

A Scientific Way of Learning Gurmukhi for Users of Shahmukhi

ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ ← شاه مُکھی

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ਮੰਗਤ ਰਾਏ ਭਾਰਦੂਜ

منگت رائے بھاردواج

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بابا نانک جی، تہاڈے اس غریب خادم کول جو کجھ وی سی،

اوہ سبھ تہاڈی خدمت وچ حاضر ہے۔

ਬਾਬਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀ, ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਇਸ ਗਰੀਬ ਖਾਦਿਮ ਕੋਲ ਜੋ ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਸੀ,
ਉਹ ਸਭ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਖਿਦਮਤ ਵਿਚ ਹਾਜ਼ਿਰ ਹੈ।

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01

A Word from the Publishers

A Pole Star of Panjabi Linguistics

Dr Mangat Rai Bhardwaj belongs to the great community of Panjabi scholars who have been spreading the light of the knowledge about language for centuries. With this book, he has created history by accomplishing a unique task of uniting the the great heritage of Panjabi literature and culture torn apart among the speakers of Panjabi in the East and the West Punjabs and overseas who know English. A literature is a mirror to its society and its culture. According to the great Russian scholar Igor Serebriakov, if you wish to understand the soul of the Panjabi society, you need to understand the literature created by its people by transcending the barriers of language and script. Most of the literature created by the Panjabi-speaking people is in Panjabi, but it is written in the Gurmukhi and the Shahmukhi scripts. It is indeed a great tragedy that with the partition of India in 1947 our great inherited Panjabi-speaking land was divided into two parts. Our Panjabi language and literature have been suffering the consequences ever since.

Common wisdom is that the roots of a culture and its languages go back into their heritage. Religion and spirituality arose out of human desire to understand the Creator and His creation. A great deal in this area has rational thought as well as imagination and pure speculation. A civilisation develops slowly and a culture arises from it. A culture creates words consisting of sounds to express thought and feelings and for the purpose of social communication. In order to preserve the ephemeral auditory sounds, words and utterances for a longer time, their visual representations are created. Symbols for the sounds or words of a language are then systematised into a script or writing system. Usually, a language (Persian, Arabic, English, for example) is written in only one script. But some languages are traditionally written in more than one script. For example, Sindhi is written in the Devanagari script as well as an extended version of the Perso-Arabic script. Panjabi is written in the Gurmukhi script as well as the Perso-Arabic script. Recently, the name Shahmukhi has been coined for this script when it is used for writing Panjabi.

Most linguists believe that most North Indian languages are descended from the language of the Vedas known as Vedic Sanskrit. Likewise, all the scripts of the Indian origin are descendants of the old Brahmi script written from left to right. Gurmukhi belongs to this Brahmi family. The phonological system underlying Gurmukhi is the one discovered in minute detail and with great precision for Sanskrit thousands of years ago. As Dr Bhardwaj shows in this manual, letters of the Indian writing systems are arranged on the basis of their pronunciation – from the throat, movements of the tongue over different parts the palate and the teeth, and the flow of the outgoing airstream through the lips and the nose. The biggest problem a writer faces

while writing Panjabi in a borrowed script is that the script has no letters for some typical Panjabi sounds. Examples are the Panjabi sounds represented by the native Gurmukhi letters like ਙ, ਞ, ੜ, ਟ, ਢ, ਧ, ਠ and many others. The extremely common Panjabi word ਪਾਣੀ written in Shamukhi is sounds like ਪਾਨੀ, which ruins the Panjabi nature of the pronunciation.

To our knowledge, Dr Bhardwaj is a rare (if not unique) combination of a renowned Panjabi-speaking theoretical linguist, experienced and dedicated language teacher, erudite scholar and creative writer (essayist) writing in Panjabi. He believes in doing things thoroughly, and not with half-hearted guess work (ਤੁੱਢੇਬਾਜ਼ੀ) as many half-baked Panjabi “scholars” and “linguists” are doing. The very fact that he has taken up this task of bridging the gap between the Panjabi writers in the West Punjab and East Punjab should be a welcome step.

We are immensely pleased to present his work to the Panjabi writers and readers who wish to learn Gurmukhi. We wish Dr Bhardwaj a long, healthy and fruitful life.

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Preface

You are most welcome to read this book even if you are reading it simply to add to your “general knowledge” about Panjabi and its scripts. But if you are seriously interested in learning the Gurmukhi *script* (not the mythical Gurmukhi *language*), I promise you a unique learning opportunity based on my own experience of learning Shahmukhi. Actually, I started learning Urdu (both language and script) before the word Shahmukhi was coined or came to my knowledge. The name Shahmukhi was coined on the analogy of Gurmukhi to refer to the Urdu script when it is used for writing Panjabi. But it is 100% Urdu script.

I started my primary school education 1951, two years after the Punjab government discontinued teaching Urdu in its schools. But the use of Urdu in some government departments continued until the mid sixties. I was attracted to my father’s calligraphic Urdu handwriting with black ink and a reed pens (which he himself crafted). He agreed. He got an Urdu *qaida* (primer) for me. I wrote down in it the names of the Urdu letters in Gurmukhi. He also taught me how some letters change their shapes according to their position in the word, which letters can be joined *to* other preceding letters but cannot be joined *by* other following letters. He explained that marks like *zabar*, *zer*, *pesh* and *tashdid* are omitted in writing if it is clear *from the context* what the writer wants to say.

So far, so good. I learnt all this in a few weeks. But then I found that it was actually “so far, so *bad*.” My inquisitive and logical mind started asking question when I started reading Urdu texts. Some of the questions were “Why are there two or three or four letters for a single sound in some cases? Why does the spelling sometimes indicate a pronunciation not found in actual practice? What is the actual pronunciation of the letter ξ ?” Being used to the English spelling system, I was not surprised by these facts. I simply wanted to know if there was any logical or sensible reason for the existence of such anomalies and irregularities in the Urdu writing system. To my great surprise, these questions *delighted* him instead of annoying him. His own education had gone no further than an Urdu-medium middle school. He had an extremely sharp and honestly logical mind. But all his ambitions to get more education had been thwarted by adverse circumstances and lack of opportunities – parents’ death, poverty and family responsibilities he had to shoulder at the age of 16. He started and finished his career as a village *patwari*. Instead of answering my questions, he looked at me with a strange expression in his eyes and said, “You are better educated than me. Find out the answers yourself. May God help you!” He regarded me as his own spatial and temporal extension. He could not honestly give any “half-baked crude guesswork” to himself!

I have to mention with great regret that when I asked some Panjabi scholars of Urdu and Persian (some of them university professors) about some anomalies and irregularities in the Urdu spelling system (now applicable to Shamukhi as well), I mostly got “half-baked crude guesswork” answers which my father and I never liked. Some of these “scholars” used these anomalies to downgrade the Perso-Arabic writing system in order to praise Gurmukhi, in which, as the claim goes, “You write exactly as you speak and speak exactly as you write.” This claim about Gurmukhi is also a “half-baked crude guesswork” of a different type.

This book does not aim at teaching Shahmukhi. There are plenty of primers and websites for teaching Urdu. You can use them. I mention these anomalies in order to emphasise the fact that you do not find them in the Gurmukhi writing system. But I will never cheat myself and others by claiming chauvinistically that in Gurmukhi “You write exactly as you speak and speak exactly as you write.” When Pakistani users learn Urdu, they learn both the language and the script. But when they learn Gurmukhi, they learn the script *only*. They already know the language (unless they suffer from the delusion of there being a Gurmukhi *language*!) *Gurmukhi is not a language but a script used for writing Panjabi.*

God answered my father’s prayer when I studied linguistics in University of Manchester (UK) from 1978 to 1982. Here I was trained in the science of linguistic analysis by some of the finest world-famous linguists. I also used the great University library full of books on Arabic and Persian linguistics. I discussed the Arabic and Persian writing systems with excellent scholars in this field and found out answers to the questions which my father could not answer. So he found the answers through his spatial and temporal extension – *me*. I realised that the Urdu script is a *3rd hand Arabic script*. It was forced upon the Iranians by the conquering Arabs. The Iranians could not speak some Arabic sounds and replaced them with the sounds they were able to pronounce. They added 4 letters needed for their language and turned it into their *2nd hand Arabic+4* (or Perso-Arabic) script. This Arabic+4 script was brought to India by the conquering Turks and Afghans. Three more letters were added for the Indian languages. So the *3rd hand Urdu script* is an Arabic+4+3 script. Shahmukhi based on the Urdu script is thus a *4th hand Arabic script*.

As any honest scientific researcher should have done, I took an Arab and an Iranian linguist to the university refectory (canteen) to have tea with me and learnt from them the original Arabic sounds represented by the letters of the script and how the Iranians changed them. I represented the Urdu faction. The picture became crystal clear to me.

In the University, there is an excellent phonetics lab with modern machines with which I analysed the Panjabi sounds and tones. I fell so madly in love with the linguistic analysis of

Preface

Punjabi that even as an M.A. student I was able to do nearly half of the work needed for a Ph.D. degree. My teachers were so much impressed with my dedication that they recommended that the University grant me a Ph.D. scholarship, which I got.

My father's genes were doing in me what they could not do in him! He detested “half-baked crude guesswork” and so do I.

I do not want you to give up reading and writing Panjabi in Shahmukhi. It has been used for writing Panjabi since the 12th century, when Baba Farid Ganjshakar used it in his writings. It is an excellent script. For historical reasons, it has developed the anomalies and irregularities which upset some devotees of Gurmukhi. But **all** scripts are like this. Even Gurmukhi is not perfect (as is claimed by some of its chauvinistic devotees).

I was encouraged to undertake the writing of this book by a report that many Punjabi young men and women in Pakistan are interested in learning Gurmukhi. Some of them are university students. It is meant for their teachers as well. I assume that they are intellectually equipped and prepared to work hard to understand the materials I present here. But if they want an “easy” book, I am afraid they will be disappointed. Nothing worth learning is “easy” and available without some hard work and heartache. At some places, I give them some exercise to stretch their intellectual muscles. Such exercises are marked by the following symbol:



Intellectual Muscle Practice

There is some slightly more technical stuff as well. It should not be too difficult for a dedicated learner. but it is clearly marked by the following symbol. Having been a teacher all my working life, I know that there are all sorts of learners. Some of them wish to “go into the depth” of what they learn and ask searching questions. This information is meant for those learners. I have no desire to “show off my learning”. Nor am I an arrogant person to burden the aspiring learners with the information which is beyond them. You can easily disregard such information without losing the thread of my argument. However, I must emphasise that every honest *teacher* must know such technical details. But it would be churlish to *force* them on anybody.



For Teachers and More Advanced Learners

But I expect every good and responsible *teacher* to know these technical details and make use of them in their individual way in their teaching practice. The next chapter deals with some features of Shahmukhi which you will not find in Gurmukhi because the two scripts belong to different families.

I know fully well that my work suffers from my own human limitations. But if it is able to inspire even one person to carry on my work further from where I leave, I will regard my endeavour to have achieved its objective.

Please remember: I **do not** intend to teach you Panjabi language. I hate the spelling Punjabi (with a U, based on the mispronunciation of an Englishman from the north of England!) I was one of the the teachers who advocted the use of the spelling Panjabi in the (UK).

Acknowledgements

I hope that any knowledgeable, careful and sympathetic reader of this book will understand and forgive my initial misgivings about my ability to author, design, illustrate and typeset this book (“a job for at least four specialists”, as one of my close friends described it) for the types of learners the book is aimed at. But I have been extremely fortunate to receive help and encouragement from a number of friends who kept me going even when I was on the verge of quitting because of the sheer desperation at the slow pace of progress. I must specifically mention

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Chapter 1

Some Relevant Features of Shahmukhi

I hope that two of my assumptions about you are correct: (i) you read and write Panjabi (language) in the Shahmukhi *script* and wish to continue using Shahmukhi, and (ii) you are genuinely interested in learning Gurmukhi in order to be able to read and enjoy the writings of the people who write Panjabi in the Gurmukhi script.

The purpose of this chapter and the next is to demonstrate that the underlying systems of Shahmukhi and Gurmukhi are very different. Therefore, the “letter for letter correspondence” approach adopted by some teachers is misleading. But if you like *their* approach, you are welcome to adopt it.

According to the tradition, the use of the Perso-Arabic (later known as the Urdu/Shahmukhi) script to write Panjabi started in the 13th century with Sheikh Farid Ganjshakar. But a full-fledged text in Gurmukhi (the Sikh holy scripture *Guru Granth Sahib*) was written down in the 16th century, though the script started developing some centuries earlier. If you occasionally wish to write Panjabi in Gurmukhi (as I do write Panjabi in Shahmukhi), you can learn this as well. I hope that this book will help you. I repeat what I said in the Preface. A *language* is different from a *script* used for writing it. But, unfortunately, the two are very often conflated, even by those who prepare books and websites for teaching “Punjabi”.

The name *Shahmukhi* was coined, if I have the correct information, because this script was used by some great Panjabi poets whose name had the word Shah – Shah Hussain, Waris Shah, Bulleh Shah, Hashim Shah and some others. It is 100% pure Urdu script transferred to Panjabi. Since Urdu is Pakistan’s national language you must follow the rules and conventions of the Urdu script when you use it for writing Panjabi.

A beautiful script

Shahmukhi is a *4th hand* Arabic script. The Arabic script was adopted by the Iranians, who added to it four letters for the sounds which Arabic did not possess, and thus turned it into an Arabic+4 script. They changed the pronunciation of some Arabic sounds which they could not pronounce and replaced them with the *nearest-sounding* Persian sounds. When the Arabic+4 script was adopted for the Indian languages, three more letters for the Indian sounds were added, making the Urdu script the Arabic+4+3 script. However, the spellings of the words borrowed from Arabic and Persian were retained in Urdu *with Indianised pronunciation*. This fact has to

be emphasised because, as in all such cases of borrowing a script from some other language, the “gap between spelling and pronunciation” is inevitable. In the words borrowed from the donor languages, the original spellings are retained or changed minimally. But their original pronunciation gets modified according to the phonological system of the borrowing language. At end of this chapter, examples will be given from the English spelling system to show that this process can sometimes result in utter chaos.

The Urdu script is an extremely beautiful cursive and cascading script (known as Nastaliq نستعلیق ناستعلیق) which I fell in love with, as I have said in the Preface. But, unfortunately, it cannot be used in this book for two reasons: (i) the available Nastaliq fonts do not have two special symbols which I need, and (ii) the computer program I use for typesetting this book does not accept the available Nastaliq fonts. So I have been forced to use the Arabic Naskh font. But any reader of Shahmukhi can read it.

The chauvinistic and fanatical devotees of Gurmukhi find some “faults” with the Urdu script (applying equally well to Shahmukhi). But these ignorant people do not really understand the relation between the script (especially a borrowed one) and the reading and writing of a language.

The most chauvinistic (and hence the most ignorant) devotees of Gurmukhi find the following “defects” in the Urdu (and hence the Shahmukhi) writing system:

- (1) Some sounds are represented by more than one character.
- (2) Some words are pronounced differently from what the spelling suggests. (Examples are given below). The spellings of some words are completely *conventionalised*, so that you simply have to take them *as they are* without bothering about their spelling.
- (3) The speakers of Panjabi find some foreign sounds hard to pronounce and replace them with the *nearest-sounding* native sounds (as the speakers of Persian did with the Arabic sounds).
- (4) Other than the major letters, some symbols (such as *zer*, *zabar*, *pesh*, *tashdid*) are very often *not* used and the reader has to depend on the *context* in order to pronounce and understand the words. The unkind word “guesswork” is sometimes used for this.

Then they proudly (and even arrogantly) declare that Gurmukhi does not have these “defects” and that in Panjabi written in Gurmukhi “You write exactly as you speak and speak exactly as you write.” This is certainly *not* the case, as the next chapter will show. The “half-baked crude guesswork” sometimes results in totally *insane* claims like “Gurmukhi is a phonetic language.” This claim (very often made even by some highly educated Panjabi “scholars” as well) is insane because, firstly, Gurmukhi is a *script*, not a *language*, and secondly, no “pho-

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netic” script (representing pronunciation exactly and consistently) can ever be created. Each *living* language changes with time, and the “phonetic fit” between spelling and pronunciation goes on loosening, resulting in huge gaps after some time. The example of English given below illustrates this.

Now let us deal with some of the alleged “defects” of Shahmukhi. The sound shown phonetically within the square brackets [] is used in Panjabi. The phonetic symbols are dealt with in the next chapter.

(1) Sounds represented by more than one character

ث ص س sound as [s]

صدا [sadā]

سلام [salām]

وارث [vāris]

صابن [sāban]

خبیث [KHabīTs]

As has been pointed out earlier, Arabic has three different sounds for the letters ث ص س. We need not go into their phonetic details. But if you are interested, read the description in Chapter 4. س is pronounced in the normal Persian and Urdu manner; ص is pronounced by retracting the root of the tongue into the part of the throat known as pharynx (see chapter 4) and is known as a *pharyngeal* sound; and for the pronunciation of ث, the tongue does not touch the teeth and the outgoing breath escapes with friction (called a *fricative* sound, as in the English sound in *think*). The common Iranian people could not pronounce the three sounds distinctly like the speakers of Arabic. So they pronounced all the three as [s]. This Persian pronunciation was adopted in Urdu. Whenever there is a case of “more than one letter for a single sound”, these are mostly the cases of the Arabic *fricative* sounds or the *pharyngeal* sounds. Some examples are given below.

