

A Comparative Analysis of Consonant Clusters in English and Kashmiri Language

Sobial Jahane Gazzalie, B.Ed., M.A., M.Phil. English
Ph.D. Scholar, Gujarat University
sjgazzalie@gmail.com

Abstract

Consonant cluster exists in morphology, impact on how sounds blend together and how words may be segmented into syllables. The phonetic peculiarities have always confused researcher's work in various theoretical models. In consequence, the irregularities have contributed to a great number of analysis and the development of many new theoretical concepts. The paper presents the comparative analysis of consonant clusters in English and Kashmiri. This paper will also deal the differences between both the languages on the basis of consonants.

Keywords: English, Kashmiri, Consonant Clusters, Syllable, Sequence, Onset, Phonetic, Morpheme, Phoneme, Nasal, Aspiration. Native language, Target language.

Introduction

Consonant cluster (cc) means the sequence of two or more consonants at the beginning (onset) or end (coda) of the syllable or between the vowels (medial). In other words, a sequence of two consonants will have to form part of the same syllable if it has to be considered as a consonant cluster.

Kashmiri Consonant Clusters

Kashmiri language has (c) (c) v (c) (c) syllable structure. The first consonant of the medial cluster is assigned to the preceding syllable and the remaining elements of the unit to the following syllable. In the following examples the syllable boundary is marked by “-” sign.

Kashmiri words	meaning
nak-ši	map
mən-zil	destination

Word Initial Consonant Clusters

Word initial consonant clusters are not as frequent as the word medial consonant clusters. The second member of a consonant cluster which occur in the initial position as always / r /. The first consonant is a stop, affricate or a fricative.

Consonant clusters	Kashmiri words	Meaning
/pr/	prasun	to give birth
/phr/	phras	poplar tree
/br/	bram	Illusion
/tr/	tre	Three
/dr/	drog	Expensive
/ ʈr/	ʈrak	Truck
/ ɖr/	ɖram	Drum
/kr/	krakh	Cry
/khr/	khra:v	a wooden footwear
/gr/	gra:kh	a customer
/tshr/	tshraṭh	Mischief
/sr/	srod	joint, common
/šr/	šra:n	Bath

Word Medial Consonant Clusters

Consonant clusters occur frequently in word medial position in Kashmiri language. Most of these clusters are formed across syllable or morpheme boundaries. Some of them are broken optionally by insertion of the vowel /i/. There are two restrictions in the formation of the consonant clusters:

- (i) Two aspirated consonants do not combine to form a consonant cluster.
- (ii) / ch / is not combined to form a cluster.
- (iii) / ɖ / does not occur as the second member of the consonant cluster. Examples of these consonant clusters are given below:

Consonant clusters	Kashmiri words	meaning
/pt/	kapta:n	captain

/bn/	šabnam	Dew
/thk/	kithkin	How
/dph/	adphar	fragrance
/ḍp/	taḍpun	to suffer in pain
/kt/	maktab	School
/gr/	rangre:z	Dyer
/ck/	ackan	A long button-up coat
/jl/	khəjli:	Insult
/mṭh/	tsamṭhun	to shrink
/nt/	zanti	as if
/šm/	dušman	Enemy
/lb/	albə:n'	Plough
/rb/	gurbath	poverty
/zm/	azma:vun	to try
/hb/	rəhbar	Guide

There are only a limited number of consonant clusters of three consonants possible in Kashmiri language. In all such instances the first consonant is nasal / n /. For example,

Consonant clusters	Kashmiri words	meaning
ndr	əndrim	internal
ndk	andka:r	darkness
ndg	bandgi:	worship
nzr	gənzrun	to count

Word Final Consonant Clusters

There is a less frequency of occurrence of the consonant clusters in the word final position in Kashmiri. The first member of the consonants is any of the nasals / m, n /, or fricative /s, š/. The second consonant is any of the stops.

Consonant clusters	Kashmiri words	meaning
/ mp/	lamp	Lamp
/ mb/	amb	Mango
/nd/	dand	Teeth
/nḍ/	khandḍ	Sugar
/nk/	bank	Bank

/nʃ/	šankh	Conch
/ng/	rang	Colour
/st/	mast	carefree
/ʃt/	gašt	Round

English Consonant Clusters

In English upto three consonants can begin a syllable (as in *spleen* and *stream*) and upto four consonants can end a syllable (as in *texts* and *tempts*). Therefore, English has a syllable structure of (c) (c) (c) v (c) (c) (c) (c).

