



The Gender in Pashto Morphemes

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Obstruct :

Among Indo-Aryan languages, Pashto is the language with the most complete rules and regulations. Every grammatical and linguistic issue has its systematic formula. Pashto is an Indo-Aryan language that has maintained the historic principle of gender (masculine and feminine), even though it has lost neuter gender. In Pashto, masculine and feminine genders are not based on the gender of the noun, but on the final sounds of words, for which there is a unique formulaic system. This article centers on the final letters of Pashto words, which Determine the gender of words.

Key Words:

Phoneme, morpheme, independent letters, non-independent letters, words, feminine, masculine

Introduction:

Independent letters are the most basic and useful items in the language. There is no such word in the languages of the world that consists of separate independent letters or two syllables. In the Pashto language, independent letters have their special value. Their arrival at the end of words has a great grammatical value and determines the gender of words. Feminine and masculine words are limited only to the extent that they do not affect their gender, but these words, taking into account their gender, in a grammatical and syntactical structure, destroy the entire structure of the sentence by themselves, and looking at the structure of the whole sentence and the name, it is masculine or feminine. This small article of ours revolves around the problem of how to determine the gender aspect of names.

Main topic:

Pashto linguists, after researching, observing, and studying the Pashto language, have agreed that there are seven Standard vowels in the Pashto language without taking into account dialectal features.

) (O)) each و (U) و (e) ي (i) (ə) ر - ه (A) ه - (Ā) These seven vowels are ((one of them has its own rule in to the gender of morphemes, third of them is Pashto Zorakai, which had a very good symbol similar line in ancient Pashto, which is a small line like) (ay) was used recently. This kind of forceful usage is mostly seen in ZorkaWala (handwritten texts, which were alive in Pashto grammar until 1315 AH, and it was used until the revolution of the Mujahideen. In the early days of the Taliban first time government, it was still there for a while, but after all the other printing works were computerized, this feature - ə began to be written in the seam form that ه-ر a) and zorakai (disappeared and zwar (caused both grammatical errors and errors between graphemes But we do not dwell on this topic here, we come directly to the effects and function of these letters in the Pashto language, which have both phonetic and phonemic forms with examples like this:

No	letter	Phonetic	Example	Meaning
1	آ	Ā	ĀsiyĀ - آسیا amrikĀ - امریکا kanaḍĀ - کاناد	Asia America Canada
2	ه	A	taxta - تخته pša - پښه pyada - پیاده	Board Foot Pedal
3	ه - ر	ə	Naikə - نیکه wrĀrə - وراره lewə - لېوه	Grand father Nafew wolf
4	ي	I	xpalwi - خپلوي sarī - سړي mangi - منگي	Relation Men Sleeves
5	ې	E	xwəle - خولي kuṭe - کوټي maste - مستي	Sweat Rooms Yogurt
6	و	U	bizu - بيزو	Monky

			پیشو - pisu زانگو - zĀngu	Cat cradle
7	و	O	سالو - sĀlo بازو - bĀzo تالو - tĀlo	Headscarf Arm Palate

(9: 68 - 3: 14)

Now I return to my main topic, how important are the last phonemes of the words? In Pashto, how much does it impact the sentence and grammar of the language? But before entering the main topic, it is very necessary and Vital to identify the two most important words in the discussion (phoneme and morpheme) because the discussion until the end of the article revolves around these two:

1:phoneme :

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that does not have any independent meaning but causes significant variation in individual words. (4:11-9:14) That is, if we split a meaningful word or change any letter of that word, then that meaningful word loses its meaning or gives a new meaning, as in the following examples:

Meaning	Word	Meaning	Word	
Home	کور - kur	grive	گور - gur	By changing k to g the whole word changed.
Sister	خور - xur	Read	سور - sor	By changing x to s the whole word changed.
Daughter	لور - lor	Black	تور - tur	By changing l to t the whole word changed.
Hundred	سل - səl	Twinty	شل - šəl	By changing s to š the whole word changed.
Mother	مور - mur	Other	نور - nur	By changing m to n the whole word changed.

2: Morpheme :

A morpheme is a small linguistic unit that may or may not have its meaning. Although in most Pashto grammars and linguistic works, a morpheme is always called a word with meaning. (4: 9 -19) (19 -6 23)

However, bounded morphemes never carry meaning independently, yet they play an important role in altering the meaning of a word. A morpheme is made up of one or more phonemes and is classified into two types: bounded morphemes and unbounded or free morphemes. A free morpheme can independently convey meaning, while a bound morpheme loses its meaning when used on its own. (11:75 76)

Free	Bounded	Word	Meaning
kitab - کتاب	wonΘ - ونه	kitabwonΘ - کتابونه	books
xpal - خپل	wai - وي	xpalwai - خپلوي	Relationship
bĀy - باغ	wĀn - وان	bĀywĀn - باغوان	Gradeaner
xolΘ - خوله	wΘr - ور	xolΘwΘr - خولور	Out spoken
zur - زور	wΘr - ور	zurwΘr - زوره ور	Powerfull

In the Pashto language, the last phoneme of a word determines the gender of the word, whether the word is masculine or feminine, because in Pashto, the phoneme affects the morpheme and the morpheme affects the sentence and changes the structure of one and the other. These effects of Pashto words are the same in Avesta and other ancient Aryan languages. (5:19-61-62-63)

Another thing that is generally noteworthy in all languages is that in any language, the names of masculinity and femininity of a word are not determined by taking into account the nature of the thing (gender) but rather by the phonological structure of the word.

