Chapter - I
Introduction
Chapter-I

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This dissertation is a study of Kohistani, embedded in a multilingual situation in Ganderbal District in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In Ganderbal District, Kashmiri, the dominant linguistic community exists with other linguistic minorities like Pahari, Gojri and Kohistani. The Kohistanis form the smallest linguistic community in Ganderbal District. The Kohistanis are a multilingual community with competence in Kashmiri, Gojri and other minority languages that are there in the region. Urdu apart from being the official language of the state is used as a lingua franca for any intergroup communication among these linguistic communities in Ganderbal District. This dissertation proposes to see what happens to a minority language like Kohistani in a multilingual context. The objective of the study is to see (i) whether a minority language like Kohistanis is able to survive the onslaught of the majority languages in Ganderbal District (ii) If so, what happens to the structure of Kohistani that is engaged in long standing multilingualism.

Like Kashmiri, Kohistani also belongs to the Dardic group of languages. But Kohistani is one of the less commonly described Dardic language. The Kohistanis are based in Northern Pakistan. The small concentration of Kohistanis in Ganderbal District in Jammu and Kashmir is believed to have migrated from Northern Pakistan. In Ganderbal District, the minority Kohistanis are dominated by other linguistic groups. The study of Kohistani speech community in Ganderbal from a multilingual framework will be able to provide new insights in our understanding of language contact phenomena.
1.1 Dardic: A brief introduction

The Dardic languages also known as ‘Dardu’ or ‘Pisaca’ are the languages of the people concentrated in the mountainous tracts in northern Pakistan’s Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region, eastern Afghanistan and Jammu and Kashmir in India. The term ‘Dardic’ was first used by G.W. Leitner in the late 19th century. Grierson (1906, 1919) in Linguistic Survey of India, refers to the languages spoken in northern region as “Dardic” and considers these Dardic languages as an independent branch of the Aryan languages, distinct from the Iranian and Indo-Aryan. Grierson further categorized the Dardic language family into three main groups: the Kharif group, the Khowar group and the Dard group. The Dard group includes Shina, Kashmiri and Kohistani.

Grierson’s classification of Dardic languages has been challenged and refuted following the work of Georg Morgenstierne (1961). Morgenstierne (1961) provides another classification of Dardic that differs from Grierson. He draws a distinction between the Dardic and the Kafir groups (Koul 2008b). Morgenstierne (1965) considers Dardic languages to be Indo-Aryan. Morgenstierne (1961) states:

“Dardic languages contain absolutely no features which cannot be derived from Old IA. They have simply retained a number of striking archaism, which had already disappeared in most Prakrit dialects...There is not a single common feature distinguishing Dardic as a whole, from the rest of the IA languages, and the Dardic area itself is intersected by a network of isoglosses, often of historical interest as indicating ancient lines of communication as well as barriers. Dardic is simply a convenient term to denote a bundle of aberrant IA hill-languages which, in their relative isolation, accented in many cases by the invasion of the Pathan tribes, have been in varying degrees sheltered against the expanding influences of IA Midland(Madhyadesha) innovations, being left free to develop on their own”(1961: 138).
Morgenstierne’s categorization mainly differs from Grierson’s on two grounds (i) his stress on the distinctiveness of the Kafir group and (ii) heterogeneity of the group called Dardic (Koul 2008b: 143). Following the works of Morgenstierne, there has been many researches, such as, Fussman (1972), Kachru (1969 a, b, 1973), Strand (1973), Koul and Schmidt (1984), Radloff (1992), Bashir (2003).

Fussman (1972) asserts that the term Dardic is a geographic convention rather than linguistic expression. Bashir (2003:822) also states that Dardic covers both ‘genetic’ as well as ‘geographic’ components. She further argues that Dardic does not imply ‘ethnic unity’ and cannot be traced to single Stammbaum-model (Bashir 2003: 822). Zoller (2005: 10-11) suggests that the Dardic languages are the successors of the Middle Indo-Aryan languages Gandhari (Gandhari Prakrit). Like Bashir, Zoller also mantains that family tree model may not be adequate to account for the historical development of Dardic languages.

