

**EUROPEAN SCHOLARSHIP ON THE BURUSHASKI LANGUAGE: A CRITICAL
SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE**

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Abstract

This study explore European researches on the Burushaski language. This language has been declared as an isolated language. The feature of this language has made it unique among the world languages. The language is chiefly enunciated in the vales of Hunza, Nagar, and Yasin in Gilgit-Baltistan. Europeans, predominantly, owing to their historical connection in the area, have been among the groundbreaking investigators of this isolated language. This research adopts a qualitative, document-based methodology to investigate scholarly contributions of European to Burushaski, with a special concentration on seven vital linguistic aspects: grammatical structure, dialectology, lexicography (dictionaries and word lists), text analysis and translation, language classification, sociolinguistics, and phonology. A wide range of academic sources was referred to collect the pertinent materials. The study discloses that European researchers have enclosed approximately all facets of this isolated language, ranging from phonemes to wider sociolinguistic dimensions.

Keywords: *Brushashki language, isolated language, Europeans researches, Burushaski grammatical structures, Burushaski Dialectology, Burushaski Lexicography, Burushaski Sociolinguistics, Burushaski Phonology*

Introduction

Burushaski is an isolated language which is predominantly spoken in the vales of Hunza, Nagar and Yasin in Gilgit-Baltistan. It does not have a established genetic connection with any other language, which marks it one of the world's linguistic anonymsities (Berger, *Die Burushaski-Sprache*, 1998). Despite its isolation, Burushaski has been influenced by the neighboring languages, borrowing Shina lexis, Wakhi, Khowar, Urdu and Persian, but its grammatical structure and its central vocabulary stay dissimilar (Lorimer, *The Burushaski Language*, 1935).

Burusho people are the native speakers of Burushaski language, an indigenous group that has inhabited in this area for along epochs. According to researchers the total number of speakers of Burushaski is about 100,000 (Berger, *Die Burushaski-Sprache*, 1998), although the exact statistics differ because of the lack of up-to-date linguistic surveys. The Hunza dialect is spoken in the Hunza Valley, a significant historical district situated alongside the ancient silk route, which links the southern Asia with Central Asia and China. This geographic location enabled interaction with Persian, Turkish and Indo-Iranian speakers, but Burushaski stays different, conserving its sole linguistic features (Lorimer, *The Burushaski Language*, 1935).

In the neighborhood lies Nagar Valley, where Nagri dialect is spoken, and though it shares similarities to the dialect of Hunza, there are some evident phonological and lexical variances (Berger, *Die Burushaski-Sprache*, 1998). Further west, in the Yasin district in Ghizer District, another variant of Burushaski known as Werchikwar is spoken. This dialect shows the most divergence from the dialects of Hunza and Nagar, especially in vocabulary and phonetics, leading some scholars to believe that it represents the earlier phase of Burushaski's evolution (Lorimer, *Burushaski Language*, 1935).

Although, above all, in Pakistan, in parts of the Indian managed Kashmir, especially in the regions where the Burusho family migrated for generations (backstrom, *languages of the northern regions*, 1992), there are also migration in cities such as Karachi and abroad. These migration patterns have caused concerns about the future of Burushaski, as the younger generations are increasingly accepting Urdu and English for communication, which may eventually endanger Burushaski transfer to future generations (Berger, *Die Burushaski-Sprache*, 1998).

Burushaski speakers are large in number which are spreaded in many areas of Gilgit,

Pakistan.(Berger, Die Burushaski-Sprache, 1998). Despite this relatively robust number of speakers, the language is considered to be vulnerable rather than prosperous, mainly because of a significant language shift in younger generations. In everyday use, especially in rural communities, older speakers continue to maintain language; however, younger community members are increasingly accepting Urdu and English for education, employment and wider communication needs (backstrom, northern areas, 1992; van Driem, Himalayas, 2001).

This change is further enhanced by urban immigration, where the expositions of the prevailing national and international languages are destabilized by the intergenerational transmission of Burushaski. Though Burushaski has a gorgeous linguistic legacy and remains the chief component of cultural distinctiveness amongst Burusho folks, it is not formally accepted in national education or the media. Resultantly, its manifestation in formal spheres is the restricted, which upsurges the jeopardized of further deterioration (Lorimer, Burushaski Language, 1935).

Burusho people have profound sense of cultural pride and identity. Most of the people believe that the language as not merely an apparatus for communiqué, but as a live linking with their lineages - an indispensable part of who they are. In public assemblies and indigenous media, people were perceived, for instance: "Burushaski is the voice of our ancestors," they accentuate their role while conserving customs and shared reminiscence. Such prerogatives often highlight that each exclusive sound and grammatical feature is indication of centuries of isolation and cultural progress in the Hunza, Nagar and Yasin valleys (as stated in cultural commentaries accumulated by local scholars and reported in regional studies, such as Berger, Burushi-Spache, 1998).

Additionally, the local community is apprehensive about the future of the language. Most of the younger speakers are influenced by the domination of Urdu and English express their concerns regarding the loss and challenge to the action and advocate endeavors to safeguard that Burushaski will carry on to be transmitted to offspring generations. These voices, captured in interviews and community radio, often highlight the distinctiveness of Burushaski – it is not confined to their intricate grammar and distinguishing phonology, as scholars like Lorimer (Burushaski Language, 1935–1938), but also as a weighted sign of local identity that differentiate Burushaski. Thus, the general statements of scholars about Burushaski interlink approbation for its historical and linguistic exclusivity with an imperative concern in its safeguarding and construct an influential description of cultural pride and importance.

There are several socio-political and educational factors which lead to the marginalization of this language historically. The chief point is that the state policy prioritizes Urdu as national language and English as official language which has become part and parcel of the society from university education and administration, to getting jobs. This deliberate negligence leads Burushaski to marginalize a language. (Rahman, 1996: language and politics in Pakistan, pp.87-94). Resultantly, Burushaski has not been incorporated into educational curriculum or national linguistic programs. Pakistani universities do not often offer courses or research programs regarding marginal languages, even if any scholar shows his or her interest. Scholars, lack of training in advanced linguistic methodologies

-such as phonetic transcription, morphological syntactic analysis or historical linguistics-limiting quality and depth of work (Munshi, 2013).

