

---

---

# LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Volume 14:1 January 2014  
ISSN 1930-2940

Managing Editor: M. S. Thirumalai, Ph.D.  
Editors: B. Mallikarjun, Ph.D.  
Sam Mohanlal, Ph.D.  
B. A. Sharada, Ph.D.  
A. R. Fatihi, Ph.D.  
Lakhan Gusain, Ph.D.  
Jennifer Marie Bayer, Ph.D.  
S. M. Ravichandran, Ph.D.  
G. Baskaran, Ph.D.  
L. Ramamoorthy, Ph.D.  
C. Subburaman, Ph.D. (Economics)  
Assistant Managing Editor: Swarna Thirumalai, M.A.

---

---

## Comparative Analysis of Subject-Verb Agreement of Sindhi and English

Mubarak Ali Lashari  
Priyanka Hafeez  
Illahi Bux Gopang

=====

### Abstract

In this paper we present the subject-verb agreement of two different languages, namely, English and Sindhi. Sindhi is one of the most ancient languages of the Indus River Civilization, and English is also an ancient language, but not as ancient as Sindhi language. Both languages have different origins, history and cultural values. In this research work, the first thing which is discussed is the background of both languages like their origin, their history, and their different

values, cultural and geographical importance. Afterwards the literature review is discussed. Verbs that show “actions” they are used in both languages in different manner and, in various contexts. Then the comparison of verbs is carried out in order to understand the link and global uniformity in languages of the world.

**Key Words: Subject-Verb, Agreement, Syntax, Comparison, Sindhi, English**

## **Background**

Sindhi shares many features in common with related Indo-Aryan languages. Sindhi language originating in the lower Indus Valley region of the Indian subcontinent is spoken by over 40 million people in present day Pakistan and India and by a large Diaspora community around the world. Sindhi belongs to the Indo-Aryan language family within Indo-European, and is classed with Kashmiri in the northwestern subgroup. Sindhi is the primary language of the province of Sindh in Pakistan and is spoken along the Indus River Valley stretching into the Thar desert to the east, and bounded by the Sukkur dam to the north, the Kirthar mountain range to the west, and the Arabian sea to the southwest to the south the Sindhi region extends into the Rann of Kutch in India, while Sindhi is used exclusively or as the primary language in most rural areas within this region, it exist alongside Hindi ,Gujarati, and other regional languages in India.

Sindhi is closely related to Siraiki, spoken in the north of Sindh province, and to Kachchi, spoken to the south in the Kacch region of Gujarat in India. (Jennifer Cole, university of Illinois)

English is West Germanic language that originated from the Anglo-Frisian dialects brought to Britain by Germanic invaders or settlers’ from various parts of northwest Germany and the Netherlands. Initially Old English was a diverse group of dialects, reflecting the varied Origins of the Anglo-Saxons kingdoms of Britain .one of these dialects, late West Saxon, eventually became predominant. (J. P. Mallory 2005 In Search of the Indo-Europeans)

The English language underwent extensive change in the middle ages. Written old English of AD 1000 is similar in vocabulary and grammar to other old Germanic languages such

as Old High German and Old Norse, and completely unintelligible to modern speakers, while the Modern language is already largely recognizable in written Middle English of AD 1400.

## **Introduction**

Let's see on the dialects, variations, number of speakers, of Sindhi and English language.

## **Origin of Sindhi language**

Sindh is the site of the ancient Harappa civilization of the Lower Indus River Valley. Conclusion can be made that remnants of Harappa culture are evident in Sindhi Folk and religious rituals, which raises the idea of linguistic link between Sindhi and the Harappa language. Unfortunately, there is very little evidence on which to determine language of the Harappa, the old script is yet very complicated, but theory suggests a Dravidian origin. This theory points to the presence of the Dravidian language Brahui, spoken in the northwestern Pakistani Province of Baluchistan. This link to an old Dravidian language of the Harappa's has led some scholars to claim a Dravidian origin for Sindhi. However there is little or no evidence for the Dravidian origin of Sindhi.

