Research perspective

Language Use During Chatting and Expressing Emotions by Kashmiri Speakers Using WhatsApp

Sajad Ahmad Teli iD ✉ Aejaz Mohammed Sheikh iD Saima Jan iD
Junaid Yousuf Pala iD

1,2,3 Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir, Srinagar

4 School Education Department, Kashmir Valley.

Abstract

Language used by a person in different domains of life depicts his/her affinity and attitude towards that particular language. Attitudes towards the vernacular languages changed drastically due to the spread of English and its prestigious position in all sectors of life. Kashmiri is the mother tongue of the majority of the people of Kashmir Valley and in addition to this Urdu and English act as the second language. In this globalized world where technology has affected all sectors of life communication is not an exception to it. One of the amazing tools of communication nowadays is WhatsApp, a social networking site through which people communicate with each other by sharing text, voice, images, and videos. The present study was carried out in the Kashmir valley of Jammu and Kashmiri to check the language preferences of Kashmiri bilinguals while chatting and expressing their emotions on WhatsApp. The study also took into account the script of the language used while using WhatsApp. The findings of the study support the view that the people of Kashmir Valley use WhatsApp often. They use the English language while using WhatsApp frequently and use Kashmiri rarely and Urdu sometimes. The Roman script is the preferred script as compared to the Perso-Arabic script which is rarely used.

Keywords: Language, Kashmiri, WhatsApp, Preference, Chatting

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT G☉ALS <u>Partnership for the Goals</u>

Introduction

Kashmiri is the language spoken by the majority of the population of Jammu and Kashmir. It is one of the official languages of Jammu and Kashmir along with Dogri, Urdu, and English. Kashmiri is acquired from the home environment and Urdu and English are acquired from the school environment (Sheikh, et al, 2013). Languages form the identity of a speech community and it is up to the particular speech community to protect and preserve their language. Due to the advancement in science and technology new

Citation: Teli, Sajad Ahmad, et al. (2024). Language Use During Chatting and Expressing Emotions by Kashmiri Speakers Using WhatsApp. *Journal of South Asian Exchanges* 1.1
< https://saexchanges.com/v1n1/v1n102.pdf>

information and communication tools and gadgets have been developed and are continuously developing day by day. These tools and gadgets have given new heights to traditional communication channels. Now a person can share anything at any time with anyone sitting in any part of the world. Different online mediums are available today for the sake of communication like emails, radio, TV, mobile phones, and different social media sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter. WhatsApp is the most used social networking site nowadays. It is highly addictive and can create a great impact on its continuous users; WhatsApp is used for different purposes communication, teaching students, presentations, and sharing photos, videos, texts, and audio (Otemuyiwa, et al 2017). Depending upon one's accessibility and comfort people use different languages and are using varied scripts while using WhatsApp.

Literature review

Social media networking sites serve as valuable databases for research across various domains, particularly in the field of sociolinguistics. Much research work has been conducted on the language behaviours of people on WhatsApp a social networking site. One of the studies was carried out by Otemuyiwa, et al (2017) in which they studied and analyzed the WhatsApp conversations of undergraduate students of Babalola University. He found that emojis and smileys have the power to reduce ambiguity and add emotional context to the message. A similar study was carried out by Lestari (2019) in which he argued that WhatsApp emoticons have become an important online tool for communication to enhance the message to better express feelings and emotions. People do use WhatsApp and use cross-linguistic features while chatting on WhatsApp. They mix different languages and they have their personalised coding while using WhatsApp. These new terms or language usage is continuously developing and spreading through the younger generations. It is the responsibility of language experts to explore these new terminologies and lexical items to accommodate the new concepts (Nurhamidah, 2017).

Methodology

A descriptive research design was followed in this research study. This is the most common research design that is used in social sciences, psychology, and Education (Nassaji, 2015). Data was collected directly from the users of different social networking sites who belong to the Kashmir valley of India. The population of this research consists of the users of WhatsApp in the Kashmir Valley.

Sampling technique

A stratified random sampling technique was used for the selection of a representative sample from the population. The whole population area (Kashmir) was divided into two strata: Rural and Urban. Taking into consideration the population size, a proportionate sample was selected randomly from each stratum

Sample size

For selecting the representative sample from the population, various techniques and formulas are used. Itemized sampling criteria were used to determine the sample size which says that at least ten respondents should be selected for each item in a scale to test the hypothesis (Wang

(Wang, 2012). And as such 17 items were developed in the questionnaire. However, a sample size of 200 was considered for the present study to be a more representative sample of the population.

