

Pahari Nominal Morphology: A Case of Number and Gender Marking

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Abstract

This study aims to provide the description of Nominal Morphology of Pahari, an Indo-Aryan language spoken in the state of Azad Kashmir, Pakistan. The morphological analysis presented in this study is based on natural data collected primarily between 2013-2015. Based on the data, this study reveals that Pahari nouns inflect for number gender and case. Pahari distinguishes two genders (masculine, feminine) and two numbers (singular and plural). Pahari is one of the South Asian languages that respect natural gender assignment in nouns referring to animate referents. In addition gender of certain nouns can be predicted by some morphological and phonological rules. Generally, nouns ending in /a:/ are masculine and nouns ending in /i:/ are feminine. Inanimate abstract nouns are also either feminine or masculine according to their size. In Pahari these rules of gender marking are mostly consistent but with few exceptions. Some feminine nouns are derived from masculine nouns either through vowel modification or suffixation. This study further shows that the pluralisation of Pahari nouns can be determined by the gender of those nouns to a greater extent. Masculine nouns ending with /a:/ replace /a:/ with the plural marker /e:/ while the feminine nouns that end in /i:/, form their plurals by replacing /i:/, with plural marker /iã:/. The feminine nouns that end in vowel /a:/ or a consonant are pluralized by adding vowel /ĩ:/ In addition to this, some of the nouns are pluralized by internal vowel modification. The grammatical overview of the language data presented in this study makes some generalizations about the noun morphology of the language. It is an attempt to document some of the grammatical aspects of this language and lay foundations for further research on this indigenous language.

1. Introduction

Gender and number formation systems in many languages of the world have been a fascinating area for linguistic investigation. Indo-Aryan languages distinguished variations in gender and number formalization. Some of these languages do not distinguish for gender while in others the linguistic strategies for gender and number marking are not uniform. Therefore, the question how many genders and numbers a language has and how they are manifested is dynamically debated in south Asian typological research (Comrie et al. 1996; Comrie 2005). An extensive research has been carried out from the Old Indo Aryan languages to the Modern Indo Aryan Languages to address the above mentioned question. Three genders i.e. masculine, feminine, and neuter and two numbers singular and Plural have been documented in Indo-Aryan languages. The gender in these languages is deployed in the following eight grammatical classes: nominal forms, adjectives, verbal forms, possessive pronouns, postpositions, particles and adverbs (Masica 1991). In Sanskrit, the most ancient Indo-Aryan language, all the three genders are expressed through nominal forms and verbal forms. (Cardona 2003). The Middle Indo-Aryan languages retained these three genders (Prakrit and Pali, Oberlies 2003). They are still found in the New Indo Aryan languages (Konkani, Miranda 2003 and Marathi, Pandharipande 2003). However, most of the Indo Aryan Languages like Punjabi (Bhatia 1993; Shackle 2003), Mathili (Yadav 1996, 2003) and Bhojpuri (Manindra, Verma 2003) inflects for just two genders masculine and feminine, and two numbers. And a group of languages like Bangali and Asamiya (Dasgupta 2003; Goswami and Tamuli 2003) do not show any gender distinction. However nouns in these languages

follow the Indo Aryan Languages' inflectional tradition for number. The gender in these languages with no grammatical gender can be traced through discourse context. The case of Hindi and Urdu is different in this regard. Hindi and Urdu are designated to have two genders, i.e. masculine and feminine. Gender is expressed through nominal form, verb declension, adjective and genitive case marker, (Koul 2008, Kachru 2006). In Hindi every noun is interpreted to have masculine or feminine gender and in the sentence, it is either the subject, or the object that controls gender-specific verbal-agreement (Shapiro 2003, Koul 2008). Hindi nouns are morphologically marked for number. Number in Hindi is either singular or plural and can be denoted by using binary valued features [\pm pl]. Singular in Hindi is considered the default number that does not take any morphological marking while plural can be phonologically expressed (Singh & Sarma, 2010).

The present study is based on the hypothesis that Pahari is akin to Hindi and Urdu in its gender and number marking. As per the researcher's knowledge the gender and number marking patterns in this particular language have not yet been addressed by the researchers. The above-mentioned question how many genders and numbers a language has and how they are manifested is of significant importance for a language like Pahari that has received a little attention towards the documentation of its ethnic and linguistic properties.