Sindhi has also risen from Prakrit like other modern Indo-Aryan languages. The earliest literary reference to Sindhi appears in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and also in 9<sup>th</sup> century Persian history texts show that written Sindhi was there at that ancient time. Sindhi Literature from the 8<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> centuries includes legends of saints, kings and epic heroes and their stories as well as poetry. However, literary Sindhi flourished in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with Sufi poetry. The major Sufi poets of that period were Shah Abdul Latif (1680-1752), Sachal Sarmast (1739-1828), and Sami (1743-1850), who are still most popular poets in today's era. Evidence for Sindhi as a written language starts from a Sindhi translation of the Islamic Quran in 883 A.D. and also by a Persian translation of the ancient Indian religious epic Mahabharata taken from a Language which is considered as old Sindhi.

Trump (1872) describes Sindhi as a more 'pure Sanskritical' language as compared to the other Indo-Aryan languages, Sindhi language undeniably reveals the influence of its long history. Sindhi is closely related to Siraiki spoken in north of Sindh province, and to Kachchi, spoken in

the Kutch region of Gujarat, along the border between Pakistan and India. Sindhi is primary language of province of Sindh, Pakistan. In India Sindhi is spoken by large populations in the cities where Hindu Sindhi-speakers are found in large numbers, such as Mumbai, Pune, Ajmer, Delhi, Ahmadabad, Ahmednagar, among others. There are also populations of Sindhi-speakers in Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, the USA, and Canada, and many other cities around the world. (Cole Jennifer, [citation](#))

## **Dialects**

The Vicholi dialect of Sindhi spoken in Hyderabad (Pakistan), is recognized as the standard variety. Other dialects include Thareli spoken in the Thar Desert region, Lasi spoken in Kohistan, and Las Bela, and Lar spoken in the lower Sindh and Kachchi spoken in Kutch. Some consider Siraiki as one of the dialects of Sindhi but some rejects this claim. “Lahnda” is grouping of four distinct groups for the dialects spoken in the Sindhi-speaking territory in Pakistan these are Siraiki, Hindko, Potohari, and Punjabi. Siraiki is the more “pure”. Thar pronunciation is influenced by Marwari. Sindhi-speakers show differences in pronunciation between the dialects. That shows the variety of Sindhi language (Cole Jennifer, [citation](#)).

## **Number of Speakers**

The 1961 census of Pakistan lists 4.9 million Sindhi speakers. The 1991 census produced an estimated 40 million. The 1971 census of India lists 1.2 million Sindhi-speakers in India. Including speakers of the Kachchi dialect would raise the figure, based on census data, to 1.7 million speakers. This number must be more now as population has grown over the past 3 decades.

## **Origin of English language**

English originated in Britain by Germanic settlers from various parts of what are now called the Netherlands northwest Germany and Denmark. Up to that point, in Roman Britain the native population is assumed to have spoken the Celtic language Brythonic alongside the influence of Latin, from the 400-Year Roman occupation. One of these Germanic tribes was the

Angles. The names 'England' (Land of the Angles) and *English* (Old English) are derived from this name. Saxons, Jutes and Germanic peoples from the coasts of Frisian Lower Saxony Jutland and Southern Sweden also moved to Britain in this era. Initially, Old English was a diverse group of dialects, reflecting the varied origins of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Great Britain but one of these dialects, Late West Saxon, eventually came to dominate. Old English was later transformed by two waves of invasion. The first was by speakers of the North Germanic language branch in the 8th and 9th centuries; the second was by the speakers of the Romance language Old Norman in the 11th century with the Norman Conquest of England. Norman developed into Anglo-Norman, and then Anglo-French and introduced words especially through the courts and government. As well as extending the lexicon with Scandinavian and Norman words these two events also simplified the grammar and transformed English into a borrowing language—more than normally open to accept new words from other languages. The linguistic shifts in English following the Norman invasion produced what is now referred to as Middle English. Throughout all this period Latin was the *lingua franca* of European intellectual Life. Modern English, which includes the works of William Shakespeare and the King James Bible is generally started from about 1550, and after the United Kingdom became a colonial Power, English served as the *lingua franca* of the colonies of the British Empire. In the post-Colonial Period, some of the newly created nations that had multiple indigenous languages opted to continue using English as the *lingua franca* to avoid the political difficulties inherent in promoting any one indigenous language above the others. As a result of the growth of the British Empire, English was adopted in North America, India, Africa, Australia and many other regions, superpower in the mid-20th Century (Baugh, Albert and Cable, Thomas. 2002. *The History of the English Language*. Upper Addle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. pp. 79-81).

