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LANGUAGE CHOICE ON TWITTER: A STUDY OF KASHMIRI BILINGUALS USING TWITTER

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ABSTRACT

Twitter is a famous social networking site in today's global world wherein people are able to communicate with each other by means of texts, voice and videos. Depending upon ones choice, people use different languages and scripts while posting on twitter. The present study is an attempt to assess the language choice of the Kashmiri speakers while using the social networking site twitter. The study also takes into account the script used by the Kashmiri speakers while on twitter. Kashmiri is the mother tongue of majority of the residents of Kashmir valley. A well-developed questionnaire was framed for collection of data. After the data collection, data was codified and analysed using SPSS version 25. The findings of the data support the view that people of Kashmir do use Kashmiri and Urdu rarely while using twitter and use English language quite often. It was also revealed that Roman script is preferred as compared to the Perso Arabic Script.

Keywords: Language Choice, Twitter, Script, Kashmiri

1. Introduction

Language preference and use is a much debated field in the domain of sociolinguistics. In determining the language preference and choice, researchers try to see the language behaviours of the language users in order to see which language is taken as the prestigious language by the speakers and for which language there is a perception of low prestige language among the speakers.

Communication and information technology has achieved new heights with the introduction of different social media networking sites where people are able to easily communicate with each other without

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any difficulty. One such social media network is the twitter. Twitter is a social media handle where people can share text, videos, audios and images instantly. There is no language barrier and people can share the content and can chat in any language. Despite the global spread of the twitter, very little research has been carried out on cross language behaviour on twitter (Hong, et al, 2011). Thousands of tweets are being tweeted by the users in different languages of the world. Kashmiri bilinguals also use twitter and this research is basically to identify their language behaviour while using twitter.

1.1. Literature Review

Humans have been bestowed with a unique trait i.e., language, through which they share their thoughts, information and are able to communicate with others in the society. It is said that emotions are best expressed in one's mother tongue. Due to the advent of communication technology our communication mediums changed from traditional models to new means of communication, like twitter, a social networking site. The language use can vary from person to person and from one context to the other. A study revealed that Hindi-English bilinguals tend to use Hindi while using negative comments and swearing on twitter as compared to English (Rudra, et al, 2016). Similarly, in a study, it was found that there is significant difference between the males and females in using personal pronouns while using the twitter (Abdurahman, 2017). It has been argued that behaviours of English language users generalise to other language users as well but it was seen that from the studies that other language users differ considerably while using different twitter conventions (Hong, et al 2011).

2. Methodology

Descriptive Research design was followed in this research study**.** This is the most common research design which is used in social sciences, psychology and Education **(**Nassaji, 2015**).** Data was collected directly from the users of different social networking sites who belong to Kashmir valley of India**.** The population of this research consists of the users of Twitter in Kashmir valley**.**

2.1. Sampling Technique

Stratified random sampling technique was used for the selection of a representative sample from the population**.** The whole population area **(**Kashmir**)** was divided into two strata**'**s**:** Rural and Urban**.** Taking into consideration the population size, proportionate sample was selected randomly from each stratum

2.2. Sample Size

For selecting the representative sample from the population, various techniques and formulas are used**.** Itemized sampling criteria was used to determine the sample size which says that at least ten respondents should be selected for each item in a scale to test the hypothesis (Wang, 2012). And, as such, 17 items were developed in the questionnaire. However a sample size of 200 was considered for the present study in order to be more representative sample of the population.

