Morpho-phonological Similarities in Indo Aryan Languages- A Descriptive Account[1]

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Abstract

Morphological adaptation is a very general phenomenon in the world languages. Carstensen (1986: 827) and Sapir (1921: 2) note some morphological changes in English and German in their loans from French and Latin. This paper, giving a descriptive account, highlights some similar morpho-phonological features in some commonly shared lexical items- loans adapted from mainly Persian and Arabic, in five Indo Aryan languages, Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Marwaɽi and Pashto.

Keywords: loanwords, morphology, Indo Aryan, noun, verb

1. Introduction

Lexical borrowing does not mean borrowing words alone, there are also cultural implications and social values (Hoffer 1980: 2). It generally encompasses cultural supremacy and inequality in social development and technological development etc. Lee (2004: 1) emphasizes that due to economic, technological, political, and cultural advancements, English has left a deep influence on the demise or enrichment of world languages.Like other world languages, some Indo Aryan languages e.g. Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Marwaɽi and Pashto spoken in Pakistan are also influencing and enriching each other. Words borrowed are mainly from Persian, Arabic and English, and then even from each other. This borrowing is like the one Carstensen (1986: 827) sees in some European languages. The paper discusses similar morphological features in the five Pakistani languages mentioned. Not looking at the source of loanwords, the focus is to see morphological features and interfacing phonological features. Taking some common lexical items as examples, the paper will draw a sketch of

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two features, the nominal plurals and the infinitive forms of hybrid verb formations with the constituents from diverse sources. Although the five languages are spoken in the whole Indian subcontinent, the morphological changes are seen with respect to the changes in Pakistan. However, for these languages, the terms like *Pakistani languages* and *South Asian languages* will also be used besides the standard term *Indo Aryan languages*, as per their language family.

2. Receptivity of Indo Aryan Languages and Morphological Nature of Loanwords

It is likely that the receptivity of a borrowing language has much to do with the psychological attitude of its speakers towards loanwords. Morphological changes in the loanwords become necessary for some languages. Sapir (1921: 2) gives importance to historical facts of cultural relation with respect to the extent and nature of borrowing. He studies the morphological adaptations of Latin and French loanwords in German and English. Indo Aryan languages are highly receptive languages towards the morphological treatment of loanwords. The contrast seen by Sapir (1921) with regard to the receptivity of loanwords in German and English can also be seen in these five Pakistani languages in which loans are only phonetically restructured sometimes, but very often inflectional or derivational adaptations by affixation or by compounding become necessary.

The five languages in discussion heavily borrow lexical items generally from Persian, Arabic and English. Among the five languages, Urdu is itself a key reservoir from which the other four languages are randomly recipient of words. Loanwords from almost every aspect of life are commonly borrowed, but significant morphological similarities and the changes are seen both with inflectional and derivational perspective. Inflectional changes are considerable and follow the native patterns of every language. Gender and number marking, for example, in Urdu /a/ (m), /i/ (f) and /e/ (pl), in nouns, verbs and adjectives is very interesting to see in their word structure. It is vital in all Indo Aryan languages. Derivationally, an adaptation of a big number of loans can be seen, but adaptability is restricted in the derivational formations irrespective of the loanword patterns or native pattern. However, there is a frequency difference in the derivation by compounding and the one by affixation. Derivation by affixation is more frequent when there is a correlation of

loans with native affixes. But more recurrent compound formation is seen with loan constituents.

This tendency is not just limited to Urdu, but also striking in other Pakistani languages, particularly Marwaɽɪ, Sindhi, Punjabi and Pashto being discussed in the paper. A comparative account of the morphological formations in the five languages is given in the next sections to come.

