

The Morphological Representation of /i:/ in Pashto

Serat

Department of English, University of Buner, KP, Pakistan.

Shakir Ullah

Lecturer, Department of English, University of Buner, KP, Pakistan.

Email: shakirsbbu@gmail.com

(Corresponding Author)

Rizwana Bibi

Department of English, University of Buner, KP, Pakistan.

▪ p-ISSN: 2663-3299

▪ e-ISSN: 2663-3841

▪ L-ISSN: 2663-3299

Abstract: Pashto is widely spoken in different regions of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other countries. Many researchers have studied the Pashto and revealed various interesting aspects of it. However, the purpose of the study is to investigate the use of the morpheme /i:/ as a suffix in Pashto grammar, particularly in nouns (masculine, feminine, singular and plural) and verb. For this purpose, the researchers adopted a qualitative approach and collected data from the native speakers of Pashto. The results of the study showed that the morpheme /i:/ is a very productive process in Pashto in the formation of noun and its plural, and past tense (verb). The results showed that /i:/ cause a morphological change in the root of masculine nouns (e.g., 'zalme' means 'young boy' and 'zalmi:' means 'young boys'), feminine nouns (e.g., 'wana' means 'tree' and 'wani:' means 'trees') and verbs in the past tense (e.g., 'kaṭali:' means 'saw'). The results revealed that this morpheme brings morphological change to the root of the nouns as well because it adds to the category of the noun 'χa:n' meaning 'king/authoritative person', and the category remains same (noun) 'χa:ni:' means 'wealthy/powerful' and the noun 'χari:b' means 'poor' into the noun 'χari:bi:' means 'poverty'.

Key Words: Lexical, Morphological Process, Pashto, Suffix, Word Formation

Introduction

Many languages such as Punjabi, Balochi, Sindhi, Urdu, and Pashto are spoken at the provincial levels in Pakistan. Among them, Urdu is the national language of Pakistan. Some languages are similar in sound and structure but vary in several sounds, words, structures and verbs. Pashto is spoken in many regions of Pakistan. Among these languages, some have varieties that are practiced in various regions. Varieties (dialects) are forms of a particular language spoken by a social group in a particular region (Rafiq, Rahman & Hamid, 2021).

Pakistan is a multilingual country where different languages are spoken. Among them, Urdu is national, while Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, and Pashto are prevalent at the provincial level (Ullah, Shamim, & Anjum, 2021). Pashto is mostly spoken as a mother tongue in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the districts of Peshawar, Mardan, Swat and Buner. It is spoken as a first language by most of the local speakers in other districts as well (Garcia & Munir, 2016).

Linguists have reduced the rules for writing a language, called grammar. The basic rules are the combination of letters,

morphemes, word formation, and finally sentence structure. These rules are the integral part of every language and no one deviates from these rules. Pashto is recognized as the national language and also the common language in Afghanistan (Omari & Asadi, 2022). It is worth noting that Pashto grammar has exceptional value in the field of morphology.

Each language is distinctive in terms of its morphological and phonological systems. The present study is mainly concerned with morphology which is a branch of linguistics and an integral part of grammar. According to Yule (1996), morphology is the study of the internal structure of words, morphemes, word formation, and the relationship between words in a language. It covers the terms both phonetics (the study of all speech sounds in human languages) and phonology (the study of the sound system of a language and the analysis and classification of its phonemes). Morphology plays an important role in the formation of linguistic units and structure. Basically, morphology allows a language to adopt new words from existing words, or to change the grammatical aspect of a word according to the need of language use in a particular context.

Pashto has one of the most complex morphological systems among the Iranian languages. It has retained many aspects of the complex form of Old Iranian. Both nouns and verb are used according to gender, number, and case.

Pashto forms new words like any other major languages of the world like English, Spanish and German etc. Linguists discuss that word formation processes such as substitution, coinage, and borrowing are the part of morphology (Khan, Mir, & Rashid, 2017). The word formation process in Pashto has both inflectional and derivational forms which are not only used to form new words through affixation but also forms grammatical functions. The present paper focuses on the use of the morpheme /i:/ as a

suffix in Pashto and aims to investigate the use of this practice in the language. In Pashto grammar, the morpheme /i:/ plays an important role in morphological processes. It is worth noting that /i:/ has two functions in Pashto grammar. One is morpheme and the other is phoneme in word structure, but here the focus remains on the morphological process. Therefore, the objectives of the study are; to identify the use of the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto, to know the morphological representation of the morpheme /i:/, and to reveal its different uses in various classes.

Research Questions

What is the role of the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto?