The questionnaire was designed after consulting different studies that have been conducted on language preferences on social media**.** The questionnaire has two sections**: -** one related to the demographic information of the respondents and the second is related to language preferences of Kashmiri speakers while using Twitter**.** The items were framed on a five point Likert scale**.**

Before administering the questionnaire to the participants, a pilot study was conducted to check the validity and reliability of the research instrument**.** The first draft of the questionnaire was given to two research scholars and one expert from Linguistics to confirm the validity of the questionnaire**.** After receiving their opinion, some items were deleted, some were added and some were modified**.** After incorporating the changes, the final draft of the questionnaire was created using the Google form**.** The questionnaire was distributed among 70 participants**.** The data was codified and tabulated and was entered in SPSS version 25**.** Cronbach**'**s alpha was used to check the reliability of the questionnaires**.** Cronbach**'**s alpha for the items was above 0**.**70 **(Table 2.1)** for the questionnaires which is considered as the acceptable value for the reliability of a measuring instrument**.**

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.937	18

Table 2.1: Reliability of the Questionnaire

3. Analysis and Results

Analysis of the data was carried out in different steps by using SPSS version 25**.** In the first step, the analysis of the demographic variables was carried out and then descriptive analysis was carried out to check the percentages, mean and standard deviation of the different items and their responses by the respondents**.** For comparative analysis of the

statements, Anova and t-test were carried out to check whether there is a significant or insignificant relationship of the different groups of demographic variables**.**

3.1. Analysis of the Demographic Variables

Table 3.1**:** Provides the Description of the Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Gender				
	Male		Female	
N	101		99	
%	50.5		49.5	
Geographical Location				
	Rural		Urban	
N	136		64	
%	68.0		32.0	
Educational Qualification				
	10th	12th	Graduation	Post-Graduation
N	46	48	50	56
%	23.0	24.0	25.0	28.0
Age				
	10-20	21-30	31-40	40 above
N	50	59	46	45
%	25.0	29.5	23.0	22.5

Table 3.1: Demographic Variables

3.2: Descriptive Analysis of the Items

Descriptive analysis of the items was carried out and accordingly, for every item, percentages, mean and standard deviations were calculated**.**

Table 3.2: provides the item wise analysis of the responses regarding the use of their language while using Twitter. Respondents responded that they do use twitter sometimes. Regarding the language use it was observed that they use Kashmiri and Urdu rarely while sharing, commenting and for positive comment they use English quite often. For negative comments, they rarely use Kashmiri and Urdu and use English sometimes. They also use Roman script often as compared to Perso Arabic script which they rarely.

Item Statements		N (f) (%)	R (f) (%)	ST (f) (%)	O (f) (%)	A (f) (%)	Mean	SD
I Use Twitter		0	101	71	18	10	2.69	.836
		0	50.5	35.5	9.0	5.0		
Language use while posting on Twitter	Kashmiri	136	20	32	7	5	1.63	1.034
		68.0	10.0	16.0	3.5	2.5		
	Urdu	106	31	49	12	2	1.87	1.045
		53.0	15.5	24.5	6.0	1.0		
	English	0	97	34	30	39	3.06	1.191
		0	48.5	17.0	15.0	19.5		
Language Use while Commenting on Twitter	Kashmiri	134	24	30	7	5	1.63	1.025
		67.0	12.0	15.0	3.5	2.5		
	Urdu	108	26	48	17	1	1.89	1.076
		54.0	13.0	24.0	8.5	.5		
	English	1	91	37	31	40	3.09	1.195
		.5	45.5	18.5	15.5	20.0		
Language Use while Posting Positive Comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	139	23	27	8	3	1.57	.970
		69.5	11.5	13.5	4.0	1.5		
	Urdu	111	26	49	11	3	1.85	1.066
		55.5	13.0	24.5	5.5	1.5		
	English	0	96	32	25	47	3.12	1.241
		0	48.0	16.0	12.5	23.5		
Language Use while Posting Negative Comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	143	25	24	3	5	1.51	.940
		71.5	12.5	12.0	1.5	2.5		
	Urdu	119	21	50	7	3	1.77	1.036
		59.5	10.5	25.0	3.5	1.5		
	English	0	113	30	19	38	2.91	1.191
		0	56.5	15.0	9.5	19.0		
Script Used while Using Twitter	Perso-Arabic Script	80	42	56	13	9	2.15	1.154
		40.0	21.0	28.0	6.5	4.5		
	Roman Script	17	60	42	35	46	3.17	1.310
		8.5	30.0	21.0	17.5	23.0		

Table 3.2: **Descriptive Analysis of Items Frequency, Percentages, Mean and Standard Deviation**

Five Point Likert Scale: Strongly Disagree (SDA), Disagree (DA), Neutral (N), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA)

3.3. Comparative Analysis Anova and t-test

Comparative analysis was carried out in order to check whether there is any significant difference between different groups. One way Anova was carried out for the groups which have more than two

categories and for the analysis of two categories of groups t-test was calculated.

