

An Etymological Study of Twenty Words Related to Crafts in the Hanashuri, Sarmaki, and Dohuki Dialects in Southern Iran

Sohrab Gholami

(Shiraz University)

Jalal Rahimian

(Shiraz University)

Farrokh Hajiyani

(Shiraz University)

Katayoun Namiranian

(Shiraz University)

Abstract: Hanashur, Sarmak, and Dohuk are villages in the Tasuj Rural District, in Dashti County, Bushehr Province. The Hanashuri, Sarmaki, and Dohuki dialects are varieties of the standard Persian language in Bushehr Province, south of Iran. This study is an etymological analysis of twenty words related to crafts spoken in the dialects in question. To conduct this research, ten speakers over fifty years of age and two young, literate speakers were interviewed. Their speech was recorded phonetically, and a linguistic corpus was developed using field and descriptive-analytical methods and desk research. These methods, combined with IPA transcription, were employed to collect and analyse the data. This study offers the etymology of twenty endangered words. Evidence shows that these varieties are from the southwestern

Iranian language family and are remnants of one of the ancient Persian languages; they are related to other modern Iranian languages and dialects across the ancient, middle, and new historical periods. The vocabularies of these dialects have historically undergone phonetic changes, phonological processes (especially shift and deletion), and morphological and semantic changes. Furthermore, these dialects are more similar to Middle Persian in terms of word similarity and roots, while in terms of the absence of ergative features in their grammar, they resemble Old Persian.

Keywords: Iranian Dialects, Etymology, Hanashur, Sarmak, Dohuk

Introduction

Iranian (Aryan) languages form a branch of the Indo-Iranian family, which itself represents a group within a superfamily known as the Indo-European. Iranian languages have been spoken in Iran, Afghanistan, and the region between Hungary, Turkestan, and China since at least the first millennium BC. Among the oldest varieties of this linguistic branch, we can mention Avestan and Old Persian. Avestan is the language of the Avesta, and Old Persian served as one of the primary official languages during the reigns of Darius the Great (522–486 BC) and Xerxes (486–465 BC) and their successors, alongside Elamite, which remained dominant in administrative contexts (see, for instance, Abolghasemi 1994, 6; Schmitt 2008). In the Middle Ages, these languages were divided into two categories, western and eastern, and due to the geographical extent and the coexistence of different ethnic groups, different varieties were developed. Middle Iranian languages, along with New Iranian languages, have been in use in the Islamic period for centuries; however, they have gradually disappeared or transformed. As of today, except for a brief vocabulary and syntax in some Iranian dialects, nothing remains (Rezai Baghbidi 2011, 5). Bushehr Province in south of Iran and north of the Persian Gulf is home to a variety of dialects worthy of attention. For the first time, Sohrab Gholami (2021, 5) divided various Iranian languages in this province into two categories. His categorization is regardless of political geography, and is based on dialectal geography and the mutual understanding of standard Persian speakers of the dialects in question. These two categories are:

A) Standard Persian Language Varieties: Standard Persian speakers have a mutual understanding of these dialects (Hanashuri, Sarmaki, Dohuki, Bonbidi, Konarbandaki, Jami, Rizi, Tashani, Sohui, Dasht-e-Palangi, Bushehri, etc.);

B) Non-Standard Persian Language Varieties: Speakers of Standard Persian do not have a deep mutual understanding of these dialects (Dashtiati or Dashti, Kordavani, Genavehi, Bordekhuni, Bardestani, Bolkheyri, Badulehi, Bonyadi, Sheykhiyani, Gankhaki, Jashaki, Moghdani, Abdani, Zeyzari, Khur Shahabi, Badamzari, Kololi, Feghih-Hasanani,

Feghih-Ahmadani, Banaki, Deyyeri, Ziyarati, Moghateli, Charaki, Kerdelani, Chemkouri, Bamniri, etc.).