2. Gender Marking in Pahari

Pahari nouns can be subcategorized into two genders, masculine and feminine. In the data for this study no examples of three-gender system were found that was a common feature of the old Indo Aryan languages and it is still present in some Western New Indo Aryan Languages (Masica 1991). Nouns in natural languages are categorized into gender by three main ways: according to the rational similarities in their meanings (semantic), through arbitrary convention (lexical) and by grouping the nouns having similar forms (morphological). Pahari follows semantics and morphological rules for gender categorization. Some morphological as well as semantic clues, by which gender in Pahari can be distinguished, are discussed in the following section.

2.1 Semantic Gender Assignment

In some languages the meanings of nouns are sufficient to determine their gender. Corbett (1991) refers this phenomenon as semantic gender assignment. This type of gender assignment is found in Kannada (Sridhar 1990), Mithili (Yadav, 1996), Turwali (Lunsford, 2001), Hindi (Koul, 2008), Palula (Liljegren, 2008). In these languages nouns representing male humans are masculine, and those signifying female humans are feminine. Following other Indo-Aryan languages the semantic notion of sex and animacy play a significant role in gender assignment in Pahari. In Pahari the gender assignment to the animate nouns is based on natural gender. The Pahari gender assigning system is reliant on natural gender. Specifically, animate nouns are assigned gender according to their natural gender. Data in the following table illustrates:

Masculine	Gloss	Feminine	Gloss
tʃɑ:tʃɑ:	father's brother	tɑ:tʃi:	Father's brother's wife
pɔ̃tɾɑ:	son's son	pɔ̃tɾi:	Son's daughter
tʃʊɑ:	mouse	tʃʊi:	Mice

pr:la:	male aunt	pr:li:	Female aunt
kwɔʈɔr	pidgin	kwɔʈri:	Female pidgin
kɔkɔʈ	cock	kɔkʈi:	Hen
kʰəsɔm	husband	rən	Wife
da:nd	bull	gā:	Cow
lela:	lamb	ped	Sheep
sāda:	bull ox	mā:j	Buffalo
peo	father	ma:	Mother
pra:	brother	pəhən	Sister

The nouns in column one are all biologically masculine, so grammatically their gender is also masculine. The same is true for the inherently feminine nouns in column two.

The majority of animate nouns have the same root for both females and males. However, in some of the kinship terms and the names of domestic animals, the male female pairs have different roots, like *kʰəsɔm* ‘husband’ *rən* ‘wife’, *dā:d* ‘bull’ *gā:* ‘cow’ *lela:* ‘lamb’, and *ped* ‘sheep’ etc. The gender of these nouns is assigned according to their natural gender. No additional information about the forms of these nouns is needed to determine their gender.

In common with several other South Asian languages, gender assignment in Pahari inanimate nouns is related to the size of the referents. This phenomenon is confined to only inanimate nouns ending with *a:* and *i:*. */a:/* ending inanimate nouns generally represent large objects and they are treated as masculine, while their smaller counterparts ending in diminutive suffix */i:/* denote feminine gender. Consider the data in the following table:

Masculine	Gloss	Feminine	Gloss
bəksa:	big box	bəksi:	small box
bota:	big plant	bɔ:ti:	small plant
a:ra:	big saw	a:ri:	small saw
gi:ta:	big pebble	gi:ti:	small pebble
kʰa:ra:	big basket	kʰa:ri:	small basket
tɔkra:	big basket	tɔkri:	small basket
rəsə:	big rope	rəsi:	small rope
tʃʰɔra:	big knife	tʃʰɔri:	small knife
tʃəmʃa:	big spoon	tʃəmʃi:	small spoon
bu:tʰa:	big face	bu:tʰi:	small face
pəkʰa:	big fan	pəkʰi:	small fan
tʃʰipra:	big head dress	tʃʰipri:	small head dress
bata:	big stone	bati	small stone
tʃʊfɔʈ	long tail	tʃʊfɔʈi:	short tail
pul	large bridge	puli:	small bridge

The nouns in column 1 refer to large entities and they are masculine while in column 2, their smaller counterpart nouns that denote smaller objects are feminine. The literal meaning of diminutive feminine is basically small size. It can be seen that diminutive forms are derived by replacing masculine ending */a:/* with feminine ending */i:/*.

