

Language Contact and its Impact on The Phonological Evolution of Balochi

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Abstract

In this paper, the language contact trend and its impact on the phonological evolution over time of Balochi an Indo - Iranian language spoken in Balochistan was explored. The interaction of Balochi with various Iranian languages such as Old Persian, Middle Persian, Parthian, and Avestan has also been studied. The research brought to light that the language has undergone phonetic changes during distinct periods, influenced by various languages such as Median, Avestan, Old Persian, Middle Persian, Parthian, Eastern and Western Iranian languages, Modern Persian, and Arabic. Balochi continues to borrow and assimilate foreign words, particularly due to its geostrategic location in Balochistan. However, the origins of these borrowed words remain unclear. The research also addresses the decline of Balochi's significance as a lingua franca and the reasons for its assimilation in some regions while retaining its originality in others. Furthermore, it addresses the contemporary challenges faced by Balochi, including its assimilation into other languages and the impact of English as a global language. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for further research on language contact in Balochistan and its consequences for Balochi's preservation and development.

Keywords: *Balochi, Language Contact, Borrowing, Old Persian, Phonologically*

1. Introduction

Balochi language which has interacted with neighboring languages for millennia, this research explores the diffusion of its morphological, phonetic, syntactic, and lexical structures over time, similar to other languages worldwide. The dissemination process occurred in distinct phases from 3000 BC to the present day, driven by the dominant state languages and linguistic aggression. Balochi has managed to retain ancient lexicon, syntactical morphological, and phonological forms, indicating connections to ancient Indo - Iranian languages. In modern times, Balochi continues to engage with various languages,

borrowing, Balochizing, and assimilating foreign words with ambiguous roots. The phonetic changes in Balochi transpired across three periods: ancient, middle, and modern, during which it interacted with Median, Avestan, Old Persian, Middle Persian, Parthian, Eastern Iranian Languages, and Western, and later Modern Persian, Arabic. Like other modern languages, Balochi can incorporate, borrow, or diffuse lexicons over time, with a limited number of borrowings from ancient to modern eras. The Balochi lexicon comprises distinct groups of words, some exhibiting typical Balochi features not found in Persian words, while others display Persian sound changes absent in Balochi. The interrelationship and borrowing patterns among Iranian languages remain unclear (Korn, 2003).

In modern times due to the geostrategic location of Balochistan as a transit route between different regions of the world, various languages have come into contact with Balochi, leading to the borrowing, and assimilation of foreign words whose origins are unclear.

Balochi has gone through three distinct phonetic eras, namely the ancient, middle, and modern eras. During prehistoric times, the Baloch people had interactions with the Median, Avestan, and Old Persian languages. Additionally, Balochi had connections with Parthian, Middle Persian, Western, and Eastern Iranian languages (Hintze, A. 2007), as well as the Arabic language at a later time. Presently, Balochi is surrounded by neighboring languages such as Sindhi, Saraiki, Pashto, Punjabi, Dari/Persian, and Arabic. Moreover, English is the dominant language of Science and Technology.

According to Agnes Korn:

“As far as the status of borrowdness or non-borrowdness is concerned, the Balochi lexicon may be said to comprise the following groups of words: first, words which show features typically showed in Balochi, but not by Persian words (e.g gwát ‘wind’ with Old Iranian (Olr.) $\text{w}á-$ →Bal. gwá-, róč ‘day’ with Olr.-č-→Bal. -č-). Second, there are Bal. words which have obviously been borrowed since they show a Persian sound change not observed in Bal.(e.g bačak(k) ‘son’ with Olr. $\text{w}á-$ → NP bá-, róza ‘fasting’ with Olr. -č-MP/NP -z-” (Agnes Korn , 2003: 19).

The Iranian languages share a common vocabulary structure; however, it is unknown which Iranian language contributed which lexemes.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Balochi is a language with a phonetically old structure that has remained unchanged throughout its history. However, it has had contact with other Old Iranian languages since its inception. Despite this, Balochi has never held the same significance as a lingua franca on the Iranian plateau from 3000 BC to the present day. As a result of the prevalence of ancient religions in the region, the languages used in religious prayers came to dominate, and Balochi came into contact with Old Persian, Avestan, and Median languages. This contact resulted in the exchange of a significant number of words between each language, as well as the loss of some of the ancient sounds. During the medieval and contemporary eras, Balochi was heavily influenced by Persian and other languages.