If we examine the aforementioned division more closely, we find that speakers of Standard Persian can mutually understand those Bushehri dialects that lack ergative features. This point is overlooked in previous scholarship; however, a deep and mutual understanding by speakers of non-standard Persian language varieties, such as Dashtiyati, Bolkheyri, and others, is very difficult due to the existence of a type of ergative feature, i.e. split ergativity, in these dialects (Gholami 2025, 3). The ergativity in most southwestern dialects is a legacy of the Middle Persian language (Hajiyani 2009, 21). “Regarding the establishment of five systems of case marking and agreement In the dialects studied, it can be said that mostly, nominative-accusative and then neutral systems are observed in some cases within this dialects; however, ergative, double-oblique, and tripartite systems do not occur in this dialects” (Gholami et al. 2025, 34). “In the book *Fārsnāmeḥ Naseri*” (Nasseris Persian chronicle), the settlements under study are also mentioned by the same names of the villages Hanashur, Sermak and Dohuk located in the Tasuj District of the Dashti County” (Hoseyni Fasai 2009, 2:1341). In the not-so-distant past—before the construction of roads various parts of the Dashti County to one another—the people of Hanashur, Sarmak, and Dohuk had many contacts with Dehram, Farrashband, and Firuzabad in Fars Province, and they obtained most of the resources they needed from these highland areas. They were less inclined to travel to the central areas of Dashti County and thus established closer ties with these communities. Undoubtedly, the similarities and differences in the dialects of these peoples have affected the extent and type of their contact with the surrounding areas. In general, the dialects of the villages of the Tasuj rural district should be considered varieties that are unique to these people; the most similar dialects to the aforementioned varieties are Konarbandaki, Bushkani, Farrashbandi, Dehrami, and Firuzabadi Persian. The difference in the suprasegmental characteristics with the surrounding villages, and the difference in the segmental and suprasegmental characteristics with the other mentioned regions of Bushehr and Fars Provinces, have made these Tasuj varieties unique (Gholami 2025, 6).

The most challenging issue for etymological studies in the field of the dialects under study is the lack of any previous scientific linguistic research related to these dialects, which are considered endangered in an age of rapid technological advances. In addition, research on these dialects raises a wide range of issues related to linguistics, etymology, history, and the evolution of Persian words. Since dialects are rich sources of linguistic variation, they often serve as missing links in studies of the Persian language. Also, the data gleaned from such research can be used for creating Persian equivalents of non-Persian words—for instance scientific terms—that have inevitably entered Persian. This can contribute to the enrichment of the Persian language. Moreover, new scientific studies on various fields of the aforementioned dialects will enable us to have a better

understanding of ancient and middle Iranian languages, as well as other dialects in contemporary and trans-temporal studies.

The main objective of the present study is to analyze the etymology of twenty selected words related to various crafts in the Hanashuri, Sarmaki, and Dohuki dialects. This research has been conducted by preparing, compiling, and utilizing a linguistic corpus of the popular culture of the aforementioned dialects. Indeed, the present study aims to answer the following question: What are the origin, derivational structure, and historical development of the morphology, phonological, and semantic structure of the selected words in Hanashuri, Sarmaki and Dohuki?

Theoretical Framework and Research Method

To conduct the present research, a shared vocabulary list for the dialects under study was developed. This study provides the first documentation of selected common vocabulary from the Hanashuri, Sarmaki, and Dohuki dialects, including their archaic forms transcribed using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). As an established method for representing linguistic sounds, the IPA was initiated in 1886 by Otto Jespersen and subsequently refined over time (Bauman-Waengler 2009, 54). By utilizing the Roman alphabet, the IPA ensures widespread familiarity and accessibility worldwide (Ali Nezhad 2019, 19). A similar methodological approach was adopted by Gholami and Hajiyani (2023), who provided the first phonological description of the Bolkheyri dialect in Bushehr province using the IPA.

For ancient languages and etymological debates, the following works have been consulted: Kent (1953) and Schmitt (2014) for Old Persian; Bartholomae (1904) for Avestan; Nyberg (1974) and MacKenzie (1966; 1971) for Middle Persian. Hassandoust's etymological dictionary (2020) was consulted for all the mentioned periods. Researching and analyzing the etymology of words across various Iranian dialects, including Southwestern dialects, allows us to understand the historical evolution of specific terms, clarify segmental and suprasegmental characteristics, and identify word origins that transcend geographical and linguistic boundaries. In fact, these synchronic and particularly diachronic studies in the field of Iranian dialects can help identify missing links in the historical evolution of unknown words. The outcome sheds light on unresolved aspects of vocabulary change.

