

Diachronic and Synchronic Development of K^howar Language in Chitral: Kp District (Pakistan)

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Received: October 25, 2018

Accepted: December 31, 2018

ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to explore the development of K^howar language in Chitral by describing a notion about the development of K^howar language in Chitral. The Prototype K^howar has come into existence in Chitral through the interaction of Dravidians with the indigenous people of Chitral (known as “Pisacha” who spoke “Pisacha” language). The language in turn developed six speech sounds different from the languages whose origins do not go to the Indo-Iranian roots. There are a number of lexemes particular to agriculture, which the study reveals to have Dravidian origin. Moreover, K^howar has its distinct inflectional system. Some of the words with medial and terminal /k/ sound have their close affinity with Dravidian rather than Sanskrit.

KEY WORDS: K^howar, Dravidians, Pisacha, Existence, Medial and Terminal

INTRODUCTION

The paper examines the development diachronically and synchronically of K^howar*¹ language from the different languages of the invaders and passed by this region (Chitral). It deals with six speech sounds of K^howar, which makes it different from other languages coming from the Indo-European or Indo-Iranian root. The article deals with the glimpses of the history of the Dravidian languages with citation of its role in the birth of Prototype K^howar. It also discusses the linguistic layers of K^howar taken from Sanskrit, Turkish and Wakhi languages in its developmental stages. The roots of K^howar can be traced from the layers of different languages.

Along with few other indigenous languages, K^howar is spoken widely in Chitral. Furthermore, it is also spoken in Nuristan (Afghanistan) Ghizar (Gilgit) and Kalam (Swat). Although, K^howar is the lingua franca of the area, Chitral being a multi-linguistic zone with ten other languages such as, *Kalashamondr*, *Palula*, *Dameli*, *Gawar-Bati*, *Nuristani*, *Yidgha*, *Burushaski*, *Gujari*, *Wakhi*, *Kyrgyz*, *Persian*, *Pashto*, and Urdu, English (spoken by young people who have learnt them during their education or at work places outside Chitral, i.e. in the big cities of Pakistan are also spoken (Marsden, 2005). K^howar speaking people in Chitral live in different valleys, such as; *Tori-K^how*, *Muli-K^how*, *Mastuj*, *Kuh*, *Lotkuh* and *Drosh* comprising of about one million including those who have migrated from Chitral (Ager, n.d.) (It is obvious, that before the Great Game (1813-1907) between the two Great Powers, Chitral and K^howar was alien to the rest of the world. When some of the western writers and strategists -during the tussle between the Super Powers- got access into Chitral, they studied the geographical importance of Chitral and also collected some information about the K^howar language. However, no one of them went to Chitral for the specific purpose of studying K^how and their language K^howar. But it is necessary to dedicate some space for brief description of their works on the subject under study. Among them, Leiter (xxx), Endresen and Kristiansen (1981), John Biddulph (1880), D. J. T. O’Brien’s (1885), Major Gurdon (1885, 1902) etc. are remarkable.

John Biddulph (1880) states in his work titled “Tribes of the Hindoo Kush” that further research would prove K^howar to be equally derived from Zend (Avestan, Old Persian) and Sanskrit. D. J. T. O’Brien’s (1885) work on K^howar contains Grammar and vocabulary. Major Gurdon collected some information about K^howar language during his stay in Chitral from 1895 to 1902, which were later on,

¹ *K^howar is spoken with an initial aspirated velar stop like [K^h] pronounced lightly and the air stream comes out from the mouth freely. I have noted that most of the people of other languages pronounced it as a velar fricative [Kh], it sounds like [x], if the word [K^howar] is pronounced as a velar fricative then it becomes /xowar/ meaning “the poor or inferior one”. Thus the word should be written with small /h/ after /k/ sound, like this K^howar, which refer to the predominant language of Chitral.

included in the linguistic Survey of India by Grieson. On the basis of that information Grieson has kept K^howar in the family of the indo-Iranian Dardic group of languages. As he mentions--

The inhabitants of Dardistan are frequently mentioned in ancient literature. In Sanskrit literature they are spoken of as 'Darada' and the inhabitants were called 'Pisachas' whether 'Pischas' a word that was really a tribal name, later extended to denote such a demon, or the term 'raw-eating demon' was given as a nickname to the tribes inhabiting the Dard country, and they occupied this entire tract and influenced its speech. The Dardic languages of the present day fall into three groups—the "Kafir", "K^howar" and the "Dard". Of these, Khowar consists of a single language, standing, as we shall see, somewhat apart from the others (Grieson, 1928).

