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Kashmiri Culture Lexicon: A Linguistic Analysis

Shabina, M.A., Ph.D. (Linguistics), M.Ed.

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The present paper analyzes the lexical items that belong to the Kashmiri culture. The linguistic analysis of these lexical items will be carried out at the phonological and morphological levels.

Analysis at the Phonological Level

The linguistic analysis of Kashmiri culture lexicon at the phonological level is studied with respect to syllabic structure and consonant clusters.

Syllabic structure

The syllabic structure of Kashmiri culture lexicon is distinguished into three main types, viz., monosyllabic, disyllabic and polysyllabic as given below:

I) Monosyllabic Patterns

Monosyllabic pattern is shown by the combinations of

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Consonant+ Vowel +Consonant (cvc)

For example,

<i>mo:l</i>	father
<i>ma:s</i>	mother's sister, aunt
<i>ma:m</i>	mother's brother, uncle
<i>pɔph</i>	father's sister, aunt
<i>ku:r</i>	daughter, girl

II) Disyllabic Patterns

Disyllabic pattern is shown by the combinations of

Consonant+ Vowel +Consonant+ Vowel (cvcv)

<i>pa:pi</i>	father
<i>da:di:</i>	grandfather/father's father
<i>na:ni</i>	grandfather/mother's father
<i>ba:bi</i>	father
<i>pu:za:</i>	worship

Consonant+ Vowel+ Consonant+ Vowel+ Consonant (cvcvc)

<i>nika:h</i>	marriage contract
<i>zɔ:pa:n</i>	sedan chair
<i>lɔgan</i>	wedding hour
<i>ma:min^j</i>	mother's brother's wife, aunt
<i>peč^jin^j</i>	father's brother's wife, aunt

Consonant+ Vowel+ Consonant+ Consonant+ Vowel (cvccv)

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<i>kuphtī</i>	minced meat ball
<i>ristī</i>	mutton ball
<i>takhtī</i>	wooden block, slab
<i>majmī</i>	big plate
<i>gahnī</i>	ornament/s

Consonant+ Vowel+ Consonant+ Consonant+ Consonant+ Vowel+ Consonant (cvccvc)

<i>dastka:r</i>	artisan
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Consonant+ Vowel+ Consonant +Consonant+ Vowel+ Consonant (cvccvc)

<i>zarba:f</i>	kind of cloth
<i>malimal</i>	kind of cloth
<i>vanivun</i>	songs, especially wedding songs
<i>gañDun</i>	engagement
<i>tsō:gi</i>	round mat (usually made of thatch and meant for sitting of a single person)

Vowel+Consonant+Consonant+Vowel+Consonant(vccvc)

<i>anihur</i>	bachelor
<i>oktso:r</i>	burning stove made of mud

III) Trisyllabic Patterns

The trisyllabic pattern, in case of Kashmiri culture lexicon, is shown by the combinations of:

Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel (cvcvcv)

<i>kora:bi</i>	sleeves of 'pheran' (loose-gown)
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lava:si bread

Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant (cvccvccvc),

ka:rkha:nda:r shawl maker/manufacturer

Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant (cvcvccvc)

tabakhma:z a dish in wazwaan (Kashmiri feast)

Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Consonant (cvcvccvc)

guloband muffler

Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant (cvccvccvc)

vã:kīpan braid thread

Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel (cvccvccv)

gošta:bi a dish in wazwaan

Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant (cvcvccvc)

za:mitur son-in-law

sika:rūph scarf

Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel (cvcvccvc)

mahara:zi bridegroom

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Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel (cvccvcv)

khɔrba:ni footwear

Consonant Clusters

The culture lexicon of Kashmiri consists of a number of instances that exemplify the presence of consonant clusters at the word initial and word medial positions as shown below:

i) Word initial

<i>chr</i>	<i>khra:v</i>	wooden footwear
<i>dr</i>	<i>druy</i>	brother-in-law
<i>kr</i>	<i>kra:m</i>	caste

ii) Word medial

<i>Nd</i>	<i>kha:ndar</i>	marriage
<i>rp</i>	<i>sarpoš</i>	lid, cover
<i>sp</i>	<i>go:špa:r</i>	wooden hammer
<i>lč</i>	<i>dalči:n</i>	cinnamon

Analysis at the Morphological Level

The analysis of the culture lexicon of Kashmiri at the morphological level shows the presence of processes like compounding, echo formation and affixation, etc.