The present research is based on the recommendations from the guidebook for collecting Iranian dialects published by the Academy of Persian Language and Literature (2023). In general, the compilation of the linguistic corpus and the acquisition of transcribed spoken texts were carried out based on the following:

- a) Research method, based on the objectives of the study: The present research method is a combination of descriptive-analytical and field methods integrated with desk research;
- b) Data collection method: The data was collected through interviews with selected speakers, recording, and the transcription of recorded sounds;

c) Research Tools: The technical tools employed for data collection and analysis included digital audio recorders, mobile devices, and laptop. For data processing, Microsoft Excel and corpus analysis software (specifically AntConc), along with various audio and video editing applications (specifically Video Cutter and Music Cutter), were utilized.

Word List and Analysis

In the following, we will analyze the etymology and historical evolution of twenty words shared by speakers of the Hanashuri, Sarmaki, and Dohuki dialects. Using the IPA, the etymology and phonetic of these words are presented for the first time.

1. [ʔɒrvi:z]

This word is related to handicrafts and refers to a tool for sifting flour. This word is actually a compound of ʔɒr+viz, where ʔɒr means “flour”. This has evolved in the studied varieties through the phonological process of the deletion of the consonant /t/d/ as follows: in Middle Persian, this word is: ɒrd (flour) (MacKenzie 1971, 11). In Old Iranian, *arta- (to pound and crumble) is from the root *ar* derived from the Indo-European *al* “to pound, grind” (Hajiyani 2007, 3). The second component is viz-, which existed in Middle Persian as *we:z* and *we:χtan* (to sift, scatter; MacKenzie 1971, 90). The Middle Persian forms of this word are derived from the roots *viak* “to choose and select”, and *vaig-* “to shake, turn, and throw”. The present tense form *we:z-* comes from Old Iranian **vaidza* and **vaiḡa*, and its past tense form, i.e., *we:χt-*, is derived from Old Iranian **vaiχta-* (Horn 1893, 249). Hajiyani (2007) has etymologically analyzed this word as ʔɒrviz meaning “a sieve for sifting flour” in the Bushehri dialect.



FIGURE 1. [ʔɒrvi:z] (© Sohrab Gholami)

2. /ʔan(d/n)i/

This word is related to architecture and means “to cover the roof of a house with thatch” (mixture of water, soil, and straw). In Middle Persian it is *handu:dan*, *handɒj* “to cover” (MacKenzie 1971, 42). Present tense form is derived from Old Iranian **ham-du:ta-* and its

past tense form comes from Old Iranian **ham- dvaja-*, from the root *dav* “to rub, wipe” (Horn 1893, 130). Avestan: *dav-* (only with the prefix *fra-*) meaning “to wipe or rub to clean” (Bartholomae 1904, 688). In Sanskrit it is *dhv-* (*dhvati*) meaning “to wipe” (Mayrhofer 1956, 1:110). This word has been etymologically interpreted by Hajiyani (2007) as *ʔandi dejan* “applying mud and plaster to the roof and walls of a house.” Through the process of progressive assimilation, the consonant /d/ has been assimilated to /n/, and the word is also expressed as *ʔanni* in the dialects under study.



FIGURE 2. /ʔan(d/n)i/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

3. /bedas/

This word is mostly related to handicrafts and means “span” (from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger). This word has been recorded as *widest* in Middle Persian, while its Old Iranian form is **vitasti-* “span, palm”. The latter is a compound of the prefix *vi-* and **tasti-* from the root *tan* “to spread, to weave”. The Avestan root is **vitasti*. In Kurdish it is /bist/ “span, palm” and in Lori it is /buhust/ “span, palm” (Horn 1893, 57). Hajiyani (2007) analyzes this word as *bejes* meaning “span, palm” in the Bushehri dialect, while Moghimi (2011) analyzes it as *beres* “span, palm” in the Lori dialect of Boyrahmadi.



FIGURE 3. /bedas/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

4. /bejg/

It means “doll or bride”. Its ancient Iranian form would be **vadukp-* from the root *vad*, meaning “to guide and take” (Hajiyani 2007, 6). Its Avestan equivalent is *vaδu:-* meaning “wife” (Bartholomae 1904, 1345). The Middle Persian form of this word is *wajo:dagvñ/wajog*, which means “bride” (MacKenzie 1971, 156). In the dialects of Hanashuri, Sarmaki, and Dohuki, the consonant /w/ has changed to the consonant /b/ at the beginning of the word. The substitution of /w/ with /b/ is also evident at the beginning of other words in the dialects under study. For instance, /walg/ > /balg/ (leaf), and /wise/ > [bi:si] “to send”. This word is etymologically analyzed by Hajiyani (2007) as *bejg* in the Bushehri dialect and by Moghimi (2011) as *bavig* in Lori Boyerahmadi. Both variations mean “bride, doll”.