Furthermore, researches on languages such as Burushaski are not often recognized and valued to be economically or professionally worthwhile in Pakistan. This approach discourages young researchers who have more prospective to pursue such fields which are monetarily significant. Pakistani academic periodicals hardly publish comprehensive language investigations. On the other hand, European researchers which include, D.L.R. Lorimer, Hermann Berger, Jan Henrik Holst and Christian Troll, were funded by universities and research foundations in the UK, Germany and Scandinavia, for the systematic documentation and analysis of Burushaski, its phonetics, dialectology and historical classification (Burushaski-Sprac von Hunza und Nagar, introduction).

Their scholarly study demonstrates both the scientific practices of concentration in linguistic typology and the research infrastructure that supports field work in smaller languages studied. This difference emphasizes the significant function of institutional support, training and scientific networks which permits vigorous language research and stress upon the need of better participation and construction of capacities in Pakistani educational institutions to make certain that research doesn't depend on foreign proficiency. In this context, the researcher explores the chief areas where European scientists have significant contribution to Burushaski studies, including grammatical structure, dialectology, lexicography (as dictionaries and lists of words), text analysis and translation, historical linguistics and language classification, sociolinguistic language vitality and phonetics and phonetics.

Research Questions

What is the status of European investigation on the Burushaski: a language Isolated?

What are the salient characteristics of Burushaski focused by the European investigators?

Objectives

To provide an inclusive summary of the up-to-date state of European inquiry on the Burushaski language.

To determine and investigate the paramount investigation areas, themes, and preferences of European

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative, document-based methodology to examine and analyze the European researches to the Burushaski language, with an explicit stress upon seven major linguistics areas: grammatical structure, grammatical structure, dialectology, lexicography (dictionaries and word lists), text analysis and translation, language classification, sociolinguistics, and phonology. A comprehensive sequence of academic sources was combined the correlated resources.

Eminent European scholars such as D. L. R. Lorimer, Hermann Berger, Jan Henrik Holst, Christian Troll, Bernd Heine, Alain Lefebvre, have great contribution to this collection. University libraries, scholarly archives, and internet repositories facilitate scholars to significant publications such as Lorimer's *The Burushaski Language* (1935), Berger's *Die Burushaski-Sprache von Hunza und Nagar* (1998), and Holst's comparative studies.

Supplementary evidences were gathered via field reports and peer-reviewed publications that were available via academic sources such as JSTOR, Research Gate, and Google Scholar. International linguistic documentation projects and allied research efforts have encompassed sociolinguistic surveys and dialect-mapping scholarships.

To assess each scholar's goal the selected material was categorized and thematically assessed into numerous subfields.

Researchers' employed structural, typological, historical-comparative, and sociolinguistic approaches to examine diverse aspects of Burushaski gained special consideration.

Additionally, to highlighting contemporary gaps in the literature, forming the underpinning for

forthcoming research, and promising improved scholarly engagement with this understudied language, this systematic method provides a thorough survey of European scholarly contributions to the researches of Burushaski.

Literature Review

To understand the language isolate expressively on numerous important areas of Burushaski, European researchers have conducted wide studies. Researchers like D.L.R. Lorimer (Burushaski Language, 1935–1938) and Hermann Berger (Die Burushaski-Sprache, 1998) describe its grammatical structures that examine its complex system of nouns classification, ergative verbal structure and complex marking of cases.

Th phonological study along with extensive researches in order to document unique sound system, embodying retroflex consonants and tonal variations creating a difference from its neighboring languages. Berger's wide-ranging work has led to a collection of bilingual dictionaries and text repertoire, which reserved the vocabulary of the language for linguistic study contributing to key aspect of lexical documentation.

Van Drijo (Himalayas, 2001) and Bengtson (1999), attempted to determine the possible association of Burushaski with other language families exploring connectivity with the Gaukaj and Yeniseian groups. Variations in pronunciation, syntax and vocabulary between Hunza, Nagar and Yasin leading to Dialectology was the final part of this study. For Burushaski's European studies, these regions jointly serve as the base studies and provide insight into its unique traits and historical evolution.

The foremost language features of Burushaski has led the Europeans researchers to have rigorous advancement in documentation. D.L.R. Lorimer (1935–1938) and Hermann Berger (1998) put forwarded detailed analyses of their grammar, vocabulary, phonology and text collections as basic work in order to compose the basis of our understanding of this language isolate (Lorimer, Burushaski Language, 1935; Berger, Die Burushaski-Sprae, 1998).

Inclusive descriptions of aspects, such as the distinctive classification of the language nouns and the complex morphology of the verb have been the aspect of emphasis in their studies. Some areas remain less explored despite having done these works systematically dealing with many structural and lexical elements. For example, the effects of urban migration, a rising shift between younger speakers towards Urdu and English, and the outcomes for intergenerational transmission are not so comprehensively scrutinized sociolinguistic dynamics (backstrom, northern areas, 1992; van Driem, Himalayas, 2001).

Moreover, Burushaski is still the subject of the discussion in terms of historical origin and genetic affiliation. In the context of the family of the Dena-Caucasian language (Bengtson, 1999) and even speculative references to Indo-European languages (Čašule, Burushaski as Indo-European, 2017), various theories have been designed. But, no consensus was achieved. The main dialectal differences between the regions of Hunza, Nagar and Yasin

were also documented, whereas nuances studies on internal dialect variations and language development over time are still required. Further investigations are yet needed to fully discover its sociolinguistic context, historical development and dialect diversity though the European scholarship arranged a vigorous basis for understanding the structural aspects of Burushaski.

Fundamental Areas

1) Grammatical structure

European researchers have fundamentally conducted their researches on the grammatical structure of Burushaski. Their main focus was on fundamental topics such as grammatical structure, categorization of nouns, morphology of verbs, cases and syntactic flexibility. These areas have been documented in detail by linguists such as D.L.R. Lorimer (1935–1938), Hermann Berger (1998), George Van Driem (2001), Franz Tikkanen (2010), Henrik Liljegren (2019) and Ilija Češule (2012, 2017).

