

Chapter # 7

Regional Languages of Pakistan



Introduction

Pakistan is a multi-lingual country. No less than 24 languages and dialects are spoken by the people of Pakistan. There are five regional languages. Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto, Baluchi, Brahvi and Kashmiri. These languages are rich in literature, poetry, folk songs, spiritual quotes of their respective saints and contribute greatly to the culture of Pakistan.

The regional languages, though distinct from each other in their forms, dialects and expressions of thoughts, have several common factors in them. They cultivate in them love, respect and a firm adherence to the Pakistan Ideology.

Punjabi

Punjabi is the language of the province 'Punjab'. It links back to the Aryan language Prakrit. However, with time, the vocabulary of Punjabi language became a mixture of Persian, Arabic and Turkish words. It has different dialects in different parts of Punjab like 'Saraiki' and 'Potohari'. But the basic language remains the same.

Punjabi is rich in mystical and romantic poetry. The highly imaginative and artistic exquisite literature, mostly in verses has two forms. One is "Lyric Poetry," which includes Bait, Kafi-si-harfi, Bara Mah and Satwara. The other one is "Narrative Poetry," which is composed of various rhythms and meters. Examples are Qissa Noor Namah, Gulzar, Jang Nama and Vaar.

Famous Punjabi Poets

Some of the famous poets of Punjabi language include:

Baba Farid Shakar Ganj Baksh

Shaikh Ibrahim Farid Sani

Madhu Lal Hussain

Sultan Bahu

Bhullay Shah

Ali Haider

Waris Shah

Sindhi

Sindhi is one of the important regional language of Pakistan. It appears that Sindhi was spoken in the Indus Delta from time immemorial. It is said that the language of the people of Moen-jo-Daro contained elements of present era Sindhi language.

The origin of this language is not exactly known. However, travelers like Al-Beruni have told us about the original script of the language. Chach Nama is an authentic document that proves that the dialect of Sindhi language was the same in the 12th century, as it is today. With the advent and influence of Arabs in the subcontinent, Sindhi changed its forms and adopted maximum words of Arabic as well as Persian and Turkish.

Famous Sindhi Poets

Some of famous Sindhi poets are following:

Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai

Sachal Sarmast

New Syllabus

Makhdoom Noor
Shah Inayat
Bedil
Sabit Ali Shah
Kazi Kazah

Steps taken to grow Sindhi

Various steps have been taken to develop Sindhi. Organizations like 'Sindhi Literary Board' and Bazm-e-Talib-ul-Maula were set up. Several newspapers are being published in Sindhi. These include Kawish, Ibrat, Naw-e-Sindhi and Khadim-e-Watan besides a number of weeklies.



Baluchi

Baluchi is the regional language of Baluchistan. It is the least developed of all the regional languages. It was spread by Baluchi tribes that migrated from Iran.

The history of Baluchi literature may be divided into four periods:

Early Medieval Period – 1430 to 1600

Later Medieval Period – 1600 to 1850

Modern Period – 1850 to 1930

Contemporary Period – 1930 to date

Literature produced by earlier poets is not in records, as it was preserved traditionally in the memories of the people. No newspapers or books were published in Baluchi up till 1940. After partition, however Baluchi literature received a little boost. It was due to the efforts made by various organizations and due to establishment of TV stations. At present, Baluchi literature is on the road to development.

Types of Baluchi

There are two types of Baluchi namely:

Sulemani

Makrani

Famous Poets of Baluchi

Some of the most literary figures of Baluchi are:

Azad Jamaldini

Ulfat Naseem

Abdul Qadir Shahwani

Malik Mohammad Ramzan

Mir Aqil Maingal

Well known poets of Baluchi language are:

Jam Darag

Shah Mureed

Shahdab

Pushto

Pushto is the regional language of the N.W.F.P. and tribal areas. It belongs to the East Iranian group of languages and contains many Persian, Arabic, Greek and Pehlevi words.

Steps taken to enhance Pushto

New Syllabus

Although Pushto is an old language but its literature is comparatively a new one. After independence education spread rapidly and Pushto literature received a great boost. The Pushto Academy Peshawar, some other literary societies and educational institutions such as Islamia College Peshawar helped develop Pushto literature.



Famous Pushto Poets

Some of the well known poets of Pushto language are:

Amir Karoro

Khushal Khan Khatak

Rehman Baba

Sher Shah Soori

Saif Ullah

Kazim Kazim

Brahvi

Brahvi is the next spoken language of Baluchistan. In fact, it is said to be spoken by a greater number of people than Baluchi. The Brahvi language is said to be one of Dravidian family of languages. It has borrowed heavily from Sindhi, Persian, Arabic and English. It remains in an unexplained isolation among the Indo-Iran dialects.

