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Morphophonemic structure of Kashmiri and Īśvar Kaul

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Introduction

An important point missing in the grammatical tradition of Kashmiri is Īśvar Kaul's KaśmīraśabdāmṚtam. KaśmīraśabdāmṚtam is the earliest written grammar of Kashmiri authored in 19th century A.D. by a native speaker on the Paninian model. The book is divided into 9 chapters and presents a description of the grammatical structure of Kashmiri including Phonology and Morphology. In this paper attempts have been made to present a critical analysis of the first chapter of the book which throws light on the morphophonemic structure of the Kashmiri vocabulary. The title of this chapter is *Sandhiprakaraṇam* ^[1]. This study is based on the manuscript of the book available in the Research Library, University of Kashmir. It is written in the Sanskrit Language. The script of the manuscript is Devanagiri.

Īśvar Kaul begins the chapter with the word *tatrādau* ^[2] and says that the manner in which *sandhi* occurs in Kashmiri is described in this chapter of the grammar ^[3]. According to Īśvar Kaul सन्धिसिद्धिः पदेषु ^[4] i.e; sandhi occurs in the internal structure of a *pada* ^[5] न वाक्येषु ^[6] not in the sentences.

Īśvar Kaul's description of sandhi needs to be analyzed in the context of the accepted definition of sandhi in Sanskrit. The term *sandhi* is derived from the Sanskrit verb root √dhā (to join) preceded by prefix *sam* ^[7] (together). Thus, *sandhi* means coalescence or euphonic junction of two letters coming in immediate contact with each other ^[8]. Pāṇini uses the word *samhita* for sandhi which means the extreme contiguity of letters.

The term *pada* in Sanskrit grammar denotes a complete or inflected word that can be segmented into morphemes. A *pada*, therefore, is combination of at least two morphemes, one free form (a nominal or verbal root) and one bound form (a derivational or inflectional affix) or both free forms. The collision of the final letter of the preceding morpheme and initial letter of the following morpheme results in the combinatory phonemic transformation of the two letters within the internal structure of the *pada*. However, sandhi cannot be performed in the sentence which is combination of the syntactic units ending in nominal or verbal terminations.

Rules of sandhi are language specific. The traditional Sanskrit grammarians have grouped *sandhi* into three classes viz, i) *svar sandhi* i.e; combination of two vowel phonemes, long or short, similar or dissimilar, ii) *hal sandhi* i.e; combination of two consonant phonemes and, iii) *visarga sandhi* i.e; a visarga ^[9] followed by a vowel or a consonant. The same process of sandhi applies to the tatsam vocabulary of Hindi while as other NIA languages show considerable variations. Īśvar Kaul describes the rules of *sandhi* in Kashmiri as follows:

व्यंजनं परेण सन्धेयम् – 3 ^[10]. According to this sutra the initial letter of the second component combines with the final consonant of the preceding noun. The examples are: *tāp+uk* = *tāpuk* (pertaining to sunshine), *kar+yān* = *karyān* (√do remote past, IIIrd person singular).

The sutra and its illustrations are incomplete due to the reasons explained below:

The use of /-uk/ in the genitive masculine singular sense is quite common in Kashmiri. It is added to the abstract, material and immovable masculine common nouns, qualitative adjectives and words denoting place, time and direction, such as *lūṅuk* (belonging to plunder); *tīluk* (of oil); *makānuk* (belonging to house); *gāmuk* (belonging to village); *sāmuk* (of evening); *yoruk* (belonging to this direction) etc.

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The fusion of the initial *-u* of */-uk/* and final consonant of the preceding word gives rise to some combinatory morphophonemic changes within the structure of the word to which */-uk/* is added, e.g;

- Aspiration of the final consonant of abstract nouns is dropped before the fusion of */-u/*, such as; *tāph* (sunshine) + *uk* - */tāpuk/*; *lūth* (plunder) + *uk* - */lūthuk/* while it is retained in case of the other nouns as in *vuṭh* (lip) + *uk* - */vuṭhuk/*
- The initial low central vowel */a/* of the noun is replaced by mid central vowel */ə/* while the final consonant is palatalized, as in: *az* (today) + *uk* - */əžuk/*.
- If the noun ends in high central vowel */ii/*, it is dropped and */u/* blends with the final consonant, e.g; *ḍakū* (forehead)+*uk* - */ḍakuk/*.