What is the morphological representation of the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto?

What are the different uses of the morpheme /i:/ as a suffix in various classes?

Statement of the Problem

All languages have different numbers of morphemes, some of them change category while others don't. Pashto also has various morphemes and they are used as suffixes, of which one is /i:/. It is the focus of interest in this study. The morpheme /i:/ is sometimes used as a suffix with nouns to form the plural forms, and with verbs to form past tense. The aim of the present study is to identify the use of the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto and to know how and where this morpheme is used by speakers of the language to perform different functions.

Delimitation of the Research

The present study focuses on morphological processes in Pashto. It is further delimited to only one dialect (Yousafzai). In the morphological process, a single morpheme /i:/ is focused in this study. The morpheme /i:/ is added to verbs, nouns (singular and plural), gender (masculine and feminine) to

indicate where and how it is applied to them.

Literature Review

Pashto is widely spoken in Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as in many areas of other countries. There are five main dialects of Pashto which are spoken in different regions of Pakistan. Pashto is being one of the languages spoken in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa besides other regional languages (Rafiq, Rehman, & Hamid, 2021). Pashto is the dominant language of the people living in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and these Pashto speakers are known as Pashtuns. Pashto is commonly used in informal domains of language use i.e., in the family, with friends, in playgrounds, in the living room (community center), and in informal gatherings in offices and educational institutions (Ahmad, Iqbal & Atif, 2019). Rafiq, Rehman, and Hamid (2021) conducted a study and identified phonological variation in verb form in two varieties of Pashto and found that these phonological variations are mostly related to tense, aspect and tense and aspect combinations of auxiliary verbs. There are different varieties (dialects) of Pashto, these varieties are mostly focused for phonological and lexical variations. Pashto has different varieties (dialects) and is characterized by different phonetic and lexical/syntactic variations. The distribution of dialects is easily recognized by these variations in different regions. According to Zahara et al, (2020), Pashto is derived from the Indo-European family of languages and has different forms and functions when it comes to inflection. However, Pashto stands out among morphologically rich languages when it is compared with English.

Yousafzai variety of Pashto is spoken in Swat, Chitral, Dir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Buner and Shangla (Rafiq, Rehman & Hamid, 2021). Ullah, Shamim and Anjum (2021) argue about several forms of reduplication in the Yousafzai dialect of Pashto. Reduplication is

a morphological process in which new words are formed. All languages have some similarities, but at the same time they are different from each other as well. Morphology helps us in this concept and clearly gives us the concept of reduplication. Khan, Mir and Rashid (2017) present an important morphological feature of the nominal suffix. Bauer (1983) shows that suffixes can be classified into four derivational classes based on what they create. Affixes are used to form nouns, adjectives, verbs, and in some languages such as English and other European typologies linguistic backgrounds are used to form each category of syntactic class of lexical elements.

All languages have similarities in sounds and structure, but they also differ from one another based on the number of sounds, structure, and process of forming different words. Over the past several years, many researchers have been trying to conduct researches on various languages spoken in Pakistan such as Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi, Saraiki and Sindhi which are the major languages of the country (Ullah, Shamim & Anjum, 2021). Among the researchers, Omari and Asadi (2022) conducted a study on Pashto and found that there are two types of suffixes in Pashto: prefixes and suffixes. Prefixes and suffixes are added to roots that are of exceptional importance in the formation of verbs in Pashto. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to find out the use of the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto. Many phonetic, lexical, and grammatical phenomena have been investigated in the Pashto language, and most studies are about a particular variety of Pashto. The present study is about the morphological representation of the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto (Yousafzai dialect) which is used as a suffix in it.

Research Methodology

The present study is qualitative in nature. The researcher applied qualitative

techniques to collect and analyze data. The required data were collected to explore morphological representation of the morpheme /i:/ as a suffix. To do this, the researchers focused on the conversations and utterances of the native speakers of Pashto. The researchers recorded them, but later focused on words that had the morpheme /i:/.

Data Collection

The present study attempted to investigate the morphological representation of the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto. The researchers selected the spoken discourses of native speakers of Pashto and built a corpus in audio form, particularly joined elder speakers (male and female) for data collection. First, the researchers joined the conversations of Pashto native speakers, then read different books of Pashto, and finally verified the meanings of chosen words having /i:/ morpheme in the dictionaries. Each word is lexical and has got entry in Pashto dictionaries.

The present study adopted descriptive research design; this design is most suitable for this study as it enabled the researchers to collect data from the participants about the use of /i:/ morpheme in Pashto. It also enabled the researchers to collect data qualitatively that was used to characterize the morphological representation of the /i:/ morpheme.

