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Persian Borrowings in Kashmiri: A Descriptive and Analytical Study

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Abstract: This research examines lexical and structural borrowings from Persian into Kashmiri, with a particular emphasis on nativization techniques at the morphological, semantic, and phonological levels. Addressing a gap in Persian-Kashmiri contact linguistics, this research investigates the integration of Persian loanwords and the resultant structural innovations in Kashmiri. With a framework that blends contact and historical linguistics, the study investigates linguistic limitations that affect the borrowing process. Employing corpus analysis with diachronic and synchronic approaches, this study contributes to the understanding of language contact phenomena, particularly Persian-Kashmiri interactions. The results shed light on the sociolinguistic and historical influences that have shaped the vocabulary and structure of Kashmiri, providing insights into more general trends of language borrowing and language change in contact circumstances.

Keywords: Borrowings, Nativization, Contact-Induced Change, Persian, Kashmiri.

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1. Introduction

In the field of historical linguistics and language evolution, the phenomenon of linguistic borrowing—a result of language contact—has long been the focus of academic study. In particular, the mechanisms of nativization and the restrictions governing such language transfers are examined, as well as the complex processes of lexical and structural borrowing from Persian into Kashmiri.

The degree and kind of linguistic borrowing are strongly influenced by the duration and intensity of language contact. Despite the extensive historical contact between Persian and Kashmiri, there has been a relative lack of dedicated scholarship examining Persian-Kashmiri language contact phenomena, particularly when compared to the substantial body of research on Indo-Persian linguistic interactions more broadly. This scholarly gap is particularly notable given Kashmir's unique position as a region of sustained Persian cultural and political influence. The present study addresses this lacuna by providing a comprehensive analysis of borrowing mechanisms and nativization processes specific to the Persian-Kashmiri contact situation.

Crystal (1997) posits a correlation between the geographic or social proximity of languages and the extent of lexical borrowing, which he identifies as the primary vehicle of language transfer and change. The historical context of the Persian-Kashmiri contact, rooted in the political and cultural ties between Kashmir and Iran, which were established in the 14th century, providing a rich terrain for investigating these linguistic phenomena. However, the integration of foreign linguistic elements is not unrestricted; it is constrained by the structural properties and rules of the recipient language. Winford (2003: 59) aptly notes that "borrowings are subject to different kinds of changes, as they vie for a place in the lexicon with the native items that may already occupy similar space." This observation underscores the complex interplay between borrowed and native linguistic elements.

The dynamic nature of borrowings, from their initial entry into a language to their eventual integration, is a crucial aspect of this study. Kay (1995: 72) elucidates this process: "Borrowings are especially open to modification, both on entering the language and with time… the flexibility of form and meaning of borrowings enables them to adapt easily to the structure of the host language and current trends and needs." This adaptability of borrowings forms a central theme in my analysis.

The current study expands significantly upon the foundational scholarship on Persian-Kashmiri contact, including Koul's linguistic studies (1986, 2005), Ashok K. Koul's lexical documentation (2008), and the comprehensive survey in Encyclopaedia Iranica (Koul 2012). By utilizing a larger variety of data, my research seeks to offer a more thorough understanding of the handling of lexical and structural borrowings. The methodology used includes thorough use of lexicographical resources to verify accuracy, as well as interaction with native speakers of Kashmiri and Persian.

This article is structured as follows: Section 1.1 presents the theoretical framework and socio- historical context underpinning this research. Section

2 offers a detailed analysis of lexical borrowings, with particular attention to the processes of nativization. Section 2.2 examines the semantic shifts observed in lexical borrowings. Section 3 explores structural borrowings and resultant linguistic innovations. Finally, Section 4 provides a comprehensive discussion of my findings and concluding remarks.

Through this study, I aim to contribute to the broader understanding of language contact phenomena, particularly in the context of Persian influence on Kashmiri. By elucidating the mechanisms of borrowing and nativization, I seek to shed light on the dynamic processes that shape language evolution in situations of prolonged cultural and linguistic contact.

1.1. Literature Review

Previous scholarship specifically addressing Persian–Kashmiri language contact has been limited but foundational. Koul (1986) examined mechanisms of stylistic diffusion from Persian into Kashmiri, identifying key patterns of linguistic influence. His comprehensive study (Koul 2005) offered a broader morphological and syntactic analysis of Kashmiri, while Ashok K. Koul (2008) provided the most systematic documentation of lexical borrowings to date. The authoritative *Encyclopaedia Iranica* entry (Koul 2012) presents a detailed overview of Persian elements across multiple linguistic domains. However, none of these works employ the integrated theoretical framework combining contact and historical linguistics adopted in the present study, nor do they offer a systematic analysis of nativization strategies across phonological, morphological, and structural levels. The present study builds upon these foundational contributions while expanding both the analytical scope and theoretical grounding. This segment offers a critical analysis of prior scholarship and recent research relevant to the processes of language borrowing and contact-induced change.

1.1.1. Contact-Induced Change

The field of contact linguistics has thoroughly investigated the linguistic changes that happen when speakers of distinct languages interact with prolonged interaction. These alterations have fueled language evolution throughout history, appearing in a variety of linguistic domains. Aikhenvald (2006:20) offers a nuanced perspective on the outcomes of such contact, positing that contact-induced changes can "alter the grammatical structure of the language or preserve it, depending on whether they restructure the

system or borrow a term." This observation underscores the complex and multifaceted nature of linguistic changes resulting from language contact.