The author has given a historical account of the previous studies in the field of Indian languages. A classified list of all languages spoken in Pakistan and India are elucidated. Moreover, a complete list of names given to those Languages is also included in the above-cited work. Besides, a comparison between the statistics of the survey and those of the census of 1921 is the only authentic record of its nature in this work. He (Grieson) further elaborates, 'the first Aryan invaders from the north influenced, no doubt by the non-Iranian tongs'.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To explore the diachronic and synchronic development of K^howar language in Chitral.
- To exhibit the diachronic and synchronic development of K^howar language in Chitral for debate and discussion.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- How K^howar language developed diachronically and synchronically under the banner of Dravidian language?
- What are the similarities of K^howar language with Dravidian languages diachronically and synchronically?

DELIMITATION:

The study is delimited to development of the K^howar language under the umbrella of Dravidian language; and other related development has been covered under this study.

SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY:

The study will open a new avenue for debate and discussion about the diachronic and synchronic development of K^howar language in Chitral in academic circle.

METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative, which is one of the types of scientific research (Creswell, 1998) described that the qualitative research is an inquiry process to explore social or human problems. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. The aforementioned literature provided me the basic conceptual foundation of the qualitative study, which helped me in establishing the paradigm to this research article.

QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS:

The qualitative content analysis is the method of the study. In this research article the interpretation of the text data was systematically classified through coding (Hsieh H. F., 1998). defined qualitative content analysis as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (p.1278). Thus, the qualitative content analysis was the most suitable method for this study. As the qualitative content analysis pays attention to unique themes that illustrate the range of the meanings of the phenomenon rather than the statistical significance of the occurrence of particular texts or concepts.

DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY

Data collection is a key aspect of every research. Inaccurate data collection can impact the results of a study and ultimately lead to invalid results. In the proposed study I reviewed textual data for data collection. I selected text purposively. It means the text was selected on the bases of its relevance to the objectives and questions. Hence, the data was obtained from select books, Journal, indigenous texts of folklores, poetry and analytical works of both local and international scholars on the topic.

DATA ANALYSES:

The qualitative was analyzed through careful reading and rereading, the textual data coding and sorting

the coded segments into broader categories as well as themes.

THE DRAVIDIAN LAYER IN K^HOWAR:

The term Dravidian was introduced by a linguist “Robert A. Caldwell” (1856) in his work titled “Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages”. He proclaims that Dravidians were living in India before the evolution of Sanskrit and the Aryans migration to India. (Nasim, 1949). It is believed that they were the first inhabitants of the sub-continent and spoke a language, called Dravidian language (Gersian, 1928). The speakers of the language imitated the basic sounds of birds and animals in the initial stage of its development.

Subsequently, the migration of the Dravidians continued and reached the extreme north of the present Pakistan and Afghanistan and evolved into an unfasten language (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dravidian_languages). The family of the Dravidian language is one of the largest families of Languages in the world; includes seventy-three languages spoken by more than two hundred and twenty-two million people in India, Sri Lanka, and certain areas of Pakistan. Now the only Dravidian language spoken in Pakistan and Afghanistan is Brahui, the number of its speakers in Pakistan is more than two hundred thousand.

Presently, most of the Dravidian languages are spoken in the southern part of Indian sub-continent, while on the northern part of Indian sub-continent (Pakistan) the Indo-Aryan languages are spoken. It is believed that Dravidians were Indian natives and spread throughout India and spoke Dravidian languages (Morgenstierne, 1947). Later on the invasion of Indo-Aryan from the north compelled Dravidians to move into the southern part of India (<file:///C:/Users/.../Dravidian%20Language%20Languages.html>). The assumption of the possibility of the speaker of Proto-Dravidian language in the earlier stage entered into the sub-continent from the Central Asia gives us no authenticity (Emwnwu, 1994). While it shows the possibility that in the Vedic Sanskrit the Dravidian loanwords might have entered due to the expansion of Dravidian speakers in the north. It has also been suggested that in the northwest of the sub-continent some languages may have been spoken earlier. Thus the Kafir (Nuristani) which make up the northern part of the subcontinent have languages with many Dravidian words along with Sanskrit, which in turn shows that Dravidian prevailed in what is now northern Pakistan (Emwnwu, 1984), (of which Chitral makes a part).