Word Initial Consonant Clusters

Initial CV-

/ŋ/ does not occur initially. /ʒ/ occurs initially before /i/, /i:/ and /a:/ in certain foreign words such as *gigolo*, *gigue*, *zhivago*, *jabat*, *genre*. The other consonants occur generally before every vowel, though marked deficiencies are evident before /uə, u, ɔ/.

Initial CCV-

Initial CC cluster pattern in English is as follows:

p + l, r, j
t + r, j, w
k + l, r, j, w
b + l, r, j
d + r, j, w
g + l, r, j, w
m + j
n + j
l + j
f + r, j, w
v + j
θ + r, j, w
s + l, j, w, p, t, k, m, n, f
ʃ + r
h + j

Initial CCCV-

Initial CCC consonant cluster pattern is as follows:

s + p + l, r, j
s + t + r, j
s + k + l, r, j, w

/ s / is the essential element of CCC clusters; the second element is a stop; the third element must be one of / l, r, j, w /.

Word Final Consonant Clusters:

Final –VC

/ r, h, j, w / do not occur finally in received pronunciation (RP). / ʒ / occurs finally only after / i:, a: , u: , ei / in words of recent French origin. no vowel occurs before all consonants.

Final –VCC

Word final CC consonant cluster pattern in English is as follows:

- p + t, θ, s
- t + θ, s
- k + t, s
- b + d, z
- d + z
- g + d, z
- tʃ + t
- dʒ + d
- m + p, d, f, θ, z
- n + t, d, tʃ, dʒ, θ, s, z
- ŋ + k, d, z
- l + p, t, k, b, d, tʃ, dʒ, m, f, v, θ, s, z, n, l

Final -VCCC

Final CCC consonant cluster pattern in English is as follows:

- p + t, θ,
 - t + θ
 - k + t
 - m + p, f
 - n + t, θ
 - ŋ + k
 - l + p, t, k, θ, f
 - f + t, θ,
 - s + p, t, k
- } + s

p + s
 t + s
 k + s
 d + s
 m + p
 n + s, tʃ
 ŋ + s, k + t
 l + s, p, k, tʃ
 s + p, k

n + d
 l + b, d, m, x } + z

n + dʒ, z
 l + dʒ, m, v } + d

k + s
 n + t
 ŋ + k
 l + f } + θ

Final -VCCCC

Final CCCC consonant clusters occur only rarely as a result of the suffixation to CCC or a / t / or / s / morpheme, for example, -mpts / *prompts, exempts*/, -mψd / *glimψed*/, -lψts / *sculψts* / -lfθs / *twelfthθs*, / -ksts / *texts*, / -ksθs / *sixθs* / -ntθs / *thousandθs*.

Syllable Structure of Kashmiri in Relation to Learning English

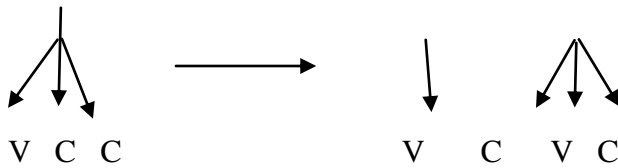
Kashmiri English can be described as a distinct because of the syllable structure of English words.

Simplification of Consonant Clusters

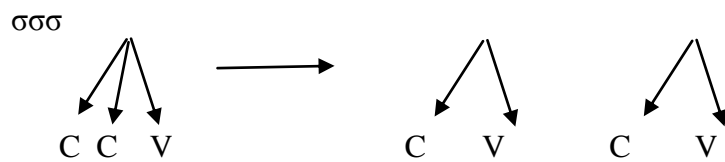
English Words	Kashmiri English
i. Help	heləp
ii. Backs	bəkəs
iii. Asked	a:skəd
iv. Bags	bægəs

v.	Supports	spəʊ:təs
vi.	Texts	tekəstəs
vii.	Blood	bələd
viii.	Sports	səpɔ:təs
ix.	School	səku:l
x.	Play	pəlei
xi.	Stray	sitre

vi) In the words given above a vowel is inserted between coda clusters as illustrated in (I to