Winford (2003) demonstrates that language maintenance scenarios—where minority languages interact with dominant linguistic groups—typically result in lexical and structural borrowing patterns driven by prestige factors, as evidenced in historical cases like Norman French influence on Middle English.

Bloomfield (1933) first introduced the idea of prestige in linguistic borrowing, proposing that borrowing usually entails the transfer of linguistic components from a more prestigious language to a less prestigious one. This theoretical framework offers a useful perspective for analyzing the historical infiltration of Persian lexical elements into the Kashmiri language. The elevated status of Persian as the language of governance in the 11th century created conducive conditions for its integration into the Kashmiri lexicon.

Building on these fundamental ideas, this research investigates the particular processes and results of Persian-Kashmiri language interaction. I hope to advance knowledge of contact induced language change by investigating the lexical and structural borrowing processes in this environment, especially when languages of different social and political standing are involved in language maintenance scenarios.

1.1.2. Linguistic Borrowing

The concept of linguistic borrowing, while ubiquitous in language contact studies, lacks a universally accepted definition. Thomason and Kaufman (1992:37) offer a comprehensive description, characterizing borrowing as "the incorporation of foreign features into a group's native language by speakers of that language." They further elucidate the terminological distinctions, designating languages that provide borrowed features as ‘source languages’ and those that incorporate these features as ‘recipients’ or ‘borrowing languages’.

Trask 1996 adopts a broader perspective, conceptualizing borrowing as the transference of any type of linguistic element between languages due to contact. This definition encompasses a wide array of linguistic phenomena, from lexical to structural borrowings. The literature frequently employs terms such as ‘donor language’ or ‘source language’ to denote the origin of borrowed elements, while ‘receiving language’ refers to the linguistic system adopting these new forms. The borrowed linguistic material itself is commonly referred to as a ‘loan’ or ‘borrowing’.

This idea is further developed by Aikhenvald (2006), who points out that a wide range of linguistic material is transferable. Phonemes, lexemes, prefixes, verbal categories, and even numerals may be included, highlighting how commonplace language borrowing is in contact situations. The degree and results of borrowing might differ greatly. Thomason and Kaufman (1992:74–76) offer a sophisticated borrowing scale that distinguishes between various borrowing stages and the characteristics that go along with them. This scale starts at "casual contact," which is defined as having little to no lexical borrowing; it goes up to "slightly more intense contact," which includes some lexical and minor structural borrowing; and it ends at "very strong contact," where substantial typological changes in the receiving language result from extensive structural borrowing. The language interaction between Persian and Kashmiri speakers can be categorized as "more intense," evidenced by substantial lexical borrowings accompanied by a limited number of structural borrowings.

1.1.3. Nativization

The process of nativization occurs when borrowed linguistic components are incorporated into the structure of the receiving language. The process of 'nativization', which is an integration mechanism, functions on various levels, varying from simple phonological modifications to intricate structural changes. The complexity of nativization tends to increase in tandem with the hierarchy of borrowability, with structural nativization presenting the most significant challenges.

As native speakers adopt and employ foreign lexical items, the process of borrowing and subsequent nativization unfolds. Winford 2003: 59 observes that this process "not only adds to the lexicon but also enriches its potential for further expansion. Phonological and morphological developments may also be triggered by foreign additions to the vocabulary." This finding emphasizes how borrowed words and phrases have the power to initiate more extensive grammatical shifts in the target language.

While the maintained language frequently experiences significant lexical borrowing, structural changes are usually restricted in language maintenance contexts. This tendency may be seen in the Persian-Kashmiri contact scenario, where the latter's nativization at different linguistic levels is a result of adopting Persian loans, but structural changes are still relatively small.

The subsequent sections of this study will explore the multifaceted nature of nativization, examining its manifestations across phonological, lexical, morphological, and structural domains in the context of Persian borrowings in Kashmiri. This comprehensive analysis aims to contribute

to our understanding of the intricate processes involved in linguistic borrowing and nativization in situations of prolonged language contact.

1.2. Socio-Historical Context

Historical and sociopolitical variables have a fundamental influence on the complex interactions between languages. It is a well-established phenomenon that dominant languages have an impact on minority speakers, and literature frequently acts as a vehicle for language dissemination. The 12th-century development of the Islamic Empire in India led to a notable infusion of Perso-Arabic vocabulary features into the languages of North India. As a reflection of the complicated linguistic environment of the time, the term "Perso-Arabic" here refers to both words of direct Persian origin and those of Arabic provenance that were conveyed through Persian.

Historical evidence consistently demonstrates that political and commercial interactions have been pivotal in fostering cultural and linguistic exchanges across societal strata. Muslim rule had an especially profound impact on Northern India prior to partition, permanently altering the linguistic fabric of the area. As stated by Bamzai (1962), Kashmiri culture was significantly influenced by Arab and Persian cultures, and these influences may still be evident today. The most notable result of this effect was the Kashmiri language and literature's Persian ancestry.

