

Identifying Singular and Compound Words Based on Letters “D” and “Dh”

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

In Dari Persian words, the letter D comes either at the beginning of the word or after a consonant, and the letter Dh always comes after a vowel. This rule is specific to singular words. In compound words, however, the first letter of the second segment cannot be Dh and only a D letter must be used. It is because the preceding vowel is not a part of the morpheme itself, but belongs to the preceding morpheme. Therefore, the second segment of compound words is subject to the same rule that applies to the singular words. According to this rule, singular words such as Badheh and Nabidh have the letter Dh, and compound words such as Padash and Sotudan have the letter D in their structure.

2. Theoretical Framework

Persian scholars such as Shams Qais Razi, Ibn Yamin Fariumi, and Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi have described how Dari Persian distinguishes between the two Persian letters, D and Dh. As they have noted, in Dari Persian, when this letter comes after a constant and a vowel phoneme, it constitutes a D and Dh, respectively. This rule only applies to singular words, and in the case of compound words, each segment of the compound represents a singular word, so the rule in question would not be applicable. For example, the word Bidhar has the letter Dh and the word Bidadh has the letter D in their structure as the third letter. It is because Bidhar is a single word and Bidadh is a compound word. It is true that the phoneme preceding the first D in Bidadh is a vowel, but this phoneme, rather than being a part of the original morpheme, is a part of the preceding morpheme, “B”. Therefore, the third letter in the word Bidadh is not Dh. However, the last letter is Dh because Dadh morpheme is singular and the vowel preceding Dh is part of the morpheme itself.

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3. Method

Some interesting results and conclusion can be obtained about the linguistics in the past by examining ancient manuscripts written until the end of the eighth century, especially through a meticulous analysis of how D and Dh letters have been recorded. The difference between D and Dh in writing can indicate the pronunciation and grammatical structure of a word. The first letter of the word is always a D, but if the second or other letters are a D, one of these two conditions would be applicable. In the first case, the preceding phoneme is a consonant, and in the second case, the preceding letter (s) is a separate morpheme incorporated in the structure of the word.

4. Results and Discussion

The analysis of evidence in manuscripts provided the following conclusions: The word Padash is a compound that consists of two morphemes, Pa+dash. The lack of a dot in the second letter in this word suggests that Pa is a separate morpheme.

The word Badidh is a compound that consists of two morphemes, Be+didh. The lack of a dot in the second letter of this word leads us to the conclusion that Be is an independent morpheme.

The word Bedhast, meaning palm, is a singular word. The existence of a dot on the second letter of this word suggests that the word in question consists of one morpheme.

The ancient manuscripts differ in how they have recorded the word Sotudan. Some versions have recorded it with a D and others with a Dh. Yet, others have adopted a dual approach, using D and Dh alternatively. The scientific evidence suggests that the word is made up of two morphemes, "Sotu+Dan". Thus, we consider manuscripts that have recorded the word with D letter as the reference.

Considering how letters D and Dh are dotted in this verse of Shahnameh, we can figure out whether the word used in the Florentine version is Bidar or Bidad:

به کندی زدی پیش بیدار گام

ورا کندرو خواندندی به نام

5. Conclusion

A meticulous analysis of the writing style of D and Dh letters in ancient texts reveals that appropriate writing of these two letters requires some background knowledge in Persian inflection and etymology. The scribes, who have recorded D and Dh correctly, have demonstrated the level of their awareness and linguistic knowledge at their time and place of living. Today, the correct

reading of manuscripts requires knowledge of rules such as D and Dh rule. Some of the editors and correctors, oblivious to this rule, have erred in reading the old versions.

Keywords: Singular Word, Compound Word, Ferdowsi, Shahnameh

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