FIGURE 4. /bejg/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

5. [du:l]

This word means “bucket.” This sturdy leather bucket was primarily used for drawing water from wells, as well as for transporting soil mixed with straw for the /ʔan(d/n)i/ (see above). This word is also found in Middle Persian as *do:l* meaning “leather bucket” (MacKenzie 1971, 26). It is derived from the Semitic root *dalw* (compare with Aramaic *dwwl*; Hassandoust 2020, 2:1376). It seems that the last two consonants of the root of this word, through the process of the metathesis and substitution, eventually became [du:l] in some variations. Ramazankhani and Sadegh Zadeh (2018) have also recorded this word as *du:l* “bucket” in the Yazdi dialect. In the Dashti dialect, this word is pronounced as /dul/ (Hashemizadeh 2020, 2:494).



FIGURE 5. [du:l] (© Sohrab Gholami)

6. /dʒuɒl/

This word signifies a bag or sack made of woven goat hair or sheep's wool, which was mostly used for carrying goods on donkeys and mules. In Middle Persian, it is **guvɒl* < Old Persian **vi-barda-* from the root *bard* “to cover, to enclose” (Hassandoust 2020, 4:2458). This word was likely derived from Old Iranian **java-barθra-*, *gavɒlak* and in Avestan it is *java-bara-* (Bartholomae 1904, 933; Kent 1953, 200). “It may be linked to Indo-Iranian **jāua-* “grain” (= Avestan *jauua-*, Vedic *jáva-* “the same”). This would suggest the Iranian form **Hu-jāua-* meaning “with good grain” or “providing good grain”. Alternatively, it may be specifically related to Avestan *jauuan-* “grain store” (Iranian **Hu-jāuan-*); *barθra-* from *bar* means to “carry” or “bring” (Schmitt 2014, 151, 272). Hajiyan (2007) etymological study has rendered this word as *guvɒl* “a sack, a container, or a bag woven from goat and sheeps hair that is placed on donkeys and mules to carry things” in the Bushehri dialect, while the Baboli dialect, it occurs as *guɒl* “a sack, a large handmade woolen bag” (Fanaei et al. 2022). By substituting the consonant /g/ with /dʒ/ at the beginning of this word, it has become /dʒuɒl/ in the dialects addressed by this article. In the Dashti dialect, this word is pronounced as /dʒuwɒl/ (Hashemizadeh 2020, 2:53).



FIGURE 6. /dʒuɒl/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

7. /gelejm/

This word is related to handicrafts and refers to a type of pileless rug woven from woolen yarn with colorful and often geometric patterns. This word comes from Turkish *kilim*, which itself apparently derives from an unknown Iranian root. Its origin may be in Semitic

languages (*galo:m* from the root GLM “to wrap, to enclose, to cover”). In Syriac, *glajm* refers to a “wool garment” (Hassandoust 2020, 4:2435). In the Dashti and Bushehri dialects, this word is pronounced as /gelej^m/, and in the Dashtestani dialect as /gelaj^m/ (Hashemizadeh 2020, 4:113).



FIGURE 7. /gelej^m/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

8. /guri/

This word refers to a pit-like structure, approximately three meters deep, used for storing agricultural products, especially grains. It can be compared with the Sanskrit *ghor`a* “terrible” (Mayrhofer 1956, 1:362–363). It occurs in the Middle Persian as [gpl/gebl] *gaBr* “pit, hole”. Its transformation process may be reconstructed as follows: **gabra-* > **gaβr-* > **gour* (see Hassandoust 2020, 4:2463). The reduction of the /ab/ cluster to /ou/ is also seen in other words of the dialects studied here; e.g., /ʔabr/ > /ʔour/ “cloud.”



FIGURE 8. /guri/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

9. /həsak/

This term refers to a type of hand mill consisting of two stones: a stationary bedstone (the lower stone) and a rotating runner-stone (the upper stone). The runner-stone is rotated atop the bedstone to grind or crush the grains. This word is composed of two parts: “ʔəs+ak.” The second component is a diminutive suffix. The first part is also a remnant of **vs* from Middle Persian and this form is found in words such as *vsyvg* and *vsyvb* “mill” in Middle Persian (MacKenzie 1971, 26). **vs* comes from Old Persian **ar-ça-* > Old Iranian **ar-θra-* “mill”, from the root **ar* “to grind”. In Avestan, it occurs as *arəna-* in the compound *jvvarəna-*, and in Sogdian, it appears as *ʾrδ* (Bailey 1979, 22). Karachi and Taheri (2015) have recorded this word as *ʔvsak* “hand mill” in the Firuzabadi Persian dialect.



