

BALOCHI A DISAPPEARING LANGUAGE IN PUNJAB PROVINCE OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract: The Balochi is an old language of Pakistan, mostly spoken in Balochistan, Sindh and Punjab provinces of the country. But it is rapidly disappearing from face of Punjab province as it has got no opportunity of being medium of instruction in educational institutions and no Balochi Department could be opened in any university of the province. If a language is lost its whole literature, culture and past history is lost which is a great loss of knowledge for mankind. Due to other language's pressure the new Baloch generation avoids speaking Balochi and usually speaks more spoken other languages. Many words of: English, Urdu, Punjabi and Jatki (Saraiki) languages are being mixed in Balochi language so it is losing its classical form and beauty in the province. Balochi Language which completely disappeared from North West Frontier Province (Khyber Pakhtoon Khawh) of Pakistan; is rapidly going to face the same fate in the Punjab Province of Pakistan.

Every Language is a great source: of knowledge, wisdom, ideas and experiences of a race, community, live sign of past history footprints, treasure of human efforts, thinking style, literature, culture, customs and civilization. Not a single person invented any language but it is the collective effort of human civilization and a particular community. Languages are signs of Allah (1). Languages should be protected. If a language is being protected then the sign of Allah is being protected because the language is a richest source of knowledge which is extremely useful for human development. Allah Himself told a pray to mankind that: "Wa qul Rab e zidni ilma". (Say, O Allah increases my knowledge (2)).

To save a language, is the deed of saving the knowledge. Language is the history sign of thousands years of mankind. If it is lost, the sign of past mankind history is lost. If a language dies then the marvelous creative efforts of mankind dies in kind of prose and poetry: meritorious stories, interesting folk tales, graced speeches, proverbs, rational sayings, wonderful riddles, joyful anecdotes, dreaming lullabies, valuable epistles, beautiful songs, exquisite verses, decent lyrics,

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sweet melodies, unique ballads , attractive quatrains, praise worthy eulogies, eminent elegies, pray poems, religious poems, ethics and character building poems, natural beauty depicting poems, incidental poems, romantic poems, joking-satiric poems, pearl like talks - dialogues and flowery writings are lost forever. All forms of poetry and the dictions are lost (3). All humans efforts for making a language rich; are lost and the coming generations remain deprived of their past lingual and cultural knowledge-heritage, rich literary record, joys and beauties of a language. The language's whole glorious literary treasure is missed. It is very difficult and impossible that an extinct language could be revived in future. If the prose and poetry of a language is alive; anyone can meet with the distinguished poets, literati of past and present of that language in person and in books. If a language is lost, its whole primitive literary wisdom is lost from the globe and then there a permanent black out of ideas will prevail instead of sprouting fine human literary ideas of that language. So, extinct of a language is not only the loss for a particular race or language speaker but also it is the loss for whole mankind because a unique source of knowledge and wisdom is being vanished from the beautiful face of earth. On the other view, if a language is alive it can easily be ascertained from its past and present available literature that how its speakers used to think in past and how they are thinking in present era. The language introduces different nations among each other, through translation process. It brings froth new ideas from the world literary heritage through research process. Hence the languages are bounties of Allah and all the languages need to be saved for the sake of knowledge and be transferred to the coming generations as an ancestral trust property (Amanat).

The United Nations Organization considers that: "the languages should be protected and promoted throughout the world. Its institution UNESCO acts on many fronts to safeguard endangered languages and prevent their disappearance: In education: UNESCO supports policies promoting multilingualism and especially mother tongue literacy; it supports the language component of indigenous education; and raises awareness of the importance of language preservation in education (4)."

In the year 2009, there 6909 languages were spoken in the world but it is guessed that more than 6000 language will disappear from earth at the end of this century (5).

