



## The position of Nuristani language in Indo-Aryan languages family

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### Abstract

There are many local languages in Afghanistan, and one of them is the Nuristani language. Nuristani language has speakers in Nuristan province of Afghanistan. In the past, many people considered the Nuristani language to be part of the family of Dardic languages while others believed that it is the third independent branch of the Indo-Aryan language family. The purpose of this study is to evaluate which of the above perspectives is more dominant. Also, in the past, due to a lack of research, most people thought that the languages spoken in some parts of Nuristan, Laghman, and Kunar provinces were all different languages and it is not Nuristani language, but after research, it has been proven that all the languages spoken in Nuristan and other neighboring provinces are not spoken languages, but dialects of the Nuristani language. Nuristani language is also a single language and other languages spoken in Nuristan province are Nuristani dialects. The study used a library-based qualitative research method and exploratory research design, which used various theoretical books. The study also criticized the present method of adjective determiner and classification. The study revealed that it is the third independent branch of the Indo-Aryan language family.

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Dardic, Indo-Aryan, Nuristani, language.

## Introduction

Afghanistan is also referred to as the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (literally, "Land of the Afghan") (Saify et al. 2011). Afghanistan is a country where many other languages are spoken besides official languages by people in different provinces. This idea is supported that Afghanistan is a multilingual and multiethnic nation (Saify et al. 2012). Moreover, the country also experiences English as a foreign language. Based on Kachru's circle, Afghanistan comes into the expanding circle where English is taught and utilized as a foreign language (EFL) in various settings namely primary schools, secondary schools and universities (Alamyar, 2017, as cited in Hasanzoy, et al. 2019). The largest group is Pashtun, followed by Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, and smaller groups. In addition, it is perceived that tens of different languages are spoken in various areas of the country. Afghanistan is a multilingual country with more than 40 languages being spoken as daily basis; amongst the two official languages of Afghanistan are Dari and Pashto (Hasanzoy, Quvanch & Haladin, 2019).

Although, in some provinces, the number of speakers of local languages have decreased day by day, people from different regions still speak local languages. The abundance of regional languages depends on the specific geopolitical location of the country. As people of different tribes live in the country; therefore, they are in terms of various genetics. Afghanistan's populations have a relatively high level of genetic diversity (Saify, et al. 2013). One of these regional languages is the Nuristani language, which has speakers in different parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Not much research has been done on the Nuristani language yet so that is a huge need to conduct a study on the local languages as well as a necessary progress is required in this regard. We also collected accurate and precise books and magazines related to the Nuristani language that were available in different libraries and regions of the country personally and in people's homes. At the same time, the people of Nuristan province who lived in Kabul took their views orally.

## Material and Method

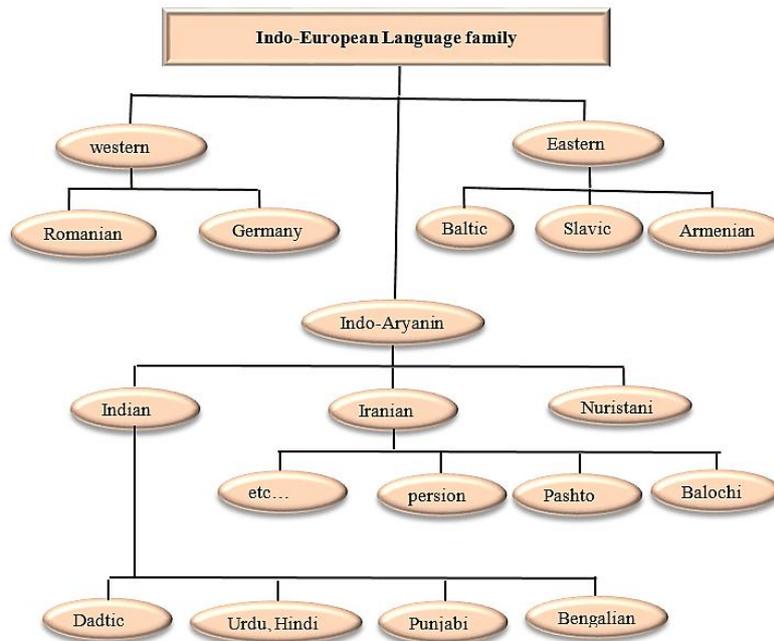
The type of research is qualitative and document analysis was used to write the article. Data was collected from various libraries in the country and some Websites including (Google Scholar). In this research, we have tried to take the precise and accurate opinions of those scholars who have made statements related to the Nuristani language. In addition, we found and used books and magazines that were very difficult to find through personal contacts, and we used the information of some Nuristan people who lived in Kabul.

