

Loanwords From Arabic into English And Hindi: A Study

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Abstract

A language of any nation is considered as the symbol of its culture and identity. Through a language, a nation can convey its heritage and patrimony to other cultures. As a medium of communication, one can use his language to tell others about his civilization, culture, and the vital role that his nation played in the achievements of human development. In the following paper, I will try to show how Arabic has enriched other languages. It gets its power and prestige from the Holy Quran and the speech of prophet Mohammed (pbuh) when he says, "I like Arabic for three reasons; I am Arabi, the Holy Quran is in Arabic and the speech of people in paradise will be in Arabic."

Keywords: language, civilization, culture, communication, Arabic, speech, heritage

Introduction

Arabic Language belongs to the group of Semitic languages. It is closer to Aramic and Hebrew. It is written with the Arabic alphabet, and it is written from right to left. Arabic is called as Quranic language as it is developed from the Holy Quran. Historically, it is said that Arabic is one of the five languages that played a significant role in the field of human culture and civilization. Together with Sanskrit, Latin, Greek, and Classical Chinese, Arabic has its own history that goes back to the pre Islam period. It is spoken by at least 400 million either inside or outside the Arab world. The two distinctive forms of Arabic are mainly two; the Classical Arabic and colloquial Arabic. The first is developed into modern standard Arabic that is used in modern media like TV and radio, newspapers, books, magazines, official documents, written speech and religious sermons. On the other hand, the colloquial Arabic is developed and molded into different varieties related to social or regional requirements. Classical Arabic is that form of Arabic that is common in all Arabic countries. However, the vernacular form of the Arabic language may slightly differ from one country to another; there may be Egyptian variety, Syrian and Iraqi variety, Gulf country variety etc. Arabic has greatly influenced many other languages in the world like English, Spanish, Turkish, Hindi, Latin, and Greek. During the Middle ages, literary Arabic was the major vehicle of culture in Europe, especially in Science, mathematics, and philosophy. As a result of Arabic contact with other languages, many words are borrowed from Arabic into other languages.

In this paper, I will try to throw light on how Arabic has deep impact upon two languages namely English and Hindi. First, I would prefer to discuss some aspects of influence of Arabic on English language, as it is an international language.

The impact of Arabic upon English

The books available to us about the history of English language tell us that English has borrowed words not only from languages of the Indo-European language family but also languages from belonging to different language families, such as the Semitic language specially family, especially from Arabic and Hebrew. From Arabic, English borrowed great number of its words at its early dawn. That is because by the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Arabic civilization was spread not only in the Middle East and North Africa, but also in Spain. During this period, Islamic armies

invaded many countries and established Islam as a new world religion. The Muslim conquest of Spain influenced medieval European scholars who began to take an interest in Arabic learning. They adopted scientific Arabic terms, especially in the field of mathematics and astronomy. Their intimate contact with and interest in Arabic culture resulted in borrowing words from Arabic to European languages. Many Arabic words of different semantic fields like food, spices, clothing, navigation, religion, etc. entered the vocabulary of English. It is worth noting that Middle English borrowed most of its Arabic words through French as it is historically known that French was the language of the most educated class in England in those days. The English loanwords from Arabic are not confined to vocabulary of mathematics and astronomy and Islamic terms only; they involve words my walks of life as follows:

1. Islmic (religious) terms

Allah, cadī, caliph, hadith, haflz, haji, hajj, halal, haram, imam, islam, jihad, kaaba, kafir, Kiblah, Koran, minbar, mihrab, mosque mufti etc.

2. Cultural Terms

Arabian, amir, Bedouin, bint, coffle, copt, hakim, nikah, sahib, salaam, sheikh, sharif, sophy, souk, ummaetc

3. Administrative Terms

Alcade, alguacil, dogana, emir, irade, majlis, mukhtar, munsif, nawab, shura, sultan, tehsi, tariff. walietc

4. Food and Beverages

Bard, burgoo, candy, falafel (or filafll), fustic, halva or halwa, harissa, kebab, salep, sugar, tahini, tamarind etc

5. Clothes and Cosmetics

Abaya, burka, jibba, kaffiyeh, Kameez, satin, sash, dishdasha, mohair etc

6. Arts and Architecture

Lute, naker, oud, rebab, sansa, santoor (or santir), table, timbale etc

7. Scientific Terms

Alchemy, aniline, benzoin, alkali, alkalist, algebra, algorithm, average, cipher, soda etc

8. Names of Birds, Animals and Insects

Albatross, baza, bulbul, houbara, marabou, popinjay, saker, ariel, bichir, civet, gazelle, genet, giraffe, jennet, jerboa, saluki etc

9. Names of Plants, Shrubs and Trees

Alfalfa, apricot, borag, cotton, cumin, doum, durra, gingili, henna, kharif, lablab, lemon, lime, loofah, sennaetc

10. Geographical Terms, nadir, monsoon, simoom, jebel, khamsin, self, shamal, haboob, wadietc

11. Navigation and Military Terms

Carrack, dahabeeyah, dhow, masla (or masoola), tartan, xebec, arsenal, assegai, magazine, razzia, zarebaetc