The questionnaire was designed after consulting different studies that have been conducted on language preferences on social media. The questionnaire has two sections: - one is related to the demographic information of the respondents and the second is related to the language preferences of Kashmiri speakers while using WhatsApp. The items were framed on a five-point Likert scale.

Before administering the questionnaire to the participants, a pilot study was conducted to check the validity and reliability of the research instrument. The first draft of the questionnaire was given to two research scholars and one expert on linguistics was assigned to confirm the validity of the questionnaire. After his opinion some items were deleted, some were added and some were modified. After incorporating the changes, the final draft of the questionnaire was created using the Google form. The questionnaire was distributed among 70 participants. The data was codified and tabulated and was entered in SPSS version 25. Cronbach's alpha was used to check the reliability of the questionnaires. Cronbach's alpha for the items was above 0.70 for the questionnaires which is considered as the acceptable value for the reliability of a measuring instrument.

Table 1: Reliability of the questionnaire

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.893	18

Analysis and Results

Analysis of the data was carried out in different steps by using SPSS version 25. In the first step, the analysis of the demographic variables was carried out and then descriptive analysis was carried out to check the percentages, mean, and standard deviation of the different items and their responses by the respondents. For comparative analysis of the statements, ANOVA and T-tests were carried out to check whether there is a significant or insignificant relationship between the different groups of demographic variables.

Analysis of the demographic variables

Table 2: Demographic variables

Gender		
	Male	Female
N	101	99
%	50.5	49.5
Geographical Location		
	Rural	Urban

N	136	64
%	68.0	32.0

Educational Qualification			
	10th	12th	Graduation	Post-Graduation
N	46	48	50	56
%	23.0	24.0	25.0	28.0

Age			
	10-20	21-30	31-40	40 above
N	50	59	46	45
%	25.0	29.5	23.0	22.5

Descriptive analysis of the items

Descriptive analysis of the items was carried out and accordingly for every item percentages, mean and standard deviations were calculated.

Table 3 provides the item-wise analysis of the responses given by the respondents on their use of different languages while using WhatsApp. It can be seen that people are using WhatsApp from often to always. It can also be seen from the table that people use Kashmiri and Urdu sometimes while sharing something, for positive replies and negative replies, and use English often for the same. While for replying neutrally they use Kashmiri rarely and Urdu and English often. For the script they use Perso Arabic rarely to sometimes and English often.

Table 3: **Descriptive analysis of items frequency, percentages, mean and standard deviation**

Item Statements		N (f) (%)	R (f) (%)	ST (f) (%)	O (f) (%)	A (f) (%)	Mean	SD
I use Whatsapp		0	5	15	57	123	4.49	.743
		0	2.5	7.5	28.5	61.5		
	Kashmiri	72	44	61	13	10	2.23	1.154
		36.0	22.0	30.5	6.5	5.0		
	Urdu	19	47	98	23	13	2.82	.981

							Mean	SD
Language use while posting on WhatsApp		9.5	23.5	49.0	11.5	6.5		
	English	0	20	81	42	57	3.68	.996
		0	10.0	40.5	21.0	28.5		
Language use while commenting on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	28	37	97	27	11	2.78	1.028
		14.0	18.5	48.5	13.5	5.5		
	Urdu	5	35	71	50	39	3.42	1.067
		2.5	17.5	35.5	25.0	19.5		
	English	0	18	95	53	34	3.52	.880
		0	9.0	47.5	26.5	17.0		
Language use while positive comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	57	57	65	12	9	2.30	1.083
		28.5	28.5	32.5	6.0	4.5		
	Urdu	17	44	91	28	20	2.95	1.050
		8.5	22.0	45.5	14.0	10.0		
	English	1	18	78	41	62	3.73	1.017
		.5	9.0	39.0	20.5	31.0		
Language use while Negative comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	86	41	46	24	3	2.09	1.129
		43.0	20.5	23.0	12.0	1.5		
	Urdu	52	53	65	24	6	2.40	1.089
		26.0	26.5	32.5	12.0	3.0		
	English	0	51	71	38	40	3.34	1.067
		0	25.5	35.5	19.0	20.0		
Script while using Whatsapp	Perso-Arabic Script	80	42	56	13	9	2.15	1.154
		40.0	21.0	28.0	6.5	4.5		

Roman Script	17	60	42	35	46	3.17	1.310
	8.5	30.0	21.0	17.5	23.0		

Five-point Likert scale Strongly Disagree (SDA), Disagree (DA), Neutral (N), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA

Comparative analysis ANOVA and T-test

Comparative analysis was carried out to check whether there was any significant difference between the different groups. One-way ANOVA was carried out for the groups that have more than two categories and for the analysis of two categories of groups T-test was calculated.