Similarly, ĪśvarKaul's remote past termination */-yān/* is unintelligible for the reasons given below:

- In Kashmiri, the terminations used to denote the remote past are of two types, viz; i) *subject ending*, and, ii) *object ending*.
- The subject ending terminations are added to the intransitive roots and agree, in number, gender and person, with the subject of the active and impersonal constructions, e.g; *su gāyo sōkūl yēli su lokuṭ śur os* (he had gone to school when he was a small child) *čē ti gēvōth* (you *Ins.* had also sung).
- The object ending terminations are added to the transitive roots and agree in number, gender and person, with object of the action in the passive construction, e.g; *tām paṛo akhūbār* (he *Ins.* had gone through the newspaper) *tami paṛo akhūbār* (she *Ins.* had gone through the newspaper).
- */-yo/* and its regional variant */yā/* is the most commonly used first and third person (mas.) object ending termination to denote the remote past tense ^[11].
- Blend of */-yo/* ~ */-yā/* or any other suffix beginning with */-y-/* results in transformation of the simple consonant into palatalized consonant.
- The conjugational terminations are employed to make the verb roots fit for use in sentences.
- ĪśvarKaul's remote past termination */-yān/* does not make the verb root fit for use in the longer constructions i.e; phrases, sentences etc.
- Īśvar Kaul is silent about the above cited and even other possible morphophonemic changes which occur due to collision of two phonemes.

Further, ins"qk fde~ ^[12] i.e; whether fusion of phrases in the longer constructions is permitted? Īśvar Kaul says that in a sentence like *tim āy* (they came), the syntactic units end in the nominal and verbal terminations respectively. In such cases sandhi is not permitted.

vlo.kZsssdkjL; yksi% & 4 ^[13]

It means that */a/* is dropped if it is followed by a dissimilar vowel and the following vowel blends with the preceding consonant. The illustrations are *ḍaka+uk* = */ḍakuk/* (of the forehead) *gāṭa+ul* = */gāṭul/* (worthy).

Īśvar Kaul's assumptions are not correct because:

- The illustrated nouns end in high central short vowel */ii/* instead of low central short vowel */a/* as described by Īśvar kaul.
- The *vcv*, *cvc* or *cvcv* structure is the backbone of word formation in Kashmiri. The syllabic structure like *vvc* or *cvv* is absent in Kashmiri. Hence not only */a/* but any

vowel sound at the final position of the word is dropped if it is followed by another vowel sound.

According to Īśvar Kaul ins"qk fde~ ^[14] i.e; sandhi is not possible between longer constructions such as *čū vōlü* (you come). However, this rule applies irregularly because there is no other rule for */u/* and such other dissimilar vowels ^[15].

Īśvar Kaul's statement is not clear because:

- In the construction like *tim āy* Īśvar Kaul says that fusion of phrases is not possible because they end in nominal and verbal terminations respectively.
- In a similar construction *čū vōlü* he tries to advocate a different rule by saying that the rule applies irregularly as there is no other rule for */u/* etc.
- Īśvar Kaul's knowledge regarding oral factors in Kashmiri vowel sounds seems insufficient as neither of the above forms i.e; *čū* or *vōlü* begins or ends with */u/*.
- More over *čū* and *vōlü* are noun and verb phrase respectively and fusion of phrases is not found in Kashmiri.

According to Īśvar Kaul Loj% lo.ksz nh?kZijyksikS & 5 ^[16]. It means that if a vowel is followed by a similar vowel, it transforms to a long vowel while as the following vowel is dropped. Thus, *karān- chy-ā* and *achi iṭ* change to *karān chyā* and *achīṭ* respectively. But in constructions like *paṛchi im* (these guests) sandhi is not possible.

Īśvar Kaul's assertions and the illustrations are not justified because of the reasons given below:

- According to the accepted sandhi rules if a simple vowel, short or long, is followed by a similar vowel, short or long, the substitute for both of them is the similar long vowel ^[17].
- Thus, if the similar long vowel is the result of the fusion of the both, in that case question of loss of the following vowel does not arise.
- The illustrations *karān- chy-ā* and *achi (eye) iṭ* are misinterpreted and do not show any junction of two similar short or long vowels.
- In Kashmiri, the actual word for *eye (əch)* is a consonant ending form instead of (*achi*) a vowel ending form as cited by Īśvar Kaul.
- Similarly, the auxiliary */ch/* does not end in the semi vowel */y/*.
- Lengthening of the preceding vowel and loss of the following vowel is, therefore, imaginary.

In fact, the above cited sutra of Īśvar Kaul seems merely copy of Pāṇini's sutra अकः सवर्णे दीर्घः ^[18] which the author tries to apply to the Kashmiri vocabulary without any logic.