The Balochi language is one of these world languages which is also a dying language in the Punjab province of Pakistan. Knowledge loving wise nations and states never leave their language treasures to be lost. They put their efforts to promote their country languages. Even if few speakers of a language live in their country, they try to save that language

Dr. Ghulam Qasim Mujahid Baloch

with their full efforts. But in Punjab Province, the Balochi language which is a very old Arian language of Pakistan has nowhere been introduced or made a teaching language and medium of instruction in any Government educational institution. Even not a single Balochi Department and a Chair could be seen in any university of the Punjab province-including capital city Islamabad. Although the Balochi language was included in: "A Book of Syllabi" Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Lahore, Punjab as a Secondary School Examination level subject of 100 marks in 1989 but since that time never encouraged and not a single student for Balochi Paper appeared in Secondary School Certificate Examination so far up to 2015 (6). No "Detailed Syllabus" and "Text Book of Balochi" Subject for Secondary School and Intermediate Examination level has been published by any B.I.S.E. and Punjab Text Book Board or by Curriculum Wing of the Province. It is a great national loss of knowledge and avoiding attitude from knowledge. Whereas the students of other languages like: Jatki (Saraiki) and Punjabi could be seen to study their mother languages in Government Educational Institutions in the Punjab and they are encouraged to appear in papers of respective languages up to Ph. D level in Punjab University Lahore, Islamia University Bahawal Pur and Baha uddin Zakariya University Multan. Many lecturers and professors of Punjabi and Jatki (Saraiki) languages have also been appointed for teaching purpose in colleges and universities by different universities and Punjab Public Service Commission, Lahore but not a single lecturer in Balochi language could be seen appointed by P.P.S.C. or any university of the Punjab Province so far.

Now the Balochi speaking old generation is passing away and the new generation is victim of inferiority complex while speaking their forefather's Balochi language because in educational institutions, the other languages have been made medium of instruction mandatory. Even in Balochistan province of Pakistan, still the Balochi language has not fully been made medium of instruction. Similarly, the other languages have the opportunity of being the language of market, print and information media of the state. So the new young Baloch generation avoids and hesitates to speak Balochi language publically. Due to other developed languages threat: present Baloch generation tries to keep itself artificially respectable between the other dominant language speakers; hence speaks the other languages instead of their own forefather's Balochi language. It can easily be observed that several such Baloch families whose elders used to speak Balochi language but their children lost their ancestral Balochi language. For precedent: writer's tribe fellow Major General (R) Amir Hamza Khan Qaisrani (15 Jan 1925 - 05 July 2000) who was a competent Balochi

speaker and a Balochi writer but his offspring almost lost speaking Balochi language (7).

At present, in Punjab, the poor illiterate Baloch villagers are so depressed about their "Baloch Identity" and Balochi language that they did not introduce themselves as Baloch. If such a Baloch is questioned that: "Are you a Baloch?" He replies: "No, I am a Korai." "Do you know Balochi?"... "Nain sain, assan phurrshay nissay." (No sir, we are not boor Balochs.) So, under the other dominant language pressure, mostly the Balochs have been made "Saraikized" and same process is happening with rest of the Balochs and Balochi language in other regions of South Asia like: in Sindh: Sindhization ; in Afghanistan: Pashtoization; in Iran Persianization and in Gulf Arab states: Arabicization. Undoubtedly, if a language is not spoken and written, it will automatically get perish. As the poet of East Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal says that:

"Dali gai jo fasal e khizaan main shajar say toot...Mumkin nahain hari ho sahaab e bahaar say (8)."

(If a branch is broken down from a tree in autumn season and dried up then it is impossible that the rain-clouds of spring season could revive that branch to green again.)

It is generally speculated that the Balochi language had been spoken by scattered Baloch tribes in southern areas of North Frontier Province (re-named: Khaiber Pakhtoon Khawh): Dera Ismail Khan, Kulachi, and some extent in Bannu areas in 1450-1900 (9) but now completely disappeared in this province and adjacent area where now all Baloch tribes speak Jatki (Saraiki) and Pashto languages.

Almost in the same period the Balochi Language was spoken by local Baloch tribes of Punjab in rural areas of: Paniala-Mian Wali, Jhelum, Pind Dadan Khan, Rohtaas, Gujran Wala, Khushaab, Sargodha, Faisal Abad, Jhang, Atharah Hazari, Bakhar, Layyah, Okara, Sahi Waal (10), Bahawal Nagar, Bahawal Pur, Rahim Yar Khan, Multan(11) and Muzaffar Garah (12) but now in these vast areas; Balochi language got totally extinct and here the scattered Baloch tribes speak Punjabi and Jatki (Saraiki) languages whose number is estimated about more than two crore people. The Baloch tribes of these areas have totally been Saraikized and Punjabized except any individual Balochi Speaking family, who migrated from Balochi speaking areas in recent decades. So this region of Punjab lost its beautiful diversity of languages also.