ه ح sound as [h]

ہفتہ [haftā]

ہوا [havā]

نہر [nahar]

رحم [raham]

لِحَاظ [lihāz]

محل [mahal]

ظ ذ ض ز sound as [z]

زبان [zabān]

زہر [zahar]

إِجَازَت [ijāzat]

نظر [nazar]

ظاہر [zāhir]

ضمیر [zamīr]

رضا [razā]

لذیذ [lazīz]

ذلیل [zalīl]

ط ت sound as [t]

تیل [tel]

تکلیف [taklīf]

طوطا [totā]

طریقہ [tarīqā]

(2) Word pronounced differently from what the spelling suggests

Any psycholinguist worth his or her salt can tell you that nobody (except beginner-learners) reads by adding letters. *We all read by scanning full words within a certain context.* There are hundreds of such words. Some examples are:

بالکل [bilkul] and *not* *[bāikal]

عیسیٰ [Īsā]

موسیٰ [mūsā]

تقریباً [taqrīban]

عموماً [amūman]

مثلاً [maslan]

The star sign (*) is used to mark the spelling or pronunciation which is not in actual use or is considered “wrong”.

The *he Mukhtafi* • at the end of a word is pronounced not as [h] but as [ā] in *most* (but not all) cases. Examples are:

پتہ [patā] *not* *[patah]

ہفتہ [haftā]

گلہ [gilā]

نہ [nā]

کہ [ki]

The letter ع , which stood for a *pharyngeal* vowel sound is Arabic (see Chapter 4), has no fixed sound in Urdu and Panjabi.

عام آدمی [ām ādmī]

علاج [ilāj]

Mukhtafi ہ and ع can be said to be “silent letters” in some contexts and or are pronounced differently in different contexts.

(3) Replacing the foreign sounds with the nearest-sounding native sounds

We have seen in Section 1 above how the different Arabic sounds were replaced by the Persian speakers with their native sounds and again by the Indian speakers.

Speakers of Panjabi (other than very careful speakers who have studied Urdu and Persian) find the following Arabic and Persian sounds difficult to pronounce. Most of them replace them with the nearest-sounding native Panjabi sounds

ق is pronounced as ک [k]

خ is pronounced as کہ [kʰ]

غ is pronounced as گ [g]

ز is pronounced as ج [j]

ف is pronounced as پھ [pʰ]

Almost 99% speakers of Panjabi in India, Pakistan and other countries pronounce چاگُو as چاڳُو

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*[cākū], سنڌوک as [sandūk], کھرڙوڙه as [k^harbūjā], باغ as [bāg], فرش as [p^harSH], and so on.

Towards the close of the nineteenth century, letters for these sounds were added to the Gurmukhi alphabet. (See page 23). But these letters came into general acceptance only after about 50 years. Most Panjabi writers in East Punjab who do not know Urdu (and thus cannot pronounce words with these sounds correctly) are not sure where to use these letters. Some of them adopt the wise option: completely avoiding these letters. Some writers get confused with words like جزيره which sound should be written as ਜ [z] and which should be written as ਜ [j]. The result of such a confusion can sometimes be comical, as with

جليل [jalīl] illustrious, honourable

ذليل [zalīl] depraved, dishonourable

The disastrous consequences of using ذليل [zalīl] in place of جليل [jalīl] are not difficult to imagine.

(4) **Omission of symbols like zer, zabar, pesh, tashdid in writing** and depending upon the context in order to pronounce and understand the words.

This is the standard writing convention which started in Arabic writing. These symbols are used in writing only the verses from the Holy *Quran* (and sometimes children's books). This convention is carried on in Persian, Urdu and Panjabi written in Shamukhi.

But you are not allowed to omit the equivalents of these symbols in Gurmukhi.

Guru Nanak Dev was a fine scholar of Persian and Arabic. But he chose Gurmukhi for his writings. Respecting the Arabic and Persian spelling baggage in the borrowed words and the omission of the above-mentioned symbols appear to be the main reason why he wrote in Gurmukhi. *Zer* and *pesh* denote short vowels which are extremely important in Panjabi. *Zabar* is also very important in some cases. *Tashdid* marks the stretching (or “doubling”) of a consonant sound. The Gurmukhi equivalents of these symbols *must* be used where necessary. Depending on the context is not regarded as sensible.

For example کتا will not do, even if the context makes it clear what is meant. It must be made clear whether the writer wants to write کِتا [kittā] (profession) or کُتا [kuttā] (dog) even if the context makes it very clear which word is written. The words مَوْت [ma^ut] (death) and مَوْت

[mūt] (urine) will have different spellings in Gurmukhi. جت [jat] (celibacy) and جت [jatt] (thick fur) should have different spellings, as should ست [sat] (essence, purity) ست [satt] (seven). پتا [pitā] is father and پتا [pittā] is gall bladder. كلا means art, and كلا [kallā] means lonely. The context may make the uses of the *tashdid* unnecessary in Urdu and Shahmukhi, but the omission of its equivalent (known as *addhak*) is not allowed in Gurmukhi.

The English writing system is the “completest” chaos.

English is a language of the Germanic sub-family of the Indo-European languages. But, like all the West European languages, it borrowed its script from Latin centuries ago. More than 60% of its word stock also comes from other languages such as French, Latin, Greek and some other languages. In the borrowed words, either the original spellings are retained or are changed minimally. But their pronunciation is Anglicised. Historical changes in the pronunciation of words have also been taking place for centuries. The result is that the English writing system has become the most notorious chaotic one in the world. *But still it works*. And that is what counts. A few examples are:

- (1) One sound is represented by different letters or combinations of letters. For example, ش is represented by *ship*, *chef*, *nation*. ف is represented *fish*, *enough*, *philosophy*.
- (2) A letter or a group of letters can represent different sounds. **Ch** is ک in *chemist*, چ in *chip*, ش in *chef*, **th** in *think* sounds like the *original Arabic* ث, but not like the Urdu or Panjabi تھ. In the word *this*, it sounds like the original Arabic sound of ذ, but not like the Urdu and Panjabi د.
- (3) There are *homophonous* words (different words with different spellings but the same pronunciation). An example pair is *weak* and *week*.
- (4) There are silent letters, **k** in *know* and *knife*, **p** in *psychology*.

The “gaps” between spelling and pronunciation in the Urdu/Shahmukhi mentioned above are nothing when compared with the English writing system.

Always remember that an experienced reader reads by *scanning* whole words within the given context. The “gaps” between spelling and pronunciation should not matter *if the system works well*.

Chapter 2

The Constitution of Gurmukhi

Since this book is aimed at mature and educated people (capable of understanding English and thinking for themselves) who wish to learn Gurmukhi as an additional script, I do not wish to insult their intelligence by writing a childish style *qaida* for them, providing them with an “easy to understand and grasp” half-baked crude guesswork ਅੱਧੱਕੀ ਕਚਖਰੜ ਤੁੱਕੇਬਾਜ਼ੀ کی کچگھڑڈ ٹکییازی اَدھ پَکی you can find in numerous *qaidas* and websites aimed at teaching “Punjabi” to speakers of “Urdu”. An example is

ਬ = ب , ਬੱਕਰੀ ਸ = س , ਸੋਟੀ سوٹی بکری سوتی

To be fair, this “letter for letter” approach is fully justified for teaching very young and even slightly older children, who have to be initiated by examples and later allowed to learn from experience. But nowhere will you find any Gurmukhi equivalents of all the Arabic letters used in these words:

تقریباً [taqrīban], عموماً [amūman], بالکل [bilkul]

The previous chapter was included not to show off my learning but to tell you in no uncertain terms that Shahmukhi (100% Urdu script) has to follow the Arabic writing conventions. Rightly or wrongly, the Urdu establishment requires you to do this. And you have to obey!). Even the arrangement of the letters of the alphabet is *visual*. For example, ج ح خ are grouped together, though phonetically ج and ح have nothing in common. Even the original Arabic pronunciation of ح has been changed to that of هـ / ه. This “letter for letter” approach is fully justified for teaching very young and even slightly older children. But when you move to another country, you have to obey its constitution.

The most serious weakness of the Arabic script has been how it represents of the *vowel sounds*. The grammatical structure of Arabic is such that it is easy to predict the short vowel sounds and the doubling of the consonants from the context of use. Hence *zabar*, *zer*, *pesh* and *tashdid* are most often omitted in writing (but *not* in the text from the Holy Quran). Turkish was traditionally written in the Arabic script. But Kamal Atatürk adopted the Roman script in 1928. The move was mainly *political*, but the *linguistic* reasons given by the Turkish scholars were also quite valid. Readers with a theoretical bent of mind can get the information about Arabic and Turkish from various sources including Google.

Shahmukhi to Gurmukhi

But moving from Shahmukhi to Gurmukhi is like moving into another country with a different type of constitution. Gurmukhi, like all the native Indian scripts, was developed for different types of languages. The salient features of the Gurmukhi constitution are:

- (1) The arrangement of the letters of the alphabet is *phonetic*, not *visual*. (See Chapter 4 if you are interested in details).
- (2) You do not show any respect for the Urdu spelling. You write *most* of the words as they are *spoken*. (But also read the Chapter 3 for some interesting exceptions).
- (3) Any letter can be joined to any other letter.
- (4) Only three letters have positional variants in modern Gurmukhi.
- (5) No vowel symbol or the equivalent of the *tashdid* (known as the *addhak*) can be omitted.
- (6) As was pointed out in Chapter 1, speakers of Persian could not pronounce some Arabic sounds. They started speaking them like the native Persian sounds. The “purist” scholars must have objected to this (as “purists” always do!). But ultimately, only the Arabic *spellings*, but not the Arabic *sounds*, were retained. The convention was adopted in Urdu. Most speakers of Panjabi find it difficult to pronounce the sounds represented by ق خ غ ز ف. Though letters for these sounds were added to the modern Gurmukhi alphabet towards the close of the nineteenth century (on the insistence of the “purists”), not all Panjabi writers started using them until the 30s of the last century. Most modern Panjabi writers use them clumsily in Gurmukhi. You may or may not use them. It is entirely up to you.
- (7) Because of some phonetic changes in some dialects of Panjabi over the past four or five centuries, one letter has become a “silent letter” in these (but not all) dialects. This subject is dealt with in the next chapter.

Important note: I give the linguistic details in this and the following chapters not to show off my learning or that I am arrogant or مغرور. The reason is that have great respect for the intelligence of the adult educated users of the book. But anything worth learning involves hard work (as I learnt from my own experience). However, if you want “easy to use” sources designed for children, you can leave this book at any time.

I do not wish to overwhelm you with the the technicalities of linguistics. But, if you wish, you are advised to check the correctness of the inevitably simplified information given in this book.

2: Gurmukhi and its Constitution

Names of the Gurmukhi letters

The traditional names of the letters of the Gurmukhi alphabet are shown in the following picture

Names of the Gurmukhi Letters				
ਓ ਓੜਾ	ਅ ਐੜਾ	ੲ ਐੜੀ		
ਸ ਸੱਸਾ	ਹ ਹੱਬਾ			
ਕ ਕੱਕਾ	ਖ ਕੱਕਾ	ਗ ਗੱਗਾ	ਘ ਗੱਗਾ	*ਙ
ਚ ਚੱਚਾ	ਛ ਛੱਛਾ	ਜ ਜੱਜਾ	ਝ ਝੱਝਾ	*ਞ
ਟ ਟੱਟਾ	ਠ ਠੱਠਾ	ਡ ਡੱਡਾ	ਢ ਢੱਢਾ	*ਣ
ਤ ਤੱਤਾ	ਥ ਥੱਥਾ	ਦ ਦੱਦਾ	ਧ ਧੱਧਾ	ਨ ਨੱਨਾ
ਪ ਪੱਪਾ	ਫ ਫੱਫਾ	ਬ ਬੱਬਾ	ਭ ਭੱਭਾ	ਮ ਮੱਮਾ
ਯ ਯੱਯਾ	ਰ ਰਾਰਾ	ਲ ਲੱਲਾ	ਵ ਵੱਵਾ	ੜ ਝੱਝਾ
There are no standard names for the following newly added letters. Most people call them as <i>ਪੰਦੀ</i> والا and then the older name of the letter. For example, ਗ਼ is called <i>ਪੰਦੀ</i> والا گگا				
ਸ਼	ਖ਼	ਗ਼	ਜ਼	ਫ਼
ਲ਼	ਕ਼			

The problem with writing names of the Gurmukhi letters ਵ ਙ and ਞ in Shahmukhi is discussed later in the booklet, where the Unicode symbol ੱ for the Panjabi sound ਞ is also discussed. Since ਞ represents an extremely important Panjabi sound, an addition must be made to the existing Shahmukhi letters.

Fig. 2.1: Names of the Gurmukhi Letters

The Shahmukhi equivalents of the Gurmukhi letters

In this picture, we have to add **h** (for example, **ك ه**) to represent the sounds involving **strong breath**. In Chapter 4, we are going to use the term “aspirated” for such a sound. In our phonetic transcription, we are going to use raised **h** as in **ḳ^h, k^h, ṭ^h**. But it is important to remember that they are *single sounds*. For example, **ك ه** or **k^h** is a single sound, and not a sequence of **ك** and **ه**, or of **k** and **h**. We have been forced to resort to the use of the raised **h**, exactly like the designers of the Urdu script were forced to use **ه**. The Gurmukhi script has a single letter for each “aspirated” sound. You can read about this in Chapter 4 if you wish to.

PANJABI SOUNDS				
Old Fricatives				
ਸ s	ਹ h			
Consonant Square (Stops)				
ਕ k	ਖ k ^h	ਗ g	ਘ g ^h	ਙ ṅ
ਚ c	ਛ c ^h	ਜ j	ਝ j ^h	ਞ ṇ
ਟ ṭ	ਠ ṭ ^h	ਡ d	ਢ d ^h	ਣ ṇ
ਤ t	ਥ t ^h	ਦ d	ਧ d ^h	ਨ n
ਪ p	ਫ p ^h	ਬ b	ਭ b ^h	ਮ m
Semi Vowels				
ਯ y	ਰ r	ਲ l	ਵ v	ੜ ṛ
New Fricatives				
ਸ਼ SH	ਖ਼ KH	ਗ਼ GH	ਜ਼ Z	ਫ਼ F
Later Additions				
ਕ਼ Q	ਲ਼*			

Fig. 2.2: Gurmukhi and Shahmukhi Equivalents of the Consonant Letters

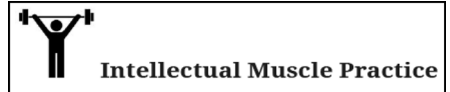
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All these sounds are **consonant** sounds. But there is one more consonant sound ਲ for which a symbol has recently been added to the Gurmukhi alphabet. But only a few writers use it. But there is an extremely important Panjabi consonant ਣ for which the traditional Urdu (Shah-mukhi) script has no symbol. Efforts have been made by some Panjabi writers in Pakistan to create a letter for this sound. But nobody ever tried to get it included in the international Unicode set. Symbols for ਣ and ਲ are shown in the following picture.



Fig. 2.3: Two more Panjabi consonants

When you write تن, the context of use certainly makes it clear whether you mean تن (“body”) or تن (“stretch” or “become rigid”). But in Gurmukhi, you will have to use the spelling ਤਨ and ਤਣ respectively. You can write ہاں اسیں بولے to mean either “We have spoken” or “We are deaf”. But in Gurmukhi you have to write “deaf” as ਬੋਲے and “spoken” as ਬੋਲے. कमल कमल is “lotus” in Panjabi, and कमल कमल is “stupidity”. In Panjabi, a گولی گولی is a maid servant and a گولی گولی is a medicine tablet or a gun bullet. کانا کانا is a type of reed کاٹا کاٹا is a one-eyed man. The context of use indeed helps in making correct interpretation. But according to the constitution of Gurmukhi, you *must* use the correct spelling required by pronunciation.



Look at Figure 2.2 on page 24. There are 25 Consonant Stop sounds in the Consonant Square. Do you find any phonetic feature (related to pronunciation) shared by five consonants in each *horizontal row* (ਤ, ਥ, ਦ, ਧ, ਨ, for example), and also by the consonants in each *vertical column* (ਖ, ਛ, ਠ, ਭ, ਫ, for example)? It doesn't matter if you don't or are not interested. But if you are interested, read Chapter 4).

In the diagram on page 24, there are some shaded boxes. They are dealt with in the next chapter. You can ignore them for the time being.

In Gurmukhi, there are no “non-joining letters”. Look at the Shahmukhi and Gurmukhi spellings.

دروازہ دروازا

The ◦ letter at the end of the word is pronounced as **ā** in Panjabi. So it is written with the Gurmukhi symbol **ā** for this sound. *Gurmukhi does not show any respect for the Arabic/Persian spellings.* Many speakers of Panjabi pronounce the word as درواجا and write it as دروازا. Only a few “purists” (true to their nature!) object to this and insist on the “true” pronunciation of ز.

