indigenous and borrowed fixed second name terms used for male and female names. These names frequently appear in the religious texts of Hindus. The personal names of Muslims though largely borrowed from Perso-Arabic sources, have been nativized in pronunciation. There are significant differences in their spoken and written forms.

The study of surnames and nicknames is a very important subject from sociolinguistic point of view. Besides some genuine surnames associated with Hindus and Muslims, a large number of surnames and nicknames have developed by the local influences and common socio-cultural patterns characterising the Kashmiri society. This is referred to as Kashmiriat. It is here that the well-defined religious boundaries do not have a role in the demarcation or distribution of these terms. A large number of these nicknames or so-called surnames are common among Hindus and Muslims. The phenomenon seems to be quite productive and has a potentiality of further development. There is a saying in Kashmiri that Kashmiris are very rich in the coinage of names and nicknames, and perhaps it is this strong texture with which Kashmiriat is woven.

### **Kinship Terms/ Modes of Address / Modes of Greetings**

The use of kinship terms, modes of address and modes of greetings represent socio-cultural milieu of any society including that of Kashmiri. They have an important place in the sociology of language.

#### *Kinship Terms*

The kinship terms in Kashmiri represent cultural and sociological patterns of the society in which these terms are used. Kinship terms are usually classified into two categories: (a) consanguineal and (b) affinal. The dimensions of (i) generation, (ii) lineal (direct ancestors and direct descendents) vs. collateral (kinsmen descended from one's own ancestors i.e. uncles, brothers, nephews, etc.) and (iii) sex are important in the study of kinship terms. They indicate the close knit structure of the society.

In the first category kinship terms can be classified as closed blood relations ( mool 'father', mAAj 'mother', booy 'brother', beni 'sister', necuv 'son', kuur 'daughter'), distant blood relations (budybab 'grand father', naany 'grand mother', maas 'mother's sister', pwaph 'father's sister' etc). It may include compound kinship terms formed by adding modifiers and/or affixes like baDI, petri to the base kinship terms (eg. baDi buDybab/ naan' 'great grand father/ mother', petrI buDybab/naany 'grand father's brother/grand father's brother's wife'). The modifier pitur (masculine) and pitlr (feminine) are used to denote the first cousin relationship (eg. pitur booy, pitlr beni ). Similarly, -tur and -lIr suffixes are added to certain kinship terms to indicate further remoteness in consanguineal relationship ( maamItur booy 'mother's brother's son', maamItlr beni 'mother's brother's daughter').

The modifier *voorl* is added to indicate the 'step' relationship ( *voorl mool* 'step father', *voorl mAAj* 'step mother'. The genitive markers *sund* and *hund* are also added to mark the distant relationship ( *neciv' sund necuv* 'grand son', *koori hInz kuur* " daughter's daughter").

In the second category (of affinal), the kinship relations are as a result of marriage. Some relationships have more than one term (eg. *ruun/barthaa/khaavand/khaandaar* 'husband', *zanaani/kwalay/trly/khaandaareny* 'wife'). There are separate terms for all the blood relations of husband and wife (eg. *druy* 'husband's brother', *saal* 'wife's sister', *zaamItur* 'daughter's husband' *nwash* 'daughter-in-law' etc). The modifiers *petrl*, *pitur/pitlr*, *voorl* and suffixes *-tur/-tlr* can be used with the affinal terms to indicate the distant relationship. There are separate terms for the man's in-laws (*hohvur*) as well as that of woman (*vAAryuv*). Thus, the kinship terms in Kashmiri cover wide range of relationships the people maintain. Kinship terms cannot therefore be studied in isolation. They form an important part of the social structure.

