

GLOBALISATION AND 'THE THREE-WAY-TUG': A CASE STUDY OF KASHMIR

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Introduction

The principal mediator of cultural, economic, and political encounters is language, and the global pattern of language use is an illustration of the complex process of globalization. Globalization is rapidly becoming, or rather has become, a metaphor for integrating the world. Another side of the coin however, is that where globalization has enhanced and exposed aspects of some communities, it has also led to the marginalization of some economically, socially and politically less prominent communities and consequently their languages. In other words, some languages, over time, have started developing a widespread appeal, where as others are moving into the background and may ultimately disappear. In this context Crystal (2000) argues that on an average, the current rate of extinction is one language every two weeks or so (2000: 19). Crystal (2000) goes on to observe that 96% of the world's languages are spoken by only 4% of the population, over half of the world's languages by less than 10,000 people and a quarter are spoken by less than 1000 people (Crystal 2002: 14), indicating that languages which are 'well entrenched' gain speakers and weaker languages lose them. Languages being 'well entrenched' or 'poor' depend not only on the number of speakers but also on who its speakers are. No language can be an international medium of communication without a strong power base and naturally, the power of the people who use it. A very close link appears to exist between language dominance and power. This power is determined in terms of economic, military, cultural and technological might; and English at the centre of these important power structures is widely perceived as a global language. The prerequisite for

simply browsing the Internet calls for at least a working knowledge of English since an estimated eighty per cent of the world's electronically stored information is in English and of the estimated 200 million users of the Internet, some thirty-six per cent communicate in English ("Frequently Asked Questions"). Though things are changing with more languages finding place on the World Wide Web, in spite of this it was found out that English still is a dominant force in the realm of the internet, and the other dominant languages of the internet are unintelligible to Kashmiris.

A study conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (The Default Language, 1999) indicates that 91% of Web sites on "secure-servers" were in English (Warschauer et al). This is significant because secure servers are used for e-commerce. In the arena of academic publications, in 1997, 95% of the articles in the 'Science Citation Index' were written in English and only about 50% of them were from English-speaking countries like the USA or Britain and European and non-US scientists publish more in English than in any other language (Garfield 1998). In Kashmir and probably in the rest of India access to scientific research can only be through the medium of English, be they originals or translated versions. Furthermore, English is also associated with technological advances as most of the technological advances are made in the United States, a premier English using nation. Furthermore, by the end of the 20th century the economy of the US, the premier English speaking nation, has proved to be the fastest growing and "the most productive economy ever" (Greenspan, 2003). Watson (1999) attributes five reasons for English as a global international language: the capacity of the English language to absorb words from different languages; the process of economic globalization; the economic dominance of the United States and the influence of US culture spread around the world; the growth of mass tourism and advertising; and finally, migration to Canada and the United States which has also acted as an incentive (1999:11-13).

Hence 'English' the language of the powerful, with money, might and technology has grown into the most important language to be learned by the rest of the world. This is more evident in South Asia and particularly the Indian subcontinent where the language of globalization is synonymous with English. Another advantage for English in India is its place as a neutral language amidst the plethora of languages in relation to the multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic Indian population. In today's concept of the global village, English appears to have become the unrivalled lingua franca of the world.

The process of globalization appears to associate first of all with a growing interventionism of English in the linguistic space of the other languages. With the growing strength of English in the international arena,

spearheading and symbolizing globalization, and thus, exerting immense pressure on the other languages of the world, many of these languages have started appearing seemingly redundant to the speakers, and in some cases considered as superfluous, or as some people would point out, 'dead weights which do nothing but drag us back' (Kak 2002:162). English, on its part, is seen as a key to success in the age of globalization, and a necessity if one has to be a part of the Global village. This has aptly been summed up by Goswami (2003)'s quote of Bianco, 'Globalized modernisation requires the knowledge of English'.