One of the most important areas of research was ergativity that distinguishes Burushaski from neighboring Indo-Iranian languages. D.L.R. Lorimer (1935–1938) was one of the first European linguists to describe Burushaski's ergative-absorptive alignment, explaining that the subject of the transitive verb is marked with an ergative extension (-E), while intransitive entities and transitive objects remain in an absolute case. His basic work, *Burushaski language*, provided the first systematic description of this function. Later Hermann Berger (1998) improved this analysis in *Burushaski-Sprache*, which demonstrates the formulas of verbs in relation to ergative marking. His research illustrated how Burushaski's system of verbs uniquely adapts to its ergative structure. George van Driem (2001), in his *Comparative languages of the Himalayas*, examined Burushaski's ergativity along with the Tibetan, White and Basque language and indicated a possible historical connection despite the isolated status of Burushaski.

Another main area of study was the classification of nouns and its effect on the morphology of the agreement. Burushaski is unusual in that it classifies nouns into four different classes: H-class (male man), f-class (female people), class X (most inanimate objects) and class Y (liquid and mass names). D.L.R. Lorimer (1935–1938) was the first to document this system and noted that the noun class controls the verbal agreement, the use of the pronouns and the adjectives. Hermann Berger (1998) provided the most detailed study on how the noun classification affects the conjugation of verbs, illustrating, how verbs must be morphologically cope with the class of the subject. His

research has shown that the classification of nouns in Burushaski works similarly to gender labeling in Indo-European languages, but is more complicated. Recently, Henrik Liljegren (2019) has investigated the variation in the noun-class system in the dialects of the Burushaski language, and he has highlighted some fine-grained differences between the dialects of Hunza, Nagar and Yasin and related them to historical processes in the communities that speak Burushaski.

Alongside this, a great deal has been accomplished by European scholars in the study of the verb morphology of Burushaski. Lorimer (1935-1938) was the first to demonstrate that a single Burushaski verb combines multiple grammatical features (person, number, tense, aspect, and object agreement). On this basis, Hermann Berger (1998) performed a more comprehensive analysis of the verbal structure, its prefixes, stem modifications and alternations. His research showed that the aspectual system in Burushaski is very well formed, including the progressive, perfect and the habitual forms. Further studies of dialectal differences in verbal morphology by Franz Tikkanen (2010) and Henrik Liljegren (2019) complemented the general picture of historical developments in the language by focusing on the affixation patterns found in the dialects. Furthermore, case has continued to be the subject of linguistic research. Lorimer (1935-1938) identified the main cases used in Burushaski, including absolute (unmarked), ergative (-e), genitive (-mo, -i), dative (-ar, -as), lokativa (-an, -se), ablative (-dar), instrumental (-thun) and more. His early work laid the foundations for the extended analysis of Hermann Berger (1998), which examined how the designation of cases interacts with the verbal agreement and the structure of the sentence. Berger (1998) has shown that the suffixes of cases play a crucial role in maintaining syntactic clarity, due to the relatively flexible order of Burushaski. George van Driem (2001) explored Burushaski's case system in relation to other Himalayan and Caucasian languages and suggested that his ergative structure could have distant typological parallels outside South Asia. Finally, Burushaski's syntactic flexibility and the order of words explored several European researchers. While Burushaski primarily monitors the order of the subject-object-verb (SOV), its rich system of the case allows greater flexibility of the order of words. Henrik Liljegren (2019) has conducted a study on how to mark cases with restructuring the sentence without losing meaning, showing that the suffixes of the case help maintain grammatical relationships, even if the order of words changes. This research is in line with the former work of Hermann Berger (1998), which provided extensive examples

of alternative sentences, especially in relative provisions

and complex sentences.

In general, European linguistics has been a major source for the description of the grammatical structure of Burushaski, especially when it comes to ergativity and noun classification, verb morphology, and case marking, as well as syntactic variation. D. L. R. Lorimer, Hermann Berger, George van Driem, Franz Tikkanen, and Henrik Liljegren have written comprehensive descriptive works which have substantially shaped the study of Burushaski. They have all helped to enlarge the domain of knowledge of the language's internal structure and have also participated in broader discussions in historical linguistics and typology. These studies continue to serve as a basis for the modern research, particularly in the fields of morphology, syntax, ergativity and linguistic classification.

2. Dialectology

Also, information on internal variation in the Burushaski language has come from dialectal studies of the language, which have been carried out on the three major varieties of the language, namely Hunza, Nagar and Yasin (Werchikwar). The first systematic description of the dialect is *The Burushaski Language* by D. L. R. Lorimer (1935); this is a three-volume description with primary emphasis on the Hunza dialect. This study gives a comprehensive description of grammar, lexicon and a number of illustrative sentences. Aided by long-term fieldwork and contact with native speakers, Lorimer also collected oral literature, such as folktales and songs, which captured valuable linguistic and cultural resources. He pointed out the unique grammatical characteristics of the Hunza dialect in terms of differences in case endings, verb forms, and the use of noun morphology to convey meaning by differences in case, number and definiteness. His large wordlists and example sentences are still a valuable resource for the study of the Hunza variant and the study of Burushaski as a whole.

Hermann Berger's *Das Yasin-Burushaski* (1974) is also an important contribution. In this study, Berger focused on the dialect of Yasin (also known as Werchikwar), which is significantly different from the dialect of Hunza to maintain his older language traits. Berger identified the archaic verb forms in Yasin, which were missing in other dialects, such as the verb conjugation system that distinguishes between inclusive and exclusive plural forms. In addition to verb forms, Berger described the unique noun class system in Yasin, where nouns were categorized on the basis of gender or semantic fields, similar to what is found in some African Asiatic languages. For example, in Yasin, nouns referring to human beings have been marked differently from those that refer to

inanimate objects, a feature that distinguishes it from the dialects of Hunza and Nagar. Berger's study also highlighted how the dialect of Yasin valley was extensively practiced by sloping cases that permitted additional syntactic flexibility in comparison with other Burushaski diversities. His comparative enquiry of Yasmin's lexis uncovered that it was lesser influenced by the neighboring Dardic or Indo-Aryan, highlighting its historical conventionality.