For the comparative analysis of the items based on educational qualification, **Table 4.3** presents the analysis. No significant difference exists in the use of WhatsApp between the different groups belonging to the educational qualification. Similarly, for the other occasions of language use on WhatsApp, no significant difference was found between the different groups belonging to different educational backgrounds. However, a significant difference can be seen in the Perso Arabic script usage by different groups of educational qualifications.

Table 4: Comparative analysis ANOVA for Educational Qualification

Item Statements		Educational Qualification	Mean	Std. Dev.	F Value	Sig.
I use Whatsapp		10th	4.35	.948	2.139	.097
		12th	4.38	.761		
		Grad	4.68	.621		
		Post Grad	4.54	.602		
Language use while posting on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	10th	2.37	1.236	.343	.794
		12th	2.15	1.148		
		Grad	2.22	1.166		
		Post Grad	2.18	1.097		
	Urdu	10th	2.83	1.081	.274	.844
		12th	2.90	.994		
		Grad	2.72	.927		
		Post Grad	2.84	.949		

	English	10th	3.70	1.051	1.163	.325
		12th	3.77	.905		
		Grad	3.46	1.054		
		Post Grad	3.79	.967		
Language use while commenting on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	10th	2.87	1.046	1.848	.140
		12th	2.65	1.021		
		Grad	3.02	1.078		
		Post Grad	2.61	.947		
	Urdu	10th	3.35	1.215	.949	.418
		12th	3.42	.942		
		Grad	3.62	1.008		
		Post Grad	3.29	1.091		
	English	10th	3.59	.884	.588	.623
		12th	3.58	.794		
		Grad	3.38	.725		
		Post Grad	3.52	1.062		
Language use while positive comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	10th	2.46	1.069	.603	.614
		12th	2.17	1.078		
		Grad	2.32	1.019		
		Post Grad	2.25	1.164		
	Urdu	10th	2.87	1.046	.610	.609
		12th	2.98	1.062		
		Grad	2.84	.997		
		Post Grad	3.09	1.100		

	English	10th	3.70	.963	.352	.788
		12th	3.65	1.000		
		Grad	3.70	1.055		
		Post Grad	3.84	1.058		
Language use while Negative comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	10th	2.37	1.181	1.344	.261
		12th	1.98	1.158		
		Grad	2.06	1.077		
		Post Grad	1.96	1.095		
	Urdu	10th	2.57	1.128	1.410	.241
		12th	2.25	1.062		
		Grad	2.22	.975		
		Post Grad	2.54	1.159		
	English	10th	3.26	.976	.232	.874
		12th	3.38	1.064		
		Grad	3.28	1.107		
		Post Grad	3.41	1.125		
	English	10th	3.46	.959	.256	.857
		12th	3.44	.965		
		Grad	3.46	1.054		
		Post Grad	3.59	1.041		
Script while using Whatsapp	Perso-Arabic Script	10th	2.65	1.233	4.892	.003
		12th	1.98	.934		
		Grad	1.82	1.082		
		Post Grad	2.16	1.203		

	Roman Script	10th	3.61	1.220	2.338	.075
		12th	3.02	1.422		
		Grad	3.02	1.332		
		Post Grad	3.05	1.212		

Table 5 presents the age-wise mean and standard deviation with the level of significance. It is observed that no significant difference is there between the uses of WhatsApp by different age groups. The finding also revealed that no significant difference is there in the choice of language use while using WhatsApp by different age groups. A slight difference was found in the use of Perso Arabic script by different age groups.

Table 5: **Comparative analysis of ANOVA for Age**

Item Statements		Age Years	Mean	Std. Dev.	F Value	Sig.
I use Whatsapp		10-20	4.38	.923	1.986	.117
		21-30	4.59	.646		
		31-40	4.63	.679		
		40 Above	4.33	.674		
Language use while posting on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	10-20	2.36	1.208	.978	.404
		21-30	2.29	1.145		
		31-40	2.24	1.177		
		40 Above	1.98	1.076		
	Urdu	10-20	2.82	1.063	.091	.965
		21-30	2.83	.894		
		31-40	2.76	1.037		
		40 Above	2.87	.968		
	English	10-20	3.62	1.048	.210	.889
		21-30	3.66	.993		
		31-40	3.67	1.034		