LANGUAGE SCENARIO IN KASHMIR

Kashmiri forms the predominant language in the province of Kashmir, the area under study. Going back in time, it is observed that in the ancient times Kashmiri had a rich literary tradition associated with it with its own ancient script '*Sharda*', which incidentally was also used to write Sanskrit. The earliest available Kashmiri work been attributed to the 13th century. Across time, Kashmiri had its gallery of poets and poetesses. However, strangely it is been observed that Kashmiri, though the indigenous language of the valley, had never had the royal or the official favour granted to it. Across time, it was Sanskrit during the ancient period, Persian in the medieval period and Urdu in the modern period, which were granted the prestigious positions, and had been the official languages and the languages of the court. The demarcation was clear, with the languages being distributed across different domains and serving different functions.

Regarding Urdu, Maharaja Pratap Singh, the Dogra king made Urdu the official language at the beginning of the 20th century. Urdu assumed the language of prestige supplanting Persian easily. This is indicated by the use of Urdu in education as well as by the use of Urdu by some Kashmiri poets. After the accession of Kashmir to India in 1948, Sheikh Abdullah, the then Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir introduced Kashmiri as the official language and the medium of instruction. However, this was shortlived and Urdu replaced Kashmiri as the official language and the medium of instruction in 1958. Presently the state of Jammu and Kashmir is the only state in India, where Urdu is the official language. Furthermore, Urdu flourished rapidly. Besides being the official language of the state of Jammu and Kashmir Urdu was also used as the medium of instruction in government schools till 2003.

English appeared on the scene in the late 19th century with the influx of missionaries in Kashmir and started being taught in the missionary schools. However, the approach to English by the Kashmiris was not positive and assumptions like English being the devil's language and learning English was equivalent

to becoming a Christian were prevalent. It took quite some time for English to be accepted and this is observed mostly in the past 30-40 years. Initially, the government used English as the language for higher education. In 2003 it was used as the medium of instruction in government schools as well. Presently, English is taught in all the schools, be they government run, private or missionary schools, as well as in the colleges and the university. Presently, Kashmir has an uncommon educated Kashmiri class which is unable to read or write the mother tongue i.e. Kashmiri, while being able to use Urdu and English in those skills.

ANALYSIS:

The article will try to analyse the implications of contact of Kashmiri (the indigenous language), Urdu (the official language) and English (the globalising language) (the language trio) in four areas, namely, code mixing/code switching, print media, competitive multilingualism and attitudinal changes.

Language Trio in the Context of Code mixing/Code switching:

Before going any further, it is important to understand the following schema.

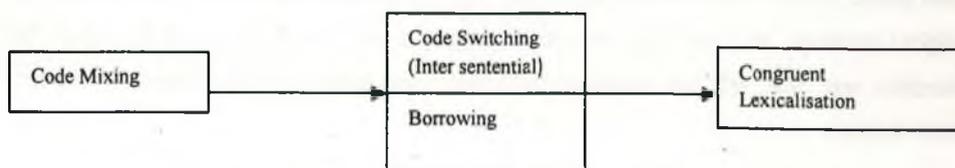


Fig 1: Scheme of Code Mixing, Code Switching, Borrowing and Congruent

Lexicalisation in a linear order

The schema represented above indicates that in the context of a Base Language, the introduction of elements from a second language occurs first in the form of code-mixes. These elements under conducive conditions and in due course of time become borrowings and code-switches. The ultimate target (prior to congruent lexicalisation) of the participating language in the context of a Base language is Code switching.. A point which is pertinent here is that the scheme is dependent on contextual factors, i.e. conducive sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic factors.

Urdu

Literary records show that prestige languages of the past like Sanskrit and Persian have influenced Kashmiri in the form of borrowings only, and we don't have any records of these languages being mixed and switched with Kashmiri. Coming to the present time, we observe instances of Kashmiri-Urdu code mixes and code switches. In the case of borrowing, thousands of Urdu words, because of the long contact with Kashmiri have (with appropriate phonological changes) become a part of the Kashmiri vocabulary.