It is also inserted between onset clusters as shown in (vii to xi)



Formation of Consonant Clusters (addition of a vowel)

English words	Kashmiri words
city	sti
Examination	Igzæmneɪʃn
cigarette	sigre:th
Separate	səpre:th
constituency	kənəscʹjuənsi

Kashmiri English is based on Arabic Persian: Persian has no diacritics in its orthography, thereby leaving some vowel sounds unmarked in the script, a Kashmiri speaker falls prey to such representations and omits the vowel sound; thereby forms a consonant cluster. All these problems pertain to syllable structure – its simplification and its formation.

As we know few linguists have worked on Kashmiri language. Most of the work is on sociolinguistic and syntax (grammar of Kashmiri). The phonetics and phonology has not been analyzed in detail.

The above-mentioned facts are some of the reasons why Kashmiri speakers become incomprehensive and unintelligible for the native speakers and the other speakers of non-native standards of English.

Problems of Kashmiri Speakers of English in Consonant Clusters

There are difficulties and problems a Kashmiri speaker/learner of English is facing while using English language. A lot of mother tongue influence of Kashmiri is seen while a Kashmiri speaker is using English. There are many consonants which are present in Kashmiri but are absent in English language e.g. /ts, ts^h, c^h, t̪^h, t̪^h, k^h/ and /ɲ/ and there are also many consonant clusters which are present in English but not in Kashmiri language. Although these sounds do not create many problems while speaking English, yet sometimes certain sounds do come in the way.

While coming to consonant clusters there are lot of problem Kashmiri speakers of English face. For example, sk, sl, kl, ml, lp, ks, kd, gs, ts, bl, sp, pl, stand lk. While using these consonant clusters most Kashmiris speakers decluster them by inserting a vowel in them. See the following data:

Skill	/sɪkɪl/
slip	/sɪlɪp/
clif	/kɪlɪf/
Milk	/mɪlɪk/
Help	/heləp/
Socks	/sɔkəs/
Logs	/lɔgəs/
School	/səku:l/
reports	/rɪpɔrtəs/
Plate	/pələit/
Stay	/steɪ/
Supports	/səpɔtəs/
Sports	/səpɔtəs/
Texts	/tekəstəs/
Institution	/ɪnɪstɪtʃʊʃən/

Constitution	/kʌnəstɪtʃʊʃən/
Blood	/bəlʌd/
Stray	/strei/

Conclusion

The consonants of standard Kashmiri are highly influenced by the Persianized variety of Kashmiri. As far as the phonology of Kashmiri is concerned, Kashmiri language consists of 31 consonants which have been described and classified on the basis of: presence and absence of voice, state of glottis, the place of articulation and the manner of articulation. In this paper a contrast has been done on the consonant clusters of both English and Kashmiri language. Consonant cluster means the sequence of two or more consonants at the beginning or end of the syllable. In other words, a sequence of two consonants will have to form part of the same syllable if it has to be considered as a consonant cluster.

From this paper we came to know that Kashmiri language does not use all the combinatorial (i.e. the potential combination) of its phonemes in the word and the syllable. There are certain consonants which have ability to combine together to form a consonant cluster. But there are also certain consonants which do not combine together, a vowel has to be put between them like sk, sl, ml, etc. And due to which (i.e. Kashmiri consonant clusters) Kashmiri speakers of English face many problems while speaking English.

Bibliography

- Balasubramanian, T. *A Text Book of English Phonetics for Indian Students*. Macmillan India Ltd, 2005.
 - Ball, M.J. and J. Rahilly. *Phonetics: The Science of Speech*. Oxford University Press, 1999.
 - Bhat, R. *A Descriptive Study of Kashmiri*. Amar Prakashan, 1987.
 - Dar, B.A. *A Comparative Acoustic Analysis of The Duration of Vowels of English and Kashmiri*, Ph.D. Thesis. EFL-University, Hyderabad, 2007.
 - Sethi, Jand P.V. Dhamija. *A Course in phonetics and spoken English*. Prentice Hall of India, 1999.
-