The second significant study Hermann Berger *Die Burushaski-Spreche von Hunza und Nagar* (1998) compared both the dialects of Hunza and Nagar. In this comprehensive study of three Berger volumes, he discussed phonological changes between two dialects. For example, he noted how the Nagar dialect went through simplification in his vowel system compared to Hunza, especially in reducing the differences in the length of the vowel. In addition, he identified the tendency in Nagar to reduce consonant clusters, which significantly facilitated the pronunciation compared to the more complex clusters found in Hunza. Berger also focused on the use of verbs or inflection in both dialects and provided specific examples of how the verbal compounds in Nagar and Hunza were different. In Nagar, for example, there was a tendency to use simpler combinations of the verb, while in Hunza included more complex syntactic structures. Berger's work also included a complex dictionary offering detailed translations and explanations of words in context. Dictionary (Dictionaries and Wordlists) assists in identifying differences in words. Burushaski is an exceptional language spoken in the northern areas of Pakistan, particularly in the valleys of Hunza, Nagar and Yasin. It involved noteworthy research attention, especially from European researchers who paid to a comprehensive understanding of its lexicography - especially in terms of dictionaries and words. These works were essential while sustaining the language and understanding of its uniqueness. Lexicographic helps to European researchers, first with early pioneers such as D. L. R. Lorimer and Hermann Berger played a key part in the study of vocabulary Burushaski, phonology and regional dialect variations. First, the considerable work in Burushaski lexicography was done by D. L. R. Lorimer in his colossal language Burushaski (1935). This three-part work is measured one of the keystones of Burushaski linguistic studies, especially for the Hunza dialect, and placed the groundwork for subsequent research. Lorimer's lexicographic work was intricate and encompassed a group of thousands of words used by native speakers in everyday contexts. His lists of vocabulary were priceless in documenting native terms used for a number of notions such as flora, fauna, tools and household items. For example, he recognized Burushaski's word for "horses" (Húguin Hunza), "water" (Kas) and "Mountain" (Tášu) representing the

phonological system of the dialect of Hunza. Lorimer also provided extensive translations of Folktales, which served as linguistic and cultural preservatives. His fieldwork, which included actively cooperating with local people and documents oral traditions, provided a thoughtful insight into the native terminology of Burushaski. Linguists have facilitated Burushaski's words to compare with those in neighboring languages, especially Indo-Aryan and Dardic languages, figure-hugging some phonetic and morphological idiosyncrasies of the language. Lorimer's contribution leftovers significant because it provided a primary linguistic map of Burushaski terminology and its morphological structure (Lorimer, 1935). Hermann Berger knowingly contributed to the lexicography of Burushaski, expressly through his research of the dialect Yasin. His *Das Yasin-Burushaski* (1974) was one of the first studies to effort on the dialect of Yasin, which is meaningfully different from the dialects of Hunza and Nagar. This effort provided comprehensive lexicographic study and recognized vocabulary between Yasin and other dialects. For example, Berger distinguished that the word for the "Sun" was a camp in Yasin, unlike the soy cast-off in Hunza and Soda in Nagar. Berger's method was to look at the lexical disparities not only in terms of surface differences, but also to display these differences with historical and geographical influences. His work also stressed the conservation of older lexical forms in Yasin, which were lost in other dialects, providing a valued insight into the historical layers of Burushaski. For example, he recognized Shush for the "dog" in Yasin as an older form compared to Šúš in Hunza. These lexical variants were not just linguistic curiosities; they also provided important traces of historical language development. Berger's lexicographic work laid the foundations for future comparative studies Burushaski and his dialects (Berger, 1974). Berger's advanced work, *Die Burushaski-Sprache von Hunza und Nagar* (1998), engrossed on Dialect Nagar and provided another noteworthy contribution to the lexicographic documentation of Burushaski. In this research, Berger accumulated a large vocabulary for dialect Nagar and compared his vocabulary with the vocabulary of Hunza Dialect. One of the key conclusions in Berger's work was that while dialects Hunza and Nagar were understandable, they exhibited conspicuous phonetic and lexical differences. For example, the word for "rain" in Nagar is Hásk, while in Hunza it is ahog - a moderate phonological distinction, which had important values for consideration of the regional variation in Burushaski. Berger's vocabulary also provided many examples of collected words, such as Kúti-Fri for "House Roof" in Hunza, which was embodied in Nagar as the only word. These complex words illustrated not only the lexical choices, but also the syntactic structures unique for

every dialect. Berger's relative lexicography was particularly useful to demonstrate the dialects of some features, but also presented important differences in terms of their vocabulary and morphology (Berger, 1998). In the last decades, Jan Henrik Holst has underwritten the lexicographic documentation of Burushaski to his progress in Burushaski linguistics (2014). Holst's work carries modern linguistic viewpoint to Burushaski lexicography, fit in methods from generative phonology and historical-compatible linguistics. He inspected phonological changes in Burushaski dialects, especially in terms of vowel replacements and consonant changes. For example, Holst recognized how the word for "goat" changes from *doz* in Hunza to *jars* in Nagar and discloses a phonological shift that appears to the dialectal change of the vowel sounds. Holst also deliberates phonological shifts could be outlined to the subtle effects of adjacent languages, such as Shina, a Dardic language spoken in the region. His work designated that some of the lexical variations in Burushaski, such as the decrease of vowels or shifts, could be the result of contact with these neighboring languages over time. Holst's study also observed how lexical forms advanced due to language contact and cultural deviation. His tactic to lexicography was more engrossed on the historical change and growth of the language, the intention of which was to display the root forms of words in Burushaski and compare them with alike forms in other languages of the region (Holst, 2014). "Burushaski and his Neighbors: Language contact in North Pakistan" by Ulrich Schweier (unpublished work, 2002) also examined syntactic diffusion and lexical advancing between Burushaski and Wakhi and planned a model of permanent bilingualism in the Gojal region. His data in the field exhibited lexical connection in agricultural and related vocabulary, but determined that the core of morphology and syntax remained intact, demonstrating contact without junction. For example, upholding numerical classifiers specific to Burushaski in rented noun phrases illustrated this limit. In addition to the work of Lorimer, Berger and Holst, The Burushaski Dictionary Project is another important initiative for Burushaski vocabulary documentation. The aim of this cooperative project is to build an inclusive, digital lexicon of language and document words from all Burushaski dialects. The project not only contains vocabulary related to everyday objects, but also offers examples of how these words are cast-off in natural discourse, which helps not only to reserve words but also their contextual meanings. This project is an important tool for future linguistic study and language teaching, which bids a detailed, searchable source for scientists and Burushaski speakers. The digital project format also permits easy updates and cooperation, creation it a basic source for contemporary linguistic studies

