ARABIC LOAN WORDS IN URDU: A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract
The sociocultural contact between the Muslim soldiers speaking different languages including Arabic and the local population of Indian subcontinent resulted in the evolution of a new language known as Urdu. Consequently upon this sustained contact between the languages of the soldiers and the dialects spoken by the local population, the process of linguistic amalgamation started. Lexical borrowing from these languages into Urdu vocabulary is one of the examples of such a linguistic amalgamation. This research paper deals with the linguistic analysis of Arabic loan words in the present-day Urdu vocabulary.

The data collected relate to standard Arabic and standard Urdu languages. The writers have used different sources in collecting the data for this paper. Being a descriptive analytical study, the writers of this paper analyzed the morphological aspects of Arabic loan words in Urdu focusing on the inflectional and derivational processes. The study concludes with a set of findings as regards the impact of lexical borrowing from Arabic in the vocabulary of the Urdu language.

Rezumat
Contactul socio-cultural dintre soldații musulmani (care vorbeau limbi diferite, inclusiv araba) și populația băştinaşă a peninsulei Industan a dus la apariția şi dezvoltarea unei noi limbi – urdu. Aceasta a apărut, în bună parte, datorită comasării unităților glotice din câteva limbi. Astfel, împrumuturile în urdu a unităților lexicale din limbile soldaților musulmani au fost un mijloc de realizare a comasării în cauză.

În articol, ne propunem să facem o analiză lingvistică a împrumuturilor din arabă în limba urdu curentă, din perspectivă morfologică, flexionară şi derivatologică. În analiză, utilizăm unități din limbile oficiale arabă şi urdu.

> "Neither a borrower nor a lender be"
> (Act I, Scene III, Line 75)

1. Introduction

The above quotation from William Shakespeare's play Hamlet "The Prince of Denmark", offers a significant piece of advice to human beings of all times, but it does not hold good for languages in contact. Word-borrowing, more or less, is a universal linguistic phenomenon. However, it is an accepted fact that for all kinds of linguistic borrowing a sustained and intimate contact between two or more speech communities is a pre-condition. This statement is very much applicable in case of Urdu, where the sociocultural contact between the native population speaking different dialects (Khari Boli, Haryanvi and Brij Bhasha, etc.) and the Muslim soldiers belonging to different nationalities (Arab, Iranian, Turkish, Afghan, and central Asians, etc.), came to India during the 12th century AD, resulted in the emergence of Urdu as a new language, and later on in 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. However, Urdu has been especially hospitable toward languages like Persian and Arabic. One of the most important factors behind a rapid amalgamation of Arabic words into Urdu vocabulary happens to be the acceptance of Islam in various parts of the Indian subcontinent. The large number of Persian loan words in Urdu vocabulary can be assigned to the fact that Persian happened to be the language of the rulers. 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 from other modern languages like English.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Urdu, a member of Indo-Aryan family of languages, originated from the interaction of Muslim soldiers from different nations (Iran, Arab, Afghanistan) and native population in Northwestern part of India. It developed in the later part of the 12th century AD. The Muslims rule was established in Delhi and a large number of Muslims migrated from Punjab and settled

in and around Delhi. Delhi was made the capital of the new Muslim empire in 1193 AD. Though it was a political incident, but it had a far-reaching impact on the sociocultural life of the people of northern India. Along with cultural synthesis, the process of linguistic amalgamation also started in northern India. The amalgamation of words from different languages – Persian, Arabic, Turkish, etc. with local dialects of Delhi resulted in the evolution of Urdu. From the introduction/spread of Islam in 711 AD to the close of the 20th century is a stretch of more than 1300 years. During this period of sociocultural and religious changes, Arabic words must have been making their way into Urdu vocabulary directly or through Persian. It is likely that the mass conversion of the people to Islam was responsible for the rapid borrowing of Arabic words. As such, the acceptance of Islam exercised a profound influence on the socio-religious life of the people as well as on their language.