3. The Morphology of Loan Nouns

The comparative analysis of five languages (i.e. Urdu, Pashto, Marwaɽɪ, Sindhi& Punjabi) indicates morphological similarity in the four languages except Pashto. The morphology of Pashto is distinctive in that it shows no additional variations. The monosyllabic and disyllabic nouns resemble mostly to their original forms with a few phonetical variations. For instance, some nouns e.g. *ʊmid* 'hope', *ɪndʒir* 'fig', and b*alʈi* 'bucket' remain unaffected in Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, and Marwaɽi. This variation can also be observed in the loan nouns, e.g. *ɪndʒir*'fig' is used with only phonetic changes as *ɪnzɪr*, the voiced affricate *-dʒ*-is replaced by voiced alveolar fricative *-z-*, while thelong high vowel *-i-* by short high vowel *-ɪ-*.

The study focuses only on monosyllabic and disyllabic nouns and nouns with three or more syllables are not considered, as for example *manager*. In most cases, they have to be adapted whenever such words are borrowed.Table 1 shows the root nouns in the said languages.

Table. 1. Root Forms of Nouns in Indo Aryan Languages

Urdu	Pashto	Punjabi	Sindhi	Marwaɽɪ	English Meaning
1. ʊmid	ʊmid	ʊmid	ʊmid	ʊmid	hope
2. ɪndʒir	ɪnzɪr	ɪndʒir	ɪndʒir	ɪndʒir	fig
3. b*alʈi*	b*alʈæ*	b*alʈi*	b*alʈi*	b*alʈi*	bucket
4. pərd *a*	pəɽd *a*	pərd *a*	pərd *o*	pərd *o*	veil/curtain
5.t h*an*	t *an*	t h*an*	t h*an*	t h*an*	a piece of cloth
6. pæs*a*	pæs*a*	pæs*a*	pæs*o*	pæs*o*	money
7. piɽh**i**	piɽh**i**	piɽh**i**	piɽh**i**	piɽh**i**	hereditary
8. t h*ap*	ʈəp	t h*ap*	t h*əp*	t h*ap*	tap
9. t əj*ar***i**	t əj*ar*æ	t əj*ar***i**	t əj*ar***i**	t əj*ar***i**	readiness
10.əspət *a*l	əspət *a*l	əspət *a*l	əspət *a*l	əspət *a*l	hospital

As can be seen in the table above, Pashto exhibits structural changes, which is an example of phonological and morphological contrast with

other Indo-Aryan languages. There is no distinctive gender marking as well as compared to that in the other four languages. This is also visible in pluralisation, and it takes the same plural marker (i.e. *–una*)in both masculine and feminine forms. Pashto seems to be the only singled out language, which is illustrated in the examples below.The pluralisation of loan nouns in other four languages depends on the alternation of nasalised vowels at the word final position. The loan stems take their respective native plural markers. Therefore, there is no morphological distinction between the loan nouns and the native nouns.

Table 2. Masculine Pluralization of Loans in Indo Aryan Languages

Urdu	Pashto	Punjabi	Sindhi	Marwaɽɪ	English Meaning
1. ɪndʒir	ɪndʒir**un***a*	ɪndʒir*a*	ɪndʒir	ɪndʒir	figs
2. əspət *a*l	əspət *a*l**un***a*	əspət *a*l*a*	əspət *a*l	əspət *a*l	hospitals
3.t h*a*n	t h*a*n**un***a*	t h*a*n*a*	t h*a*n	t h*a*n	pieces of cloths
4. pərd *æ*	pərd *a***un***a*	pərd *æ*	pərd *a*	pərd *a*	veils/curtains
5. pæsæ	pæs*a***un***a*	pæs*æ*	pæs*a*	pæs*a*	Money

Table 3. Feminine Pluralization of Loans in Indo Aryan Languages

Urdu	Pashto	Punjabi	Sindhi	Marwaɽɪ	English Meaning
1. ʊmid	ʊmid **un***a*	ʊmid *a*	ʊmid	ʊmid *a*	hopes
2. bɑlʈɪj*a*	bɑlʈɪj**un***a*	bɑlʈɪj*a*	bɑlʈɪj	bɑlʈɪ**j***a*	buckets
3. pɪɽhɪj*a*	pɪɽhɪj**un***a*	pɪɽhɪj*a*	pɪɽhɪj	pɪɽhɪ**j***a*	hereditary
4. t h*a*p	t h*a*p**un***a*	t h*a*p	t h*a*p	t h*a*p*a*	taps
5. t əjarɪj*a*	t əjarɪ**un***a*	t əjarɪ**j***a*	t əjarɪj	t əjarɪ**j***a*	readiness
6. mæz	mæz**un***a*	mæz*a*	mæz	mæz*a*	tables