### *Modes of Address*

The modes of address in Kashmiri reflect interpersonal relationships maintained in various contexts and situations. The modes of address represent the social hierarchy prevalent in the society. A large number of modes of address are based on the kinship terms. Here we will briefly mention the modes of address related to kinsmen and others to indicate their importance in understanding the social structure of the people. Certain honorific suffixes like *Tooth*, *sAAb*, *jii*, *laal*, *jaan*, *raajI* *gaashI*, *jigur* etc. are added to the kinship term *booy* for changing it to a mode of address. Notice that *booy* changes to *bAAy* due to a regular phonological change: *bAAyTooT*, *bAAysAAb*, *bAAylaal*, *bAAyjaan*, *bAAyraajI*, *bAAygaashI*, *bAAyjigur*. Similarly, the feminine honorific suffixes *TAATh*, *gAAash*, *dyed*, *jiglr* and *jii* are added to the kinship term *beni* for changing them to modes of address: *beniTAATh*, *benijiglr*, *benided*, *benijii*. It is important to point out here that The modes of address formed by the above process need not be necessarily used for older brothers or sisters, but may be used for cousins, uncles, aunts, distant relations or for other elder persons for whom respect is intended. Sometimes, when elder persons address their brothers or sisters with particular modes of address in a family, their children too use the same modes of address. Related to kinsmen there are various modes of address used independently too. Each term may be used for more than one kinsmen depending on the acquired habit. For instance the terms *bab*, *laali(sAAb)*, *TooTh*, *TaaThi(sAAb)*, *boobjii*, *kaakh* etc. may be used for father, grand father, elder brother or for an elder distant relative or any person for whom respect is intended. Similarly, the terms *baabii*, *ded*, *jiglr* can be used for mother, grand mother, aunt or distant female relation or a person for whom respect is intended.

The modes of address related to kinship terms are used in broad sense. They do not normally distinguish between the close blood relations and distant relations, between consanguineal and affinal categories. These terms are not confined to actual kinsmen but can be used for person showing affection and respect too. For instance *baabii* can be used for a friend's wife and *benijiglr* for a friend's sister too.

Besides the modes of address based on the kinship terms, there are other forms of modes of address. The honorific suffixes *sAAb* and *jii* are added to the professional terms like *doctor*, *vakiil* 'advocate' *teacher* etc for turning them into terms of address (eg. *DaakTar sAAb*, *vakiil sAAb*, *maasTar jii* etc.). Second person pronouns are also used as modes of address. These pronouns are of two types: familiar/non-honorific singular and polite/honorific plural : *tsI* and *tohy* respectively. The polite pronoun is used for honorific singular as well. Similarly the vocative terms of address are also of two types: singular/non-honorific and plural/honorific: *hayoo* and *hee*.

The honorific terms *maahraa*, *haz*, *jinaab*, and *sAA* are very frequently used as terms of address with certain restrictions. Whereas *maahraa* and *haz* are used for addressing Hindus and Muslims respectively, the term *jinaab* can be used either with Hindu or Muslim. The term *sAA* is used for showing affection or intimacy.

The use of modes of address reflects the relationship between the persons engaged in communication. It shows the social hierarchy, status and interrelationship of the participants. The pronominal usage and modes of address form an important aspect of the socio-cultural milieu.

### *Modes of Greetings*

In a greeting situation, two persons come in contact in a particular ethnic context, which is characterized by means of some paralinguistic features like gestures accompanied with certain statements. Like modes of address, modes of greetings form an important part of speech acts in the day to day communication.

There are two types of greetings in any language: verbal and non-verbal. Most of the time the greeting is incomplete without some kind of non-verbal behaviour implicit or explicit with the use of verbal mode of the greeting. It may be a nod, or a smile or a twinkle in the eye. Verbal greetings are not complete or effective in isolation unless they are accompanied with appropriate non-verbal expressions.

Non-verbal behaviour appears as an indispensable part of greeting that is often implied in the expression itself. For example, *namaste* 'I'm bowing before you' denotes an activity of non-verbal behaviour. Often the responses of various greeting formulas are fixed and stereotyped and clearly laid down in the books of etiquette.

Greeting expressions are not necessarily communication of information. Greeting expressions in most of the languages including Kashmiri consist of a kind of medical diagnosis, an inquiry about one's health as: *vaaray chivaa?* 'How are you?' The literal meaning of a greeting in most cases is completely irrelevant.

Greetings are not merely symbols of adherence to certain norms and rules laid down by rules of etiquettes. They are more than this. They are a type of social rituals in which you generally say what the other person expects you to say.

Every culture has its own set of formalized greeting expressions and/or non-verbal greeting gestures like kissing, embracing, bowing, saluting with hand, hand shake, folding hands, prostration, touching feet etc.