In this short article, we investigate the role of Pashto phonemes at the end of the word, how the Pashto phonemes that come at the end of the word change the word's situation, and what gender it gives to the word. To achieve this objective,

We have to study each vowel separately and know the difference:

1: (ā - الف :

) phoneme those all words are changed into الف - ā - All Pashto words that end with ((feminine words, and the whole sentence falls under its own grammatical rules, and the sentence's gender aspect is converted to feminine. For example:

Sentence	Phontic	Meaning
ليبيا تر جنگ لاندې ده.	Libyā tar jang lāndi dƏ.	Libya is under war.
افغانستان تر جنگ لاندې دی.	afYānistān tar jand lāndi day.	Afghanistan is under war.
قلم مات سو.	Qalam māt so.	The Pen got broken.
تخته ماته سوه.	Taxta mata sowƏ.	The board got broken.

In the above sentences, we can see that Libya and Afghanistan are two countries, both are under war, but since the feminine phoneme has come at the end of the word Libya, the structure of the whole sentence has converted to a feminine structure and also the and the board are two materials but the (qalam) end with (m) so it is not a sign of feminine so the word broke is changing its gender accordingly with (taxta) which is end with the sign of (a) the sentence changed to a feminine structure.

(2: (zuar) - a - زور :

This sound is half of the (ā) sound in Pashto, which we call (zwar). In the Pashto language, all the words that have that sound (zuar) at the end are feminine, and the sentence grammar flows according to the feminine rules. Such as:

Word	Phonetic	Meaning
تخته	taxta	board
پزه	paza	Nose
پښه	paša	Foot
باغچه	bāYča	Garden
وزه	waza	Got

Some words are adjectives, the emphasis is on the end, but still, their meaning is determined by looking at the adjective, such as:

Word	Phonetic	Meaning
ساده سړی	Sada sarəy.	A gullible man.
ساده ښځه	Sada šaža.	A gullible woman.
پیاده هلک	Pyāda halak.	A pedal buy.
پیاده نجلی	Pyāda najalay	A pedal girl.

(٣: (- (٣) - (٣) - (٣) : (٣)

This sound is half of the (zuar- (a)) and one-third of (alph- (ā)). In the Pashto language, all the words that end with the (zurakəy) sound are masculine words, and follow the structure of the sentence according to the masculine rules. Such as:

Word	Phonetic	Meaning
نیکه	nikə	Grand father
لېږه	lewə	Wolf
زړه	zarə	Heart
تره	traə	Uncle

Some words have a (zuarakəy) sound at the end, but their gender is feminine. Such words have also passed through the stage of historical change, their original form is not like this, - mouth), (čāṛə خوله but over time, and dialectical uses their form has changed like : (xolə - Canal). Their original form is (xolwayāla, čāṛa, and ویاله- knife), and (wayāla - چاره- wayāla).

(٣: Short Ya: (٣) - (٣) - (٣)

In Pashto, this sounds named (lanḍa yā), which means shorter (i) and it is because there is another sound that is longer than that one and its sound is to much similar to this sound.) has two functions: it can appear both as a In the Pashto language, the phoneme (i - morpheme and as a phoneme. When we derive nouns from adjectives, it functions in the form of a phoneme, as in the following cases:

Noun	Phonetic	Meaning	adjectives	Phonetic	Meaning
خپل	xpəl	Relative	خپلوي	xpəlwi	Relationship
دوست	dost	Friend	دوستي	dosti	Friendship
مست	mast	Ecstatic	مستي	masti	Ecstasy
شوځ	šox	Naughty	شوځي	šoxi	Naughtiness
ښاد	šād	Happy	ښادي	šādi	Happiness

And it is a morpheme in two conditions, which are:

A: When it is used to form the plural of those masculine nouns which are ending with the cluster of (əy), like:

Singular	Phonetic	Meaning	plural	Phonetic	Meaning
ژمی	žaməy	Winter	ژمي	žami	Winter
منی	manəy	Fall	مني	mani	Fall
پسرلی	pasarləy	spring	پسرلي	pasarli	spring
منگی	mangəy	Clay pot	منگي	mangi	Clay pot
لرگی	largəy	Stick	لرگي	largi	Stick