According to Major Biddulph, in the regions of Dirdistan a single language was spoken, which got split, when K^howar language came in. In addition, he argues that K^howar has very close relationship with “Kalash” language as compared to the other languages of those regions. It is assumed, earlier people called ‘Pisacha’, speaking ‘Pisacha language; inhabited the regions between Hindu Kush and Himalayas (Gardezi, 1989), and is supposed to be the single language spoken in the region (Biddulph, 1977). The above mentioned clues reveal that linguistic core of K^howar does not come from Aryan sources, but point to the presence of an earlier form of language, which might be termed as Prototype K^howar, and in turn emerged as a result of interactions between ‘Pisachas’ and ‘Dravidians’. However, a renowned linguist, Moergenstine says that the origin of many words in K^howar is not known. This unknown characteristic of K^howar supports my proposition of the study. Moreover, K^howar has developed its own Inflectional system different from Sanskrit (Morgenstierne, 1947). European theorists usually focus on Sanskrit as the mother to most of the languages spoken today in Asia and Europe. However, some recent studies point to the links between Dravidians, Turkish and the languages spoken by the aborigines of Australia. This assumption prompts one to revisit the Sanskrit model. Theoretically, this model is a convenient tool for categorizing linguistic layers. Things become complicated when the reader tries to imagine the linguistic situation before the rise of Aryans in India. In this regard, linguists rely on the religious texts of the Hindus and the Zoroastrians. Interestingly, the differences between the two sources are not so great to treat them as two distinct languages. So it is difficult to dig out any literature about the exact history of K^howar, hence to find out such information we have to rely only on the existing speech sounds and words for our supposition. It is presumed that K^howar has been spoken in Chitral since its early history i.e. 5th century B.C (Faizi I. U., 1996). According to Ismail Solon ‘K^howar is believed to be an old language; certainly older than Persian’ (Solon, 1981).