Now we move on the really thorny issue of the **vowel sounds**.

Representation of the Panjabi vowel sounds in Shahmukhi and Gurmukhi

We have already said that the Arabic script was developed for Arabic. Later on, it was imposed upon Persian. Then the Persian version was adopted for Turkish. Turkish was written in the Perso-Arabic script for centuries. In 1928, Kamal Atatürk replaced the Perso-Arabic script with an augmented version of the Roman script for writing Turkish. The reasons for this move were mainly *political*. But the *linguistic* reasons advanced by the Turkish scholars were also valid. We need not go into them. You can find information about the phonological structure of Arabic and Turkish on the Internet. The Perso-Arabic script has *three* letters for the long vowels and three symbols – *zer*, *zabar* and *pesh* – totalling *six*. But Panjabi has *ten* vowels, all of which can be **nasalised** (pronounced through the mouth and the nose at the same time). Needless to say, the Urdu (Shahmukhi) represents the Panjabi oral and nasalised vowel extremely *clumsily*. The omission of *zer*, *zabar* and *pesh* in writing leads to *guesswork*, which may not be a serious issue in Panjabi, but it *was* in Turkish. If you write پیڑ in Shahmukhi, it could be پیر **pīr** “pain” or پیر **per** “tree” or پاړ **paṛ** “footprint”. The Panjabi vowel **ī** is written in different ways in ایرکھا **īrkḥā** “jealousy”) and گئی **gaī**. But in Gurmukhi, the same form ਈ is used both word- initially and word-finally, as in ਈਰਖਾ and ਗਈ respectively. **Nasalised vowels** are a worse problem. The word ڈانگ **dāṅg** “large bamboo stick” written with a full ن preceded by ا. But the same nasalised vowel at the end in the plural form ڈانگان **dāṅgā** uses the dotless ن. In the Gurmukhi spelling ਡਾਂਗਾਂ, the vowel is written as **ā** at both the places. *The symbols unfamiliar to you at this stage (such as ā) are fully explained later.*

We are *not* downgrading the Arabic script here. It was never developed for Panjabi. It is working *exceptionally well* for the language (Arabic) it was developed for. Our purpose is to point out that the constitution of Gurmukhi is different and you must respect it.

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For Teachers and
More Advanced Learners

Henceforward, terms like *vowel* and *consonant* sounds will have to be used. You are advised to take my word about them. But if you have a scientific curiosity to learn more about them, read Chapter 4.

About the Vowel sounds of Panjabi

For the time being (until you read Chapter 4, if at all), a vowel sound, as far as Panjabi is concerned, is the one that is produced by the *voiced* airstream (see Chapter 4) passing unimpeded through the mouth (and sometimes both through the mouth and nose at the same time). These sounds are differentiated by the different parts of the tongue raised to different heights and the lips rounded for some of them. Panjabi has *ten* distinct vowel *sounds*, shown in the following picture.

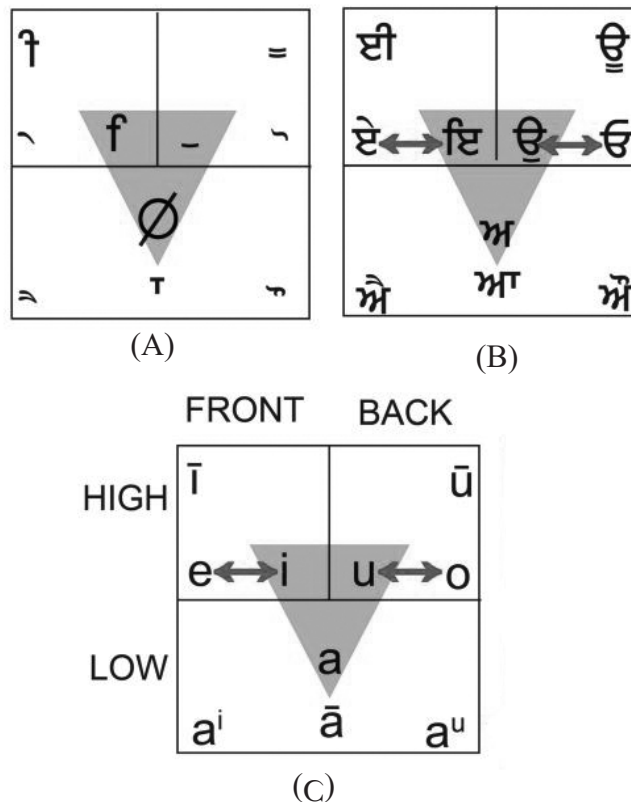


Fig. 2.4: Panjabi Vowels Sounds

Picture 2:4 shows which part of the tongue is raised to what height for the production of each vowel sound of Panjabi. Accordingly, these vowels are classified into **High Front**, **High Back** and **Low vowels**. We have 3 **High Front Vowels**, 3 **High Back Vowels** and 4 **Low Vowels**. Part A of the picture gives the **Vowel Symbols** for each vowel sound *when it is added to a consonant sound and letter*. Part B shows how the vowel sound is written *when it stands alone in the word*. Part C gives the **phonetic symbols** we use to represent these vowels sounds in our transcription. The symbol **Θ** Means “invisible symbol” (but not “absence of any symbol”). The significance of the **double-headed arrow** is explained in Chapter 4.

Here are examples

(1) Standalone vowels

ਊਠ	ਗਊ	ਈਰਖਾ	ਗਈ
اُوٹھ	گئو	ایرکھا	گئی
ūṭʰ	gaū	īrkʰā	gaī

(2) Vowels added to consonants

ਬੂਟਾ	ਬਾਬੂ	ਨੀਲਾ	ਕਲੀ
بوٹا	بابو	نیلا	کلی
būṭā	bābū	nīlā	kalī

You may be interested in the names of the **vowel symbols**. They are given in *Picture 2:5*, which also shows where each vowel symbol is placed in relation to the consonant letter. *Picture 2:6* sums up the Shahmukhi positional variants of the Gurmukhi vowels.

Some **vowel symbols** are shown within the inverted shaded triangle in *Fig.2:4*. Remember for the time being that they represent *short vowels*. There are two short-long pairs (ਅ ਆ, ਇ ਈ and ਉ ਊ among the Panjabi vowels (these totalling 6). The remaining 6 **vowels** (ਏ ਓ ਆ ਐ ਔ) are all long.

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Names of the Symbols

In addition to the letters of the Gurmukhi "alphabet" the symbols shown below are also used. You should be able to identify them and know their names. You will note that some of them are equivalents of the Shahmukhi symbols.

1. Names of the symbols for the vowel sounds are given below. (Also see the diagram given later in the book). In order to show their position relative to a letter, they are here added to the letter ਸ.

No visible Symbol						
	ਸ	ਸਾ	ਸਿ	ਸੀ	ਸੁ	ਸੂ
Name	ਮੁਕਤਾ	ਖ਼ਨਾ	ਸਿਹਾਰੀ	ਬਿਹਾਰੀ	ਅਨਕਤ	ਦੁਲਿਨਕਤ
	ਸੇ	ਸੈ	ਸੇ	ਸੇ		
	ਲਾ	ਦਲਾ	ਭੋਰਾ	ਕਨੋਰਾ		

Other symbols

ਸੰ	ਸਂ	ਸੱ
ਠਿੱਧੀ	ਭੰਦੀ	ਅੱਧਕ
Nasalisation symbols		Equivalent of Tashdid

It should be noted that some symbols come *after* a letter (ਸਾ, ਸੀ), some *above* a letter (ਸੇ, ਸੈ, ਸੇ, ਸੇ, ਸੰ, ਸਂ, ਸੱ) some *below* a letter (ਸੁ, ਸੂ), and one of them comes *before* a letter (ਸਿ)

Fig. 2.5: Names and Positions of the Gurmukhi Symbols

Gurmukhi	Pronunciation	Shahmukhi
ਈ	ī	ای
ਇ	i	اِ
ਏ	e	اے
ਊ	ū	اُو
ਉ	u	اُ
ਓ	o	او
ਅ	a	ا
ਆ	ā	آ
ਐ	a ⁱ	اے
ਔ	a ^u	اُو

All these vowels can be either *oral* (pronounced through the mouth only), or *nasalised* (pronounced through both the mouth and the nose at the same time).

Fig. 2.5: Positional Variations in the writing of the Shahmukhi and Gurmukhi Vowels

It is important to remember that **aⁱ** (ਐ) and **a^u** (ਔ) are *single sounds* in most Panjabi dialects. But in some Panjabi-speaking areas and Urdu-speaking areas, **aⁱ** (ਐ) is pronounced as a *quick glide* from **a** to **i**, and **a^u** (ਔ) as a *quick glide* from **a** to **u**. You must have

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noted that all the standalone **High Front Vowels** have ਏ, all the standalone **High Back Vowels** have ਐ, and all the **Low Vowels** have ਅ. In the Gurmukhi alphabet, ਏ, ਐ and ਅ are known as **Vowel Bearer** or **Vowel Carrier Letters**. They have no particular pronunciation associated with them.

“Doubling” of the Consonant Sounds in Panjabi

In Panjabi, some consonant sounds are sometimes “doubled” or stretched in speech. In principle, they should be shown with the tashdid sign (ˆ) in Shahmukhi. But this is rarely done. But in modern Gurmukhi, this is done regularly with the sign known as *addhak* (˘) . Some examples are given below:

Without <i>addhak</i>	With <i>addhak</i>
ਗੇਹਾ ਘਟਾ	ਗੇ˘ਹਾ ਘੇ˘ਟਾ
ਕਲਾ ਕਲਾ	ਕੇ˘ਲਾ ਕੇ˘ਲਾ
ਗੁਲੀ ਗੁਲੀ	ਗੇ˘ਲੀ ਗੇ˘ਲੀ
ਪਿਤਾ ਪਿਤਾ	ਪੇ˘ਤਾ ਪੇ˘ਤਾ
ਉਤਰ ਉਤਰ	ਉ˘ਤਰ ਉ˘ਤਰ

Sometimes, the use of the *addhak* is controversial, but it is recommended.

Nasalised Vowels

In Panjabi, sometimes some vowel sounds are **nasalised** (pronounced through the mouth and the nose at the same time). In our phonetic transcription, we write them with a squiggle above the phonetic symbol, as in the following words:

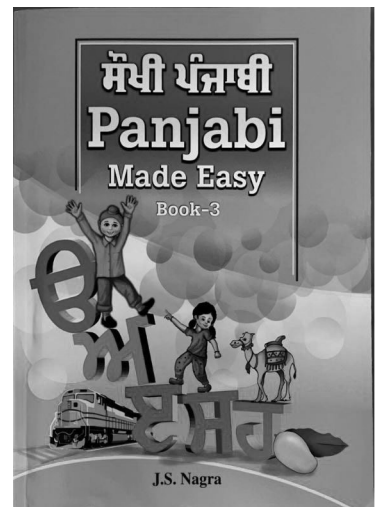
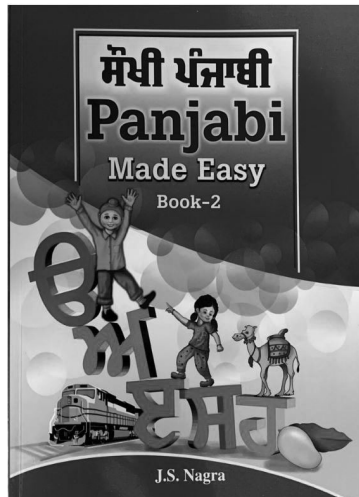
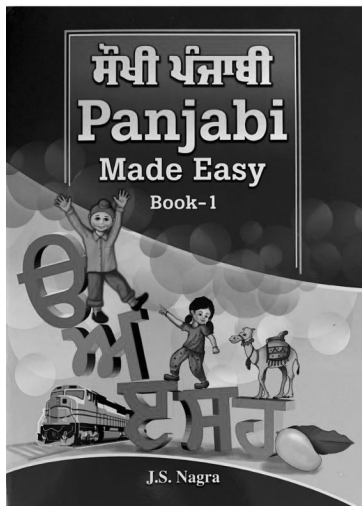
ਗਾਂ gā̃ ਗਾਂ ਗਿੰਦ gēd ਗੋਂਦ ਗੂੰਦ gū̃d ਗੂੰਦ ਗਾਂਦਾ gā̃dā ਗੈਂਡਾ

In Gurmukhi, a nasalised vowel is marked by adding either of the two symbols called *tippi* ਟਿੱਪੀ (ˆ) and *bindi* ਬਿੰਦੀ ਥਿੰਦੀ (˘). We need not go into the details of which is used where. The choice seems largely *typographical*. You use the **tippi** except where it can touch the vowel symbol or go into the letter (ਏ). In such cases you use the **bindi**. Study the following examples carefully.

ਅੰਬਰ ਕੰਬਲ ਆਂਡਾ ਕਾਂ ਇੰਜਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੀਂਦ ਬੀਂਡਾ ਪੁੰਨ ਉਂਨ ਭੁੰਡ ਉਂਘ
ਗੋਂਦ ਗੈਂਡਾ ਗੋਂਦ ਔਂਤਰਾ ਸੋਂ

You need practice now

As a language teacher, I have taught dozens of adult learners. They all have had different *styles* of learning. But I recommend only one *method* of learning – *intelligent practice*. This book aims at giving you only intelligent *information* suitable for an educated adult. But there is no substitute for the *practice* part. You have to do it yourself. Here I recommend Jagat Singh Nagra's book in three parts, all called ਸੌਖੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ سوکھی پنجابی ("Easy Panjabi"). It is an international best seller, available on Amazon. It has lots of practice materials. The book is in full colour. But only greyscale pictures of its title pages and two sample pages are given here. You are encouraged to print my book but not everyone has a colour printer.



These pictures are printed with the author's permission.

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Adhik ਅੱਧਕ (~)		
Adhik (~) is a symbol which is used to stress the sound of the following letter and is written on top of the letter as in ਨੱਕ.		
Panjabi Words	Pronunciation	Meaning in English
ਅੱਖ	Akkh	Eye
ਅੱਜ	Ajj	Today
ਅੱਠ	Atth	Eight
ਅੱਧ	Addh	Half
ਸੱਤ	Satt	Seven
ਸੱਪ	Sapp	Snake
ਹੱਥ	Haṭh	Hand
ਹੱਸ	Hass	Laugh
ਕੱਪ	Cup	Cup
ਕੱਟ	Cutt	Cut
ਕੱਚ	Kach	Glass
ਖੱਲ	Khall	Skin
ਗੱਲ	Gall	Talk
ਘੱਟ	Ghatt	Less
ਚੱਲ	Chall	Go
ਛੱਤ	Chhatt	Roof/Ceiling
ਜੱਗ	Jagg	Jug

Tippee (n) ਟਿੱਪੀ (^)		
Tippee (^) is a sign which gives the sound of mild 'n' and is put on the top of the letter as in ਅੰਬ. Tippee is used with those words which have mukta, ਿ, _ , = symbols.		
Panjabi Words	Pronunciation	Meaning in English
ਦੰਦ	Dand	Teeth
ਅੰਬ	Amb	Mango
ਖੰਡ	Khand	Sugar
ਧੁੰਦ	Dhund	Fog
ਰੰਗ	Rang	Colour
ਕੰਮ	Kam	Work
ਖੰਘ	Khang	Cough
ਸੁੰਘ	Sungh	Smell
ਠੰਢ	Thandh	Cold
ਚੁੰਜ	Chunj	Beak
ਪਿੰਡ	Pind	Village
ਸਿੰਘ	Singh	Singh
ਕੰਨ	Kann	Ear
ਪੰਜ	Panj	Five
ਨਿੰਭੂ	Nimboo	Lemon
ਚੰਗਾ	Changaa	Good
ਮੁੰਡਾ	Mundaa	Boy

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Nagra's transcription meant for older children is different from ours. If you cannot get this book, you can use any other *qaida* or primer. Because of the limits of this book, we cannot give the basic practice materials in sufficient quantity here.

What we have covered so far

In Chapters 1 and 2, we have shown that

(1) Shahmukhi is a *4th hand Arabic script*. So it has to follow the conventions developed for *Arabic*, such as joining the letters in the original Arabic style, using the Arabic spellings for the words borrowed from Arabic, omitting symbols like *zer*, *zabar*, *pesh* and *tashdid*. In Gurmukhi, you must use the Gurmukhi conventions. You *must not* omit any vowel symbols and the *addhak* where they are needed. Follow your pronunciation, but also carefully read the section following this one. You cannot approach the subject in the *letter for letter* manner adopted by many *qaidas* and websites (ب = ਬ: بکری, س = س: سوئی سہی) etc.