The data for the morphological representation of the morpheme /i:/ as a suffix in nouns (plural), gender (masculine and feminine), and verb forms were collected through recordings, listening to recorded speeches, reading books, other written materials and consulting dictionaries.

Population and Sampling

The population selected for the present study were native Pashto speakers (aged forty to sixty years) from district Buner. The researchers randomly joined the conversations of the native speakers and recorded these native speakers for two months and collected the required data.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The Use of the Morpheme /i:/ in Feminine Nouns

The present study focuses on the rules of the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto grammar, specifically feminine and masculine nouns (singular nouns and their plural forms), and verb (past tense). Feminine nouns that end in the pattern /a/ are pluralized with the morpheme /i:/ as a suffix and this represents the morphological value of the /i:/ morpheme in Pashto, e.g., 'χaza' means 'woman' has /a/ morpheme at final position and changes into /i:/ in plural 'χazi:' means 'women'.

Table 1. Stimuli for the Morpheme /i:/ Used in Plurality of Feminine Nouns

S. No	Singular form	Meaning	Category	Plural form	Meaning	Category
1	χaza	Woman	Noun	χazi:	Women	Noun
2	χata	Mire	Noun	χati:	Mires	Noun
3	guṭa	Ring	Noun	guṭi:	Rings	Noun
4	wana	Tree	Noun	wani:	Trees	Noun
5	peyla	Unmarried mature girl	Noun	peyli:	Unmarried mature girls	Noun
6	uχka	Tear	Noun	uχki:	Tears	Noun
7	la:ra	Way	Noun	la:ri:	Ways	Noun

S. No	Singular form	Meaning	Category	Plural form	Meaning	Category
8	paṇa	Leaf	Noun	paṇi:	Leaves	Noun
9	sa:nga	Branch	Noun	sa:ngi:	Branches	Noun
10	lumbaṇa	Fox	Noun	lumbaṇi:	Foxes	Noun

1. ḍa haḡu mōr ḡa **ḡaza** ḍa (singular form).
Her mother is a kind **woman**.
haḡa tōli **ḡazi:** ḍi: (plural form).
They all are **women**.
2. halṭa yawa gura **wana** da (singular form).
There is a dense **tree**.
wani: guri na di (plural form).
These **trees** are not dense.

Table 1 lists singular feminine nouns and their plural forms which end with /a/ pattern in singular form by replacing with /i:/ that change into plural. ‘**wana**’ means ‘*tree*’ and **wani:** means ‘*tree*’. The morpheme /a/ is used in the singular form that follows its patterns,

but when it needs to be plural, it needs the morpheme /i:/. The data show that the morpheme /i:/ is used as a bound morpheme and suffix. Briefly, the present study shows that the morpheme /i:/ is used morphologically in Pashto.

The Use of the Morpheme /i:/ in Masculine Nouns

The morpheme /i:/ is also used in masculine nouns, which are pluralized with the /i:/ as a suffix. Those masculine nouns in the singular form end with the pattern /e/ and are pluralized with the /i:/. The examples are given below in table 2.

Table 2. Stimuli for the Morpheme /i:/ Used in Plural Forms of Masculine Nouns

Sr. No	Singular form	Meaning	Category	Plural form	Meaning	Category
1	saṭe	Man	Noun	saṭi:	Men	Noun
2	lewane	Mad	Noun	lewani:	Mads	Noun
3	malgare	Friend	Noun	malgari:	Friends	Noun
4	zalme	Young boy	Noun	zalmi:	Young boys	Noun
5	kale	Village	Noun	kali:	Villages	Noun
6	zmare	Tiger	Noun	zmari:	Tigers	Noun
7	bute	Plant	Noun	buti:	Plants	Noun
8	sparle	Spring	Noun	sparli:	Springs	Noun
9	gane	Sugarcane	Noun	gani:	Sugarcanes	Noun
10	mege	Ant	Noun	meqi:	Ants	Noun

- 1). haḡa ḍa Ahmad **malgare** ḍe.
He is Ahmad's **friend**.
haḡu ḍa Ahmad **malgari:** ḍi.
They are Ahmad's **friends**.
- 2). sōk wayi: ṭi: haḡa **lewane** de?
Who is said that he is **mad**?
haḡu: **lewani:** na ḍi:.
They are not **mad**.