### **Dialects of English language**

English has been subject to a large degree of regional dialect variation for many centuries. Its Global spread now means that a large number of dialects and English-based Creole languages and Pidgins can be found all over the world. Several educated native dialects of English have wide acceptance as standards in much of the World. In the United Kingdom much emphasis is placed on Received Pronunciation (RP), an educated Dialect of South East England.

In Oceania the major native dialect of Australian English is spoken as a first language by the vast Majority of the inhabitants of the Australian continent, as the standard accent. The English of New Zealand as well as that of South Africa has to a lesser degree been influential Native varieties of the language.

Aside from these major dialects, there are many other varieties of English, which include, in most cases, several sub varieties, such as Cockney, Scouse and Geordie within British English; Newfoundland English within Canadian English; and African American Vernacular English and Southern American English within American English. English is a pluricentric language, without a central language authority (Wakelin, Martin Francis (2008. First Published 1978, *Discovering English Dialects*. Oxford: Shire Publications. p. 4)

### **Literature Review of Subject Verb Agreement of English**

When grammar is concerned, the knowledge of grammar occurs in different stages in a person's language development. In order to perform certain language tasks, relevant grammatical structures need to be mastered by a beginner. He only needs to comprehend some rules enough to use them like the basic rules of SVA and to know how to apply the Rules in forming sentences. As for students at the upper level, they probably need to be able to understand the rule of SVA in depth and discuss the grammatical problems with their teachers. In English language, grammar rules are very important. In the topic of Subject-Verb Agreement, the subject must agree with the verb. Singular subject is followed by singular verb and, plural subject by a plural verb. This rule only applies in Simple Present Tense. This is the general rule for subject-verb agreement, which is also represented by its sub-rules.

Dorn (2000) states that the sentences created by words and phrases are the essential blocks of meaning that allow us to communicate thoughts. If these are not constructed carefully, they can make reading difficult. He further states that major basic Usage and grammar slips in written English are those associated with verbs. Based on the fact that subject-verb agreement area is very important to express ideas especially in writing, where non-verbal communication is absent, the students really need to master .This rule in order to write effectively. As a result, they can convey their message clearly. By writing a

paragraph that is without an error, it shows that learner has mastered the English grammar rules and it will give a good impression to others who read his work.

According to Celce-Murcia and Freeman (1983: 10), “In spite of the early introduction and superficially simple rules of the subject-verb agreement, they still pose problems for ESL learners at all levels or proficiency”. Malaysian ESL learners face problems in subject-verb agreement because in their L1 (generally a person’s mother Tongue or the language acquired first) which is Bahasa Malaysia, there is no such rule regarding subject-verb agreement. In Bahasa Malaysia all subjects either singular or plural require the same form of verb.

Malay learners have difficulty in the subject-verb agreement because Bahasa Malaysia does not differentiate between persons and, therefore, it is not necessary for verbs to agree with the subject. In English, however, this is essential in the present tense and with the Verb ‘be’. Because of this, it creates confusion among learners who tend to make errors in their writing. This was the first study in English subject verb agreement which raised the further research in this vast topic of research

## **Literature Review of Subject Verb Agreement of Sindhi**

The verb almost in all languages is the most important part of sentence. In Sindhi also verb plays an important role. The verb agreement in Sindhi language comes from its Arabic basis. In Arabic, the basis of word formation and the present shape of words is same as in Sindhi. The arrangement of the parts of the Syntax, i.e., the places of subject, verb, object etc., is also same in Arabic and Sindhi. In Sindhi language the agreement is link which is showing the verb agreement with other components.

## **Word Order in Sindhi (SYNTAX)**

The basic word order in sentences in Sindhi is Subject-Object-Verb, or SOV. Sindhi is a free word order language, which means that other order of subject, object, indirect object and verb are possible, until unless the meaning is same and are quite common in spoken form. The

changing word orders have the effect of shifting, increasing, or decreasing focus of the “displaced” constituents.

