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## Syntax in Action: The Verb Agreement in Sindhi Language

**Nabi Bux Jumani, Ph.D. & Mubarak Ali Lashari, Ph.D. Scholar**

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### Abstract

In the paper the nature of the verb in Sindhi language is generally discussed while the verb agreement is particularly investigated. The researchers took particular notice of the verb agreement in one of the most ancient languages of the river civilizations of the world. During the course of analysis, first the importance, origin and relation of the Sindhi language were sought. Afterwards the specific perception of the verb and its nature in the language was discussed. Subsequently, the variants of the verb changes and its agreement were discussed in detail in order to find the specifications in the language which can be significant in general linguistic understanding of the language in line with the world languages.

### Introduction

Sindhi language is one of the most ancient languages of the world, which belongs to the Indus Valley Civilization. This language is the family member of the languages like Urdu, Persian, Sanskrit, Arabic, Hindi and so on. Sindhi employes Perso-Arabic script and thus is written from right to left in contrast to the most of the Western languages which are written from left to right (Shaikh 1986). And another similarity

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between Urdu, Persian, Sindhi and Arabic languages is that they owe their descriptive form from Arabic description. Not clear. Please elaborate. Otherwise, delete the sentence.

There are various views of Sindhi Linguists with regard to the origin of Sindhi language and its genealogy. Some say that it is the branch of Sanskrit language and others say that it is off shoot of Prakrit language so on and so forth. “Sindhi, Hindi and other local languages grew from Prakrit language in the reign of Soomras in 1100 A.D” (Advani). Here Advani connects Sindhi and Hindi languages along with other languages spoken in the sub-continent.

With contrast to the era mentioned by Advani, Dr Baloch argues that “The structural age of Sindhi language is of Rai family, Brahmin family and Arab rule, which in lump sum is the era of 5 to 11 A.D. in this age the prevailing Sindhi language was structured” (Baloch, 1992).

In this context this discussion goes on and on but one thing can be had that Sindhi language has very close structural affinities with languages spoken in Islamic world and the sub-continent. In this connection, in order to find close affinities of the sub-continental connections the book of Sharaf ud Din Islahi “The Linguistic connections of Urdu and Sindhi languages” (Urdu-Sindhi ke Lisani Rwabit) can be referred which affirms the above claims that Sindhi language is closely associated with the sub-continental languages. He confirms that

Urdu and Sindhi are two such languages of the sub-continent in which much linguistic relations and agreements are found. Their phonetic system is almost same. Their grammar is closely related. Their vocabulary and semantics are interconnected. Their scripture is almost same. Their literary traditions are also almost analogous.

(pp. 61)

Islahi is of the view that Urdu and Sindhi are very closely related with regards to many features. It should be noted that Urdu language is said to be the mainly found on Sanskrit language as put by Qazi (1977), “This (Urdu) language is founded mainly on Sanskrit which had absorbed a good many Dravidian words during its formation here, and later on it has been embellished by the elder sister of Sanskrit, viz. Persian”. (pp. 112). From Qazi’s description it can be inferred that Urdu is mainly from Sanskrit language and Sankrit language borrows many words from the Dravidian language that was spoken in Indus Valley civilization before the arrival of Aryas.

### The Verb and Its Kinds in Sindhi

Sindhi language has been written in various descriptive forms in the Sub-continent. Muslims write Sindhi in Arabic descriptive form. On the other hand Hindus use Devnagri, Gurmukhi and Hindko descriptions. “Sindhi language has taken birth directly

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from Sanskrit and Prakirt; and its letters of alphabet are mostly from Sanskrit” (Shaikh 1986, pp. 6).

It is also an agreed fact that Sindhi owes its description from Arabic scripture. Thus, Sindhi language borrows most of its linguistic and grammatical terms from Arabic and Sanskrit languages.

Before going to Sindhi verb and its specification, it is apt to know the verb form in English and some of its definitions. Wren and Martin (2002) define verb as, “A Verb is a word that *tells* or *asserts* something about a person or thing. *Verb* comes from the Latin *verbum, a word*. It is so called because it is the most important word in a sentence” (pp. 65).

On the other hand Davis (-) gives the functional definition of the verb in English as following:

Any member of a class of words that are formally distinguished in many languages, as in English by taking the past ending in -ed, that function as the main elements of predicates, that typically express action, state, or a relation between two things, and that (when inflected) may be inflected for tense, aspect, voice, mood, and to show agreement with their subject or object.

While speaking to specifically language and its verb that comes from its “Masdar” infinitive, which is same as in Sanskrit and Prakirt languages. The verb in Sindhi can be defined as; a word that shows to be, to do, to have or an action on something, that is said to be a verb or in short a word which tells something about a person or thing etc. (Baig 1992, pp.2).