Kashmir and Iran established cultural and political ties in the 14th century, which facilitated the introduction of Persian lexical elements into Kashmiri linguistics. It is important to remember that although Persian borrowings make up the majority of borrowings, a substantial number of borrowed items trace their etymology to 9th-century Arabia, entering Kashmir via Persian. Examples include *nūr* 'light', '*ālam* 'universe', and *haqq* 'right', underscoring the complex trajectories of lexical borrowing. As documented extensively in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (Koul 2012), Persian elements permeated multiple domains of Kashmiri language and culture, with borrowings spanning religious, administrative, and literary vocabularies. Koul's (1986) analysis of style diffusion reveals that this influence operated not merely at the lexical level but also affected register and stylistic conventions.

Historically interconnected Arab and Iranian cultures, forged by political alliances, provide essential context for understanding these linguistic phenomena. Rezakhani (2011) reports that a synthesis of Arabic and Persian cultural and linguistic aspects was sparked by the Arab conquest of Iran in 651 CE, which came about as a result of the collapse of the

Sassanid Empire. The linguistic advancements that followed in Northern India were made possible by this historical event.

During the 11th century, when Muslims ruled a large portion of Northern India, there was a notable infusion of Perso-Arabic terminology into native languages. The long reign of this language left its mark on the lexicons of several Indian languages, to differing degrees. According to Safavi (2006), all Indian languages, such as Bengali, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Telugu, Hindi, and Kashmiri, possess a large number of Persian words and phrases without any native equivalents.

This historical synopsis offers an essential foundation for comprehending the sociolinguistic processes that enabled the widespread borrowing of Persian into the Kashmiri language. It emphasizes how crucial it is to take into account larger historical and cultural contexts when analyzing language occurrences, especially in areas with intricate histories of political upheaval and cross-cultural interaction.

1.3. Language Ideology and Diglossia

Ferguson (1959) introduced the idea of diglossia, which is the coexistence of high and low varieties of a language, each used in different formal and informal contexts. An essential framework for comprehending the processes of language contact and borrowing in multilingualcultures is provided by this sociolinguistic phenomenon.

According to Aikhenvald 2002:13, circumstances involving "*one-to-one language contact with diglossia may lead to a considerable influx of loanwords*" from the language that is socially or politically dominant. On the other hand, situations where there aren't any power differentials during language contact typically lead to *"mutual adjustment of structure"*. This theoretical framework provides insightful information about the type and degree of language borrowing in many contexts.

The diglossic link is especially important in the context of Persian-Kashmiri language interaction. Persian was the language of the state and was used primarily by the privileged strata of society. It was the principal language of court, government, and poetry. The lexical borrowing and phonological adaptation patterns were significantly impacted by this linguistic stratification.

One significant feature of this diglossic environment is the establishment of two distinct pronunciation patterns for borrowed words. Proficient in Persian and/or Urdu, the upper classes of society have mostly preserved the original pronunciation of borrowed phrases, especially in formal settings.

In contrast, the general populace has adopted nativized pronunciations, especially in informal settings. This phonological divergence not only reflects the sociolinguistic stratification of the speech community but also provides a fascinating case study of the processes of linguistic adaptation and nativization.

Dual pronunciation patterns present a rich field for sociolinguistic research, with the ability to clarify the intricate relationships between language ideology, social status, and linguistic practice. It emphasizes how diverse language contact outcomes may be, with borrowed pieces undergoing varying integration processes based on usage settings and sociocultural factors. Thus, the Persian-Kashmiri case illustrates how diglossic circumstances, influenced by social, political, and cultural forces, can result in complex patterns of language borrowing and adaptation. This viewpoint improves our comprehension of the intricate dynamics present in language contact scenarios, especially when there is a pronounced power imbalance between the interacting linguistic communities.

2. Lexical Borrowing: Processes and Nativization Strategies

Lexical borrowing is a common occurrence in cross-linguistic interaction that can take many different forms and occur in a variety of circumstances. This process frequently requires intricate nativization mechanisms in the target language, far from being a straightforward transference of lexical elements. Given its substantial borrowings from Persian in a variety of semantic areas, such as lexicons related to religion, administration, and law, the Kashmiri language offers an excellent case study for researching these nativization processes.

2.1. Nativization Strategies: Theoretical Framework and Mechanisms

The various approaches taken to nativize borrowed words highlight how complex language adaptation is in contact situations. These procedures help incorporate new terms more easily, but they may also cause pre-existing lexical paradigms to change in response to language influences from different cultures. As Haugen (1953:388) astutely observes, "every loan is part importation and part substitution," highlighting the dual nature of lexical borrowing as both an additive and transformative process.

2.1.1. Phonological Nativization

A key component of linguistic nativization is the phonological modification of borrowed lexemes. Usually, this technique entails replacing foreign

phonemes with the closest native equivalents. Hyman 1970 proposes a model of phonological borrowing based on phonemic comparison, positing that a language first finds the closest phonemes that encompass the phonetic quality of the foreign sound, and then the foreign sound is approximately phonemicized and subjected to the phonological constraints of that phoneme's members. Since they are accustomed to the phonotactic restrictions of their language, native speakers quickly modify borrowed words to fit these pre-established patterns. As part of this adaptation, the borrowed lexeme may be inserted, deleted, or substituted to align with the recipient's syllable structure and phonological rules.

In the context of Persian loanwords in Kashmiri, several distinctive nativization strategies are observable.

