
Kind of Morphophonemic Changes in Pashto Language

Zahidullah Karimzai*, Mohammad Israr Shinwaray

Pashto Language and Literature Department, Kunduz University, Kunduz, Afghanistan

Email address:

zahidkarimzay@gmail.com (Zahidullah Karimzai), israr.shinwari@gmail.com (Mohammad Israr Shinwaray)

*Corresponding author

To cite this article:

Zahidullah Karimzai, Mohammad Israr Shinwaray. Kind of Morphophonemic Changes in Pashto Language. *Arabic Language, Literature & Culture*. Vol. 8, No. 1, 2023, pp. 9-13. doi: 10.11648/j.allc.20230801.12

Received: December 4, 2022; **Accepted:** January 11, 2023; **Published:** February 24, 2023

Abstract: Morphophonemic changes are considered vital discussion in the language and linguistic. These changes are a sample process in all language of the world, which are initially unconscious, easy, energy-saving and euphony. It has essential role in the growth and sustainability of a language. To this end, this research will investigate morphophonemic changes in Pashto language, and the cause and types of these changes. This research is a qualitative and data was collected from various Pashto theory and grammar books so that the morphophonemic changes were described with brief examples. It was discovered that the changes occur in order to reduce the physical and mental energy. In most cases the meaning of the morpheme is not change while the form of the morpheme changed. However, in some cases the meaning is also changed, such as in omission one phoneme is obliterated. In some examples create new morpheme, which cause create different meaning in the language. Regarding the changing of meaning there is different ideas in the books, some linguists say that these changes do not cause to change the meaning while some says that sometimes they change the meaning as well. Based on my opinion all morphophonemic changes do not change the meaning, for instance in assimilation and dissimilation and in the omission it changes the meaning like in /spor/ in English horseback or rider morpheme if the /p/ omit it become /sor/, which /sor/ means length in Pashto. This article tries to describe the morphophonemic changes in Pashto language.

Keywords: Assimilation, Dissimilation, Hiatus, Metathesis, Omission, Sandhi, Syncope

1. Introduction

As every aspect of the life is changed so that the language is also changing by passing the time and place. It moves from difficulties and complicated situation to easy and development situation. Such changes are not new in the language, but they have been occurred already in the language. Complicated syllable structures transformed to sample syllable structures are the good example. For instance, in Pashto the previous form of /zmā/ and /stā/ were /dēmā/ and /dētā/ still common in some dialect. This means the two syllables structure transformed to one syllable are still taken place in the language, these changes occur unconsciously in the language and amazingly these changes are very regular and logical. The research tried to answer such questions. What are morphemic changes? What are the causes of these changes in the language? Form change or meaning change, what types these changes have.

From one side the language is learning phenomena but

from the other side it is a natural phenomenon as well, that is why the changes occur naturally in the language. The investigation, description of these changes help to know the status and internal structure of a language. The main significance of these study is to investigate the morphemic changes in Pashto language. Although some studies have done previously, they are about the historical revolution in Pashto language.

There is discussion in grammar book regarding Pashto language morphological changes even the book which was written by Mr. Mohammad Qasim under the title of (Pashto language phonologic and morphologic changes). The book discusses about Pashto language historical revolution. The book describes the Pashto and Avista language's changes historically. There is not any discussion regarding Pashto morphophonemic changes as Majawer Ahmad Zeyar has explained this topic better than anyone. The research

explained both the reasons for the changes and the types with clear examples.

2. Research Method

This is qualitative research that utilizes various authentic references, definitions and theory was taken from books and the examples are taken from public. Based on the definitions the examples are explained and the study type is based on library.

3. Morphophonemic Changes in Pashto Language

In language and language families the changes are common phenomenon, by passing the time new languages are come to existence and some languages are vanished, and new languages take their place. These changes have different reasons such as politics, economic, religious, culture, education and science, relationship with other societies. They are the main causes that pave the way for changes in languages.

