

## Territorial Basis of the Status of Languages in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Puhanmal Master Muhammad Nayim Artash

Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, Department of Dari Language and Literature, Faryab University, AFGHANISTAN.

Corresponding Author: Puhanmal Master Muhammad Nayim Artash



[www.ijrah.com](http://www.ijrah.com) || Vol. 3 No. 4 (2023): July Issue

Date of Submission: 18-07-2023

Date of Acceptance: 05-08-2023

Date of Publication: 15-08-2023

### ABSTRACT

Many writers have written many articles and books about the status, territorial and country status of languages in Afghanistan. However, no articles have been written about the Uzbek language in Afghanistan, and the articles that have been written are insufficient and incomplete. This article, with the consideration of modern research methods, reveals the controversy between the Pashto and Dari languages, and the Uzbek language in the territory of the country. Showing its location and problems, the shortcomings and advantages of the Uzbek language in the past hundred years are described in detail. This article fully explains the situation of languages in the Afghan community.

**Keywords-** Afghanistan, Government circles, the status of languages, Uzbek language, Pashtu language, Persian language.

In this article, it is written about the status of languages in the territory of Afghanistan. The status of the Uzbek language in the territory of Afghanistan, as well as its historical situation, are briefly explained. The main purpose of writing this article is to summarize the role and status of languages in Afghanistan in government organizations, especially the role of the Uzbek language in the country. Because in the course of history, how many articles and biographies have been written and distributed about the languages of Afghanistan. However, there is not enough information about the Uzbek language. Mainly, this article is written only on the territorial basis of the status of languages in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, using valuable articles and biographies. By reading this article, it is clear that readers will learn about all the languages in Afghanistan, especially the place and status of the Uzbek language in Afghan organizations.

50 years ago, in 1972, the western scholar "Jorge Markinsteran" researched that there were 32 languages in Afghanistan, and based on the research of other researchers, "There are 48 known languages in Afghanistan, and the speakers of these languages are

lives in different geographical regions of the country" (<https://shafaqna.com>).

Numerically, three of these languages have a large community of speakers. They also have prominent speakers of Pashto, Persian-Dari, and Uzbek, as well as Turkmen and Baluch, and other languages have their own communities. Now, when the status of languages in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is said to be territorially basic, we are talking about the national and local languages of the country. First, we will examine the controversy between Pashto and Dari and discuss whether they are recognized as state languages and national languages. Secondly, we want to discuss in detail when the Uzbek language was included in the basic law of Afghanistan and recognized as the third official language of the country.

The basis of our topic is "During the period of Muhammad Nadir Shah and his dynasty, from 1929 to 1978, the Pashtuns inside and outside the Afghan government removed the Farsi-Dari language from the state offices, education and culture system, and introduced the Pashto language into the state organization system. who have seriously tried to. In this

case, the Persian language is living side by side with the Pashto language. In this regard, the country changed the name of the language from Persian to Dari during the years of the government of Muhammad Zahir Shah (1933-1973), mainly in the early years of 1961. In the basic law of 1964, it was changed to the same name. After this name change, some groups claimed that Dari was separate and distinct from Persian, but according to Persian and Dari, ancient Persian texts and theories of linguists, both are one language, politically two. the name is given" (Habibi, 1790, p. 132). Thus, the groups working to break up, limit, and suppress the Persian-Dari languages claim that Persian and Tajik are separate languages. These groups considered Persian to be Iran, Dari to Afghanistan, and Tajik to Tajikistan. With this political thinking, they are trying to establish this theory in their thoughts. Thus, in terms of population, Pashtuns are more than some other ethnic groups in Afghanistan, but linguistically, they are an absolute minority. The main ethnic groups in this country, the Hazaras, the Tajiks, and the Aymaks, speak Persian. Most of the Uzbeks in Afghanistan are able to speak Persian-Dari languages in addition to their own language. But the national anthem of the state is in Pashto.

"The country was first called Afghanistan in 1747 during the reign of Ahmadshah Durrani. Basically, Afghanistan takes the first steps to establish itself at that time. But the Pashto language received the status of the official state language in 1936. It is said that the written and literary rules of the Pashto language were established in the middle of the 16th century. But due to various reasons, the process of creating literary rules in Pashto language has not been completed yet" (Sotsiyev, 1393). However, the "Rules and Laws of the Pashto Language" begin to be established after 1747. Before that, there was a colloquial language. In 1964, the name of the Persian language was changed to Dari, and Persian and Pashto were again given official language status.

Afghan scholars use both Persian and Pashto languages and have found Persian to be conducive to cultural education and development. Zahir Shah, during his reign from 1933 to 1973, following and following his father Muhammad Nadir Shah, decreed that officials should learn and use Persian and Pashto. Three years into his reign, in 1936, the royal family and most of the officials, despite the fact that they mostly spoke Pashtu, declared Pashto the official language of Afghanistan by order of the king. It was said that this decision was caused by the anti-Iranian and anti-Shia atmosphere instilled by the British in the Afghan rulers at that time (Husain, 2005).

