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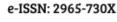GOALS

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Gradual Development of The Vowel System in Dari and Persian Languages

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ABSTRACT

The idea that language is composed of interrelated and mutually dependent layers has a long history. In traditional linguistics, for instance, the division of language structure into three parts (phonetics, lexicon, and grammar) and the establishment of three fields of study to investigate them provide clear evidence that language is viewed as a composite of such layers. During the transition from Middle Persian to Modern Persian and from Old Persian to present-day Dari and Tajik, changes occurred in the phonological systems of these languages. Dari has retained its archaic character, expressing several linguistic features of the past. The article focuses on the gradual development of the vowel system in Dari and Persian languages, through a comparative study of language development and patterns in genetically related and typologically close languages. It highlights the need for special research to compare the unique and complex aspects of the language system.

Keywords: phoneme, sound, vowel, Dari language, Classical Dari language, Persian language, long vowel, short vowel, yâ-ye ma'ruf, wâw-e ma'ruf, yâ-ye majhul, wâw-e majhul.

1 INTRODUCTION

The idea that language is composed of interrelated and mutually dependent layers has a long history. Traditional linguistics, for instance, divides language structure into three parts (phonetic, lexical, and grammatical) and

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separates them into three departments for study. This demonstrates that language is viewed as a whole made up of these layers.

Prior to the 20th century, the phoneme structure, accent, and tone characteristics of language were primarily studied in the field of phonetics. With the development of linguistics, phonetics and phonology became distinct fields. N.S. Trubetskoy explains this distinction and connection: 'Phonetics studies speech sounds, and phonology studies language sounds; Phonology treats phonetics as political economy treats product science' (Trubetskoy, 1960). Language develops through gradual phonetic changes, which in turn cause phonological changes. The relationship between phonetics and phonology is evident in all linguistic differences. Both fields study the material side of the phoneme, including expression and plan (Abduazizov, 1992). They are also concerned with the study of phonetic units such as sounds, stress, and tone. The structure of language sound, including syllables, stress, and intonation, requires examination in four aspects: articulatory (physiological), acoustic (physical), perceptive (hearing and feeling), and phonological (functional and social). Although each aspect can be studied separately, they are interrelated. A comprehensive phonetic examination covers all four aspects (Abduazizov, 1992). This analysis will focus solely on phonemes in the phonological aspect.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This article analyses the formation, similarities, and differences of vowels in the phonetic systems of Dari and Persian languages. The focus is on determining how vowels and diphthongs have changed since the 10th century and which language has preserved its archaic character.

To achieve this goal, the article employs deduction, historical-comparative, and analysis methods.

3. RESULTS

1. The first idea about the phonetic system of the Classical Dari language belongs to Abu Ali Ibn Sina. For the first time, phonemes were divided into mosawwat "vowel" and sâmet "consonant".

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2. Vowel phonemes in the Classical Dari language: Abu Ali Ibn Sina – 6, Nasiriddin Tusi – 6, Ghiyasiddin Rompuri – 7, A. Kuronbekov – 8, in the book "Fundamentals of Iranian Linguistics; the new Iranian languages: Western group, Caspian languages" – 8, Daniel A. Reese – 8. Modern Dari language has 8 vowel phonemes, Modern Persian has 6 vowel phonemes. The Classical Dari language vocalisms are fully reflected in the Modern Dari language.

3. In the 17th century, Husayn Inju's dictionary "فرهنگ جهانگیری"   provided information about the phonemes yâ-ye majhul and wâw-e majhul, yâ-ye ma'ruf and wâw-e ma'ruf for the first time.

4. The vowel phonemes of the Modern Dari language fully reflect the vowels of the Classical Dari language. yā-ye ma'ruf (ī) and yā-ye majhul (ē) in Classical Dari have merged into the vowel i, and vāv-e ma'ruf (ū) and vāv-e majhul (ō) have merged into the vowel ū in Modern Persian.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Phonology is the branch of linguistics that studies speech sounds as a means of distinguishing the sound shells of words and morphemes. It involves the functional differentiation and non-differentiation symptoms of phonemes, syllables, stress, and intonation of a language. This definition is based on the works of Abduazizov (1992) and Khojiev (2002).