One of the language changes can be morphophonemic change, in which the morpheme change due to the influence of environment or other reasons that chooses various forms. The changes which are occurred due to the environment lead to other changes occur in phoneme of the morpheme so that it is called morphophonemic changes [1].

The changes occur in the syllables, morpheme, and in words and in phoneme are independent at the same time. Therefore it is called morphophonemic changes and most of times the changes do not affect the meaning. Rather, the phonemes in these syllables are harmonized according to their phonetic characteristics, or they show differences and disharmony. Similar sounds are combined into one another and a phoneme is dropped, but sometimes it causes a change in the grammatical meaning [2].

In some language the morphophonemic changes are simple but, in some languages, it is more complicated. Generally it occurs two in types: first type like the phoneme is influenced by another phoneme and changed. Such as in English /s/ sound is the plural phoneme when it comes after voiced it sound like /z/ such as in words (roads, Eggs, Rooms). At the end of the words /m/, /g/ and /d/ sound comes. These three sounds are voiced so the based on the influence of voiced /s/ change to /z/. If the same plural /s/ morpheme come after unvoiced it will pronounce /s/ unvoiced such as in words (Lips, Books, and Roots). The words end with (K, T, P) unvoiced, so the plural (S) is pronounced on its own form. [1]

Also, in Pashto language in /stā/) and /zmā/ words the /z/ and /z/ are possessive morpheme. If this morpheme come before voiced phoneme /m/ it pronounces like /z/ means voiced, and if it comes before voiceless /t/ phoneme then it pronounces as /s/ which is voiceless, it means that the subsequent morpheme is affect by it is following phoneme and it's changing.

4. Causes of Morphophonemic Changes in Language

Like all other social phenomena, language also change over the passing of time and these changes have some reasons. Like other language in Pashto the morphophonemic changes have some reasons. One of the reasons is to use less mental and physical muscles and try to consume less energy in speaking like we do the same in other activities. Therefore morphophonemic changes happening in the languages, even today some of the words are pronounced incomplete as well as short form in our oral language. Some phonemes and syllables are omitted or changed into other phoneme. The word comes in the infinitive form, like instead of /Cə kawē/ use /Cəkay/ in this case the /zawar;ā/ and wāw /w/ phoneme is omitted. The vowel /e/ also left its place to /ay/ diphthong. [3]

Also, another reason for morphophonemic changes is that end of each phoneme proximate or near to each other. Instead of one phoneme pronounced another phoneme.

Another reason for morphophonemic change is music or melody, sometimes due to easy pronounce and euphony in a morpheme one phoneme added extra such as in Pashto /mong/ morpheme usually it is /moḡ/ only /n/ is added and change to /mong/.

5. Type of Morphophonemic Changes in Pashto Language

Morphophonemic changes happen in all parts of language such as phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic. The difference between languages change and other changes is happened consciously and by professional people. However, language changes happen naturally and unconsciously in the language. Therefore, these changes have been studied by linguists and these changes occur in all language of the world. In There are more instances of such changes in some language while in other languages less. Pashto language is also in the queue which has been affected the changes within the passing of the time. The research does not discuss regarding grammar and historical changes but only discuss on current morphophonemic changes and describes these changes with examples. The changes have different types and we were described briefly.

5.1. Assimilation

A popular type of morphophonemic changes is assimilation in a word or morpheme. One phoneme is assimilated with another phoneme. For instance, in a sound environment one phoneme takes phonetic characteristics of another phoneme. Like in /punba/ and /sanbola/ the /n/ sound is change to the (m) sound and pronounce as /pumba/ and /səmbola/. Here the sound /m/ changes to sound /n/ because it come with bilabial phoneme /b/ therefor /n/ changes to bilabial /m/. Such changes occur due to the speaker's energy saving, and easy pronunciation. [4]