Compounding

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Compounding or compound formation is the process in which two or more words are joined together to make a new word. Marchand (1969:11) talks of compounding as occurring when two or more words combine into a morphological unit, and Adams (1979:30) refers to the combination of two free forms, or words that have an otherwise independent existence (as cited in Malmkjær, 2004:359, 360).

The culture lexicon of Kashmiri comprises of different types of compounds which are derived from different sources like Arabic+Persian, Persian+Sanskrit, Persian+Kashmiri, Sanskrit+Arabic, English+Arabic, Arabic+English, and also the compounds which are derived from same source like Persian+Persian, and Sanskrit+Sanskrit.

There are many examples of the process of compounding found in the culture lexicon of Kashmiri as given below:

<i>nika:h + niš̄ḍ:nʹ</i>	Arabic+Persian
<i>na:bad+ niš̄ḍ:nʹ</i>	Persian+Persian
<i>m̄ḍ̄:z+ra:t</i>	Sanskrit+Sanskrit
<i>mahara:z+sab</i>	Sanskrit+Arabic
<i>house+boat</i>	English+English
<i>waist+coat</i>	English+English
<i>sa:z+s̄ḍ̄ndu:k</i>	Persian+Arabic
<i>leji+kaba:b</i>	Kashmiri+Persian
<i>niš̄ḍ̄:nʹ +mahrenʹ</i>	Persian+Sanskrit
<i>ifta:r+party</i>	Arabic+English
<i>m̄ḍ̄:zi+majmi</i>	Sanskrit+Arabic

Echo Forms

An echo word as a term refers to a particular kind of reduplication. These echo words are characterized by reduplication of a complete word or phrase, with the initial segment or syllable of the reduplicant being overwritten by a fixed segment or syllable. In most languages in which this phenomenon is present, echo words serve to express a meaning of "... and such; and things like that." The process of echo formation is commonly applied in spoken forms of any language. So, this echo formation is shown in the form of partial reduplication. The partially repeated form of the base word is an echo word. Partially in the sense that either the initial phoneme which can be either Vowel or Consonant, or syllable of a base word is replaced by another phoneme or syllable. The replaced unit is called as 'replacer'.

Usually the sound 'v' acts as replacer in Kashmiri culture lexicon, but for the words starting with 'v' the sound 'p' acts as replacer, and this replacer makes the sense of 'and the like'. Some of the examples are given below:

- i) The initial consonants other than /p/ of the word stem are replaced by /v/ as in:

<i>Nika:h</i>	<i>Vikah</i>	marriage contract
<i>kha:ndar</i>	<i>vandar</i>	marriage
<i>niš̄ḍ:nʲ</i>	<i>viš̄ḍ:nʲ</i>	engagement
<i>dasta:r</i>	<i>vasta:r</i>	turban
<i>gulʲmʲu:th</i>	<i>vulʲmʲu:th</i>	gift/s
<i>beni</i>	<i>veni</i>	sister
<i>bo:y</i>	<i>vo:y</i>	brother

<i>be:mi</i>	<i>ve:mi</i>	brother-in-law
<i>kāṅgir</i>	<i>vāṅgir</i>	fire pot
<i>majmi</i>	<i>vajmi</i>	big plate
<i>tr̄ḁ:m</i>	<i>v̄ḁ:m</i>	plate
<i>izband</i>	<i>visband</i>	wild rue

ii) The Initial /v/ of the word stem is replaced by /p/ in the echo word

<i>vaguv</i>	<i>paguv</i>	mat
<i>voT</i>	<i>poT</i>	porch, verandah

iii) The initial consonant cluster is replaced by a single consonant /v/ in the echo word as in:

<i>Druy</i>	<i>vuy</i>	brother-in-law
<i>khra:v</i>	<i>va:v</i>	wooden footwear
<i>pra:n</i>	<i>va:n</i>	shallots

Affixation

Affixation, literally, means the act of attaching or affixing something. It is defined as the process which involves the formation of a word by means of an affix, i.e., the addition of a prefix, suffix, or infix to a word in order to create a new word.