(2) The Shahmukhi system has been working well centuries (and there is no doubt about it), so continue using it for writing Panjabi. Gurmukhi is another script for writing Panjabi. *Gurmukhi is not a language but a script.*

(3) Most speakers of Panjabi find it hard to pronounce the sounds associated with ف ز غ خ ق . Though letters for these sounds ਕ ਖ ਗ ਜ ਢ have been added to the Gurmukhi script (see page 24), users of Gurmukhi use them wrongly, inconsistently or do not use them at all. They are doing to these sounds what the Iranians did to the Arabic sounds they could not pronounce. (See Chapter 1). The dictionaries prepared by Punjabi University, Patiala, regard them as variants of ਖ ਗ ਜ ਢ respectively and have discarded ਕ completely. You can do what you like.

(4) The Shahmukhi conventions for writing the *vowel sounds* (following Arabic) are idiosyncratic. They are not always suitable for writing other languages including Turkish and Panjabi. Gurmukhi conventions are really suitable for writing Panjabi in Gurmukhi.

(5) For an educated adult learner (demanding not only “how” answers but also “why” answers), a lot of *intelligent practice* is necessary. You can use a *qaida* or books for younger and older children such as Nagra’s books mentioned above.

What we are going to discuss now

(1) The “*follow your pronunciation*” advice given above works in about 95% cases. But it should be taken with a pinch of salt. It does not fully apply to any writing system. In *qaidas* and many books devoted to the teaching of “Punjabi”, you will find a lot of *half-baked crude guesswork* ਅੱਧਰੇਵੀ ਕੁਝ ਅਰਥ ਤੁੱਢੇਬਾਜ਼ੀ پکی کچھہر ٹکیبازی آدھ about “Punjabi” such as “In Punjabi, you write exactly as you speak and speak exactly as you write.” Such claims (often made with a religious fervour and devotion) are pure nonsense. The next chapter is going to deal with some of the the problem of writing *modern* Panjabi in Gurmukhi. Languages change and the fit between spelling pronunciation and spelling goes on looseing. *The problem is really serious and a full chapter has to be devoted to it.*

(2) For the more advanced learners with a theoretical bent of mind, Chapter 4 giving some technical information is attached.

(3) Finally, some short stories written for the more advanced learners (and already published in another book) are included. You can do advanced reading practice after you have read books like Nagra’s or a *quida* giving plenty of practice materials.

Chapter 3

The Road Ahead is Slightly Less Smooth

You must have noted that we have been *slightly unfair* to the Arabic-derived Shahmukhi script for not representing some Panjabi sounds well. Well, the Arabic script was *never* originally designed for any language other than Arabic. If a garment that was never designed for me does not fit me well even after some alterations, it is not the fault of the original designer or of the garment. What really matters is that the script has been serving its purpose well for centuries. Even if the garment was designed specifically for me, it may not fit me properly after some time because of the changes in the shape of my body. This is inevitable with *any* script including Gurmukhi. People who have spoken to the learners of Gurmukhi in Pakistan report some problems these learners are facing. In this chapter we are going to deal with some of these problems. But before you go ahead, look at the following sign we have already introduced.



Intellectual Muscle Practice

Please go ahead *only* if you are really interested in the root cause of the problem and want to solve it with *intelligent practice*. If you feel that simple practice is enough, fine. But you cannot ignore the problem.

Beware of the “Gianis”

In the schools in East Punjab, the word Giani (ਗਿਆਨੀ گيانی) is used for a teacher of Panjabi. The word comes from *gian* (ਗਿਆਨ گيان) “knowledge”. So a *giani* means a “knowledgeable” or “enlightened” person. Most of them also hold a *Giani* (“Honours in Panjabi”) diploma. Sadly, these “knowledgeable” persons are really responsible for spreading *a-gian* (ਅ-ਗਿਆਨ اگيان) or “misleading information”) about Panjabi and Gurmukhi.

Two of the gravest sins of these *a-gianis* are

(1) Making Gurmukhi a *sectarian* script. They spread the misinformation that “Gurmukhi speech (ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ ਬੋਲੀ گُرمُکھی بولی) was created by by Guru Angad Dev”, the second Guru of the Sikh faith. However, historical research (mentioned at the end of this chapter) has shown that the script originated centuries before the Sikh faith. Guru Nanak Dev, the first Guru of the Sikh faith mentions the names of all the original 35 letters of this alphabet in the composition ਪਟੀ ਲਿਖੀ believed to have been written some years before he met his follower Lehana, who later became Guru

Angad. The name Gurmukhi, they argue, means “from the Guru’s mouth”. They propagate this theory with such a religious fervour and fanaticism that many non-Sikhs are put off this script. But it is possible that Guru Nanak gave this script its *modern* form and then Guru Angad made it popular among the Sikh and Hindu users of Panjabi.

(2) The second myth follows from the first – “In Gurmukhi language [sic] you write exactly as you speak and speak exactly as you write.” This is the more dangerous myth in our present context. This is possible in *no* script. True, the situation in Gurmukhi is not utterly chaotic as in English or as bad as in Shahmukhi. But this claim is still utterly misleading. The rest of this chapter is devoted to an attempt to expose this myth. But a myth is *impossible* to destroy when it becomes a part of a religious dogma. Those who hold the dogma present the myth with a redoubled vigour. Such fanatically aggressive Sikh *a-gianis* are mainly responsible for turning non-Sikhs away from Panjabi and Gurmukhi. But an honest effort has to be made in the interests of scientific analysis. If you wish to stick to these myths, especially the second one, please stop here and proceed no further.

Panjabi as a “tone language”

Listen carefully to the Panjabi pronunciation of the word **ਭਾਈ** **بهانی** in the Lahore area and then in Jhang, Mianwali and Multan areas. While in the west of Lahore, the pronunciation is almost Urdu-like [b^hāī], in Lahore, Amritsar, Jalandhar and East Panjab, it is [pāī]. [b^h] is pronounced as [p] and [ā] is pronounced with a *falling pitch of voice* and with some *constriction in the throat*. This is called **Low Tone** of voice. Try speaking the word both ways and you will notice the difference. The word **ਸਾਧੂ** **سادهو** is spoken in an almost Urdu-like way as [sād^hū] in the above-mentioned areas west of Lahore. But in Lahore and East Punjab, it is pronounced as [sādū]. [d^h] becomes [d] and the word is pronounced with a higher pitch of voice. This is called the **High Tone** of voice.

This change of pitch and the replacement of a consonant sound by another is known as **tone**. In modern Panjabi, almost all the **tonal** words have one of these consonants in their spelling – **ਭ ਡ ਢ ਣ ਙ** or **ਭ ਡ ਢ ਣ ਙ** or **ਭ ਡ ਢ ਣ ਙ**.

This should not be a very serious matter if **ਭ ਡ ਢ ਣ ਙ** were not involved in the process. In the case of **ਭ ਡ ਢ ਣ ਙ**, when **tone** comes, a consonant is replaced by another consonant *from the same horizontal group*. (See the picture on page 24). For example **ਭ** is replaced by **ਧ** or **ਭ** depending upon the **tone**. Only the *pronunciation* is affected, but not the *spelling* in Gurmukhi. But the serious problem created by **ਭ ਡ ਢ ਣ ਙ** is that *it very often disappears and the vowel sound represented in the spelling is replaced by another vowel sound*. The vicious myths about Gurmukhi mentioned above make it necessary for us to sound a warning before we move ahead.

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Warning: Do not hear with your eyes

As a result of the two vicious myths about Gurmukhi mentioned earlier, many Panjabi “scholars” look at the written/printed form of a word and *mentally* hear the sounds which are not there in the actual pronunciation. We will discuss this in detail later. But an example can be given here.

The Panjabi word pronounced as [sáʳā] is written as ਸਹੁਰਾ in Gurmukhi, which, letter by letter, should be sahurā سہرا. When a person “hearing with his/her eyes is told that there is no consonant sound ਹ ਾ in the *actual pronunciation* of the word (as indicated by the spelling), and that the vowel sound in actual pronunciation is not ਊ (as indicated by the spelling) but ਐ, the most common response is “I don’t agree. Gurmukhi is a phonetic language and spelling exactly represents the pronunciation. I can hear the ਹ ਾ consonant as well as the ਊ vowel sound.”

This is the supreme confidence found in the people addicted to “half-baked crude guess-work” ਅੱਧੱਧਰੀ ਕਚਖਰੜ ਤੁੱਕੇਬਾਜ਼ੀ کچکھڑ ٹکیبازی. All this is discussed in detail in the rest of this chapter. So don’t be put off.

The vicious myths about Gurmukhi mentioned above are pure nonsense. Read the references at the end of this chapter. Appealing to other people’s religious sentiments to assert your point is totally unscientific, unethical and unacceptable. But, sadly enough, this practice is widespread.

Get ready to face the bull

Friends who spoke to learners of Gurmukhi in Pakistan tell me that their main problem is words like ਕਹਿਣਾ and ਸਹੁਰਾ, whose pronunciation does not reflect their spelling. There is no ਹ h sound in their pronunciation. ਕਹਿਣਾ should be pronounced as [kahɪɳā] if this “write as you speak and speak as you write” claim were true. But it is pronounced as [káɳā] without [h] but with a high tone on [á]. The ਿ shown in spelling is pronounced not as [hi] but as [a]. Similarly, ਸਹੁਰਾ is pronounced as [sáʳā].

The reason for this is the changes which have been taking place in the variety of Panjabi spoken in Lahore, Amritsar and East Punjab over the past four or five centuries. If you are interested in the technicalities of these changes, please go ahead. As the heading of this section says, we must either “take the bull by the horns” or move away frightened.

In discussing the problem, we cannot use Shahmukhi, unfortunately. We have to use the phonetic transcription and Gurmukhi. If you are not yet completely familiar with all the Gurmukhi letters and symbols, you can refer to the relevant pages in Chapter 3. It will become clear to you why we transcribed *ਐ* as [a[]] and *ਐ* as [a^u]. Some centuries ago, *ਐ*, though grammatically/phonologically a *single vowel*, was actually pronounced as [a[]] (as a *rapid glide* from a to i, with the [a] part more prominent than the [i] part). The case with *ਐ* was similar. It was pronounced as [a^u]. Many speakers of Urdu, Hindi and Panjabi in India still pronounce these vowels in this manner.

Vowel stress in Panjabi

Pronounce the following word aloud:

ਅਨਾੜੀ
anāṛī

Now concentrate on the vowel sounds only printed in black. The consonant sounds are printed in grey. The symbols for the *ਅ* vowel is *ੜ* and is added to the consonant symbol *ਨ*. The symbol *ੀ* for *ਈ* is added to the consonant symbol *ੜ*. You can refer to the relevant pages in Chapter 3 if you need to.

As you can hear and see, there are 3 *vowel sounds* in the word shown in black above. The consonant sounds are shown in grey. What is remarkable is that one of the vowels (*ਅ* in this example) is **pronounced with more energy than the other two and stands out above others in speech**. This vowel is known as the *stressed vowel*. If there is only one vowel sound in a word, it is regarded as *stressed*. The standalone vowel symbol *ਅ* at the beginning is written as *ਅ*. The symbol for this vowel sound is *invisible*, but the invisible symbol must be added to *ਅ* if it is a standalone vowel in a word.

Stressing of a vowel sound in a word differentiates Panjabi pronunciation from the *real* Urdu pronunciation (as spoken in the Urdu-speaking areas *in India*, but not necessarily always in the “Punjabi-ised” variety of Urdu spoken in Pakistan by the people whose mother tongue is Panjabi). Now look at the following words showing how a *standalone vowel sound* is written in Gurmukhi and how it is written when added to a consonant sound, and also which vowel sound is *stressed*.

ਉਡੀਕਣਾ
uḍīkṇā

If necessary, look at the relevant pages in Chapter 3 to see why the vowel symbols are written in the way they are.

ਹਿੱਲੋਗੇ
hīllōge

The symbol for the vowel ਏ is *f*. It is placed *before* the consonant letter. The symbol for the vowel ਓ is *˘* and it is written *above* the consonant letter. The symbol *˘* for ਏ for also written *above* the consonant letter. The “doubling” of the consonant ਲ is shown by the symbol *addhak* ˘ placed *before* the consonant letter.

ਜਾਓਗੇ
jāoge

It is difficult to add the symbol *˘* to the **vowel bearer letter** ਓ. So ਓ+*˘* is written as ਓ.

ਗੁ

gāū

The vowel ਅ added to ਗ is *stressed*. But its symbol is *invisible*. The standalone vowel ਉ at the end of the word is written as ਉ.

ਜੋ

jā^u

The only vowel ਐ in this word is regarded as *stressed*. The symbol for this *nasalised vowel* is ੐ and is written *above* the consonant symbol. It does not look odd in actual writing as it does in this exaggerated example. It looks ਜੋ.

Let's take the smallest bull by the horns – “tone” in Panjabi speech

Important information

Panjabi is the only major Indian/Pakistani language that has “*tone*” – a change in the *pitch of voice* indicating a change in meaning. This movement of the pitch of voice is shown graphically in the pictures on the next page. Look at the following examples of words and try to speak them *naturally* as in real life, without caring for how they are spelt in writing and in print.

The Low Tone

ਘੋੜਾ

g^hOṛā pronounced as kÒṛā

The pitch of voice falls *rapidly* on the *stressed vowel* o and then rises *gradually* on ā, as shown in the following picture. This change of pitch is known as *Low Tone*.

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k ò ṛ ā

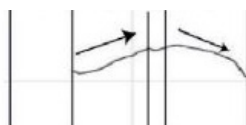
The **Low Tone** is marked as **ò** on the *vowel letter*.

The High Tone

ਕੋਹੜਾ

kOhrā pronounced as kÓrā without h ਚ sound.

The pitch of voice rises *gradually* on the **stressed vowel o** and then falls *rapidly* ā, as shown in the following picture. This change of pitch is known as **High Tone**.



k ó ṛ ā

These pictures were obtained by *computer analysis* of the spoken words.

All the Panjabi words with a **tone** have at least one of these consonant letters in spelling ਘ ਙ ਞ ਟ ਢ or ਚ (g^h j^h ḍ^h d^h b^h or h). All these letters represent *single sounds*, in spite of the fact that we have to use a superscript (raised) ^h in transcribing them.

But we shall be dealing only with the consonant **h** here. Dealing with the other consonants will make the book very long and complicated. But you can read my books mentioned at the end of the chapter. An example is also given in Chapter 4.

ੳ at the end of a word

Obviously, this ੳ comes after the *stressed vowel*. It is never pronounced and the word gets a *High Tone* on the *stressed vowel*. Look at the following examples:

ਚਾਹ

cāh pronounced as cá

ਖੂਹ

k^hūh pronounced as k^hú

ਮੀਂਹ

mīh pronounced as mǐ

But if ੳ occurs *after* the *stressed vowel*, but not at end of the word, some speakers pronounce the word with ੳ and *without* giving a *High Tone* to the stressed vowel.

Remember: *High Tone* and ੳ sound cannot co-exist in a word.

Examples are:

ਚੂਹਾ

cūhā pronounced as cūhā or cúā

ਠੂਹਾ

ṭhūhā pronounced as ṭhūhā or ṭhúā

In these examples, since the first vowel sound is stressed, the *High Tone*, if given, occurs on it.

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ਚਾਹੀਦਾ

cāhīdā pronounced as cāhīdā or cáīdā

Since the first ā is stressed, the **High Tone**, if given, falls on the first ā.

The double-headed arrows

In the picture on page 27, you find double-headed arrows linking the vowel symbols.

ਇ↔ਏ ਉ↔ਓ
i↔e u↔o

These arrows symbolise that in *modern Panjabi speech*, ਏ and ਈ are very similar vowels and are very often inter-changeable. They differ because ਇ is more central than ਏ and is pronounced with *more relaxed tongue muscles and cannot be prolonged*. It is a **lax vowel**. ਏ is more **tense** and can be prolonged in speech. Prolonged ਇ becomes ਏ. The difference between ਉ and ਓ is the exactly same. They, too, are often inter-changeable. ਉ is more central and **lax** and cannot be prolonged like the **tense vowel** ਓ. In some **tonal** words with ਹ in spelling, ਇ is pronounced as ਏ and ਉ is pronounced as ਓ. (You can find more details in my books mentioned at the end of this chapter).

ਇਹ

ih pronounced as é

ਉਹ

uh pronounced as ó

ਕਿਹੜਾ

kihṛā pronounced as kéṛā

ਵਿਹੜਾ

vihṛā pronounced as véṛā

There are a few words which different writers spell differently. The pronunciation is the same either way: The words have ਹ in spelling, but not in pronunciation. There is **High Tone on the stressed Vowel**. Some examples are given below:

Some of these words are

ਮਿਹਰ	mér	ਮੇਹਰ
ਸਿਹਰਾ	sérā	ਸੇਹਰਾ
ਸੁਹਣਾ	sónā	ਸੋਹਣਾ
ਉਹਲੇ	óle	ਓਹਲੇ

Such *tonal* words with ਇ and ਏ are interchangeable in writing because they have the same pronunciation. And so are ਉ and ਓ. The pronunciation with High Tone and without ਼ is the same either way. But, of course, there are a few “I-don’t-agree” people who claim that “our” spelling is “right” and “your” spelling is “wrong”!

Now the middle bull – Conjunct ਼ “at the foot”

We have emphasised again and again that the *consonant sounds* written in Shahmukhi as ڄ ڄھ ڄڻ ڄڻھ ڄڻڻ and transcribed as **g^h j^h ɖ^h d^h b^h** are *single* sound, and not sequences or *conjuncts* with as **h** the second member. (Read the next chapter if you wish to or take my word for this).