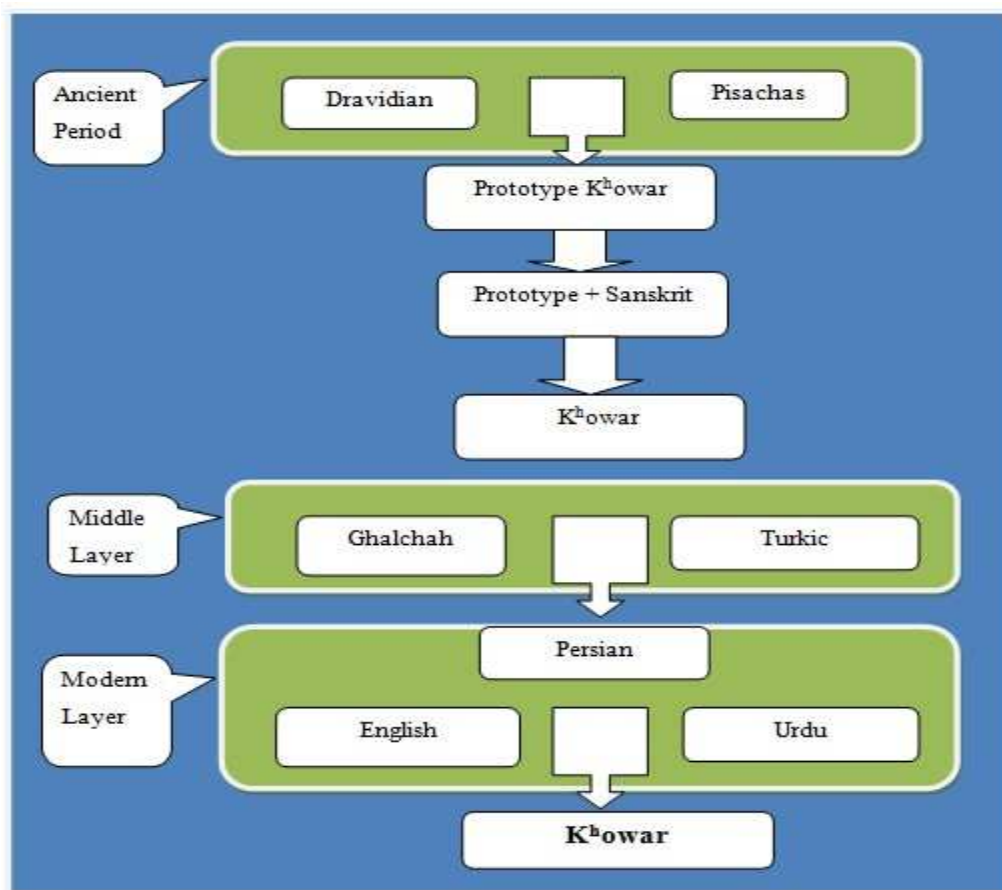
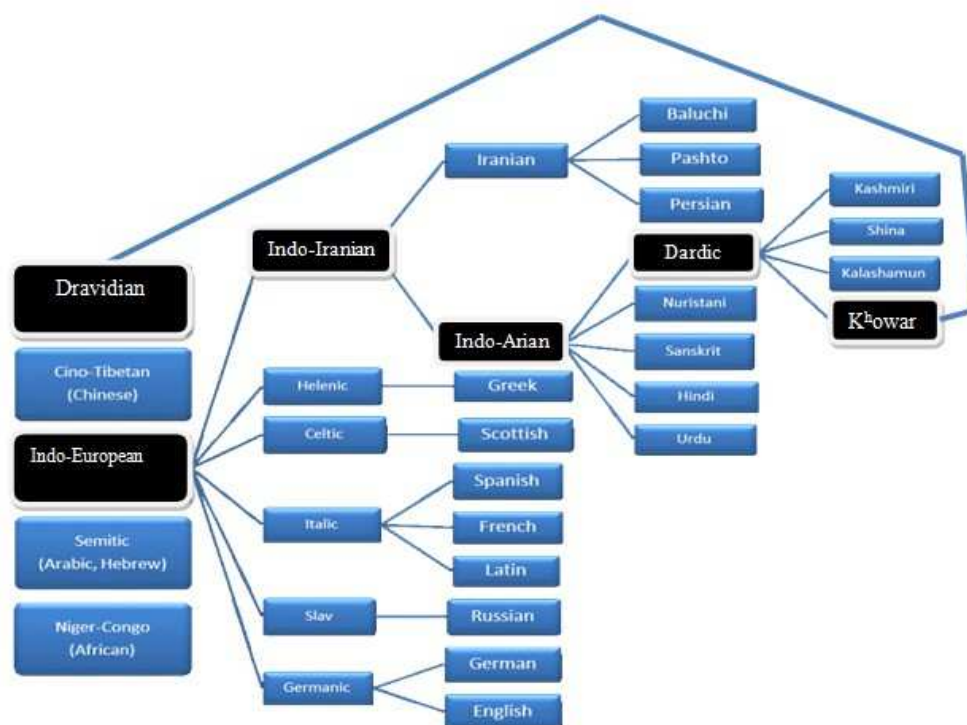


Figure1: DIFFERENT LAYERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROTOTYPE KHOWAR