Bashir (2003: 824-825) based on ‘historical sub grouping approximations’ and ‘geographical distribution’ categorizes the Dardic languages into six broad groups:

1. Pashai
   - Eastern dialects
   - Western dialects

2. Kunar
   - Gawarbat type
   - Dameli type

3. Chitral
   - Khowar
   - Kalasha
Chapter I

(4) Kohistānī

Tirahi
Dir-Swat
Dir-Kohistani,
Kalam-Kohistani
Torwali
Indus-Kohistani

(5) Shina

(6) Kashmiri

The Kohistan group consists of various varieties known by different names, such as, Kohistana, Garwa, Torwali, Indus Kohistani, Maiyā and many others. The Kohistani varieties are mostly concentrated in Swat, Indus Kohistan in Northern Pakistan and in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir. In some existing literature, Kohistani has been considered as a regional dialect of Kashmiri (Grierson 1919, Kachru 1969b, cited in Koul 2008b). Some studies report Kohistani as a dialect of Shina (Bayley 1924, Fussman 1972).

1.2 A Review of Literature

There were studies on language contact phenomena as early as nineteenth century. However, empirical and use of systematized approach to study of language contact phenomena begun after 1950 with the publication of Weinreich (1953), Haugen (1953) and Mackey (1956). The seminal work “Languages in Contact” by Weinreich (1953) opened up new vistas in the study of language contact. Weinreich (1953) “Languages in Contact” laid the groundwork for the study of language contact characterised by multilingualism. This work covers all aspects of language contact, from the problems of approach in studying language contact to the importance of social and psychological factors in language contact and the linguistics outcomes of
language contact. Weinreich (1953) discusses at length about ‘interference’ and the level of ‘integration’ in bilingual communities. Following Weinreich, there has been a surge in the study of language contact. There are many studies that deal with the various definitions and categorization of bilinguals (Haugen 1953, Mackey 1957, Saville-Troike 1973). A great deal of research is available on effects of language contact characterized by borrowing (Mackey 1970, Hasselmo 1969, Poplack and Sankoff 1984, Mougeon et al 1985). Studies on ‘borrowing’ focused on many aspects, such as, identifying the loan words, locating social and psychological motivations for borrowing and many other issues (Haugen 1969). These studies also emphasized on the nature of phonological and morphological integration of these loan words in the recipient language (Haugen 1950, 1969; Arndt 1970, Baetens Beardsmore 1971; Mougeon et al 1985). Many of these studies brought to light the ‘hierarchies of borrowability’ of the different linguistic items (Haugen 1950, Muysken 1980, Poplack et al 1988, Poplack and Meechan 1998). These studies showed which elements have the propensity to be borrowed more. Many studies tried to distinguish ‘borrowing’ from the phenomenon of ‘code-switching’ (Pfaff 1979, Poplack 1980). The sociolinguistic phenomenon of code-switching has been looked at from various perspectives. Blom and Gumperz (1972) in their work “Social meaning in linguistic structures” categorizes switching as ‘situational’ and ‘metaphorical’ code-switching. There is abundant research that emphasized on grammatical constraints on code-switching. These studies throw light on the debate on formal linguistic constraints that regulate switching (Pfaff 1979, Poplack 1980, Sankoff and Poplack 1981, Woolford 1983, Joshi 1985, Di Sciullo and Williams 1987, Belazi et al. 1994, Halmari 1997). Myers-Scotton (1993) focuses on the social significance of code-switching. She states that the speaker negotiates their social roles by using different codes. Myers-Scotton further asserts that the speaker must have an understanding of the ‘social meaning’ of the different codes available to them.

‘Diglossia’ is a linguistic phenomenon where ‘two or more varieties of the same language are used by some speakers under different conditions’ (Ferguson 1959: 65). After Ferguson introduced the term ‘diglossia’, it was widely accepted by sociolinguists. There are others, who further extended and refined the understanding

The concept of linguistic convergence leading to the formation of ‘linguistic area’ or Sprachbund has triggered many debates among the researchers of language contact (Trubetskoj 1928, Emeneau 1956, Gumperz and Wilson 1971, Masica 1976, Matras 1996, 2009, Thomason 2001) The concept of ‘linguistic area’ or Sprachbund was introduced by Nicolai Trubetskoj in 1928 while referring to the Balkans. Subsequently, a number of studies on convergence arose from India (Emeneau 1956; Gumperz and Wilson 1971). Gumperz and Wilson’s study on Kupwar village in Maharashtra in North India showed how extensive multilingualism lead to convergence between two Indo-Aryan languages, Marathi and Urdu, and Dravidian languages, Kannada. Linguistic areas emerge as a result of diffusion of structural patterns across language boundaries. Though there has been extensive research on linguistic convergence, there is no consensus among linguist regarding general nature of the phenomenon of linguistic areas (Thomason 2000). The research on convergence phenomenon delves at various issues, such as, the different methods of studying ‘linguistic areas’, nature of shared areal features and the kind of problems that ‘linguistic areas’ create for developing linguistic theories and typological classifications (Matras 1996; Thomason 2000, 2001; Ramat and Stolz 2002; Campbell1985, 2006; Matras and Sakel 2007).