1.3. Research Hypotheses

- Word-borrowing is a universal linguistic phenomenon;
- Lexical borrowing is an outcome of a sustained contact between different speech communities;
- The sociocultural changes are reflected in the advancement of a particular linguistic community;
- The vocabulary of a language is a reliable source for indicating the sociocultural changes during a specific period of time;
- With the cultural synthesis, the process of linguistic amalgamation influences the linguistic scenario of linguistic communities in contact.

1.4. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This paper is restricted to a linguistic analysis of loan words from Arabic in Urdu. It discusses, rather briefly, the contact of Muslims with the people of the Indian subcontinent resulting in a sociocultural synthesis and in a process of linguistic amalgamation. The sociocultural changes not only brought about a process of linguistic amalgamation, but gave birth to a new language, later, known as the Urdu language. This article discusses the impact of the borrowings from Arabic on the overall morphological system of Urdu. It focuses on the morphology loan words: derivational and inflectional processes.

1.5. Review of Literature

The study of linguistic borrowings, especially lexical ones, has interested linguists for centuries together. However, to the best of our knowledge, no such attempt has been made in the specific area of Arabic loan words in Urdu, discussing the derivational and inflectional processes including hybrid formations and the process of 'nativization' of thses words in the present-day Urdu vocabulary. This paper does not discuss the phonological and semantic changes as regards Arabic loan words in Urdu.

1.6. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is four-fold:

- To understand the extent of borrowing lexical items from Arabic into Urdu in different domains,
- To analyze the impact of Arabic loan words on Urdu vocabulary,
- To investigate the process of 'nativization' and 'hybrid formation',
- To analyze the impact of the borrowing of the Arabic words on the overall morphological system of the Urdu language.

1.7. Methodology and Data Collection

This is a descriptive analytical study and the data has been collected over a period of 18 months or so while teaching at the College of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The sources of this data are:

1) Arabic–Urdu dictionaries;
2) Collecting words after interviewing the Urdu and Arabic speakers;

3) Words based on the experience of the writers of this paper who are native speakers of Urdu from the north of India and Arabic from Yemen respectively. The data relate to Standard Urdu and Standard Arabic languages.

1.8. Method of Analysis

- Fairly a large number of words (Arabic loan words) used in the present-day Urdu were collected.
- These loan words were categorized according to their occurrence in different domains with a view to ascertaining the extent of borrowing.
- These words have been transcribed phonemically.
- In Urdu, some of the speech sounds of Arabic have been neutralized.
- The phonemic symbols used are the following:

Stops	*p, ph, b, bh ; t, th, d, dh, t̪, t̪h, d̪, d̪h; k, kh, g, gh ; č ; j ; čh, jh; q*	= 21
Nasals	*m, n, (ŋ)*	= 2
Fricatives	*f v ; s z ; š ž,x , □ , h*	= 9
Lateral	*l*	= 1
Flap	*r̪ r̪h*	= 2
Trill	*r*	= 1
Semi vowel	*w*	= 1
Vowels		
Pure Vowels	*i , i:, u, u:, ə, a , e, o*	= 8
Diphthongs	*ai, au*	= 2

2. Domains of Loan Words

As stated earlier, Arabic loan words are attested in a large number in the present-day Urdu vocabulary. They occur in almost all the domains. The following are some of the examples of the Arabic loan words in Urdu belonging to different domains.

2.1. Words Belonging to Religious Domain

Among the nouns borrowed from Arabic and having to do with Islamic belief and doctrine are:

- */somo-səlat/ 'prayer and fasting*   - */zəkat/ 'charity, alms'   - */ɣusl/ 'bath'*
- */miski:n/ 'the poor'*   - */di:n/ 'religion'*   - */yəti:m/ 'orphan'*
- */əqi:də/ 'faith'*   - */nikah/ 'marriage'*   - */rəb/ 'God'*

2.2. Words Belonging to Domestic life

Arabic loan words also exercised a profound influence on the domestic life of the people. This can be attested in the adoption of many words used in almost every walk of life. The Arabic loan words can be traced in words of administration, art and learning, medicine, education, domestic items, months, days and directions. Some of these words are given below.

a) administration:

- /vəzi:r/ 'minster' - /mujrim/ 'criminal' - /həku:mət/ 'government' - /məlik/ 'king';

b) art and learning:

- /jəɣrafiya/ 'geography' - /məntəq/ 'logic' - /nəju:m/ 'astrology' - /twəri:x/ 'history';

c) medicine:

- /jism/ 'body' -/məri:z/ 'patient' - /šifa/ 'cure' - /dimaɣ/ 'brain' - /jild/ 'skin';

d) education:

-/mədrəsa/ 'school' -/ədəb/ 'literature' -/šer/ 'poetry' -/tərbiyət/ 'training';

e) domestic items:

-/kitab/ 'book' -/kursi/ 'chair' -/libas/ 'dress' -/xizab/ 'dye';

f) months, days and directions:

-/muhərrəm/'1st month in the Hijri (Islamic) calender' /juma/ 'friday' -/i:duləzha '10th day of thi-l-Hajjah (the 12th month in the Islamic calender) -/mašriq/'east' -/junu:b/'south' -/šumal/'north'.

2.3. Commonly Used Expressions

Arabic words that made their way into Urdu were not confined to lexical items but extended to commonly used expressions. Some of these expressions are listed below:

-/inša əllah/'If God says' -/jəzakəllah/'May God reward you'.

The above expressions are used by speakers very frequently as a part of their culture, sometimes, not understanding the meaning.

3. Loan Word Morphology: Nominals

Like in other languages, most borrowings into Urdu have been nouns, but some adjectives have also been borrowed. A few prepositions and adverbs are also attested. There are quite a few verbal compounds attested as hybrid formations. A review of the present-day vocabulary reveals that instead of coining new words, Urdu has shown a marked tendency to go outside its own linguistic resources and borrow from other languages including Arabic. While borrowing words from different languages for centuries together, Urdu has built up an unusual capacity for assimilating elements of other languages. The use of affixes from Arabic and Persian turned out to be a fertile source in word building.

As stated earlier, through centuries of association with Arabic, Urdu enriched itself not only by word borrowing, but also by accepting new affixes. The following are some of the affixes from Arabic, commonly used not only with Arabic loan words, but with words borrowed from other sources. Some of these affixes (prefixes, infixes and suffixes) are analyzed below:

3.1. Derivational Morphology of Loan Words: Prefixes

The bound morphemes */ la-, bila- ˗bina-/* have the effect of changing the meaning of the loan words they are attached to but do not alter its lexical category. These morphemes are used with Arabic words as well as words from other sources:

Prefix	Word	Grammatical Category	Gloss
/la- /	/ilm/	noun	Without + knowledge = ignornt
/bila-/	/šərt/	noun	Without + any condition = unconditional

Table 1: *Prefix /la- and bila-/ used with Arabic words (Exclusive to Urdu)*

The rapidity with which the above prefixes are assimilated is evidenced by the morphemes with which these became the derivatives of Urdu words. The following are some examples:

la + vəris	'without + claim'	=	'unclaimed luggage, body, etc.'
la + vələd	'without children'	=	'issueless'
la + jəva:b	'without + equal'	=	'unique '
la + sani	'without + equal'	=	'unparallel'
la + pərva:h/	'without + care'	=	'careless'

The prefix *bila-˗bina-* attached to Arabic words is shown in the table below:

Prefix	Word	Gloss
/bila- / + noun	/šubha/	Without + doubt = 'without a trace of doubt'
/bina-/ + noun	/ijazət/	Without + permission = 'without permission'
/bina-/ + noun	/zərurət/	Without + necessity = 'without need or necessity'

Table 2: *Prefix bila- bina + Arabic loan words (Exclusive to Urdu)*

It is interesting to note that most of the examples listed above are not used in Arabic. As such, the prefix *la-* and *bila-* are added to Urdu words with as much freedom as to Arabic words.