The Balochi language has changed with time, despite still being one of Iran's oldest languages and having sounds that have been preserved more consistently than those of other Iranian languages. Bráhui which is also the mother tongue of a large number of Baloch people is growing more quickly than Balochi in the majority areas of Balochistan. There is also a need to analyze why Balochi has undergone significant assimilation in Sindh and Punjab, and why the Balochi language's assimilation into other communities has been slower than it ought to have been? All of the questions need to be researched.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

To study the language contact in Balochi-speaking areas.

To identify the archaic lexicon and sounds of the target language despite language contact context with Iranian as well as neighboring languages.

To find out how Balochi borrowed the lexemes, assimilated them and also maintained their originality.

To investigate how the linguists considered the common family language words as Persian than that of Balochi.

Diffusion of some Balochi sounds and preserved maintenance of proto and Old Iranian

sounds.

1.3 Hypothesis

The phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical structure of the Balochi language has slightly deteriorated in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Gulf countries.

Balochi has absorbed many lexical, and phonological, elements from old neighboring languages.

1.4 Scope of the Research

In the present day, Balochi interacts with regional, official, and international languages just like the other languages of the world.

This research focuses on language contacts languages of Historical Balochistan i.e. where Baloch people live and share borders. Turkmenistan is not included because it does not border either the Baloch linguistic region or historical Baloch territory.

This study also clarifies the legitimacy behind all conjectures on the linguistic contact zones under state control and exposes both covert and overt assimilationist governmental strategies.

2. Literature Review

Academic research on the Balochi language started during British Colonial times in the mid-19th century. Mr. Leech published a book in 1838, and British officials in India were required to learn the local languages spoken in their jurisdiction. As a result, the British colonial administration compiled a large amount of text, lexicon, data, and grammar on Balochi. Grierson (1921) also collected specimens of languages belonging to the Iranian Family. According to him, only three manuscripts in Balochi were preserved in the British Library, containing text and a dictionary, along with sporadic missionary translations of certain passages of Scripture. There were practically no written texts in Balochi at the time.

A number of tiny handbooks that typically included texts with glossaries, and grammatical sketches were published as a result of the collection activities. A number of grammar and lexicon books were compiled by Hittu Ram (1881), Mayer (1901), Marston (1877), Gladstone (1874), Dames (1881), (1891), (1897), (1907), and Mockler (1877) are also the reliable source of language. The linguistic data of Balochi included in the "linguistic survey of India" is based on Mockler's (1877) and Dames's (1891) research works. The dictionaries that provide a bridge between Balochi and a European language are those by Gilbertson (1925), Geiger (1890), T. J Mayer (1910), and, together with the glossaries Elfenbein (1963) and 1990, Zarubin 1930, (1932), and (1949), Skolova 1953, and 1956.

The most recent study on the topic was carried out by Bahareh (2017) she compared the phonological system of three Iranian Balochi dialects i.e Mrijaveh Sarhaddi Balochi (MSB), Sarawani Balochi (SB), and Lashari Balochi (LB).

The Balochi language has been in contact with other languages in the region for millennia. (Elfenbein, 1966; Carina, 1989; Korn, 2005). According to Elfenbein (1966), it has interacted with Pashto/ Dari and Persian speakers in Afghanistan, Iran and Sindhi speakers in Sindh, Punjabi and Saraiki speakers in Punjab, and Arabic speakers in the Gulf and other Middle Eastern nations.

Thus, when politically Baloch tribesmen ruled Balochistan, their language had a very important status so many people who migrated from Afghanistan and Iran to central Balochistan after settling there, acquired Balochi and used it as a medium of communication. (Archer,2003)

In modern times Balochi has been impacted by Sindhi in Dera Murad Jamali, Jhal Magsi, and, Naseerabad where a discernible number of Balochi have assimilated into Sindhi. Interestingly Baloch who speaks Bráhue has preserved the Bráhui language in Sindh. The Balochi language is fully assimilated in Sindh and Punjab's metropolitan areas. (Elfenbein, 1966; Agnes, 2005; Carina, 1989).