Another outcome of language contact that received a lot of attention is Pidginization and Creolization. Addison Van Name’s “Contribution to Creole Grammar” (1869-70) is accredited to mark the beginning of the scientific study of creole languages (Stolz 1986 cited in Holm 1988: 24). Studies on pidgin and creoles blossomed in the 1880s following the work of Schuchardt and his contemporaries. There are conflicting versions regarding the origin of pidgins and creoles that have evoked lot of debate and controversies (Muhlhausler 1986, 2000; Bickerton1971, 1975, 1984; Sankoff 1980, 1991; Trudgill 1986; Holm 1988; Satyanath 1991; Siegel 1993 a, b, 2000; Mufwene 2000, 2001; Lefebvre 2004). The Universalist versus substratum debate regarding the origin of pidgin and creoles has been the focal point of pidgin/creole studies. There are massive amount of research on the structure of pidgin and creoles that posit problems for historical linguists (Rickford 1987; Winford 2000, 2003; DeGraff 2001;

Barring the research by Emeneau (1956), and Gumperz and Wilson (1971), a few other studies on language contact have emerged from India as well. Most of these studies throw light on the contact between Indo-Aryan and Dravidian (Pandit 1972 a, b; Nadkarni 1975). Nadkarni (1975) reports the contact between Mangalore Saraswat Konkani and Kannada. The Saurashtri and Tamil contact is discussed in Pandit (1972). The earliest description on Nagamese, a contact language spoken in Nagaland is provided in Sreedhar (1974). In the recent years a number of studies on language contact between Tibeto-Burman and Indic emerged (See Laskar 1996, 2002a, b, 2003 a, b, 2006, 2008a,b,c, 2012a, b; Satyanath and Laskar 2002, 2003, 2006, 2008a, b 2009). Laskar’s research focuses on Bishnupriya, a contact language that emerged in North-East India as a result of contact between Tibeto-Burman and Eastern Indo-Aryan. There is another study by Laskar and Ahmad (2017) that examines the contact between Urdu and Bhojpuri varieties in Bihar.

So far there have been very few research on Kohistani. The few studies that emerged are based on the Kohistani spoken in Indus Kohistani, Pakistan. The first documentation of Indus Kohistani was done by Leitner (1893). The language Kohistani is known by different names, such as, Garwi, Bashkarik, Maiyā and others. The Grierson (1906, 1919) provides a brief description on Kohistani. A discussion on the ethnography of that region is presented in Barth (1956). Jettmar (1983) presents a discussion on the languages of Indus Kohistan. Fussman (1989) presents a study of the Indus Kohistani variety referred to as Maiyā (1980). A grammatical sketch of Kalam Kohistani is presented in Baart (1999) and Baart and Sagar (2004). An analysis of some essential characteristics of Kohistani varieties is disscussed in Bashir (2003). An analysis of tense and aspect system of Gawri (a Kohistani variety) is presented in Rönnqvist (2013). The only study on Kohistani speech based in Jammu and Kashmir
was done by Ganai (2012, 2013). Ganai’s PhD research engages with a comparison of Kashmiri and Kohistani (Ganai 2012). Ganai draws his data from Kupwara. The other study by Ganai (2013) deals with the verb morphology of Kohistani.

1.3 Ganderbal District in Kashmir Valley: Area of Study

Jammu and Kashmir, the northern most state in India has been at the centre stage of political conflict in the post-independence era. The strategic geographical location and the history of the state make the region politically very vulnerable. However, what remains largely unexplored is the linguistic plurality and multicultural vibrancy of the state. This state shares its border with Afghanistan, former Soviet countries and China in the north, Pakistan in the West and Tibet in the east. The state is geographically divided into three regions: Jammu region, the Kashmir valley and the Ladakh region. Ideally this state can be viewed as a language contact area, where exists a number of distinct languages belonging to different language families. For instance, there exist various Dardic languages of the Indo-Aryan group such as Kashmiri, Shina, and Kohistani in the north, Dogri and many Pahari dialects in the south and Balti, Ladakhi and some other Tibeto-Burman languages in the east (Kachru). Urdu is the official language of the state. Kashmiri and other Dardic languages are concentrated largely in the Kashmir Valley, whereas Dogri, Pahari and Punjabi varieties are confined to the Jammu area. Balti, Ladakhi and other Tibeto-Burman varieties are spoken in the Ladakh region.