Verb which in Sindhi language is called “**Fael**” has two main kinds. According to Allana (2004), “all the Dravidian languages have two kinds of verbs *Fael Mutaadi* and *Fael Lazmi*” (pp. 262). They are same as 1. “**Fael Lazmi**” (Intransitive verb) and 2. “**Fael Mutaadi**” (Transitive verb) same as in English language. *Fael lazmi* stands still with its subject and does not necessarily take its object and gives its sense completely as;

1. Sijj ubhriyo (The sun rose). In this sentence ‘Sijj’ (The Sun) is a subject and ‘Ubhriyo’ is verb. It completes here without taking any object.
2. Noukar aaiyo (Servant came). In this sentence ‘Noukar’ (Servant) is the subject whily ‘Aaiyo’ is verb which takes no object with it and shows the complete sense in itself.

According to Mirza Qaleech Baig (1992)

.....*lazmi* mana luzoom thiyal yani lagal ya chumbriyal. Matlab ta *fael* laazmi khi mafaol kon theedo aahi.... (pp. 30)

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(It means something which is compulsory i.e. stuck with. Means compulsory verb has no object).

On the other hand there is *Fael Mutaadi* (Transitive verb) which takes object with it to complete its sense. It is defined as the verb whose action crosses to or shows effects on the object is said to be a *muttadi fael* (Transitive verb) as”

1. Khatti chadar dhoi tho. (The washer man washes the shawl) Here verb is ‘Dhoi tho’, ‘Khatti’ is subject and the action of washing is carried on ‘Chadar’ which is object.
2. Gopal laddoon khadho. (Gopal ate sweet) In this sentence the verb is ‘Khadho’, ‘Gopal’ is subject and the action is done on ‘Laddoon’ which is object.

Third kind of the fael (verb) is “*Fael Maawin*” (Auxiliary/helping verb) which is also defined as the form of *fael lazmi* (Intransitive verb). *Fael Maawin* sometimes is considered as a different kind of verb and sometimes as the sub-kind of *Fael Lazmi* (Intransitive verb). The examples of *fael maawin* (Auxiliary verb) as:

1. Gulab hiti aahi. (Gulab is here)
2. Gulab kalh hiti ho. (Gulab was here yesterday)
3. Gulab munhjo saut theay. (Gulab is my cousin)

In the above sentences the words like ‘aahi’, (is) ‘ho’(was) and ‘theay’ (to be) are *fael maawin* (auxiliary/helping verb).

*Fael Lazmi* is further divided into another kind as *Fael Laazmi Maroof* (Active Intransitive verb). For example:

1. Peenghi men ludbo aahi. (It is rocked in the cradle) In this sentence ‘ludbo aahi’ is *fael lazmi maroof* but it has no subject. Therefore this is the form of passive verb. Such verbs in Sindhi language are said to be “Akar tarak” ‘A’ means not in Sindhi while ‘Kartar’ or ‘Karta’ means subject, the doer of work. It means without subject or doer.

And the *Fael Mutaadi* (Transitive verb) is sub-divided into three kinds as:

1. *Fael Mutaadi Maroof* (Active Transitive Verb)
  1. The cat catches the rat
  2. Ali takes tea.
2. *Fael Mutaadi Majhool* (Passive Transitive Verb)
  1. Zameen har san kherji tho. (The land is ploughed)
  2. Akhbar parhy waji thee. (The newspaper is read.)

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3. ***Fael Mutaadi Balwasta*** (Causal Transitive Verb)

1. Ustad, shagird de patewalo dourraiyo. (Teacher caused peon to run to student)
2. Aslam mochi khan juti polish karayo. (Aslam made shoes polished by the cobbler)

### **The Verb Agreement in Sindhi**

The verb almost in all languages is the most important part of sentence. In the same way the also plays an important role in Sindhi too. The verb agreement in Sindhi language comes from its Arabic basis of “Saraf” and “Naho”. In Arabic, same as in Sindhi too, ‘Saraf’ is basis of word formation and the present shape of words. While ‘Naho’ in Arabic, same as in Sindhi language, is the arrangement of the parts of the syntax i.e. the places of subject, verb, object etc.

In Sindhi language the agreement is said to be “Nisbatoon’ or ‘Paryoog’, which is showing the verb agreement with other components. Thus it according to its arrangement enters into the Arabic study of ‘Saraf’ and ‘Naho’.

‘Paryoog’ is actually the Sanskrit word which means showing ‘Nisbatoon’ or we can say agreement in English language.

There are three types of verb agreement in Sindhi language.

- a. Kartary Paryoog
- b. Karmani Paryoog
- c. Bhawei Paryoog

1. ***Kartary Paryoog***

***(Subjective Agreement)***

The word ‘Kartar’ or ‘Karta’ means ‘Faail’ (Subject) and the ‘Kartary means ‘Faaily’ (Subjective).

In ‘Kartary Paryoog’ the verb in Sindhi language agrees with the subjects and in its number, gender and persons (pronoun). It is equal to the English finite verb which agrees to 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)
3. Ho ghar aayo. (He came home)
4. Uhey ghar aaya. (They came home)

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 ‘dorri tho’ to ‘dorran

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tha' in the second sentence. In sentence 3 when there is singular subject as 'ho' (He) in Sindhi language, takes singular verb as 'aayao' and in sentence 4 when the subject is plural the verb changes from 'aayo' to 'aaya'.