FIGURE 9. /həsak/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

10. /kepar/

This is a type of small settlement made from the stems and leaves of the palm tree (/piʃ/) and is mostly used in summer. The word is derived from the root *kap* “to take, cover”. In Middle Persian it appears as *kaparak* maning “vessel, container” (Hassandoust 2020, 4:2121, 2130). In Sanskrit, *kapṛa-* “cup, goblet” (Mayrhofer 1956, 1:155), and in the Gurani dialect *k`apra* “pavilion” (MacKenzie 1966, 100) are related to it.

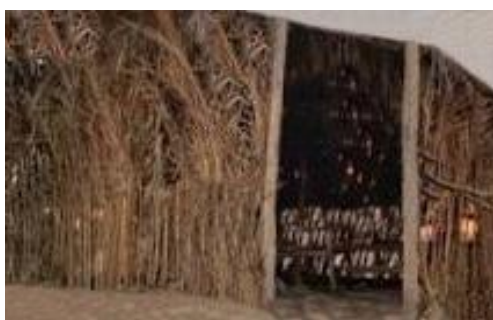


FIGURE 10. /kepar/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

11. /kepu/

This word refers to a type of basket woven from palm leaves. This word is derived from the root *kap* “to hold, enclose, and cover”. Its Middle Persian equivalent is *kaparak*, meaning “vessel, container”. In the Baluchi dialect, it exists as /kapɒt/ “a type of basket woven from palm leaves” (Hassandoust 2020, 4:2121, 2122). In Sanskrit, it occurs as *kappla-* “cup, goblet, head bowl” (Mayrhofer 1956, 1:155). In southern Iranian regions under study, /kepu/ is mostly used to store dates, lemons, etc.



FIGURE 11. /kepu/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

12. /keran/

It is a kind of tool for digging the ground or carving stones. It may derive from Old Iranian: **kanant-* “doer” from the root *kan* “to dig” (with the consonant /n/ substitution to /r/ in the middle of the word). In Bakhtiari, it exists as *koland/kaland* and in Tajik it is *kaland* (Hassandoust 2020, 4:2236). In Sanskrit it has been recorded as *khnitra-/khanitrv-* “oar, shovel” (Mayrhofer 1956, 1:301). From the root *kan*, meaning “to dig” or “explore.” It is found in the compounds *ni+kan*, meaning “to destroy”, and *vi+kan*, meaning “to ruin” (Schmitt 2014, 199).



FIGURE 12. /keran/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

13. /korkor/

This word refers to a type of cage woven from flexible woods of certain trees such as

willow. The cage is used for keeping poultry or wild birds such as pigeons and partridges. In Middle Persian, it is *kark* “chicken, bird”, apparently from Old Iranian **kṛkṛ-* “chicken, bird, rooster” from the root *kark* “to crow, to sing” (Bailey 1979, 59). The Sanskrit variants include *kṛka-vṛku-* “rooster”, *krakara-/kṛkara-* “a type of partridge” (Mayrhofer 1956, 1:256). In the Sistani dialect, it has been recorded as *kṛrg* meaning “crow” (Mohammadi Khamak 2000, 303).



FIGURE 13. /korkor/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

14. /maʃk/

/maʃk/ is the tanned and sewn skin of animals such as goats and sheep, into which milk is poured and shaken back and forth in steady rhythm to separate the butter from the milk. It is also used to store water and oil. In Middle Persian, it is *maʃk* < Old Persian *maʃkṛ-* “water-skin”. In Khwarizmi it appears as *mʃk* “water-skin”. In Armenian, it exists as *maʃk* “skin” (Hassandoust 2020, 4:2622). The Sanskrit equivalent is *ma`saka-* “water-skin” (Mayrhofer 1976, 3:393).



