

## The Relationship between Turkic and Mongolian Languages and Errors in Detection of Turkic and Mongolian Loan Words in Persian<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

In the past two centuries, the connection between languages has attracted the attention of researchers. Linguists have classified most world languages as large language families. Among these families, we can mention the Semitic, Indo-European, Dravidian, Uralic, and Altaic languages. In most cases, the kinship among the languages in a language family has been proven, but in some cases, there is only talk about a language family theory. The Altaic languages are among large language groups where there are disagreements about the connection between their members. There are two completely different standpoints about the Altaic languages. The first standpoint considers these two languages to be of the same root and language family in the framework of the Altaic languages. The second standpoint is based on the view that these two languages do not belong to a single language family and each language is a language independent from the other, this standpoint puts forward the argument of an interlanguage contact.

The proponents of the first standpoint have expressed their views in the format of the theory of Altaic languages. According to this theory, the Turkic, Mongolian, Tungusic-Manchu, and Korean languages, and in the opinion of some linguists the Japanese language as well, are all branches of a single common root language. Therefore, according to this theory, both Turkic and Mongolian languages are members of the same family of languages. These linguists believe that the Turkic and Mongolian languages were branched in a distant past from a single language and over time have gradually turned into two independent languages. Researchers do not have precise information on the history of the differentiation of these two languages, but the history of the split of the presumed Altaic languages is believed to date back to some time between three and four thousand BC. The most important evidence offered by this group of linguists for their claim that the Turkic and Mongolian languages belong to the same language family is the equivalency of

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“Z~R” and “SH (Š)~L” consonants in these languages. This means that in some words the equivalent of the consonant /Z/ in Turkic languages is the consonant /R/ in the Mongolian language, and also the consonant /Sh/ in Turkic is equivalent with /L/ in the Mongolian language.

But the linguists in the second group, that is the opponents of the theory of Altaic languages, believe that the two Turkic and Mongolian languages were not related, but have been in a deep linguistic relationship. These linguists believe that the Turkic and Mongolian languages do not belong to a language family, but in the past, they have been in a close relationship due to geographical proximity as well as the coexistence of the Turks and Mongols in a particular period of history. One of the most important reasons presented by this group of linguists, as an evidence for their claim that Turkic and Mongolian languages are not related is that basic words in the two Turkic and Mongolian languages are not equivalent. Based on the opinion of these linguists, changing or borrowing basic words like human body parts and numbers between these two languages is rarely seen. By reviewing 16 basic words related to human body parts, the German linguist Gerhard Doerfer found that none of the 16 basic words are common among the Altaic languages, whereas among the members of large family languages such as Semitic, Indo-European, Dravidian and Uralic languages a few of these words are common. Therefore, it can be said that although there are common words between Turkic and Mongolian languages, the presence of common words is not an evidence of these languages having the same root. These similar common features have been formed as a result of linguistic contact.

Many words have entered the Persian language from Turkic and Mongolian languages. Especially with the occupation of Iran by the Mongols, many words have entered the Persian and Turkic from Mongolian. By reviewing different Persian language sources, especially the dictionaries, we realize that Iranian scholars and lexicographers have made some mistakes in recognizing Turkic and Mongolian word such that there is no consensus among the lexicographers in recognizing Turkic and Mongolian words from each other. The lexicographers have sometimes used the compound term “Mongolian-Turkic” in identifying the origin of some words. According to the explanations given above, the use of such compound terms for clarifying the origin and root of a word is not etymologically correct. For example, in Persian dictionaries, the origin of words such as Jolo (front), Qarāvol (warden), Keshik (sentinel), Jeiran (gazelle), Maral (deer), Sheltaq (conflict), and Yasavol (mounted mace-bearer) have been mentioned as Turkic. However, all these words have Mongolian roots. Errors in identifying Turkic and Mongolian words is not limited to Persian dictionaries. This situation can be seen in many Persian works written in the field of literature. In this paper, the goal is to study the relationship between the Turkic and Mongolian languages in general and show the extent of the difference between these two languages from different aspects. In the end, to discover the extent of the difference between the two Turkic and Mongolian languages, some sample Mongolian sentences with their Turkic (Turkish and Azerbaijani) as well as Persian translations have been included.

**Keywords:** Turkic, Mongolian, Relationship between Turkic and Mongolian, Loan Words from Turkic and Mongolian in Persian