Comparative analysis on the basis of educational qualification is presented in **Table 3.3**. It can be seen that there is no difference in the use of Twitter by different groups of educational qualification. There is also a significant difference in the use of Kashmiri language while sharing on Twitter and in English language use while writing a negative comment between the different groups belonging to the different educational backgrounds. Using the Perso Arabic script by the different groups while writing in Urdu and Kashmiri, the groups have shown a significant difference.

Item Statements		**Educational Qualification**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**F Value**	**Sig.**
I Use Twitter		10th	2.76	.874	.777	.508
		12th	2.79	.874		
		Grad	2.64	.776		
		Post Grad	2.57	.828		
Language Use while posting on Twitter	Kashmiri	10th	1.93	1.218	2.711	.046
		12th	1.38	.914		
		Grad	1.50	.974		
		Post Grad	1.70	.971		
	Urdu	10th	2.02	1.145	1.271	.286
		12th	1.67	.996		
		Grad	1.78	.975		
		Post Grad	1.98	1.053		
	English	10th	3.17	1.270	1.899	.131
		12th	2.88	1.104		
		Grad	2.84	1.149		
		Post Grad	3.30	1.205		
Language Use while Commenting on Twitter	Kashmiri	10th	1.80	1.128	1.267	.287
		12th	1.44	.943		
		Grad	1.54	.973		
		Post Grad	1.71	1.039		
	Urdu	10th	1.87	1.067	.702	.552
		12th	1.73	1.086		
		Grad	1.88	1.118		
		Post Grad	2.04	1.044		
	English	10th	3.30	1.209	1.356	.258
		12th	3.00	1.167		
		Grad	2.86	1.161		
		Post Grad	3.20	1.227		
Language Use while Posting Positive	Kashmiri	10th	1.83	1.235	1.985	.118
		12th	1.38	.789		
		Grad	1.46	.862		
		Post Grad	1.61	.928		

Comment on Twitter	Urdu	10th	1.85	1.074	.983	.402
		12th	1.77	1.096		
		Grad	1.70	.974		
		Post Grad	2.04	1.111		
	English	10th	3.17	1.253	.932	.426
		12th	3.04	1.237		
		Grad	2.92	1.243		
		Post Grad	3.30	1.235		
Language Use while Posting Negative Comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	10th	1.67	1.076	.935	.425
		12th	1.35	.863		
		Grad	1.48	.953		
		Post Grad	1.54	.873		
	Urdu	10th	1.78	1.052	.364	.779
		12th	1.67	1.038		
		Grad	1.74	.965		
		Post Grad	1.88	1.096		
	English	10th	3.09	1.279	2.784	.042
		12th	2.81	1.123		
		Grad	2.56	.972		
		Post Grad	3.16	1.290		
Script while Using Twitter	Perso-Arabic Script	10th	2.65	1.233	4.892	.003
		12th	1.98	.934		
		Grad	1.82	1.082		
		Post Grad	2.16	1.203		
	Roman Script	10th	3.61	1.220	2.338	.075
		12th	3.02	1.422		
		Grad	3.02	1.332		
		Post Grad	3.05	1.212		

Table 3.3: Comparative Analysis Anova for Educational Qualification

Table 3.4: presents the comparative analysis of items on the basis of age of the respondents.

The findings show that there is no significant difference between the different age groups of Kashmir valley when it comes to the frequency of using twitter. For most of the items there is no significant difference between the different age groups in the language use preferences. However, it can be observed that a significant difference is present between the use of

Kashmiri language while posting on twitter and the use of Perso-Arabic script by different age groups.

