Summary
and
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Variation is a common and natural phenomenon found in almost all widely used languages of the world. Languages vary according to the social characteristics of speakers. They also vary according to situation in which the users find themselves.

Language variation in sociolinguistics refers to the variation in linguistic items in accordance with social variation. The factors such as religion, region, age, sex, education and occupation are responsible for variation in language and resultant linguistics items are called as linguistic or sociolinguistic variables. Since language variation takes place because of social variation, the linguistic and social variables are correlated.

Language variation is the mirror reflection of social variation. The state of the Jammu and Kashmir is the home of various races and sects. There are different social levels. In other words we many say that there are people belonging to different social groups. Technically saying there is a social heterogeneity. This social heterogeneity is reflected in the linguistic behaviour of the speech community, thus leads to the speech variations among its speakers at various levels of linguistics. These speech variations are found at various levels of linguistics such as phonology, morphology, lexicon and syntax, on the basis of social variables, religion, age, sex, region, education and occupation. It may be noted that the impact of religion and region on Kashmiri speech varieties goes on hand to hand.
Kashmiri speech community comprises a considerable Muslim population and a little microscopic Hindu population. These two faiths of people are in contradistinction for being monotheistic and polytheistic respectively. Most of the Muslims are agriculturists. The Hindus who constitute approximately less than 5% of the total population of the valley belong predominantly to the service class.

On the basis of religion, the Kashmiri speech community has broadly been distinguished into two main groups of speakers, viz., Muslim and Hindu Kashmiri speakers. Almost all the Hindu Kashmiri speakers belong to the Brahmin caste. In Kashmir they are locally called as batd.

The Muslims on the other hand constitute approximately more than 96% of the total population of the valley. Most of the Muslims are from the agricultural and business background. Different occupational groups of the Kashmiri speech community such as cobblers, boatmen/fishermen and businessmen are also from Muslim community.

The Muslim and Hindu Kashmiri speakers show considerable variations in their speech. The main reason behind this variation is that the variety of speech used by Muslim Kashmiri speakers is filled with the Persian and Arabic vocabulary and the variety of Kashmiri spoken by Hindu Kashmiri speakers is full of the Sanskritic sources.

The region bifurcates the entire speech community into two main groups of speakers, viz., Rural and Urban Kashmiri speakers. The rural people are mostly the agriculturists. They are by and large disadvantaged in the spheres of the education and
business as compared with their urban counterparts. The urban Kashmiris on the other hand constitute the business class and education elite. It may be noted that the people living in the city of Srinagar, which is the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir are called as the urban people and the people living in different parts of valley other than Srinagar are called as rural people. The urban people are generally considered as well cultured and civilized than their rural counterparts. Depending on the nature of ruralization and urbanization, the variety of Kashmiri spoken in the different areas other than Srinagar is rural in character. This variety is generally considered as the non-standard variety of Kashmiri.

Though education is presently in the reach of each social group of the Kashmiri speech community in the equal proportion. But there is no denying the fact that the students of the higher education belong to the urban Kashmiri group. The main reason for the little percentage of the higher educated students among the rural Kashmiries is due to their involvement in agriculture (Farming). For the purpose of looking after their agricultural fields, to produce various agricultural products, the rural people had paid a little attention towards education. As a result of which they had been lagged behind in the field of education by their urban counterparts. But it is reasonable to argue that at present the rural people have turned their attention back with a keen interest towards education. The percentage of students with lower as well as higher education among rural people is now considerable.

On the basis of education, the whole speech community has been divided into three groups of speakers, viz., E1 (illiterate i.e. having no education at all), E2
(semiliterate i.e. having education up to intermediate or plus two level) and E3 (educated i.e. having education from graduation onwards).

The main occupation of the Kashmiri people is agriculture (farming). The Kashmiri farmers are the cultivators of rice, wheat, maize, corn and mustard among cereals. They are also producers of potatoes, onions, turnips, brinjal, chilly and spinach among vegetables. Kashmiri farmers also produce fruits, for which they are famous all over the world. The chief fruit products are apple, nuts, walnuts and almonds. Besides, saffron is also grown by these farmers to a considerable extent.

It can be reasonably claimed that the Kashmiries do not wholly and soley depend on the agriculture only. But they have occupied other occupations also. Thus on the basis of occupation, the entire Kashmiri speech community can be distinguished into four main occupational groups such as farmers, businessmen, boatmen/fishermen and cobblers. The farmers as said earlier are the rural agriculturists. They make their living mostly by the production of different agricultural products.

The people from business class are mostly involved in the business of fruits such as apples, nuts and almonds. They also perform the business of saffron, handicraft products, woolens such as shawls and carpets. The handicrafts and the manufacture of woolen give employment to a fair proportion of the people, who are known all over the world as the finest handicraftsmen of the East.