It is observed that more than a hundred years of contact has caused Urdu to cross the first stage of code mixing. With the passage of time and greater spread and consequently higher fluency many Urdu words have attained the status of borrowings in Kashmir, and Urdu has also attained the status of a switched variety in a Kashmiri base. The factors responsible for the popularization of Urdu are given below.

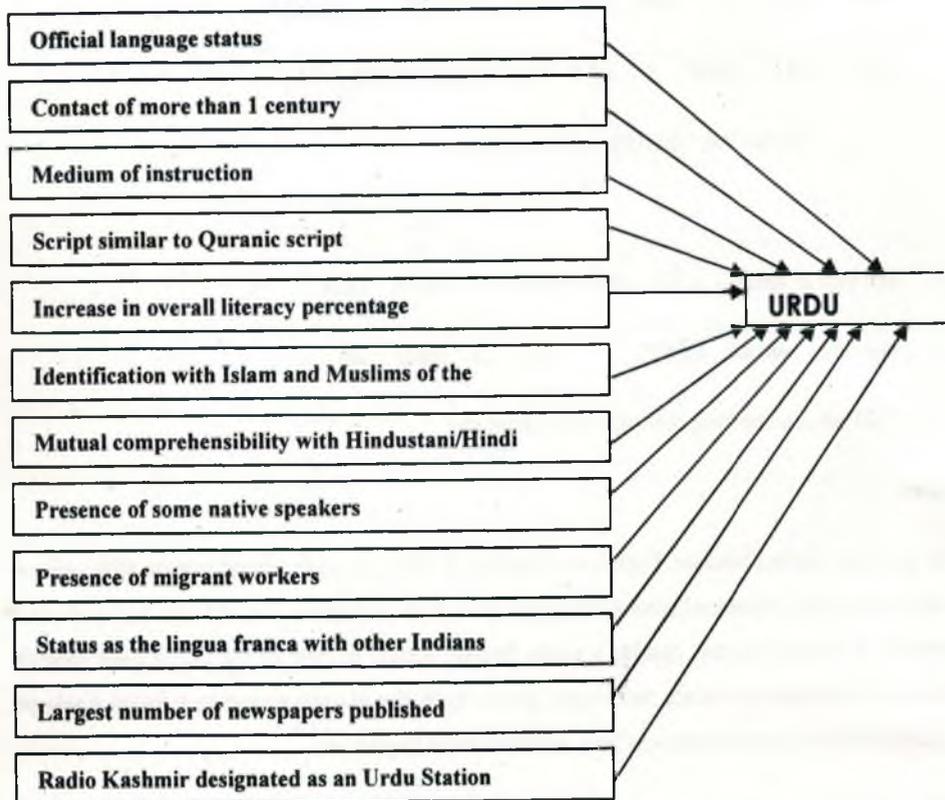


Fig 2. Showing status of Urdu in Kashmir.

The use of Urdu as a switched variety is passing from the more educated to the less educated Kashmiri and from the formal to informal domains. Thus, Urdu in due course of time has become the primary choice for code switching or is used as a code switched variety. Some examples are given below.

a. MEIN-NE KAHA NA bl yeml nl to:r.
I -Erg said have I come Neg there.
'I said that I won't go there'

b. USE KAHO KI m'e Chu ni bakwaas pasand.
him tell COMP I have Neg useless talking like.
'Tell him that I don't like useless talking'

c. akh kathaay vanay KI MEIN TUM PAR FIDAA HUN.
one talk will tell COMP I you on crazy am
'I will tell you one thing that I am crazy about you'

English

Strictly speaking, contact between English and Kashmiri is of recent origin around thirty to forty years in spite of English being introduced around a hundred years back in Kashmir. The reasons, some of which are mentioned earlier, included hostility towards English, apathy of most of the Dogra kings towards education of Kashmiris, low literacy percentage, greater inclination towards education in religious schools (darsgahs/pathshalas) where there was no question of use of English, etc.