During the transition from Middle Persian to Modern Persian and from Old Persian to present-day Dari and Tajik, changes have occurred in the phonological system of these languages. Despite this, Dari has retained its archaic character, with several features from the past still present in the language.

Abu Ali ibn Sina discusses the origin of sound in his book 'Articulation of Sounds' ('مخارج الحروف). He explains that sound is caused by the undulation of air, which is set in motion by the collision or separation of objects. This creates a wave-like vibration in the air. When two bodies collide, they compress the air and cause it to rapidly escape in the direction of movement with a specific force and speed. When the bodies separate, the compressed air is forced out with a certain force and speed. This phenomenon was described by Nurmonov in 2002.

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The author explains that speech sounds, known as phonemes, are distinct from physical sounds. Phonemes are represented by letters (harf), while physical sounds are represented by sounds (sawt). The difference between the two is that letters are produced by the speech organs. Harf is a type of sound that varies in pitch and tone, and can be distinguished by hearing (Nurmonov, 2002).

Abu Ali ibn Sina classified speech sounds into two types: vowels - musavvit and consonants - somite. This division was also noted by Abu Nasr Farabi in his work 'Book on Music' according to Parviz Notel Khanlari (Ilyasov, 2019).

According to Nasiruddin Tusi, the Arabic language has 28 phonemes, of which 20 are common to both languages. The remaining 8 phonemes (so, ho, to, zo, sod, zod, ayn, qaf) are unique to Arabic and absent in classical Dari. Additionally, there are 5 phonemes (pe, chim, je, fe, gof) that are not present in Arabic. Tusi suggested that if Arabic speakers wish to use words containing these 5 phonemes, they should replace them with sounds from the Arabic alphabet (Ilyasov, 2019).

In his dictionary 'Dictionary of the Gift of Friends', Hafiz Sultan Ali Ubayhi confirmed the ideas of the dictionaries created before him and identified 8 phonemes in the Arabic language (so, ho, to, zo, sad, zod, ayn, qaf). He also noted that these phonemes are not pronounced in classical Dari. However, he identified 4 phonemes in classical Dari that are not found in Arabic: pe, chim, je, and gof. It is worth noting that the phoneme fe is not included by the scholar. Classical Dari, which is based on the Arabic script, uses an apostrophe to represent these phonemes. For example, if ب is written, the phonemes are represented by پ pe, چ by chim, ز by je, and ک by gof.

In the preface of the dictionary 'فرهنگ جهانگیری', Husayn Inju notes that Persian speakers only use 20 out of the 28 letters of the Arabic language due to 8 difficult-to-pronounce sounds. Additionally, there are 24 phonemes in Persian words, with 4 more phonemes used in Arabic words that cannot be pronounced originally in Persian (for example, the Arabic phoneme ş is pronounced as s). According to Mirzoyorov (2011), these are muarrab (Arabic) phonemes. ح ،ث، ص، ض، ط، ظ، ع، ق .ث، ح، ص، ض، ط، ظ، ع، ق. Additionally, four more phonemes were added to the account of novices, namely:

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In the 'Strict Evidence' ("برهان قاطع") dictionary, it is stated that Persian words consist of twenty-four letters, with some letters being omitted, namely: Persian words are written based on twenty-four phonemes, as per Nazari (2018).

M.R. Ilhom and M.H. Yamin give the definition of Khanlary:

همین صداهای انسانی که نخستین عنصر سازنده زبان اند، فونیم یا واک گفته میشوند اگر چه این واحدهای صوتی به تنها یی بی معنا اند، ولی در درون واژه و واژک نقش معنا یی را افاده می کنند

(Human sounds are the foundational elements of language. These sounds, known as phonemes, lack meaning when used in isolation, but convey meaning when combined to form words and morphemes.) (Ilhom, 1971)

M.N. Saidi, M.R. Ilhom, and M.H. Yamin (2018) categorise phonemes in the Dari language into primary phonemes (فونیمهای مقطعه fônimhâ-ye maqta' – segmental) and secondary phonemes (فونیمهای عروضی fônimhâ-ye'aruzi – supersegmental). The primary phonemes consist of vowels (واول wâwal), semi-vowels (شبه واول šabh-e wâwal), and consonants (کانسونانت kânsunânt). Secondary phonemes, such as exclamatory sounds (فشار fešâr), tone (آهنگ âhang), and rhyming connections (وصل و فصل wasl-o fasl), are not discussed in this article. This article analyzes primary phonemes.