It is generally believed that there is an underlying semantic systems in all languages for gender assignment, yet some morphological criteria are also involved (Corbett 1991). In addition to the semantic gender assignment, there is a set of phonological and morphological rules to predict the gender for a large proportion of nouns. These rules for gender assignment are discussed in the following section.

2.2 Overt Gender Marking in Pahari

The relationship between phonology and gender marking is very common in the Indo Aryan Languages (Masica 1991). Pahari being an Indo Aryan language shows a similarity to its sister languages. A large set of the Pahari nouns can be categorised either as feminine or masculine by looking at their ending sounds. Very often the nouns ending in /a:/ are masculine and words ending in /i:/ are feminine. These two groups of nouns are morphologically interrelated. The /a:/ ending masculine nouns regularly form their feminine counterparts by replacing /a:/ with /i:/ in corresponding feminine nouns. Most of such nouns refer to kinship relations or animals. This is the most productive way of gender formation in Pahari. The following table illustrates this phenomenon:.

Masculine	Gloss	Feminine	Gloss
pəṭra:	son's son	pəṭri:	son's daughter
ḍəḥṭra:	daughter's son	ḍəḥṭri:	daughter's daughter
pā:ja:	sister's son	pā:ji:	sister's daughter
sa:la:	wife's brother	sa:li:	wife's sister
k ^h əṭa:	donkey	k ^h əṭi:	female donkey
kəṭa:	calf	kəṭi:	female calf
bəḥra:	bull ox	bəḥri:	female bull ox
ka:ka:	baby boy	ka:ki:	baby girl
sā:ṭla:	mlae lizard	sā:ṭli:	female lizard

The examples show that there is a correlation between both the two genders. Masculine nouns in column one end in /a:/ and the feminine forms in column 2 are derived by substituting /i:/ for /a:/.

Although this derivation of diminutives is parallel to the masculine singular pairs in previous table yet there is difference between these two sets of data. The pairs of the nouns in the previous table have the pure masculine feminine relation but here the diminutive feminine nouns are not the feminine counterparts of the masculine instead the feminine gender is used to indicate smallness of the object.

Though most of the nouns in Pahari can be distinguished as masculine and feminine by following /a:/ ending nouns as masculine and /i:/ ending nouns as feminine rule, but this rule is not consistent and shows some exceptions. Since there are some masculine nouns having endings identical to the feminine nouns' endings and some feminine nouns have endings identical to the masculine nouns' endings. For example, the words like *tʃa:* 'tea', *ma* 'mother', *sla:* 'opinion' *ra:* 'path' are feminine nouns, even though these nouns end with the masculine marker /a:/. Similarly, some masculine nouns like *mɔʃi:* 'shoe maker' and *ʃe:li:* 'oil smith', *səʒi:* 'friend' end in /i:/ which often marks feminine nouns. However the deviations do not exist in large numbers.

2.3 Suffixation

Nouns denoting casts, profession and family names that ends in *i*: and *n* are masculine. These masculine nouns mostly form their feminine counter part by adding suffix */ja:ni:/* with the nouns ending in */i:/* and by adding */i:/* with */n/* ending nouns.

Masculine	Gloss	Feminine	Gloss
teli:	oil smith	telja:ni:	female oil smith
mɔtʃi:	cobbler	mɔtʃja:ni:	female cobbler
mɔlvi:	a man who calls for prayers	mɔlvja:ni:	wife of molvi
kɑ:ri:	a man who teaches Quran	karja:ni:	a woman who teaches Quran
darzi:	Tailor	dərzja:ni:	female tailor
kɑ:svi:	a male having the caste kɑ:svi:	kɑ:svja:ni:	a female having caste kɑ:svi:
k ^h ɔji:	a male having the caste k ^h ɔji:	k ^h ɔja:ni:	a female of caste k ^h ɔji:
lɔwar	Blacksmith	lɔwari:	female blacksmith
kɔma:r	pot maker	kɔma:ri:	wife of pots maker
sɔɖɔn	a male having the caste sɔɖɔn	sɔɖni:	a female of caste sɔɖɔn
baɖɔn	a male having the caste	baɖni:	a female having the caste baɖɔn

It can be seen that there are two classes of noun forms that are used to specify casts names and the persons who belong to different tribes. Class 1 comprises of the masculine nouns ends with vowel */i:/*. They form their feminine counter parts by the suffixation of */ja:ni:/*. The data shows that when the suffix */ja:ni:/* is added with these nouns, last vowel */i:/* in their second syllable is deleted. The class 1 words ending with consonants undergo no change other than the suffixation of */ja:ni:/* for feminine marking. The class 2 masculine nouns form end in a consonant. Their feminine counter parts are formed by suffixing vowel */i:/* with masculine noun. They have */ɔ/* as the peak in second syllable which is deleted during the process of suffixation.