Brahvi literature has a vast treasure of folklores. It's script has been borrowed much from Pushto script. Malik Dad was a great poet and a learned personalty of Brahvi language.

Kashmiri

Kashmiri is the language of the people of the Indian-occupied Kashmir and Azad Kashmir. This language has been derived from Sanskrit. Kashmiri is generally spoken in Muslim families of the valley. It contains many Turkish, Arabic and Persian words. It is written in the Persian script.

Kashmiri, like all the regional languages of Pakistan, had its early literature in the form of poetry. It began with the composition of folk songs and ballads.

Kashmiri Literary Figures

Famous authors of Kashmiri language are:

Sh.Nooruddin

Khatoon Lillah Anifa

Baba Nasiruddin

Ghani

Conclusion

The regional languages of Pakistan, i.e., Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto, Brahvi and Baluchi are the most modern Pakistani languages. They have several common features and their literature bears the same eternal message for mankind. Government has been doing its best to develop the regional languages and introduction of regional TV channels is a positive step for promotion of regional languages.

URDU-NATIONAL LANGUAGE

INTRODUCTION

Language is the only media by which one can express his ideas and feelings. It plays a vital role in building the character of an individual as well as a nation. Languages brings closer each other and it creates a sense of

harmony among the people.

Pakistan has several regional languages chief of them being Pushto, Punjabi, Sindhi, Baluchi and Kashmiri.

URDU-NATIONAL LANGUAGE OF PAKISTAN

After Independence Quaid-e-Azam said in clear cut words that the National language of Pakistan would be Urdu. He said:

“Let me make it clear that the national language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. Without one state language no nation can remain tied up solidly together”.



EVOLUTION OF URDU

Urdu evolved over a period of centuries by cultural contacts between local people of north of Sub Continent and Muslims of Arabia, Iran and Turkey. The base of this language is Prakrit, an Aryan language. The script of Urdu is modified form of Persian. Urdu is a word of Turkish language and its literal meaning is camp.

QUALITIES OF URDU

1. Great Power of Assimilation

The splendour of Urdu is Turkish and its charm is Persian in its base. The vitality of Urdu lies in its ability to adopt words from other languages in such a way as if they originally belonged to it. The chief reason for its country wide popularity was its power of Assimilation. According to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan:

“...Still now Urdu has great affinity for many other words and ideas which increases its beauty.”

2. Source of National Identity

National language is the identity of a nation. When we are abroad we are identified as Pakistani because of our national language. That is why, every nation gives out respect and importance to national language.

RICH TREASURE OF PROSE AND POETRY

The Urdu language possesses a very valuable treasure of poetry and prose. The poets and writers have contributed their most in its development. Maulana Shibli Nomani, Maulana Hali, Deputy Nazir Ahmed, Mirza Ghalib, Ameer Khusro and many others adopted this language in their poetry and writings. Sir Syed wrote for the re-awakening of the Muslims of sub Continent. According to Abdul Haq.

“It is Sir Syed due to whom Urdu has made such a great progress within a period of only one century.”

IMPORTANCE OF URDU IN NATIONAL LIFE

Certain points which express the importance of Urdu in national life are given below:

1. Means of Brotherhood and Unity

People of Pakistan are one nation, therefore their thinking, aims and objectives are common. Their progress and prosperity depends upon their unity and brotherhood. An important factor for achieving this unity and brotherhood is Urdu.

2. Source of Expression

Urdu has become a source of expression, feelings, thoughts and aspiration. People of two different areas can easily understand each other ideas and thoughts by Urdu.

3.Means of Communication and Co-ordination

Urdu serves as a means of communication and is a binding force between all the four provinces of Pakistan. People living in different provinces realize that in spite of speaking different languages, they are joined together by one national language which is the heritage of all.



4. Medium of Instruction

Urdu language is the medium of instruction in most of the educational institutions of Pakistan. History, Islamic Studies, Political Science and other subjects are taught upto M.A level in Urdu. Lectures on Islamic education and religion are also delivered in Urdu throughout Pakistan.

URDU-AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE

Urdu grew in popularity and by the later Mughal Period and the advent of the British, it had been adopted by the Muslims and the Hindus alike. It would not be wrong to say if it is said that:

“Urdu is a part of our cultural Heritage”

CONCLUSION

Being the National language of the country, it is the binding force in different parts of Pakistan. The officers have adopted Urdu language in their official work and the Government has published a dictionary containing Urdu terms for the office work. The Urdu Development Board and “Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu” are trying to give Urdu a place in society and it is hoped that Urdu would find its place in society within short period of time.

