COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN A BILINGUAL SOCIETY
– A FRAMEWORK
(WITH REFERENCE TO THE LINGUISTIC SITUATION IN KASHMIR)

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Abstract
Kashmiri has always taken a back seat in the valley. There is no evidence of Kashmiri ever being used as a language of administration in Kashmir. It has more or less a role of home language. With the result, the preference for communicating in Kashmiri in comparison with other languages is being affected.

Key words: Bilingualism, multilingualism, communication strategies, Kashmir, code switching, code mixing, interactional strategies.

Aim of the research: To identify communication strategies among adolescents in Kashmir.

Keeping in view the linguistic situation of Kashmir, one can say that there is always a pull of Urdu or English on Kashmiri, especially if the person is educated. Moreover, if a person is not well versed in one language the other language comes to his rescue. Therefore, a speaker has three languages at disposal i.e. Kashmiri, Urdu, and English. The pattern in which communication is carried out in each of these languages is called as ‘strategy’.

Communication strategies can be defined as the individual’s ability to manipulate the linguistic resources available to him or her in a given socio-linguistic context. Communication strategies can be said to be a policy to make communication effective and effortless. In other words communication strategies can be defined as the way, which the communicator applies in order to express the ideas by overcoming the difficulties, which may be encountered while communicating with each other either in L1 or L2. These difficulties may be related to certain syntactic constructions, lexical use or even to managing turns, etc. Broadly, how a speaker passes through a message is called communication strategies.

Strategies in communication can be identified at two levels, viz., linguistic strategies and interactional strategies. Linguistic strategies are related to the usage of language at different levels are called linguistics strategies. Interaction strategies are strategies used for carrying out the conversation. It is related to the use of language as a means of communication or tool of interaction. It is to be noted that communication strategies are identified on the basis of performance about which a speaker may or may not be conscious.

Linguistic strategies are; word level, above word level, i.e. Sentence level and above Sentence level i.e. Discourse level. Depending upon the nature of a strategy, word level strategies are classified into Mixing and Borrowing. Sentence level strategies include change in code, which is called switching. Switching can be seen in chunks within the same turn or in the whole conversation turn. Discourse level strategies are recognized by a language spoken by speakers in overall conversation. It gives an idea of language preferred by a speaker for carrying on his conversation. The languages opted by a speaker are Kashmiri, Urdu or English in the present research. It is to be noted that none of the errors or mistakes have been taken into consideration under linguistic strategies.

Interaction strategies help us to know the interaction ability, patterns as well as policy of a speaker for carrying out communication.

Research Methodology

Data Collection: Data was collected in the form of audio recordings from three districts of Kashmir viz Pulwama, Budgam and Srinagar. Rural and urban areas of these districts have been taken into consideration separately. Also, questionnaire survey was done along with the audio recordings. The informants were only adolescents and the data was collected in schools.

Quantitative and qualitative analysis: Percentage, frequency and average were used as statistical tools to analyse the data. Questionnaires were separately analysed and interpretations were drawn with respect to different variables. Conclusions were drawn taking into consideration interpretations of both speech samples and Questionnaires.
Introduction
Kashmiri has always taken a back seat in the valley. There is no evidence of Kashmiri ever being used as a language of administration in Kashmir. It has more or less a role of home language. With the result, the preference for communicating in Kashmiri in comparison with other languages is being affected. The use of Kashmiri in different spheres of life can be described briefly as follows:

Law and Government: - Jammu and Kashmir state is linguistically divided into three regions viz; Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Jammu is the region where Dogri is spoken; Ladakhi is spoken in Ladakh and Kashmiri in Kashmir. Moreover, the state has two capitals, Kashmir for summer and Jammu for winter. After every six months, most of the state employees have to shift from one capital to another. Urdu is used as a lingua franca in order to bridge the communication gap among the people of three regions. Moreover, the official language of the state is Urdu. All official correspondences are carried on in Urdu. Legal matters including the verdict passed by courts are also announced in Urdu.