## Results and Discussions

**RQ1:** Is the Nuristani language from the Indo-Aryan language family?

The roots and basis of the Nuristan language have a long history like the Nuristani strain and move to a place where all the Aryans had lived in a common home (Ariana Vijay). According to linguists, Nuristani people are one of the Aryan tribes who moved from Central Asia and have migrated to Bactria where they have settled. The Aryan (Indian and Aryan) tribes separated from other Indigenous European tribes around the 2nd BC and according to the researchers, their homeland was located in the north between the Urals and the Black Sea. Moved and headed for Central Asia, a group of the Aryan tribes settled in Central Asia and subjugated the whole of Ariana and the surrounding areas, according to the texts of the Avesta. Honorable and Noble means (Shaphoon 1339, p. 16).

According to historical documents, the Aryan and Indian- languages families have existed and developed. Later the languages passed through East (India), West (Persia), and the banks of the Hindu Kush, because still sub-dialects affected by the two families. The languages have still been spoken in some of the valleys of the country (Shinwari 1354, p. 52). A study on the migration of Bactrian Aryans that has been conducted by Dr. Khalilullah Omar indicated that the Bactrian constituency has hosted the migration four times. All linguists except for some minor issues accept this. Phase1: Migration of Nuristani and Dardic languages speakers (2-3 BC). Phase 2: Migration of Indo-Aryans: Vedic, and Ossetia speakers such as Bactrian, for example: Pashtuns, Omar, Para chis, Pamirs (5 BC). Phase 3: Migration of Midi and Persian languages speakers (2 BC). Phase 4: The Aryan tribes that now live in the mountains of Central Asia and the Caucasus, such as the speakers of the Khwarizmi and Sughidi languages (Omar 2008, p. 32) shows Indo-European Languages Family (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Indo-European Language family.

It is stated in Professor Rashad's book (Geographical Notes) that formerly the Nuristan province of Bluristan was located in the east of Chitral. Administratively, the areas of Klum and Pushal are related to Laghman province. The Landi Sea flows in the east of Nuristan province and becomes the Kunar Sea after combining the Peach Dara Sea and the Landi Sea (Rashad 2010, p 502).

Nuristan province used to be mentioned as Kazafarstan. During the time of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan (1894), the people of this province converted to Islam (Kahanki 2019, p. 32). Linguists have previously divided Indo-European languages into two families:

- 1- Indo-Aryan languages family
- 2- Iranian languages family

Also well-known and well-known linguists Morgan strain, Emil bin Vanceman, Fosman and many other scholars have come to the conclusion that the Indo-European language family is not divided into two branches but three branches.

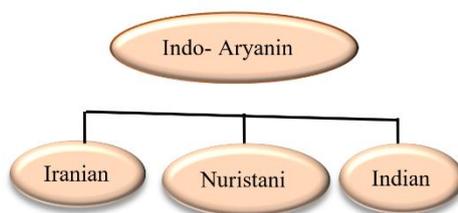
- 1- Indo-Aryan
- 2- Iranian
- 3- Nuristani

Here we will study the Indo-Aryan branch of Nuristani language according to the views of the linguists:

George Morgenstern, a Norwegian linguist, announced the Nuristani language in the year (1916): I have the right to declare the third branch of the Indo-Iranian family, which generally corresponds to the Indo-Aryan, which forms the boundary between the Indo-Aryan family and the Indo-Aryan language family. The group's antiquity suggests that they had long been separated from other languages. He emphasizes that Nuristani language is

the opposite of Dardic (Hazard Qa lif 1998, p. 23). Thus, the famous linguist George Morgenstern Nuristani language declared the third branch of the Indo-Aryan languages.