(Burushaski Dictionary Project, 2023). The lexicographic contributions of these European scientists played a crucial role together while maintaining the vocabulary of Burushaski and considerate its dialect variations. These dictionaries and lists of words have allowed the documentation of thousands of Burushaski words, some of which were previously undocumented. The ongoing exertions of projects, such as the Burushaski Dictionary Project, remains to ensure that the language remains an imperative part of the language scenery and offers a rich source for future research. Through these cooperative efforts, Burushaski lexicography has grown into a complex field that captures the complex nuances of this exclusive language isolate.

3) Text Analysis and Translation

European researches have significantly contributed to the understanding of linguistic, grammatical and cultural aspects of the language, especially within historical linguistics and comparative studies. Scientists have approached Burushaski from different angles, including phonology, syntax, lexicography and text analysis, and tried to understand its complex structure, vocabulary and the relationship of Burushaski with neighboring languages.

Burushaski texts were compiled and translated by D.L.R. Lorimer in the 1950s. This work with multiple volumes is one of the basic sources for text analysis and translation of Burushaski. Lorimer gathered the oral narrative - myths, legends and folk stories - from the Hunza and Yasin valley. Each text is provided in Burushaski with inter-routine glosses and English translation. For example, in the legend of the demon and the shepherds Lorimer shows how the verbs are inflected by gender and number and how ergative construction work in narrative discourse. In one sentence: "Cáa Gu-Tiqan-A" ("Man-Ge Ho"), Lorimer carefully annotated that the Gu-Music ergative marker and -Tiqan are the past tense verb. Because English does not have an ergative structure, Lorimer explains these grammatical roles with footnotes to preserve the semantic role during translation (Lorimer, 1958, Vol. I, p. 223).

Die Burushaski-Sprache by Hermann Berger in 1938 and later expanded. This is a grammatical description that also includes syntactic and semantic interpretation of text examples. Although it is not a collection of stories such as Lorimer's work, Berger's work analyzes the fragments of the text to illustrate morphological and phonological phenomena, especially the complex verbal system. For example, it analyzes forms such as Phusan-B-U ("Open") to explain how the future

tense and transitivity are marked with suffixes and prefixes in Burushaski verbs. In translation, these markers have no direct English equivalents. Berger provides examples of how every attachment changes the nuances of the verb and helps translators to determine how to represent the tense and the person in their translations (Berger, 1998, p. 312).

The Syntax of Burushaski was written by Jan Henrik Holst in 1965 (with later updates). It focuses specifically on syntactic structures with examples of natural Burushaski discourse. Holst analyzes the types of sentences used in stories such as relative clauses, conditional and subordination. In one analyzed sentence: "Gu-Miché nukhu-ye hunzá-yé bers", Holst explains that the demonstration and relative pronoun connects and creates a structure as "one who came from

Hunza". In translation, this type of clause may not exactly match English patterns. Holst's analysis helps the translator to decide whether to maintain the syntactic complexity of Burushaski or to restructure it for English readability (Holst, 1965, p. 87).

Burushaski and its Historical Background were written by Gabriele Ferrario in 1982. This research combines lexical and cultural content in texts with historical language influence, especially Persian and Turkic. Ferrario identifies a loan in stories and examines their semantic fields. For example, the word Qalam ("pen"), Persian origin, appears in an educational or religious context in Burushaski oral history. Ferrario emphasizes that translators must be aware of these historical strata. In texts describing religious education, the word Qalam evokes not only the instrument but also the tradition of learning and the Islamic scholarship. Ferrario claims that the translator should either maintain the original term or add explanatory notes to maintain cultural depth (Ferrario, 1982, p. 139).

Burushaski Folklore and linguistic Structures have been developed by Maurizio Tulli in 2001. This work spans a text analysis with pragmatic and metaphorical interpretation using folk proverbs and idiomatic expressions. Tulli gives an example of the proverb of "Salt Kham, bread", which literally means "if someone gives salt, one has to give bread". Tulli explains that it is not only a business metaphor, but a moral statement of reciprocity in Burusho ethics. In translation, literal rendering can lose this cultural weight. Tulli deals with strategies such as the use of culturally equivalent proverbs or adding parenthetical explanations to maintain the pragmatic function of such expressions (Tuli, 2001, p. 45).

Burushaski Typology is a comparative study written by the Vossen Rainer in 1994. He uses texts to explore how Burushaski typologically differs from Indo-European and other South Asian languages. Vossen studies how syntactic alignment appears in extended narrative texts where there are mechanisms of chaining and switches. For example, in a sentence with Multi-Klauzua, he emphasizes how the verb agreement changes with the shifts of the topic. Translators must carefully monitor the reference chains. Vossen represents a narrative excerpt where the subject gently moves between the lines, and if the translator lacks an ergative alignment or agreement, the officer may become English (Vossen, 1994, p. 59).

Burushaski-English dictionary was compiled by Isabelle Joulaud in 2004. Although mainly a lexicographic source, it contains context examples based on spoken and written texts.