From the point of view of predictability, greetings in Kashmiri fall within two broad categories: closed and open. The closed greetings are those which have only one fixed response, where the predictability is cent percent. On the other hand, the open greetings may have more than one response. They have limited predictability. Examples of both types are given below:

#### Closed (Maximum predictability)

Participants	Greeting	Fixed Response
Hindu to Hindu	namaskaar (mahraa)/namaste	namaskaar(maahraa)/namaste
Hindu to Muslim	aadaab(arIz)(haz/jinaab)	aadaab(arIz)(mahraa)
Muslim to Hindu	aadaab(arIz)(mahraa)	aadaab (arIz)(haz/jinaab)
Muslim to Muslim	aslaam alaikum	vaalaikum salaam

The Muslim to Muslim greeting phrases express the wish of 'peace':

salam alaikum	'Peace be with you.'
vaalaikum salaam	'And unto you be peace.'

#### Open (Limited predictability)

People may greet each other using different greeting expressions and get alternative unpredictable responses as follows:

Greeting Expressions	Alternative Response
vaaray chivaa ?	vaaray, toh' chivaa vaaray?
Are you fine?	Fine. How are you?
vaarayaa?	kwassh pAATh'
Are you fine?	I'm very happy
khAArIy chaa?	aahansAA khAArIy
Are you fine?	Yes , I'm fine.
k'aasAA/k'aa mahraa vaarayaa?	toh' chivaa vaaray ?

Are you fine?

Are you fine?

tuhInz meharbAAanii

Your kindness.

or zuv/dor koTh/lAsiv/DyakI boD

Be healthy/Be strong/Live long/Be lucky' etc.

Greeting phrases are mostly related to queries about one's health and well-being. The responses too refer to the greeter's health, happiness, well-being and longevity of life. The replies used by elders take the form of blessings:

aadikaar (< adhikaar)

'Power/Authority'

or zuv

'Healthy'

dor koTh

'Be strong !'

sadbiisaal vumIr

'May you live for hundred and twenty years!'

rumi reshun aay

'May you live a long life as that of a great Rishi!'

DekI boD

'Be lucky!'

lAsiv

'May you live long!'

patrI gaash

'Be blessed with the light of children!'

Ach puur

'May your eyesight last for ever!' etc.

Unlike English, Japanese, Chinese etc. the verbal greetings in Kashmiri like Hindi-Urdu are the same for different times of the day. There are no special phrases referring to morning, evening etc.

The greetings are determined by certain sociolinguistic variables of time, space, participants, channel and the communicative intent. Sometimes the same person may use different modes of greetings for different persons at different time. A beggar near a Muslim shrine uses the greetings appropriate of the name of the saint or shrine:

dasgiir kAriinay athI roT

'May Dasgir help you !'

reshmool thAvinay vaarI

'May the Rishi keep you healthy!'

The same beggar may use different set of terms near a Hindu shrine like:

(mAAj) bagvatii kAriinay anIgrAh

'May (Mother) goddess keep protect you!'

Time also play a role when two friends meet after a long time, the greetings of namaste/namaskaar, aadaab (arIz) are repeated as: namaste namaste, namaskaar namaskaar, adaab (arIz) adaab (arIz).

The greetings thus reflect a wide range of socio-cultural patterns of the Kashmiri society. It indicates the concern about the health, prosperity and well-being of the people and seek blessings from Almighty, gods and goddesses, saints and elders.

## Conclusion

Though included in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India, Kashmiri is not even recognised as an associate official language in its home State for its use in administration. It has a primary role in day to day communication by its native speakers. The lack of adequate patronage of the language at the political and social levels has hampered its development. The language does suffer from the lack of standardisation especially in the use of Perso-Arabic and Devanagiri scripts used for writing it. Its insufficient use in education and mass media is responsible for the lack of modernisation. It is only its adequate use in administration, education and mass media will ensure its development, standardisation and modernisation.

As other languages and concerned societies, the Kashmiri language and society too are very closely related. The language reflects the socio-cultural patterns, ethos, values, beliefs etc. of the people who speak it natively. Its speakers fall into two religious streams: Muslims and Hindus. There are minor dialectical variations in the speech of the two communities. The variations are mutually intelligible and can be termed as different styles of speech. There are certain regional and social

dialects, which show variations primarily at the phonological and lexical levels. The socio-semantic variations do not hamper the communication between the people belonging to different areas and social stratification. The illustrations of the use of personal names, surnames, nicknames, kinship terms, modes of address and modes of greetings show that the language represents the social and cultural patterns of the Kashmiri society. The Kashmiri society too is adequately reflected in the use of Kashmiri language in its various as illustrated above.

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