Media: - Though radio and Television have allotted time slots for relaying programmes in Kashmiri, there is not a single newspaper published in Kashmiri. All the local dailies are either in English or in Urdu. In addition, the only magazines available in Kashmiri are Academic journals published by Kashmir University and the Cultural academy of Kashmir.

Trade and commerce: - Kashmir being the hot spot for tourists, most of the businesspersons come in frequent contact with people from other states and countries. Moreover, Kashmir not being the industrial place a businessperson has to deal with non-Kashmiris. For this purpose, they need to know Urdu or English depending upon the kind of business one runs.

Education: - At the educational level, also Kashmiri has a negligible role to play. There is not a single school in Kashmir in which the medium of instruction is Kashmiri. The textbooks are too written in Urdu or English. Officially, the medium of instruction is either English or Urdu but in most of the schools, students are made to read and learn in one language and understand in the other. Translation method in teaching is prominent in most of the schools. Teachers of Urdu medium schools explain in Kashmiri and those of English medium in Urdu or in a few cases Kashmiri. This results in the frequent contact of a student’s first language with other languages.

Personal communication: - As far as verbal communication is concerned, Kashmiri is used largely in day-to-day life. However, regarding written communication, there would be hardly any example where a person would correspond in Kashmiri. All written communications in the valley are carried out either in Urdu or in English.

Keeping in view this situation, one can say that there is always a pull of Urdu or English on Kashmiri, especially if the person is educated. Moreover, if a person is not well versed in one language the other language comes to his rescue. Therefore, a speaker has the three languages at disposal i.e. Kashmiri, Urdu, and English. The pattern in which communication is carried out in each of these languages is called as ‘strategy’.

Communication strategies can thus be defined as the individual’s ability to manipulate the linguistic resources available to him or her in a given socio-linguistic context. Communication strategies can be said to be a policy to make communication effective and effortless. In other words communication strategies can be defined as the way, which the communicator applies in order to express the ideas by overcoming the difficulties, which may be encountered while communicating with each other either in L1 or L2. These difficulties may be related to certain syntactic constructions, lexical use or even to managing turns, etc. Broadly, how a speaker passes through a message is called communication strategies.

Strategies in communication can be identified at two levels, viz., linguistic strategies and interaction strategies. Strategies related to the usage of language at different levels are called linguistics strategies. Interaction strategies are strategies used for carrying out the conversation. It is related to the use of language as a means of communication or tool of interaction. It is to be noted that communication strategies are identified on the basis of performance about which a speaker may or may not be conscious.

Linguistic strategies are; word level, above word level, i.e. Sentence level and above Sentence level i.e. Discourse level. Depending upon the nature of a strategy, word level strategies are classified into Mixing and Borrowing. Sentence level strategies include change in code, which is called switching. Switching can be seen in chunks within the same turn or in the whole conversation turn. Discourse level strategies are recognized by a language spoken by speakers in overall conversation. It gives an idea of language preferred by a speaker for carrying on his conversation. The languages opted by a speaker are Kashmiri, Urdu or English in the present research. It is to be noted that none of the errors or mistakes have been taken into consideration under linguistic strategies.

Interaction strategies help us to know the interaction ability, patterns as well as policy of a speaker for carrying out communication.
Communication strategies as mentioned above is divided into two broad categories in the present research viz; linguistic strategies and interaction strategies.

**Linguistic Strategies**

**BORROWING** When a speaker does not have any option available in the same language for a particular word, the word is borrowed from other language. e.g. पुर्वीन

वारसार, etc. Moreover, if the word from other language is present in the active vocabulary of speakers and is spoken by a community at large, inspite of options available in the same language, the word is a borrowing, e.g., the Kashmiri equivalent of सक्ता is तोटा, but it is rarely in use at present, so सक्ता is regarded as borrowing. Similarly, the use of words like पां, टैक्चर, लेस्सेंस are considered as borrowings in both Urdu and Kashmiri inspite of equivalents like का_म्या, जोड़_द्वारा_द, साइबाक्ल/साइबाह.

