Phonological Make-up of Portuguese Loanwords Incorporated into Urdu

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Abstract

A language influences another language in different ways. Ruler's language may influence the languages of ruled and vice-versa. The languages of the external traders and preachers may influence the local languages. Thus, we can say that when two or more cultures or languages come into contact, they are bound to influence each other in various ways, i.e., whenever there is a cultural contact of any form, there is also a linguistic contact. Borrowing is one of the outcomes of this contact and when borrowing takes place, some changes in phonological contents of the original words seem to be usual.

Urdu has borrowed many words from the western cultures and languages because of the western colonization in India and Portuguese is one of them. Urdu has many loan words, which have been borrowed from Portuguese with some phonological modifications.

To be more specific, the present paper shows in detail, how lexical items, when borrowed from an alien-language into a native language (in the case of Portuguese and Urdu

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respectively), undergo many phonological changes and are restructured according to the morphological patterns of a borrowing language.

Introduction

In Indian linguistics, the study of loan words in a language is very useful to understand not only the history of language but also the cultural history of the speakers of that language. The study of loan words shows the amount of influence of colonial languages on the Indian languages in various fields like religion, philosophy, and cultural and social life, etc., of Indian speech communities and vice versa. During the 15th and 16th centuries, the Portuguese spread in many parts of the world. In places where they sailed they often left a linguistic heritage, which endures to the present day.

Borrowing

Linguistic borrowing seems to be a universal phenomenon in all the languages of the world. There seems to be no language, which is completely free from borrowing of words, etc.

Linguistically the study of loan words is very interesting and important because it provides an insight into the phonological and morphological structures of both recipient and source languages. It also helps us to understand the cultural affinity between the borrowing language and the lending language.

There are around 7000 languages spoken all over the world. It has been found that when languages come into contact, there is transfer of linguistic items from one language to another due to the borrowing of words (Kachru, 1989).

According to Hock (1986: 380), "the term borrowing refers to the adoption of Individual words or even large sets of vocabulary items from another language or dialect." This process is called borrowing although the lending language does not lose its word, nor does the borrowing language return the word. A better term might be "copying" but "borrowing" has long been established in this sense and words that are borrowed are called loan words (Trask, 1996).

Borrowing in and among Modern Indian Languages

Many modern Indian languages have a large number of foreign origin words, and Indian grammarians have rightly categorised them as '*wideshaj*' (of a foreign origin). Urdu is also one of the Indian languages, which has borrowed a lot of foreign vocabulary from the other languages like English, Turkish, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Portuguese, etc.

For example:

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English - Glass, Building, Machine, Paper, Hospital etc.

Sanskrit - Kutta (dog): Kukkur, Suraj (sun): Surya, Raat (night): Raatri, Ungli (finger): Anguli, Gaay (cow): Gau etc.

Turkish - Begum (lady, in Turkish and is used in the same sense in Urdu. In addition it is also used for 'wife'), Baji (elder sister), Yalghar (attack), Quli (a career labourer), Tamgha (medal) etc.

Arabic - azeem (great), jurm (crime), fikr (thought), khaber (news), khilaf (opposite) etc.

Persian - ashiyana (home/nest), arzoo (desire), buland (high), kahkasan (galaxy), mard (man) etc.

Portuguese – Anannas (pineapple), Kamra (room), Fita (ribbon), Pagar (salary), Kaju (cashew) etc.

Borrowing from Portuguese in Urdu

Moulvi Abdul Haq is perhaps the first scholar to have mentioned the words borrowed from the Portuguese language by Urdu. His article on the subject appeared in the July 1949 issue of the quarterly *Urdu*. A little later, Dr. Muhammad Umar in his book *Urdu men dakheel alfaaz* (1955) further discussed the issue (Parekh, 2010).

The present study discusses how Portuguese language was exposed to Urdu language where with some local variations; many Portuguese words are still used in Urdu and many other Modern Indian Languages. It examines the influence of Portuguese on Urdu and demonstrates the conscious and unconscious shift of vocabulary items from Portuguese to Urdu during the interaction between speakers of these two languages.

Borrowing and Language Variation

Borrowing can be directed with a little change, without any change in the original word or mixture of local and foreign language. The process of borrowing takes place from the dominating (prestigious) to the subordinate (lower).

Borrowing is a sporadic language change in which one language (the recipient language) adapts words or other grammatical features from another language (the donor language). Borrowed words are called loanwords and are often nativized, which means that the pronunciation, and sometimes the morphology, is changed to match the regular patterns of the recipient language. Borrowing can happen for a variety of reasons, including prestige and need.

Direction of Borrowing

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The direction of borrowing can often be inferred based on knowledge of phonology, sound change, morphology, cognates, real world geography, ecology, cultural differences, etc. Borrowing often occurs within particular semantic domains (food, religion, politics, etc.), especially when very different Cultures come into contact.