5.1.1. Assimilation Divided in the Following Types

According to the preceding and following sounds:

a. Progressive assimilation: when in a syllable, morpheme, or words that comes before a phoneme and affects the Subsequent phoneme and the last phoneme changes. Such movement is called progressive assimilation. For instance, in /maṇa/ and /raṇā/ words which the /a/ and (ā) affect the /n/ phoneme and it pronounce nosy or like in north-eastern dialect the word /baṣṣal/ the sound /x/ affects the /ṣ/ and it became /baṣṣal/ sound both /x/ integrated and changed to /Baxal/. [5]

b. Regressive assimilation: if in a syllable, morpheme, and word the subsequent phoneme affects the front phoneme and the front phoneme change than it is called the regressive assimilation, for example in /landa/ the /n/ is changed to /m/ and the word become /lamda/. In /Akbar/ the sound /k/ change to /g/ the word became /Agbar/ because the voiced sound of (b) change unvoiced sound of (k) to voiced sound of (g), or unlike the northeastern accent in the central Pashto the morpheme of /Baxṣal/ the last /ṣ/ sound affects the /x/ and the word become like (baṣal) and sound on both /ṣ/ integrated and the word form changed to (baṣal). [4]

5.1.2. According to Completeness and Incompleteness Divided into Types

a. Total assimilation: in this kind of assimilation one phoneme completely replaced by another phoneme, like in /badoday/ the second /d/ changed to /g/ and become /badogay/. In /lmar/ and /nmar/ the sound /l/ changed to /n/ finally in /ləmasay/ and /nəmsay/ the /l/ change to /n/, the mentioned examples are the type of complete assimilation.

b. Partial assimilation: in a syllable, morpheme, and word when one phoneme assimilated due to the manner or place of articulation of another phoneme such as in /tanba/ and /xanba/ the sound of /n/ changes its articulation and become in nose so which pronounce near to /m/ and as well the words pronounced /tamba/ and /xamba/. [6]

5.1.3. According to the Distance the Assimilation Divided into Types

a. Contiguous assimilation: where a phoneme assimilated with the subsequent phoneme like in the above examples.

b. Noncontiguous assimilation: where in a syllable, morpheme and word assimilated phoneme assimilated among two phoneme. For instance in /nonəs/ which is originally it is /Nuləs/ and assimilated /l/ become assimilated with it is own /n/ and changes to /n/. There has also been a noncontiguous assimilation in /zanjər/ and /janjər/. [7]

5.2. Dissimilation

The phonemic change is the opposite of the assimilation. In this type of changes in a syllable, morpheme and word the assimilated phoneme become dissimilated. Such as in word /nmonj/ the first /n/ with second /n/ are assimilation. However, these become dissimilation and change to /lamonj/, as well dissimilation like assimilation divided into completeness and incompleteness, contiguous and

noncontiguous, progressive, and regressive. [4]

5.3. Omission

When a phoneme is omitted or integrated with another phoneme in a syllable, morpheme, or word, such changes are called omission. For instance in /siwray/ the word /i/ is omitted and the word changes into /soray/ or in /xpor/ and /spor/ the phoneme /p/ is omitted and changes to /xor/ and /sor/.

In Pashto examples of omission are seen more in compound verbs. The compound verbs are the verbs which the first part should be noun and the second part should be /kedəl/, /kawəl/ verbs. So, in these compound verbs the second part of first consonant /k/ is omitted and a complex syllable structure change to a simple syllable structure. [8]

Instances:

/koṇ kedəl, koṇ kawəl: kaṇedəl, kaṇawəl/
 /koḡ kedəl, koḡ kawəl: koḡedəl, koḡawəl or kaḡedəl, kaḡedəl/
 /ṛund kedəl, ṛund kawəl: ṛandedəl, ṛandawəl/
 /pox kawəl, pox kawəl: paxedəl, paxawəl/
 /xpor kedəl, xpor kawəl: xporedəl, xporawəl or xparedəl, xparawəl/
 /soṛ kedəl, soṛ kawəl/
 /tod kedəl, tod kawəl: tawdedəl, tawdawəl/
 /zoṛ kedəl, zoṛ kawəl: zaṛawəl, zaṛedəl/
 /moṛ kedəl, moṛ kawəl: maṛedəl, maṛawəl/
 /corb kedəl, corb kawəl: corbedəl, corawəl or carbedəl, carawəl/
 /trix kedəl, trix kawəl: trixedəl, trixawəl/
 /zeḡ kedəl, zeḡ kawəl: zeḡedəl, zeḡawəl/
 /spin kedəl, spin kawəl: spinedəl, spinawəl/
 /wrost kedəl, wrost kawəl: wrastedəl, wrastawəl/

