Assimilation of Militancy Related Jargon in Kashmiri

Aejaz Mohammed Sheikh[*]

Since culture is regarded as an integral whole, changes in various departments of culture cannot be treated as distinct and unrelated. It follows that change(s) in one aspect of a culture must invariably result, sooner or later, in change(s) in other aspects. As language forms a fundamental and basic component of culture, change(s) in culture results in a perceptible influence on language. This influence is usually more vivid on lexical level as the cultural and social changes lead to the induction and adoption of the vocabulary related to that socio-cultural change.

In this backdrop, the present paper aims to analyse the influence of militancy on Kashmiri language, with main focus on the induction/ borrowing of militancy related vocabulary in it. As it is, a heavy chunk of militancy related lexical items has been adopted by Kashmiri language in the last two decades. These lexical items have been nativized in conformity with the linguistic structure of Kashmiri.

Emergence of Militancy and Gun-Culture

From the beginning of the last decade of the last century, Kashmir valley witnessed an unprecedented turmoil unknown in its past history. The political scenario of Kashmir valley has been constantly at change. Prior to the eruption of militancy, National Conference (NC) enjoyed total supremacy in the political scenario of Kashmir, with Congress-I and other parties mainly confined to the sidelines. However, the dawn of 1987 witnessed the emergence of Muslim United Front (MUF), a conglomeration of different religious parties, posing a real and potential threat to the all time dominance of National Conference. But the political battle of National Conference and Muslim United Front could not last long as the year 1989 marked the eruption of militancy. It resulted in a virtual

[*] Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, India.

collapse of the political system, consequently, landing the picturesque valley in the hands of gun-trotting men. In a short span of time, militancy and counter militancy (by security forces) engulfed the whole valley affecting almost every sphere of life and resulting in a change and shift in the social and cultural fabric of valley. It seems proper to say that it led to the emergence of a totally different scenario in Kashmir which can be labelled as the 'gun-culture'.

Militancy and the Vocabulary of Kashmiri

From the past two decades, Kashmiris are living under the shadow of this gun-culture. In view of the intricate relationship which exists between language and culture, the impact of 'gun-culture' on Kashmiri language was more than due. The changed scenario in Kashmir valley has inducted into Kashmiri a jargon suiting its purpose. A large number of militancy related words gained currency in Kashmiri language. Their presence could be easily felt in the language of common Kashmiris with obvious mixing of militancy related jargon in their day to day speech. Cutting across the social barriers of age, sex, caste, literacy, etc., the militancy related lexical items like *gun, crackdown, trigger, rocket, grenade, militant, hideout, mine, interrogation, ambush, commander, cha:pi* 'raid', *muja:hid* 'warrior' and many of this kind acquired high frequency in the daily language use. Even small kids and illiterate people easily perceive and use compound words like *bu:khadta:l* 'hunger strike', *upper ground, rocket launcher, crackdown, searchlight*, etc., the way they perceive their native words, unmindful of the borrowed origin of these words. This militancy related jargon belongs mainly to English and Urdu.

English

As it is, the names of most of the titles and labels of war/ weaponry and army related items owe their origin to English. After renaissance, West has been constantly developing sophisticated weapons which led to a change in the old techniques and norms of war. The manual and hand based weapons like sword, dagger, etc., gave way to lethal and modern weapons like gun, tank, missile and what not. With every passing day, new and deadly arsenal is being added to the already existing stock of destructive weapons. Since the eruption of militancy made such weapons a common

feature of Kashmir, a large number of English based war and weaponry related lexical items have found place in the lexicon of Kashmiri. The use of words like *gun, rocket, rocket launcher, grenade, machine gun, SLR, Kalashnikov, RDX, blast, mine blast, missile, action,* etc., by common Kashmiris can substantiate the point. The militants operating in the valley also use the terminology of army to identify their rank and, as a result, we see the use of words like *battalion, company, division, platoon,* etc., with commanders of such units being labelled as *battalion commander, divisional commander, company commander, platoon commander,* respectively. Since these titles are used in the language of media also, the words have become a common feature of Kashmiri language. The deployment of security forces and their counter insurgency and counter militancy operations has led to the induction of words like *army, army camp, bunker, search, search light, crackdown, operation, fire, cross firing, cordon, bullet proof, pouch, parade, CRPF, BSF,* etc., in Kashmiri language. The words related to the control line include *border, border cross, sector, guide, track, group,* etc. A close monitoring of the local media, literature and common parlance will also reveal the use of words like *kidnap, underground, black day, strike, torture, CID, trigger, hit order, leg shot,* etc. The paucity of space of the paper does not permit to list all such words but the above mentioned examples suffice to portray the adoption of such words in Kashmiri.