Borrowing does not change basic word order, phonological and morphological processes of the base language, rather it becomes assimilated in the base language as its part. Borrowing can be said to be partially assimilated or fully assimilated into receiving language. Borrowing is fully assimilated if a word adapts all linguistic features of a receiving Language e.g. प्रस्तुत in Kashmiri is a borrowed word. It is partially assimilated if one of the linguistic features of receiving language is not adapted by the borrowed word e.g. English word सक्ता in borrowing in Kashmiri. It is pronounced either as सक्ता which is fully assimilated or सक्ता which is partially assimilated since phonologically it matches with English. It should be noted that borrowing is taken into account according to the present sociolinguistic situation of Kashmir, where majority of people are using Persianised Kashmiri.
CODE MIXING: When a particular word is available for a speaker in the same language but still a word from other language/s is used it is mixing. Words retain the features of embedded language in case of code mixing; exception can be the phonological features or pronunciation of a speaker. e.g., ‘books’ is pronounced either as βυκές or βυκά; well ας σελ or γελ.

CODE SWITCHING: When there is a change in language or code of a speaker above word level, i.e. phrase or sentence, it can be said that a speaker switches from one code to another. Code is considered here to be a system or rules of a language, therefore when there is alteration in the linguistic system of a speaker it is code switching. Depending on its nature, switching is described as follows;

Reiteration: When a speaker repeats the same concept in two different languages i.e. in base language and in switched language or vice versa. It is worth mentioning that reiteration can be shown by a speaker either in the same turn or in another turn e.g.

- ημαμα ψαννδαμνταλ ραιτη ηαι ραιτη τουω ικαπαλτη σΟ δΘητ ιηευ τΟ δνυ κΟ σε_μ ηι_ 
  ηο_να_ χαηψε_ (spk.34)
- μαι νε_ καηα_ τηηνκιηη μΘηφαρσ (spk.52)
- α_μ ιο_ παρ κΟ_ψι_ κηηα_ σ δεηιηπελιν ναηη_ ηεη γΕησα_ δε_π ιζ νΟ_ δεηιηπελιν (spk. 15)

Emphasis: Sometimes to put stress on self-opinion or negate an opinion of other person, a speaker switches to other language. e.g.

- πραηαητη τδυυαηζας ζαηξα_ρι_ ηαη αα δδυ_ληδ_ εγρη_ δηδ ηιμ (spk.15)
- ιτη ιζ νΟηδ λαηκ δΘητ ηαρ κΟ_ψι (spk.52)
- διη ις ψυηθ ηηηεηηη ιτη ιζ νΟηδ λαηκ δΘητ (spk.15)

Personalization: When a speaker wants to personalize his ideas, he switches to other language. e.g.

- αα τηηνκ νυ_ κηηξαηρ φζημιη_ βιηα_ζζ αα βιλολνγ τουω νυ_κηηξαηρ φζημιη_ (spk.15 switched from Urdu to English)
- αα τηηνκ βΟ_τη α_ρ γιηεην ι_κςαλ (spk.53)

Message qualification: When a speaker wants to qualify his or other person’s message, he shows switching. (Qualifying the constructions such as sentence and verb (Gumperz)) e.g.

*(Switched language is in italics)*

- ημαμα_ρε_ κΟ_ φρενδιδζςιπ ρακηνι_ ηαι κιηι_ λαδδοι_ κΟ_ κιηι_ κε_ σα_ ηι_ Εζ_ α κλα_ σ μΘητ_ Εζ_ α 
  φρενδρακηνα ηαι κιηι_ κΟ_ φρενδι (spk.33)
- τδρενδι ιζ νΟηδ α_ λ τδρενδι βι_ ηαι (spk.52)
- ταε χηηκη δΕνα_ψ κηεζαζα_ζζ οηετι δδαλ σηδηδεντζει ρει κια φιηρακη ρυ_ζζ ιητδειηεφενζει δε δδαλ 
  σηδηδεντζες δδαλ σηδηδεντζες μαι ηεηη_ χε_ νφις ηΟ_τι_ ηΘ (spk. 36)

Conjunction: Sometimes after using conjunction from other language, speaker switches to that language. This kind of switching can be seen within the same turn or in other turn e.g.