In spite of the earlier delay, the trend of globalization and along with it, its related dimensions have provided great impetus to English in Kashmir. The related dimensions, include use of English in higher

education, new advances in science and technology, introduction of cable network and internet which all have enhanced English. The need for English has been felt to be so pressing that English, which historically faced hostility in the valley, was implemented as the medium of instruction right from the primary level from 2003 by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School education as a part of the government policy.

Being associated with modernization, technology and prestige, English vocabulary items are increasingly used in day-to-day speech of Kashmiris. Kashmiri speech embedded with English vocabulary items is increasingly being used in the day-to-day speech of Kashmiris and is becoming the unmarked code in present day Kashmir (Kak and Wani, 2005 a). Globalisation has played an important role in the entry of English lexicon in both the formal and informal dimensions of a Kashmiri's life. At present, English is frequently observed to be the primary choice for code mixing, in other words, English has attained the status of code-mixed variety with respect to Kashmiri in present day Kashmir. Some examples include

d. yi RESULT Chu DISGUSTING, DISCOURAGING ti POLITICALLY MOTIVATED

this is and

'This result is disgusting, discouraging and politically motivated'

(Kak and Wani 2005 a)

e. temis kar thooDa HELP.

him do little

'Give him a little help'.

In spite of the factors (marked by (-)) it is observed that English has made a great headway. It is clear that introduction of English as a result of globalization has resulted in a new linguistic hierarchy with accompanying linguistic rearrangement. English as a globalizing language has established itself in present day Kashmir in a short span of time. Taking an overall view of Kashmir, English and Urdu appear to have assumed a relation of complementary distribution with respect to the Base language Kashmiri, with Urdu forming the primary choice for code-switching and English forming the primary choice for code mixing in present day Kashmir. However, English does appear to be on the path to the next stage with English borrowings and Code Switches also observed, though mostly observed among the educational

and social elite and the youth who possess a positive attitude towards English and mixed/switched code and a handsome level of English proficiency. (Kak 1995, Kak and Agnihotri 1996)