Item Statements		Age Years	Mean	Std. Dev.	F Value	Sig.
I Use Twitter		10-20	2.76	.847	.186	.906
		21-30	2.66	.921		
		31-40	2.67	.732		
		40 Above	2.64	.830		
Language Use while Posting on Twitter	Kashmiri	10-20	1.92	1.226	3.418	.018
		21-30	1.69	.969		
		31-40	1.57	1.109		
		40 Above	1.27	.654		
	Urdu	10-20	2.02	1.169	.924	.430
		21-30	1.93	1.015		
		31-40	1.76	1.037		
		40 Above	1.71	.944		
	English	10-20	3.08	1.259	.141	.935
		21-30	3.10	1.199		
		31-40	3.07	1.162		
		40 Above	2.96	1.167		
Language Use while Commenting on Twitter	Kashmiri	10-20	1.74	1.103	.892	.446
		21-30	1.69	.951		
		31-40	1.61	1.201		
		40 Above	1.42	.812		
	Urdu	10-20	1.88	1.100	.763	.516
		21-30	2.05	1.121		
		31-40	1.76	.993		
		40 Above	1.80	1.079		
	English	10-20	3.22	1.200	.293	.830
		21-30	3.07	1.216		
		31-40	3.00	1.155		
		40 Above	3.07	1.232		
Language Use while Posting Positive comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	10-20	1.78	1.200	1.813	.146
		21-30	1.63	.869		
		31-40	1.46	.959		
		40 Above	1.36	.773		
	Urdu	10-20	1.84	1.095	.209	.890

		21-30	1.93	1.081		
		31-40	1.78	1.052		
		40 Above	1.80	1.057		
	English	10-20	3.08	1.243	.162	.922
		21-30	3.20	1.270		
		31-40	3.04	1.192		
		40 Above	3.11	1.283		
Language Use while Posting Negative Comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	10-20	1.66	1.062	1.247	.294
		21-30	1.58	.914		
		31-40	1.46	1.048		
		40 Above	1.31	.668		
	Urdu	10-20	1.78	1.075	.068	.977
		21-30	1.81	1.042		
		31-40	1.74	1.042		
		40 Above	1.73	1.009		
	English	10-20	3.02	1.253	.450	.718
		21-30	2.80	1.141		
		31-40	3.00	1.193		
		40 Above	2.84	1.205		
	English	10-20	2.98	1.152	.032	.992
		21-30	2.97	1.174		
		31-40	2.91	1.132		
		40 Above	2.98	1.323		
Script while Using Twitter	Perso-Arabic Script	10-20	2.50	1.266	2.756	.044
		21-30	1.88	.948		
		31-40	2.17	1.355		
		40 Above	2.07	.963		
	Roman Script	10-20	3.42	1.295	.917	.434
		21-30	3.03	1.203		
		31-40	3.07	1.405		
		40 Above	3.16	1.364		

Table 3.4: Comparative Analysis Anova for Age

Gender wise analysis of the items is given in **Table 3.5**. It can be seen that both males and females use twitter equally and for all the items it can be seen from the figures that both males and females use language equally for sharing, commenting, and positive comment and for negative comment. Table also shows that females tend to use Roman script more times than males.

Item Statements		Gender	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-test for Equality of Means	
					t-Value	Sig. (2-tailed)
I Use Twitter		Male	2.67	.826	-.200	.842
		Female	2.70	.851		
Language Use while Posting on Twitter	Kashmiri	Male	1.68	1.076	.803	.423
		Female	1.57	.991		
	Urdu	Male	1.97	1.144	1.446	.150
		Female	1.76	.927		
	English	Male	3.03	1.162	-.303	.762
		Female	3.08	1.226		
Language Use while Commenting on Twitter	Kashmiri	Male	1.66	1.070	.534	.594
		Female	1.59	.979		
	Urdu	Male	1.93	1.125	.606	.545
		Female	1.84	1.027		
	English	Male	3.11	1.182	.225	.822
		Female	3.07	1.214		
Language Use while Posting Positive Comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	Male	1.58	.962	.282	.779
		Female	1.55	.982		
	Urdu	Male	1.95	1.161	1.417	.158
		Female	1.74	.954		
	English	Male	3.15	1.244	.385	.701

