



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

M.Ed. In TESL Program Language Group Specific Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

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KASHMIRI

(KOSHUR)

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TESL 539
Fall 2011

Where is Kashmiri Spoken?

Kashmiri is spoken by 5,420,000 people in India. Most speakers are in the northern most state, Jammu and Kashmir. The language spreads through the Himalayas and plains across country boundaries outlined below in blue. There are 5,640,940 speakers in the world including India, Pakistan, China, the United Kingdom and United States.

This land was historically settled by Indian inhabitants. Over the years Muslim rulers have forced religious conversions. Pakistan has waged war on this land for the past 70 years to gain control. The UN has established the borders colored here. They were not agreed upon by Pakistan, shown in the green, or China, shown in the yellow.



(Wikipedia)

Indian Cultural Greetings

- ▣ “Nameste” is “Hello”
- ▣ Men shake hands and link arms as a sign of friendship.
- ▣ Women avoid touching and eye contact which is seen as flirting.
- ▣ Hugging and Kissing is not appropriate outside of a marriage in a private home.
- ▣ Their ears are sacred and should be treated nicely. Ruff touches are seen as an insult.
- ▣ Indians run late for appointments, but this is their social normalcy and not considered rude.
- ▣ They remove their shoes when entering most indoor locations (places of worship, homes, some shops and businesses).

Indian Cultural Communication

- ▣ Indirect eye contact is best. Prolonged eye contact is considered rude and inappropriate.
- ▣ Indians will say what they think you would like to hear. They rather communicate in an indirect approach and wait for gestural cues to understand one's message.
- ▣ They call each other over by pointing and using a scratching motion while their palms face the floor. Never wink or whistle as they are seen as discourteous.

Most Kashmiri Speakers in the U.S. seek Political Asylum

- ▣ The KOA, Kashmiri Overseas Organization, is based out of Maryland. Kashmiri Pandits practice Hinduism and face hate crimes from their Pakistan neighbors and Muslim Indian extremists.
- ▣ The purpose of this organization is to protect, preserve, and promote the ethnic and cultural aspects of their heritage, celebrate religious festivals, and assist in any way other displaced Kashmiri Pandits.
- ▣ They host bi-annual camps to bring their community together. They have a school which keeps in their traditions and print Kashmiri literature.

History of Kashmiri

- ▣ There is much debate over the origin of Kashmiri. Arguments include:
 1. It is both a Dardic language and an Indo-Aryan language.
 2. A Dardic language stemming from Aryan stock.
 3. Indo-Aryan language, but devoid of any Dardic lineage.

Dialects

SEVEN REGIONAL

- Spoken within the Kashmir Valley: Maraz, Kamraz, and Srinagar.

**main variations are phonological use and some lexicon*

- Spoken outside of the Kashmir Valley: Kashtawari, Poguli, Rambani, and Siraji.

** Kashtawari is standard; Poguli shares 70% of lexicon; Rambani and Siraji share simularites and are called 'Kashmiri Creole'*

TWO SOCIAL

- Hindu Kashmiri and Muslim Kashmiri

**These social dialects differ from standard Kashmiri with regard to vocabulary, phonology, and a relatively small amount of grammatical properties, but importance lay in diglossia.*

Srinagar is known for the most prestige dialect. Adults will use 'style switching' to sound educated.

Alphabet

- ▣ Kashmiri is the only Dardic language that uses its own writing system.
- ▣ The main writing system of Kashmiri is a modified Persio-Arabic alphabet.
- ▣ There are 15-17 vowels and 27-34 consonants depending on the source.
- ▣ Letters are joined to resemble cursive.
- ▣ Symbols around letters help determine pronunciation.

Phonology/ Morphology

- ▣ There are 44 phonemic sounds.
- ▣ Palatalization is a distinctive feature of the Kashmiri sound system.
- ▣ Verbs, adjectives and pronouns must agree with the subject in number (singular, plural) and in gender (masculine, feminine). This is given by word endings and inflections.
- ▣ Pronouns are distinct from people of higher and lower status.
- ▣ Questions words (who, what, when, etc.) must also reflect gender.

Kashmiri Text

All the vowels can be nasalized and dots help determine length in their sound.

The palatalization of the consonants is represented by an apostrophe sign.

Sample text in Kashmiri

بۇ زۇم سوتنگ رخ پۇرتھ يکھ، باغس باغس ہیرمے زاگ
کھ کثہ کورہم شکھ شہہ پڄر نو، منہ پھلہ ہانگس چھونم ماگ
طمہاگ آزر لوجر تھوونس بڑمراوتھ مرژن منز باگ
علمہاگ نھرن سیکہ لہن پھروتھ ظلماتن منز دتئم داغ

Source: <http://www.gulmarg.com/manikaman.pdf>

Syntax

- Word order is similar to that of English.
Subject + Verb + Object

However...

- Word order can change to SOV in some cases.
- This brands Kashmiri as a V-2 language.
V-2 languages simply mean the verb will come second after the object.

English as a second Language.

- ▣ Most Kashmiri speakers also learn Urdu and English.
- ▣ English is used in code switching among educated Kashmirians and the youth has begun assuming these habits.

However,

- ▣ Students are used to adding inflection to show singular/plural and gender to verbs, subjects and question words. This might cause confusion.
- ▣ Students may expect to speak more formally in social situations to distinguish people of higher class.
- ▣ Students may confuse word order from SVO to SOV.

Resources

Books

- Koul, O. N. (2000). *Kashmiri language, linguistics and culture*. Manasagangotri: Central Institute of Indian Languages.
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Internet sites

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Images

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