But *conjuncts* do occur in Panjabi. They are

ṇh nh mh rh lh vh ṛh ḷh

These conjuncts are *Consonant+h* followed by a *Vowel sound*. For example **mh** is a *conjunct* or *sequence* of **m** and **h**. The **h** sound in a conjunct is *never* pronounced. It simply gives

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a tone to the *stressed vowel* in the word (mostly a **High Tone**, but sometimes a **Low Tone** as well). This **h** ੳ is written as “ੳ at the foot” or *below* the first member of the conjunct, as in

ṇh is written as ਣੳ

nh is written as ਨੳ

mh is written as ਮੳ

rh is written as ਰੳ

lh is written as ਲੳ

ṛh is written as ਰੳ

ḷh is written as ਲੳ

This ੳ, though “written at the foot” is a *full sound*. It is *never* pronounced, but its effect on the *tone* is clear. If it comes *after the stressed vowel*, it generates **High Tone** that occurs on the *stressed vowel*. Examples are:

ਕਣੂ [kÁṇā] ਬੰਨੂ [bÁnn] ਥੰਮੂ [tʰÁmm]

ਵਰੂ [vÁrā] ਕੱਲੂ [kÁll] ਰਵੇਗਾ [rÁvegā]

ਬੁੱਲੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ [bÚlle SHÁ]

But if this ੳ, occurs *before* the stressed vowel, it gives **low tone**. Compare

ਪੜ੍ਹ [pÁr] and ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ [parÁi]

ਸਿੱਲੂ [sÍllā] and ਸਲੂਬਾ [salĀbā]

ਮਲੂ [mÁlā] and ਮਲੁੱਪ [malĀpp]

The results can sometimes be interesting. For example:

ਉਹਨਾਂ and ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ have the same pronunciation [úhnã] according to the rules. Try applying the rules of pronunciation discussed above.

Same is the case with ਜਿਹਨਾਂ and ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ. People go on using either spelling.

ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ (generation) and ਪੀਹੜੀ (women's woven cotlike stool) are both pronounced as [pīṛī]

There are some other such interesting examples.

The Panjabi word for a bull [sān] is mostly written as ਸਾਨੁ with a subscript ਹ. But the actor Balraj Sahni spelt his surname as

ਸਾਹਨੀ [sānī], and not as ਸਾਨ੍ਹੀ.

The Sikh scholar Kahn Singh Nabha spelt the first part of his name as ਕਾਨੁ, and not as ਕਾਹਨ, as some people do now. Either spelling results in the same pronunciation, as the rules given in this chapter show.

Fortunately, such differences in spelling are tolerated, and acrimonious “spelling fights” over such matters are very rare.

Now let's face the biggest beast!

Now we are coming to the climax of this chapter. If you have put up with the information given so far, you will have realised why

- (1) We spent so much time explaining and exemplifying the Panjabi tones; and
- (2) Why we chose to transcribe the Panjabi vowel sound ਐ as [a] and ਔ as [aʊ]. There are IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) symbols [ɛ] for ਐ and [ɔ] for ਔ. In IPA, ਧੈ is written as [pɛ] and ਧੌ is written as [sɔ]. The reason for our choice will become clear now.

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Some centuries ago, in the pronunciation of the Panjabi vowel sound [a^h], the tongue moved *quickly* from the position of the vowel sound [a] to that of the vowel sound [i], so that the resulting **vowel sound** [a^h] was as long as the any other **long non-gliding vowel sound**. In this vowel, the [a] element was stronger and more prominent than the [i] element. Technically, such a long vowel is known as a **diphthong**. But you do not need to learn this new term. Similarly, [a^u], was pronounced as **quick glide** from [a] to [u]. Many speakers of Hindi, Urdu and Panjabi in India still pronounce these two vowels as **gliding vowels**.

Now look at and speak the Panjabi word *naturally* (with a **High Tone**).

ਪਹਿਲਾ (meaning “first”) [pá^hlā].

Letter by letter, it should be **pahilā**. Since the first vowel **a** is stressed, it gets the **High Tone** and the **h** sound disappears. With the disappearance of this **h**, the **short vowel sounds a** and **i** come together to make a **long gliding vowel sound aⁱ** in which the **a** element is stronger and the **i** element is weaker. Many Hindi and Urdu speakers still pronounce this vowel as a **gliding long vowel (diphthong)**. Speakers of Panjabi in the Southern district of East Panjab also use this pronunciation of **ਐ**.

There are dozens of Panjabi words which have **ੜ** **consonant letter** in Gurmukhi script, but *not* in pronunciation. They have the **vowel sound ਐ** with the **High Tone** in pronunciation, but not in Gurmukhi spelling. The combination **ੜਿ** occurs in spelling only, but *not* in pronunciation.

This sounds the death knell of the myth that “in Gurmukhi you write exactly as you speak and speak exactly as you write.” But, of course, hundreds of *a-gianis* will shout in one voice “We don’t agree”.

Some of such words are

ਗਹਿਣਾ (“ornament”) [gá^hṇā]

ਪਹਿਰਾ (“guard”) [pá^hrā]

ਰਹਿ (“stay”) [rá^h]

ਕਹਿੰਦਾ (“He says”) [ká^hṇdā]

ਮਹਿੰ (“buffalo”) [mǎ̃ˈi]

It differs from [mǎ̃ˈi] (“I”) in pronunciation because [mǎ̃ˈi] has no *tone*. But the difference in spelling ਮਹਿੰ and ਮੈਂ is huge.

The borrowed word محل (“palace”) has been Panjabi-ised in pronunciation as [máˈlɪ] with a *High Tone* and given the spelling ਮਹਿਲ in Gurmukhi, for which there is no justification except conforming to the pattern of spelling rules. The same thing happened with نہر (“canal”) written as ਨਹਿਰ in Gurmukhi and pronounced as [náˈrɪ] with a *High Tone*.

With the disappearance of h from pronunciation and arrival of the *High Tone*, the *short vowel sounds* a and u come together to make *a long vowel sound* a^u in which the a element is stonger and the u element is weaker. As in the case of ਐ many Hindi, Urdu and Panjabi speakers still pronounce ਐ this vowel as a *long gliding vowel (diphthong)*.

Some of such words are

ਬਹੁਤ (“much, many”) [báˈut]

ਪਹੁ (“dawn”) [páˈu]

ਪਹੁੰਚ (“approach”) [pǎ̃ˈuc]

ਬਹੁਕਰ (“broom”) [báˈukar]

ਮਹੁਰਾ (“a type of poison”) [máˈurā]

ਸਹੁੰ (“oath”) [sǎ̃ˈu]

It differs from [sǎ̃ˈu] (“to sleep”) in pronunciation because [sǎ̃ˈu] has no *tone*. But the difference in spelling between ਸੌਂ and ਸਹੁੰ is huge.

ਐ and ਔ have become *non-gliding* vowels in the speech of many speakers of Panjabi. But their *gliding* past survives in the spelling of many words such as the ones we have discussed above.

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ਰ and ਵ “at the foot”

In the Sikh scripture *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*, a number of other Gurmukhi letters are used “at the foot”. But in Modern Gurmukhi, only one other letter ਰ is used in this way. It is used mainly in names and in the Sikh greeting. It is written as ੜ in the conjunct **Consonant**+ ਰ in the following examples:

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ [srī gurū granth sāhib] ਸ+ਰ=ਸ੍ਰ, ਗ+ਰ=ਗ੍ਰ

ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ [sati srī akāl] ਸ+ਰ=ਸ੍ਰ

ਪ੍ਰੇਮ [prem] ਪ+ਰ=ਪ੍ਰ

ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ [prītam] ਪ+ਰ=ਪ੍ਰ

Some older writers also used ਵ “at the foot” in words like ਸ੍ਰੈ ਜੀਵਨੀ (autobiography). But modern writers use the spelling ਸਵੈ ਜੀਵਨੀ.

Notes on Chapter 3

The emergence of Tones in Panjabi appears to be a recent phenomenon and I am not aware of any in-depth study dealing with them in English.

But I can refer you to my own books

1. *Colloquial Panjabi*. (1995, 2015). (Routledge: London and New York)
2. *Panjabi: A Comprehensive Grammar*. (2016). (Routledge: London and New York)
3. *Panjabi Language and Script for the Coming Generations on the International Stage*.
Downloadable from <https://jugsandhi.com/2021/11/21/punjabi-future>

The last book deals in greater detail with some of the topics discussed in this book.

The next Chapter gives some indication about why the Panjabi **tones** occur mostly in the Panjabi words which have at least one of the the *consonant letters* ਘ ਙ ਢ ਢ ਭ or ਹ (g^h j^h ḍ^h d^h b^h).

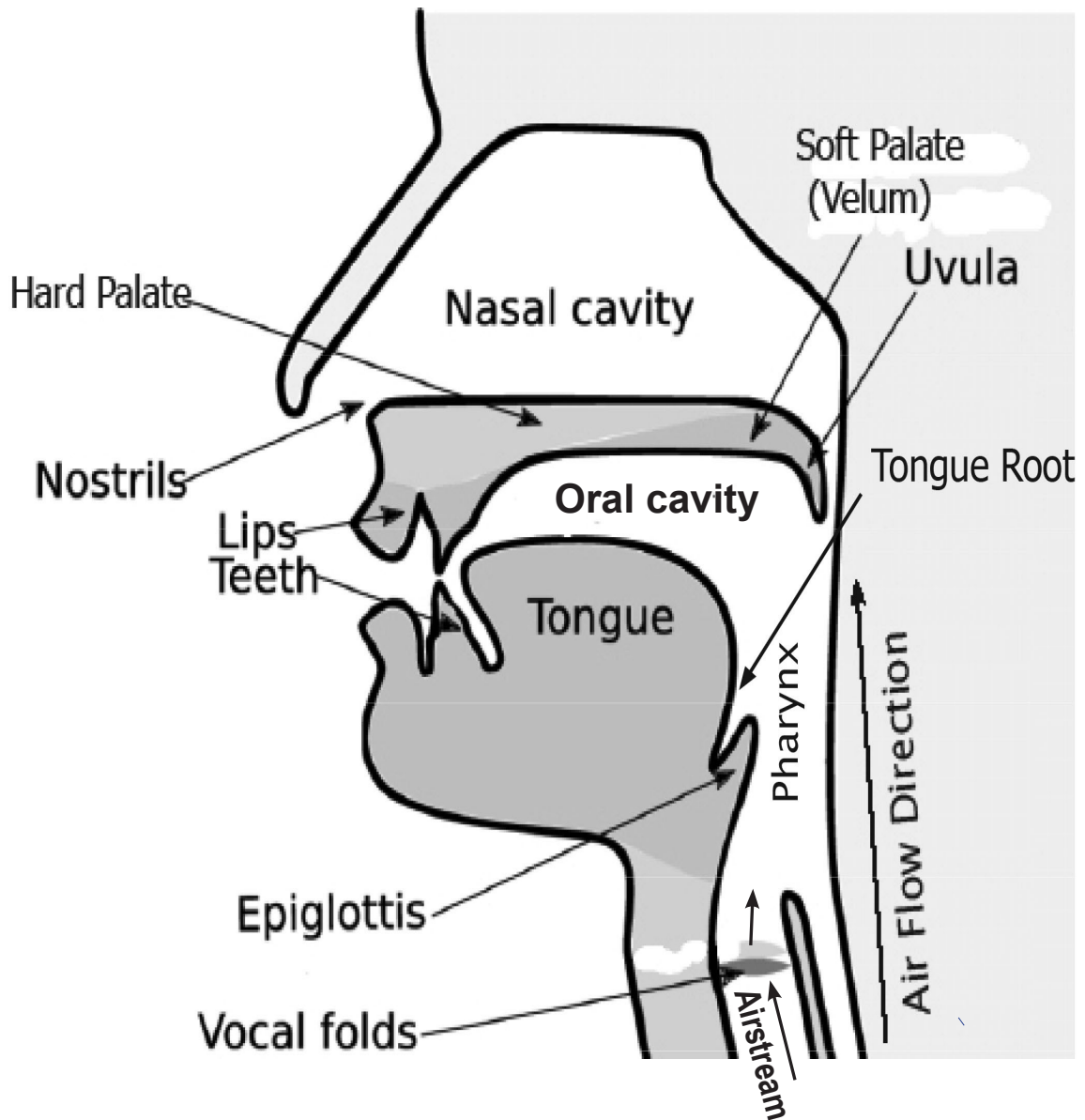


Fig. 4.1: Human Speech Organs
[Adopted and adapted from Google]

Chapter 4

The Anatomical Dimension



**For Teachers and
More Advanced Learners**

You know as a Shahmukhi user that the arrangement of the letters of the alphabet is *visual*. Letters looking similar in shape are grouped together – ٹ ٹ ت پ ب or خ ح چ ج f, for example. But you may ask on what principle the letters of Gurmukhi are grouped? Look at the picture on page 52. You find that they are grouped *phonetically* – both *horizontally* and *vertically*. Why are ਓ ਅ ਏ grouped in this order, and not any other, order? What is the difference between the *stop* and the *continuant* consonants? How are the continuants divided into *fricatives* and *frictionless continuants*? In the **Consonant Square**, what is the common feature shared by the consonants in each *horizontal row* and each *vertical column*? You may be interested asking “What are letters ਙ and ਞ doing in the Gurmukhi alphabet?” Are they ever used in *writing Panjabi in Gurmukhi*? **Yes** – by a few writers who belong to the now shrinking minority. And are they ever used in *Panjabi speech*? Most certainly **yes**, but we cannot discuss this here.

By this time, you must be getting fed up of being told that a *language* must not be confused with the *script* used for writing it. Shahmukhi and Gurmukhi are *scripts* used for writing the *language* now known as Panjabi. But old thinking habits, especially those springing from the delusions created by religious/sectarian commitments, die hard.

I cannot guess with certainty all the questions you may like to ask. My experience shows that some of my students get incurably addicted to asking all sorts of questions. This brief chapter is meant for such students and their teachers. You will need to refer to the pictures on page 50 and page 52.

Interest in the anatomical dimension of speech sounds

Believe it or not, ancient Indian linguists based their study on the functions of the vocal organs (or “anatomy”) of the sounds of language as far back as 700 BC (or perhaps even earlier). The analysis of the sounds of Sanskrit in the Sanskrit grammar of Pāṇini (7th century BC) also takes

Gurmukhi Alphabet Revisited

Vowel Bearer letters

ੳ	ਅ	ੲ
---	---	---

Older Fricatives

ਸ s	ਹ h
-----	-----

Consonant Square (Stops)

	Voiceless Unaspirated	Voiceless Aspirated	Voiced Unaspirated	Voiced Aspirated	Nasal
Velar	ਕ k	ਖ k ^h	ਗ g	ਘ g ^h	ਙ ṅ
Palatal	ਚ c	ਛ c ^h	ਜ j	ਝ j ^h	ਞ ṇ
Retroflex	ਟ ṭ	ਠ ṭ ^h	ਡ ḍ	ਢ ḍ ^h	ਣ ṇ
Dental	ਤ t	ਥ t ^h	ਦ d	ਧ d ^h	ਨ n
Bilabial	ਪ p	ਫ p ^h	ਬ b	ਭ b ^h	ਮ m

Frictionless Continuants

ਯ y	ਰ r	ਲ l	ਵ v	ੜ ṛ
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

New Fricatives

ਸ ś	ਖ x	ਗ ɣ	ਜ z	ਫ f
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Newer Additions

ਕ q	ਲ !
-----	-----

*Fig. 4.2: The Gurmukhi Alphabet
(Updated picture)*

4: The Anatomical Dimension



Pāṇini



Suśruta

into account (among other things) how these sounds are *produced*. The study of the anatomy of the human body was quite advanced in ancient India. Sushruta, regarded as the “father of surgery”, is believed to have lived around Pāṇini’s time. The classic *Suśruta Samhitā* treatise on surgery attributed to him is still respected as a classic. The modern science of Phonetics was able to come to the level of Pāṇini only in the closing decades of the 19th century, and the *direct* influence of the Indian grammarians on modern linguistics is clear and openly acknowledged.

Now let’s go to the (considerably simplified) picture of the “speech organs” on page 50. You will need to refer to both the pictures on page 50 (dealing with the so-called ***Vocal Organs***) and on page 52 (describing and classifying the *distinctive sounds* of Panjabi). You will find that we have supplied new ***phonetic symbols*** to some of the sounds different from the ones shown in the picture on page 24.

The information given below, though presented in the modern terminology, was either *implicit* in the writings of the ancient Indian grammarians or often *explicitly* given as well by some ancient Indian phoneticians. It must be of considerable interest to the speakers of Panjabi that Pāṇini lived and worked in Takshshila (modern day Taxila). So it should be a matter of great pride to the modern Punjabi people that the scholar still regarded as the greatest linguist in history lived among their ancestors.

Some phonetic features of Panjabi pronunciation and their anatomy

We will take up some important phonetic distinctions and deal with them below. More than one feature may apply to particular phonetic distinction, and *vice versa*. We will go on referring to the pictures by their numbers [4.1] and [4.2].