The pluralization of loan words occurs using some shared and contrasting features in the said languages. The nouns in Table 2 are considered as masculine while those in Table 3 are feminine nouns. Although there are morphological variations in the formation of masculine nouns but the major morphological changes occur in the formation of feminine nouns. No genderdistinction is observed in Pashto and the plural is formed with addition of same suffix for masculine as well as feminine nouns. On the other hand, the plural formation is marked with the alteration of vowels in other four languages under study. This alteration is more obvious in the feminine pluralization as opposed to masculine pluralization. This abundance of phonological alternations is subject to the factors which cause the variation (Davenport & Hannahs, 2005). There are no changes generally in masculine plurals besides vowel alternation which is also not

very frequent.For example, *deta* 'datum' is a masculine singular in Urdu and its plural is *dete* while 'deta is plural in Marwaṛi and Sindhi and its singular is *deto*.

The pluralization of feminine nouns is dependent on the suffixal change of nasalized vowels, usually an addition of nasalized vowel to the singular noun. For instance, addition of a to *kitab* 'book' in Urdu makes it a plural. This can be contrasted with the addition of to *kitab* in Sindhi and addition of to the same noun in Punjabi and Marwaṛi. For an oblique plural, the insertion of nasalised vowel in Urdu is needed. A vocative plural requires only non-nasalised vowel *o*. Therefore, the two plural forms in Urdu become *plæt* and *plæto* respectively.

Thus, also similar case morphology is visible in the four languages. Sindhi sometimes has a tendency to utilize original plural patterns borrowed. Unlike the four languages, Pashto nevertheless rejects distinction in nouns based on gender. Unlike other four languages, the plural marker *-una* is commonly used by both the genders in Pashto.

The general observation in the five languages is that the pluralisation of a noun is based on either merely alternation of vowels or suffixation. This is contradictory to the formation of verbs with loans, which is formed through compounding of different constituents from different sources.

4. Loan Verb Morphology

In Indo Aryan languages, verb is the most complex syntactic category. A verb shows inflection for almost all grammatical features such as number, gender, tense and mood. Two forms of verbal structure are commonly found in all the languages. A big number of verbs are present in lexical forms. They take various grammatical markers in suffixal forms. A lexical verb in Urdu usually takes suffix *-na* to form infinitive such as *kha**na*** 'to eat', *bhag**na*** 'to run', etc. Similarly, the suffixes *-a* and *-ja* are used for past tense such as b^haga 'ran' and $k^ha**ja***$ 'ate'. These suffixes are also altered for feminine gender. For instance, the suffixes *-i* and *-ji* are used with b^hag and k^ha respectively to show feminine gender. The progressive masculine suffix *-rəha* is also replaced with *-rəhi* to mark feminine gender. For instance, k^ha-***rəha*** shows that agent of the action is a masculine singular noun, while k^ha-***rəhi*** is used when the subject of the verb is feminine. It is interesting to note that unlike masculine singular progressive suffix *-rəha*, the feminine suffix *-rahi* is not marked with number. The number is shown by the auxiliary that is also marked with

tense. For instance, singular feminine auxiliaries for present and past tense are *hæ*and *tʰi*, respectively, while the nasalization of vowels makes them plural.