The Balochi language is now widely spoken in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, as well as Balochistan's major cities. We see that the majority of non-Baloch people in Quetta,

particularly grocery shopkeepers, can understand and speak Balochi. The Baloch people make up about 90% of the clientele, which is the cause. Social, print, and electronic media use has also been crucial in reviving the Balochi language in non-Baloch regions of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran as well as among Baloch people who have lost their native tongue.

3. Research Methodology

A combination of qualitative and comparative approaches which were employed to examine the trend of language contact and its impact on the development of Balochi's phonology. The study is based on an extensive literature review, academic works, and previous studies on the Balochi language and its historical interactions with other languages.

The researcher uses a historical-comparative approach to investigate the stages of Balochi language interaction, following the linguistic impacts on Balochi from ancient times to the present. Through the analysis of primary and secondary sources, linguistic characteristics, phonetic alterations, and lexical borrowings are examined.

The study uses a variety of linguistic concepts and terminologies to define and examine the phonological changes that occurred in Balochi. To explain the patterns of language interaction and the associated phonetic alterations, it applies linguistic frameworks and theories while taking into account elements like migration, language borrowing, and language assimilation.

3.1 Data Collection

Multiple techniques of data collection were employed during the fieldwork. The data was acquired by visiting multiple sites across Balochistan, Sindh, and the Punjab regions. In addition to this, during the winters of 2016 and 2017 one of the authors visited Sindh and the southern region of Punjab for data collection due to the law and order situation in several regions of Balochistan, including Kohlu and Dera Bugti, most of the residents have moved to Sindh and Quetta. The language assimilation level of the Baloch tribes, of New Khahann near Hazar Ganji Quetta, was also examined during interviews.

In addition to this, ancient scripts and languages that had interacted with the Baloch were examined and studied side by side with Balochi.

3.2 Data Analysis

After examining the various obtained data, the scale of phonology, syntax, lexicon, and morphology of different dialects of the Balochi language was analyzed. Using the qualitative study method, the degree of borrowings with the contact languages in Balochistan, Sindh, and Punjab was examined.

This research was conducted using a variety of approaches. For these purposes, lexical, morphological, syntactic, and phonological analyses were conducted using sociolinguistic questionnaires. The only language interaction with Balochi in modern times was the subject of this questionnaire. Different texts and maps of the ancient and medieval eras were examined to analyze the essence of ancient linguistic communication.

3.3 Structure of Ancient Balochi Phonological

In terms of phonological structure, the Balochi language has an important place among the OIr. Among the modern Iranian languages, Balochi is also phonetically an archaistic language. (Mallory, & Adams, 2006) Balochi language maintained a large amount of OIr. sounds for thousands of years.

When it comes to the phonological organization among OIr languages, the Balochi language certainly has a significant position. Among the contemporary Iranian languages, Balochi is also phonetically an ancient language. While studying this topic it was observed that the Balochi language has maintained the OIr sound in, pīt “father” (Av. pitar -, OP. pitar -, Pahl. pīt, Skt. 'ptə -, NP. *pidar*, Prth. *Pid(ar)*).

Brat: “Brother” (OP *brata*, Av., NP. *Brother*).

Kapót : “dove” Balochi *Kapot* is very much similar to the Av. and OP *kapautaka*. (OP *kapautaka*, Av., NP. *kabútar*, MP. *Kabótar*, *kabód*).

Pač: “cook” (Av. *pača-*, OP. *pača-*, Pah. *Pač-*, NP. *paz*, Parth. *Pažag*).

Áp : “water” (Av. *áp*, OP. *áp*, Skt. *ápa*, Pah. *áp*, NP. *áb*, Prth. *áb*).

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 HJ; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007).

1. t

Similar to other languages in the Old Iranian (OIr.) family, Balochi has preserved the sound '-t-' in various words. For instance, it can be observed in:

Tač : meaning "to run" (OP. Tača, Av. Tača, NP. Taz/táz, Prth. Taž).

Bút: meaning "been" (OP. Búta, Skt. Bavata, Av. Búta-, NP and Prth. Búd).