Phonation and articulation

[4.1] For the speaking of some North Indian languages like Panjabi, Hindi-Urdu, Bengali, Marathi and Gujarati, human lungs and diaphragm push up *two types* of *airstreams* – normal and stronger. The linguistic sounds resulting from the stronger airstream are known as *aspirated* sounds, and the ones resulting from the normal airstream are contrastively known as *unaspirated* sounds. But when these airstreams pass through the *vocal folds* (or *vocal cords*), these folds **may** come closer to each other, so that they *vibrate* in the airstream and add a *buzzing* character to the airstream. This buzzing is known as *voice* and the airstream is known as *voiced*. The result is that after passing through the vocal folds, an airstream can assume **one** of the 4 features: (1) *Voiceless Unaspirated*, (2) *Voiceless Aspirated*, (3) *Voiced Unaspirated*, or (4) *Voiced Aspirated*.

[4.2] Look at the **Consonant Square** in the picture. The consonants in the *first* column – ਕ ਚ ਟ ਤ ਪ are *Voiceless Unaspirated*; the consonants in the second column ਖ ਛ ਠ ਥ ਫ are *Voiceless Aspirated*; the consonants in the third column ਗ ਜ ਡ ਢ ਬ are *Voiced Unaspirated*; and the consonants ਘ ਝ ਞ ਣ ਭ in the fourth (shaded) column are *Voiced Aspirated*. We will discuss later why they (like ਚ) are in the shaded boxes. The *Nasal* consonants in the fifth column are described below.

It must be emphasised once again that the raised **h** used in transcribing some of these consonants simply indicates their *aspirated* character, and not a *sequence* of a *consonant*+**h**. For example, **d^h**, **p^h** and other characters transcribed in this way are *single sounds* with *aspirated* character.

The action of the two types of airstream and the action (or sometimes the lack of action) of the *vocal folds* results in *4 types of Phonation* – *Voiceless Unaspirated*, *Voiceless Aspirated*, *Voiced Unaspirated* and *Voiced Aspirated*. Every linguistic sound carries *one, and only one*, type of original *phonation*. What happens to a linguistic sound above the *vocal folds* is known as *articulation*. Every linguistic sound (except ਚ **h**) has *articulation*. But ਚ **h** has *voiced aspirated phonation* only. This is the reason for its odd behaviour we have seen in Chapter 3.

[4.2] The *Pharynx* plays no role in the articulation of the Panjabi linguistic sounds. But the Arabic *pharyngeal vowel* ع and the *voiceless pharyngeal fricative* ح are *articulated* here. For the articulation of the Arabic *dental consonants* ط ظ ص the root of the tongue is pulled into the *pharynx*, resulting in the *secondary articulation* known as *pharyngealisation*. The Iranians were unable to pronounce the *pharyngeal* and the *pharyngealised* sounds and changed their pronunciation, as we have seen in Chapter 1.

4: The Anatomical Dimension

[4.1] The primary speech role of the *Uvula* is to act as a door to the *Nasal Cavity*. If it hangs down, as shown in the picture, it lets the airstream pass through the nose. The result is *Nasal Consonants* or *Nasalised Vowels*. The consonants **ਙ ਙ ਙ ਙ** are *voiced nasal stop consonants*: the outgoing *voiced* airstream is stopped in the *mouth* (or *Oral Cavity*). We can say that *nasal* is a *secondary feature* imposed on the *voiced* airstream. A similar process happens in the case of the *nasalised vowels* as well. The outgoing *voiced* airstream goes on escaping **both through the mouth and the nose** at the same time.

Another *articulatory* role of the *uvula* is that for the production of the Arabic *voiceless consonant* **ق**, the tongue touches the *uvula* to stop the outgoing airstream. So it is called a *voiceless uvular consonant*. But very few (if any) speakers of Panjabi use this consonant in their speech.

The Oral Cavity (mouth): the grand theatre of articulation

[4.1] The four types of *phonation*: *Voiceless Unaspirated*, *Voiceless Aspirated*, *Voiced Unaspirated* and *Voiced Aspirated* enter the oral cavity to be *articulated* into different linguistic sounds (known as phonemes). **ੜ** is an exception because it has *Voiced Aspirated phonation* only. We have seen in Chapter 3 that when it loses its *phonation* because of the arrival of the *tone*, it has no *articulation* to retain, as is the case with the *voiced aspirated stop consonants* in the fourth (shaded) column.

Vowels and consonants

For the articulation of the vowels, the *voiced airstream* is not obstructed in any manner. But different parts of the tongue are raised or lowered to different height in the different parts of the mouth. This is shown in a *simplified manner* in the picture on page 27. The neutral position of the tongue (the normal breathing position) is that of the vowel **ਅ**, known as the **ਮੁਕਤਾ** vowel. Lips are rounded for the articulation of the *High Back* vowels. In articulation **ੳ** and **ਓ** are quite close. But **ੳ** is more *centralised* than **ਓ**. **ੳ** is articulated with the lax tongue and cannot prolonged in speech. The same difference applies to **ਏ** and **ਐ**. Some speakers pronounce **ਐ** as a *rapid glide* from **ਅ** to **ੳ**, and **ਐ** as a *rapid glide* from **ਅ** to **ਏ**. This was the normal Panjabi pronunciation some centuries ago and some speakers of Panjabi still use it. You have seen the consequences of this historical fact in Chapter 3.

IMPORTANT NOTE

You can see that all the **High Back vowels** are written with ਓ, all the **Low Vowels** are written with ਅ, and all the **High Front vowels** are written with ਏ. This is the reason why the order of the vowel carrier letters in the Gurmukhi alphabet is ਓਅਏ. **The arrangement is according to the air flow direction from the lungs.**

The air flow direction

[4.1] For Arabic, the *pharynx* is the first place of *articulation*. Then there is the *uvula* for the articulation of the *voiceless uvular stop* consonant ق़ q. But for Panjabi, it is the *velum* (or *soft palate*). [4.2] The *velar stop consonants* ਕ ਖ ਗ ਘ ਙ are articulated by stopping the outgoing airstream in the mouth by touching the back part of the tongue here. But it escapes through the nose for ਙ because the *uvula* is lowered down. Further forward, the front part of the tongue touches *hard palate* in the similar manner the articulation of the *palatal stop consonants* ਚ ਛ ਜ ਝ ਞ. For the articulation of the *retroflex stop consonants* ਟ ਠ ਡ ਢ ਣ, the tongue is curled back and the *underside of the tongue* touches the farthest part of the *hard palate* behind the upper teeth. Farther still, the *tip of the tongue* articulates the *dental stop consonants* ਤ ਥ ਦ ਧ ਨ by touching the *teeth*. The final *articulatory* point is the two *lips* closed for articulating the *bilabial stop consonants*. The tongue plays no role here.

Fricatives and frictionless continuants

[4.2] For the articulation of these consonants, the outgoing airstream is not completely blocked, but only *impeded*. If this causes a frictional sound, the resulting consonants are known as *fricatives*. But if the *voiced* airstream escapes without any friction, the resulting consonants are known as *frictionless continuants*.

[4.2] The *voiced aspirated consonants* in the shaded boxes have *disappeared* from the variety of Panjabi we are studying. These stops are ਘ ਙ ਛ ਞ. For the *articulation* of these consonants, the outgoing airstream is completely blocked. But they have lost the original *phonation*, as we will see below.

Why are ਙ and ਞ there in the Gurmukhi alphabet?

These two *nasal stops* are hardly ever used in *writing*. But they are a part of the *system*. They are used in *speech*. But they occur in the positions where a *Bindi* or a *Tippi* can do their business in writing. Giving all the technical details will not be desirable here. But you can refer to my books mentioned at the end of Chapter 3.

Lost phonation, but not articulation

We conclude this chapter with an example.

The Panjabi word written as ਘੋੜਾ was pronounced as

ਘੋੜਾ [g^hŌṛā]

some centuries ago in the variety of Panjabi we are studying (as still in Urdu and Hindi and in some Western Panjabi dialects). The vowel **Ō** was *stressed*. The *voiced aspirated stop* came *before* the *stressed vowel*. Now the pronunciation has become *tonal* as

[kŌṛā]

g^h has lost its *voiced aspirated phonation* and has become *voiceless unaspirated*. In the word-initial position, it lost both *voice* and *aspiration* with the arrival of the *Low Tone*. **Ō** has got a *Low Tone* now. But the older g^h has *retained* its *velar articulation* by becoming **k**. Now we come to

ਬਾਘ [bāg^h]

The present pronunciation is

[bā̃g]

g^h has lost *aspiration* only but not its *voice*. Its original *velar articulation* has been retained. A similar fate has happened to all the former *voiced aspirated stops*. They lost their original *phonation* only, but retained the *articulation*.

But what about the poor **h**? It consists of *phonation* only. So when it comes to losing *phonation* with the arrival of the *tone*, it can only *disappear* because it has no *articulation* to retain.

We have seen this in detail in Chapter 3. Languages change and this particular change seems to have started *after* the Gurmukhi system got established in its present form. The older spellings are in use. But there are no symbols for showing *tones* in Gurmukhi. As

was said in an earlier chapter, Panjabi is the only major Indian/Pakistani language which has *tone*.

So much about the claim of the *a-gianis* that in Gurmukhi “You speak exactly as you write and write exactly as you speak.”

If there is a God who does justice, we should leave it to Him to decide what to do with these *a-gianis*.

Chapter 5

Reading Practice

In this Chapter, we provide some Gurmukhi passages for reading practice. You will hardly come across any Panjabi words which the learners of Gurmukhi in West Punjabi will be unfamiliar with. If you come across any, you can look them up in the online Panjabi dictionary prepared by Punjabi University, Patiala.

The first passage is from Jagat Singh Nagra's **ਮੌਖੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ** Part 3. The other passages were written by me for my *Colloquial Panjabi 2*, downloadable from the Internet.

Another problem faced by the Shamukhi users learners learnin Gurmukhi is that of *vocabulary* used by the writers in East Punjab. They tend to borrow their “learned” words from Sanskrit and Hindi, while writers in West Punjab borrow such words from Urdu and Persian. This is done mostly by the literary critics and theorists, and not generally by the creative writers writing for the common readers.

The only solution to this problem is to use the Online Punjabi to English Dictionary.

How Gurmukhi letters and symbols are written together

A letter in Gurmukhi does not change its shape (except ਹਰਵ “at the foot”). We have also seen how the **Vowel Symbols** and markers like **Tippi**, **Bindi** and **Addhak** are added to the **Consonant Symbols** are **Vowel Carrier** letters. See pages 28-29.

Look at the picture on page 52. You will find that the majority of the *main letters* such as ਸਹਕਗਘਚਛਜਝਟਠਡਢਣਤਥਦਧਨਫਬਭਯਰਲਵੜ, have a “roof”. Some other *main letters*, such as ਅਖਘਪਮ, are “roofless”. Details are give in my book *Punjabi Language and Script for the Coming Generations on the International Stage*. This book is downloadable from <https://jugsandhi.com/2021/11/21/punjabi-future>. It also has a full chapter ‘Gurmukhi Writing Practice’ on *how to write the main Gurmukhi characters*.

But *all these main letters* are written *below* the line. The only partial exception is ਓ, whose “*turban*” part goes *above* the line. This “*turban*” is the reason why ਓ plus ੱ is written as ਓ and why the **tippi** ੱ is not added to ਓ. The Panjabi-speaking people all over the world have great respect for their turban and tolerate no interference with it! There are no other major problems of joining the letters similar to the ones you face in Shahmukhi. For ਹਰਵ “at the foot”, read pages 45-49.

ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇ ਲਾਭ ਅਤੇ ਹਾਨੀਆਂ

ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਮੀਲ ਦੂਰ ਬੈਠਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨੇੜੇ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਖ਼ਬਰਾਂ, ਮੌਸਮ ਦਾ ਹਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਨ ਘਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਸੁਣ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਸਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਸਾਇੰਸ ਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਵੱਡਾ ਤੋਹਫ਼ਾ ਹੈ।

ਅੱਜ-ਕੱਲ੍ਹ ਲਗਭਗ ਹਰ ਘਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਹੈ। ਕਈ ਘਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਵੀ ਹਨ। ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇਖਣ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਲਾਭ ਹਨ। ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਮਨੋਰੰਜਨ ਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਬਹੁਤ ਵੱਡਾ ਸਾਧਨ ਹੈ। ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ 'ਤੇ ਕਈ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੀਆਂ ਫ਼ਿਲਮਾਂ, ਡਰਾਮੇ, ਡਾਂਸ, ਗੀਤ-ਸੰਗੀਤ ਅਤੇ ਖੇਡਾਂ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਬਹੁਤੇ ਲੋਕੀ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਪਸੰਦ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਾਧਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ 'ਤੇ ਕਈ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਦਿਅਕ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਦਿਖਾਏ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਕੂਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਕਈ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕਈ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੀ ਸਿਖਾਈਆਂ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਛੋਟੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਕਈ ਕਾਰਟੂਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਬੱਚੇ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਪਸੰਦ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਜਿੱਥੇ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇਖਣ ਦੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਲਾਭ ਹਨ, ਉੱਥੇ ਕੁਝ ਹਾਨੀਆਂ ਵੀ ਹਨ। ਬਹੁਤਾ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਅੱਖਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਮਾੜਾ ਅਸਰ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਘੱਟ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਕਈ ਬੱਚੇ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇਖਣ ਦੇ ਆਦੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਰ ਤਕ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਕੂਲ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਵੀ ਸਮੇਂ ਸਿਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਬਹੁਤਾ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ ਦੇਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਸਿਹਤ 'ਤੇ ਵੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਮਾੜਾ ਅਸਰ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬਹੁਤਾ ਚਿਰ ਬੈਠਣ ਨਾਲ ਸਰੀਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਈ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੀਆਂ ਬੀਮਾਰੀਆਂ ਲੱਗ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਕਸਰਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ।

ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ 'ਤੇ ਕਈ ਵਾਰ ਕਈ ਅਸਲੀਲ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਦਿਖਾਏ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ 'ਤੇ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਭੈੜਾ ਅਸਰ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ 'ਤੇ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਉਹ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਦੇਖਣੇ ਚਾਹੀਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਵਿੱਦਿਆ, ਖੇਡਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਮਨੋਰੰਜਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਹੋਣ। ਟੈਲੀਵਿਯਨ 'ਤੇ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ।

ਠੇਕੇਦਾਰ

ਅੱਧੀ ਸਦੀ ਬਾਅਦ ਹੁਣ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਹਦਾ ਅਸਲ ਨਾਂ ਭੁੱਲ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸੰਨ 1958 ਵਿਚ ਜਦ ਮੈਂ ਤੇ ਉਹ ਹਾਈ ਸਕੂਲ ਵਿਚ ਇੱਕੋ ਕਲਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਪੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਸਾਂ, ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਵੀ ਸਭ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਠੇਕੇਦਾਰ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਬੁਲਾਉਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਹਦਾ ਇਹ ਉਪਨਾਮ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਪਿਆ, ਪਰ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਬੁਲਾਏ ਜਾਣ 'ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਇਤਰਾਜ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਕਲਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਬੂਹੇ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਨੇੜੇ ਦੇ ਬੈਂਚ 'ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਥਾਂ ਉਹਦੇ ਲਈ ਰਾਖਵਾਂ ਸੀ, ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਉੱਥੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਬੋਲਦਾ ਉਹ ਘੱਟ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਦਾ ਗੰਭੀਰ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਉਹਦੀ ਆਦਤ ਸੀ।

ਸਾਡੇ ਇਕ ਟੀਚਰ ਦੀ ਆਦਤ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ “ਬੱਚੇ” ਆਖ ਕੇ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਆਮ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ “ਬੱਚਿਓ” ਹੈ; “ਬੱਚੇ” ਹਿੰਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਰਦੂ ਵਿਚ ਆਖਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਅਜੀਬ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਰਤਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਟੀਚਰ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ “ਬੱਚੇ” ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਇਕ ਦਿਨ ਜਦ ਉਹ ਟੀਚਰ ਕਲਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਆਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਸਭ ਬੱਚੇ ਉਹਦੇ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਲਈ ਆਮ ਵਾਂਗ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਮੈਂ ਟੀਚਰ ਦਾ ਮਜ਼ਾਕ ਉਡਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਹਿ ਦਿੱਤਾ, “ਬੈਠ ਜਾਓ ਮੇਰੇ ਬੱਚੇ”। ਉਹਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਗੁੱਸਾ ਆ ਗਿਆ। ਉਹ ਬੈਂਚ ਦੀ ਸੋਟੀ ਹਵਾ ਵਿਚ ਘੁਮਾਉਂਦਾ ਕੜਕਿਆ, “ਇਹ ਬਕਵਾਸ ਕਿਹਨੇ ਕੀਤਾ?” ਪਰ ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਬੋਲਿਆ। ਉਹਨੇ ਫਿਰ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਜਿਹਨੇ ਇਹ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਜੇ ਉਹ ਮੰਨ ਜਾਏ ਤਾਂ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਮਿਲੇਗੀ, ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਪੂਰੀ ਕਲਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਕੁੱਟ ਪਏਗੀ।”

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਸਕੂਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੁੱਟਣ ਦੀ ਇਜਾਜ਼ਤ ਓਦੋਂ ਵੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਵੀ ਹੈ। ਜਦ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਮੁੰਡਾ ਨਾ ਮੰਨਿਆ, ਤਾਂ ਟੀਚਰ ਨੇ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਬੈਂਚ 'ਤੇ ਬੈਠੇ ਠੇਕੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਹੋ ਜਾ। ਦੱਸ ਇਹ ਕਿਹਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ? ਤੂੰ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਨੇ?” ਠੇਕੇਦਾਰ ਨੇ ਹੌਲੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਜੀ ਇਹ ਮੈਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ।”

“ਬਦਮਾਸ਼! ਮੈਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਸ਼ੱਕ ਸੀ। ਹਰ ਬਦਮਾਸ਼ੀ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਠੇਕਾ ਤੇਰੇ ਕੋਲ ਹੀ ਤਾਂ ਹੈ।” ਇਹ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਟੀਚਰ ਨੇ ਉਹਦੀਆਂ ਤਲੀਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਚਾਰ ਪੰਜ ਬੈਂਤਾਂ ਜੜ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ, ਤੇ ਕਲਾਸ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਆਮ ਵਾਂਗ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ।

ਇਸ ਘਟਨਾ ਨੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਦੁਖੀ ਕੀਤਾ। ਕਲਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੈਂ ਠੇਕੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਇਹ ਸ਼ਰਾਰਤ ਮੈਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ।”

“ਹਾਂ, ਮੈਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਸੀ।”

“ਫਿਰ ਤੂੰ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਹੀਂ?”