Ganderbal District was carved out of Srinagar in 2007. It is surrounded by other newly created districts, Bandipora in the northwest, Baramullah in the west, Srinagar in the south, Arhama forests in the north and Kargil in the east. Ganderbal District comprises of four blocks, namely, Wakoora, Laar, Ganderbal and Kangan. The population of Ganderbal District comprises of Kashmiris, Pathans (in Gutlibagh area), Gujjars, Bakerwals and Kohistanis. The Gutlibagh area of Ganderbal District is regarded as a home to the largest concentration of Pathans in Kashmir. The Leh
Srinagar road passes through this district. It is a gateway to Ladakh. Ganderbal District has two assembly constituencies Kangan and Ganderbal. The total area of Ganderbal is approximately 259.00 sq km. The distribution of population in Ganderbal District is provided in Table 1.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population in Jammu &amp; Kashmir</th>
<th>12,541,303</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population in Ganderbal</td>
<td>297,446</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1.1: Population of Ganderbal District (Census Report 2011)*

The present study was conducted in two villages, Wangath and Mammer located in Kangan Block in Ganderbal district. These two villages come under the Kangan Block. The population of various villages including Wangath and Mammer in Kangan is shown in Appendix I. The population in these two villages comprises of Kashmiris, Gujjars or Gojris and Kohistanis. Kashmiris, the dominant group live in separate settlements, whereas the Kohistanis and Gojris live in mixed clusters in these villages.

### 1.3 Linguistic Demographics of Wangath and Mammer

The official language of Jammu and Kashmir is Urdu. Urdu language is mostly used in public domains, especially in educational institutions, media, and government offices. Kashmiri is the dominant language used by the majority of the population in Jammu and Kashmir. It is also used in education, literature and media like newspapers, television and radio. Kashmiri has many regional and social varieties. However, the variety spoken around Srinagar, the capital, is considered the prestige variety (Koul 2008b). In addition, many minority languages like Shina, Kohistani, Gojri, Dogri and Pahari are spoken by small groups scattered all over the state of Jammu and Kashmir. However, Ladakhi is spoken in the Ladakh region. Dogri is largely spoken in the Jammu region. There are a number of minority linguistic communities concentrated in small pockets all over the state. Urdu is used as a lingua
franca for any inter-group communications among the various linguistic communities. Hindi is also used for such communications.

1.5 The Kohistanis in Wangath and Mammer

The population of Wangath and Mammer comprises of Kashmiris, the dominant group and a few other minority groups like Gojri and Kohistanis. The Kohistanis form a small minority group with a population of about 300 members. The Kohistanis speak a language which they refer to as “Kohistani”. The older members of the Kohistani community believe that their forefathers have migrated to Ganderbal from Yagistan in late nineteenth century. Yagistan (land of the rebels) is at present called Kohistan. Kohistan is one of the administrative districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan. The ethnic population of Kohistan comprises of Kohistanis and Pashtuns.

The Kohistanis, who have settled in Ganderbal and Kupwara District in Jammu and Kashmir, trace their roots to Kohistan in Northern Pakistan. In Ganderbal (Wangath and Mammer) where the present study is conducted, the Kohistanis are surrounded by Kashmiris and Gojris. The Kohistanis are multilingual and have varying degrees of competence in Kashmiri, Gojri and Urdu. The Kohistanis speak in Kohistani among themselves. Most of the Kohistanis have proficiency in Kashmiri and Gojri. But they prefer to use Urdu with Kashmiris and Gojris. As Urdu and Hindi are syntactically not very different, they also resort to Hindi to communicate with Kashmiris and Gojris.

The Kohistanis in Ganderbal are generally engaged in agriculture and animal rearing. Now some of them have received some education and are employed in Government offices and schools. The Kohistani women are not encouraged to study and are engaged in household works. The young girls drop out of schools very early. However, at present the male members are very keen to get education in order to improve their prospects. They send their children to the village schools where the
medium of instruction is Urdu. The proficiency in Urdu is enhanced by this fact as well. It is observed that educated youths prefer to use Urdu or Hindi rather than Kashmiri when speaking to outsiders.

Kohistani does not have a writing system. So they do not have written literature. In social functions, Kashmiri, Gojri and even Pahari songs are used. This shows that oral traditions in Kohistani have been eroded in Ganderbal. But Kohistanis speak in their own language with the members of their own community both inside the home and outside. The Kohistanis have their religious sermons in Urdu.