These assumptions suggest the history of Khowar language, which is usually called Prototype Khowar; begins with the interaction of Dravidian with the indigenous inhabitant called 'Pisachas'. There are words (vocabularies) in Khowar, which can be used as a reference to such supposition. In linguistics, the study of the history of words is called etymology (Turner, 1973), shows when words entered in one language from the other and from what sources, and with the passage of time how meaning and form of that words have been changed. Words may enter from one language to other languages as a loanword through derivational morphology with the combination of preexisting elements in the borrowing language. The hybrid of this evolution is called the process of the phono-semantic; and this method of linguistic study is being applied on the Dravidian words in Khowar i.e. '/vari/' means seed or grain (Emwnwu, 1984); and the word exists in Khowar as '/varo/' means seed or grain. At the end of the word the vowel /i/ changed into /o/ vowel sound. When the people increase and become multilingual (Magnus, 2005), as a result of swelling regional changes, the resulting language could undergo parallel changes either through actual contact or as a result of mutual cultural or biological conditions; an example from Dravidian are the words '/vari/' and '/varo/' already mentioned. In Proto Dravidian language the word "/var/" means written language (Emwnwu, 1984), while in Khowar the word "/var/" means language i.e. /K^ho-var/ (the language of the "K^how" People), it indicates that the word "/var/" may be derived from Dravidian. A word of the Proto-Dravidian and Khowar in the same form and meaning is "/nul/" means twist, (Emwnwu, 1984), which is used as a sandal beneath the feet of horse, mule etc. The word "/gonada/" (David, 1988), in Proto-Dravidian means, "wall" while in Khowar "/kanda/" means "wall"; only the /g/ sound has been changed into /k/ sound. Another vocabulary in Proto-Dravidian is "/kalan/" means threshing ground. (David, 1988) It is "/khol-an/" in Khowar, /k/ sound is aspirated and the vowel sound /a/ has been changed into /o/ sound; and used as plural form of "/khol/". The word "/gonad/" means a piece of wood used as a hook of something like axe etc in Dravidian, while this word in the same meaning Khowar in "/gondaro/". A word "/kott-ay/" (Emwnwu, 1984), in Dravidian means 'fort' whereas the word "/kotani/ or /kotanai/" means bungalow in Khowar. "/kali/", (Emwnwu, 1984), which means in Dravidian to join or come together, "/kali/" in Khowar has the same meaning; it is a staff to fasten the bullocks for tilting. "/koric/", (Emwnwu, 1984), in Dravidian means to nip off the husks of grain, in Khowar the word is pronounced "/kromic/" in the same meaning i.e. to nip off the husks of grain (Emwnwu, 1984), "/pal/" means a kind of harrow both Dravidian and Khowar used for tilting (Emwnwu,

1984), “/nar/” means water in Dravidians, while in K^howar /nar/ means the gushing point of water. The above cited cognate words of Dravidian shows the foundation of K^howarleximes, which are mostly related to agricultural stuffs. These also reveal that agriculture in Chitral started from that very point of time when Dravidian reached in Chitral

Besides, the above-mentioned words, other words of Dravidian homophone words also exist in K^howar, a glittering example is the word “/Kotakai/”, (Emwnwu, 1984), even now used for a room attached to a mosque. Moreover, the noun “/ure/”, (Emwnwu, 1984), in proto Davidian means house, while in K^howar it is pronounced by modification as “/dure/” means house./paran/ means the place of fire or the sidesof fire place in proto Dravidian and the some word /paran/ is used for the same meaning in K^howar.A word /tak/,(Emwnwu, 1984), which means to sustain or to tie-up in proto Dravidian, the word /tak/ in K^howar has the same meaning as tie-up, which is used in K^howar like this “Istorohertakkora” means, tie-up the horse there. The word /pot/ in proto Dravidian means the blast of the boiling dish during boiling process; and this word is used for the same meaning in K^howar, i.e. “shakhish-pot doyan”. Dravidians prevailed in the country before Aryan immigrations (Morgenstierne, 1947). It indicates that Prototype K^howar has taken its roots from the Dravidians; consider the chart.



4.3 THE PROTOTYPE K^hOWAR

Prototype K^howar has its distinct phonology, and inflectional system (Morgenstierne, 1947). There exist six speech sounds in K^howar, hence, makes it different from other languages coming from the Indo-European or Indo-Iranian roots. As it has already been mentioned that K^howar has been spoken in Chitral since 5th B. C. (Faizi 1996), these speech sounds are as following.