(b) The verb agreement in paryoog Kartary changing according to its gender of the subject. As;

1. Ghoro dorriyo ho (The horse had run)
2. Ghoree dorrey hue (The mare had run)
3. Aslam ghar aaiyo (Aslam came home)
4. Naseema ghar aaye (Naseema came home)

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' instead of 'dorriyo ho'. And in the sentence 3, if there is masculine gender (Aslam) the verb stands as 'aaiyo' while in sentence 4 when there is feminine gender the verb agrees to the gender as 'aayee' instead of 'aaiyo'.

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

1. Aaon dourundus (I shall run)
2. Aseen dourandaseen (We shall run)
3. Ho dourundo (He will run)
4. Uhey douranda (They will run)

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 'dourandus' when in sentence 2 the subject is first person plural the verb changes as 'dourandaseen'. And in sentence 3 there is third person singular the verb in Sindhi is used as 'dourando' while in sentence 4 with third person plural, the verb is 'douranda' instead of 'dourando'.

## 2. Karmani Paryoog

## (Objective Agreement)

The word 'Karam' means mafaool (Object) and 'Karmani means 'mafaooly (Objective) Thus it is said to be an objective agreement of the verb.

**Definition:** In 'Karmani Paryoog' the 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 kitab likhyo (The boy wrote a book)
2. Chhokri kitab likhyo (The girl wrote a book)
3. Chhokar kitab likhya (The boy wrote books)
4. Chhokar kitabriyon likhyon (The boy wrote booklets)

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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, while in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> sentences there is change of numbers from 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences the verb change from ‘likhyo’ for singular object, ‘likhya’ for plural objects. Thus the examples clearly show the agreement of the verb with object in number.

(b) The verb in ‘karmani Paryoog’ changes according to gender of the object, as;

1. Ghoro marji wayo (Sawar khan) (The horse has been beaten.(by the rider)
2. Ghoree marji wayee (Sawar khan) (The mare has been beaten.(by the rider)
3. Chhokar pakarji paya. (The boy has been caught)
4. Chhokari pakarji payee. (The girl has been caught)

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 ‘ghoro’ (Horse) the verb agrees to be ‘wayo’ and in second sentence when there is feminine gender as ‘ghoree’ (feminine of horse) the verb agrees to it as ‘wayee’. By the same way in sentence 3 and 4 there are ‘paya’ and ‘payee’ according to the genders of the object.

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

1. Kam kabo aahi (Work is done)
2. Kar kabi aahi (Task is carried out)

In the above sentences ‘kam’ and ‘kar’ are the objects might be carried out by the people (subjects) which are main cause of changing of the verb from ‘kabo’ to ‘kabi’.

### 3. Bhawei Paryoog

(Neuter Agreement)

The word ‘Bhawei’ in Sindhi language is said to be as the ‘separate’ in agreement.

**Definition:** Such verb which agrees neither to its number, gender and persons of the subject nor to its object but remains as it is, is said to be the ‘Bhawei Paryoog’.

It is often used to as case maker in ‘Ergative case as defined by Dr. Raja Nasim Akhtar. In Urdu it is said to be as, when there comes the words like ‘ne’ ‘ko’ as the ergative case the verb remains same. It is same in Sindhi language which is shown in following examples as:

1. Shikari haran khe mariyo. (Huntsman (singular) hunted the deer)
2. Shikarian haran khe mariyo (Huntsmen (plural) hunted the deer)
3. Maan haran khe mariyo (I hunted the deer)
4. Assan haran khe mariyo (We hunted the deer)

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5. Murras haran khe mariyo (Husband hunted the deer)
6. Zaal haran khe mariyo (Wife hunted the deer)

In the above example when case maker of Sindhi 'khe' comes before the verb, the verb 'mariyo' remains unchanged altogether though there is change of subjects in number, gender and persons. Thus can clearly said that 'Bhawei Paryoog' in Sindhi language is a form of the verb agreement which remains neutral in the sentence overlooking the changes in subject or object or their number, gender and persons.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that the Sindhi language has its own criteria of its verb agreement which in its actual terminology is said as the 'paryoog' which definitely enters into the 'Saraf o Naho' of the Arabic language. Paryoog of Sindhi language is taken from Sanskrit language which means 'Nisbatoo' or 'Melap' (Agreement). With regard to sentence construction (syntax) there are three types of verb agreement i.e. the Paryoog Kartary, the Paryoog Karmani and the Paryoog Bhawei. In 'Paryoog Kartary' the verb agrees with its subject. In 'Paryoog Karmani' the verb agrees with the number, gender and person of the object. And finally in the third 'Paryoog Bhawei' which is said to be a neuter agreement in which the verb neither agrees with the subject nor with the object but remains separate and neutral

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