Mát: meaning "mother" (Skt. Mātaṛ, Av. Mátar-, OP. Mátar, Russ. Māt, NP. Mádár-, Prth. Mád(ar)).

Gwát: meaning "wind" (OP. Váda, Av. Váda, Prth. Vád, NP. Bád).

(Korn, 2005; Faravashi, 1381.HJ.; Geiger, 1890; Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj ;Shahbakhsh, 2004; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007)

2. k>

The phoneme '-k-' is prevalent in all Old Iranian (OIr.), Middle Iranian (MIR.), and New Iranian (NIR.) languages.

Kap/ kapt: meaning "fall" (Prth. Kaf/kaft, Av.-, OP., NP).

Kasán: meaning "small" (Av. Kasu, Prth. Kas, NP. Kótáh).

Makisk: meaning "fly" (Av. Makiska, Skt. Makiška, Pahl. Magas, Prth. Magas, NP. Magas).

Rék: meaning "sand" (Av., OP., Prth., Pahl., rék and rég, NP. Rég).

Hušk: meaning "dry" (Av. Huška-, OP. Huška, Pahl. Hušk, Prth. Hušk, NP. Xušk).

In Early New Iranian (EHD), postvocalic 'p', 't', and 'k' are transformed into 'f', 'θ', and 'x', respectively, while word-initial 'p', 't', and 'k' are aspirated.

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007).

3. OIr. *b,d,g*

In Balochi, the (OIr.) sounds 'b', 'd', and 'g' are represented as 'b', 'd', and 'g' respectively. For example:

Bay-/bút: meaning "became" (Av. Búta, NP and Prth. Buw/búd).

Brát: meaning "brother" (Skt. Brātha, Av. Brátar, OP. Brátar, NP. Brádar, Prth. Brád(ar)).

Kumb: meaning "pool/jar" (Av. Xumba-, Skt. Kumba, NP. Xum(b), Prth. Xumb, "jug").

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007).

4. *d*

The phoneme 'd' in all linguistic aspects is preserved in Balochi. For instance, it is observed that it in words such as:

Dóčag/ Dóč: meaning "to sew" (NP. Dóz-),.

Dantán: meaning "tooth" (Av. Dantan-, NP. Prth. Dandán).

Ádénk: meaning "mirror" (NP. Áyína, Prth. Áđénag).

Kadí: meaning "when" (Av. Kađa, NP. Kaí, Prth. Kađ).

Šód-: meaning "to wash" (NP. Šoy/šust, Bal. Šuš, Prth. Šód-/šust).

Pád: meaning "foot" (Av. Páđa-, Skt. Páda, oind. Páda, NP. Páy, Prth. Pád).

Šud: and šuđ-(EHD), meaning "hunger" (yav. Šuđ-, NP. Šuy, OInd. Kšud^h-).

Sind: meaning "break" (Av. Oind. Čid, ^hc inád, Prth. Sind).

Gind-: meaning "see" (Av. Vid: vinad-, oind. Vinid:, vindá-, Prth. Wind-/windád).

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007).

5. *g*

The Old Iranian (OIr.) phoneme 'g' continues to exist in Balochi and other contemporary Iranian languages. For instance, it is present in words such as:

Gas: which represents the verb 'gasag' or 'gasit,' meaning "to bite" (NP.gaz, Prth. gaz/gašt, OInd. Gáh).

Gók: meaning "cow" (Av. gau, Prth. gáw).

Nigóš/góšdárág: "to listen" (Av. guš, NP. niyóš-/niyóšíd, Prth. niyóš).

Bóg: "joint" (OInd. ^hbógá- "to bend").

(Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ.; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Mahmoodzahi, 1370 H_j ; Cheung, 2007)

6. OIr č and j

While reviewing the data it was observed that the Balochi preserved the 'č' and 'j'. In Balochi, it is similar to the stops, 'č' and 'j' become lenited allophones in postvocalic positions, but later returned to their original Old Iranian state. However, since there is evidence of 'č' and 'j' preservation in the Middle North - Western Iranian, it can be assumed that they have indeed been maintained in their OIr. form.

(Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ.; Hashmi, 2000; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Cheung, 2007).