Affixation is present in the culture lexicon of Kashmiri mainly in the form of suffixation and prefixation as shown below:

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Suffixation

Suffix is an affix added to the end of a word or stem, serving to form a new word, and the process of attaching suffixes is labelled as suffixation. Following are some of the examples of suffixation in the cultural lexicon of Kashmiri language:

i) –da:r

-daar is used as a suffix especially to denote the shapes and designs, for example, in shawl making and carpet making. Some of the examples include:

Examples in the designs/shapes of shawls

<i>palī+ da:r</i>	a design that is spread over edges
<i>ba:da:m+ da:r</i>	almond shaped design
<i>ni:m+ da:r</i>	a design with small flowers
<i>be:l+ da:r</i>	floral design

ii) –tīr

This suffix is used to denote the feminine terms of kinship terminology as given below:

<i>ma:mi+tīr</i>	mother's brother's daughter/cousin
<i>ma:s+tīr</i>	mother's sister's daughter/cousin
<i>pi+tīr</i>	father's brother's daughter/cousin
<i>pɔph+tīr</i>	father's sister's daughter/cousin

iii) –tur

-tur is used to denote the masculine terms of Kinship terminology as given below:

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<i>pɔph+tur</i>	father's sister's son/cousin
<i>pi+tur</i>	father's brother's son/cousin
<i>ma:s+tur</i>	mother's sister's son/cousin
<i>ma:mi+tur</i>	mother's brother's son
<i>za:mi+tur</i>	son-in-law

iv) **-band**

-band is used as a suffix to designate the items of apparels like the following:

<i>gulo+ band</i>	a neck ornament
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v) **-thir**

This suffix is used in the terms related to kinship as given below:

<i>ba:b+thir</i>	brother's son/nephew
<i>beni+thir</i>	sister's son/nephew

Prefixing

Prefix is an affix which is placed before the stem of a word, and this process of attaching prefixes is known as prefixation. The culture lexicon of Kashmiri shows the presence of limited number of prefixes. For example, **phir**. This prefix finds its use in the terms of wedding/marriage as given below:

<i>phir+sa:l</i>	first visit of bride and groom to Brides' home after marriage
<i>phir+lath</i>	second visit of bride and groom To brides' parents

Conjunct Verbs

Conjunct verbs are derived by the addition of certain set of verbs to nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. There are limited examples of conjunct verbs present in the culture lexicon of Kashmiri, for example:

‘ <i>mō̃:z- la:gin</i> ’	to apply henna dye
‘ <i>dasta:r- ganDun</i> ’	to fix or adjust turban
‘ <i>mas -mitsra:vun</i> ’	to open up hair
‘ <i>masa:lī-dagun</i> ’	to grind spices

Conclusion

The analysis was carried out at the phonological level and at the morphological level. The analysis at the phonological level illustrated the presence of syllabic structures and consonant clusters. The syllabic structure is shown in the form of monosyllabic (e.g., Consonant + Vowel + Consonant), disyllabic (e.g., Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel), and Trisyllabic (e.g., Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel + Consonant + Vowel) patterns. The consonant clusters are present at the word-initial and word-medial positions.

Compounding, echo formation, affixation, and conjunct verbs are the features identified in by this analysis at the morphological level. The process of compounding consisted of various combinations like Arabic + Persian, Arabic + English, Persian + Sanskrit and even the same source languages like Sanskrit + Sanskrit.

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