

Examining the Presence of Letter “i” in the Interpretation of Quran Pak Text

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Abstract

In the interpretation of Quran Pak, letter “i” along with its two phonemes “i and e” have been used in some words such as “Frishteh”. The same words in other texts have been written without letter “i”. In today’s written form of these words, letter “i” is not used. Researchers considered “i” phoneme for this letter and believed that the written forms of these words are based on the way they are pronounced in the dialect of the text’s writer. In this paper, according to the historical development of words, the results revealed that letter “i” in these words implies the phoneme “e” and does not present their dialectical pronunciations.

Keywords: Interpretation of Quran Pak, Letter “i”, Frishteh=Fereshteh, Ki=Keh, Chi=Che.

INTRODUCTION

Language and its evolution during the transition from period to period has been the focus of researchers. Nowadays, very small and simple elements are also reviewed to achieve a more comprehensive knowledge of the language. In Persian language, even in reviewing the structure of the word, we realize that there are still a few things that needed further investigation.

Ancient interpretations and translations of Quran are texts which include the most prestigious and rich words of Persian language. According to the sacred words of the Quran, translators and interpreters had great care and precision to avoid errors in the translation and interpretation used to find the most accurate equivalents. In a way that sometimes they employed words which were not or were rarely used in the Persian language of that time.

Hence the surviving texts from the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries are considered as the great treasures and valuable Persian words. According to Professor Ali Ravaqi, people who come to see translations of the Quran have been faithful and wanted to put equality so as to not be reprimanded. Therefore these translations and interpretations have provided a great and precious treasure of the original Persian words (Parvizi, 1383).

Aside from dictionaries or vocabulary lists, most research in the field of investigating the vocabularies in the ancient texts, includes research in the field of presenting a list of one or more types of vocabulary book in the form of a dictionary or vocabulary review and analyze a text along with the evaluation of other characteristics.

One of the treasures of Persian language and literature is interpretation of Quran Pak that its old way of writing and orthography for other linguistic and morphological features are noteworthy. This version is originally a nameless piece of writing in Persian that the author and the time of its production is unknown and remains a small part of the overall interpretation. The existing version includes verse 65 of Surah Baqarah to verse 151 of the same Surah and has just 46 pages. According to the researchers suspect it has been more than two thousand pages (Kamaei Fard, 1388).

Besides, Mojtaba Minavi considered this book as contemporary with the late fourth century and early fifth century books and estimate that the place of its compilation will likely be from east plateau of Khorasan to Ghaznain. It is not a translation of the Arabic work but a direct work written in Farsi. The writing style and spelling characteristics suggest that it was not written later than the year 450 AH (Azarnoush, 1390).

From the few references included in this interpretation which were about two interpreters such as Qazi Bu Asem and Khajeh Abu Jafar, unfortunately it is impossible to solve the questions of the author of the interpretation and its real time of compilation (Zaryab Khoui, 1345). The way of word formation and finding equivalents in this book is not much different from those seen in big interpreted book, as the collection of words and even accent of both books are the same.

The translation which we found in the Quran Pak interpretation of Quranic verses are a little closer to the current fluent Farsi than in the fifth century. In the author's original text, not the Arabic translation, it is observed that in several successive terms subject + verb + object +verb are following and facing each other which is in line with the contemporary as well as traditional Persian (Azarnoush, 1375).

By doing research on these texts and by comparing the texts remained from the era of Dari Persian with each other, apart from their writing style, the differences and similarities between their vocabularies can be achieved. In the text of the interpretation of Quran Pak which has been revised by the researcher, the same cases have also been seen. Among these cases is the difference between the appearance of words such as "Fereshteh, Keh, and Cheh" where "i" is used instead of "e". Most researchers consider these differences as dialectic differences. Understanding the causes of these differences necessitates addressing the analysis of the etymology and vocabulary phonetic changes, which in this paper according to the approach described these words have been studied.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The ancient texts of Quran are very valuable works to explore and find a way into the different aspects of Persian language which is our most important national identity, and it can be achieved by digging and investigating these treasures.

Knowledge of the historical evolution of Persian words from past to present and also awareness of their etymological issues can be very helpful and will help to better understanding of the issues. The Quran Pak text is among the texts that in addition to the researches that have been done on it can be reviewed in terms of its vocabularies.