In addition to the above mention semantic rules, there are also some nouns used for animals that have one grammatical gender, but are used to refer to both the genders; for example, *sã:tbl*: meaning either a male or female ‘lizard’. Similarly *tʃu:wa*: ‘mouse’, which is masculine, but can refer to either female or male. Both *tʃu:wa*: and *sã:tbl*: have their feminine counterparts as well that are used when gender distinction is required.

In Pahari the phenomenon of unisex names is also found. Male names are used as female names, and females names are used for males. For example *nasi:m*, *shami:m*, *rahi:m*, *kari:m*, *əkh^hɔr* and *habi:b*. There are two ways to judge the gender of these unisex nouns. First, if these nouns are used in isolation, Pahari speakers tend to differentiate their gender by adding feminine gender indicating suffix *jaan* with these nouns when used for females. e.g. *habi:b ja:n*, *kari:m ja:n*. Secondly, if these nouns are used in a sentence, the verbal agreement in the structure clarifies the gender of the unisex noun. There is no need to add *jaan* with these unisex nouns for gender identification.

1. a. nasim ke ak^hna: sa:
 nasim.M.S.NOM what say.IMPR.M.S. be.FUT.M.S.
 ‘What was Nasim (male) saying?’
- b. nasim ke ak^hni: si:
 nasim.F.S.NOM what say.IMPR.F.S. be.FUT.F.S.

‘What was Nasim(female) saying?’

The discussion above shows that there are morphological and phonological principles that account for gender assignment of most of the Pahari nouns. There are identifiable rules for gender assignment in Pahari with few exceptions.

3. Pluralization

Pahari nouns also inflect for numbers. Number can be either singular or plural. The pluralisation of nouns in Pahari can be determined by the gender of those nouns to a greater extent. Plural is formed depending on the gender and ending of the noun. It has been discussed above that the /i:/ and /a:/ are the major gender markers for feminine and masculine respectively. Masculine nouns ending with /a:/ take the plural marker /e:/ while the feminine nouns that end in /i:/, replace their final vowel with /iã/ to form their plurals counterparts.

Masculine	Gloss	Masculine Plural	Feminine Singular	Gloss	Feminine Plural
kəɽpɔla:	a vegetable	kəɽpɔle:	dəɽa:ti:	sickle	dəɽa:tiã
ɦɪndwa:na:	water million	ɦɪndwa:ne:	dəvəri:	window	dəvə:riã
tʃipra:	head dress	tʃɦipre:	bə:ri:	broom	bə:riã
pɔrkʰa:	abaya	pɔrkʰe:	kə:kɽi:	cucumber	kəkɽiã
bʊ:ta:	tree	bʊ:te:	nə:ɽi:	neck	nə:ɽiã
bə:wə:	old man	bə:we:	pəkʰru:ti:	butterfly	pəkʰrutɪã
mā:ja:	broom	mā:je:	kəkɽi:	hen	kħɽiã
gətʰa:	knee	gətʰe:	kə:ɽi:	watch	kə:ɽiã
kɔɽa:	man	kɔɽe:	kwa:ɽi:	axe	kwa:ɽiã

This is the most productive process of plural formation in Pahari. A large number of nouns follow this process however; a small number of nouns show the deviation from this pattern. See the table below:

Singular	Gloss	Plural
tʃa:	animal name	tʃa:
pra:	Brother	pra:
sa:	Breath	sa:
ga:	Noise	ga:
da:	Cheat	da:

Nouns like *da*: ‘cheat’, *pra*: ‘brother’ and *ka*: ‘grass’ are all masculine ending with *a*: but these nouns do not undergo any change for plural formation. Their plural forms remain the same. Number agreement provides the most convenient way to identify the number of these nouns. The following example illustrates this phenomenon:

2. a. tʃwa:ɽa: pra: kʰã: da:
 your brother.S.M.NOM where be.PRES.S.M
 ‘where is your brother?’