However the Balochi Language is still spoken only in south western corner of Punjab province; in a small strip situated on eastern and western banks of Indus river Bhong- Rojhan, scarcely in vicinity of Rajan Pur, the Baloch tribal area hills of Rajan Pur, in vicinity of Dera Ghazi

Dr. Ghulam Qasim Mujahid Baloch

Khan and the Baloch tribal area hills of Dera Ghazi Khan whose number is guessed about ten lakh people.

With the passage of time, in plain areas of Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajan Pur, the Balochi language has almost gone in the dreadful jaws of death. Only the limited Baloch tribal areas Sulaiman Mountain are left where Balochi language is spoken as conversational language among Baloch tribes but they have been seized from acquiring higher education in their area, as no sign of any College could be traced anywhere in these Baloch tribal areas hills.

The Baloch population of notable villages situated on or near border line of Sulaiman Mountain and plain areas from south to north: Harand, Lal Garah, Choti Zaireen, Mamori, Bandwani, Choti Bala, Jhok Nangar, Sakhi Sarwar, Badore, Yaroo, Bazil (Kot Mubarak), Shadan Loond, Ahmadani, Boochar, Bughlani, Sokar, Mangrotha, Wasti Buzdar, Kot Qaisrani, Bahar Jhok, Tibbi Qaisrani, Nutkani, Jhok Bodo, Lalani, Mithawan, Baho (Vehoa), Ambrah Binda, Kirar Dhir (Muslim Abad), Lakhani and may others have almost lost Balochi Language and have been Saraikized. It is surmised that the Baloch people of these villages used to speak Balochi Language seventy years back.

But now the external languages are overwhelming and intruding, even in Baloch tribal areas hills in the form of Punjab Text Book Board educational system and modern communication system. The educational authorities of Punjab seemed to be void from sensitivity for the survival and progress of dying Balochi language in this area. Whereas the founder of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah granted the rights to Balochs of this tribal Area, equal to the rights of Marri and Bugti tribes of Balochistan where there many Degree Colleges have been established and the students of those tribes have the facility to study the Balochi language in Balochistan University Quetta (13).

Now it would not take much time that the poor illiterate Balochi speakers of this Hill Area will adopt the other dominant languages and lose their own Balochi language because they are accepting the external languages rapidly without any sense of loss. This process will ultimately result in complete disappearance of Balochi language from this area of Punjab Province. However a little hope could be kept alive like a candle light; from recently established Ghazi University, Dera Ghazi Khan, if that could establish a Balochi Department in Dera Ghazi Khan. On public and a Balochi linguist's request, the Registrar Ghazi University, wrote a letter to the Deputy Secretary Governor's Secretariat, Lahore in the indecisive words that: "the case regarding initiation of Balochi Department in Ghazi

University will be placed before Syndicate of the University for its Consideration and feasibility." (14).

The other co-lingual aspects of Balochi language like: poetic practices in "Shair"(poem), "Narr"(lute) music practices are also being given up in the Baloch tribal areas of Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajan Pur and there is no such Public and Governmental organization which promotes "Balochi Divaan" (poets gathering) and Balochi Music. So the Balochi folk heritage is also being lost rapidly in this region of Punjab. On the Information Media like: radio and television: there no Baloch poet, literati, scholar, artist and singer is given any time to appear on screen and perform in Punjab. The literature, art and music promoting organizations like: Academy of Letters Pakistan Islam Abad, National Language Authority Islam Abad, Lok Virsa Islam Abad, Punjab Institute of Language Art and culture Lahore etc are almost quite disinterested and indifferent about the Baloch poets, writers, artists, musician and Balochi language; limitedly spoken in the Punjab province. The print media: Daily News Papers and periodical Journals have also no interest to publish the Balochi articles, prose and poetic texts.