2.1.1.1. Vowels

There are a number of vowels that were nativized in Kashmiri, usually by an alternate vowel or vowel insertion. Below are some examples of how Persian vowels are nativized in Kashmiri.

2.1.1.1.1. Vowel alternations

The close-back rounded vowel *u* is replaced by the open-mid back rounded vowel *ɔ*: As indicated in the examples in (1) below:

(1) ***u* > *ɔ***

gulāb > *gɔlāb* 'rose',

ruxsār > *rɔkhsār* 'cheeks',

ruxsat > *rɔkhsat* 'leave/discharge'.

In the above examples, the velar fricative *x* is replaced by the velar stop *kh*. This change will be discussed in the consonant change below.

The open central unrounded vowel ā is replaced by the mid-central vowel *ə̄* (schwa but only when the following consonant is followed by the close front unrounded vowel i as indicated by examples in (2):

(2) ***ā* > *ə̄***

tāǰir > *tə̄ǰir* 'trader',

ǰāri > *ǰə̄ri* 'running/ongoing',

bāzi > *bə̄zi* 'play',

ɣāliban > *gə̄liban* 'probably'.

Comparing the borrowed word *tāb* 'fortitude/resistance', which does not change to *tə̄b*, its vowel remains the same. Also, in the word *gulāb* 'rose,' which changes to *gɔlāb* only the vowel in the first syllable changes. The open central unrounded vowel *ā* remains unchanged since the following consonant *b* is not followed by the vowel *i*. However, when the same noun *gulāb* is changed into the adjective *gulābi* 'rosy', its nativized form *gɔlāb* changes into *gɔlābi,* the vowel *ā* changes to *ə̄,* because the final consonant is followed by the vowel *i*.

Kashmiri does not allow vowels *i, e, and u* in the initial position, so borrowings that start with these vowels are usually replaced. For example, when the close front unrounded vowel *i* is in the initial position, it is replaced by the voiced palatal semivowel *y,* as indicated by examples in (3):

(3) ***i > y***

insāf > *yinsālf ~ insāf* 'justice',

isteqbaal > *yistekbāll ~ istekbāl* 'welcome',

imkān > *yimkān ~imkān* 'possibility'.

Scholarly investigation is warranted due to the complex phenomenon of lexical borrowing between Kashmiri and Persian in the sociolinguistic context. The appearance of two distinct pronunciation patterns for borrowed lexemes is a prominent aspect of this linguistic situation. In phonological realization, this duality appears as a socially stratified dichotomy. The vast majority use nativized pronunciations, which have been phonologically adjusted to conform to Kashmiri phonotactic restrictions. Conversely, the upper classes of society, especially those who speak Persian and/or Urdu fluently, tend to retain pronunciations that are closer to the original Persian forms. This split in pronunciation reveals deeper sociolinguistic dynamics rather than being just a result of linguistic variety. The preservation of more "authentic" Persian pronunciations among the elite echelons of society can be interpreted through the lens of language ideology and prestige. Maintaining these pronunciations, particularly in formal settings, probably acts as a sociolinguistic marker, possibly indicating cultural sophistication, social standing, or education.

This tendency is consistent with more comprehensive theories of language ideology and sociolinguistic prestige. The elite pronunciation may have overt prestige in the speech community because of its ties to speakers of the historically dominant language. On the other hand, the nativized forms are more frequently linked to informal settings and the general public, while potentially carrying covert prestige as markers of local identity.

This scenario offers an intriguing case study on the relationship between linguistic ideology, social stratification, and language contact. It emphasizes

how intricately historical power relations, social standing, and phonological adaptation interact when there is a lot of lexical borrowing.

2.1.1.1.2. Vowel insertions

Instances of vowel insertions are also observed. For example, a vowel *i* is added to break consonant clusters, as indicated by examples in (4):

(4) *darj* > *dari̯j* 'record',
sabr > *sabi̯r* 'patience',
garm > *gari̯m* 'hot'.

2.1.1.2. Consonants

Consonants were mostly nativized by substituting them with native equivalents and deletion. Given are some of the examples of consonantal changes.

2.1.1.2.1. Consonantal Changes

The process of nativizing Persian loanwords into the Kashmiri language entails the methodical replacement of foreign stops and fricatives with their corresponding Kashmiri equivalents. This is what Hock 1991 refers to as a "system-based pattern of substitution." This procedure exhibits a dependable, consistent method for modifying foreign sounds while taking into account the phonological restrictions of the target language. These replacements adhere to observable patterns rather than being random, preserving Kashmiri's phonological integrity while adding new vocabulary. This methodical adaptation advances our knowledge of general principles in language borrowing and phonological change and offers insightful information about the phonological linkages between Persian and Kashmiri. For instance, Kashmiri adopts different stops and fricatives from Persian:

stops	ʔ →	ə
	q →	k
fricatives	x →	kh
	ɣ →	g
	f →	ph

The Persian glottal stop ʔ in the initial position changes to the mid-central vowel *ə*, as indicated by examples in (5):

(5) ʔ > ə

ʔiṯīr > *əṯīr* 'scent/perfume',
ʔišq > *əšik* 'love',
ʔilm > *əlim* 'knowledge'.

Uvular stop *q* changes to velar stop *k*, as indicated by examples in (6):

(6) *q* > *k*

qad > *kad* 'height',
qarār > *karār* 'rest',
yaqīn > *yakīn* 'belief'.