5.4. Syncope

The dropped of unstressed vowel following by stressed vowel is called syncope. A synthetic or compound word is creating, if the first part of the word end with stressed vowel than the vowel sound grapheme is not omitted, and suffix is written with the word in half space. [8]

/sima/+ /yiz/

Here in /sima/, /wasla/ and /Jagra/ the last vowel (a) is stressed one, therefor it is not omitted, and suffix is joined with it /simayiz/, /waslawal/ and /Jagrayiz/

But if the first part of the word end with unstressed vowel, than the last vowel grapheme is omitting and the /iz/ change to /yiz/ like other words which is end with consonant (dod+iz/=doddize/, words which is end with consonant /iz/ suffix added. Instance: /toləna/+ /yiz/= /tolaniz/. Here, the last vowel sound "a" is unstressed, so the grapheme is dropped and "yiz" also becomes "iz".

The syncope rule is applying for all suffix such as /wasla/+ /wāl/

In the above examples the /wasla/ is end with stressed vowel, so the grapheme is not omitting, in the half distance the other part is joining, for instance /mina/+ /wāl/

/pohəna/ is ended with unstressed vowel so the (a) is omitting and the second part is joined.

/pohəna/+tun/=pohantun/

Half space: full space comes between two words, if we separate two words we separate it by space bottom, based on linguistic rule, every word which provide a meaning should be written together as much possible according to the writing system, meaning and form unity bring together. [9]

If we hit space among /sima/ and /yiz/ morpheme, then it became two words and if we do not hit the space than our writing systems does not have ability to read it better, so like this type of word need half space, we can find by (Shift+B) in computer Pashto keyboards.

5.5. Hiatus

Hiatus means gap or fraction, in this type of changes a word last vowel phoneme is combined with the beginning phoneme of another word and create a long new vowel, for instance according to Nangarhar Mazeen in /ārx pa ārx/ the /pa/ sound /a/ is merged with /ā/ and forming a new long /ā/ and /ārx pa ārx/ changed to /ārx paɾx/ Hiatus is considered as a type of omission of vowel phonemes. [10]

5.6. Sandhi

The term of sandhi is not much popular in Pashto, nor their examples are investigated much, the author (linguistic terminology book Rahmullah Qani written based on Mr. Azizullah Jabir Khail lecture notes, that sandhi is refers to change of phoneme in a sentence, the origin is related to Sanskrit, but maybe we can investigate the examples in Pashto as well, the meaning of sandhi is linking and in the sentence the some words last phoneme affect from the upcoming word beginning phoneme, for instance /zə sind ta tləlay wəm/ in this sentence the /zə/ /ə/ is affected with beginning phoneme of the /send/ morpheme, this kind of assimilation is called sandhi. [11]

5.7. Metathesis

If in a word one phoneme change its place with another phoneme it is called metathesis, Pashto language has a lot of instance of metathesis, like /wraz/, /zməka/, /ɣaḡ/, /pəša/, /pəsarlay/ are changed /rwaz/, /mzəka/, /ḡaɣ/, /sparlay/. [12]

5.8. Addition

When in a phoneme is added in a syllable, morpheme, and word due to the ease, fluency or euphony, this change is called addition,[13] for instance in /moḡ/ morpheme the /n/ phoneme is add and change to /monḡ/ as well in /ɾombay/ and /ɾond/ words the /w/ phoneme is added and changed to /wɾombay/ and wɾond/. [14]

Or addition is the change in which one phoneme is added in a word, for example in /ʃkazəl/ the /ʃ/ will added and change to /ʃakanzəl/ or in /māšay/ the /ɣ/ added and change to /ɣawmāšay/. [15]