7. č

č is a typical Proto- Iranian sound that exists in all Old Iranian languages, including Balochi. However, in New Persian, this sound undergoes assimilation or conversion into 'z' due to the long-lasting contact with the Arabic language. In Balochi, the Arabic language was unable to alter the '-č-' sound because Arabic directly influenced Persian as the language of the dominant elite class.

It can be observed in words like:

Čar(r), meaning "turn/return" (NP. Čark, Av. Čara, "move", Prth. Čar "graze/turn").

Čamm, meaning "eye" (Av. Čašman, NP, Prth. Čašm).

Čin, meaning "pick, gather" (Av. Činao-, NP, Prth. Čín-/číd).

Gičén, meaning "select/choose" (Av. Ví-činao-, NP. Guzín-/guzíd, Prth. Wižín-/wižíd-),

Róč, meaning "day/sun" (Av. Raočah-, NP. Róz, Prth. Róž),

Ač, meaning "of, from" (Av. Hača, NP. Az, Prth. Áž).

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

8. J

The phoneme 'j' exhibits a consistent pronunciation across various Indo-Aryan and Indo-Iranian languages, particularly in Sanskrit (Skt.). For instance, it can be observed in words like;

Jan/jat: meaning "strike, hit" (Av. jan/jata, Skt. jan or janat e, NP. zan/zad, Prth. žan/žad).

Jan, meaning "wife" (Av. ja'ni- Skt. jan, NP. zan, Prth. žan), bój/bójag, meaning "open/to open" (Av. bój, MP. bóz-/bóxt, Prth. bóž/bóxt, both "save").

Raj/rajít, meaning "process of coloring" (NP. raz-/rašt, razíd OInd. raj "color").

Dráj, meaning "long" (Av. drájah-, NP. diráz).

Parthian, as attested, demonstrates a more advanced stage, specifically with the phoneme 'ž', apart from the allophone 'j' occurring after 'n' and possibly after 'r'. Kurdish also utilizes 'ž', while in some dialects of Zazaki 'j' is retained, suggesting a stage that can be postulated for early modern New West Iranian.

(Korn, 2005; Cheung, 2007; Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj ; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ.; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Hashmi, 2000;)

9. OIr. s

The existence of sound 's' in all Old Iranian languages verifies the existence of contact during ancient times. Therefore similarity in words such as;

Sóč, meaning "to burn something" (Av. saoča-, OInd. šuč, NP. sóz-/sóxt, Prth. sóž/suxt).

Ásin, meaning "iron" (Pahl. ásin, NP. áhan, Prth. ásun).

Rés, meaning "spin" (Av. uruuaéasa-, NP. rés-/rišt, Prth. árwis/árwist, árwisád).

Rópásk, meaning "fox" (NP. róbáh, Prth. róbás, OInd. lópásá-).

Pas, meaning "sheep, goat" (Av. pasu, OInd. pasú, MP. pah, Prth. pas).

Gis, meaning "house" (Av. vís-, OInd. vís-, Prth. wis, NP. xúna).

Furthermore, we can observe similarities of Balochi with other linguistic branches, such as Skt.

Sind/sist, meaning "pluck/break" (Av. sid, OInd. ^bcid),
Tus/tusag-, meaning "suffocate" (NP. tuhí, Prth. tusíg), tós, meaning "extinguish" (in contrast to forms without this suffix, e.g., Av. taošaiia-),
Waps-, meaning "go to sleep" (Av. xwafsa),
Rust/rudag, meaning "grow/to grow" (Prth. NP. rust). These linguistic correspondences provide evidence of ancient linguistic contact.

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

10. z

During ancient times Balochi experienced contact with other Old Iranian languages. In Balochi, the OIr. sound 'z' has preserved its original position, whereas other modern Iranian languages have changed, diffusing into 'd'. This sound change occurred much later, particularly during the Arab occupation of Iranian territories.