However, this does not mean that the borrowed words did not undergo any change. Somehow or the other, they underwent some changes. The borrowing of foreign words always entails their phonetic modification. There are sure to be foreign sounds or accentual peculiarities that do not fit the native phonetic habits. They are then so changed as to do as little violence as possible to these habits. Frequently, we have phonetic compromises. (Sapir, 1921)

Adaptation

When a language borrows words from a different language, it tries to adopt them with the help of the sounds closest to the original sounds of the word it possesses. In case of Urdu, which is rich in sounds, has borrowed many words in their original forms from different languages.

Urdu and Portuguese

Portuguese is one of the major languages of the world (the sixth most spoken language worldwide), spoken by about 200 million people on four continents. It belongs to a group of languages called "Romance" or "Neo-Latin" that evolved from Latin, the language of Latium in ancient Italy, or more specifically, the city of Rome.

Muslim soldiers and traders belonging to different nationalities came to India during the 12th century AD, which resulted in the emergence of Urdu as a new language, and later on led to the process of linguistic amalgamation including lexical borrowing. The presence of a large number of loan words from different languages is evident from the historical overview of the present-day Urdu vocabulary.

Urdu is an Indo-Aryan language of the Indo-Iranian branch from the Indo European family.

Beginnings of Urdu

Abbas (2002) traces Urdu's origin to the armies of Afghan emperor Mehmood Gaznavi in the 12th Century. However, as generally known, the term *Ordu* was first used for the language spoken by the soldiers of Mughal emperor Shahjehan (17th century) when he built the Red Fort in Delhi, and the surrounding town called *Ordu-e-Mu'alla.* Urdu absorbed the several languages spoken by the soldiers in the Indian army and absorbed the loanwords from them. That's why

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it is often called *ləʃkəri* (army) *zəban* (language) or the language of the army. There have been four major dialects of Urdu i.e. (1) Dakhani or now called Daccani (2) Pinjari (3) Rekhta and (4) Modern Vernacular Urdu. The modern vernacular language is based on the *Khaɽi Boli* dialect, of the Delhi region, spoken in 12th century. Urdu is most closely related to Assamese, Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, Sindhi, Singhalese, and Romany. It is one of the largest languages of the Indian subcontinent with native speakers of over sixty million, and an official language in Pakistan and the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Kashmir and Delhi.

According to an estimate, Urdu has approximately 75% words from the Indic sources. About 23% have been borrowed from Persian, Arabic and Turkish. Urdu has also borrowed words from other languages like English and Portuguese. In the present study, the focus is only on Portuguese loan words in Urdu.

Portuguese in India

The people who came first in great number to India were the Portuguese, who were called the Franks, Parangi, or Firangi by the Indians. Vasco de Gama landed on the Malabar Coast in 1498, and his followers gained political power by 1508. In that year, under the leadership of Afonso de Albuquerque the Portuguese wrested the territory of Goa and adjoining areas from Muslim kings of Bijapur. From these they soon spread too much of the costal India, and effectively dominated the Arabian Sea and the sea route from the Indian coasts to Europe via Cape of Good Hope and the Mediterranean.

With their naval power, the Portuguese soon established themselves as a formidable power in all these ports and, thus they spread all around India, and penetrated deep inside as well, through perennial rivers like the Ganga, the Godavari, etc. they became a power in Goa as much as in Bangal before the end of 16th century.

The Portuguese missionaries also brought the technology of printing to India. They translated the Bible, books of Catechism and such other scriptures, and began the era of printed literature in the modern Indian languages. Many Portuguese missionaries believed that conducting church services in the Indian languages would help them to win the hearts of their Indian flock. So they learnt the modern Indian languages and later also wrote grammars and lexicons if these languages. In many cases they found no existing term in the language, they used the Portuguese word. That is how, perhaps, words like *padri* and *girja,* respectively for priest and church, and similar words, got into Indian languages. (Chaudhary, 2009).

Data Analysis

1- **Elision or Deletion**

Elision is the omission of one or more sounds (such as a vowel, a consonant, or a whole syllable) in a word, producing a result that is easier for the speaker to pronounce. Based on position (initial, medial and final) the process of elision is of

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three types, apheresis, syncope and apocope but in the present data only last two types of elision are found which are as below.

a- Syncope

Sounds removed from the middle of the word.

Portuguese	Urdu	Meaning	Change
• Igreja:	girja:	Church	e
• toa:liya:	toliya:	Towel	a:
• piris	pirč	Saucer	i
• yəmela:	gəmla:	Flower pot	e

syncope as well as velarization of palatal semi vowel is taking place in yəmela:

b- Apocope

Sounds removed from the end of the word.

Portuguese	Udru	Meaning	Change
• Ispa:də	ispa:t	Steel	ə
• mezə	mez	Table	ə
• pistɔlə	pistɔl	Pistol	ə
• kəmi:zə	kəmi:z	Shirt	ə
• pra:to	pəra:t	Big plate	o
• ərma:rio	əlma:ri	Almirah	o
• ka:zə	ka:j	Hinge	ə
• kərtu:so	ka:rtu:s	Cartridge	o

2- Vowel Change

Vowel change in a language refers to the any of various changes in the acoustic quality of vowels, which are related to the changes in stress, sonority, duration, loudness, articulation or position in the word. Based on vowel change, Portuguese loan words in Urdu can be analyzed as below.