Urdu

The second main source of militancy related jargon is the Perso-Arabic based lexicon of Urdu. A huge number of militancy related lexical items can be traced to this source. Their presence and frequent utilization by militants can be attributed to the religious tone and colour of these lexical items. The words like *jiha:d* 'holy war', *șahi:d* 'martyr', *tehri:k* 'movement', *muja:hid* 'warrior', *a:za:di:* 'freedom', etc., are an indicator in this regard. The names of many militant organisations have also been coined by using the Perso-Arabic and Urdu sources. To make the point clear, consider the names of some militant organisations: *Hizbul Mujahidin, Hizbullah, Harkatul Mujahidin, Harkatul Ansar, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Al- Badr, Harkat-e-Jehad-e-Islami.*

Hybrid Expressions

In addition to the individual lexical items of Urdu and English, many hybrid expressions have been evolved during the period of militancy. The use of bases from Kashmiri, Urdu and English languages is witnessed in such expressions. Consider the following examples.

gaʂti: party	Urdu + English
ja:ba:z force	Urdu + English
local trained	English + English
ʂina:khti: parade	Urdu + English
tehsi:l commander	Urdu + English
ʂahi:d maza:r	Urdu + Urdu
dragad militant	Kashmiri + English

Linguistic Treatment of Militancy Related Jargon

It needs to be mentioned that, throughout its history, Kashmiri has profoundly borrowed from various languages, the prominent among whom are Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and Urdu. Given the global status of English, Kashmiri has been borrowing frequently from this language in the last couple of decades. The trend of borrowing by Kashmiri continues as can be witnessed from the above deliberations. The borrowed words are adapted and assimilated according to the linguistic structure of the language. The linguistic modifications or nativization occurs at different levels like phonology, morphology, etc.

Kashmiri makes necessary phonological changes in the borrowed militancy related words which can be observed in the following examples.

garnet	for	*grineid*	'grenade'
cre:kdavin	for	*krækdaun*	'crackdown'
kamp	for	*kæmp*	'camp'
ba:dar	for	*bɔ:də'*	'border'
mi:zê:yil	for	*mizail*	'missile'
po:ch	for	*paʊʧ*	'pouch'
ko:d	for	*kəʊd*	'code'
kantro:l lê:n	for	*kəntrəʊl lain*	'control line'
harta:l	for	*hadta:l*	'strike'
mujê:hid	for	*muja:hid*	'warrior'
ikhwê:n'	for	*ikhwa:n*	'militants of an organization

In morphological modifications, various morphological processes of Kashmiri are applied to these borrowed words. For example, many words undergo plural formation according to the pattern of Kashmiri language.

For example,   *mayin*   *mayni*   (addition of suffix 'I')

ikhwa:n   *ikhw∂:n'*   (paltalization of the last consonant accompanied by vowel change)

In some cases, zero suffixation is involved in plural formation. For example, word '*muja:hid*' is used both as singular and plural in Kashmiri while in Urdu its plural is '*muja:hidi:n*'. Similarly, word '*militant*' has '*militants*' as plural in English while in Kashmiri the word 'militant' is used as both singular and plural.

The case suffixes of Kashmiri language are also applied on the militancy related jargon.

For example,   militant   militant + av

militant   militant + an

militant   militant + as

Besides the phonological and morphological modifications semantic changes are also observed in various militancy related words. It includes the processes of semantic narrowing, widening and shift. Consider the following examples.

Words	Original meaning	Meaning in Kashmiri	Semantic Change
Operation	(n) operating; the way a thing works planned action; surgical operation	military operation surgical operation	Narrowing
rocket	a structure that flies by expelling burning gas; a spacecraft	rocket shaped explosive fired by a weapon called rocket launcher; spacecraft	Narrowing
camp	place with temporary accommodation	army camp	Narrowing

	in tents; a place where troops are lodged or trained; a group of people with the same ideals		
mukhbir	Informer	informer; informer for for army or intelligence agencies	Widening
track	marks left by a moving person or thing; a path; a rough road; way; railway line	secret paths used by militants to sneak	Narrowing
ikhwᾱːn'	brother	Militants of an organisation, surrendered militants working for the army	Shift

Besides, some words belonging to Kashmiri language have also undergone semantic shift with a new meaning getting attached to them, in addition to their original meaning, under the influence of militancy. For example, a word 'dragud' (meaning barren open land) has been used to refer to the local trained militants who did not get arms training across the border. Another word 's.ɔyeʔ' (meaning wick) has also been used for such militants. It needs to be mentioned here that the words are regional variants in that the former is employed in South Kashmir while as the latter is used in Srinagar.