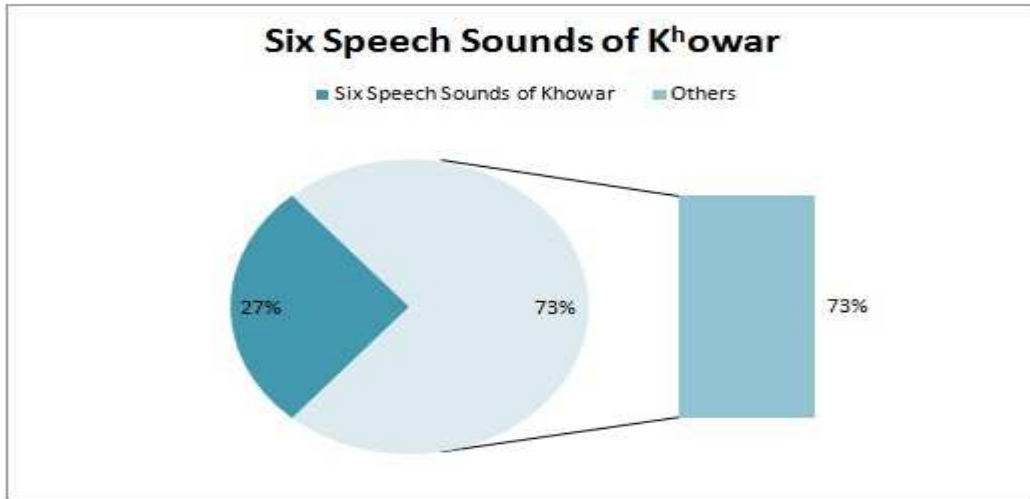


Figure: 4.3

1. ç/çh “çhey” _____ çetraar (Chitral), çetrari (Chitrali).
2. ts/ts “tsey” _____ tsetseq,(Children), /tsowoc/ means hungry, /tsoghu/ means orphan, tsopik means to pick up some things.
3. j/ĵ “jeem” _____ ĵenjair (Chain).
4. ǝ/w “ǝaǝ” _____ khoshgaǝ (Yak)
5. ž/žh “ž” _____ žhindrik (a kind of horse's braying), žouç means knotted, žar means sharp or quick and poison, žaq means inspissations, žieq means a sound produced by door,
6. Ş/Şh “Şeen” _____ /Şapik/ (bread), /Şhaa/ (black), /Şhawai/ (pearl). /KiŞepi/, means Magpie, /Şour/ means salty, /buypaŞh/ means a big traditional room in çettrar (Chitral), /Şotar/ means seashore, “/kawoŞh/” means sandals.

As mentioned by (Solon, 1981), the author of K^howar English Dictionary that K^howar has 42 phonemes, while (Faizi I. , 1976)says most of the phonemes do not exist in any other language of the region. For instance, the letters /t/, /th/, /d/, /l/, /sh/, /ch/, /chh/, and /j/ all have two dissimilar forms, i.e. retroflexed and detail-veolar (non-retroflexed). The inhabitants who learnt the language on his mother's knee could easily distinguish these forms, whereas outsiders can never learn the phonemes, no matter how long they stay in Chitral (Solon 1981). Among these, the most interesting are the /chh/ aspirated and /ch/ non-aspirated sounds, the word Chitral itself is the best example; never pronounced correctly by outsiders (Solon 1981). Among the people of these regions, Chitral is always pronounced and written “Chitrar”: it seems to rise from an inquisitive lack of ability to make a distinction between the letter “r” and “L”, (In this way “/Konur/” becomes “/Konul/”, the “/Lowri Pass” the “/Rowli/” Pass etc. (Biddulph, 1971). To differentiate the above-mentioned phonemes; word like “/chuchi/” means “tomorrow morning” has two entirely different 'ch' sounds. The former is aspirated palato-alveolar and the latter is un-aspirated palato-alveolar. Besides, “/Chuy/” means “night” is palato-alveolar while “/chuy/” means “hungry” is retroflex. “/char/” means “a cliff” or an oval ground is un-aspirated palato-alveolar and “/char/” means “a dry leaf” is un-aspirated retroflex.

CONCLUSION:

The Prototype K^howar came to exist in Chitral with the interaction of Dravidians with the indigenous people of Chitral. They were known as “Pisacha” and spoke “Pisacha” language. It developed six speech sounds different from the languages coming from the Indo-Iranian roots. On the other hand, the cited words (nouns) mostly concerned with agricultural stuff have been still in use in K^howar, shows that agriculture started in those regions from that point of time, when Dravidians accessed to Chitral. Later on the Aryans came to these regions as invaders, so, Sanskrit as the language of the invaders had considerable impact on K^howar in its developmental stage. K^howar has borrowed so many names of the villages and mountains from Sanskrit. Besides, the Turkic and the Ghalchach languages i.e. Wakhi have very considerable share in the development of K^howar, because of its geographical contiguity with Eastern Turkistan (Xinjing) and Wakhiks of Gorno-Badakhshan and Wakhan corridor. In near past the people of those areas were passing through Chitral in the form of invaders, traders, and pilgrims by leaving behind their linguistic influences, in this way K^howar became a full-fledged language.

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