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VOWELS

Front   Near front   Central   Near back   Back

Close	i • y	ɨ • ʉ	ɯ • u	
Near close	ɪ • ʏ		• ʊ	
Close mid	e • ø	ɘ • ɵ	ɤ • o	
Mid		ə		
Open mid	ɛ • œ	ɜ • ɞ	ʌ • ɔ	
Near open	æ	ɐ		
Open	a • ɶ-ɑ	ɑ • ɒ		
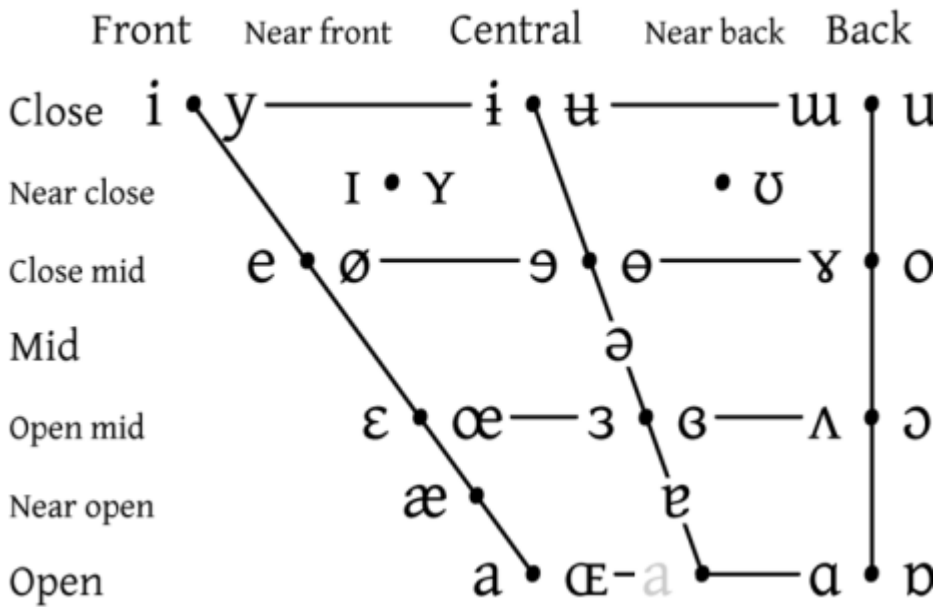
a- Centralization

A centralized vowel is a vowel that is more central than some point of reference, or that has undergone a shift in this direction. The concept of centralization is convenient in cases where front and back vowels move toward each other, rather than all advancing or retracting in the same direction.

Portuguese	Urdu	Meaning	Change
• botən	bəTən	Button	o-ə
• forma:	fərma:	Mould	o-ə
• ingles	əngrez	English Man	i-ə
• bu:mba:	bəmba:	Pump	u:-ə

b- Decentralization

Portuguese	Urdu	Meaning	Change
• pəo	pa:o	Bun	ə-a:
• kərtu:so	ka:rtu:s	Cartridge	ə-a:

c- Raising

Portuguese	Urdu	Meaning	Change
• təba:ko	təmba:ku:	Tabacco	o-u
• pa:dre	pa:dri:	Priest	e-i:

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- mestri: mistri: Master/Mechanic   e-i

3- Zero Change

The loans words given below are very frequent in Urdu and are used in the same form that means no phonological change.

Portuguese	Urdu	Meaning	Change
a:ya:	a:ya:	Governess	φ
kəmra:	kəmra:	Room	φ
fi:ta:	fi:ta:	Ribbon	φ
kobra:	kobra:	Cobra	φ
ma:rka	ma:rka	Stamp/Hallmark	φ
pi:pa	pi:pa	Pipe	φ
pəga:r	pəga:r	Salary	φ
sa:ya:	sa:ya:	Petticoat	φ
ka:ju:	ka:ju:	Cashew	φ

4- Bilabialization

Portuguese	Urdu	Meaning	Change
ča:vi:	ča:bi:	Key	v-b
kovi:	gobhi:	Cabbage	v-bh

5- Metathesis

Portuguese	Urdu	Meaning	Change
Igreja:	girja:	Church	i

Conclusion

To conclude the present paper it can be said, "Change in language is natural". When two or more languages come in contact, they influence each other in different ways (phonologically, morphologically, syntactically etc). Because of this contact, many linguistic elements are transferred from one language to another. Borrowing is one of the main process through which speakers add new lexicons to their language from other languages. When borrowing takes place, some phonological changes in the original form of a word are common.

Language contact and the influence of one language on another are very common phenomena. Portuguese have influenced various languages globally. Urdu is one of the

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recipient languages, which has borrowed many words from Portuguese. This study focuses on the phonological modifications in the original form of the Portuguese loanwords in Urdu.

Loanwords from Portuguese in Urdu are far older than English loans, and function like native Urdu words with a little phonological change or without any change in the original form of the words. These changes occur due to the process of 'nativization', which means the pronunciation, and sometimes the morphology, is changed to match the regular patterns of the recipient language.

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