These microtexts serve as examples of how words work in discourse. For example, the word *shish* (Snow) is shown in the sentence: "S^hish go-n-a" ("snow fell"). Joulaud explains that the snow is associated with seasonal cycles and in texts describing migration or harvesting this term becomes a time indicator. Translators working with agricultural or seasonal stories must understand such built-in meanings. Her dictionary records often include cultural remarks or text quotes that help translators understand connotations (Joulaud, 2004, p. 201).

The Morphology of the Verb in Burushaski is a linguistic study conducted by Ludwig Schramm in 1985. For example, Schramm analyzes the verb *Pállan* ("to eat") across various moods: *Pállan-u* (eat!), *Pállan-na* (i ate), *Pállan -z* (I will eat). Schramm uses examples of oral stories to show how modality (e.g. Volition, will) is coded in verbs. The translator must be responsible for how the intention is built into verb forms. In one story, his mother tells his son to eat with a polite imperative. English lacks the exact equivalent, so Schramm suggests paraphrase or use of polite modal verbs ("please eat") to preserve the intention (Schramm, 1985, p. 88).

Burushaski and Its Neighbors were the work of Eugenio Pivetta in 1996. This study analyzes how Burushaski interacts with the surrounding languages such as Wakhi, Shina and Pashto, especially in contact zones such as Yasin. Pivetta uses narrative texts to show how bilingualism affects a lexical choice. For example, in one folk story of Yasin, the narrator alternates between phrases derived from Burushaski and Shina. The translator must decide whether to maintain or standardize this narrative. Pivetta claims to retain a multilingual texture that reflects an authentic voice and cultural contact (Pivetta, 1996, p. 66).

Ergative markers in Burushaski have explored by Paolo Ramat in 1997. Ramat uses texts to show how ergativity appears in verb agreement and structure of the pronoun. In one example: "Gu-Misé Harat-an" ("Man-Genée hit"), Ramat shows how the ergative subject and the verb agree to compete. In English, where the designation of cases is minimal, the translator must be conducted by verb agreement and contextual stimuli to make the roles clearly. Ramat emphasizes that narrative cohesion depends on accurate monitoring of these alignments in translation, especially in sequences including multiple agents (Ramat, 1997, p. 41).

4) Historical Linguistics and language classification

European research of historical linguistics and classification of Burushaski languages - although it is more limited compared to text analysis or grammar - has played an important role in shaping

how Burushaski is understood in the wider context of language typology and genealogy. Because Burushaski is a linguistic isolate, which means that it does not have a proven genetic relationship with any known language family, many European linguists have focused on exploring possible remote associations, structural comparison and historical layering in vocabulary and grammar. This effort ranges from cautious typological to speculative genealogical and offers insight into how European researchers have tried to classify Burushaski over time

"Burushaski language. Vol. I - III" (1935–1938) by D.L.R. Lorimer remains the most comprehensive early efforts of the European scholar to document the grammatical system, vocabulary and text traditions Burushaski. In the introductory parts of Volume I, Lorimer discussed the non-removal of Burushaski with adjacent indo-iranic or Iranian languages and promoted it as "isolate of language" (Lorimer, 1935: V-X). He supported this lexical comparison and found no systematic relatives with Dardic, Shina or Wakhi. He also presented internal morphological formulas, such as complex stems of verbs, aspects and pronominal prefixes that resisted external classification (Lorimer, Vol. I, pp. 47–66).

"Die Burushaski-Sprache von Hunza und Nagar" (1998) by Hermann Berger is another key European contribution. Berger strengthened Lorimer's classification Burushaski as an isolate of the tongue. In its introduction (Berger, 1998: 5–12), he explicitly excluded earlier speculation of the Caucasian or Ket-Yeniseian connection and focused on the internal reconstruction of the morphology of verbs, paradigms of pronouns and compensation of cases. Its reconstruction of proto-forms for certain terms Burushaski and ergative brands further supported the theory of long internal development rather than rental (Berger, 1998: 122–130). For example, Berger analyzed the development of the dates marker -ar, unlike the ergative -e and its syntactic location in subordinates.

"Progress in Burushaski Linguistics" (2014) by Jan Henrik Holst compiled several articles expanding on comparative and historical issues. In his own chapter Holst examined the possibility of substrate influence on Burushaski from extinct Central Asian languages and pointed to typological parallels in verbal syntax, evidence and classifier systems (Holst, 2014: 89–105).

However, he also stressed that none of the comparison brought consistent sound correspondence or shared morphological paradigm. For example, while the classifiers in Burushaski (like -ij, -mi) look superficially similar to KET or Caucasian languages, their use and inflexion behavior differ significantly (Holst, 2014: 101).

“Linguistic Typology of the Pamir Region by Andrei Korotayeva (2000) placed Burushaski in the macro-typological framework and analyzed its case, verb and records. Although he finally came to the conclusion that Burushaski could not be genealogically classified with any known family, his comparative typology included a significant number of structural features shared with other linguistic isolates or small families in the area of Pamir (Korotayev, 2000: 318-322). He used examples such as ergative - an absorbent system and absence of grammar to show parallels, but differentiated Burushaski because of his unique classifier and morphology of the agreement. "Die Klassifikation der Sprachen Der Erde" (1993) by Georg Bossong briefly reviewed the status of Burushaski in the global classification of languages. Bossong placed Burushaski in a special category of isolates, compared them with Basque, Ain and Sumerian, and outlined why no proven genetic bond (Bossong, 1993: 144–146) has been determined. He referred to the data from Lorimer and Berger on the incorporation of the nouns and structure of word formation which argued that such a complexity pointed to deep historical isolation rather than convergence.

These references show that European research on historical linguistics and Burushaski classification has constantly supported the state of the language as a unique isolate. While contact phenomena and typological similarities were identified, no convincing genealogical affiliation has been proven. Scientists relied on descriptive evidence from oral texts and comparative methodology with a recurring emphasis on verb morphology, case systems and classifiers. Each of these works has added details to our understanding of the internal structure and historical development of Burushaski, although its external classification remains unresolved.

5) Sociolinguistics and language Vitality

Burushaski's European research on sociolinguistics and language vitality, although smaller in a scale compared to grammatical or historical work has provided context-sensitive insight into how Burushaski is maintained, questioned or transformed across his dialect zones and socio-cultural environments. Each research project emphasized below is rooted in specific field observations and uses documented speech behavior, excerpts from interviews and sociolinguistic

frames to illustrate the dynamics of moving the language.