As regards the example */paṛchi im/* ^[19] it is an unintelligible construction. The reason is that the word order in this construction deviates from the accepted word order of a noun phrase. In Kashmiri, unlike Sanskrit, order of words in the phrases and sentences is fixed. Thus, any change in the order of the words makes the construction unintelligible or breaks it into meaningless fragment(s). The Kashmiri noun phrase (NP), like English and most of the NIA languages, consists either of only a noun as in *paṛch* (guests) [NP] or an adjective + a noun as in *yim paṛch* (these guests). Thus, */paṛchi im/* ^[20] is incorrect construction.

अकारेकारलोपः – 5d ^[21]. This sutra is in contradiction to the previous sutra. According to this sutra */a/* is dropped if followed by */a/* as in *garū – an* becomes *garan*. It is noteworthy that the final sound of the first component is */ii/* which, if followed by */a/*, is dropped.

अकार इकार, (and) उकारो ओ – 6 (and) – 7 ^[22]

According to author if /a/ is followed by /i/ or /u/ it changes to /e/ or /o/ respectively while the following (letter) is dropped [23] as in *cya – in* → *cyen* (drank objective plu.) and *khya –un* → *khyon*. The sūtras and the illustration are not justified for these reasons:

- The palatal affricates in Kashmiri do not occur combined with the semi vowel /y/.
- The actual verb root is √*ce* (to drink) which has /ē/ at the final position and not /a/ as assumed by Īśvar Kaul.
- Possibility of transformation of *a + i* or *u* to *e* or *o* therefore, is not justified.

Both these sūtras match with Pāṇini's आद्गुणः [24] sutra. According Pāṇini when *a* or *ā* is followed by *i*, *u*, or *R*, short or long, the corresponding *guṇa* letter i.e; *e*, *o* or *ar* takes the place of both as in: *upa + indra = upendra*; *hita + upadeśa = hitopadeśa*; *mahā + Rśi = maharśi* etc. But Īśvar Kaul's illustrations do not justify his assertions, कारो, (and) ओकारो औ – 8 (and) – 9 [25]

If /a/ is followed by /e/ or /o/, it is replaced by /ai/ or /au/ respectively such as *ga – ey = gaiy* (they went); [26] *pya – ey = pyaiy* (they fell down); [27] *ga – ov = gauv* (he went); [28] *pyauv* (he fell down) [29].

Īśvar Kaul has created this sutra on the analogy of Pāṇini's sutra वृद्धिरेचि [30] which means that when *a* or *ā* is followed by *e* or *ai*, *o* or *au*, *ai* and *au* are respectively substituted for both. Pāṇini's rule is comprehensible through the illustrations given in support of this sutra [31]. But Īśvar Kaul's sutra is unintelligible for the following reasons:

- Diphthongs like *ai* and *au* are absent in Kashmiri.
- Verb roots are misconceived by the author.
- The actual verb roots are *gačh* and *pē* respectively instead of *ga* and *pya*.
- Neither of these roots ends in /a/ or /ā/ as given by Īśvar Kaul.
- The simple past tense forms of these verbs are *gav ~ gōv* and *ṭav ~ ṭōv* and not *gauv* or *pyauv* as illustrated by the author.

According to Pāṇini's bdk;s;kf [32] when *i*, *u*, *R* and *lR*, short or long, are followed by a dissimilar vowel, *y,v,r* and *l* are respectively substituted for them and the following vowel blends with *y,v,r* or *l* such as *sudhī+upāsyah=sudhyupāsyah* (adored by the wise) etc. According to Īśvar Kaul bdkjksllo.ksZ; ksssjyksi% & 10 [33] i.e; when /i/ is followed by a dissimilar vowel, *y* is substituted for /i/ as in *kari – uk = karyuk* [34].

This rule certainly applies to Kashmiri. But Īśvar Kaul's illustration is not clear. In fact the actual word is *kar* (when) and not *kari* (logs) as illustrated by the author. As stated earlier use of /-uk/ is quite common in Kashmiri. This suffix is added to words of time, direction and place in the adjective – genitive sense or in the sense of 'relating or belonging to' such as *gām-uk* (belonging to village); *parus-uk* (last year's) etc [35]. However, constructions like *tati + uk = tat-y-uk* (belonging to that place) and *tēli + uk = tēl-y-uk* (of that time) make the above cited rule clear. This substitution of *y* for *i* gives rise to a very significant morphophonemic change that is *y* leads to the palatalization of the preceding consonant. Thus, the resulting forms are – *taṭuk*, *tēluk* etc. Similarly *nari* (arms)+*an=naṛan*; *kori* (girls)+*an=koṛan* etc.

mdkjks o% & 11 [36] i.e; /u/ followed by a dissimilar vowel changes to /v/. But this rule hardly applies to Kashmiri. The reason is that there are only two /u/ ending words in Kashmiri – *hu* (he within the range of sight) and *su* (he beyond the range of sight). The quoted illustration *karān chuā ~ chavā* is

unintelligible. Īśvar Kaul further says that in phrases such as *kati – āya* and *paṭu* [37]- *an* sandhi is not possible.