The voiceless velar fricative *x* is replaced by the velar stop *kh* as indicated by examples in (7):

(7) *x* > *kh*

xarāb > *kharāb* 'bad',
xām > *khām* 'raw',
xoš > *khoš* 'happy',
xās > *khās* 'special'.

The voiced velar fricative *ɣ* changes to the voiced velar stop *g*, as indicated by examples in (8):

(8) *ɣ* > *g*

ɣāliban > *gəliban* 'probably',
ɣaflat > *gaflat* 'heedlessness'

The labiodental fricative *f* changes to the voiced bilabial stop *ph* as indicated by examples in (9):

(9) *f* > *ph*

fasād > *phasād* ~ *fasād* 'corruption',
fan > *phan* ~ *fan* 'abuse/curse',
fida > *phida* ~ *fida* 'sacrifice,'
farzi > *pharzi*~ *farzi* 'fake/false'

Koul and Kashi (1997: 295) observe a noteworthy phonological phenomenon in Kashmiri: the presence of a non-native sound, presumably [f], primarily in loanwords. This sound exhibits considerable variability in its realization,

alternating with the aspirated bilabial stop [pʰ] in many speakers' pronunciations. Furthermore, in formal or affected speech, it freely varies with [f]. This pattern of phonological adaptation and variation illustrates the complex interplay between native phonemic inventories and borrowed sounds. It emphasizes how phonological integration is dynamic in language contact scenarios, preserving the phonology of the source language while also adjusting it to the phonological system of the target language. This phenomenon offers significant fresh insights into the sociolinguistic variables affecting phoneme realization in borrowed lexemes as well as the processes of phonological nativization.

2.1.1.2.2. Consonantal Deletions

There are several borrowed words that undergo cluster reduction through deletions at various positions. For example, the dental unaspirated stop *t* is lost when it is preceded by alveolar fricative *s* or palatal *š*, as indicated by examples in (10):

(10) *dast* > *das* 'hand',
ābgošt > *ābgoš* 'meat cuisine',
šikast > *šikas* 'defeat'.

2.1.2. Morphological Nativization

The morphological nativization of Persian loanwords in Kashmiri presents a compelling case of linguistic integration, manifesting in both inflectional and derivational processes. This phenomenon demonstrates the adaptability of borrowed lexemes to the grammatical structure of the recipient language.

2.1.2.1. Inflectional Nativization

Inflectional nativization is particularly noteworthy, as Persian loanwords readily adopt Kashmiri inflectional morphology. Koul (1977) provides illuminating examples of this process. The loanword *batuk* 'duck' (from Persian *batax*) exemplifies this adaptation, undergoing pluralization (*batuk* M.Sg 'duck' > *batak* M.PL 'ducks'; *batič* F.Sg > *batiči* F.PL) and gender marking (*batuk* M, *batič* F) in accordance with Kashmiri morphological patterns. This pattern mirrors that of native Kashmiri words, as evidenced by the comparable inflection of *gagur* 'rat'. Moreover, Persian stems demonstrate compatibility with Kashmiri case marking systems. The dative case marker *-as* attaches to both borrowed and native stems (e.g., *batk-as*

'to the duck', *gagar-as* 'to the rat'), illustrating the seamless integration of loanwords into Kashmiri's case system.

Koul (1977) further elucidates this phenomenon, noting that the locative case marker *-an* readily affixes to Persian stems (*sahar* 'morning' > *sahran* 'in the morning'). Additionally, the feminine dative marker *-i* exhibit productivity in deriving adjectives from Persian nouns (*kitāb* 'book' > *kitābi* 'bookish'). This morphological integration aligns with broader patterns documented in Ashok K. Koul's (2008) comprehensive survey of Kashmiri lexical borrowings, though the present analysis extends beyond mere documentation to examine underlying nativization mechanisms.

This comprehensive morphological integration of Persian loanwords into Kashmiri's inflectional system underscores the language's capacity to assimilate foreign lexical items fully into its grammatical structure. It provides valuable insights into the mechanisms of linguistic borrowing and the adaptability of grammatical systems in language contact situations.

2.1.2.2. Derivational Nativization

There are not many examples of native Kashmiri prefixes attaching to a Persian stem because there are not many prefixes in Kashmiri itself, however, suffixes are common. The derivational suffix *-lad,* a nominalizer, has been extended from Kashmiri words like *phakhlad.* Below are some examples:

(11) Persian stem + Kashmiri suffix

Persian stem	***Gloss***	***Nativized form***	***Derived form***	***Gloss***
šikast	failure	*šikas*	*šikaslad*	someone who is destitute
sil	tuberculosis	*sil-*	*sil-lad*	someone with tuberculosis
xasār	loss/damage	*xasār-*	*xasār-lad*	something that is damaged

The morphological integration of Persian elements, while extensive, represents only one dimension of lexical adaptation. Equally significant are the semantic modifications that occur during the borrowing process. The phonological and morphological integration of Persian elements, while extensive, represents only one dimension of lexical adaptation. Equally significant are the semantic modifications that occur during the borrowing process.