### Examples of Basic and Changing Word Orders

Chokria kuto ditho      SOV  
Girl   dog   saw

Chokria ditho kuto      SVO  
Girl   saw   dog

Kuto chokri ditho      OSV  
Dog   girl   saw

Ditho chokri kuto      VSO  
Saw   girl   dog

Kuto ditho chokri      OVS  
Dog   saw girl

Ditho kuto chokri      VOS  
Saw dog girl

### What is Subject Verb Agreement?

Subject-verb agreement is all about making sure that a subject and verb that go together talk about the same number of things. Whether subject is singular or plural, the verb needs to be compatible with it. This helps make complex sentences less ambiguous. This can be tricky sometimes. You have to think about the entire subject, not just one noun. Subject verb agreement refers to the fact that the subject and verb in a sentence must agree in number. In other words, they both must be singular or they both must be plural. You can't have a singular subject with a



plural verb or vice versa. The tricky part is in knowing the singular and plural forms of subjects and verbs. Singular and plural subjects or nouns are usually pretty easy. In most cases the plural form of a noun has an “s” at the end. Like this:

*dog*– singular *dogs* – plural Verbs don’t follow this pattern, though. Adding an “s” to a verb doesn’t make a plural. Here’s what we mean:

*Walk Walks*

Since *he* and *she* are singular pronouns *walks* is a singular verb. The word *they* are plural so *walk* is the plural form.

*He walks. (He haly tho)*

*She walks. (Hua haly thi)*

*They walk. (Uhy halan tha)*

### **Subject Verb Agreement of English Language**

1. The subject of a sentence or clause must agree in number with the main or auxiliary verb of that sentence or clause.

Ex: The books were on the table yesterday.

Every book is checked out.

One of the books was missing.

The news is on at 6:00.

2 .When an –of phrase follows a percentage, distance, fraction, or amount, the verb agrees with the noun closest to the verb.

Ex: Half of the tables are occupied.

21% of the population is poor.

21% of the books are paperback.

3. With indefinite quantifiers (e.g., all, few, many, much, some), the verb agrees with the Preceding noun or clause: With a singular or non-count noun or clause, use a singular verb:

Ex: Much of the book seems relevant to this study.

All the information is current with a plural noun, use a plural verb:

Ex: Many researchers depend on grants from industry.

All the studies are current.

4. Usually, a singular verb follows NONE, even if the noun following it is plural. However, in Conversational English, a plural noun has become acceptable.

Ex: None of the workers receives a tip.

None of the workers receive a tip (less formal).

5. With a collective noun, use either a singular or a plural verb, depending on whether you want to emphasize the single group or its individual members:

Ex: Half of my family lives/live in Canada.

All of the class is/are here.

Ten percent of the population is/are bilingual.

6. Adjectives preceded by THE and used as plural nouns take a plural verb:

The rich get richer.

The poor face many hardships.

7. Expressions using the phrase number of depend on the meaning of the phrase:

They take a singular verb when referring to a single quantity:

The number of students registered in the class is 20.

They take plural verbs when they are used as indefinite quantifiers:

A number of students were late.

8. With expressions AS WELL AS, IN ADDITION TO, TOGETHER WITH, the first noun determines if the verb is singular or plural.

Ex: France, as well as other European countries, has a tip-included policy.

Waiters, in addition to others who work for tip, are usually generous tippers.

9. In the subjects with NEITHER/NOR and NOT ONLY BUT ALSO the noun closest to the Verb determines if that verb is singular or plural.

Ex: Neither the host nor his guests were happy.

Neither the guests nor their host was happy.

10. With EITHER/OR, the second noun determines that the verb is plural.

Ex: Either John or his brother is going to make dinner. (Yale Graduate School Writing Center)

### **Subject-Verb Agreement of Sindhi Language**

The verb almost in all languages is the most important part of sentence as it shows the action performed by the subject of the sentence. In the same way the verb also plays an important role in Sindhi. There are three types of verb agreement in Sindhi language.

A. Subjective Agreement

B. Objective Agreement

C. Neuter Agreement

#### **1. Subjective Agreement**

**Definition:** In this type of verb agreement, verb in Sindhi language agrees with the subject and in its number, gender and persons (pronoun). It is equal to the English finite verb. This agrees with its subject.