		40 Above	3.78	.927		
Language use while commenting on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	10-20	2.84	1.037	1.314	.271
		21-30	2.93	1.065		
		31-40	2.54	1.048		
		40 Above	2.76	.933		
	Urdu	10-20	3.28	1.196	.973	.406
		21-30	3.53	1.056		
		31-40	3.28	.935		
		40 Above	3.56	1.056		
	English	10-20	3.52	.886	.261	.854
		21-30	3.58	.875		
		31-40	3.52	1.005		
		40 Above	3.42	.753		
Language use while positive comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	10-20	2.44	1.091	.845	.471
		21-30	2.22	1.018		
		31-40	2.39	1.256		
		40 Above	2.13	.968		
	Urdu	10-20	2.82	1.063	.407	.748
		21-30	2.95	.955		
		31-40	3.04	1.210		
		40 Above	3.00	1.000		
	English	10-20	3.60	1.030	.475	.700
		21-30	3.78	.984		

		31-40	3.83	1.102		
		40 Above	3.69	.973		
	Kashmiri	10-20	2.32	1.203	1.062	.366
		21-30	2.07	1.158		
		31-40	1.96	1.095		
		40 Above	1.98	1.033		
	Urdu	10-20	2.50	1.165	.423	.737
		21-30	2.44	1.087		
		31-40	2.35	1.120		
		40 Above	2.27	.986		
Language use while Negative comments on WhatsApp	English	10-20	3.18	.983	.506	.679
		21-30	3.42	1.102		
		31-40	3.37	1.162		
		40 Above	3.36	1.026		
	Urdu	10-20	2.64	.985	.990	.398
		21-30	2.69	.969		
		31-40	2.50	.960		
		40 Above	2.84	.952		
	English	10-20	3.38	.987	.281	.839
		21-30	3.54	1.056		
		31-40	3.50	1.130		
		40 Above	3.53	.815		
		10-20	2.50	1.266	2.756	.044

Script while using Whatsapp	Perso-Arabic Script	21-30	1.88	.948		
		31-40	2.17	1.355		
		40 Above	2.07	.963		
	Roman Script	10-20	3.42	1.295	.917	.434
		21-30	3.03	1.203		
		31-40	3.07	1.405		
		40 Above	3.16	1.364		

Table 6 depicts the language used by males and females while using WhatsApp. It is clear from the table that both males and females use WhatsApp equally. There is also no significant difference between the language preferences of males and females when they use WhatsApp. However, a significant difference can be seen from the Roman script used by males and females. Females use Roman script more than males.

Table 6: **Comparative analysis T-test for Gender**

Item Statements		Gender	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-test for Equality of Means	
					t-Value	Sig. (2-tailed)
I use Whatsapp		Male	4.46	.700	-.663	.508
		Female	4.53	.787		
Language use while posting on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	Male	2.37	1.198	1.759	.080
		Female	2.08	1.094		
	Urdu	Male	2.87	1.026	.746	.457
		Female	2.77	.935		
	English	Male	3.69	1.017	.187	.852
		Female	3.67	.979		
	Kashmiri	Male	2.76	1.115	-.244	.807

Language use while commenting on WhatsApp		Female	2.80	.937		
	Urdu	Male	3.38	1.076	-.518	.605
		Female	3.45	1.062		
	English	Male	3.61	1.010	1.617	.108
		Female	3.41	.714		
Language use while positive comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	Male	2.40	1.105	1.335	.183
		Female	2.19	1.056		
	Urdu	Male	3.02	1.010	.949	.344
		Female	2.88	1.091		
	English	Male	3.72	1.021	-.031	.975
		Female	3.73	1.018		
Language use while Negative comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	Male	2.23	1.165	1.818	.071
		Female	1.94	1.077		
	Urdu	Male	2.42	1.070	.273	.785
		Female	2.37	1.112		
	English	Male	3.41	1.088	.949	.344
		Female	3.26	1.046		
Script while using WhatsApp	Perso-Arabic Script	Male	2.18	1.244	.410	.682
		Female	2.11	1.058		
	Roman Script	Male	2.98	1.233	-2.031	.044
		Female	3.35	1.365		

Rural and urban usage and language preference while using WhatsApp is given in **Table 7**. No significant difference is found in the usage of WhatsApp between females and males. However, it can be observed that there is a significant difference between the language usage while updating status on WhatsApp in Kashmiri and Urdu, with positive

replies in Kashmiri, and negative replies in Kashmiri by people belonging to rural as well as urban areas. The findings also support that Roman script is used mostly by urban areas as compared to rural areas.