FIGURE 14. /maʃk/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

15. /merzeŋ/

This word means “eyelash”. Its Old Iranian form would be **midʒaka-*. Furthermore, /merzeŋ/ is derived from the root *midʒ/maig* “to wink, to blink” (Mayrhofer 1963, 2:380). It

exists in Middle Persian as *midz(ag)* “eyelash” (MacKenzie 1971, 304), and also as *mazag* (Farahvashi 1979, 107). In Sogdian, it appears as *miza* (Gharib 1995, 227). This word is found in Lori dialects as *merzeng* (Hemmati 1991, 154), in Gavkoshaki as *borzong* (Musavi 1993, 75), in Mazandarani as *madzik* (Shokri 1995, 262), in Koroshi as *merzeng* (Salami 2004, 53), and in Laki as *merzeng* (Izadpanah 2012, 126). It has also been identified as *merzeng* in the Bakhtiyari (Taheri 2012) and Abarj (Hajiyani et al. 2016) dialects, *mezeng* in the Lay-Zangani dialect (Ranjbar 2019), all of which have the meaning “eyelash”. In the Hanashuri, Sarmaki, and Dohuki dialects—unlike the aforementioned varieties in Iran—the final cluster /ng/ is replaced by a single consonant /ŋ/, and the word is pronounced as /merzeŋ/.

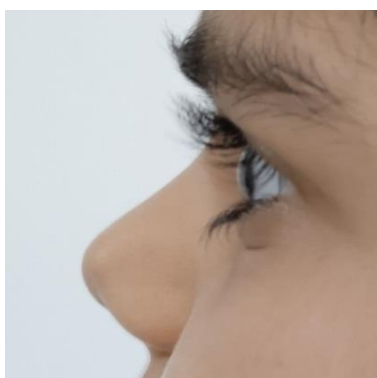


FIGURE 15. /merzeŋ/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

16. /nemad/

This word signifies felt; a thick, coarse cloth made by beating and rubbing wool. The product is used for making a kind of rugs, or hats and coats in Hanashur, Sarmak, and Dohuk. Its Middle Persian form is *namat* “felt” < Old Persian: **namatv* “something beaten, rubbed”; Avestan: *nəmata-/nimata-* “felt, dry branch, fold” (Bartholomae 1904, 1068). Its Sanskrit forms include appears *namata-* “bent, curved, crooked” from the root *nam* “to strike, to beat” (Horn 1893, 104; Nyberg 1974, 135), *nəmatika-* “felted garment”, *nvata-* “wool blanket”, while in Hindi it occurs as *namdv* (Mayrhofer 1963, 2:135).



FIGURE 16. /nemad/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

17. [ne:re]

[ne:re] is a type of /majk/ “water-skin” (see no. 14), used to churn milk. Today, it is made of metals and is often electrically powered. The ancient Iranian word would be **ni-θraka-* from the root *ni/nay* “to beat, to strike, to churn” (Hassandoust 2020, 4:2816). In the Davani dialect, it is also used as [ne:re] meaning “water-skin” (Salami 2002, 415).



FIGURE 17. [ne:re] (© Sohrab Gholami)

18. /pɒgili/

It refers to a dwelling whose foundation is made of mud and stone, and the roof of which is made of palm tree stems (/piʃ/), thicket, etc. This word is a compound of *pɒ*+*gili*, where the first part, *pɒ*, here means “foot, foundation, wall”. Its Middle Persian forms are *pnj* “to stand, to protect, to preserve, to guard, to keep in view, and to be careful”, and *pnd* “foot” (Nyberg 1974, 147, 155). Old Iranian form would be **pndaka-* > Old Persian *pnda-* “foot” (Horn 1893, 281). The second part of this word is *gil-i* “mud”, which in Middle Persian is *gil* (Nyberg 1974, 82). In Indo-European we have **glei-* “to stick, rub” from the root *gray* > Latin *gelu:ten* > Old High German *keleim* “glue” (Pokorny 1994, 362–363).



FIGURE 18. /pɒgili/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

19. [ʃu:]

[ʃu:] means “wood”. In Middle Persian, it appears [ʃo:b] (Horn 1893, 448). In the evolution process, the consonant /b/ disappeared and the vowel /o/ was replaced by /u/. In the Hanashuri, Sarmaki, and Dohuki dialects, the similar changes from Middle Persian can be observed in other words; e.g. [ru:a] > [ro:bɒh] “fox.”