One of the issues that require further attention and research is the difference between the writing of some words in this edition with other texts. Among these differences is the presence of letter "i" instead of the vowel "e" in the word "Frishteh" instead of "Fereshteh", the "ki" rather than "Ke", and "Chi" instead of "Che" which is used in the interpretation of Quran Pak. In this study, we tried to examine the historical evolution of this word to realize the presence of letter "i".

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have been conducted on ancient texts but most of these studies are like presenting a list of such words and examples of the books. In the interpretation of Quran Pak text and its linguistic characteristics and its literary style, some researches have been conducted. But what most cited is expressing the headlines and bringing the sample sentences from the book.

The example of linguistic characteristics of this book is a matter that requires careful and sophisticated consideration. Researchers also have pointed out the written form of words "Fereshteh, Keh, Cheh" for "Frishteh, Ki, Chi" in several texts. But, like other words, mostly the sentences as examples have been investigated. The following some samples of these studies will be presented along with examples.

Regarding the interpretation of Quran Pak, first Hafez Mahmoud Khan Shirani, the prominent researcher of Shahnameh area, wrote a very detailed and research-based article in Urdu. Shirani's version drew the attention of Persian language astronomers and researchers. Iranian Cultural Foundation in a series of photos of manuscripts, the first version of the photo was published in 1344, was based on Shirani version. This publication has a four-page note written by Mojtaba Minavi. Mahmoud Khan Shirani's article was translated into Persian by Doctor Aref Nowshahi. This interpretation was published by Iranian Cultural Foundation in 1348, this time with the efforts of Mr. Ali Ravaghi. In this edition, after Shirani's introduction, the interpretation text has been presented and then some notes have written on this interpretation by Doctor Ravaghi.

Azarnoush (Arabic to Persian translation history from the beginning to the Safavi era) on a part of the book which is devoted to the interpretation of Quran Pak, has explained about the characteristics of the text, its writing style and the dictation of the words. Besides, Sadeghi (Language characteristics of Quran Pak) as the introduction of his article implies, has investigated it from linguistics study aspect though like other researchers he mostly examined examples. And also Zaryab Khoi (The interpretation of Quran Pak) listed some rare literal interpretation of the text and their meanings. Komaei Fard (The presentation and comparison of two old interpretation of the Holy Quran) presented an introduction and a comparison of two old interpretation of Quran

where the interpretation of Quran Pak is compared with the old part of the interpretation.

Khanlari (360, vol. 1), in the division of Dari Persian eras, presented the word *Frishteh* as an example for the period of growth and development, and believed that this form of writing words is not constant due to the early appearance of Persian words in Dari and he cited the name of the resources that has used *Frishteh* form (62, vol. 2).

Shirani (52), in the comparison of *Shahnameh* words with vocabularies' of the interpretation of Quran Pak, mentioned that some words of *Shahnameh* such as "*Fereshteh*" are written as "*Frishteh*". And also he cited that the singular word "*Che*" is written as "*Chi*" (56). In the case of the word "*Ke*" he noted that it has been written as "*Ki*" (58).

Hassan Dust presented examples for "*Ki*" (2313) and "*Chi*" (1064). Sadeghi (51) also mentioned that "*I*" in the word "*Frishteh*" is equivalent to "*I*" in other texts of this era. Bahar (431, vol. 1) about word "*Frishteh*" has stated that this word in the ancient books, in texts that are less manipulated is written similarly as "*Frishteh*" everywhere and in poems it is reduced to bring its weight and accordingly became "*Fereshteh*" gradually; though it should be considered that "*i*" is passive rather than active.

Broumand Said (252) presented the changes of "*i*" letter in "*Fereshteh*" (= *Frishteh*) as examples and mentioned the sentences of ancient books in which these words are used. Abolqasemi (111) mentioned that "*Ke*" in the Middle Persian entered in Dari Persian in forms of "*Ke*, *K*, and *Ki*".

In the above researches, there was no effort has been done to investigate the etymological and historical evolution of the words, the causes of phonetic changes, and the differences in the appearance of a vowel or consonant in different contexts. Often a more descriptive approach has been employed. These sources also relied on examples regarding the reasons for writing style of the words "*Frishteh*, *Ki*, and *Chi*" and they did not address the etymology and historical evaluations of the letter "*i*" in these words.