2.2 Semantic Change in Lexical Borrowings

A plethora of words that were borrowed with no change in meaning, ranging from fruits like *gilās* 'cherry' and', *hendevane* 'watermelon' to body parts like *rag* 'blood vessel', *rān 'thigh',* and', *šooš* 'lung' to proper nouns like '*dilshad*', '*feroz', 'shams',* and *'aftāb'*. Besides phonological and morphological nativization, many borrowed words underwent semantic changes as well. In some cases, the meanings of borrowed words were extended to additional domains, like the Persian word *dur* which means 'pearl' or 'pearl earrings', extended to mean 'any kind of earring' in Kashmiri *duur*. Some words underwent specialization, i.e., the meaning that erstwhile covered a large sense becomes narrow. For example, the Persian word *bāng* means 'a loud cry', however, in Kashmiri, it is only used for 'the cry of a rooster' or 'the call to prayer of a *muezzin*' (person who gives the call to prayer at a mosque).
There have been numerous instances in Kashmiri poetry where Iranian lexical items have been used, mostly in the form of metaphors. Persian metaphors like *sarv,* literally the name of a cypress tree, is used to praise the height of someone; *durdān* 'pearl' for teeth, *sarv-e ravān* 'walking cypress' for praising gait, and *tīr-e misgān* 'arrows of eyelashes' for praising eyelashes. The last two are structurally new and different given the Kashmiri structure. There is a profusion of such Persian phrases in Kashmiri that were transported and used as frozen phrases. Due to structural constraints, they were not extended to native Kashmiri words, which will be discussed in the following section.

3. Structural Borrowing and Innovations

The phonological, morphological, and syntactic systems of the receiving language can all be strongly impacted by the phenomena of structural borrowing in language contact situations. Although there has been significant phonological nativization of Persian lexical borrowings into Kashmiri, the process has not been consistent throughout the speech community. Alternative pronunciations continue to exist, especially among the upper classes of society, as demonstrated by earlier examples, most notably (3) and (9). The intricate sociolinguistic dynamics at work in the context of contact between Persian and Kashmiri are reflected in this linguistic stratification. In-depth analyses of the ways in which this linguistic interaction has shaped the morphological and syntactic structures of Kashmiri will be presented in the following sections, offering insights into the wider consequences of language contact on structural linguistic aspects.

3.1 Morphological Borrowings

One important component of structural borrowing in this language contact scenario is the integration of Persian derivational morphology into Kashmiri. The morphological system of Kashmiri has easily absorbed Persian derivational affixes, although inflectional morphemes usually do not transfer across languages. Interestingly, these borrowed affixes have proven to be remarkably productive, combining readily with native Kashmiri stems and going beyond their initial domain of Persian loanwords. The creation of new vocabulary forms has been made possible by this process, increasing the Kashmiri language's expressive potential in formerly unattainable ways. The phenomenon illustrates the dynamic nature of linguistic borrowing, where structural elements can be abstracted from their source and generalized within the recipient language's grammatical system. The following examples showcase the application of Persian derivational prefixes and suffixes to Kashmiri words, highlighting the creative linguistic innovations arising from this cross-linguistic influence.

1. Prefixation

(12) The prefix bi- 'without' is extended to native Kashmiri stems, mostly nouns and adjectives, generating words like:

Prefix (Persian) + stem (Kashmiri)

bi- + X

Kashmiri stem	***Gloss (stem)***	***Derived form***	***Gloss (derived form)***
šūb	etiquette	be-šūb	without etiquette, uncouth
ḍool	shape	be-dool	without shape
zuv	life	be-zuv	without life

The *bi-* prefix (meaning 'without') is extended to native stems but was originally borrowed from Persian into Kashmiri, as indicated by words like *biqarār* 'restless' and *biadab* 'mannerless'. However, it is important to note here that the *bi-* prefix is itself phonologically nativized in Kashmiri, changing the **c**lose-front unrounded vowel /i/ to the close-mid front unrounded vowel /e/. Many Kashmiri stems readily attach to the bi- prefix, which is the most productive. It is primarily an adjective-forming morpheme that attaches to nouns or adjectives.

2. Suffixation

Many suffixes are borrowed from Persian and are used with Kashmiri stems. For example, the suffix *-dār* (to hold, to bear) is very productive, and like other derivational affixes, it was also imported with Persian words like *māldār* 'wealthy', *tabardār* 'axe bearer', *dokāndār* 'shopkeeper', etc. The suffix *dār* is extended and is used as a nominalizer with native Kashmiri stems, mostly nouns and adjectives as illustrated in example (13):

(13) Kashmiri stem + Persian suffix:

[X] = (Kashmiri stem) + [-dār] → derived forms

	Kashmiri stems			***Derived forms***	***Gloss***
	gāš			**gāšdār**	something that bears light
[**X**] =	**gal**	+	**[-dār]**	**galdār**	someone who owns a grocery store
	lāg			**lāgdār**	something useful

3.3 Syntax

The syntactic borrowing from Persian into Kashmiri presents a compelling case of structural influence in language contact. Kashmiri typically follows a head-final structure in noun phrases, with determiners and modifiers preceding the noun and possessor pronouns in phrase-initial position. In Persian, on the other hand, possessor pronouns come last in phrases. Despite these basic structural distinctions, several Persian phrases that deviate greatly from Kashmiri's natural syntactic patterns have been included. This phenomenon challenges beliefs on the immutability of fundamental syntactic features by illuminating the possibility of deep structural borrowing under conditions of intense language contact. These Persian-style sentences have been successfully incorporated into Kashmiri, providing important new insights into the adaptability of syntactic systems and the formation of hybrid grammatical structures in multilingual settings. As an illustration,