The basic law of Afghanistan was established for the first time, as a significant law, a century ago during the reign of Amanullah Khan. This basic law was changed eight times by the governments as political changes came to the country. This basic law was created when Afghanistan gained independence in 1919. Every

new government changes the basic law according to their whims and wishes. For the singers to understand better, we need to remember them briefly. Amanullahkhan period (April 19, 1923), Nadirkhan period (September 1931), Zahirshah period (October 1, 1964), Davudkhan period (January 26, 1977), Babrak Karmal period (May 14, 1978) -year, the time of Dr. Najib (June 15, 1988), the time of Burhoniddin Rabbani (September 1993) and the time of Hamid Karzai (September 2002). (meshran, website, <http://www.meshran.website>)

Pashto and Persian languages have been included in the law and have been used as the official languages of the country in the eight cycles of the above basic law. However, other languages, especially the Uzbek language, which has such a large community, have been excluded due to discrimination and prejudice. But after 55 years, in 1978, the Savar revolution took place. Due to this uprising, the democratic people's government of Afghanistan was created and the government of Muhammad Davudkhan rose. After that, good spiritual, political and social changes took place in the country. During this period, the Uzbek language also came into being with the struggle and initiative of Uzbek intellectuals from Afghanistan. At this time, a new era is marked for the Uzbek and Turkmen languages. At the same time, it was published in the official journal of the government under the name "Brotherly nations in Afghanistan, including the Uzbek-Turkman language, based on the official order of the government of May 28, 1978, number four of the democratic republic of Afghanistan." done" (Sharayi Juvzijoni, 2021, <https://www.uzlig.com>).

After that, permission to write, read and work in Uzbek was officially given by the state. However, these languages are not included as official languages in any article of the country's basic law. Uzbek and Turkmen languages began to function only by order of the president. After 10 years of political upheavals and uprisings, in 2001, when the new republican government came to power, the basic law of Afghanistan was changed with a new reform. In 2003, the assembly of the basic law of Afghanistan was held in the capital with the participation of 503 people. There were a lot of discussions on the new basic law of the country in the established commissions. One of the important controversial topics was the acceptance of Turkic (Uzbek and Turkmen) languages as the official language of the country in the basic law. It is true that the representatives of the northern and northeastern regions, who participated in the main law commissions established in 2003, especially Marshal Abdul Rashid Dostum, and Uzbek and It is very important that Turkmen representatives fought bravely" (Aral, 2020, p. 10).

This is the basic law of Afghanistan, where the following text was adopted: "In areas where the majority of the population speaks one of the Uzbek, Turkmen,

Nuristani, Baluchi or Pamir languages, this language is the official third language, in addition to Pashto and Dari, and the strengthening of these languages and powering is the responsibility of the state. In this case, the procedure for using these languages is regulated by law" (detailed law, 2013, p. 89).

Also, on the initiative of a number of Afghan intellectuals, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan approved October 21, 2020 as the national day of the Afghan-Uzbek language. This day was recognized as the national day of the Uzbek language in the country and was included in the Afghan calendar (Zahir, 2020, p. 14). This Uzbek language holiday is celebrated as a national day.

### CONCLUSION

The linguistic landscape of Afghanistan, steeped in its rich and multifaceted history, has seen the ebb and flow of various languages. A keen exploration into the territorial status of languages reveals a mosaic of diverse tongues, with particular emphasis on the Uzbek language—a subject often overshadowed by its counterparts. Historical insights from 1972 by Jorge Markinsteran, highlighting the presence of 32 languages, accentuate the complex linguistic makeup of Afghanistan. Prominent among these are Pashto, Persian-Dari, and Uzbek.

Delving deeper into the historical trajectory of linguistic politics, it becomes evident that the reign of Muhammad Nadir Shah and his dynasty marked a pivotal shift. This period saw the promotion of Pashto, leading to a subdued role for the Persian-Dari language. However, linguistic purists have always recognized Dari and Persian as linguistic twins, politically bifurcated but intrinsically the same.

The political gambits played out over the years were not solely limited to the Pashto and Dari dialectic. Despite the vast Uzbek-speaking community, the language long remained on the fringes of official recognition. It was only post the 1978 Savar revolution, after strenuous efforts by Uzbek intellectuals, that the Uzbek language gained some prominence. Nevertheless, it remained absent from the nation's foundational legal document. The turning point arrived in 2003 when the nation's foundational law was reshaped, incorporating

provisions for languages like Uzbek and Turkmen based on regional predominance.

To underscore the recognition of the Uzbek language, 2020 saw the inauguration of the national day of the Afghan-Uzbek language. This serves as a testament to Afghanistan's evolving linguistic narrative, which, while deeply rooted in history, continues to shape and be shaped by its ever-changing political and social milieu.

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