French linguist Emile bin Vincent believes that all Nuristani language families belong to the Indo-European language family. To be honest it belongs to the Indo-Aryan family, there are features in some languages that resemble both branches of the Indo Aryan language family. That is to say, until there was a difference between the two families (Indo-Aryan and Andi Aryan). The Nuristani language remained the Indo-Arian language because people live in remote areas, pure language remains and there are no differences. Morgenstern talks about the differences between the sounds and letters of the Nuristani language and the similarities between some words in an article before the results of the Nuristani language research. He says that the Nuristani language may have been separated from the Indo-Aryan family (2000 BC) years ago and its text reaches the old Vedic language. In Nuristani language, there are steadfast voices that do not remain in the Vedic language. Renowned Indian scientist George Bodhros supports Morgenstern's view: The Nuristani language is separated from the Vedic language from the Old Hindi dialect and the old features and characteristics that are not seen in other dialects of Hindi. Seen in Nuristani language.



**Figure 2.** Indo Arianian Group

Samiullah Taza says that considering the views of linguists, we come to the following conclusion:

If the science of linguistics is the views of the George Morgenstern, Fosman, Bonniest and George Bodrus on the migration of the Aryan tribes, which have already been separated from the Indo-Aryan and Aryan families, the antiquity of Nuristani language dates back to (4500 BC).

2- If linguists believe in Morgenstern's theories and the Nuristani language accepts the third branch of the Eric language, then the antiquity of the Nuristani language still dates back to the (4500 BC) years before Milady. 3- If you have the views of number, 2 or if you have the views of Morgenstern's, Fosman, Ben and Boniest. The Nuristani language is closely related to the (Indo Aryan and Aryan) families and was once present in (Arian waia), in which case the Nuristani language reaches before Milady (5000 BC) (Taza 2012, p. 43).

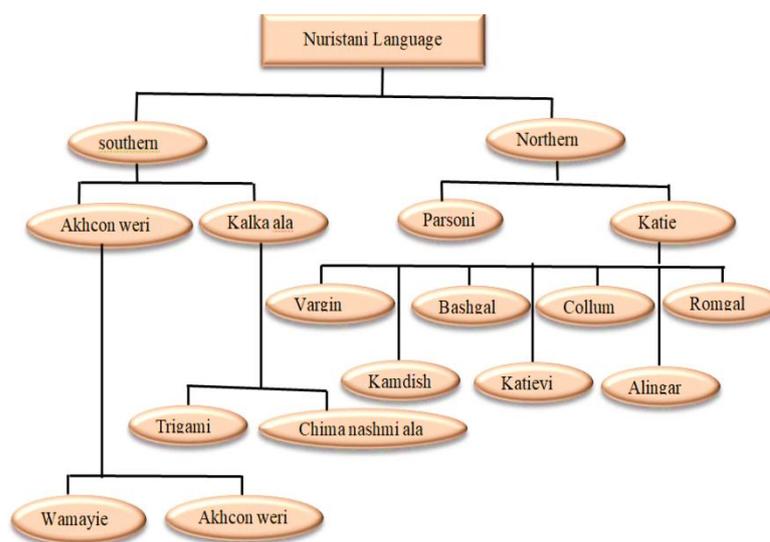
### **Is Nuristani language a single language or many languages?**

The Nuristani language is spoken by people in Kunar and Nuristan, Afghanistan, and in some parts of Chitral, Pakistan. It has the following accents.