In addition to the above prefixes, the prefix *na-* is also used before Arabic words. It seems that /*la-*/ is in free variation with *la-* in certain Urdu words. The morphophonemic analysis of some Urdu words in present-day Urdu phonology reveals the tendency of free variation between *la-* and *na-*. This alternation between lateral /*l*/ and nasal /*n*/ confirms the 'structural adjustment' in Urdu phonology. Some of the examples are tabulated below:

Prefix	Word	Gloss
na-	mumkin	Not + possible 'impossible'
na-	bali☐	Without + adolescence, 'not adult
na-	layəq	Without + worth 'worthless', non-deserving

Table 3: *Prefix na- with Arabic loan words (Exclusive to Urdu)*

It is evident from the above analysis that Urdu has made a generous use of prefixes, infixes and suffixes to form new words. As stated earlier, Urdu has been extraordinarily hospitable towards Persian to the extent that the present-day vocabulary contains a large number of Arabic words with Persian prefixes. The prefixes /*ba:- , be-, bad-*/ of Persian origin are tabulated below:

Prefix	Word	Gloss
ba:-	izzət	With + respect, honour
ba:-	ədəb	With + respect, manner, 'with regards'

Table 4: *Persian prefix ba:- with Arabic words*

The table below shows the example of the prefix *be-* with Arabic loan words:

Prefix	Word	Gloss
be-	həya	Without + shame , shameless , having no sense of shame
be-	səbəb	Without + cause
be-	fa:yida	Without + profit 'profitless'

Table 5: *Prefix be- with Arabic words*

The prefix *bəd-* meaning 'bad, wrong, without', etc. is added before loan words from Arabic:

Prefix	Word	Gloss
bəd-	dua:	bad + supplication, curses, etc
bəd-	niyat	Bad + intention having bad intention

Table 6: *Prefix bəd- added before Arabic loan words*

4. Arabic Infixes in Urdu

An infix is a morpheme that is inserted within another morpheme. Urdu, does not offer examples of infixes in words of Indic origin. However, Arabic exploits this morphological possibility to a great extent. In the process of borrowing, Urdu, has adopted a few Arabic loan words with infixes. Some, some of the examples with infixes are tabulated below:

Word	Infix	Word with infix	Gloss
Məhfil	-a-	məhafil	Gathering , meeting – gatherings , meetings
Məsjid	-a-	məsajid	Mosque – mosques
Tərti:b	-a-	tərati:b	Arrangement – arrangement orders

Table 7: *Infix used in Arabic loan words in Urdu*

The above example takes –a- as the infix, converting a singular noun into a plural noun. In addition to –a- meaning plurality, another infix creates a new word (meaning Noun 'doer').

The following Arabic loan words in Urdu, offer examples of another infix converting a noun into another noun (as a doer):

> *Nəqš* 'impression' - *naqqaš* 'a person who inscribes the impression'
> *rəqs* 'dance' - *rəqqas* ' dancer'

The infix in these words changes a monosyllabic into a disyllabic word. The last consonant of the first syllable is repeated, and then the infix -a- is added creating new words.

5. Arabic Suffixes in Urdu

In Urdu, suffixes of Arabic and Persian origin change the lexical category of words to which they are attached. Such a process of derivation is quite common to Urdu with Perso-Arabic as well as Indo-Aryan suffixes. These suffixes occur quite frequently with Arabic loans. Some of these are illustrated below:

The suffix –*i* /*i:*/ of Arabic origin can be added to a place name or country referring to nationalities, place of living and sometimes language:

-/pakistani/'a citizen of Pakistan'- /haydrәbadi/'aperson living in Hyderabab'-/pәnjabi/'person from Punjab as well as his language'.

In certain cases the suffix –*i* is added to words meaning 'related to':

/sәnәt/'industry, crafmanship' - /sәnәti/ 'industrial'.

This Arabic suffix (-*i*) is also attached to Indic words as well:

/asman/ 'sky, heaven'/asmani/ 'related to sky, heavenly/

6. Inflectional Morphology of Loan Words

Arabic language, belonging to the Semitic Family of languages, is known for its morphological complexities. Arabic, like other Semitic languages, has maintained an elaborate inflectional system over the centuries, while Urdu has minimized inflectional morphemes. In both Urdu and Arabic, nouns have inflections for number with a difference. In Arabic, nouns have inflections for number and case. In Arabic, there are three inflections: singular, dual and plural and they have to agree with the case. As against this, Urdu nouns have inflections for number only and there are only two inflections – singular and plural, and certain Arabic loans also confirm to these rules (See Table 11).