A vowel sound is a sound formed in the oral cavity without any obstruction, consisting mostly of sound with little to no noise.

Abu Ali ibn Sina discussed the long and short vowels as follows: However, in my view, the pronunciation of the long and short alif is smooth and without any obstacles, while the pronunciation of the two 'wow' sounds is somewhat difficult due to the narrowing of the lips and the weakness of the upper lip bending outwards. Both sounds rest on the lower lip. Describing vowels can be a challenging task. Short vowels are formed quickly, while long vowels take twice as much time (Mirzoyorov, 2011).

Ibn Sina identifies six vowel sounds: short vowels - zabar (a), zer (i), and pesh (u); and long vowels - alifi mamdudi musawwat (long a or o), waw-i musawwat (ū), or musawwat (ī) (Ilyasov, 2019).

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In his book 'The Criterion of Poetry' ("معيار الاشعر"), Nasiriddin Tusi categorises sounds into two types: musawwat (vowels) and musammat (consonants). Vowels can be short or long, with short vowels (musawwatho-i maqsur) represented in writing by satrosti and satrusti movements such as damma (u), fatha (a), and kasra (i). Long vowels (musawwatho-i mamdud) are indicated by double pronunciation of these characters, such as o, ū, and e. The remaining sounds are consonants. The phonemes 'vov' (w), 'alif' (a, o, i, u) and 'yo' (i, ī) belong to both vowels and consonants. While vov and yo consonants are written, the alif is represented in writing as hamza. If it is a short vowel, it is considered one phoneme along with the phoneme that follows it, and the pair is called maqsur. For example, although the phoneme 'j' (ja) in the word Jawâd is transcribed by two phonemes: 'j' and 'a', linguists consider it to be one phoneme. According to the Greek linguistic tradition, Abu Nasr Farabi and Ibn Sina interpret it as 'two phonemes of one short syllable' (Ilyasov, 2019). It is worth noting that Ibn Sina and Nasiruddin Tusi only analysed vowel phonemes based on the phonetic system of the Arabic language. As a result, no information was provided regarding the phonemes yâ-ye majhul and wâw-e majhul (that is, ambiguous yâ and wâw) in the vowel system of the classical Dari language. However, the dictionary 'فرهنگ جهانگیری' does contain information about these two phonemes. Husayn Inju, Ibn Sina, and Nasir al-Din explained Tusi's opinions on vowel phonemes, but did not mention the phonemes یای مجهول yâ-ye majhul and واو مجهول wâw-e majhul that appear in pronunciation. Although Husayn Inju did not provide detailed information about the vowel phonemes, he introduced یاي معروف yâ-ye ma'ruf (i.e. clearly yâ) and واومعروف wâw-e ma'ruf (i.e. clearly wâw) for the first time in classical Dari language. It includes symbols such as e. definitely wâw, which represent the phonemes ī and ū, and symbols such as η and ω, which represent the phonemes yâ-ye majhul and wâw-e majhul respectively. The text describes the representation of various phonemes in the Arabic language. The phoneme w in the words حور ,سور is represented by wâw-e maruf, while the phoneme w in the words روز، سوز، واو is represented by wâw-e majhul. Similarly, the phoneme y in the words مجهول دیر ,پریر is represented by yâ-ye maruf, and the phoneme ی in the words نیل ,پیل is represented by yâ-ye maruf, and the phoneme ی in the words دیر ,پریر

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is represented by yâ-ye majhul. The text concludes by stating that the latter is called passive.
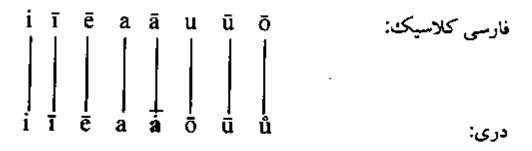
F. Djalolova reports that Ghiyasiddin Rompuri used specific terms in the 'Dictionary of Giyas' (غياث اللغت') to prevent misreading of words. These terms include 'bilkasr' (with a short 'i' sound), 'bizzam' (with a short 'u' sound), 'bilfath' (with a short 'a' sound), 'vov-i majhul' (with a long 'ū' sound), 'vov-i ma'ruf' (with a long 'ū' sound), 'yo-yi ma'ruf' (with a long 'ī' sound), and 'yo-yi majhul' (with an 'e' sound). The annotation of words is the only place where notes about the long o phoneme can be found. According to Ghiyosiddin Rompuri's explanation, the term 'zam(m)' means to connect and the vowel it represents is called 'pesh'. It is pronounced with 'zammushshafatayn', which means both lips are together.