For instance, this contrast can be observed in words such as:

Zán, meaning "know" (zaná-, NP. dán-/dánist, Prth. zán/zánád),

Zámát, meaning "son-in-law" (Av. zámátar, NP. dámád),

Mazan, meaning "big" (maz-, MPM, NWIr form), mazan, meaning "monster" (OInd. mahán/mahánt),

Méz, meaning "urinate" (Av. maéza-, NP. méz/mézíd), naz(z)ík, meaning "near" (Av. nazdiió, NP. nazd(ík), Prth. nazd),

Mazg, meaning "brain, marrow" (Av. mazga-, NP. magz).

These linguistic phenomena highlight the influence of historical and sociocultural factors on language change.

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

11. OIr. š

All Iranian languages, including the Indo-Aryan language Skt. have maintained the phoneme 'š'. This is evident in the vocabulary, as exemplified by words such as:

Nigóš/nigóšt: meaning "listen" (Av. √guš, NP. niyóš/niyóšíd, Prth. niyóš/niyóšád),

Mušk: meaning "mouse" (Skt. muška-, NP. múš),

Šud: meaning "hunger" (OInd. kšudh-, Skt. kšudh, YAv. Šuδ, NP. šuy, MP. šuy and suy),

Šór: meaning "salty earth" (NP. šór, Prth. šór "salt desert," šórén "saltish/salty").

As was already mentioned that Balochi čamm, meaning "eye" (OInd. cák-us, Av. čašman, NP. čašm),

Kaš: meaning "armpit" (OInd. kákxa-, Av. kaša, NP. Kaš),

Taš: meaning "adze" (Av. taša-, NP. taš, OInd. √takš, which may have been borrowed from New Persian or inherited from the Iranian language family.

It is worth mentioning that the term "muš," which signifies "rub," may have been constructed based on the past stem "mušt. (Hubschmann 1890:558, cf. Prth. nimarz-/ni-mušt "make smooth" Av. maraza-), This past stem, if not borrowed from New Persian "mušt," could potentially be related to the Iranian cognate of either OInd. √mrj.

These linguistic examples demonstrate the continuity and preservation of the 'š' sound in Iranian and Indo-Aryan languages.

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 HJ; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

12. ž

The Balochi language, spoken by the Baloch people in their place of residence from the 2nd century BC to the 2nd century AD, was heavily influenced by the Parthian language. The Parthian sound 'ž' is similar to the Early New West Iranian stage of Balochi and is also present in Kurdish.

Dóžah, meaning "hell" (Av. daožaiḥa-, Kur. Dóžax, NP. dózax, Prth. dóžax, MP. došux),

Dužmen, meaning "enemy" (NP. dušman, Prth. dušmen), may exhibit a secondary assimilation process. The expected Balochi outcome of OIr. Av.dušmanah-, dušmaniiu- would be dum(m)an, but the presence of a morpheme boundary might have prevented assimilation. In this regard, it can be compared to OAv. dužmanah- (YAv. dušmanah-, Hofmann/Forssman 1996:104). Additionally, the word muž, meaning "mist/fog," could be connected to the Iranian words derived from Old Iranian. miža-.

These examples highlight the linguistic contact and influences between Balochi and Prth, shedding light on the historical development of the Balochi language. (Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007).

13. *h*

Similar to other Iranian languages, both ancient and modern, the Balochi language has maintained the 'h' sound in all of its forms. An example of this can be seen in:

Ham: meaning "also" (Av. ham, OP. ham, Prth. ham, Pahl. ham, NP. ham).

Gwahár: meaning "sister" (Av. xvañhar-, Skt. Sausār, NP. xwáhar, Prth. wxár).

Huš/hušit, meaning "to end, absorb" (Av. √huš, NP. xóš/xóšíd, MP hóš-/hóšíd, Prth. huš-/huš, hóšíd).

Hušk, meaning "dry" (Prth. hušk, xušk, Skt. huška, NP. Xušk).

Húk, meaning "pig" (Prth. Húg, Av. hú, NP. xúk, MP. xúg,).

These examples demonstrate the retention of the 'h' sound in the Balochi language, aligning it with the linguistic characteristics of other Iranian languages.

(Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

14. *m*

Balochi has preserved the OIr sound 'm' in alignment with other languages of the Iranian family.

Miç: meaning "suck/breastfeeding" (NP. maz-/mazíd), madag, referring to "locust, prawn" (Av. maðaxa-, NP. maig), rómast, indicating "rumination" (OInd. romantha-), and né(mag), denoting "half" (Av. naéma-, NP. ním(a), MP. ném(ag), Prth. ném).

