

The History of Brahui Alphabet

Language & Literature

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Abstract

This research article reflects that Brahui language has its proper phonemic alphabet. The earlier phonic alphabets of Brahui language were quite similar with the Arabic alphabet. Malik Dad Klati in his first book "Tufatul ajaib" which was compiled in 1760 and published in 1905 had adopted the Arabic borrowed alphabet. The history of Brahui alphabets till 2008 has passed deferent stage in the maintained period of Brahui alphabets the consensus regarding uniformity had not been made by the Brahui Scholar. Brahui Language Board (BLB) has decided and finalised the phonemic alphabet of Brahui and a linguistics approach of study has been commenced after BLB.

Keywords: *Alphabets, Brahui, Language, phonetics*

Sound Verses Symbol

The concept of on sound for one phonic symbol has been implemented after establishment of BLB in 2008. It is obviously clear that including Brahui all over the world the spoken languages are using the first invented 22 alphabet of Arami (Prof S. Salem: 1981) language. The study of Brahui phonetics, its distribution towards strengthens and standardization of language, Brahui Language Board took a historical step. Finally 35 phonemes

have been adopted in unanimous decision of Brahui language Board's meeting in 2008 (Talar: 2010:3). Brolikva (Omniglot: 2011) has the one sound one alphabet tendency in it. This trend brought the solution regarding symbol and sounds which usually accord while reading and writing. Excluding 9 Arabic and aspirated phonemes Brahui language has its pure 27 consonants bases on one sound one alphabet.

Table. 1. list of Brahui Consonants

	Bilabial	Labiodentals	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Plosive	Pb		Td	?ḍ	c	K	g	
Nasal	M		N			Ṣ		
Trill			R	Ṙ				
Fricative		fv	Sz		ʃ	X	ġ	h
Approximant			ž y		j			
Lateral approximant			l ɭ					

Source: The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), 2005.

ب	Be	B	[b]
پ	Pe	P	[p]
ت	Te	T	[t̪]
ٲ	te	t̪	[t]
ج	Jim	J	[d̪ʒ]
چ	Che	Ch	[t̪ʃ]
ر	Re	R	[r]
ڑ	ar	r̪	[r̪]
ز	Ze	Z	[z]

ژ	Zhe	Zh	[ʒ]
س	Sīn	S	[s]
ش	Shin	Sh	[ʃ]
ه	choṭī he	H	[h]
غ	ghain	Gh	[ɣ]
ف	Fe	F	[f]
ک	Kāf	K	[k]
گ	Gāf	G	[g]
ل	Lām	L	[l]
م	Mīm	M	[m]
ن	Nūn	N	[n]
و	Vā'o	v, o, or ū	[v], [o:], or [u:]
ی	Ye	y, i	[j] or [i:]
ڈ	dāl	Ḍ	[d]
		Ḍ̣	
		Ḍ̣̣	
		D	
		X	

Influence of Arabic Language Brahui had to use Arabic orthography (Manzoor: 2007:31). This usage introduced 9 extra phonemes in Brahui language which were totally different from the actual sounds of Brahui.

The Brahui linguists have different opinions about the usage of 9 Arabic sounds or alphabet. Some of them have counted those alphabets separately and emphasises their need based usage (Parvana: 1961:10).

The following are 9 Arabic sounds which were used in Brahui Language before establishing BLB. Now in new trend these alphabets are being omitting from the latest alphabet.

Borrowed Voices

ث	Thay; colloquially 'say'	pronounced [s:eʔ]	Arabic	Shift + T	Dental
ح	Hay	pronounced [heʔ]	Arabic	P	Aspirated
ذ	Dhaal; colloquially 'zaal'	pronounced [zʔʔ]	Arabic	Shift + E	Aspirated
ص	Suaad	pronounced [sʔʔʔʔ]	Arabic	W	Velar aspirated
ض	Dhuaad; colloquially 'zuaad'	pronounced [zʔʔʔʔ]	Arabic	Shift + W	Velar aspirated
ط	Toay'n	pronounced [θʔʔʔ]	Arabic	Q	Dental velar
ظ	Zoay'n	pronounced [zʔʔʔ]	Arabic	Shift + Q	Velar aspirated
ع	Ain; guttural 'a'	pronounced [æ̃n]	Arabic	M	Velar vowel
ق	Quaaf; 'Qu' is pronounced only as 'k'	pronounced [gʔʔʔ]	Arabic	Z	Velar

There are three Brahui Consonants which are not foundation letters, like alveolar Lateral approximant voice (l), trill voice (r) and velar nasal voice (ŋ) there is no any word which commence from these three voices.