This information is cited by F. Djalolova in the book 'Fundamentals of Iranian Linguistics; the new Iranian languages'. The article 'Western Group, Caspian Languages' presents a detailed comparative analysis of the phonetic systems of modern Persian, Dari, and Tajik languages, which are considered successors of the classical Persian language. It is worth noting that there were three pairs of vowels in classical Persian: i-ī, a-ā, u-ū. Additionally, two diphthongs formed one monophthong: aı>ē, aụ>ō. Classical Persian had eight vowel phonemes: i-ī, a-ā, u-ū, ē, ō.

Although there is no special symbol for expressing monophthongs ē and ō in Arabic-Persian graphics, it is clear that they exist. In medieval grammars, the phonemes ī-ē and ū-ō were combined with each other, and the contrast is noticeable. The letters ى and و represent the phonemes ī and ū as yâ-ye ma'ruf and wâw-e ma'ruf. The letters ى and و represent the phonemes ē and ō respectively, and are called yâ-ye majhul and wâw-e majhul. When expressing the phonemes e and o in written sources created in the X-XI centuries, the fatha sign is placed over the letters ى and: مردى mard- ē meaning 'some person', و اوَى ōy meaning 'ō', and سوَختن sōxtan meaning 'to burn' (Abaev et al., 1982).

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D.A. Reese identifies 8 vowel phonemes in Classical Dari (Proto-Modern-Persian): æ, ɪ, ʊ, ɑ, u, i, e, o. When comparing the phonology of Middle Persian and Classical Dari with modern Dari, Persian, and Tajik languages, it can be observed that the phonemes ē and ō present in Middle Persian are represented by e and o in Classical Dari (yâ-ye majhul and wâw-e majhul, respectively). This suggests that these phonemes have remained unchanged in modern Dari, while in Persian, they have changed to the phonemes i and u (Rees, 2008).

H. Urmur confirms that the classical Persian language had eight vowel phonemes, and that the Dari language has preserved them completely (Urmur,

2012).

 The scientist's opinion is based on the book 'Fundamentals of Iranian Linguistics: The New Iranian Languages - Western Group, Caspian Languages' by H. Urmur, who provides the ideas and examples.

It is evident from the aforementioned notes that Middle Persian and Classical Dari have six short and long vowels (mosawwathâ-ye kutâh-o baland), as well as two additional vowels that are not present in Arabic: wâw-e majhul-ô (zamma-ye kašida) and yâ-ye majhul- ê (kasra-ye kašida) were actively used. Wâw-e ma'ruf represents the phoneme u, which is understandable for Arabic speakers and is denoted by the letter و, while wâw-e majhul represents the indefinite phoneme ô, which is also represented by the letter و. In classical Dari language, the letter و represents a long vowel (ô, u) as wâw-e ma'ruf in words such as dur, xun, and bud, and wâw-e majhul in words like rôz, bôy, and gôš. The letter ی represents the long phoneme ī in classical Dari language as yâ-ye ma'ruf, and the phoneme ê as yâ-ye majhul when used in words like pīr, šīr, pêš, and šêr.

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M.R. Ilhom states that each phoneme is a science and that the Dari language has eight vowels (واول) (i, I, e, a, A, u, U, o) which function as the nucleus or center of the syllable. The description of vowels should take into account factors such as the position of the tongue muscles, the movement of the tongue from the bottom up, the back to the front, the shape of the lips, and the stretching and relaxation of the speech muscles (Ilhom, 1971).

According to M.N. Saidi, the modern Dari language has 8 vowels (aa, a, i, e - yâ-ye majhuli, ii - yâ-ye ma'rufi, u, o – wâw-e majhuli, uu - wâw-e ma'rufi) and 2 semi-vowel phonemes (w, y).