- d. miṣṭri: piṭē: ki: rāḡ la:ne:
carpenter.M.S.ERG. door.M.PL.ACC. colour. attach.IMPF.M.S.
'The carpenter is painting the door.'

The noun *pit* 'door' in 3 (a) and 3 (b) is in nominative case, so the same form of the noun *pit* functions as singular in 2(a) and plural in 2(b). Whereas in 3(c) and 3(d) the noun *pit* is followed by accusative postposition *ki*. In 3c the *pit* inflect for oblique case on the pattern of singular noun inflection for oblique case while in 3(d) it inflects like a plural noun.

Majority of feminine nouns ending in vowel /i:/ in the data form their plurals by replacing final vowel /i:/ with /iā/, yet the feminine nouns ending in vowel /a:/ or consonants do not conform this pattern. These feminine nouns take /ī:/ as plural marker. The list of these nouns is given below:

Singular	Gloss	Plural	Gloss
ra:	Way	raī:	ways
ba:	Fountain	baī:	fountains
gā:	Cow	g ^h aī:	cows
həwa:	Air	həwaī:	airs
māṭd	Buffalo	māṭdī:	buffalos
a:k ^h	Eye	a:k ^h ī:	eyes

Apart from the general plural formation rule related to gender, Pahari plurals are also formed by vowel change. The plurals of bisyllabic masculine nouns that end with consonant are formed by the modification of vowel in the second syllable. The following table illustrates the patterns:

Singular	Gloss	Plural	Gloss
kəkət	Cock	kəkət	cocks
pətər	Son	pətər	sons
pəəṭ	Stone	pəəṭ	stones
dəḡət	Animal	dəḡət	animals
sətər	Thread	sətər	threads
kwətər	Pidgin	kwətər	pidgins
kəpət	Head	kəpət	heads
rəp ^h ət	Hardship	rəp ^h ət	hardships
jəḡət	Forest	jəḡət	forests
bəəṭ	edge of field	bəəṭ	edges of field
ḡu:g ^h ət	Joke	ḡu:gət	jokes
kəbət	Blanket	kəbət	Blankets

It is interesting to note that all singular masculine nouns have back vowel *o* as the peak in their second syllable that is replaced by /ə/ in Plural counterparts. Therefore, a broader generalization can be made that two syllabic masculine nouns that end with a consonant /l/ and /r/ having *o* as the peak in the second syllable, form their plural counterpart by replacing vowel /o/ with /ə/, in their second syllable.

Conclusion

This paper investigates number and gender marking in Pahari and concludes that the language in its gender and number marking is in line with its sister languages. Like other South Asian languages, Pahari distinguishes two genders (masculine and feminine) and two numbers. Gender assignment is determined semantically for a majority of animate nouns. Pahari also follows phonological and morphological criteria for gender marking. Nouns endings with vowel /i:/ are usually feminine and nouns endings with /a:/ are masculine. There are some exceptions to both the semantic and phonological gender assignment rules. Many nouns are feminine even though their form is typically masculine, and some other nouns having the feminine forms are masculine.

Feminine are derived from corresponding masculine stems through suffixation or vowel modification. The regular process involves vowel modification while the feminine of a small number of nouns are formed through suffixation. Following the tradition of Indo Aryan languages the inanimate nouns are marked for gender according to their size and power. The nouns used for large inanimate objects are masculine while the nouns denoting small inanimate objects are feminine. The pluralisation of nouns is related to the gender of the nouns. Masculine nouns ending with /a:/ replace /a:/ with the marker /e/ while the feminine nouns that end in /i:/, form their plurals with the addition of plural marker /ã/. The regular vowel change rule does not affect the nouns ending with consonants or the vowels other than /a:/ and /i:/. The masculine nouns remain unchanged. There are some nouns that do not have a formal difference between singular and plural. The same form is used for singular as well as the plural objects. In addition to this, the bi-syllabic singular nouns that end in a consonants // and /r/ form their plural by modifying the vowel in second syllable. Although gender and number morphology of Pahari nouns is rule governed yet there are frequent lexical exceptions too.

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