1.6 Data and Methodology

This study is conducted by following the sociolinguistic frame work pioneered by Labov (1963, 1972 a, b, 1984), Wolfram and Fasold (1974), Milroy (1980,1987), Trudgill (1974) and Eckert (2000). The data for this study was collected from two villages, Wangath and Mammer in Ganderbal district. In Ganderbal District, these two villages have the highest concentration of Kohistani population. So we choose to work on the Kohistanis of these two villages.

In community based sociolinguistic research judgement sample or neighbourhood method is utilized (See Laskar 2003a, 2012a; Feagin 2002). Judgement sample or quasi-random sample involves selecting subjects to fill pre-selected social categories (Labov 1963, Trudgill 1974, Feagin 1979). In other words, in judgement sample the researcher selects the informants to fills the cells which had been already designed based on a number of criteria like age, class, gender, profession. Judgement sample allows one to have a representative sample. The other one is neighbourhood method where an entire neighbourhood is selected for study (See Satyanath 1991, Laskar 2003a, 2012a). In this study we have used the neighbourhood method where a few cluster of settlements were chosen for study.

Once we had decided on the locality where our study would be conducted, we got in touch with two Kohistani friends who introduced us to some Kohistani families.
These families introduced us to other families. In this way, an entire Kohistani settlement was covered. The data was collected over a period of six months. The corpus consists of natural running speech covering fifty hours of speech collected from 60 speakers ranging from 10-80 years. Once we were introduced to the community, we had the challenge of overcoming the problem of ‘Observer’s Paradox’ introduced by Labov (1972a). So we befriended the members of the family. We did everything to win their trust and friendship. Kohistanis are a conservative society and so it was necessary to get the consent of the elder members of the community. Once the elders agreed we begin collecting the actual data. The data was collected through ‘sociolinguistic interviews’ and ‘participant observations’.

1.6.1 Sociolinguistic Interviews

‘Sociolinguistic interviews’ is not a conventional interview. It is a classic method used in sociolinguistic studies (Labov 1972a, 1984, Wolfram and Fasold 1974). This method involves ‘one-on-one tape recorded conversational interview’ (Feagin 2002: 26). We used sociolinguistic interviews to elicit data in our study. As we had gathered information regarding the life of the Kohistanis, we introduced topics that suited the context and people, and encouraged the informants to speak. A small microphone was attached to the clothes of the informant and the speech was recorded in a multitrack recorder. A few initial interviews were taken with the help of my Kohistani friends. All the interviews were taken in natural settings. The Kohistanis were interviewed both outside and inside the house. The male members were interviewed with the help of my husband, whereas the women were interviewed without the help of any man. The Kohistanis spoke at length regarding their daily life, culture and other issues. We also took some group interviews where more than one speaker were interviewed and recorded. All information regarding lexicons was elicited through sociolinguistic interviews. Children were interviewed with the help of parents. Most of the interviews were of more than 60 minutes duration.
1.6.2 Participant Observation

Participant observations are used to supplement the data elicited through sociolinguistic interviews. In the present study also, participant observation was done. In participant observation we observe people how they actually use their speech in natural settings. We have observed interaction of Kohistani people both with their own community members and others in a variety of settings like local markets, fields where they work, schools, marriage-ceremonies and community centres.

This dissertation is organised into five chapters:

(1) Chapter – I: In chapter I, we provide an introduction to the dissertation. We have discussed the theoretical perspectives and the methodology adopted in this study. We provide a discussion on the literature on language contact. We also present a detail discussion on the Kohistani speech community in Ganderbal District.

(2) Chapter –II: In Chapter II, we have provided a discussion on the basic phonology and phonotactics of Kohistani spoken in Ganderbal District. In addition, we have also drawn a brief comparison of Ganderbal Kohistani with other Dardic languages.

(3) Chapter – III: In Chapter III, we delineate some essential morpho-syntactic characteristics of the nominal and verbal categories in Ganderbal Kohistani.

(4) Chapter – IV: In chapter IV, we have discussed the impact of multilingualism on Kohistani. By analysing huge corpora of natural data from Kohistani in Ganderbal, we have shown the linguistic outcomes of contact in Ganderbal Kohistani.
Chapter – (V): Chapter summarizes the findings, analysis, and conclusions drawn from this dissertation.

1Bashir (2003: 824-25) discusses in detail the different sub-groups within each groups. We have mentioned the major subgroups only.
2Grierson (1919) uses the term Garwi to refer to Kohistani.
3“Observor Paradox” means to ‘observe the way people use language when they are not being observed’ (Labov 1972 a).