(14) Kashmiri-

NP = [[DET (Possessor Pronoun)] + [Head Noun]]

K:	*mēn*	*kitāb*
	my.F.SG	book (N)

'my book'

K:	*m'ōn*	*ləḳ̣di*
	my.M.SG	boy (N)

'my boy'

(15) Persian-

NP = [[Head Noun-GEN] + [DET (Possessor Pronoun)]]

Pers:	*kitāb-e*	*man*
	book- EZ	my.SG

'my book'

Pers:	*pisar-e*	*man*
	son-EZ	my.SG

'my son'

In Kashmiri, the noun *kitāb* 'book' comes after the determiner *mēn* 'my'*;* however, in Persian, the noun *kitāb* comes before the determiner *man.* Similarly, when adjectives act as modifiers:

(16) Kashmiri-

NP = [[DET (Adjective)] + [Head Noun]]

K:	*jān*	*kitāb*
	good (Adj)	book(N)

'good book'

K:	*asl*	*ləḳ̣di*
	good (Adj)	boy(N)

'good boy'

(17) Persian-

NP = [[Head Noun-GEN] + [DET (Adjective)]]

Pers:	*kitāb-e*	*xūb*
	book-EZ	good (Adj)

'good book'

Pers:	*pisar-e*	*man*
	boy-EZ	my.SG

'my boy'

The syntactic divergence between Kashmiri and Persian is further exemplified in adjectival modification structures. In Kashmiri, adjectives precede the nouns they modify, as in *jān kitāb* 'good book'. Conversely, Persian employs a post-nominal adjectival placement, exemplified by *kitab-e xūb* 'good book'.

Persian syntax is characterized by the ezafe construction, which is denoted by the connecting element (-e). This form expresses possession and modifies the adjectival function, among other grammatical functions. Similar in function to a genitive case marker, the ezafe establishes a structural paradigm that is substantially different from the original syntax of Kashmiri.

One significant example of syntactic borrowing is the incorporation of Persian words using the ezafe construction into Kashmiri. The incorporation of Persian ezafe constructions into Kashmiri represents a form of lexicalized borrowing rather than productive syntactic innovation. These Persian-derived phrases appear to function primarily as fixed literary expressions, preserved in their original structural form without extending to broader syntactic productivity in Kashmiri. Even when comparable native Kashmiri structures already exist, they are nonetheless adopted, even though they are now mostly obsolete.

Examples (20-22) illustrate this phenomenon, juxtaposing borrowed Persian constructions with their native Kashmiri counterparts. The fact that these borrowed structures continue to exist while their native counterparts are becoming obsolete highlights the significant influence of Persian on Kashmiri grammar.

(18) Persian structural borrowing:

xūn	*-e*	*ǰigar*
blood(N)	-EZ	liver (N) [NP]

'blood of liver'

Native Kashmiri form:

ǰigar -uk khūn
liver(N) [NP] -GEN blood (N)

'blood of liver'

(19) Pers: *čašm -e tar*
eye(N) EZ wet (Adj)[NP]

'wet eye'

K: *tar čašm*
wet (Adj)[NP] eye(N)

'wet eye'

(20) Pers: *āb -e hayāt*
water (N) EZ life [NP]

'water of life/life force'

K: *hayāt -uk āb*
life (N) [NP] EZ water (N)

'water of life/life force'

The phenomenon of syntactic divergence between native Kashmiri structures and borrowed Persian phrases is noteworthy in this context of language contact. Even though the Kashmiri forms shown in (20)–(22) are grammatically correct, these native structures are now largely obsolete. On the other hand, Persian-derived structures are increasingly prevalent in formal writing, such as poetry and prose, as well as informal speech.

The key structural difference lies in the position of the head noun. In the borrowed Persian phrases, the head noun occupies the phrase-initial position, followed by its modifier. This arrangement contrasts sharply with the native Kashmiri syntax, where the head noun is phrase- final, preceded by its modifier.

These borrowed phrases frequently possess metaphorical meanings, as demonstrated by *xūn-e ǰigar* (literally 'blood of liver'), which is used to convey apprehension. This metaphorical use extends to sentential constructions, such as *me gav xūn-e ǰigar* 'I am anxious/worried'.

It is important to note that even though these Persian grammatical constructs have been extensively appropriated, their impact is limited to particular phrases. The structural pattern has not been expanded to become an efficient feature in Kashmiri syntax. Instead of a more extensive syntactic shift, this restricted borrowing points to a type of lexicalized syntactic borrowing.

It is noteworthy that a number of the lexical components of these phrases, such as *xūn* 'blood', *ǰigar* 'liver', *čašm* 'eye', *āb* 'water', and *hayāt* 'life', have also been independently borrowed and nativized in Kashmiri. This dual process reveals that while individual Persian lexemes undergo full nativization, ezafe constructions remain as frozen literary expressions, suggesting that structural borrowing in Persian-Kashmiri contact is lexically constrained rather than syntactically productive.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The analysis of Persian-Kashmiri linguistic contact reveals a complex interplay of borrowing phenomena, demonstrating the multifaceted nature of lexical and structural adaptations. Empirical data indicate substantial phonological modifications in borrowed lexemes, encompassing processes of substitution, insertion, and deletion. The Kashmiri aspiration rule, exemplified in (11), where the dental unaspirated stop /t/ is elided in word-final position but retained medially, illustrates language-specific phonological constraints governing loanword integration.