The Balochi language's vocabulary in Punjab province is also getting decreased, changed, and weakened rapidly by external linguistic pressures specially: Jatki (Saraiki), Punjab, Urdu and English. The new scientific and invented English words like: bulb, bus, calculator, camera, car, cell, cheque, college, commissioner, computer, cooler, cycle, doctor, Dollar, draft, drama, engineer, file, form, fridge, glass, jug, keyboard, kilo, M.N.A., M.P.A., meter, mobile, motor cycle, mouse, notes, novel, passport, pen, pencil, phone, principal, professor, radio, rail, register, T.V., ticket, truck, university, etc are being extensively used in oral Balochi language without any Balochization or Balochi translation. Such new scientific words are in large number which are rapidly effecting and marring the classic Balochi language and literature. Contrary to it, the old Balochi words are being forgotten and discarded by Balochs. Hence, new generation does not know the meanings of several old Balochi words. Similarly, there is no such mechanism to Balochize or translate such new scientific words and no literary forum, Governmental or non-Governmental organization is working in this field, in the Punjab province. All the discussed evidences depict that Balochi Language in Punjab province has been marginalized, placed out from the main page text of the provincial linguistic literature and put in danger for disappearing from the province which is a horrible situation for the future life of Balochi language, loss of national and human knowledge in the Punjab Province. May Allah bless the dying languages!

Dr. Ghulam Qasim Mujahid Baloch

References and Notes:

- (1). Quran e Majeed: Surah e Tuaha-20: Verse: 114.
- (2). Quran e Majeed: Surah e Rome-30: Verse: 22, (Wa min aayateyhi an khalq o ssamawaat e wal arz e w akhtelaafu alsaynatekum wa alwaanekum...And his signs are: the creation of the skies and the earth and the variety of your languages and your colours.)
- (3). The different genres of Balochi poetry can be perused in the famous book: Popular Poetry of the Baloches, Vol. I & II, written by M. Longworth Dames, in 1907 and published for the Folk lore Society by David Nutt, 57-59, London, Pp. xxxiv+ 204+224.
- (4)(www.google.com,www.unesco.org/endangered-languages/), link: FAQ on endangered languages (Frequent Asked Questions on Endangered Languages); What can be done to save a language from disappearing?, approached on: 22 June 2015.
- (5). Stephen R. Anderson: How Many Languages Are There in the World?, Linguistic Society of America,www.Google.com,www.linguisticsociety.org , approached on: 22 June 2015.
- (6). Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Lahore (1991) A Hand Book of Curricula and Syllabi for the Secondary School Examination to be held in 1991 (Academic Session 1989-91), Pp. ii & 5.
- (7). Ghulam Qasim Mujahid (July 2000) "Dera Ghazi Khan ka Mard e Jarri Major General ® Amir Hamza Khan Qaisrani Baloch", Hab Balochistan, Mahtak Balochi Labzank, Vol. 11, Issue: 69, Pp. 29-33.
- (8). Iqbal, [Dr. Allama Muhammad] (August 1991) Baang e Dra, (included in: Kulyat e Iqbal), Edition: II, Lahore, Sheikh Ghulam Ali and sons (private) limited publishers, 199 Circular road, Chowk Anaar Kali, P. 248.
- (9). Gazetteer of the Dera Ismail Khan District 1883-84 (1884), Lahore, Arya press, P. 58.
- (10). Gazetteer of the Montgomery District 1883-84 (1884), Lahore, Arya press, Ram Das, P. 65.
- (11). Gazetteer of the Multan District 1923-24 (1926), Lahore, Superintendent Government Printing, Punjab. In 1924 The Balochs of Multan-Lodhran area had given up their Balochi language as mentioned in Gazetteer that: " The Belochis of the district are chiefly Rinds and Korais. They have long been for practical purpose, ordinary Jats, having forgotten their old language, disused their old costume." P.91.
- (12). Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume XXXIV-A, Muzaffar Garh District (1929), Lahore, Superintendent Government Printing, Punjab, P. 75.

(13). Notification of Governor General Muhammad Ali Jinnah, dated: 15 August 1947, Appendix A Political and Pass port Branch, No. 5010-PP-47/50683, in which it is written that: "I Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Governor General of Pakistan, hereby declare that all laws that were in force in the Baluchistan tribal areas including Marri and Bugti tribal areas and in such of the Baluch tribal areas adjoining to Dera Ghazi Khan district of the Punjab as are not included in Baluchistan on the 14th day of August 1947, will continue to be in force, and all subsidies and allowances hitherto paid will continue to be paid by the Government of Pakistan." P.9

(14). Letter of the Registrar Ghazi University, Dera Ghazi Khan; addressed to the Deputy Secretary (Admn.), Governor's Secretariat, Punjab, Lahore, Numbering: GU-DGK/Admn. 57/485 dated: 28 May 2015.