1- Katie weri 2 - Kalka ala 3 - Parsoni 4- Akhcon weri are scared. Some linguists have called Trigami and Damili the dialect of Nuristani.

The Nuristani language is divided into two groups, North and South as indicated in the Fig

A. Northern Group: The name of the Katie's weri and the three names of the Katie Valley may not be related to each other. According to linguists, the dialect has three other sub-dialects.



**Figure 3.** Geographical distribution of Nuristani Language

A. Eastern dialect: Linguists know this dialect as Bashgali and in the upper areas and villages of Bashgal Valley such as Sunra, Marvi, Perok, Pul Rustam, Chapi, Ola Gul, Badmuk, Pra, Badisha, Bergamtal, Shadgul Also in Chitral, Shikan, Bagram, Konishi and Mamiri, who had gone there during the migration, are said to be in these areas.

B. Kam dialect: This dialect is spoken in the following villages of Bashgal Valley, such as in the village of Chong in Ghaziabad district, in the Sher Gul area of Saalikot, Machma, Shindgar, Nari district, as well as Kotia, Kumari Gul. Natgal, Chinar Khur, Gordish, Bazgul, Sarbat, Kamar, Kamdish, Yormer, Agro, Agaqi, Ostrat, Matiwal, Samarbagh and Kamdish Mina. It is also said to be in the Dara Manda Gul area of Central Bashgul.

C. Western dialect: This dialect is said in the upper areas of Kolm and Ramgal Alingar. Uprising, Bachgram, Shatks belong to the Doab district. There are also speakers in Gamta, Shatada, Dahan Bandol, Pancha, Sako, Plan, Quraysh, Quraysh, Chatterjee, Chatterjee, Jankhel, Shawl and Sandol districts of Nuristan.

It should be mentioned that the people of most parts of Panjshir province like Paryan, Korptoo, Shahr-e-Bala are all Nuristani they settled there before Islam but now speak Dari. Nuristani live widely in Kerman and Manjan districts of Badakhshan province. But they have also lost their language and speak Dari. Morgenstern writes: Both Eastern and Western dialects have maintained their consulates equally. According to speakers, Katie wari dialect have the highest number of Nuristanis in terms of speakers and are mother dialects for other dialects.

1- parsoni: This dialect is spoken in the Baron Valley. According to linguists, most common phonets are not very different from Eastern and Western dialects. It is discussed in the areas of Kishtaki, pronto, nabtavi, ishrak and cacom.

B - Southern Group:

1- Kalakh Ala: This dialect has speakers in the Valley of the Clashum, which is now popular in the Valley of the Wagel. This dialect is then divided into North (Virgin Ala) and South (Cheema Nishi Ala). The Virgin Ala dialect has speakers in Ataza, Yamminchgul, Arsi, Ning, Durran, Garmtal, Ogur, Chakgul, Kachra, Gum Gul, Dabar and other areas. In addition, Chima Nishi dialect is popular in Nishgram, Schinigal, Brooklyn, Training, Yusuf Abad, Cherigal, Agata and Walis. It should be noted that this dialect has speakers in areas where the effects of Dardic language are more common in these areas due to its geographical location.

2- Akhcon weri: The language is much spoken in the mountainous areas of Nuristan province. Such as: Pashok, Oak, Gul Chiyalam, Stal, Kotal, Zhang Dam, Nishak, B Gora, Torak, Malik Shirin Chinjak areas.

3- Trigami: Morgenstern believes that Trigami is not a language in itself, but a dialect of Nuristani language. The traditions and culture of the people are different. Why have so many common words and phrases that show resemblance to each other. Trigami is taken from (Trigadam). Means three villages such as: Katar, Gemir and Devi. It is worth noting that Kalshla, Akhcon weri, Wamai and Trigami are members of the Kalashnan tribes and who currently live in the Chitral region.