A notable phonological tendency in Kashmiri involves the aspiration of word-final unaspirated consonants in loanwords, a phenomenon observed across Hindi-Urdu and Persian borrowings. In Kashmiri all consonants can occur in word-final position; however, Koul and Kashi (1997:298) point out that "as a general rule unaspirated word-final consonants are not tolerated. This seems to hold in many Hindi-Urdu, as well as Persian-borrowed words, as final deaspirates from these languages are aspirated in Kashmiri." This is evidenced by transformations such as /t/ > /th/ (e.g., *jannat* > *jannath* 'paradise') and /k/ > /kh/ (e.g., *paak* > *paakh*). As observed in section (2.1.1.2.1), the substitution of Persian-borrowed foreign stops and fricatives by perceived Kashmiri equivalents follows what Hock (1991) calls the system-based pattern of substitution common in borrowings. As illustrated in section (2.1.2), morphological nativization of Persian lexical borrowings at both inflectional and derivational levels is very productive and faces no major constraints.

Kashmiri remained resistant to structural borrowings of phrases but has freely borrowed derivational morphemes. A lot of borrowing results in inventions or the creation of new words that combine materials from the

source language and the receiving language. The borrowings from Persian also had an impact on Kashmiri morphology, particularly on the derivational morphology. Several derivational affixes were imported along with Persian words, and several of them were extended and used with native stems. As noted by Winford (2003: 62), "*Speakers do not have access to a list or a complete inventory of morphemes from which they can select. For instance, when Middle English speakers borrowed derivational morphemes like -tion, -able, etc., from French, it certainly wasn't because they isolated them in relevant French words and imported them independently of the stem to which they were attached. Nearly all the borrowed affixes were introduced with loanwords and were soon extended to native stems.*" Similarly, Persian morphemes used in Kashmiri were first imported with relevant Persian words and then used with native Kashmiri stems. It has been found that most nativization has been through analogical change: morphemes or stems have been changed to represent another item on the basis of analogy or apparent similarity. Talking of morphology, there is a general agreement among scholars that inflectional morphemes are notoriously difficult to borrow. According to Winford (2003:62), "*… morphological adaptation can be more difficult, especially if the recipient language has complex rules involving case, number, and gender.*" To illustrate, an example can be cited here: the pluralizing suffix in Persian is -hā, used as *bače* 'kid' > *bačehā* 'kids. The same pluralizing form is sometimes used in Kashmiri stems but is not very productive because Kashmiri masculine plurals are formed by palatalization and/or vowel change, e.g., *koṭ* 'boy' → *kəṭ* 'boys'. Feminine plurals are typically formed by adding the suffix *-i/-ɨ* with a vowel and consonantal changes, e.g., *nər* 'arm'→ *nari* 'arms'. From the perspective of morphology, it is clear that derivational morphemes are more likely to be borrowed than inflectional ones.

Structural borrowing through syntax faces constraints due to the difference in the word order of the two languages. As illustrated in section (3.3), the Persian head noun is the initial phrase, and the modifier follows it. In Kashmiri, however, the head noun is phrase final, and the modifier comes before the noun.

As discussed above, borrowing due to contact encompasses not just the direct transfer of words but a range of other factors leading to innovations in the receiving language. From the discussion above it is evident that Persian had a profound effect on the Kashmiri language. Various Persian loans were used with little to no linguistic change, whereas others were nativized so much that they became indistinguishable from their Kashmiri counterparts. Kashmiri follows the same rules of borrowing and nativization in terms of phonology and morphology. However, it can be

said that due to the level of contact between the two languages and, more importantly, due to the grammatical particle *ezafe* found in the Persian language, structural borrowing faces constraints. Moreover, it is important to mention here that according to Musyken (1981), adjectives rank next to nouns on the borrowing scale. However, due to the ezafe construction in Persian, the borrowing of adjectives faces a challenge. Due to this, far fewer base adjectives have been borrowed from Persian than derived adjectives. The integration of borrowings led to changes at different levels, such as phonological adjustments in the pronunciation of the new items, morphological adjustments, and syntax. According to Winford (2010: 50), "the various types of integration demonstrate that so-called "borrowing" involves complex patterns of lexical change that create new lexical entries or modify existing ones in response to culture contact." It is observed here that the degree of structural and lexical borrowing does not always correlate. In cases of language maintenance, lexical borrowing serves as a vehicle for structural innovations in the receiving language, especially in derivational morphology. However, the recipient language remains highly resistant to foreign structural interference. This study's original contribution lies in its systematic documentation of nativization strategies across multiple linguistic levels, revealing that while Kashmiri readily adapts Persian morphological elements and syntactic borrowings remains constrained to lexicalized phrases. These findings build upon and extend the foundational documentation provided by Ashok K. Koul (2008) and the analytical frameworks established in earlier studies (Koul 1986, 2005, 2012), while offering new theoretical insights into the selectivity of borrowing processes and the constraints governing structural adaptation.

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