6. Conclusion

Internet and especially social media connect the human societies, bring changes and revelation in life much faster than before, like other part of the life, changes in a language also occur very fast. In the language the most important change is the morph phonological changes. These changes have different types which is already described with instances. In this article, each example is explained for a better clarification of the subject and that will pave the way to the collection and research of words. The popular idea regarding the morph phonological changes is that these kind of change not bring changes in the meaning. However, we have seen that to change the meaning and the good example is in the omission of /p/ in /xpor/ the /p/ phoneme is omitted and change into /xpor/ which means find out the second meaning, or in the other word it changes the meaning. Finally we can conclude that the morph phonological are changes in the language word (syllable, morpheme, and word) environment which one phoneme affect the other phoneme, and these affection sometimes changes the meaning of the morpheme. Overall, the change is for easiness, saving energy in using a language.

The changes have an important role in the growth and development of the language and when the morphophonemic changes are discussed, it should not be integrated with the discussion of the historical changes of the language because they are two separate discussions. In the historical evolution of the language, the previous known changes of the language should be discussed, and in the morphophonemic changes, the current phonemic changes of the language should be explained.

In the study, the boundaries have been revealed and further studies are required to explain such types of changes in the future. It is highly significant for future researchers to use the study for their further knowledge and document it in their future investigations.

References

- [1] Šerzād, Mohammad Aqā. (1399. H0. pašto grammar (phonology) [Pashto Grammar: Phonology]. Kabul: Jehān Dānāš Press. p 117.
- [2] xweŠkay, Mohammad Sabər. (1395. H). pašto ɣaḡpohana aw wayaypohana [Pashto Phonology and morphology] (6th Edition) Kabul: Jehān Dānāš Press. p 58.
- [3] Yamin. Mohmmad Hosain. (1384. H). dastore mayāsər zabān pārsi dari [Contemporary Pashto Dari Language]. Kabul: momand Press. P 118.
- [4] Zeyār. Mojāwar aḥmad. (1384. H). pašto poşoya [Pashto Grammar]. Kabul; dānāŠ press. p 35-38.
- [5] xweŠkay, Mohammad Sabər. (1398. H). pašto māāsər grammar [Contemporary Pashto Grammar], (3rd Edition). Kabul: Jehān Dānāš Press. P 59.
- [6] Tahiri, Nasir Aḥmad. (1399. H). taŠrehi žəbpohəna [Descriptive Linguistics]. Kabul: Samun Press. p 57.

- [7] Šakər, nur ahmad. (2019). žəbanəy cərni [Linguistic Research] (2nd Edition). Kandahār: Sadāqat press. p 37.
- [8] Zeyār. Mojāwar ahmad. (1386. H.). paštoli klār [A Guide of Standard Pashto] Kabul: Jehān Dānəš Press. p 57-80.
- [9] Chamto, Moahmmad Qasim. (1400. H). pašto phonolozek aw morpholozeki badlon [Pashto Language's phonological and morphological changes]. Kabul; Samoon Publisher. P 31.
- [10] Qane. Rahmānullah. (1397. H). žəbpohanizi nomawəni [linguistics Terminology]. Jalal Abād: Momand Press. p 96-98.
- [11] Čamtu, Mohammad Qasim. (1398. H). tašrehi žəbpohəna [Descriptive Linguistics] (4th Edition). Kabul: Jehān Dānəš Press. p. 86.
- [12] acək, bāyzid. (2020). pašto phonology [Pashto Phonology] compiled: Mahmood marhoon. Kandhar; sadaqat press.
- [13] Helali, abdulhakim. (2019). Pašto Phonology [Pashto Phonology]. Kandhār; Sadaqt Press. p 23.
- [14] Mahbub, mohbobsha. (2019). Pašto zhabdod [Regularity of Pashto]. Jalal Abād: Momand Press. p 31.
- [15] Reštin, sadiqullah. (1393. H). žəbšodana- pašto grammar [Pashto Grammar]. (5th Edition). Jalāl Abād: godar press. p 40.