By examining various aspects of each book separately, in addition to the special features of each book, and matching it with the grammatical features during that period or the existence of special features that relate to the same historical period, some solutions can be achieved to resolve ambiguities regarding its words. Many interpretations have been published in recent years which all are full of issues that researchers can examine them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Some words have been presented with similar phonetic and writing structure and meaning in all Dari ancient text. But others have a different appearance in these texts. Some differences are seen in the emergence of "*I*" letter in the words of some ancient texts. In this interpretation of Quran Pak that we have studied, the words "*Frishteh*, *Ki*, and *Chi*" are used instead of "*Fereshteh*, *Keh*, *Cheh*", respectively. This interpretation, like many other interpretations, is related to the early centuries of the Dari Persian era.

Sentence examples for the word “Frishteh” in the interpretation of Quran Pak (Interpretation of Quran Pak by Ali Ravaghi)

Khanlari has divided Dari Persian in terms of development and evolution over thousands of years into three major periods: the period of growth and development, the period of Persian Dari, and the period of renewal and transformation. Period of growth and development includes the earliest surviving works of Persian Dari after Islam to the end of the seventh century AD. The language in this period has certain properties. Still there was no basis for how to pronounce each word on a constant basis and there was no single voice. Writers and producers pronounce each word as normal and consistent with their local register. The same words of the writers who come from different parts of the country accepts various forms in terms of morpheme (i.e. how to pronounce). For example, the following words are presented to reveal different forms of the same word in this period:

“Dival” / “Divar”

“Frishteh” / “Fereshteh”

“Danshumand” / “Daneshmand”

(Khanlari, 360, vol. 1)

Shirani regarding the comparison of Shahnameh words with the words of interpretation of Quran Pak mentioned that some words of Shahnameh including “Angoshtari, Gazit, Divar, Shanbeh, Fereshteh, and Nasepas” are written in our interpretation as “Angoshtireh, Sargazid, Dival, Shanbed, Frishteh, and Nosepas”, respectively. These differences can be because of place not time. In another words, Ferdowsi concerned Khorasan dialect while our author considered Touran dialect (Shirani, 52). Besides, he provided more detailed explanations for word “Fereshteh” and stated that Bu Ali Balami in his interpretation of Tabari History wrote “Fereshteh” as “Frishteh”, for instance:

Chon shab daramad Khodaye azevajal yek frishteh ra befrestad...

The Indian linear manuscripts, which has followed Touran tradition, the form “Frishteh” is used rather than “Fereshteh” (Shirani, 52).

Khanlari’s opinion about registering words based on the writers’ local dialect due to the lack of fixed forms of the words in the early period of Dari Persian is acceptable, but by studying these differences and phonetic developments in the etymology of words, the hypothesis of time differences seem more logical and acceptable. As in examples other than “Frishteh” which Khanlari presented, this hypothesis is obvious such as in word “Danshumand=Daneshmand” (in this study this word is not taken into account but must bear in mind that the suffix “mand” in Middle Persian is written as “oumand”, therefore the presence of this suffix in the form of “oumand” has historical reasons rather than dialectical differences).

And also by considering these cases, Shirani’s opinion regarding following the Tourani Tradition rather than Iranian Tradition cannot be honest about all these texts.

As in the study of etymology and phonetic changes of these words from the ancient to the present time it is seen that the presence of letter “i” in these words can be justified linguistically and historically.

Letter “i” in “Frishteh” is equivalent with “i” in other texts of this era (Sadeghi, 51).

This word in the ancient books is written everywhere as “Frishteh” with letter “i” after letter “r”, unless some authors reduces its form in some texts. In the Manichaeism’s books also it is written as “Fristag” and in Dari Khorasani it is “Frishteh”. Some of the old poets called it both “Frishteh” and “Fereshteh”, as in an elagiac poem attributed to Muezi:

Nour frishtegan dar zire damane tost Az tiregi to chera chon jan ahrimani

(Bahar, 431, vol. 1)

The word “Fereshteh” is derived from fraštag, from the root of aiš (Abolqasemi, 66) which is in turn derived from ancient Persia fra-ištaka (Hasandoost, 2012). In ancient Persian, aiš root is for verb which means to go quickly and in its causal case aišya, it means to go out and Send. Also in Avesta this root comes as aēš and aēšaya in causal case means to send forward and in Avesta it is fraēš (Kont, 527).