“ਮੈਨੂੰ ਮੁਖਬਰ ਬਣਨਾ ਚੰਗਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਗਦਾ। ਜੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਆਉਣ 'ਤੇ ਤੂੰ ਮੰਨ ਵੀ ਜਾਂਦਾ, ਤਦ ਵੀ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਪੰਜ ਸੱਤ ਹੋਰ ਜਣਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਂ ਕੁੱਟ ਪੈ ਹੀ ਜਾਣੀ ਸੀ। ਮੈਂ ਸੋਚਿਆ ਮੈਂ ਕੱਲਾ ਕੁੱਟ ਖਾ ਕੇ ਬਾਕੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਬਚਾਓ ਕਰ ਦਿਆਂ।”

ਉਹਦਾ ਅਸਲ ਨਾਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਹੁਣ ਯਾਦ ਨਹੀਂ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਹੁਣ ਉਹ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਇਸ ਘਟਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਯਾਦ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਉਹਦੀ ਸ਼ਖ਼ਸੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਦਾ ਸਿਰ ਝੁਕਾਉਂਦਾ ਰਹਾਂਗਾ।

ਕਿਸੇ ਦੇ ਚਰਿੱਤਰ ਦੀ ਮਹਾਨਤਾ ਉਹਦੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਕੰਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿਚ ਉਹਦੇ ਨਿੱਕੇ ਨਿੱਕੇ ਕੰਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਝਲਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਮੂਸਾ ਭੱਜਾ ਮੌਤ ਤੋਂ, ਅੱਗੇ ਮੌਤ ਖੜੀ

ਇਹ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਮੈਂ ਬਚਪਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਤੋਂ ਸੁਣੀ ਸੀ।

ਉਨੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਅਖ਼ੀਰਲੇ ਦਹਾਕੇ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਬਾਲੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਬੜਾ ਹੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਫ਼ਕੀਰ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਮੂਸਾ ਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਗੜੇ ਹੋਏ ਰਈਸਜ਼ਾਦੇ ਨੇ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਤੰਗ ਕਰਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਉਹ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਰੋਜ਼ ਫ਼ਕੀਰ ਕੋਲ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ, “ਬਾਬਾ ਜੀ, ਮੇਰਾ ਮੁਸਤਕਬਿਲ ਦੱਸੋ।” ਫ਼ਕੀਰ ਦਾ ਜਵਾਬ ਸਦਾ ਇਹ ਹੁੰਦਾ, “ਕਾਕਾ, ਮੁਸਤਕਬਿਲ ਦਾ ਫ਼ਿਕਰ ਨਾ ਕਰ। ਹਾਲ ਵਲ ਧਿਆਨ ਦੇ। ਮੁਸਤਕਬਿਲ ਉਸ ਪਰਵਰਦਿਗਾਰ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਵਿਚ ਐ। ਇਹਨੂੰ ਉੱਥੇ ਹੀ ਰਹਿਣ ਦੇ। ਤੂੰ ਉਹਦਾ ਫ਼ਿਕਰ ਨਾ ਕਰ।” ਪਰ ਉਹ ਰਈਸਜ਼ਾਦਾ ਫ਼ਕੀਰ ਦਾ ਖਹਿੜਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਛੱਡਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਕ ਦਿਨ ਤੰਗ ਆ ਕੇ ਫ਼ਕੀਰ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਚੰਗਾ, ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੁਸਤਕਬਿਲ ਜਾਨਣਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਸੁਣ। ਅੱਜ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਜਵੇਂ ਦਿਨ ਅੰਬਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਤੇਰੀ ਮੌਤ ਹੋਏਗੀ।” ਰਈਸਜ਼ਾਦਾ ਲਾਲ ਪੀਲਾ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਬੋਲਿਆ, “ਬੁੜ੍ਹਿਆ, ਪੰਜਵਾਂ ਦਿਨ ਤਾਂ ਆਉਣਾ ਹੀ ਐ। ਇਹਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਰੋਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ। ਪਰ ਮੈਂ ਅੰਬਾਲੇ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਚਲਿਆ ਜਾਵਾਂਗਾ। ਫੇਰ ਦੇਖਾਂਗਾ ਤੇਰੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਸੱਚ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਐ। ਅਗਲੇ ਹਫ਼ਤੇ ਵਾਪਸ ਆ ਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਤੇਰੀ ਦਾਹੜੀ ਫੜਾਂਗਾ।”

ਅਗਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਮੂਸਾ ਘੋੜੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਵਾਰ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਚੱਲ ਪਿਆ। ਚਾਰ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਲਗਾਤਾਰ ਸਫ਼ਰ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਉਹ ਦੁਪਹਿਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਹੁਸ਼ਿਆਰਪੁਰ ਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਇਕ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਪੁੱਜਾ। ਅੱਤ ਦੀ ਗਰਮੀ ਸੀ। ਉੱਥੇ ਇਕ ਖੂਹ ਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਬੋਹੜ ਦੇ ਦਰਖਤ ਦੀ ਠੰਢੀ ਛਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰੁਕ ਕੇ ਉਹਨੇ ਠੰਢਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਪੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਘੋੜੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਪਿਆਇਆ।

ਦਰਖਤ ਦੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਇਕ ਬੜੀਆਂ ਬੜੀਆਂ ਮੁੱਛਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਭਲਵਾਨ ਜਿਹਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਹੱਥ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਸਾ ਫੜੀ ਬੈਠਾ ਸੀ। ਉਹਨੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਮੁੰਡਿਆ, ਬੜਾ ਖੁਸ਼ ਜਾਪਦੈਂ। ਵਿਆਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਚਲਿਐਂ?”

“ਨਹੀਂ ਭਾਈਆ, ਮੌਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਚ ਕੇ ਆਇਆਂ।”

“ਮੌਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਚ ਕੇ? ਉਹ ਕਿਵੇਂ?”

“ਮੈਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਗਲ ਫ਼ਕੀਰ ਨੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਅੱਜ ਮੇਰੀ ਮੌਤ ਅੰਬਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਣੀ ਐ। ਮੈਂ ਅੰਬਾਲਿਓਂ ਡੇਢ ਸੌ ਮੀਲ ਦੂਰ ਆ ਗਿਆਂ। ਹੁਣ ਦੇਖਦਾਂ ਉਹਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਸੱਚ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਐ।”

ਭਲਵਾਨ ਨੇ ਹੱਸ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਕਾਕਾ, ਇਸ ਪਿੰਡ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਵੀ ਅੰਬਾਲਾ ਐ। ਮੈਂ ਮੌਤ ਦਾ ਫ਼ਰਿਸ਼ਤਾ ਹਾਂ। ਗਲਤੀ ਨਾਲ਼ ਏਸ ਅੰਬਾਲੇ ਆ ਗਿਆ। ਚੰਗਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਜੋ ਤੂੰ ਖੁਦ ਹੀ ਚੱਲ ਕੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਗਿਆ। ਚੰਗਾ, ਚੱਲ ਹੁਣ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ਼।”

ਮਹਾਨ ਫਲਸਫਾ

ਜੂਨ ਜਾਂ ਜੁਲਾਈ 1967 ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਿਵਾਲਕ ਦੀਆਂ ਪਹਾੜੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਸੜਕ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਈਕਲ ਸਫ਼ਰ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਸਾਂ। ਰਾਹ ਵਿਚ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਸੁਆਂ ਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਦੀ ਪਾਰ ਕਰਨੀ ਪੈਣੀ ਸੀ, ਜਿਹਦੇ 'ਤੇ ਪੁਲ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਆਮ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਇਸ ਨਦੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਗੋਡੇ ਗੋਡੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਵਗਦਾ ਹੈ, ਅਤੇ ਇਹਨੂੰ ਪੈਦਲ ਪਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਉਸ ਦਿਨ ਇਹਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ੋਰਦਾਰ ਹੜ੍ਹ ਆਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਹੜ੍ਹ ਦੇ ਉਤਰ ਜਾਣ ਤਕ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਡੀਕ ਕਰਨੀ ਪੈਣੀ ਸੀ। ਸੋ ਮੈਂ ਰਾਤ ਬਿਤਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਨੇੜੇ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਲ ਨੂੰ ਚਲ ਪਿਆ।

ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਮੈਂ ਇਕ ਚਿੱਟੀ ਦਾਹੜੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਦੇਖਿਆ, ਜੋ ਸਿਰ 'ਤੇ ਪੱਠਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਭਰੀ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਮੈਂ ਪੁੱਛਿਆ, “ਬਾਬਾ ਜੀ, ਇਸ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਜਾਂ ਮੰਦਰ ਹੈ ਜਿਥੇ ਮੈਂ ਰਾਤ ਠਹਿਰ ਸਕਾਂ? ਮੈਂ ਹਾਲੇ ਸੁਆਂ ਪਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ।” ਉਹਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਘਰ ਆ ਜਾਓ।”

ਰਾਤ ਉਹਦੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਨੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਸਾਦਾ ਜਿਹਾ ਖਾਣਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ, ਜੋ ਉਹ ਖੁਦ ਖਾਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਮੰਜਾ ਬਿਸਤਰਾ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਗਰਮੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਦਿਨ ਸਨ। ਮੈਂ ਵਿਹੜੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਰਾਮ ਨਾਲ ਰਾਤ ਬਿਤਾਈ। ਸਵੇਰੇ ਸਾਦੇ ਨਾਸ਼ਤੇ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਤੁਰਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਮੈਂ ਕੁਝ ਰੁਪਏ ਉਸ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ। ਉਹਨੇ ਹੱਥ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਬੜੀ ਨਿਮਰਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਜਨਾਬ, ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੈਥੋਂ ਇਹ ਪਾਪ ਨਾ ਕਰਵਾਓ।” ਮੈਂ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਪੁੱਛਿਆ, “ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਪਾਪ ਵਾਲੀ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਗੱਲ ਐ? ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਆਸਰਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ, ਰੋਟੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਮੇਰਾ ਫਰਜ਼ ਬਣਦੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਉਹਦਾ ਮੁੱਲ ਦਿਆਂ।” ਅੱਗੋਂ ਉਹਨੇ ਜੋ ਕਿਹਾ ਉਹ ਮੇਰੇ ਲਈ ਅਭੁੱਲ ਯਾਦ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਉਹਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਜਨਾਬ, ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਭੇਸ ਬਦਲ ਕੇ ਹਰ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿਚ ਉਹਦੀ ਇਨ-ਸਾਨੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਇਮਤਿਹਾਨ ਲੈਣ ਆਉਂਦੈ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਲਗਦੈ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਓਹੀ ਹੋ।”

ਉਸ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਦੀ ਸਾਦਗੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਦਿਲ ਨੂੰ ਛੂਹ ਗਈ। ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹਨੂੰ ਉਹਦਾ ਅੰਧ-ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਹੀ ਸਮਝੋ। ਮੈਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਫਲਸਫੇ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਹਨ। ਪਰ ਇੰਨਾ ਮਹਾਨ ਨੈਤਿਕ ਫਲਸਫਾ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿਸਿਆ।

ਮੈਂ “ਓਹੀ” ਨਹੀਂ ਹਾਂ। ਜੇ ਮੈਂ ਈਮਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਕਹਾਂ, ਤਾਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਪੱਕਾ ਯਕੀਨ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ “ਉਹ” ਹੈ ਵੀ ਜਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ। ਪਰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਯਕੀਨ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਉਹ ਸੱਚਮੁਚ ਹੈ, ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਦਿਆਲੂ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਆਂਕਾਰੀ ਵੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨੇ ਇਸ ਸਿੱਧੇ ਸਾਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੇ ਆਖ਼ਰੀ ਇਮਤਿਹਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਸੌ ਫੀ ਸਦੀ ਨੰਬਰ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹੋਣਗੇ।

ਮਿੱਟੀ ਨਾ ਫਰੋਲ ਜੋਗੀਆ

ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਤਾਲੀ ਸਾਲ ਰਹਿਣ ਅਤੇ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਰਿਟਾਇਰ ਹੋਣ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਜੱਦੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਯਾਦ ਆਇਆ। ਸੋਚਿਆ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਅਲਵਿਦਾ ਕਹਿਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਮਿੱਟੀ ਦੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਕਰ ਲਵਾਂ ਜਿਹਨੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਜਨਮ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਜੀਅ ਜਾਂ ਰਿਸ਼ਤੇਦਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਬਚਪਨ ਅਤੇ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਜਵਾਨੀ ਦੇ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਆੜੀ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਜਾ ਪੁੱਜਾ। ਪਿੰਡ ਦੀ ਨੁਹਾਰ ਬਹੁਤ ਬਦਲ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਸੀ, ਪਰ ਗਲੀਆਂ ਉਹੋ ਸਨ। ਉਹਦੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਖੇਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲੇਗਾ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਹਦੇ ਖੇਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਤਾ ਸੀ, ਜਿੱਥੇ ਇਕ ਕੋਠੇ ਵਿਚ ਅਸੀਂ ਰੂੜੀ ਥ੍ਰਾਂਡ ਦਾਰੂ ਛਕਦੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਾਂ। ਜਾਂਦਿਆਂ ਹੀ ਦਰਖ਼ਤ ਹੇਠ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਗਠੀਲੇ ਜੁੱਸੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਉਹੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਦਿਸਿਆ ਜਿਹਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਪੰਤਾਲੀ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਗਿਆ ਸਾਂ। ਮੈਂ ਭੱਜ ਕੇ ਉਹਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਬਲਦੇਵ, ਪਛਾਣਿਆ ਮੈਨੂੰ? ਮੈਂ ਮਨਮੋਹਨ, ਤੇਰਾ ਆੜੀ!” ਉਸ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਨੇ ਕੁਝ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਪਰ ਪੂਰੇ ਅਦਬ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਜੀ, ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਜੀ ਹਨ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇੱਥੇ ਮੰਜੇ 'ਤੇ ਬੈਠੋ। ਮੈਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲਿਆਉਂਦਾ ਹਾਂ।” ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਮੂਰਖਤਾ 'ਤੇ ਸ਼ਰਮਿੰਦਾ ਸਾਂ, ਪਰ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿਉ ਦੀ ਕਾਰਬਨ ਕਾਪੀ ਸੀ, ਅਤੇ ਦੋਸਤ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਦੇ ਜੋਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਮੈਂ ਬੀਤ ਗਏ ਪੰਤਾਲੀ ਸਾਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੁੱਲ ਗਿਆ ਸਾਂ। ਮੈਂ ਉੱਥੇ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਰਿਹਾ। ਦੋ ਕੁ ਮਿੰਟਾਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਚਿੱਟੀ ਦਾਹੜੀ ਅਤੇ ਢਿੱਲੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਪੱਗ ਵਾਲਾ ਇਕ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਕਮਰਿਓਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਆ ਕੇ ਬੜੀ ਨਿਮਰਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਬੋਲਿਆ, “ਜਨਾਬ, ਮੈਂ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਾਂ। ਹੁਕਮ ਕਰੋ, ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਾਂ।” ਮੈਂ ਕਾਹਲੀ ਕਾਹਲੀ ਉਹਦਾ ਹੱਥ ਫੜ ਕੇ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਮਾਰ ਗੋਲੀ ਹੁਕਮ ਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਨੂੰ। ਮੈਂ ਤੇਰਾ ਆੜੀ ਮਨਮੋਹਨ ਹਾਂ।” ਇਕ ਪਲ ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਸਿਰ ਤੋਂ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਤਕ ਤੱਕਿਆ। ਫਿਰ ਉਹ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਘੁੱਟ ਕੇ ਕਲਾਵੇ 'ਚ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਬੋਲਿਆ, “ਅੱਧੀ ਸਦੀ ਬੀਤ ਗਈ। ਕਦੇ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਜੰਮਣ ਭੋਂ ਯਾਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਈ? ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਖ਼ਤ, ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਫ਼ੋਨ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਤੇਰਾ ਬਹੁ ਟਿਕਾਣਾ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਤੂੰ ਜੀਉਂਦਾ ਵੀ ਹੈਂ। ਮੈਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਣ ਦੀ ਆਸ ਛੱਡ ਬੈਠਾਂ ਸਾਂ। ਚਲ ਹੁਣ ਘਰ ਚਲੀਏ।”