These examples showcase the continuity of the 'm' sound in Balochi, paralleling its existence in other languages within the Iranian family. (Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

15. *n*

Balochi has preserved the Old Iranian (OIr) 'n' in various lexical items. For instance, the verb "ništ" meaning 'sat down' (derived from Parthian "nišast"), the noun "namáš" meaning 'prayer' (derived from Avestan "namah-", Middle Persian "namáč", New Persian "namáz", and Parthian "namázš"), the verb "zin-" meaning 'seize' (derived from Avestan "ziná-"), the noun "dantán" meaning 'tooth' (derived from New Persian "dandán" and Parthian "dandán"), and the noun "zan(úk)" meaning 'knee' (derived from Avestan "zánu" and New West Iranian form "zánú" or "zámúg"). These findings are supported by various sources, including (Mahmoodzahi, 1370 Hj; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007).

16. *r*

Balochi has successfully retained the OIr. 'r' sound, paralleling its presence in other languages.

Róp/rupt: meaning "sweep" (OIr, similar to Av and OP, urúpaia-, NP. rób/ruft).

Rék: referring to "sand" (NP. rég).

War: indicating "eat" (Av. xwara, NP. xwar/xwurd, Prth. xwar-/xward).

Brát: denoting "brother" (Prth. brád(ar), Av. brátar, NP. brádar,).

Gwahár: signifying "sister" (Prth. Wxár, Av. xwaṛhar, NP. xwáhar,).

Siasar: in Rakhshani Balochi Siasar also use for Sister, Skt. Sausār

These examples illustrate the preservation of the 'r' sound in Balochi, in line with its existence in other languages within the Iranian family. (Mahmoodzahi, 1370 HJ; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

17. *rd*

All ancient contact languages effectively retained the "-rd" sound, while NP lost it in distinct periods. However, in Kurdish and other Western Iranian languages, this sound can still be observed to some extent. For example;

Zird, meaning "heart" (Av. zaraδ(aia)-, NP. dil, Prth. zirδ).

Šurd, indicating "mild."

These examples demonstrate the preservation of the '-rd' sound in ancient contact languages, while New Persian has undergone changes leading to its loss. Nevertheless, this sound can still be observed in Kur and other West Iranian languages. (Mahmoodzahi, 1370 HJ; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

18. *rz*

In the languages of ancient Iran the '-rz' sound, occurring at the end of adjectives or nouns, is common in Indo Iranian languages. Balochi, being one of the oldest Iranian languages, has preserved the '-rz' sound.

Burz: meaning "high" (Av. barazant-, Prth. burz, NP. buland).

Barzī: referring to a "saddlebag" (Av. baraziš-, NP. bála).

Marz: indicating a "clod crusher" (NP. mála "harrow"), marz-, meaning "to use a clod crusher" or "to stroke" (Av. maraza-, NP. mál-, Prth. ni-marz "make smooth").

During the Middle Balochi period (MBal), a slight influence of the Arabic language can be observed in terms of phonological and lexical changes.

This highlights the prevalence of the '-rz' sound in ancient Iranian contact languages, with Balochi being a notable example. Additionally, the Middle Balochi period shows some phonological and lexical influences from Arabic. (Mahmoodzahi, 1370 HJ; Geiger, 1890; Faravashi, 1381.HJ; Shahbakhsh, 2004; Korn, 2005; Hashmi, 2000; Cheung, 2007;).

19. w>g

During the middle period of Balochi languages, a significant phonetic change occurred where the sound 'w' transformed into 'g'. This phase is known as the second phase. Several examples illustrate this transformation:

Wačak (k) > gwačak(k) - meaning 'boy'

Wāčī > gwāčī - indicating 'play' or 'playing'

War > gwar - denoting 'breast'

Waharām > Gwaharām - a popular Balochi name

(h)wāp > gwāp - describing the 'braiding of hair'

(h)wāt > gwāt - referring to breeze

(h)wast > gwast - representing the second form of (h)wazag or gwazag, which means 'to pass'

These changes in the Balochi language during this middle period demonstrate the evolution of the 'w' sound into 'g'.