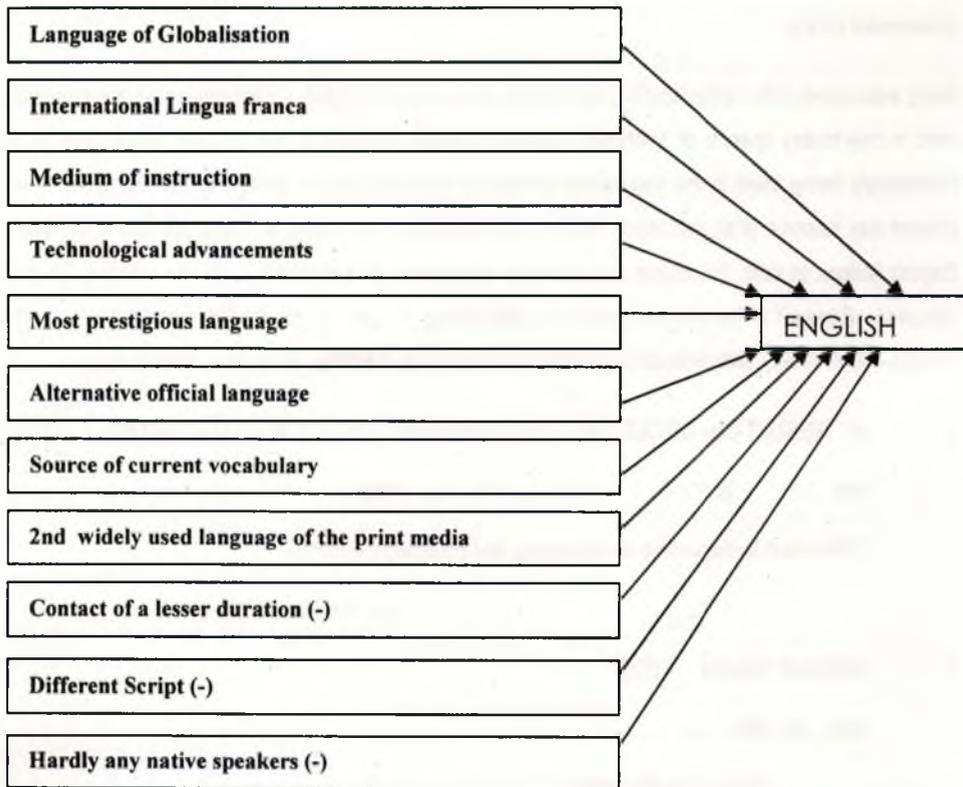


Fig 3: Showing status of English in Kashmir

PRINT MEDIA

In Kashmir, print media is observed basically in the form of Urdu and English dailies and weeklies. In 1994 only 1 English paper was published from Kashmir. In 1995 and onwards, a steady increase in the number of English newspapers was observed. At present 8 English dailies are published from Kashmir indicating an 8 fold increase in the past decade. Looking at the number of English weeklies during the same time, it is observed that the number of English weeklies was just 1 (as in the case of English dailies) in 1994. Presently, the number of English weeklies is 12. Urdu dailies and weeklies appear to have had a strong footing in 1994. The number of Urdu dailies in 1994 was 36 and the number of Urdu weeklies was 37. In 2005, the number was 48 Urdu dailies and 38 Urdu weeklies. Surprisingly, the increase in the number of Urdu dailies is 25% (as compared 800% in the case of English dailies) and there is hardly any increase in the number of Urdu weeklies. Urdu dailies also lack a consistent increasing order with decrease in numbers as well (44 in 2001, 48 in 2003, 46 in 2004 and 48 in 2005) as compared to the English dailies which show a consistent increase from 4 in 2001 to 8 in 2005. Urdu weeklies, interestingly, show a somewhat constant number in the last decade.

First of all it is important to point here that literacy in the last decade has increased perceptibly. Literacy from a Kashmiri perspective means literacy in English and Urdu which are the languages of education and serve as medium of instruction. Furthermore, they are the only languages included in formal education (Hindi has very few learners). However, the figures indicate an important point i.e. though Urdu in the print media has had a base (36 dailies and 37 weeklies in 1994) it had been unable to capitalize on its foundation and the increase is not as significant as it ought to have been. English on the other hand, which started from almost nothing has gained significantly during the last decade.

Another indication of the rise of English in the print media is evidenced by the fact that *Alsafa*, one of the leading Urdu dailies started an English weekly in addition to its usual Urdu daily publication in 2000. In 2001-2002, *Alsafa* started running as an Urdu-English bilingual daily and is being published like that even now.

Incidentally, Kashmiri print media in the past decade produced only one weekly *Miraas* In 1998 which was later discontinued.

COMPETITIVE MULTILINGUALISM

As already indicated Sanskrit and Persian had been the languages of prestige in the ancient and the medieval times. These languages were allocated prestigious domains. The patronisation and allocation of prestigious domains to these non-Kashmiri languages led to a state of multilingualism, where these languages though with higher status than Kashmiri, existed on congenial terms with Kashmiri. The demarcation was clear, with the languages being distributed across different domains and serving different functions and what existed was congenial multilingualism.

In the present linguistic scenario, Urdu is the official language of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, with a receptive populace, with identification with Islam and Muslims of the sub-continent, an essential language up to 10th class, medium of instruction in Government schools till 2003, a court language in lower courts, for writing revenue records, avenues for exposure as in print media, books, etc and other similar functions. In these circumstances it was natural to assume that Urdu will gain the stature of the most prestigious language. Surprisingly, this has not happened. Instead, English which faced initial hostility, had an entirely different script and comparatively lesser exposure occupies the top position, followed by Urdu and then Kashmiri (Kak 2002: 84,108,160). The major reason for the prestige associated with English is that it is the global language. Regarding Kashmiri there appears to be no reason for granting it prestige. And for Urdu the prestige is localized and even this localized prestige is gradually fading.