ਬਲਦੇਵ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਖੇਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ, ਜਿੱਥੇ ਉਹਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਲਈ ਤਿੰਨ ਕਮਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਰਿਹਾਇਸ਼ ਬਣਵਾ ਲਈ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਉੱਥੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਂਦਾ, ਪੀਂਦਾ, ਸੌਂਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਬਿਤਾਉਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਲੇ ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਉਹਦੇ ਦੋ ਪੁੱਤਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਟੱਬਰ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਉਹਦੀ ਘਰ ਵਾਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਕਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇਖਿਆ। ਉਹਦਾ ਵਿਆਹ ਮੇਰੇ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਜਾਣ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਹੋਇਆ, ਅਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਤਿੰਨ ਕੁ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਉਹਦੀ ਘਰ ਵਾਲੀ ਚਲਾਣਾ ਕਰ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਉਹਦੇ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਪੁੱਤਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਾਲਿਜ ਦੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਕੀਤੀ, ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਖੇਤੀ ਬਾੜੀ ਦਾ ਖ਼ਾਨਦਾਨੀ ਕਿੱਤਾ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਲਿਆ। ਨਵੇਂ ਢੰਗ ਦੀ ਖੇਤੀ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਪੈਸੇ ਕਮਾਏ, ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਖ਼ਰੀਦ ਲਈ। ਹੁਣ ਉਹਦਾ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਰੱਜਿਆ ਪੁੱਜਿਆ ਸੀ। ਪੁੱਤਰ ਬੜੇ ਆਗਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਸਨ, ਤੇ ਪਿਉ ਨੂੰ ਖੇਤੀ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਸਮਾਂ ਬਿਤਾਉਣ ਲਈ

ਬਲਦੇਵ ਮੱਝਾਂ ਗਾਈਆਂ ਦੀ ਥੋੜੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਦੇਖਭਾਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਪਤਨੀ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਲੇ ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਣ ਲਈ ਉਹਦਾ ਦਿਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ।

ਸ਼ਾਮ ਵੇਲੇ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਨੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਪੁੱਛਿਆ, “ਕੀ ਪੀਏਂਗਾ? ਬੀਅਰ, ਵਿਸਕੀ, ਰੰਮ, ਵੋਦਕਾ, ਜਿਨ ਜਾਂ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਰ? ਪਿੰਡ 'ਚ ਹੁਣ ਸਭ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ।”

ਮੈਂ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਹੂੜੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਂਡ ਮਿਲੇਗੀ? ਪਿਛਲੇ ਪੰਤਾਲੀ ਸਾਲਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਤਰਸ ਰਿਹਾਂ।”

“ਜਿੰਨੀ ਕਹੇ,” ਉਹਨੇ ਹੱਸ ਕੇ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਤੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਦਲਿਆ। ਮੁੰਡੇ ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ ਪੀਂਦੇ, ਪਰ ਉਹ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੋਕਦੇ। ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਇੰਨਾ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਨੇ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਨਾ ਪੀਆਂ।”

“ਠੀਕ ਹੈ, ਅਸੀਂ ਉਸੇ ਕੋਠੇ 'ਚ ਬਹਿ ਕੇ ਪੀਆਂਗੇ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਪੰਤਾਲੀ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਲੁਕ ਛਿਪ ਕੇ ਪੀਂਦੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ।”

ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਦੀਆਂ ਨੂੰਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਰ੍ਹੋਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਗੰਦਲਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਾਗ, ਮੱਕੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਰੋਟੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰਾ ਘਰ ਦਾ ਮੱਖਣ ਭੇਜ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਰਵਾਇਤੀ ਢੰਗ ਨਾਲ ਦਾਰੂ ਛਕੀ – ਅੰਬ ਦੇ ਅਚਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਭੰਨੇ ਹੋਏ ਗੰਢਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ। ਫਿਰ ਅਸੀਂ ਰੋਟੀ ਦਾ ਮਜ਼ਾ ਲਿਆ। ਦੇਰ ਰਾਤ ਤਕ ਅਸੀਂ ਬੀਤੇ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਯਾਦ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ।

ਅਗਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਮੈਂ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਲ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਸਭ ਥਾਵਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਗਿਆ ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਡੀਆਂ ਪੁਰਾਣੀਆਂ ਯਾਦਾਂ ਜੁੜੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਇਕ ਥਾਂ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਮਨਮੋਹਨ ਦੇ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ਲੱਭ ਰਿਹਾਂ ਜਿਹਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਪੰਤਾਲੀ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਇੱਥੇ ਛੱਡ ਗਿਆ ਸਾਂ।”

ਉਹਨੇ ਇਕਦਮ ਗੰਭੀਰ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਕਿਹਾ, “ਕਿਸੇ ਮੁਰਦੇ ਦੇ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ਲੱਭ ਕੇ ਕੀ ਕਰੇਂਗਾ?”

ਮੈਂ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਪੁੱਛਿਆ, “ਕਿਹੜਾ ਮੁਰਦਾ?”

“ਬੀਤੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਕਬਰ 'ਚ ਦਫ਼ਨ ਤੇਰਾ ਹਮਨਾਮ। ਸਮਾਂ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਇੱਕੋ ਦਿਸ਼ਾ 'ਚ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ – ਅਗਾਂਹ ਵਲ ਨੂੰ। ਉਹ ਕਦੇ ਰੁਕਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਕਦੇ ਪਿਛਾਂਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੁੜਦਾ। ਜਿਹੜਾ ਬੁੱਢਾ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਤੋਂ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਉਹ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੋ ਪੰਤਾਲੀ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਇੱਥੋਂ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ।”

“ਬਲਦੇਵ, ਤੈਨੂੰ ਕੀ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ? ਇਹ ਫਲਸਫ਼ਾ ਤੂੰ ਕਿੱਥੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਆ?”

“ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਨੇ ਸਿਖਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਸਮੇਂ ਦੇ ਵਹਾਉ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਚੱਲੋ। ਸਦਾ ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਜੀਓ; ਅਤੀਤ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਮੋਹ ਨਾ ਰੱਖੋ, ਭਵਿੱਖ ਬਾਰੇ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਆਸਾਂ ਨਾ ਬੰਨ੍ਹੋ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਸਦਾ ਦੁੱਖ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ, ਹੋਰ ਕੁਝ ਨਹੀਂ।”

Chapter 5 : Reading Practice

ਇਹ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਉਹਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਦਰਦ-ਭਰੀ ਸੁਰੀਲੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣਾ ਮਨ-ਪਸੰਦ ਗੀਤ ਛੇੜ ਦਿੱਤਾ -

“ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਭਣੇ ਲਾਲ ਗੁਆਚੇ, ਮਿੱਟੀ ਨਾ ਫਰੋਲ ਜੋਰੀਆ!”

Some new words for you

ਦਿਸ਼ਾ	Direction	رُخ
ਵਰਤਮਾਨ	Present time	حال
ਅਤੀਤ	Past time	ماضی
ਭਵਿੱਖ	Future time	مستقبل

The last passage we include here is a Ghazal by the modern Panjabi poet Rajinderjeet. This Ghazal has already been published in his book *ਸਾਵੇ ਅਕਸ* ساوے عکس which has also been published in Shahmukhi in Pakistan.

ਗਜ਼ਲ

ਰਾਜਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ

ਨੂੰਰ ਦੇ ਸੁੰਨੇ ਪਲਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਭਟਕਦੇ 'ਕੱਲੇ ਅਸੀਂ
ਭਾਲਦੇ ਪੂਰਬ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਦ ਹੀ ਅਸਤ ਹੋ ਚੱਲੇ ਅਸੀਂ।

ਧੁੱਪ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਆਈ ਤਾਂ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਂ ਸਿਰ 'ਤੇ ਲੋਚਦੇ
ਰੱਖਿਆ ਛਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੁਣ ਤੱਕ ਠੋਕਰਾਂ ਥੱਲੇ ਅਸੀਂ।

ਜੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਸਨ ਖੁਸ਼ਕੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ, ਪਰਤੇ ਖੁਸ਼ਕ ਹੀ
ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੇਸ ਨੂੰ ਜਿੰਨੇ ਵੀ ਖ਼ਤ ਘੱਲੇ ਅਸੀਂ।

ਰਾਤ ਸਾਰੀ ਤਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵੱਲ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਝਾਕਦੇ
ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਅੰਦਰ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਝੱਲੇ ਅਸੀਂ।

ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਹੈ ਸਲੀਕਾ, ਸੁਰ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਹੈ ਮਿਠਾਸ
ਬੰਸਰੀ ਵਾਂਗਰ ਗਏ ਕਿੰਨੀ ਦਫ਼ਾ ਸੱਲ੍ਹੇ ਅਸੀਂ।

غزل

راجندر جیت

نھیر دے نئے پلاں وِچ بھٹکدے کَلے اسیں
بھالدے پُورب نوں تُوڈ ہی است ہو چلے اسیں

دُھپ چڑھ آئی تاں ایہناں نوں ہاں سرتے لوچدے
رکھیا چھاواں نوں نُون تیک ٹھوکراں تھلے اسیں

جو لکھے سن خُشکیاں دے نال، پرتے خُشک ہی
بدلاں دے دیس نوں جِنے وی خط گھلے اسیں

رات ساری تاریاں دے ول رہندے جھاکدے
روشنی دی بھال اندر ہو گئے جھلے اسیں

تاں ہی شاید ہے سلیقہ، مَر وی ہے تے ہے مٹھاس
بنسری وانگر گئے کئی دفعہ سلھے اسیں

Chapter 6

Afterword from Shagufta Gimmi Lodhi

شاہ مکھی استعمال کرنے والوں کے لیے گر مکھی سیکھنے کا ایک سائنسی طریقہ

از منگت رائے بھردواج

"شاہ مکھی استعمال کرنے والوں کے لیے گر مکھی سیکھنے کا ایک سائنسی طریقہ" از منگت رائے بھردواج اُن افراد کے لیے ایک انمول کتاب ہے جو شاہ مکھی رسم الخط اور گر مکھی رسم الخط کے درمیان لسانی پل کو پائنا اور عبور کرنا چاہتے ہیں۔ یہ کتاب ایک جامع رہنما کے طور پر کام کرتی ہے، جو شاہ مکھی رسم الخط سے پہلے سے واقف لوگوں کے لیے گر مکھی میں مہارت حاصل کرنے کے لیے ایک منظم اور طریقہ کار فراہم کرتی ہے۔

موضوع کے معاملے میں مصنف کی مہارت اُس وقت نکھر کر سامنے آتی ہے جب وہ تحقیقی انداز سے گر مکھی کی پیچیدگیوں کو سلجھاتے ہیں، جس سے قارئین کے لیے ایک ہموار منتقلی کی سہولت ہوتی ہے۔ بھردواج کا نقطہ نظر منظم ہے، جو قدم بہ قدم ترقی کی پیشکش کرتا ہے جو گر مکھی رسم الخط اور زبان کی باریکیوں کو سمجھنے میں مدد کرتا ہے۔

اس کتاب کی ایک خوبی اس کی واضح وضاحتوں اور اچھی طرح سے منظم مواد میں پنہاں ہے۔ ہر باب پچھلے باب پر استوار ہوتا ہے، جو سیکھنے والوں کو گر مکھی میں ایک مضبوط بنیاد تیار کرنے کے قابل بناتا ہے۔ کافی مثالوں، مشقوں کے مواد کی شمولیت مواد کے ساتھ فعال مشغولیت کو یقینی بناتی ہے، جس سے قارئین کو عملی استعمال کے ذریعے اپنے سیکھنے کو تقویت ملتی ہے۔

مزید برآں، بھردواج کی طرف سے پوری کتاب میں شاہ مکھی اور گر مکھی کے درمیان موازنہ کو شامل کرنا خاص طور پر مددگار ہے۔ یہ موازنہ نہ صرف دونوں رسم الخط کے درمیان مماثلت اور فرق کو اجاگر کرتے ہیں بلکہ بنیادی لسانی اصولوں کو سمجھنے میں سیاق و سباق اور مدد بھی فراہم کرتے ہیں جب کہ کتاب اپنے مواد میں سبقت رکھتی ہے، چند شعبوں میں بہتری سے فائدہ اٹھایا جاسکتا

اضافی بصری امداد، جیسے چارٹ یا خاکے، سیکھنے کے تجربے کو بڑھا سکتے ہیں اور بصری سیکھنے والوں کی مدد کر سکتے ہیں۔

بہتری کے لیے ان معمولی شعبوں کے باوجود، "شاہ مکھی استعمال کرنے والوں کے لیے گر مکھی سیکھنے کا ایک سائنسی طریقہ" ان لوگوں کے لیے ایک انمول وسیلہ ہے جو اپنے لسانی افق کو وسیع کرنا چاہتے ہیں۔ منگت رائے بھردواج کی مہارت اور تشکیل شدہ نقطہ نظر اس کتاب کو شاہ مکھی پس منظر سے گر مکھی میں مہارت حاصل کرنے کے سفر پر جانے والے افراد کے لیے ایک ضروری ساتھی بناتا ہے۔

مجموعی طور پر ہم کہہ سکتے ہیں کہ بھردواج جی کی کتاب رسم الخط کے درمیان ایک پل کا کام کرتی ہے، جو گر مکھی میں مہارت حاصل کرنے کے لیے سائنسی اور طریقہ کار کا راستہ پیش کرتی ہے۔ اپنے منظم انداز، واضح وضاحتوں، اور پریکٹس مواد کے ذریعے، یہ کتاب سیکھنے والوں کو گر مکھی رسم الخط اور زبان کی دنیا میں اعتماد کے ساتھ تشریف لے جانے کی طاقت دیتی ہے۔ چاہے ذاتی یا تعلیمی مقاصد کے لیے، "شاہ مکھی کے استعمال کنندگان کے لیے گور مکھی سیکھنے کا ایک سائنسی طریقہ" ایک قیمتی ذریعہ ہے جو لسانی ترقی اور کراس اسکرپٹ کی مہارت کے لیے راہ ہموار کرتا ہے۔

About this booklet and its author



This book is meant for the speakers of Panjabi primarily in West (or Pakistani) Punjab who wish to learn the Gurmukhi script used for writing Panjabi in East (or Indian) Punjab. It offers a serious analysis of the structure both the scripts, anticipating the problems of the learners and offering useful suggestions. It does not offer any quack prescriptions but tried and tested methods based on his study and analysis.

The author is a native speaker of Panjabi. He got his M.A. in English from Panjab University, Chandigarh, and M.A. and Ph.D. in Linguistics from University of Manchester (UK). He is the author of several books and articles, including the BBC *Hindi Urdu Bol Chaal* (with Gordon Wells), *Colloquial Panjabi*, *Colloquial Panjabi 2*, *Panjabi: A Comprehensive Grammar*, *Panjabi Language and Script for the Coming Panjabi Generations on the International Stage*, and a number of papers and articles. He devoted his life to an analysis of Panjabi language and scripts. His belief is that a language and script are common to a linguistic community and must be kept separate from religious and sectarian considerations.

This booklet is his gift of love to the speakers of his mother tongue separated by barriers of an unfortunate divisive politics and script.