Table 7: **Comparative analysis t-test for Area**

Item Statements		Geographical Location	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-test for Equality of Means	
					t-Value	Sig. (2-tailed)
I use Whatsapp		Rural	4.57	.652	1.909	.059
		Urban	4.33	.892		
Language use while posting on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	Rural	2.45	1.210	4.691	.000
		Urban	1.75	.854		
	Urdu	Rural	2.94	.933	2.582	.011
		Urban	2.56	1.037		
	English	Rural	3.65	1.008	-.681	.497
		Urban	3.75	.976		
Language use while commenting on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	Rural	2.77	1.033	-.159	.874
		Urban	2.80	1.026		
	Urdu	Rural	3.32	1.095	-1.777	.077
		Urban	3.61	.986		
	English	Rural	3.46	.942	-1.334	.184
		Urban	3.63	.724		
Language use while positive comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	Rural	2.42	1.113	2.505	.013
		Urban	2.03	.975		
	Urdu	Rural	2.97	1.075	.403	.687
		Urban	2.91	1.003		

	English	Rural	3.67	1.047	-1.133	.258
		Urban	3.84	.946		
Language use while Negative comments on WhatsApp	Kashmiri	Rural	2.29	1.186	4.265	.000
		Urban	1.66	.859		
	Urdu	Rural	2.49	1.047	1.718	.087
		Urban	2.20	1.157		
	English	Rural	3.33	1.047	-.079	.937
		Urban	3.34	1.116		
Script while using Whatsapp	Perso-Arabic Script	Rural	2.05	1.157	-1.679	.095
		Urban	2.34	1.130		
	Roman Script	Rural	2.97	1.253	-3.126	.002
		Urban	3.58	1.343		

Conclusion

It is said that emotions are better expressed in one's own language. Everyone has his/her language choice while communicating with others. It may differ from talking to family, friends, and strangers, in formal as well as informal situations. Due to innovative technologies, many communicative channels are supported by the Internet. Among them, WhatsApp is mostly used. The findings of the study revealed that people in Kashmir use WhatsApp often to always. Regarding their behavior regarding the use of language during WhatsApp, the English language is often used while Kashmiri and Urdu are used rarely to sometimes. Regarding the use of script, the findings support that Perso Arabic script is used rarely whereas Roman script is often used. The findings of the study also revealed during comparative analysis that no significant difference is there in the use of WhatsApp and the language choice on WhatsApp by different groups of people belonging to different educational backgrounds, ages, genders, and areas. However, it was found that a significant difference was found in the use of the script while using WhatsApp. Roman script is used by females and people in urban areas more frequently than that of males and people in rural areas.

References

Nassaji, H. (2015). Qualitative and descriptive research: Data type versus data analysis. *Language teaching research*, *19*(2), 129-132.

Wang, J., and Wang, X. (2012). Structural Equation Modeling: Applications Using Mplus. Wiley Higher Education Press.

Sheikh, A. M., Kuchay, S. A., & Jan, S. (2013). The Emerging Picture: A Study of Language Preferences in Kashmiri Youth. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Linguistics*, *6*, 157-174.

Nurhamidah, I. (2017, June). Code-switching in WhatsApp exchanges: Cultural or language barrier? In *Proceedings Education and Language International Conference* (Vol. 1, No. 1).

Lestari, A. P. (2019). Exploring the Language Use in WhatsApp as Study Pragmatics. *Makna: Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi, Bahasa, dan Budaya*, *4*(1), 58-79.

Otemuyiwa, A. A. (2017). A linguistic analysis of WhatsApp conversations among undergraduate students of Joseph Ayo Babalola University. *Studies in English Language Teaching*, *5*(3), 393-405.

Teli, S. A., Gul, I., & Andrabi, S. S. (2022). Kashmiri as the Medium of Instruction in the Light of National Education Policy 2020: Planning and Implementation. *Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow Volume 22: 3 March 2022 ISSN 1930-2940*, 63.

Sajad Ahmad Teli is currently working as a Senior Research Fellow, in the Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir, Srinagar. He is working in the field of applied linguistics.

Prof. Aejaz Mohammed Sheikh is a Professor in the Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir, Srinagar. His areas of expertise include Media Linguistics, Documentary Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Stylistics, Translation and Discourse Analysis.

Dr. Saima is working as an assistant professor in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Kashmir. She has worked in different projects funded by CIIL, Mysore, and ICSSR, New Delhi.

Junaid Yousuf Pala serves as a Resource person for various organizations like Pratham and UNICEF. Currently working in the school education department of Kashmir Valley.