“Fereshteh” in Middle Persian texts is written in the form of frēštag. In this case, in addition to the development of the phoneme of the final word, the compound vowel “ai” has become vowel ē in Ancient Iran.

Fereshteh: Mp: frēštag: (McKenzie, 75)

ai> ē: Vowel ē of Western Middle Iranian remains of vowel ai of Ancient Iran (Abolqasemi, 1378: 39)

In Ancient Persian there were some compound vowels such as “au, ai” which became “ō, ē” in middle age. In the compound vowel “ai” continuous movement of speech organs from the position of “a” vowel to “i” vowel is done (Samareh, 98). The tendency of vowel “a” toward vowel “i” caused the elimination of “a” vowel and elasticity of “i” vowel. This process is called elimination and vowel elongation.

Vowel elongation compensation is defined as a chain unit which is the result of eliminating or shortening of an adjacent chain (Darzi). This process can be seen in many Middle Persian words with phonetic evolution from the ancient to the middle era. In fact, a phoneme is stretched to compensate for what has been deleted (Kambozia, Article 210).

In pronunciation of Dari Persian, in the first centuries of Islam, the specific qualities of these two vowels (, ō, ē stretched) remained and Loghavian sometimes pointed out the pronunciation characteristics, and their differences with the same Arabic vowels, and he called them unknown ō and unknown ē (Khanlari, 343, vol. 1)

Sadeghi cites several reasons that the vowel system of the Persian language in this period had no difference with Arabic vowel system, except the vowels ē and ō which are considered as unknown ē and unknown ō (Kambozia, 220). That he himself confirms that there was no specific letter of Persian writing system to show these vowels, and thus letter "i" is used.

Dari Persian vowels are the same as western middle Persian vowels:

Short	Long
a	ā
i	ī
u	ū
-	ē
-	ō

(Abolghasemi, 75)

The presence of letter "i" in word "Frishteh" is used in numerous other contexts as well, in addition to this interpretation

In the correct and older versions of Tabari History translation, translation of Hamv interpretation and Kashfolmahjub, along with Sistan History which are less manipulated, in all of them "Frishteh" was used instead of "Fereshteh" and sometimes in poem to weigh they used "Fereshteh" instead of "Frishteh" and its "i" is eliminated but it must be noticed that this "i" is unknown rather than known.

Saeid Borumand (252) mentioned the sub-changes of i (ē > i) in word "Fereshteh" (=Frishteh) and cited some sentences from different contexts as examples:

-Va nemigam shoma ra man "ferishtehi" ham pas rui nemikonam (Qods Quran, 69).

-" ferishteh" az khodavandeh ta'ala dasturi khast kea z malekol mot in beporsid (Interpretation of Quran's poems, 66).

- chahar hezar payambar budast va zeh mardom, vaz ferishteh chenanak goft Interpretation and translation of Tabari, 685).

- va amad ferishteganeh ma suye ebrahimeh payambar beresanidan besharat (Nasaji Interpretation, vol. 1, 296).

-va davazdah hezar ferishteh kamarhaye malekaneh beh kamar bastand (Pandeh Piran, 184).

- dar bazi tafsir avardehand ke rabol ezeh do bar ferishtegan ra sejdeh farmud... qomi goftand ferishtegan zamin ra farmudand (Kashfolasrar, vol. 3, 565).

- sheikh dar in sokhan bud ke ferishteh didam keh biamad va chizi chand dasht keh mohr be an nahade bud, biyamad va dar khedmateh sheikh benhad (Ferdosol Morshediyeh, 420).
- khiyaleh ferishteh inja khod chizi nist khaseh khiyaleh div (Shams Articles, 75).
- dolat chon doayeh malekeh in goyad bar charkh konad ferishteyeh amin (Divaneh Masud Sad, 664).