FIGURE 19. [ʃu:] (© Sohrab Gholami)

20. /χas/

This word signifies an space enclosed with palm fronds or woven reed stems, used for keeping livestock or growing crops. This is derived from Old Iranian **hasta-* stemmed from the root **had* “a place to sit and live” > Avestan *pasu/-hasta-* > Middle Persian *pahast* “sheep pen” (Bartholomae 1904, 849; MacKenzie 1971, 63). This word has also been analyzed by Hajiyan and Mahmudi (2023) as *χas* meaning “an open place for keeping sheep, a stable, or an open sheep pen” in the Bushehri dialect.



FIGURE 20. /χas/ (© Sohrab Gholami)

Conclusion

By analyzing the etymology and historical evolution of words shared by the Hanashuri, Sarmaki and Dohuki varieties, and by comparing the synchronic and diachronic characteristics of these dialects with neighboring and other Iranian varieties, we find that these three dialects belong to the Southwestern Iranian language family. They are remnants of an archaic Iranian variety that followed a distinct evolutionary path to the present day. Also, evidence indicates the co-existence and interaction of these dialects with other ancient and modern Iranian languages and dialects. The study shows that the selected words from the dialects in question have sometimes undergone structural, phonetic, phonological, and semantic changes historically; some words seem to have survived all the factors that could have affected the language over time, as they still exist in these dialects preserving ancient components and characteristics. These findings raise three main possibilities. First, Middle Persian existed in both oral and written sources, meaning that some vocabulary was used in speech but absent from written sources. Second, these dialects may have coexisted with other Iranian languages during the Middle Period. Third,

such linguistic forms may have been preserved due to inherent conservatism, thus retaining features close to those of Old Iranian. These dialects are more similar to Pahlavi in terms of the similarity and root of the words. In most dialects of Bushehr and Fars Provinces, the ergative case (split-ergativity), a legacy of Middle Persian grammar, has remained in transitive past verbs. The establishment of the ergative system is very evident in Middle Persian, unlike Old Persian. In this respect, and given the absence of ergative features in the grammar of the varieties under study, these dialects show behavior similar to Old Persian. Also, the linguistic, etymological, cultural, and social evidence available in the research collection shows that the Hanashuri, Sarmakis, and Dohukis are clearly of Iranian origin and, like other residents of the villages of Tasuj District—similar to neighboring residents in Fars Province such as Dehram, Farashband, and the Parsians of Firouzabad—are Aryan.

References

- Abolghasemi, Mohsen. 1994. *Tārikh-e Zabān-e Fārsi*. SAMT.
- Ali Nezhad, Batul. 2019. *Mabāni-e Vāj-shenāsi*. University of Isfahan.
- Bailey, Harold Walter. 1979. *Dictionary of Khotan Saka*. Cambridge.
- Bartholomae, Christian. 1904. *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*. Karl Debrüner.
- Bauman-Waengler, Jacqueline. 2009. *Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology: From Concepts to Transcription*. Pearson.
- Fanaei, Mozghan, Farrokh Hajiyani, and Mohsen Mahmudi. 2022. “An etymological study of some words in the Baboli dialect.” *Iranian Regional Languages and Literature* 12, no. 2:99–121.
- Farahvashi, Bahram. 1979. *A Pahlavi Dictionary*. University of Tehran.
- Gharib, Badrozzaman. 1995. *Sogdian Literature*. Farhangian.
- Gholami, Sohrab, and Farrokh Hajiyani. 2023. “Description of the Phoneme Structure of the Bolkheyri Dialect: An IPA Approach.” *Linguistics and Iranian Languages* 8, no. 2:185–215.
- Gholami, Sohrab, Jalal Rahimian, and Farrokh Hajiyani. 2025. “Typology of the Hanashuri Dialect in Terms of Representation of Grammatical Relations.” *Linguistics and Iranian Languages* 10, no. 2:19–37.
- Gholami, Sohrab. 2021. “A Linguistic Study of the Tangsiri Dialect (Bolkheyr):

- Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Etymology and Selected Vocabulary.” Master’s thesis, Shiraz University.
- Gholami, Sohrab. 2025. “A Linguistic Analysis of the Hanashuri Dialect.” Master’s thesis, Shiraz University.
- Guide to Collecting Iranian Dialects*. 2023. Academy of Persian Language and Literature.
- Hajiyani, Farrokh, and Mahmudi, Kheyrollah. 2023. “Etymology of Some Words in the Bushehri Dialect.” *Linguistics and Iranian Dialects* 8, no. 2:37–53.
- Hajiyani, Farrokh, Dorudi, Mojtaba, and Mahmudi, Mohsen. 2016. “An Etymological Study of Words from the Abarj Dialect.” *Linguistics and Iranian Dialects* 1, no. 1:1–22.
- Hajiyani, Farrokh. 2007. “An Etymological Study of Selected Vocabulary of the Bushehri Dialect.” *Social and Human Sciences* 26:1–20.
- Hajiyani, Farrokh. 2009. “A Comparative and Historical Study of the Construction of the Ergative Verb in the Ardakani, Dashti, Dashtaki, Kalymian Yazdi, and Lari Dialects.” *Language Skills Education* 1, no. 1:21–40.
- Hashemizadeh, Seyyed-Kuchak. 2020. *Farhang-e Vājegān-e Guyesh-e Dashti*. 4 vols. Qom: Negah-e Ashena.
- Hassandoust, Mohammad. 2020. *Farhang-e Rish-e-shenākhti-e Zabān-e Fārsi*. 5 vols. Mahris.
- Hemmati, Abuzar. 1991. “Comparative Dictionary of Vocabulary of Lori Mamasani Dialect with Modern and Middle Persian Vocabulary.” Master’s thesis, Shiraz University.
- Horn, Paul. 1893. *Grundriss der Neupersischen Etymologie*. Strassburg: Carl J. Trübner.
- Hoseyni Fasai, Mohammad Hasan. 2009. *Fārs-nāme Nāseri*. Edited by Mansur Rastegar Fasai. 2 vols. Amir Kabir.
- Izadpanah, Hamid. 2012. *Farhang-e Laki*. Asatir.
- Karachi, Ruhangiz, and Esfandiyar Taheri. 2015. “Etymological Study of Words from the Firouzabadi Dialect.” *Zaban-pazhuhi* 7, no. 16:81–99.
- Kent, Roland. 1953. *Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, Lexicon*. New Haven.
- MacKenzie, David Neil. 1966. *The Dialect of Awroman*. Copenhagen.
- MacKenzie, David Neil. 1971. *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary*. London.
- Mayrhofer, Manfred. 1956–1980. *Kurzgefätes. Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*. 4 vols. Carl Winter.

- Moghimi, Afzal. 2011. "An Etymological-Comparative Study of Some Lori Boyrahmadi Words." *Literature and Local Languages of Iran* 1, no. 2:157–76.
- Mohammadi Khamak, Javad. 2000. *Vāje-nāme Sakzi*. Soroush.
- Musavi, Hasan. 1993. *Vāje-nāme va Guyesh-e Gāvkooshak*. Navid-e Shiraz.
- Nyberg, Henrik Samuel. 1974. *A Manual of Pahlavi. Part II: Glossary*. Harrassowitz.
- Pokorny, Julius. 1994. *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Vols. 1 and 2. Francke.
- Ramazankhani, Sedigheh, and Mahmoud Sadeghzadeh,. 2018. "The Comparative Etymological Study of the Most Important Lexicon of the Yazdi Dialect (Considering the Dialect of Khorramshahi District)." *Iranian Regional Languages and Literature* 8, no. 19:19–40.
- Ranjbar, Hasan. 2019. "An Etymological-Comparative Study of Fifteen Words from the Lay-Zangani Dialect." *Rokhsare Zaban* 4, no. 4:132–60.
- Rezai Baghbidi, Hassan, ed. 2011. *Vāje-nāme Mozu'i-e Zabān-hāye Bāstāni-e Iran*. 2 vols. Asar.
- Salami, Abdonnabi. 2002. *Farhang-e Guyesh-e Davāni*. Academy of Persian Language and Literature.
- Salami, Abdonnabi. 2004. "An Overview of the Koroshi Dialect." *Nameye Farhangestan* 1, no. 3:39–56.
- Schmitt, Rüdiger. 2008. "Old Persian." In *The Ancient Languages of Asia and Americas*, edited by Roger D. Woodard, 76–100. Cambridge University Press.
- Schmitt, Rüdiger. 2014. *Wörterbuch der altpersischen Königsinschriften*. Reichert.
- Shokri, Giti. 1995. *Guyesh-e Sāri (Māzandarāni)*. Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies.
- Taheri, Esfandiyar. 2012. "Etymology of Some Words from Lori Boirahmad." *Adab Pazhuhi* 6, no. 20:75–88.