M.H. Yamin defines the following three characteristics of vowels:

1- سه جملهء از میز: میگوییم که وقتی مثلاً ؛میشوند ادا دوامدار صورت به تموج و طنین با واولها
است داده کلمه به خاصی موسیقیت نوع یک یعنی دارد متداوم و متموج نسبتاً صوت آن وسطی سازندهء عنصر
است واول همان این و

(1- vowels are always formed by oscillating with noise. For example, if the word "myz" consists of three phonemes, the phoneme in the middle of the word oscillates in relation to the rest of the phonemes, giving the word a unique musicality)

2- واول که کلمه و مورفیم از قسمت همان در یعنی نمیگردد متوقف تنفس هوای جریان واولها تلفظ در
کند ادا تر طولانی را آن میتواند بخواهد که قدم هر گوینده و میشود نگهداشته باز تنفس هوای جریان است آمده

(2- In pronunciation, the flow of breathing air is not interrupted when producing vowels. This means that the speaker can prolong the sound of the vowel as desired, without any obstruction to the flow of air, within the same part of the morpheme or word where the vowel appears..)

3- واولها یعنی ،میگیرند قرار هجا مرکز و هسته حیث به همواره زبان صرفی ساختمان نظام در واولها
هجایی یک های کلمه و مورفیمها در چنانکه ؛میدهند انجام را ها کلمه و مورفیمها به را ادا دادن قابلیت وظیفهء
را واولها تعدد معنای ها کلمه و مورفیمها در هجاها کثرت و است واول یک موجودیت آن تشکیل اساسی شرط
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(3- In the morphological structure of the language, vowels always serve as the nucleus and center of the syllable. They give morphemes and words the ability to function. Monosyllabic morphemes and words require the existence of a vowel for their formation. The number of syllables in morphemes and words corresponds to the number of vowels present.) (Yamin, 2018)

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M.H. Yamin and M.R. Ilham both identify eight vowels, but Yamin uses a different phonetic representation: î, i, e, a, â, u, û, o. In Dari, w and y are considered semi-vowels (نیم واول nim wâwal). A recent study conducted by A. Majid in Afghanistan fully supports Yamin's findings (Yamin, 2018). Kh. Urmur's phonological analysis differs from the opinions of Afghan scholars in some aspects. Urmur's phonological analysis differs from the opinions of Afghan scholars in some aspects. Urmur's phonological analysis differs from the opinions of Afghan scholars in some aspects. Short vowels are modified with the addition of phonemes e, a, and o, while long vowels are modified with the addition of ī, ē, ā̆, ū, and ů̄. This concept was published in the 2011 edition of the Encyclopedia of Afghanistan (Encyclopedia, 2012), and should be considered objective and factual.R. Farhadi, agreeing with his colleagues, noted 8 vowel phonemes in the Dari language: e, a, o - short vowels, i, â, ô, u, ê - long vowels. Here, ê – wâw-e majhuli, ô – yâ-ye majhuli phonemes (Farkhadi, 1974).According to V.B. Ivanov (1996), L.N. Kiseleva (1985), and B.Ya. Ostrovsky (1994), the Dari language has eight vowel phonemes, five of which are long (â, ô, u, ê, i) and three of which are short (a, o, e). The phoneme ê is derived from the diphthong aı, and the phoneme ô is derived from the diphthong au. It is worth noting that in her book 'Farsi-Kabuli Language' (1960), L.N. Kiseleva (Dorofeeva) describes the vowels in the Dari language (Kabuli) as a, i, u (unstressed-short), ī, ū, ā, ē, ō (stressed-long). However, in the book 'Dari Language of Afghanistan' (1985), they are expressed as a, o, e (short) and â, ô, u, ê, i (long). It appears that the author changed her stance over time. Initially, the scientist demonstrated that the Dari language has retained its archaic features in comparison to Persian by fully reflecting its phonological system (Dorofeeva, 1960). Subsequently, she transcribed the short i phoneme in classical Dari as e, and the short u phoneme as o in the Dari language. In Dari, the phonemes 'ï' and 'u' change their pronunciation when they are followed by certain phonemes. For instance, when they come before the phonemes 'ayn' and 'h', they are pronounced like 'ê' (dêh, êlānāt). Similarly, when they come after the phonemes 'q' and 'γ', they are pronounced like the phoneme 'ы' in Russian (qita) (Kisileva, 1985). In her book published in 1985, the author states that the short 'e' phoneme is pronounced as 'i' (ziyâd) when it precedes the

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semivowel 'y', but as 'e' (deq, qet'a) when it precedes back and explosive consonants (Kisileva, 1985). However, the author does not provide a reason for the change in her definition of phonemes.