Hassan Dust (2013) also mentioned some sentences as examples for the function of this word:

- Va chonin goftand mubedaneh ajam... keh izad tabarak va ta'ala davanzdah ferishteh afarideh ast (Noruznameh, 2/16).
- hark eh in nakonad lanateh khoday va ferishtegan va jomleyeh adamiyan bar vey bad (Nasihatolmoluk, 2/3351).
- dani keh chon shodam cho zeh divan gorikhtam? Nagah ba ferishtegan ashna shodam (Naser Khosro, 24/139).

And Khanlari (62, vol. 2) has also mentioned the name of the sources in which “Frishteh” was used: Alabniye An Haghayrgh Aladviyeh, Sour Abadi Interpretation, Sistan History, Sajestani’s Kashfolmahjub, and Translation and interoretation of Tabari.

Besides in this commentary “K” statement has always been written “Ki”. It means that “Har ke” was written as “Har ki”. But when it sticks to other words such as “Ankeh, Bedankeh, Az Ankeh, Az Barakeh” is written as “K” like “Ank, Bedank, Az Ank, Azirak”, also in many cases “Aziraki” has been seen (Shirani, 58).

That “he” for “everybody” is written. But when the words stick like that, Bdankh, the, Azyrakh, as the “K” is written like the Nk, Bdank, Azank, Azyrak, also seen numerous cases Azyraky (Shirani, 58).

“Keh” in Middle Persian is like ēk that is derived from kahya (Hasan Doost, 2312) interrogative pronoun, relative pronoun and questioning pronoun. The Middle Persian kē has reached the forms of “Keh, K, and Ki” (Abolqasemi, 111).

“K” usually comes after “An, In, and Har” (Abolqasemi, 111).

Furthermore, “Cheh” in Middle Persian is derived from čahya in Ancient Iran (Hasan Doost, 2312) which has reached the forms of “Cheeh, Chi, and Ch” in Dari Parsian. Che: Mp : čē (Makeni, 58).

Sentence examples for the words “Ki and Chi” in the interpretation of Quran Pak (Interpretation of Quran Pak by Ali Ravaghi)

- in kas ma khast key ta o ra bekoshad; jebreil o ra berahanid (31).
- ba in jahudan va tarsa'an ahdi va peymani basteh ayad ta key begravand bedin peyqambar (32).

-izadeh ta'ala mar moslemin ra alayhehsalam farman chenan dadeh bud key ta joz azz bani esrail zani bezani nakhahad (33).

-kei begravidand va begravand behasti khodayeh aza-va-jal va bar ferishtegan va beh ketabha va peyqambaran (15).

-hameh az jay barkhizand beh barekateh an farmani key to madareh khod ra dashti (11).

- Agar bandeh chi masum ast az pando andarz vaz amro nahi khali nabashad (22/98).

- Eblis javab dad keh madar chi khabar darad maru anja (10).

- Ba zegard va maran ferishteh ra begui ke chi farmai, ta in gav ra be chand forusham.

- Javan beh nazdeh ferishteh baz amad vaz vey beporsid (12).

- Jahuda nagoftand na, to isa mehtareh ma rayeh kardi (29).

- Azira chi jahudan andar toriyat neshaneh peyqambareh akharozaman yafteh budand va begravideh budand (32).

The “Ki” form was also used in other sources:

- Va bar ebne sanat akhti bord kei morq dar hava setveh shodi (Farsnameh, 79/22).
- Kei kherad akharyani ke bar kharidaneh an hameh ziyan konad, hich sud nakonad? (Qesasol Quran, 12/275), (Hasaneh Dust, 22/79).
- Kanizak khast kei atasheh fetneh ra bala dahad va ... (Sandbad, 76/177).

Besides the “Chi” form was also used in other sources:

- Rast guid ke in qeseho in nadereh chist va an keh abestanetan kard beguid kist (Manuchehri, 197/2630).
- Khoshtar zeh eisho sohbat bagho bahar chist saqi kojast gu sababeh entezar chist (Hafez, 12/ 127).

The examples in these books represent the use of “Frishteh, Ki, and Chi” in addition to interpretation of Quran Pak version. And using the extracted vowel ē in these words shows their use in the wider region rather than the dialectic features

Kē and čē have been phonetically changed like word “Frishteh”. In this change, assimilation has occurred prior to the deletion process.