Table 2 shows a list of masculine nouns that end with the /e/ morpheme in the singular form but by adding /i:/ morpheme changes into plural forms. For example, ‘**malgare**’ means ‘*friend*’, is singular noun and ends with /e/ pattern is pluralized with /i:/ morpheme ‘**malgari:**’ means ‘*friends*’. It shows morphological changes in the structure of masculine nouns, caused by the addition of

the /i:/ morpheme instead of /e/. The results of the study show that the morpheme /i:/ is also used in the plural form of masculine nouns.

The Use of the Morpheme /i:/ in Nouns

Noun is one of the essential parts of grammar

in Pashto which shows names of a person, place, thing and an idea. The study analyzed the use of /i:/ morpheme as a suffix in Pashto noun and found another name which ends with this /i:/ morpheme as a suffix. Here in this process, the grammatical category of words is not changed.

Table 3. Stimuli for the Morpheme /i:/ Forming another Noun

S. No	Words	Meaning	Category	Words	Meaning	Category
1	χa:n	King	Noun	χa:ni:	Authority	Noun
2	waxt	Time	Noun	waxtj:	Early	Noun
3	kaʃar	Young	Noun	kaʃari:	Youngers	Noun
4	maʃar	Senior	Noun	maʃari:	Seniority	Noun
5	ranzər	Sick, ill	Noun	ranzori:	Sickness	Noun
6	zwa:n	Young	Noun	zwa:ni:	Youthfulness	Noun
7	yar	Mountain	Noun	ɣarsani:	Wild	Noun
8	ma:lɖa:r	Rich	Noun	ma:lɖa:ri:	Richness	Noun
9	χpal	Relative	Noun	χpalwali:	Relationship	Noun
10	ɣari:b	Poor	Noun	ɣari:bi:	Poverty	Noun

- 1). ɖa χalaq paχwani: de.
They are **ancient people**.
- 2) ɖa sɖa χa:ni: na ɖa.
This is not your **authority**.
- 3). nan saba haɣu pa zwani: ki dj:.
Presently, they are in **youthfulness**.

Table 3 shows that the morpheme /i:/ occurs with nouns that end with this morpheme and undergoes a morphological change in the process. The examples show that there are some nouns in Pashto that end with the /i:/ morpheme as a suffix. These nouns are derived from other nouns, when the morpheme /i:/ is attached to them. The results regarding the use of /i:/ morpheme in nouns show that this /i:/ morpheme causes morphological changes in these words, but the category does not change e.g., 'χa:n' means 'the leader of a tribe' by adding /i:/

morpheme as a suffix changes into another noun 'χa:ni:' means 'authority' and 'ɣari:b' means 'poor' changes into 'ɣari:bi:' means 'poverty'.

The Use of the Morpheme /i:/ in Past Tense

In Pashto, the past and present tenses are distinguished by the verb, while the verb has no future tense/form (Azeemi, 2009). Pashto verb use is difficult when it is compared to other grammatical categories that contains information about tense, aspect, mood, gender, person and number, etc. (Babarkazai, 1999). The present study interprets the use of /i:/ morpheme as a suffix with verb in past tense and reveals those verbs which end with /i:/ morpheme, it shows the past tense. The examples provided in the table below.

Table 4. Stimuli for the Morpheme /i:/ Used in Past Tense

S. No	Words (Past. tense)	Category	Meaning
1	wayali:	Verb	Told
2	kaṭali:	Verb	Looked
3	ṭali:	Verb	Went
4	leḍali:	Verb	Saw
5	warkaṭi:	Verb	Gave
6	manali:	Verb	Accepted
7	praneṣṭali:	Verb	Opened
8	karali:	Verb	Planted
9	sa:ṭali:	Verb	Kept
10	ḡa:ndali:	Verb	Laughed

1). ṭi: za ra:lam haḡu la:ṭal (Past indefinite tense).

When i came, they went.

haḡu: pa la:ra rawa:n wo (Past continue tense).

They were going on way.

haḡu: ṭali: di (Past perfect tense).

They had gone.

2) sara ma:ṭa owe, ṭi: haḡu: ma sku:l ki: **lidali:** (Past indefinite tense).

Sara told me, that she **saw** them at school.

sa:ra maṭa **owayal**, ṭi: haḡu: ba ma sku:l ki: **lidal** (Past continue tense).

Sara **told** me, that she was **seeing** them at school.

sa:ra ma:ṭa **wayali:** wo, ṭi: haḡu: ma sku:l ki: **ledali:** di (Past perfect tense).

Sara had **told** me, that she had **saw** them at school.