A.Kuronbekov notes that the vowel phonemes of the classical Persian (Classic Dari) language are almost identical to those of the modern Dari language of Afghanistan and the Tajik language of Tajikistan. It is worth noting that the Persian language has undergone some changes. The Turkic-speaking Safavid dynasty ruled Iran from the 16th century, resulting in the integration of many Turkic words into the Persian language. Additionally, the influence of Turkish pronunciation on the phonological system of Persian has been demonstrated (Kuronbekov, 2009).

Researchers have also identified archaic aspects of the vowel system in Dari, including the retention of the 8 vowel phonemes found in classical Dari.

The Dari language preserves the passive long vowels ô and ê from Middle Persian and Classical Dari, as seen in words such as têz (Middle Persian, Classical Dari tēz), dêwâr (Middle Persian, Classical Dari dēwâr), and dôst (Middle Persian, Classical Dari dōst).

Unlike Modern Persian and Tajik, Dari vowels differ in terms of longness and shortness, which is typical of Middle Persian and Classical Dari languages (Abaev et al., 1982).

D.A. Reese (2008) and A. Baker (2016) both note that Modern Dari has eight vowel phonemes: i, u, ʊ, e, ɛ, a, o, and ɑ/ʌ. Windfur (2009) indicates that Modern Persian has six vowel phonemes: i, u, o, e, a, and ā, with corresponding long pairs for three of the short vowels (e, o, and a). In spoken Persian, the short vowels e, o, and a undergo assimilation. For instance, kelid becomes kĭlid [key], xeyābān becomes xĭyābun [street], be-gu becomes bo-gu [say], madrasa becomes madrase [school], and nahār becomes nāhār [noon].

P.N. Khanlari, H. Anvari, and H. Ahmadi-Givi (Anvari & Givi, 2012) also express a similar opinion, but there is a slight difference in the designation of vowels: a, e, o, ā, ū, i.

On the basis of the above-mentioned sources, the changes in the development of vocalism in the languages compared can be observed through the following table (short vowels in the first 3 lines: a – ˊ, e – ِ , o – ُ; in the 4th line: â long vowel – آ, in the 5th line: u long vowel – و , in line 6: ī long vowel –

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ی, in line 7: ê long vowel – ی yâ-ye majhul, in line 8: ô long vowel – و wâw-e majhulis given):

Classic Dari	a	i	u	ā	ū	ī	ē	ō
Ibn Sina (980) – Classic Dari	a	u	y	o	ȳ	ū		
Nasiruddin Tusi (1245) – Classic Dari	a	u	y	o	ȳ	e		
Giyasiddin Rampuri (1827) – Classic Dari	a	u	y	o	ȳ	ū	e	ȳ
A. Kuranbekov – Classic Dari	a	i	u	ā	ū	ī	ē	ō
D.A. Reese (2008) – Classic Dari	æ	ɪ	ʊ	ɑ	u	i	e	o
M.N. Saidi(1969) – Modern Dari	a	i	u	aa	uu	ii	e	o
M.R. Ilham (1972) – Modern Dari	a	I	U	A	u	i	e	o
M.H. Yamin (1973) – Modern Dari	a	i	u	â	û	î	e	o
R. Farhadi (1974) – Modern Dari	a	e	o	â	u	i	ê	ô
The book "Fundamentals of Iranian Linguistics; the new Iranian languages: Western group, Caspian languages" (1982) – Modern Dari	a	e	o	ā̄	ū	ī	ē	ō
L.N. Kiseleva (1985) – Modern Dari	a	e	o	â	u	i	ê	ô
V.B. Ivanov (1996) – Modern Dari	a	e	o	ā	u	i	ē	ō
D.A. Reese (2008) – Modern Dari	a	ɛ	ʊ	ɑ	u	i	e	o
Kh. Urmur (2011) – Modern Dari	a	e	o	ā̄	ū	ī	ē	ů
A. Majeed (2015) – Modern Dari	a	i	u	â	Û	Î	e	o
A. Baker (2016) – Modern Dari	ɐ	ɛ	ʊ	ʌ	u	i	e	o
The book "Fundamentals of Iranian Linguistics; the new Iranian languages: Western group, Caspian languages" (1982) – Modern Persian	ä	e	o	å	û	î	î	o