4- Damli dialect: This dialect also has many speakers. It is not surprising that some words have some words in Nuristani language as well as Gorbani, Kalisha and Kovar. Many of these languages have borrowed words, and every dialect of Nuristani has the influence of neighboring languages. (Ariana 2007, p. 354)

Some people think about the dialects of Nuristan language that all dialects are different languages; why all dialects are Nuristani dialects and one-language only dialects are more. According to local traditions, the people of Nuristan are divided into three branches by ethnic division.

- 1- Katie
- 2- Kalkha
- 3- parsoni

Which (Kat) then comes as a source? According to other traditions, the people of Nuristan consider the Gore tribe to be the fourth branch. Why do linguists consider these people to be a Gore tribe in terms of culture and language differences, but their language belongs to the Dardic language. (Motamede 1991, p. 121).

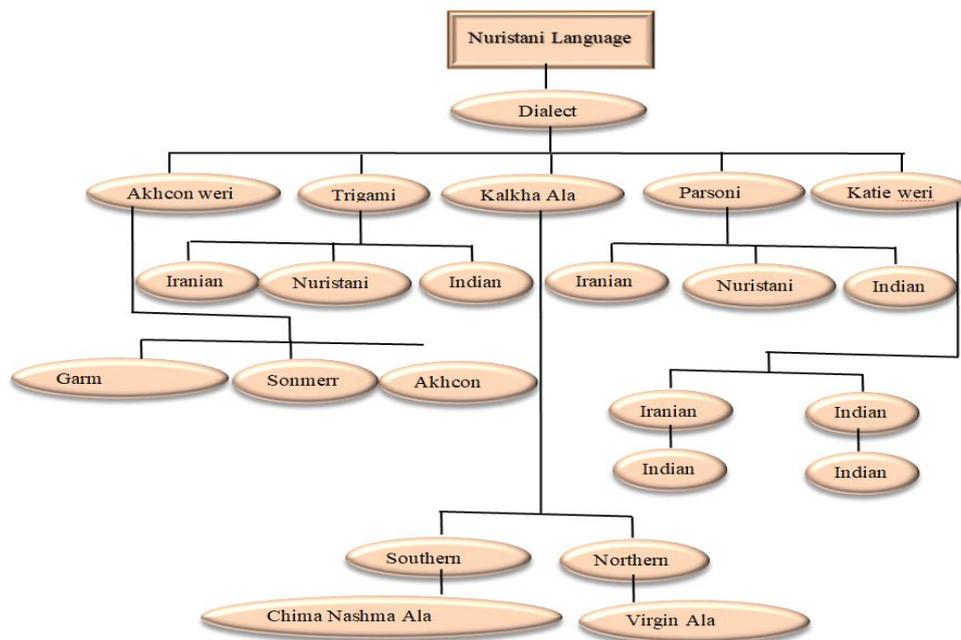


Figure 4. Nuristani Language Dialect

Nuristani are a descendant of the Elena tribe, who has been fluent in the language ever since. Nuristani language did not have the alphabet and written texts until half a century ago Azizullah Shalmach writes in this regard: For the first time during the reign of Mohammad Zahir Shah, a script was made for Nuristani language. After the coup d'etat, radio programs and printing issues were raised. In all, Nuristani has more than five special letters in Pashto (Taza, 2012, p. 104). For the Nuristani language, the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan has started writing books for schools.

Books for the first grade have been published in Nuristani language and books in the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades have been published for printing

## Conclusion

Nuristani is a language from the Indo-Aryan language. Many people in Afghanistan and Pakistan talk about it. In the past, linguists considered Nuristani to be one of the Dardic languages. However, research has shown that Nuristani is an independent third branch of the Indo- Aryan language, not Dardic languages.

It was also thought that the language spoken in Nuristan province was not the same and there were many languages. Probably a factor as to why they are doing so poorly. Then the research of linguists found that all people in Nuristan speak the same language (Nuristani) and in different valleys, people speak Nuristani dialects.

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## Data Availability Statement:

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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