However, it is interesting to note that despite the absence of dual number in Urdu nouns of Indic origin, Urdu has borrowed a few Arabic nouns exhibiting duality and they are still in use. Some of these words are the following:

validayn 'parents', fәri:qәyn 'two parties' and zәwjәyn 'husband and wife, couple'.

7. Nativized Forms

By nativized forms we mean those forms that have Arabic loan lexemes followed by native suffixes as well as suffixes from other sources. A large number of Arabic loan words in Urdu are nativized. The nativized Arabic words can be classified into the two different categories listed below:

1) Nativized forms by adding a native (Indic) suffix:

Arabic stem	Native suffix	Nativized Form
/mәzbu:t/'strong' (Adj)	-i	/mazbu:ti/ 'strength' (N)
/□ulam/ \slave' (N)	-i	/□ulami/ 'slavery' (N)
/kitab/	e˜	Kitabe˜
/kursi/	a˜	kursia˜

2) Nativized forms by adding a borrowed suffix (Non-Arabic)

Arabic stem	Native suffix	Nativized Form
Xәwf 'fear'	nak	/xәwfnak/ 'terrifying, fearful'
□әzәb 'anger'	nak	/ xәtәrnak/ 'dangerous'
dukan 'shop,store'	dar	dukandar/ 'shopkeeper'
di:n 'religion'	dar	di:ndar/ 'religious' or follower of Islam'

8. Verbal Formations

Verbal formations are formed from Arabic loans (Nouns) + native verbal elements. The word /zәkat/'charity' is borrowed as a noun and then the native (Urdu) verbal element /denә/ 'to give, etc.' is added to convert the nouns into a verb /zәkat denә/ 'to give charity, alms, etc.' Such verbal formation is quite common. Some of these verbal formations with different verbal (native) elements are listed below:

Arabic Noun	UrduVerbal Element	Verbal Formations/ Verbal Compounds	Gloss
vudu	*kərnə*	*vudu kərnə*	*Ablution+ to perform 'to perform ablution'*
kitab	*xəri:dna*	*kitab kəri:dna*	*Book + to purchase 'to purchase book(s)*
əzan	*denə*	*əzan denə*	*Call for prayers+to give 'to give call for prayers'*
məˈlu:m	*honə*	*məˈlu:m honə*	*'to know about'*
i:d	*mənanə*	*i:d mənanə*	*Eid + to celebrate 'to celebrate Eid'*
qami:s	*pəhənə*	*qami:s pəhənə*	*Shirt + to put on 'to put on shirt'*

Table 10: *Verbal Formations/Verbal Compounds*

The above examples of 'verbal compounds' function as verbs only when the loan items (nouns from Arabic) are combined with native (Urdu) verbal items. It is interesting to observe that in the case of verbal formations, the loan items (Arabic nouns) always precede the verbal items.

9. Adjectives and Adverbs

Among the Arabic loan words in Urdu there are a few adjectives and adverbs. Some of these are listed below:

Adjective	Adverbs
/mašɣu:l/ 'busy, engaged with'	/qəbl/ 'before'
/qəri:b/ 'near'	/bad/ 'after'
/bəxi:l/ 'miser'	

Conclusion (Main Findings):

The main findings of this paper have been summarized below:

- Urdu, has borrowed from Arabic not only the lexical items but also the affixes.
- Borrowing has resulted in Hybrid formations: verbal compounds, plurality of nominals, etc. Such examples are used exclusively in Urdu.
- Some of the loan words have been completely assimilated into the morphological systems of Urdu to the extent of being nativized.
- One of the most important factors responsible for such an influx of loan Arabic words into Urdu vocabulary in the domain of religion has been the spread of Islam in the subcontinent.
- Most of the loan words are used by the speakers of Urdu, irrespective of their religious and cultural affiliations.

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