The process of **clipping** is also frequently applied on borrowed words in which "a word of more than one syllable gets reduced to a shorter form, often in casual speech" (Yule, 1997, p.66).

e.g.,

'Hide'	for	'Hide Out'
'Set'	for	'Wireless Set'
'Launcher'	for	'Rocket Launcher'
'Local'	for	'Local Trained'

In addition to the above, acronyms are also created in many cases. They are "formed from the initial letters of a set of other words. These can remain essentially 'alphabetisms' such as CD ('compact disk') or VCR ('video cassette recorder') where the pronunciation consists of the set of letters. More typically, acronyms are pronounced as single words, as in NATO, NASA or UNESCO. These examples have kept their capital letters, but many acronyms lose their capitals to become everyday terms such as *laser* ('light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation'), *radar* ('radio detecting and ranging'), *scuba* ('self contained underwater breathing apparatus') and *zip* ('zone improvement plan') code" (Yule, 1997, p. 68). The process results in shortening of certain forms of language to reduce the time and effort spent on in speech and writing. Examples are as follows:

'HM'	for	'Hizbul Mujahidin'
JKLF'	for	'Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front'
'KK'	for	'Kalashnikov'
'DC'	for	'District Commander'
'AC'	for	'Area Commander'
'STF'	for	'Special Task Force'

Use of Militancy Related Jargon in Formal and Informal Situations

As mentioned earlier, the militancy related words have gained a wide currency in the speech of Kashmiris. Their use can be observed in both formal and informal situations. In formal situations, a person is supposed to behave and act in a polished and disciplined manner. In such situations, language is used in a calculated manner, depending on the extent of formality. In such situations one can witness the use of militancy related

words like *muja:hid* 'warrior', *şahi:d* 'martyr', *tehri:k* 'movement', *firing*, *army*, etc. The language of news media can also be cited in this regard. The local newspapers of valley, Doordarshan Kendra, Srinagar and Radio Kashmir, Srinagar have got influenced by this jargon. In the newspaper headlines of local dailies and the news bulletins of Doordarshan Kendra and Radio Kashmir, one can witness the words like *grenade, cross firing, border, militant, militancy, surrender, blast, hathya:r* 'arms', *taşadud* 'extremism, torture', *jangju:* 'fighter', *cha:pi* 'raid', etc. In this regard some of the headlines gathered from news media are reproduced below.

kɔpwa:ri chu dɔyav militantav sarandar kormut
'Two militants surrendered in Kupwara'

doda:has maz̃ chu jadpi maz̃ akk militant jã bahak gomut
'One militant killed in an encounter in Doda.'

The use of such jargon is witnessed in day to day conversations also. Consider the following examples:

zan chu maslay kashmi:r
'As if it is (like) Kashmir issue'.

The expression has been used to talk about the serious/ non-serious nature of a problem. Observe the use of word army in the following expression which portrays the haste of a person.

zan chay armi: patɨ
'It seems as if army is chasing you'.

Besides the formal situations, the militancy related jargon is frequently used in the informal situations also by various close-knit groups. The members of such (informal) groups include classmates, kin relations, friends and neighbours. In such groups, the regular interaction, and the consequent informality, leads to the generation of group norms which become typical of that particular group. In the informal talks of these groups, the militancy related expressions are deliberately adopted to codify the message in such a manner that only a group member can decode it. Use of these words in a comical manner serves to interest, to delight and to

appeal to the senses. For example, in such situations, the word 'action' is used to refer to 'winking'. Similarly, 'hide out' stands for 'secret meeting place for lovers' and 'crackdown' for 'love action'. In such situations, the name of a secessionist women's organisation 'Dukhtaran-e-Millat' is used to refer to the girls.

Besides, the militancy related words are also used in figurative and non-literal manner in the casual speech of common Kashmiris. Consider the below given example.

machan kara:n crekdavin
'(It) crackdowns on house flies'

The expression was used by a road side vendor in a bid to sell and advertise his insecticide used for killing house flies and mosquitoes. By using the expression 'machan kara:n crekdavin' the vendor tries to portray the killing power of the insecticide. The figurative use of the word crackdown adds vigour to the expression given the background of the word and the response and image the word is capable of creating in the mind of the hearer.

Another example of this nature is as follows.

ba:kiy ta:liba:n kati chi:
'Where are your other Taliban'

The expression was used on a wedding party by a person to enquire from a butcher about his other companions. Observe the jovial and comic nature of the expression. The use of word Taliban has not only a comic and jovial sense but its association with the word butcher lends it pragmatic dimensions.

Conclusion

As revealed from the above discussion, Kashmiri language has been profoundly influenced by militancy in that it has adopted a large number of militancy related words in its vocabulary. These lexical items, after proper linguistic treatment, have been completely nativized and assimilated in the language which is attested by their use in the language of common

Kashmiris. The use of these words in the casual and informal speech points to the total acceptance and assimilation of this jargon in Kashmiri. The findings also highlight the close relationship which is supposed to exist between language and society/ culture.

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