However, there are various occasions, when a lexical verb is not present. For such a case, loan nouns and adjectives particularly coordinate with dummy verbs to produce compound verbs. A dummy verb is used as a tool to derive verb, when lexical verbs are absent for the expression of an action in Pakistani languages. Dummy verbs like *ho* 'be' and *kər* 'do' are actually restructures of Persian auxiliaries. Schmidt (1999: 101) discusses about Urdu that verbs shows a regular combination with the exclusion of five verbs *ho* 'be', *kər* 'do', *ɖe* 'give', *le* 'take', and *dʒa* 'go'. The other four languages also exhibit this verbal conjugation, and the five verbs are mostly the same. The five verbs function primarily as main verbs and then as dummy verbs (Versteegh, 2001: 488) and light verbs (Butt, 1995) used in complex predicates. The distinction of dummy verbs and light verbs is not the point of discussion. For the purpose of basic understanding, it is enough to say that dummy verbs are utilized as tools to derive verbal compounds in coordination with nouns, e.g. N (*s s*'breath') + dV (*le* 'take') = V (*s sle* 'breathe') or with adjectives, e.g. A (*xʊʃ* 'happy') + dV (*ho* 'be') = V (*xʊʃho* 'be happy'). There is a need for it when a lexical (base) verb is not present for a verbal concept. Versteegh (2001: 497) states that the widespread use ofdummy verb in compound verbis distinction of Hindi-Urdu and all Indo Aryan languages.

Dummy verbs are predominantly pervasive for verb derivation in combination with loanwords. Any loan verb- entering Urdu or any other Pakistani language, loses its verbal capacity, it can only be used as a noun, and it must take a dummy verb to exhibit inflectional information. The morphological roles of a dummy verb are the same. Instead of a loan verb, which is used only as a noun, a dummy verb gives gender, number, tense and aspect information. Therefore, a dummy verb has the key role to derive a compound verb, and every loan- whether noun, adjective or even a verb, has to take it to give tense and aspect morphology. For instance, the English loan verb *prove*'prove' stops performing as a verb in Urdu or any other Indo Aryan language. It is very frequent and convenient to borrow such verbs. However, the verbs like *prove* halt functioning as verbs, if they do not merge with dummy verbs. Therefore, for the semantics of a verb in this case, the compound verb formation will be like *prove* + *kər**na** 'to do' (root *kər*) = *provekər**na*** 'to prove'. Any loan verb

like the present English examplecan only be used as a dysfunctional verb (i.e. in the capacity of a noun).A loan verb never functions in the status of a verb in all Indo Aryan languages. Its verbal capacity cease to function and it is adopted by the dummy verbs because of complex verbal systems morphologically in all Indo Aryan languages.

It is therefore very convenient to claim that verb formation with the help of a loanword is always in a compound form. It is rather a hybrid compound. Different linguists have distinctively deduced the term *hybrid*. For instance, Capuz (1997: 8) considers the combination of the two constituents from two different sources as *hybrid* or *loan blend*. Haugen (1950: 215) defines them as the examples of lexical borrowing for which *importation* and *substitution* is seen. Kent (1999) takes the term *hybrid* as *pseudo loanword*. The hybrid formation of a loan constituent with a native word is a common phenomenon in compounding. Nevertheless, the heavy influence Persian-Arabic and then English on the Indo Aryan languages causes the huge enrichment of the lexicon of these languages. It is also notable that some dummy verbs, e.g. *kərna,* are themselves morphologically restructured forms of Persian auxiliaries, e.g. *kərd ən* in this case. This shows that the verb formations by the Indo Aryan languages diverge from the morphological norms of both source languages and the target languages. Table 4 demonstrates some compound verb formations with the help of dummy verbs in the five Pakistani languages:

Table 4. Compound Verbs in Indo Aryan Languages

Root	Pashto	Punjabi	Sindhi	Marwaṛi	English Meaning
1.bərt ərəf	k*a*vəl	kər*na*	kərəɽ	kər**no**	to sack
2. p*a*k	k*a*vəl	kər*na*	kərəɽ	kər**no**	to purify
3. pərhæz	k*a*vəl	kər*na*	kərəɽ	kər**no**	to avoid
4. pes*a*	haɣəʃt əl	le ɽ	pes**o** wətʰəɽ	pes**o** leɽo	to take money
5.qurb*a*ni	vərk*a*vəl	de ɽ	ḍejəɽ	de ɽo	to scarify
6. əsər	ʃo	ho ɽ	t ʰɪjəɽ	ho ɽo	to get influenced