An important point here is that instead of the just-below-the-official-language position, which Kashmiri had normally occupied in the past, the presence of English has forced it one step further down. Another interesting point here is that for a Kashmiri, the path to English is not direct, i.e. a Kashmiri native speaker does not learn English directly but rather through the path of Urdu (Kak 2002: 84, 85). A Kashmiri native speaker is observed to acquire Urdu first. From Urdu only does he move on to English. Acting as a bridge-language between Kashmiri and English, Urdu seems to have strengthened its own position, in a way making it indispensable for English acquisition. The basic difference between multilingualism of the past and the present is that in the present instead of specific domains for specific languages English is observed to be steadily encroaching upon the domains hitherto occupied by Urdu and Kashmiri. This is due to increased exposure available today and a trend observed in people where they look at things from a global perspective with local perspective taking a backseat.

The attraction for learning English is very tempting for a Kashmiri because of the global utility of English. One of the reasons that Kashmiris have for learning English is that it is perceived that English has a greater communicative potential (Kak and Qadir forthcoming) as an English speaker can communicate with a greater number of people (international lingua franca) and have access to knowledge via physical (personal contacts, books, etc) as well as virtual (internet, etc) media. In the modern age, with the concept of the global village being propounded incessantly and with prestige markers being followed more readily, Kashmiris have started thinking beyond their immediate domains and greater emphasis is laid on the international viewpoint than was laid in the past. Furthermore, there are certain aspects of life which a Kashmiri cannot escape from if he/she wants to achieve anything of substance in the material world. Globalization has caused a shift in government policies with education in Kashmir only being achieved through the medium of English, same is the case with other domains where English is steadily taking over the domains previously occupied by Urdu. In the domain of international trade and commerce, which has increased in importance in the last decade the same is observed. Another very valid point is the significance of computers in the present day world, where for a Kashmiri, the precondition to simple computer awareness is knowledge of English. The same applies to the use of the World Wide Web. The prerequisite for simply browsing the Internet calls for at least a working knowledge of English.

ATTITUDINAL CHANGES

The envisaged potential of English on its part also appears to have influenced the socio-psychological attitudes of Kashmiris. The high prestige value of English is manifested in a number of ways for a Kashmiri native speaker. Domains from where English had been acquired in the past have mainly been educational institutions but in recent years it is observed that English has started being acquired from the environment and a little from the home as well (Kak 2002: 84,86). This is encouraged by the parents and accepted eagerly by the children. This is because of the realization among all generations that learning English is a prerequisite to 'the good things in life' and English fluency provides the children prestige within and outside their peer group. Duration of use of English has also been observed to be gradually increasing, not only in the formal contexts but in the informal contexts as well along with claimed proficiency in English (Kak 2002: 91) which brings with it fruitful gains.

Attitudes and views of Kashmiris have also been observed to show a change, with English speakers been stereotyped highest in the attributes 'intelligent, ambitious, practical and modern' (Kak 2002: 99), indicating what English and its speakers symbolise for the Kashmiri native speaker. A very important attitude of the Kashmiri native speakers is reflected by their view regarding which language should be used as the medium of instruction. All the age and gender groups strongly feel that English should be the medium of instruction (Kak 2002: 113,114). This is observed even more strongly in the case of the youth. This is what is expected when we take into consideration that English has been accorded official or special status in around seventy five countries (accounting for over two billion people). English is also spoken as a first language by around 375 million people and as a second language by the same number. Interestingly, people who speak English as a second language outnumber those who speak it as a first language, approximately 750 million people speak English as a foreign language and one out of every four people in the world have some English competence and the demand from the others is increasing ("Frequently Asked Questions").

BBC, CNN are household names in Kashmir and Times and Newsweek mean authenticity and status. The influence of English has also caused a shift in the patterns of language use. For counting, naming colours, days of the week, etc, English is predominantly used and the youth finding it difficult to use Kashmiri for these functions (Kak 2002: 123-125). In the office/administrative domain, Urdu though the official language, is rapidly being replaced by English. As pointed out earlier, Urdu is used for court and revenue records but this is changing with the advent of the younger generation who find themselves more comfortable in English than in Urdu.