(a) In Sindhi language showing **the number** agreement of a verb with its subjects

1. Ghoru dorri tho. (The horse runs)

2. Ghora dorran tha. (The horses run)

In the above sentence 1 when there is singular subject in number the verb agrees to be “dorri tho” and when there is plural subject the verb changes from singular to “dorran Tha” in the second sentence.

(b) The verb agreement changing according to its **gender** of the Subject. As;

1. Ghoru dorriyo ho (The horse had run)
2. Ghoru dorrey hue (The mare had run)

In the above sentences when there is masculine gender “ghoro” (horse) the verb agrees to it as “dorriyo ho”, and when there is feminine gender as “ghoree” (female of horse) the Verb comes as “dorrey hue”.

(c) The changing of verb agreement of Sindhi language according to its **persons** (Pronouns) as:

1. Aaon khaindus (I shall eat)
2. Aseen khaenandaseen (We shall eat)

In the above sentences the verb in Sindhi agrees to the persons of the subject. In the first sentence when the pronoun is in first person pronoun, the verb stands for it as “Khaindus” when in sentence 2 the subject is first person plural the verb changes as “khaenandaseen”.

## 2. Objective Agreement

**Definition:** In this type of verb in Sindhi language agrees with the object and in its **number, gender and persons** (pronoun). It is the passive form of the verb.

(a) The verb showing number agreement with its object, as;

1. Chhokar khat likhyo (The boy wrote a letter)
2. Chokri khat likhyo (The girl wrote a letter)

In the above first two sentences there is a change in genders of the subjects yet the verb remained same and no change has taken place, it shows agreement.

(b) The verb changes according to gender of the object, as:

1. Bilo marji wayo (Sawar khan) (The tom has been beaten. (by the rider)
2. Bili marji wayee (Sawar khan) (The cat has been beaten. (by the Rider)

In the above sentences on which some work is done, and there is no doer or subject, is the cause of getting change or agreement of the verb. In sentence 1 when there is masculine object “bilo” (tom) the verb agrees to be “wayo” and in second sentence when there is feminine gender as “Bili” (feminine of tom) the verb agrees to it as “wayee”.

(c) The changing of verb agreement of Sindhi language according to its persons of the Object, as:

1. Pani Piabo aahi (Water is to drink)
2. Mani khaba aahi (Meal is to eat)

In the above sentences “pani” and “mani” are the objects might be carried out by the People (subjects) which are main cause of changing of the verb from “piabo” to “khaba”.

### 3. Neuter Agreement

**Definition:** Such verb which agrees neither to its number, gender and persons of the neither Subject nor to its object but remains as it is. It is often used to as case maker in Ergative Case the verb remains same. It is same in Sindhi which is shown in following examples as:

1. Hathi Haran khe Mario. (Elephant (singular) hunted the deer)
2. Hathyan Haran khe Mario (elephants (plural) hunted the deer)

In the above example when case maker of Sindhi “khe” comes before the verb, the Verb “Mario” remains unchanged even though there is change of subjects in Number, gender and persons. Thus it can be said that in Sindhi Language the Verb agreement which remains Neutral in the sentence and avoids the changes in subject or Object.

### Comparative Analysis of Subject-Verb Agreement

There are few places where subject verb agreement between English and Sindhi takes place and at a few places they also don't agree with each other.

In **person** subject verb agreement of both languages is similar:

1. She speaks quickly (hei tezi sa ghalaindi ahy)  
They speak quickly (uhy tezi sa galhainda ahn)

In above sentence both verbs agree with their subject .as “she” is singular so “speaks” is used. And “they” is plural, so here “speak” is used.

In **number** subject verb agreement of both languages is similar:

2. He comes here (hu hity aindu ahy)  
They come here (hua hity ainda ahn)

In above sentence both verbs agree with their subject. As “he” carries singular verb and “they” carry plural verb. That’s why “aindu” and “ainda” is used.