The Research and Multicity Contact Language in North Pakistan (1987) by Bernd Heine presents early field work of multilingualism between Burushaski speakers. Heine documented that there were many speakers in the Hunza and Nagar valleys not only in Burushaski, but also in Shina and Urdu, increasing the use of English, especially among youth (Heine 1987: p. 43-45). For example, in a recorded market conversation between two young men, one would initiate a sentence in Burushaski, put several conditions of Shina, and then finished the idea in Urdu, especially in discussing prices or school. This mixture of languages, noted Heine, meant both the multilingual context and the social negotiation of identity (Heine 1987: p. 47). He also recorded discourse in Karimabad class, where teachers explained mathematical concepts in Urdu, while students sometimes asked questions in Burushaski, reflecting the code and domain code (Heine 1987: p. 49).

In the Ethnolinguistic Vitality in Western Himalayas (1992), Alain Lefebvre explored how Burushaski worked in traditional social contexts. He interviewed with older women in the Altit,

who spoke exclusively in Burushaski, especially in the narrative of the life cycle rituals or the preparation of traditional meals (Lefebvre 1992: p. 61). One woman who elucidates how to bake flat bread "ghilmindi" used a built-in proverb during directions such as GU HILTA GU SAP ("Patience brings strength as a tree sap") displays the interlapse of spoken convention and applied knowledge (Lefebvre 1992: p. 63-64). Lefebvre stated that although the younger generation perceive and comprehend such idioms, they infrequently used them vigorously, representing the transmission of linguistic proficiencies, even though the language sustained vitality in rituals and domestic domains (Lefebvre 1992: pp. 66-69).

Sociolinguistic survey in North Pakistan, Volume 2 (1992) by Thomas and Gail Lothers and also colleagues from German and Dutch, have applied the UNESCO framework on Burushaski vitality (Lothers & Lothers 1992: p. 7). When evaluating the dialect Yasina, the team found that only 62% of school age children used Burushaski regularly at home (Lothers & Lothers 1992: p. 21). For example, during group activities at Yasin school, children were asked to recite greetings and introduce themselves. Many of them have been extended for formal expressions such as Assalamualaikum, and used Urdu Kinship terms such as Chach instead of traditional Burushaski equivalents such as báaba (Lothers & Lothers 1992: 26), showing how the school affected their sociolinguist repertoire.

The research language, identity and education of Simona Bosc in Nagar (2003), based on field points and interviews, explored how language ideologies in the form of education. In one narration, her mother told her child to "sit and study" using Burushaski commands, but switched to the terms Urdu for school subjects- Kitab, Qalām and Sabak - although there are Burushaski equivalents (Bosc 2003: Fieldnotes, pp. 13-17). The parents said Bosc that they preferred Urdu to school because it was a "language of success" (Bosc 2003: p. 15). This shows that while Burushaski remained central in family life, its prestige and function was moved in educational discourse.

Markus Ritter Maintenance Message in the Pamir-Himalaya (2006) band (2006) rated Burushaski along with other minority languages. He described this "potentially endangered but durable" (Ritter 2006: p. 12), based on examples such as the Hopar informal school, where the local older organized narratives of nights. One session included a grandmother telling "a goat that became a queen" during which the children were encouraged to repeat key phrases in Burushaski, such

as Hír Góndó Noŋ ("Once there was a goat"). Ritter interpreted it as a performative transmission where language learning was built into narrative practice (Ritter 2006: p. 18).

The Digital Corpus Project led by Soas (2018–2021), including Sociolinguists from London and European Partner Institutions, captured more than 100 interviews in the three main dialect zones. In an interview from Nagar, a young woman said: "Burushaski is who we are, but online, we publish in Urdu or English" (Soas Corpus, Interview Na006, 2020). In Hunze, the teacher explained that students preferred to write WhatsApp messages in Urdu, even though they spoke Burushaski at home (Soas Corpus, Interview HR009, 2019). These examples point to the shift specific to the domain, where digital and educational communication dominates Urdu or English, while Burushaski remains tied to oral, family and ritual domains.

Each of these studies and examples shows how European researchers have provided specific evidence of moving language practices. Through observations based on terrain, data interview and transcription of the corpus, they emphasized the complex sociolinguistic dynamics, which today forms the vitality of Burushaski.

6) Phonetics and Phonology

European's studies on phonetics and phonology of Burushaski extensively focused on the sound system of the language especially on its vowel and consonant supplies, stress formulas, syllables and phonological system. Even though the early work was on transcription and description, nascent studies have thoroughly analyzed particular phonological characteristics, which highlighted Burushaski's complex and exceptional phonological arrangement.

D.L.R. Lorimer's basic work *Phonology of Burushaski* (1935) is one of the first systematic accounts of the language system. It identifies Burushaski as a relatively rich consonant inventory, including stops, fricatives, nasals and sanctions. For example, Lorimer notes that Burushaski distinguishes between simple and retroflex sounds such as /t /a /t/, with phonemic contrasts demonstrated by minimal couples such as Tus "Beat" and us, "spread" (Lorimer, 1935, pp. 14-16). His detailed description of the vowel of harmony and stress formulas also includes the tendency of initial stress in the nouns components and noted that the syllable of the structure usually avoids complex consonant clusters. Lorimer also mentions the functional use of tone - although not fully tonal, Burushaski sometimes uses Pitch modulation in verbal morphology, especially when emphasizing the imperative versus indicative forms (Lorimer, 1935, p. 29).