Table 4 shows that the morpheme /i:/ is mostly used in Pashto verbs that indicates the Pashto past indefinite tense. Some aspects of past indefinite tense, past continuous and past perfect tense can be the same but the difference is in the form of the verb such as the verb form in the past indefinite tense '**ṭali:**' means *went*, the past continuous tense '**rawa:n wo**' means *went* and the past perfect tense '**ṭali: di:**' means *had gone*'. The results of the data analysis show that the past tense is identified by the root of the verb. The results show that verbs

end with the /i:/ morpheme as a suffix indicates the past tense. From the results of the discussion, it was found that the past tense of Pashto is recognized by the form of the verb. The results of the present study are similar to the findings of previous research (Azeemi, 2009) that past and present tense are identified by the verb root.

Conclusion

This study was concerned with the morphological representation of the morpheme /i:/. The study specifically focused on the morpheme /i:/ in Pashto and revealed its different uses in different categories. Morphological representation of the /i:/ morpheme found in plural forms of both feminine and masculine nouns, and verb (past tense). From the analysis and results, the use of morpheme /i:/ in Pashto grammar, the researchers concluded that /i:/ is a morpheme and has significant role in Pashto morphology. Furthermore, the study showed that the morpheme /i:/ is used mostly in the plural form of nouns rather than the morphemes /a/ and /e/ in singular nouns such as **ḡata**' means '*mire*' (feminine singular noun). The singular form ends with /a/ and is changed into plural **ḡati:**' means '*mires*'. The pattern /a/ is changed into /i:/, for example, '**pa yaw ṭaraf ḡati: we aw pa bal ṭaraf oba we**' means *there was water on one*

side and mud on the other. It is also used in the plural of masculine nouns ending in the singular form with the pattern /e/, are pluralized with the /i:/ morpheme, e.g., 'sare' means *man* (singular noun) changes into plural form with the morpheme /i:/ as a suffix 'sari:' means *men*, e.g., 'haltā ki sari: wo' means *there were men*. The results of the study showed that the /i:/ morpheme is used in noun that are derived from other nouns such as 'χa:n' (noun) means '*royal or dignified man*' by adding /i:/ morpheme forms another

noun 'χa:ni:' means '*authority*'. For example, 'dā χa:ni: ba muḍa:m na we' mean '*this power/authority is not forever*'. The results showed that the morpheme /i:/ is also used in the past tense (verb) like 'katali:' means '*saw*', 'wayali:' means '*told*' etc., for example, 'haye kiḭabuna kaḭali:' means '*she read the books*'. The present study will help the students to recognize the morphological features of Pashto in other categories and will provide a platform for further work on the subject.

References

- Ahmad, N., Iqbal, L., & Atif, M (2019). Pashto-English contact: The role of suffixation in hybridizing lexical items. *Global Regional Review*, 4(4), 629–637. [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/grr.2019\(IV-IV\).58](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/grr.2019(IV-IV).58)
- Azami, D. (2009). *Learning Pashto, intensive elementary and secondary Pashto for military and other professionals*. Columbus: The Middle East Studies Center.
- Babrazzai, F. (1999). *Topics in Pashto syntax*. (Doctoral dissertation). University of Hawai'i.
- Bauer, L. (1983). *English Word-Formation*, Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.
- García, M. I. M., & Munir, B. (2016). *Origins of the Pashto Language and Phases of its Literary Evolution*, 23.
- Mir, S, H., Rashid, H & Khan, A, Q. (2017). Nominal Suffixation in Hindko. *Journal of Literature*, 1(2), 22-35.
- Omari, P, N & Asadi, P. N. (2022). The position and function of phonological and morphological vowels of (i,e) in Pashto grammar. *International Journal for Research in Applied Sciences and Biotechnology*, 9(3), 24-27. <https://doi.org/10.31033/ijrasb.9.3.5>
- Rafiq, M., Rahman, G., & Hamid, A. (2021). Phonological variation in verb in Pashto spoken in district Swat. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 5(4), 689-700. [https://doi.org/10.35484/pssr.2021\(5-IV\)52](https://doi.org/10.35484/pssr.2021(5-IV)52)
- Ullah, S., Shamim, M., & Anjum, U. (2021). Full and Partial Reduplications in Various Categories of Pashto. *Pakistan Journal of Society, Education and Language*, 8(1), 127-135. <https://pjsel.jehanf.com/index.php/journal/article/view/612>
- Yule, G. (1996). *The study of language*. Cambridge: University Press United Kingdom.
- Zahara, F., Saleem, T., Joiya, N., & Abdullah, F. (2020). Mayers-Scotten's 4-M Model: A Qusai-Experimental Study of Pashto-English Morphological Ability. *Amazonia Investiga*, 9(34), 8-16. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2020.34.10.1>