		Female	3.08	1.243		
Language Use while Posting Negative Comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	Male	1.58	1.022	1.127	.261
		Female	1.43	.847		
	Urdu	Male	1.88	1.160	1.543	.125
		Female	1.66	.883		
	English	Male	2.98	1.208	.841	.401
		Female	2.84	1.175		
Script while Using Twitter	Perso-Arabic Script	Male	2.18	1.244	.410	.682
		Female	2.11	1.058		
	Roman Script	Male	2.98	1.233	-2.031	.044
		Female	3.35	1.365		

Table 3.5: Comparative Analysis t-test for Gender

Table 3.6: figures out the classification of the language use while using twitter by rural areas and urban areas. It is observed that no significant difference is found in the use of twitter by rural and urban areas. There is significant difference in the use of English language by people belonging to the rural and urban areas when it comes to sharing, commenting, and positive comment. Urban people tend to use English more frequently than rural people. When writing a negative comment, rural people use Kashmiri more than the urban people. Difference can also be seen in using roman script. People belonging to the urban areas use Roman script frequently than that of people belonging to rural areas.

Item Statements		**Geographical Location**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**t-test for Equality of Means**	
					t-Value	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
I Use Twitter		Rural	2.73	.847	1.076	.284
		Urban	2.59	.811		
	Kashmiri	Rural	1.68	1.059	1.174	.242
		Urban	1.50	.976		

Language Use while Posting on Twitter	Urdu	Rural	1.85	1.065	-.237	.813
		Urban	1.89	1.010		
	English	Rural	2.93	1.152	-2.191	.030
		Urban	3.33	1.235		
Language Use while Commenting on Twitter	Kashmiri	Rural	1.71	1.081	1.929	.056
		Urban	1.44	.871		
	Urdu	Rural	1.88	1.071	-.191	.849
		Urban	1.91	1.094		
	English	Rural	2.96	1.160	-2.339	.020
		Urban	3.38	1.228		
Language Use while Posting Positive Comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	Rural	1.65	.993	1.815	.072
		Urban	1.39	.902		
	Urdu	Rural	1.85	1.060	.011	.991
		Urban	1.84	1.087		
	English	Rural	2.99	1.208	-2.049	.042
		Urban	3.38	1.279		
Language Use while Posting Negative Comment on Twitter	Kashmiri	Rural	1.63	1.025	2.955	.004
		Urban	1.27	.672		
	Urdu	Rural	1.80	1.060	.626	.532
		Urban	1.70	.987		
	English	Rural	2.86	1.169	-.860	.391
		Urban	3.02	1.241		
Script while Using Twitter	Perso-Arabic Script	Rural	2.05	1.157	-1.679	.095
		Urban	2.34	1.130		
	Roman Script	Rural	2.97	1.253	-3.126	.002
		Urban	3.58	1.343		

Table 3.6: Comparative Analysis t-test for Area

4. Conclusion

Language preference has been always a topic of discussion in the academic disciplines of social sciences especially in the discipline of Sociolinguistics. The theme of this paper revolves around the languages used by the Kashmiri Bilinguals while using twitter, a social networking site. Kashmiri is the language spoken by the majority of the people of Kashmir valley and Urdu and Kashmiri are acquired as the second languages. The findings of the study revealed that Kashmiris' do use Twitter in addition to the other social networking sites. The findings also revealed that the language preferences of Kashmiris' varies from using Kashmiri and Urdu rarely to using English language often while sharing, commenting and for positive comment of twitter. People of Kashmir also prefer using English sometimes and Kashmiri and Urdu rarely while posting a negative comment on twitter. Further it was also revealed that they use Roman script instead of Perso Arabic script while using twitter. Findings of the data also support that there is no significant difference between different groups on the basis of educational qualification, age, gender and area in the language choice while using twitter. However, a significant difference was seen from the data that females tend to use Roman script frequently as compared to the males. People belonging to urban areas do use Roman script more frequently than rural areas.

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