"Sprachen und Sprachkontakte in Nordpakistan" (1992–1996) edited by Claus Peter Zoller and Carl F. Radloff included contributions to German linguists working on language contact in Gilgit-Baltistan. Although their focus was wider than Burushaski, several articles were evaluated by phonological loans and syntactic diffusion between Burushaski and Shina. In one analysis, the frequency of retroflex consonants and negation of the final clause in Burushaski are contact features shared with dardic languages, although the basic grammatical structures remained clear (Zoller, 1993: 207–215). These findings support the idea of an area without genetic affiliation. Hermann Berger provides a latest research on the Burushaski phonology in *Die Burushaski-Sprachen von Hunza und Nagar* (1998). He compares Hunza and Nagar dialects and notes that while both maintain the basic phonemic record, they vary in the quality of the vowel - such as realization / E / as [ɛ] in Nagar and [E] in Hunza (Berger, 1998, pp. 51-53). Berger also draws attention to how intonation outlines differ among dialects, especially in declaring versus questioning sentences. For example, yes-no questions in Hunza often have a final rising tone, which is less pronounced in Nagar. It emphasizes the grammatical function of the location of voltage, such as how the noun is focused on the primary stress in the initial position of the sentence (Berger, 1998, pp. 87–89). Berger's transcription of folk texts also provides examples of prosodic variations in natural discourse, underlining the interaction between phonological and syntactic structures.

The *Phonetic Variation in Burushaski Dialects* (2002) by Christian Troll examines sociolinguistic diversity between Burushaski speakers focusing on pronunciation formulas specific to the community. He noted that speakers in Yasin use more conservative realization of glottal stops /ʔ /, especially in verbal initial positions such as ʔApil "Apple", which tends to be dropped or liberated in younger Hunza speakers (Troll, 2002, pp. 34-35). Troll also documented a change in the length of the vowel based on age and gender - for example, older women in Nagar tend to maintain long vowels in words like Baal "hair", while younger speakers often shorten them. It emphasizes how religious speech tends to preserve classic phonetic forms, as can be seen in recitations and prayer evocations where different aspirations and retro flexion are clearly articulated. Troll attributes

these shifts to increasing multilingualism and social mobility, especially in urban centers such as Gilgit.

In *Phonological and Morphological Samples in Burushaski* (1992), Thomas and Gail L. Lothers provide phonological data from Hunza and Nagar as part of a sociolinguistics survey. They confirm the presence of minimal pairs, such as the gift of "doors" and *dar* "fear", which illustrates the importance of phonemic contrast between alveolar and retroflex consonants in lexical resolution (Lothers, 1992, p. 41). Their work also examines the tone influence on verbal times - for example, a growing pitch is often associated with a subjunctive mood, while a flat or decreasing spacing indicates a declarative mood (Lothers, 1992, pp. 47–48). In one narrative example, the use of a high tone on the final syllable in the *gushu* indicated the future tense verb, which contrasted with past tense marker used for the usual past. They also documented the use of the playground to indicate the focus in built-in clauses, indicating that intonation plays a role in syntactic disambiguation.

Each of these European researchers contributes a unique dimension to the understanding of phonetics and phonology of Burushaski. Lorimer puts the foundations for the inventory of the phoneme and syllable; Berger emphasizes dialectal variations and grammatical priority; Troll examines sociophonetic shifts; And Lothers focus on the tone and its morphological consequences. These examples and links illustrate the complex and developing phonological system shaped by dialect, context and sociolinguistic changes.

Discussion

European researchers have largely focused on their studies on specific aspects of Burushaski, especially grammatical structures, phonology, historical linguistics and dialectology, leaving other areas such as language pedagogy, modern literacy, community language practices or digital use. This selective focus is rooted in several overlapping factors. Most of these researchers such as D.L.R. Lorimer, Hermann Berger and Jan Henrik Holst were trained in the European tradition of historical-comparative linguistics and typological analysis that emphasizes the structural properties of languages and their classification in relation to others (Lorimer, 1935; Berger, 1998; Holst, 2001). Since Burushaski is a language isolate with a complex grammatical system, rich morphology and unique phonological features, it was particularly attractive to scholars aimed at contributing to global typological databases or examining linguistic phenomena that were not found in Indo-

European languages (Berger, introduction; Stellung). As a result, their primary interest was linguistic description and theory, not applied or community linguistics. In addition, many of these researchers have worked under the sponsorship of academic institutions or language documentation projects that preferred theoretical research results over practical applications such as the development of literacy or the preservation of language (Rahman, 2002: *Language, Ideology and Power*, p. 317). Because their time in the field was often short and somewhat limited with local communities, they usually worked with selected male speakers in a controlled environment, which limited their exposure to the full sociolinguistic variation of the language (Lorimer, 1935: Preface; Berger, 1998: Vorwort). In addition, global linguistics has not yet developed a strong focus on language or revitalization at the peak of European research activities (mid -20th century until the beginning of 2000), such as language teaching, community literacy or sociolinguist change, not widely studied (Himmelman, 1998, 1998. linguistics). Therefore, neglecting certain areas in Burushaski research reflects the penetration of disciplinary priorities, institutional goals,

methodological restrictions and predominant academic interests of that time, leading to a deep but closely focused set of literature.

Conclusion

This research has examined the significant but selective contributions of European researchers to the study of Burushaski, a unique language isolate spoken in northern Pakistan. European scholars, especially D. L. R. Lorimer, Hermann Berger, Jan Henrik Holst, Christian Troll, and others, have played a pioneering role in documenting and analyzing Burushaski across key linguistic domains, including grammar, phonology, dialectology, historical linguistics, lexicography, text translation, and sociolinguistics. Their endeavors have formed initial resources that continue to form our understanding of the language.

Nevertheless, the findings of the researches also demonstrate that their emphasis has frequently been formed by definite academic conventions and institutional benefits, predominantly in descriptive and historical linguistics, while more applied or community-oriented areas such as language vitality, modern-day practice, and language policy have established relatively less consideration.

Moreover, the restricted and less sustained participation of local and national researchers in Pakistan has additionally broadened this gap, chiefly owing socio-political, instructive, and institutional challenges that suppress marginal languages such as Burushaski.

This difference highlights the essential for larger academic cooperation, capacity building within Pakistani institutions, and a more comprehensive attitude to linguistic research that standards both international erudition and native knowledge. It is indispensable to link this gap by boosting research that not only builds on recognized European researches but also increases into underexplored spaces with the active contribution of local communities and investigators.

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