All the five Indo Aryan languages show that the verb formation patterns are the same. They require a loan to affix with a dummy verb to take a verbal marking and to producea verbal structure. It is not always necessary, but the dummy verbs in many cases are also the same in the five languages, e.g. Urdukər 'do' (1-3),for transitive form and *ho* 'to be'for an intransitive and passive (9-10) verb. Gender and number or tense and aspect marking is only possible in the dummy verb, which undergoes

morphological reformation. Any loan constituent, disregarding the category, cannot undergo morphological changes. Interestingly, infinitive marking such as *-na* e.g. *pak kərna* 'to purify' (1) and *əsər hona* 'to get influenced' (10), seems to be similar in the four of the languages except for Pashto. Looking at language to language difference, some changes in the (morpho)-phonological structures of dummy verbs with infinitive forms are visible. As can be seen in Table 4 (1-6), the dummy verbs also show similarities in the four languages. They take a nasalised syllable or there may be an alveolar nasal with a vowel. Pashto dummy verbs- on the other side, differs again. They mostly take a lateral ending. There are however distinctive grammatical markers in them for various verb forms like progressive, perfective and imperfective etc. As far as the basic dummy verb structure is concerned, there is no significant difference.

5. General Perspective of Loanword Morphology in Indo Aryan Languages

The above discussion in the paper highlights a sketch at two vital points of loanword morphology in the five major Pakistan languages. The two points include the pluralisation of loan nouns and the compound verbs derived through the loanwords and the native dummy verbs, which are also actually the restructured forms of Persian auxiliaries. By the term *loanword* the paper here is meant to refer to a word borrowed from Arabic, Persian and English or even from anyone of these five languages and is commonly shared by them all. Generally looking at the structures (except for those of Pashto), it seems that the gender and number formations are dependent on only substitution of final vowels. However, the loan nouns taken as feminine are often affected by the restructuring. The pluralization is possible by the change of vowels with nasalised vowels. Most nouns taken as masculine are unchanged. The gender marking in loan nouns and loan verbs is not seen in Pashto. There is no grammatical gender, and so no gender distinction is seen in loanwords also. Further, all loans undergo a suffixal change for pluralisation and the plural marker *-una* is frequent e.g. gl*asuna* 'glasses' for both genders.

Verb formation is achieved by compounding of loanwords with dummy verbs in all above five languages. Any loan verb borrowed- if it is, stops functioning as a verb. No morphological changes occur as well in loan constituents, and only dummy verb takes the verbal capacity for grammatical marking. The combination will therefore be a hybrid compound. Such a formation is a distinctive feature in itself. However,

this kind of formation does not follow source language and target language rules in all the five languages.

Nearly all the dummy verbs are similar in their morphological structures in all the five languages.The only noteworthy difference is that of infinitive forms, which are dependent on nasal or nasalised vowels, in the four of the languages, while those of Pashto are mainly dependent on a lateral. Other grammatical markings like progressive, perfective and imperfective are, however, different in them all. For transitive or intransitive verb formations, as well, there are various dummy verbs available in these languages. They are different from each other depending on their semantic expressions.

6. Conclusion

The paper discusses two important aspects of loanword morpho-phonology- noun and verb, in some major languages spoken in Pakistan, Urdu, Sindhi, Punjabi, Marwaɽi and Pashto. Phonological changes are seen only in relation with morphological changes. There are three major sources of loanwords, Persian, Arabic and English, but Urdu itself has been donor language for the rest. Some commonly used nouns and verb have been taken as data for the morphological analysis. Generally looking, Pashto seems to show some major changes different from those of the rest. The morphological changes seen in the four languages are mostly similar. Unlike Pashto, they exhibit gender and number morphology not only in nouns but also in adjective and verbs, although the latter two categories were not seen with this perspective. For verb formations, in the absence of a lexical verb, all five languages use loan constituents along with dummy verbs- a distinctive feature of Indo Aryan languages. Even if the loanword is a verb, its verbal capacity is frozen and it is taken by dummy verb.

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