20. wí(i) > gí(i)

In the realm of linguistics, a notable transformation occurred where the sound 'wí' shifted to 'gí' in Balochi. This change can be observed in various examples:

Wih > gih - representing 'good' or 'wonderful'

Wírām > gírām - indicating 'to forget'

Wíst > gíst - signifying 'twenty', while the form 'bíst' for 'twenty' has recently been borrowed from Persian.

Vind > gind - meaning 'to see'

21. j > z

Additionally, another phonetic shift that has taken place involves the conversion of 'j' to 'z': tājag > tāzag - originally meaning 'fresh' and still present in all dialects, but the form 'tāzag' is particularly common in the Rakhshani Balochi dialect.

Rahjan > rahzan - referring to a 'looter on the way', with the 'z' sound recently borrowed from Persian.

Tazhan > tazhan - commonly used in the Kechi dialect, denoting 'injured internally', but it can also be customized as 'tahzan', which has been borrowed from Persian.

These linguistic changes illustrate the dynamic nature of the Balochi language and its interaction with other languages, leading to the modification of certain sounds and the adoption of new phonetic elements.

Loss of prefix -a-

After the establishment of direct contact with the Balochi language as well as other Iranian languages, the Arabic language thereby exerted influence on the Balochi negative form prefix '-a-'. However, it is worth noting that this prefix is still retained in many Balochi words.

Many terms have lost their "-a-" prefixes, including "a-wādag" which means "without salt or saltless," "a-nóš" which means "unintoxicated," "a-bétk" which means "easeless" or "calm," "a-póg" which means "against" or "co-wife," "a-dāruk" which means "temporary stay," -ḍók' characterizing 'miscreant'.

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that the Pahlavi language kept this structure until 579 CE. Pahlavi language contains a number of examples with 'a-' prefix, such as 'a-bahr' which means 'portionless', 'a-čār' that denotes 'helpless', 'a-dād' conveying 'illegal', 'a-dard' signifying 'painless', 'a-gāh' representing 'without rank', 'a-ganj' meaning 'penniless', 'a-gār' characterizing 'powerless' or 'useless', 'a-gówāg' indicating 'speechless', 'a-gumān' representing 'without doubt', 'a-kinārag' denoting 'boundless' or 'unlimited', 'a-kard' conveying 'not done', and 'a-marg' signifying 'deathless' or 'undying'.

The aforementioned alterations in language usage and influences exemplify the effect of language contact and transformation. The Balochi negative prefix displays the influence of the Arabic language, whereas the Pahlavi language retained a comparable structure until the specific period (MacKenzie, 1971).

4. Conclusion

This study examined language interaction and how it affected the development of Balochi's phonology. During the thorough investigation of historical sources, linguistic data, and comparative research complex processes of linguistic interaction and phonetic alterations were observed that have affected the evolution of Balochi. Findings demonstrate Balochi's exceptional ability to hold onto some phonetic traits that it has received from Old Iranian languages. Balochi has retained distinctive phonetic patterns, such as the retention of the 'n' sound in numerous nouns, as is illustrated by *ništ*, *namáš*, *zin-*, *dantán*, and *zan(úk)* despite the influence of neighboring languages and the introduction of Arabic.

The study has also clarified the many phases of language contact Balochi has gone through. Balochi has consistently been in contact with other languages, leading to phonological alterations and lexical borrowings, starting with its early interactions with Old Persian, Avestan, and Median and continuing with Middle Persian, Parthian, Young Avestan, and Arabic.

Within the Balochi language phonetic changes in certain dialects have also been identified for example the transformation of 'w' into 'g' and 'j' into 'z'. These transformations and phonetic changes reflect that through time language continues to advance.

furthermore, the study has emphasized the need to study how modern languages such as Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Saraiki, Sindhi, and English have influenced Balochi phonology. The influence of these languages, notably English, in the age of globalization, provides both opportunities and problems for the development and preservation of Balochi as a separate linguistic entity.

Overall, this research work contributes to the larger field of linguistics by providing a comprehensive assessment of Balochi language contact and phonological history, and it serves as a starting point for future research and academic endeavors in this area.

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