In Kashmir, English is associated with the elite and is a necessity in spheres which have modern day relevance and is an important tool for demanding authority, status and attention. Not knowing Kashmiri may be considered fashionable but not knowing English is job-prospect-wise detrimental, uncouth and a sign of being backward. This builds a mindset where everyone who has aspirations has no other option but to use this language. A general perception in Kashmir is that educational shortcomings are usually concentrated in schools in which languages other than English are used as the media of instruction, and it is common knowledge that those less proficient in English are handicapped when it comes to integrating and facing the challenges of the modern life.

All these tastes and attitudes stem from the perspective that it is English, which is the source of modern knowledge, is driving the economy and from the concept that 'Efficiency and development, growth and human capital, are not tolerant of difference, Globalized modernization requires that knowledge is imparted in ways that are comparable across differences of setting, culture and language' (Bianco, quoted by Goswami) and for homogenization of these attributes English seems the logical choice and this choice is not far fetched but within reach, making it easier to go for.

POSITION OF HINDI

Regarding Hindi, before the separatist movement (pre 1989-90) a steady trend in line with 'Hindi-isation' of N. India especially was observed. Hindi was taught both at the Under graduate and Post graduate level. In the Post graduate level in the 1970's Hindi department with an intake capacity of 65 students used to be reasonably full. In the 1980's an overall trend in favour of science subjects had a negative impact on Arts subjects, especially on Hindi, Persian and Arabic. In the 1980's usually 15 to 16 students were enrolled each year and incidentally almost all the students belonged to the Hindu community. This in a way seems to indicate that the mindset seemed to associate Hindi with the Hindu religion (as is observed in the rest of India where Urdu is more or less associated with Muslims, also indicated by an analysis of enrolled candidates in MA Urdu at most Indian especially North Indian Universities). After the migration of most Kashmiri Pandits from the valley during militancy, in the initial few years (1991 onwards), the post graduate department of Hindi functioned in name only with no student enrolling for Hindi. Only lately have students started enrolling again but the maximum number has never crossed 5-6.

The overall weak stand of Hindi in the Kashmiri society, in spite of the encouragement by the centre, has been an important factor which has never allowed Hindi to act as a competitor against Urdu or English and make a place for itself in the multilingual context of Kashmir.

Conclusion

Looking at the linguistic face of present day Kashmir the language trio in question shows a special arrangement under the influence of globalization. As a globalised language, English has successfully established itself in Kashmir. English is seen as the most prestigious language and forms the main choice for code mixing, is an emerging language in the print media, has upset the congenial multilingual setup of Kashmir and has influenced the sociopsychological attitudes. As compared to Urdu, English has established itself in comparatively lesser time and in spite of initial opposition; the main factor for this being globalization. Taking contextual dependency of languages into consideration, no generalization can be made, however, it is clear that as a result of globalization, impact of English is increasing day by day in Kashmir valley. English is shaping the psychological makeup of a modern Kashmiri and is becoming the 'dream' language of modern Kashmiris. English is gaining strength day by day and providing the means needed to survive and flourish in this global world, and slowly but steadily taking over the domains previously allocated to other languages. The recent surge of Liberalization in India, which has gained momentum at a rapid pace has further increased the importance of English.

A negative influence of this is that the globalisation-oriented and modernistic frame of mind which places English on the topmost pedestal has not only relegated other languages to inferior positions but have made them appear redundant, rather as burdens serving no practical utility. This mindset has started sprouting and it is more alarming for Kashmiri which is already weakened because of official apathy. The present generation and the generations to come have lesser time for 'unnecessary burdens' and try to think in a way which they call 'being practical'. In this heavy onslaught there is little scope for other languages and language choice is in name only, and the study of the language trio is the substantiation.

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List of Abbreviations

Erg = Ergative

Neg = Negative

Comp= Complementizer.