The fishermen/boatmen locally called as ga:čhō:nz or na:vēhō ":nz constitute another occupational group in the Kashmiri speech community. They
mostly make their living by fishing. Some of them are the load carriers from one gha:t to another gha:t in their boats. Presently some of them have shifted to the business of selling and purchasing the wood for fuel and timber for construction purposes. They are economically well off. In Srinagar proper, these boatmen form two groups. One group is totally engaged in tourist industry as guides houseboat owners and hotelier’s. Another group in engaged in their traditional work of fish catching and rowing of their small boats.

The cobblers locally called as va:tal constitute the lowest occupational group in the Kashmiri speech community. The cobblers fall in two groups one is engaged as the carriers of dead animals, sweepers etc. Another group of cobblers is engaged in all low jobs except dead animal carriers. They generally live on the outskirts of the villages. They are not permissible to visit the homes of the other people and are strictly prohibited to interdine with them.

Like the other speech communities, there are found the people of different age groups. There are young, adults and older people. On the basis of age, the Kashmiri speech community has been differentiated into three main age groups, viz., A1 (15 to 35 years), A2 (36 to 50 years) and A3 (51 years and above).

As regards the social factor sex, it bifurcates the speech community into two groups of speakers, viz., male speakers and female speakers with their apparent speech variations. It has been presumed that some sociolinguistic features of one particular social group could optionally be used by another social group in different situation and occasions.
Kashmiri speech community has a highly structured phonological behavior, it has been found that the difference in the vowels, semivowels, vowel sequence, nasalized vowels, consonants and vocative markers of males and females correlate with the corresponding differences in the social strata of the speech community. But one thing may be noted that at the phonological level more variability is found in the use of vowels and semivowels than in consonants. Thus for the variation in the use of language among Kashmiri speakers at the phonological level, the social variables like religion, region and education have been found to play a very significant role.

Like the phonology, the structure of the Kashmiri language also varies considerably at the level of morphology among its speakers. There are a large number of words found in the speech of one special group which are missing in the speech of another social group. For this variation in the process of word formation (morphology) among the Kashmiri speakers certain social variable such as religion, region, sex, age, education and occupation play a very prominent role. The variables found at the morphological level which divide the speech community into various social groups have been found in the use of a wide range of categories such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjective etc. The morphological variations have also been found to occur in the use of certain address forms, courtesy maskers and kinship terms. The variation in the use of nominal categories has mainly been found on the basis of religion, region, age and education. For the variation in the use of verbal categories among the Kashmiri speakers, the social variables religion, region, age and education have been found to play a very significant role. The variation in the use of certain pronominal categories have been found to exist only on the basis of education. As regards the variation in the
use of certain adjectival categories, it has been found to occur on the basis of social factors religion and age only. Similarly, the variation in the use of kinship terms, which leads to the morphological variation among Kashmiri speakers has been observed on the basis of the social variables education, age, religion and sex.

So far as the variation in the use of language at the level of morphology on the basis of social variable occupation is concerned. It has been observed and explained in terms of use of different 'Registers' or 'Jargons'. The registers or jargons are those lexical items which are associated with the occupation or the profession of a particular occupational group.

It is not surprising or a new thing for any language to show variation at its syntactic level among its speakers, when it varies in its phonology, morphology and lexicon. This is because of the fact that syntax is the combination and arrangement of the smaller units into the larger ones. In other words we may say that syntax is the study of combination or joining of morphemes and words into the sentence of the language. In the Kashmiri speech community, it has been found that there are expressions and even full sentences used by the speakers of one social group which are lacking in the speech of another social group. It can be claimed that like the phonology and morphology, the Kashmiri speakers show obvious variations in their speech at the syntactic level with respect to social variables such as religion, region, age, education, sex and occupation. The variables found at the syntactic level, which divide the speech community into various social groups have been found to occur over a wide range of grammatical categories such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, address forms, courtesy maskers etc. The Kashmiri speakers have also been found to
very in the use of certain phrases and proverbs which differentiates the speakers of one social group from those of another at syntactic level.

Besides showing the variation in their speech at various levels of linguistics, Kashmiri speakers also cross their linguistic boundary and switch over from their mother tongue to other language and mix words from other languages into their mother tongue. This phenomenon of language choice is technically called as Code-switching and Code-mixing. Thus the phenomenon of Kashmiri-Urdu and Kashmiri-English Code-switching has been observed and analysed at various levels of the Kashmiri language. In the Kashmiri-Urdu phonological switching, the phonological interaction and contrast between the Kashmiri and Urdu sounds have been discussed. Kashmiri-Urdu morphological switching has been found to occur over a fairly wide range of categories such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives etc. Similarly Urdu-Kashmiri syntactic Code-switching also occurs over different grammatical categories. As regards English-Kashmiri Code-switching, it has been observed at the nominal and adjectival level only.

It has been observed that in the Kashmiri-Urdu and Kashmiri-English language contact situation, the main reason for this language choice lies in the face that Urdu and English are the first and second official languages of Jammu and Kashmir respectively. They are also the languages of literacy and mass media of the state. Both of these languages enjoy the special status in the state. Most of the Kashmiri mother tongue speakers use Urdu and English in various domains of their social life. Moreover, it has been found that rural Kashmiri speakers tend to switch over to the urban speech variety, while talking to urban people.