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P.N. Khanlari, (2002) – Modern Persian	*a*	*e*	*o*	*ā*	*ū*	*i*	*i*	*ū*
H. Anvari and H. Ahmadi-Givi (2011) – Modern Persian	*a*	*e*	*o*	*ā*	*ū*	*i*	*i*	*ū*
G. Windfur (2009) – Modern Persian	*a*	*e*	*o*	*ā*	*u*	*i*	*i*	*u*

The classical Dari language has 8 vowel phonemes, a fact that has been recorded since the 17th century. There are differing opinions on how to mark short vowels e – ِ, o – ُ and long vowels ê – ى yâ-ye majhul, ô – و wâw-e majhul in the Dari language.

In the works of M.N. Saidi, M.H. Yamin, and A. Majid, the short vowel e – ِ is represented as i. However, in the works of M.R. Ilhom, R. Farhadi, L.N. Kiseleva, V.B. Ivanov, and Kh. Urmur, the short vowel e – ِ is represented as e – ِ. In the book 'Fundamentals of Iranian Linguistics: The New Iranian Languages - Western Group, Caspian Languages', Urmur is represented as 'e', while D.A. Reese and A. Bakers recorded it as 'ɛ'. The definitions provided by M.N. Saidi, M.R. Ilhom, M.H. Yamin, and A. Majid align with the description given by L.N. Kiseleva: unrounded, open, front vowel, of medium width, very short, and unstable. However, according to L.N. Kiseleva (1985), the pronunciation of the phoneme 'e' is closer to the long vowel 'ê' than to the phoneme 'I'. D.A. Reese and A. Baker's (2016) definition is not unique, except that they base their representation of phonemes on English phonology. Below are the results of their experiment supporting this point:

Vowel	Duration (ms)		
	25% Quantile	Median	75% Quantile
e	293	302	312
i	272	282	296
ʌ	184	282	317
u	247	263	278
o	222	246	281
ɐ	158	222	269
ɛ	181	204	241
ʊ	169	177	190

In expressing the short phoneme o – ؘ, M.N. Saidi, M.H. Yamin, A. Majid и, M.R. Ilhom U, R. Farhadi, L.N. Kiseleva, V. Ivanov, Kh. Urmur o, in the book "Fundamentals of Iranian Linguistics; the new Iranian languages: Western group, Caspian languages", D.A. Reese and A. Bakers used ʊ symbols. Definitions given by Afghan scientists according to the description given by L.N. Kiseleva: lipped, open, tongue back, medium wide, very short and unstable. L.N. Kiseleva notes that the phoneme o is pronounced closer to the long vowel ô than the phoneme и (Kisileva, 1985).

The opinions of Afghan scholars are not unanimous. Afghan scientists (M.N. Saidi, M.R. Ilhom, M.H. Yamin) tried to show that vowels in the Dari language are preserved from the classical Dari language, but in the researches after the 1980s, scientists followed the path of determining the vowels in the Dari language in imitation of the Persian language.

According to the experimental conclusion mentioned above, it is appropriate to refer to the short phoneme ɛ as short o, and the phoneme ʊ as closer to the phoneme o. The modern Dari language should define the short vowels a, i, o, long â, u, ī, ô, ê based on this information.

If V.A.Efimov, T.N.Pakhalina considers the long ê and ô vowels to be more open and lower wide than the short e and o vowels, B.Y.Ostrovsky and L.N. Kiseleva, on the other hand, describes short e and o as more open and lower wide vowels (Efimov et al., 1982).

In the description of the long vowels ê and ô, M.R. Ilhom emphasizes that they have two allophones. It proves with examples that under a strong accent (primary accent) a long (sêr, kôh) and a shorter (elA, bUro) are pronounced under a weak (secondary) accent (Ilhom, 1971).