In the process of assimilating, one or some of the characteristics of a sound passes to the nearby sound. In this process, a consonant may take the characteristics of its adjacent vowel or a vowel may take the characteristics of its adjacent consonant. It is also

possible that a consonant affect another consonant or a vowel affect another vowel as well.

Sounds which are appeared as constantly phonetic sounds in the speech chains affect each other; this means that each sound may lose one or two phonetic characteristics of itself or adapt one or two phonetic characteristics of the adjacent sound and as a result appear with a specific phonetic change (Mashkuholdini, 131).

Here, letter “Y” which is described as a hard palatal voiced sound, affects the short vowel “a” in ča and ka and changed it to the closed vowel “e” and then by the end elimination in the short vowel “e”, vowel elongation occurred. In fact, the terminal elimination results in the elongation of vowel “e”.

Ka-hya>kē-hya>kē

ča-hya>čē-hya>čē

In Middle Persian’s vocal tract, two vowels of ē (prolonged, passive e) and ō (prolonged, passive o) were existed which then they have become the vowels ū, and ī. This conversion can be seen in the vowels in the words below:

šēr > šīr

Zōr > zūr

(Mashkuholdini, 150)

In the first and second centuries AD, the language of Iranian Muslims was Arabic. From the third century AD, with the foundation of the state Safarian, Iranian Muslim used Dari Persian language, known as Farsi Dari, and wrote it by the Arabic alphabet (Abolghasemi, vocabulary, 39). It is natural that in such circumstances, particularly in the first centuries, the use of the Arabic alphabet was used to write words for Persian language and different terminologies to be written in different ways in these texts. Also, the way of writing vowels has a more prominent role. The stretched vowel Ē which is common in Middle Persian is one of those. This vowel in Dari Farsi, especially in its beginning was more used and was shown as “i” in the writing forms.

Regarding the presence of the phoneme 'i' as the long vowel, the time changes share seems to be high lightened. However the scribes' locus and dialectical characteristics should not be disregarded. Nevertheless the phoneme 'I' as a long vowel in the very three words (Frishteh, Ki, and Chi) would be located historically by examining their morphophonemics and probing into the system. According to the selection of the Arabic alphabet and instability of the words written form in the beginning of their prevalence, some scribes have used the phoneme 'I' to show the long vowel 'ē'. It should be noted that the grapheme 'i' in the very words has been used as a vowel and has not been pronounced as 'ei'.

CONCLUSION

The presented article, that has studied the difference between the words 'che, Ke, and Fereshteh' and 'Chi, Ki, and Frishteh' in the Quran Pak interpretation text with some Dari Farsi texts, shows the reason of the phoneme 'I' existence in the very words by examining these words morphophonemics and phonemic changes. And also this phoneme appeared after the omission of a vowel through the ancient phonemic changes which influenced another phoneme in the word by prolonging it as the main cause in the very changes. There is vowel elongation in the Farsi language system as a natural thing. The very feature existed in the first centuries of Dari Farsi. Language changes do not happen from a period to another one; a period's lingual characteristics may remain up to the next periods. The long vowel 'ē', a normal feature in the Middle Farsi, was also usual in the Dari Farsi, too.

According to the issue of changing the handwriting and choosing the Arabic alphabet, the grapheme 'ﺉ' was chosen to show the very vowel; the reason is the fact that there was not a specific grapheme to show the vowels in the Dari Farsi, just like the modern Farsi. The long vowel 'ē' has changed to the short vowel 'i' in the modern Farsi and therefore there would be no need to show its elongation. Totally, the results of vocabulary and phonemic analyzing of these words leads us to the issue that Ksrh 'ﻭ' was pronounced longer in the first centuries of Dari Farsi that has remained from the Farsi pronunciation of these words. Furthermore, the grapheme 'ﺉ' was used to show the elongation of the very vowel, because the Farsi written system with the Arabic alphabet had no specific grapheme to show a vowel elongation.

In a number of the studies, the very differences have been known as a result of dialectical differences. Although, more examination of these words results in the fact that all of these differences and characteristics relate to the dialectical differences. Finally, it should be pointed out that the ancient Farsi texts are full of the issues that are in need of more probing and examination. To attain a better and more scientific result out of these studies, there is a necessary need to be aware of the words morphophonemics and phonemic changes and their changing trend from a period to another one.

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