- β_ρτδ τδρενδι ιζ νΟηδ α_ λ κιηι_ κΟ (spk.52)
- β_ρτδ κΟ_ στελι_ αα τηηνκ Ερβαν κΟ ηι_ δηψα_ φα_τα_ ηαι (spk.52)

Quotation: Sometimes for quoting others, speakers switch to a language other than the base language. e.g.
Accommodation: When two speakers talk in two different languages one of them while trying to show solidarity with the other switches. e.g.

Spk.35: σκυ_λ_μαε_τO_ναης_ΗO_κα_ηαε_ψε_

Spk.36: κυστ_σκυ_λ_μαε_ (switched from Kashmiri to Urdu)

Topic change: When a speaker switches from one topic to another it also brings change in language in some cases. Further switching can be in chunks as well as in whole conversational turns.

Interaction Strategies

Interaction strategies are simply management of conversation and using the language skills with least effort in a social group. It is worth mentioning here that domains are not taken into consideration separately since the purpose is to find out how far a speaker carries on communication in a group. In addition, it is possible that a speaker talks over one subject at length but not on the other. Therefore, conversation is taken as a whole with all the domains in it. The strategies that were identified are as follows:

❖ Self-repair: If a speaker corrects his speech by himself/herself during a conversation, it is a self-repair. This strategy is most prominently seen in Urdu and English and it gives the idea about the speaker’s awareness of the errors committed in a language. e.g.

ψεηι_ΗΘ_μο_στδ_δψψιφε_ματλαβ_μο_στδ_βαψε_ψεηι_σΟ_χτε_ΗΘ (spk. 52)

......

βικα_ζι_δε_ΗΘδω_τδυ_α_νσαρ_τδυ_μιστδαρ_βικα_ζι_δε_ΗΘδω_τδυ_ψυ_νο_βι_α_νσαρε_βΕλ_τδυ_μιστδαρ_πρινσιπιαι _ ---- (spk. 69)

❖ Other initiated repair: When a listener corrects the speech of a speaker, it is other initiated repair. This strategy is seen only in English. The strategy is assigned to a speaker since it is a speaker whose errors are corrected. This could be assumed as helping strategy for a speaker. e.g.

Spk.70: υν_τα_ΗΤινυ_δΕ_στδυ_δσντδσ _

{ }\text{Spk.71: } νυ_χινυ_δΕ_στδυ_δσντδσ _

❖ Fillers: Fillers can best be defined as the filled pauses e.g.mhmhmm, a..a..a a. This also indicates the hesitancy of a speaker in a particular language. Mostly fillers are found when a speaker looks for a proper word or is unable to find the appropriate word in a conversation.

ηι_κΘυ_ι_ζιλι_γιτι_δεμ_δΕ_ααα_ααα_σατδ_οι_κα_λι_Θζ_ηι_κΘυ_ι_ζιλι_κΕλψ_δΕ_σινες (spk 73)
The West East Institute
Circumlocution: If a speaker does not know a proper word and tries to explain a concept, it is circumlocution.

Call for help: If a speaker seeks direct help from listeners by using the phrases like “what to say” or “what we call”?

Turn takings: Turn takings are management of turns in a conversational group. Turn takings help us to decide how far a speaker is able to make himself/herself an active participant in the conversation. In addition, how far a speaker is able to manage turn takings and holding the floors. Turn taking is classified into three categories viz

Sequential turns: This is a kind of self appointed turn. A speaker takes the turn according to the sequence.

Frequency of sequential turns helps us to know the interaction capacity of a speaker. More sequential turns indicate a speaker is able to manage turns on his own.