Earlier 62 sounds were used in Brahui including 15 aspirated voices, 3 semi vowels, 3 diphthongs and 9 pure Arabic letters. These alphabets could be found in Roman (Wikipedia: 2009) and Persian based orthography (Lot, R. Lieach: 1838). At the mid nineteenth century Allah Bux Zehri has excluded few letters and he had used 44 letters for Brahui including 4 sindhi alphabet. (Allah Bux: 1878:3)

Aspirated voice (Do chashmī he)

The letter “do chashmī he” (ھ) is used in native Hindustānī words, for aspiration of certain consonants. The aspirated consonants are sometimes classified as separate letters, although it takes two characters to represent them. In 1992 Balochistan text book board's book has used the following aspirated sounds (Text Book: 1992) besides Jahalavanic dialect of Brahui as collectively these voices have no more usage in Brahui language this voice (ھ) is a separate identity in new Brolikva script.

Letter	Transcription	IPA
ہا ب	Bhā	[b ^h ɑ:]
ہا پ	Phā	[p ^h ɑ:]
ہا ت	Thā	[t ^h ɑ:]
ہا ٹ	ṭhā	[t̪ ^h ɑ:]
ہا ج	Jhā	[dʒ ^h ɑ:]
ہا چ	Chā	[tʃ ^h ɑ:]
ہا د	Dhā	[d ^h ɑ:]
ہا ڈ	ḍhā	[d̪ ^h ɑ:]
ہا ڙ	rḥā	[r̪ ^h ɑ:]
کھا	Khā	[k ^h ɑ:]
گھا	Ghā	[g ^h ɑ:]

Nasalization

Brahui Language has the following three nasal sounds [m], [n], [ɳ] (the sound in the middle of "yanzda"), and [ŋ] (the sound at the end of "Danh"). They are sounds that are made by closing the air stream off in the mouth and letting the sound come out through the nose.

We don't "drop" the /n/, but it does undergo a change. English nasal consonants assimilate to the place of articulation of the following consonant. Thus rainbow is pretty much always pronounced rai [mb] ow, raincoat is rai [nk] oat, ect.

Brahui Vowels

Brahui language contains 8 vowels for their eight usable voices. Before Brolikva script in the past all scripts which were used for Brahui they have just 2 vowels in their alphabet. that is the point Brahui language feels a new script for it to fulfil the lingual requirements.

This pronouncement has been made to make the reading and writing simple and easy in Brahui language. Brahui vowels are alienated in two groups.

i. Short Vowels

A, I, and U (a, i, u) are tot up as short vowels in Brahui language. Except Brahui's new script 'Brolika' these short vowels were not characterized in all previous scripts.

Vowel	Name	Transcription	IPA
ب	zabar	Ba	/ə/
ب	zer	Bi	/i/
ب	pesh	Bu	/u/

ii. Long Vowels

Á, í, ú, e and o signify the voices of long Brahui vowels. As it is cited above in short vowels that apart from Brolikva script, characterization of Brahui vowels were not obviously used. This is what orthographically and scripted inaccuracy constructed failures in Brahui reading and writing. Implementation of Brolikva would be elucidation for script errors.

(a, á, i, í, u, ú, o, e) » ba, bá, bi, bí, bu, bú, bo, be)

CONCLUSION

The specification of Brahui Bashagal (alphabet) introduces tendency towards error (spell) free script for Brahui. This study approaches in the direction of classifying speech sounds which are of two major types-vowels and consonants. The numerous uses of vowels the readers gets with that the vowels are speech sounds produced with no obstruction to the air flow coming from the lungs. It takes on their different sound qualities by subtle changes of shape in the vocal tract as they are being produced.

This article cleared that those languages face delinquent while script and orthography. As the result Brahui language left its verity due to borrowed scripts. These circumstances caused by borrowing voices.

It is miserable situation for Brahui language that excluding Brolikva script all other scripts have no proper identification regarding vowels. Persian script denotes just two from the eight vowels. One short and one long vowel can't fulfil the writing requirements of Brahui language. This article recommends taking strong steps towards Brahui language and standardisation of its alphabet.

- One sound one alphabet formula must be adopted.
- All vowels must be proper classified
- Short vowels must have a separate alphabets
- Long vowels must be represented by different alphabets.

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