Some of the Arabic loanwords entered directly into English while others were borrowed through other languages like Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, Turkish, Persian, Hindi-Urdu, or Hebrew. Among the Arabic loanwords in English, some are easily identifiable, especially words "related to Islam. It may be reasonable to claim that the majority of Islamic words borrowed from Arabic by English were taken directly from Arabic. They include words such as Allah, Arab, Caliph, haji, halal, haram, imam, Islam, jihad, Koran, muezzin, minaret, mufti, mujahedin, mullah, sunni, shia, sharia, hafiz, waqf, fatwa, hadith, Kaba'a, zakat. However, some other Arabic loanwords entered through other languages. For instance, words such as alcove, amber, bard, aniline, caliphate, cotton, fakir, jar, jasmine, lime, etc. entered through French. Words such as alkali, abutilon, alcohol, assassin, soda, realgar, usnic, etc. entered through Latin. Words such as adobe, alcazar, alfalfa, noria, entered through Spanish. It is, indeed, these words which reflect the range of

influence that Arabic has on the English language. Arab traders and travelers took their mother tongue with them wherever they went and were influenced by other languages.

The influx of Arabic words to other languages, especially English did not stop when imperial European powers became strong; it increased during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and is continuing even now. Arabic words like *intifada*, *hezbollah*, *fedayeen*, *hamas*, *alfatah*, etc. are recent entrants to English.

In fact, the contribution of Arabic to English vocabulary is enormous and covers almost all fields of life. These Arabic words in English reflect the range of influence that Arabic has on the English language. Arab traders and travelers took their mother tongue with them wherever they went and were influenced by other languages.

The Impact of Arabic upon Hindi

On the same pattern, Arabic has impacted Hindi — Urdu language either directly or through Persian and Turkish. Historically, India has very old links with Arab world and with Persia. For hundreds of years starting in the 11th century, large parts of northern India were ruled by dynasties with roots in that part of the world; the language of the Mughal court was Persian, and so on. This is all well-known, as is the existence of many loanwords from Farsi, Arabic and Turkish in Hindi/Urdu, the lingua franca of much of northern India and Pakistan. As a matter of fact, the influence of Arabic on Indian languages is not restricted to Urdu for there are many Arabic words in Indian languages which are either found in their original form or in a slightly changed form. As an Arabic speaker, who lives in India for study, I come across hundreds of words of Arabic in Hindi that prevail in everyday language situations.

This phenomenon makes me think more and more about the origin of these Arabic look like Hindi words in all walks of life. For example, in the field of politics we come across words like '*siyasat*' (.i.e. politics), '*akhbar*' (.i.e. newspaper; in Arabic, it means "news"), *Jumuriyat* (.i.e. "democracy" in Urdu; in Arabic, *al Jumhriya* is a republic and the *Jumhur* is citizenry or polis). I admit that my knowledge of Hindi is shaky but I am interested in sociolinguistics. Therefore, I decided to study these aspects of languages. It is sometimes difficult to differentiate between Hindi, Urdu, and Marathi. But with the help of my friends I tried to write this paper. Moreover, the only thing that

makes me believe that these words are of Arabic origin is that some of them are in the Holy Quran like, Kitab (i.e. book), kalam(i.e. pen),salam (i.e. salute), etc. As far as Arabic words in Hindi are concerned we can mention following; muqaddar (i.e. fate), bas (i.e. enough), mahabbat (love), makaan (i.e. place),dukaan (i.e. shop), insaan (i.e. human being, person, man), izzat (i.e. honor), sukkar (i.e. sugar-), maalom(i.e. known), masjed (i.e. mosque), kanoon (i.e. law). As professor Brown —ments, "It is certain that no satisfactory knowledge of Persia, Turkey, Mohammedan India other Muslim land is possible without a considerable knowledge of Arabic and that appreciation and enjoyment of these literature grow in direct ratio to this knowledge."JibriluGwandeu in his topic " Arabhindi, where Arabic- Hindi converge, he observeswhen he reads about common Yorubo words of Arabic origin, he realizes that Hausa :.rage is dominated by many Arabic words. The influence of Arabic is also obvious in e:-ili. In his comparative Religious Studies, he found many Hebrew words have almostmeaning with Arabic. He recently realized that many words which form an integral - of Hindi language have Arabic origin. He could say that without fear of contradiction with some relevant justification that," mastering Arabic language appears to be a key of many international languages." In his eloquence, he explains numberidi words of Arabic origin such as, aulaad (i.e. children), amir (i.e. rich/leader), Baqiyremaining), filhal (i.e. currently/ now), Garib(poor/ unknown), Galat (i.e. wrong),(i.e. waiting), Inkar (i.e. denying), Jaruruat / Darurat (i.e. need, urgent), Khatam - _-n, over, ended), Kitab (i.e. book), Malik (i.e., owner), Qalam (i.e. pen), Qabul (i.e. :ojtance), Lekin (i.e. but), Maujud(i.e. available, present), Salam(i.e. salute), Subhi.e. morning), Shukriyyah (i.e. thanks), Waqt (i.e. Time), Ya'ani (i.e. he means/ --_ore), Ziyada (i.e. more, increase) ...etc. A deep analysis of these words gives us a clear :_ice that the two languages; Arabic and Hindi came closer and enriched each other in :ific period of time. Though the resources about Arabic words in Hindi are rare, I have done my best to collect some of them from real life situations.

Thus Arabic as the language of Holy Quran has left an indelible impression on other languages English and Hindi. In English, scientific terms like chemistry, algebra, algorithm, cipher, arsenal and almanac are commonly in use upto the present time. In Hindi, Arabic words are prominently present and are heard in every day communication. They are heard in mosques, markets, shops, streets, and on the trains.

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