Interrupted turns: If a listener breaks up the speech of a speaker it is interrupted turn. However, interrupted turns indicate the violation of maxim of the conversation, at the same time, it has a positive connotation of conversation to be going on.

Triggered turns: If a listener is not directly appointed by a speaker but is prompted to share his/her ideas. Triggered turns help to find whether speakers are able to manage the flow of conversation internally.

Other appointed turns: Other appointed turns are those when other participants appoint speakers for taking their turns. In our data, it includes the interviewer also i.e. when interviewer appoints a speaker. It is to be noted that the interviewer appointed a speaker only when participants failed to take turns on their own.

Overlaps: Many simultaneous speech acts are found in the conversation i.e. when both listener and a speaker speak concurrently. Overlaps are not the full fledged turns but it firstly shows the urge of a speaker to take the turn and secondly it masks the part of the speech of a speaker.
On the whole, it is found that informants of Urdu medium schools and rural areas have a tendency towards speaking in Kashmiri and to some extent in Urdu. Informants of English medium schools and urban areas have a tendency towards speaking in Urdu and to some extent English. It can be presumed that the transition is from Kashmiri to Urdu to English. It can be further substantiated by the strategy of switching which has the same hierarchy i.e. informants switch from Kashmiri to Urdu, Urdu to English but not English to Kashmiri. Moreover, females have a tendency to speak in Urdu, which is obvious from the conversation as well as questionnaire analysis. It can be further substantiated by the mixing and switching (to English) patterns that are higher among males than females. As far as interaction strategies are concerned lexical interference, wrong lexical use, syntactic interference are found more
among males than females and in rural than among urban informants, while self repairs and lexical avoidance are found more among females than males and urban than rural informants. This indicates that females and urban informants prefer to either repair the errors or avoid the use of a word for a concept instead of using it wrongly i.e. they tend to be on the safe side, which is a safe strategy. At the syntactic level urban informants do not have interference of other tongue but there are syntactic errors in their speech because of wrong syntactic usage. In addition, wrong syntactic use is found more among males than females when base language is English. One of the reasons is that females prefer to speak in Urdu, which is the safe strategy. Similarly, self repairs and lexical avoidance are more among informants of English medium schools than of Urdu medium schools while lexical and syntactic errors are more among informants of Urdu medium schools than of English medium schools. Here again, English medium informants tend to be on the safe side by not committing errors. Besides, informants of Urdu medium school prefer to speak in Kashmiri, while informants of English medium school prefer to speak in Urdu or English more than Kashmiri. Fillers are more among urban informants when base language is Kashmiri, but more among rural informants when base language is Urdu. The reasons are that rural informants are not exposed to Urdu language like urban informants, plus they prefer to speak in Kashmiri while the case is opposite with urban informants. Urban informants prefer Urdu to Kashmiri.

Therefore, strategies in communication observed among adolescents are inter-related. The factors that have a role in the strategies used are medium of instruction, change in the preference of language use inside and outside the schools or with friends at home and schools, location or more precisely the contact of one language with other languages. Most of the time, a school going person is exposed to either English or Urdu in the written form and Kashmiri or Urdu and to less extent English in the oral form. Most of the time, one language comes in contact with another which leads to mixing, switching or any other strategy due to which a speaker finds the way out for overcoming the difficulties in any language.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, the communication strategies among bilingual informants in a bilingual situation differ from second/ foreign language learners in a monolingual situation. In a bilingual situation both the speaker and listener are able to understand each other in the languages they speak while in monolingual situation the second language or foreign language learner/ speaker has no other option but to convey the message in the particular language. That is to say, in monolingual situation other language doesn’t come to his/ her rescue in case of difficulty while among bilinguals it is not the case. In case of bilingual situation such as in Kashmir, it is the role, attitude and prestige of a language that are decisive factors for language preference and the strategies thus shown, while in monolingual situation it is sheer need that leads to communication strategies.

**References**