Analysis of this chapter reflects Īśvar Kaul's insufficient knowledge regarding oral factors and distribution of Kashmiri vowel sounds. Kashmiri has 15 oral vowel phonemes. The linguistic study of Kashmiri shows that it has, according to the height of the tongue, 6 high vowels *i ī; ü ū; u ū*: 6 mid vowels *ē e; ə ē; ō o* and 3 low vowels *a ā ɔ* while according to the parts of tongue raised it has 4 front vowels *i ī; ē e*: 6 central vowels *ü ū; ə ē; a ā* and 5 back vowels *u ū; ō o ɔ*. According to the position of lips Kashmiri has 10 unrounded *i ī; ü ū; ē e; ə ē; a ā* and 5 rounded *u ū; ō o ɔ* vowels. Īśvar Kaul does not differentiate especially between the high central (*ü ū*), mid central (*ə ē*) and low central (*a ā*) vowels. According to his descriptions these vowels possess the same vowel quality which is not true.

As regards the distribution of vowels, *u* and *ɔ* do not occur in the word initial position while *ū ə ū* and *ō* do not occur in the word final position. *u* occurs very rarely in the word final position.

It is because of the author's insufficient knowledge regarding the linguistic peculiarities of the Kashmiri vowels that the sandhi rules perceived by him do not match with the illustrations cited in support of his sutras. Besides, most of his sutras match with the sutras of the Aṣṭādhyāyī to the extent that there will be no exaggeration to say that Īśvar Kaul tries to apply Pāṇini's sandhi rules to the Kashmiri language. This attempt of Īśvar Kaul is erroneous because of the fact that every language generates its own rules and methods according to its linguistic peculiarities. Īśvar Kaul is silent about *vyañjan sandhi* in Kashmiri.

References

1. The chapter related to sandhi : KaśmīraśabdāmRtam: p.4
2. Means *In the beginning* (of the work) or *the first chapter* (of the work) ----- ibid
3. ----- ibid -----
4. *sandhih siddhih padeṣu* : KaśmīraśabdāmRtam: 1/1 p.4
5. *suptiñantam padam*: pāṇini – 1.4.14
6. *na vākeṣu* : KaśmīraśabdāmRtam: 1/2 p.4
7. *sam* meaning *together* + √*dhā* meaning *to join*
8. *parah sannikarṣah samhitā* : Aṣṭādhyāyī – 1.4.109
9. Consonant ending in a distinct hard aspiration
10. *vyañjanam pareṇa sandheyam* : KaśmīraśabdāmRtam: p.4
11. Razdan S.- Kashmiri grammar: History and Structure – p. 223
12. *padeṣu kim* : KaśmīraśabdāmRtam: p.4
13. *asavarṇeakārasya lopah* : ----- ibid -----
14. *padeṣu kim* : ----- ibid ----- p.5
15. ----- ibid -----
16. *svarah savarṇe dīrghaparalopau* : ----- ibid -----
17. *akah savarṇe dīrghah* : pāṇini : 6.1.101
18. ----- ibid -----
19. Pronounced *pāčh*
20. Pronounced as *yim*
21. *akāre akāra lopah* : KaśmīraśabdāmRtam 1/5/a p.5
22. *akāra ikāra e ; ukāro o* : ----- ibid ----- p.5-6
23. *akārikār pare ekāro bhavati parlopaśca*: ----- ibid -----
24. *ādguṇah* : Pāṇini : 6.1.87
25. *ekāro ai; okāro au* : KaśmīraśabdāmRtam: p. 6
26. ----- ibid -----
27. ----- ibid -----

28. ----- ibid -----
29. ----- ibid -----
30. vRddhireci : Pāṇini : 6.1.88
31. Such as *KRṣṇā+ekatvam = KRṣṇaikatvam; sā+eva = saiva etc.*- Pāṇini : 6.1.88
32. *Iko yaṇaci* : Pāṇini : 6.1.77
33. *ikāroasavarṇeyoapara lopah* : KaśmīraśabdāmRtam: p. 6
34. ----- ibid -----
35. Razdan S.- Kashmiri grammar: History and Structure – p. 129
36. KaśmīraśabdāmRtam: p. 6
37. Correct pronunciation is *pōṭ* (woolen cloth).