3. When there is **collective noun** then subject verb agreement is similar:

- The news is true (khbar sachi ahy)  
The team is heading for practice this afternoon. (Aj manjhad jatho mashaq la wendo)

In above sentences there are collective nouns but the verb is singular as collective nouns show Plurality but their meaning is in singular form.

4. When there is **a compound noun** then subject verb agreement is similar:

He wants to invite James to his birthday (ho James khy pehnji salgrah may dawat deyar Chahy tho)

Here “wants” is used which is showing the singular form of sentence and “Chahy tho” is also singular and this shows agreement.

When subject verb agreement of both languages **disagree**:

1. I eat (ma khawa tho)

They eat (uhy khain tha)

Here when “I” and “they” both are singular and plural subjects respectively even though the verb “Eat” remains unchanged

2. Ali went to Karachi (Ali Karachi wayo)

They went to Karachi (uhy Karachi Waya)

Here “Ali” is singular and “they” is plural but the verb “went” is not changed. And the verb comes first in English language but in Sindhi it is comes at the end.

3. We drive a car (asan car halainda ahyo)

I drive a car (ma car halaindo ahya)

Here “we” and “I” both are different subjects but their verbs are same in English but in Sindhi verbs are changed as in “halaindo” and “halainda” and it shows the disagreement.

4. Rabia is intelligent. (Rabia hoshyar ahy)

Ali is intelligent. (ali hoshyar ahy)

Here there is difference in gender and also in word order in both languages. The helping verb comes before adjective in English but in Sindhi it occurs after adjective (ahy).

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that the Sindhi language has its own criteria of its verb agreement. Both languages have own criteria for doing agreement with verb. Sindhi and English Languages agree with each other in context of subject and verb agreement where person, number, and collective and compound nouns or subjects are used. English and Sindhi languages

disagree in subject verb agreement mostly in the position of verb. In Sindhi helping verb comes after Adjective but in English it comes before adjective. In English after subject there is verb but in Sindhi verb comes in the end. The subject verb agreement of both languages is different in a few places but it is also similar in some other places.

=====

## References

- Baig, M..Q. (1992). *Sindhi Waya Karan* (Char Bhaga), Jamshoro, Hyderabad: Sindhi Adabi Board Sindh
- Baugh, A. and Cable, T. (2002). *The History of the English Language*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. pp. 79-81).
- Hudson , R. (1998) UCL July. Retrieved on 10/05/2013 from <http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/papers.htm>
- Jennifer C. (1998). *An Encyclopedia of the World's Major Languages, past and Present* University of Illinois pp. 647-653. New York, NY: The H.W. Wilson Company,
- Mustafa, I. (2007). *Resources for writer's* Library guides at Western Washington University
- Wakelin, Martin Francis (2008). First Published 1978). *Discovering English Dialects*. Oxford: Shire Publications. p. 4)
- Stapa, S. H. (2008). Heuristics and Rule-Based Approach for Automated Marking Tool for ESL Writing. Retrieved on 01/03/2013 from [http://www.academia.edu/263334/Heuristics\\_and\\_Rule-Based\\_Approach\\_for\\_Automated\\_Marking\\_Tool\\_for\\_ESL\\_Writing](http://www.academia.edu/263334/Heuristics_and_Rule-Based_Approach_for_Automated_Marking_Tool_for_ESL_Writing)
- Jumani, N. B., & Lashari, M. A. (2011). Syntax in Action: The Verb Agreement in Sindhi Language. *Language in India Journal*, [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) Nov 2011.
- =====

Mubarak Lashari, M.Phil., Ph.D. Scholar  
Department of English Language  
International Islamic University  
Islamabad  
Pakistan

Faulty Member, Institute of English Language and Literature, University of Sindh, Jamshoro.  
[mubaraklashari78@gmail.com](mailto:mubaraklashari78@gmail.com)

Priyanka Hafeez, B.S. Hons. Student



Institute of English Language and Literature  
University of Sindh  
Jomshoro  
Pakistan  
[pari.dero6@gmail.com](mailto:pari.dero6@gmail.com)

**Illahi Bux Gopang**, M.Phil. Leading to Ph.D. Scholar  
Institute of English Language and Literature  
University of Sindh  
Jamshoro  
Faculty Member, Labella University, Lasbella  
Baluchistan, Pakistan