The table above illustrates the changes in vowel phonemes over time. To avoid confusion, the table uses a simplified phonological transcription in the Latin alphabet. It is important to note that there are differing opinions on the representation of vowel phonemes in the Dari language:

Classic Dari	a	ā	i	ī	ē	u	ū	ō
Modern Dari	a	â	i	ī	ê	o	u	ô
Persian Dari	a	ā	e	i	o	ū		

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The quality of the vowel a in the classical Dari language is somewhat different. The short a phoneme in classical Dari and Dari languages is unlabitated, open, and the tongue is midline, lower wide, while the short a in modern Persian is unlabitated, frontline, and pronounced in a slightly lower tongue position than the phoneme a in English (Abaev et al., 1982). afgandan (cl. Dari) – afgandan (Dari) – afkandan (Persian) [throw], farmān (cl. Dari) – farmân (Dari) – farmān (Persian) [edict] (Urmur, 2012).

The long ā in the classical Dari language has not changed in Dari or Persian: slightly lipped, open, tongue back, lower wide: āb (cl. Dari) – âb (Dari) – āb (Persian) [water], āzād (cl. Dari) – âzâd (Dari) – āzād (Persian) [free] (Urmur, 2012).

The short phoneme i in the classical Dari language does not change in Dari when it comes at the beginning of a word, but in Persian it changes to the phoneme e: imrōz (cl. Dari) – imrûz (Dari) – emruz (Persian) [today] (but Kh. Urmur also mentions the variant emrůz in Dari notes (Encyclopedia, 2012)) in some words the short i phoneme in the classical Dari language changed to a long ê in Dari language and a short e phoneme in Persian: si (cl. Dari) – sê (Dari) – se (Persian) [three (count)] (Urmur, 2012). In some words, the short i phoneme has changed to a phoneme: bistar (cl. Dari) – bistar/bastar (Dari) – bastar (Persian) [bed] (Urmur, 2012).

The long ī phoneme in Classical Dari language is unchanged in Dari language, and in Persian it is a constant i: bīst (cl. Dari) – bīst (Dari) – bist (Persian) [twenty]. Classical Dari and modern Dari have two variants of the same word. For example, دیگر dīgar and دگرdigar [other], میرزا mīrzâ and مرزا mirzâ [Mirza] (Dorofeeva, 1960). Only dīgar, mīrzā forms are found in Persian language. Classical Dari had two different pronunciations of تو, tu/tō, and these two variants are preserved in Dari, while Persian has only the variant to (Urmur, 2012). This was noted by M.N. Saidi and Kh. Urmur in their works.

Classical Dari phoneme yâ-ye majhul (ē) was preserved in Dari, changed to long i in Persian: safēd (cl. Dari) - safêd (Dari) - safid (Persian) [white] (Urmur, 2012).

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The short u phoneme in the classical Dari language has become a short o phoneme in the Dari and Persian languages: anjuman (cl. Dar.) – anjoman (Dari) – anjoman (Persian) [meeting], xušk (cl. Dari) – xošk (Dari) – xošk (Persian) [dry] (Urmur, 2012).

The classical Dari long ū phoneme has not changed in Dari or Persian: dūr (cl. Dari) – dur (Dari) – dūr (Persian) [long], jādū (cl. Dari) – jâdu (Dari) – jādū (Persian) [magic] (Urmur, 2012).

The classical Dari phoneme wâw-e majhul (ō) is preserved originally in Dari. In Persian, it became a stable ū phoneme: gōš (cl. Dari) – gôš (Dari) – gūš (Persian) [ear], pōst (cl. Dari) – pôst (Dari) – pūst (Persian) [skin] (Urmur, 2012).

In some words, in the classical Dari language, the phoneme i has changed to a in Dari, and to e in Persian: dirāz (cl. Dari) – darāz (Dari) – derāz (Persian) [long] (Urmur, 2012).

In classical Dari and modern Dari languages, vowels are classified based on their length and shortness, while in modern Persian, they are classified based on their quantity. The stable vowels in current Persian are i, ā, and ū, while the non-stable vowels are e, o, and a. Therefore, classical Dari has eight vowel phonemes, all of which are retained in modern Dari.

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