) is **B:** When it is used to form the plural of feminine nouns whose feminine marker (-salybale stress) is placed on the penultimate خجnot pronounced, meaning the sukun (vowel of the word. Such as:

Singular	Phonetic	Meaning	plural	Phonetic	Meaning
ښځه	šaža	Woman	ښځي	šaži	Women
پزه	paza	Nose	پزي	pazi	Noses
کوټه	kuṭa	Storage	کوټي	kuṭi	Storages

مئینه	məyana	lover	مئینې	məyani	lovers
سترگه	starga	Eye	سترگي	stargi	Eyes

(10: 26)

5:Long ya: (awžda yā) - e) - اورده يا - ې)

) in the Pashto language, and it is because ې - اورده يا - This sound (e) is called (awžda yā - it is louder and sounds double as the (i) we discussed above.

This phoneme also has two states like the above vowel, in all those words that have this (e-) vowel at the end, those words follow the rules of feminine nouns and the word is a feminine word the word doesn't have to be singular or plural, but it is as a phoneme in all those singular nouns which are end with that sound and there is no other structure without a single noun like:

Noun	Phonetic	Meaning
ادي	ade	Mother
خوابني	xuāše	Mother in law
ناوي	nāue	Groom

)—is pronounced, هـWhen the final phoneme of feminine nouns—or the feminine marker () falls on the final vowel, the plural خج meaning that the syllabic sukun (syllable stress-form of such words is constructed through the use of that vowel(1 41). such as:

Singular	Phonetic	Meaning	plural	Phonetic	Meaning
پښه	puša	foot	پښې	puša	Foots
اوره	auža	Shoulder	اورې	auža	Shoulders
کوټه	kuṭa	Room	کوټې	kuṭa	Rooms
سینه	sina	Chest	سینې	sina	Chestes
خوره	xuža	Swett	خورې	xuža	Swettes

) should •In all current Pashto grammars, it is clearly stated that all feminine words ending in () ې be pluralized by changing them to (e- (7 65)

This is an incorrect rule and goes against phonological norms, as in the Pashto language, the final phoneme of a morpheme alters the morpheme's morphology. Therefore, this rule) is •contradicts morphological principles, considering the above explanations, and the (sometimes clear and sometimes not because of the syllable stresses which are coming accordingly in every word based on the structure of those morphemes.

وړد وړو: (awžd wāo - 6: long wave : (u-
Pashto uses several types of the letter *wāo*, but linguists have agreed that only two are officially used as standard vowels.

Long wave is the longest sound in the waves of sounds, and in the Pashto language, all the words that have a long vowel at the end are feminine words that force the structure of the sentence to follow the rules of the feminine category, such as:

Noun	Phonetic	Meaning
بیزو	bizu	Monkey
بنارو	šāru	Mina
پیشو	paišu	Cat
زانگو	zāngu	Cradle
ورشو	waršu	Range

وړد وړو: (Land wāo - 7: Short wave : (o -

The sound of this *wāo* is half of the above *wāo*. In the Pashto language, all the words that have a short *wāo* at the end are masculine, and the structure of the sentence is going under the rules of the masculine category, such as:

Noun	Phonetic	Meaning
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سالو	sālo	Headscarf
تالو	tālo	Palate
بازو	bāzo	Arm
لاهو	lāho	Sunk
کډو	kaḍo	Pumpkin

As we explain above that In Pashto language, there are other waves as well besides these two waves, but those waves are used as diphthongs, which are not the subject of our discussion here, and the other thing is that they are consonants that take the effect of a vowels, which modern linguists mistakenly call a semi-vowels which I am not agree.

We should not forget that in Pashto, feminine nouns can be categorized into three distinct types based on morphological and semantic criteria.

A: These feminine nouns exhibit semantically determined gender, meaning their classification as feminine arises from inherent biological or social distinctions, and each has a corresponding masculine form. Such as:

Noun	Phonetic	Meaning	Noun	Phonetic	Meaning
نر	nar	Male	ښځه	šaža	Female
چرگ	čarg	Rooster	چرگه	čarga	Hen
غوی	Ÿoeyəy	Bull	غوا	Ÿwā	Cow
خر	xar	Donkey	خړه	xara	Female donkey
پسه	posə	sheep(Ram)	مڼږه	maežə	Ewe

B: The morphemes or words that have the sign of feminine words that we explained above.

C: This category includes nouns that are **inherently gendered** due to their referents, rather than through morphological marking. In Pashto, such nouns are treated grammatically as feminine because they denote female persons or roles within familial or social structures. Such as:

Noun	Phonetic	Meaning
مور	mor	Mother
خور	xor	Sister
ترور	tror	aunt
مږور	mžor	Daughter-in-law
ايندروړ	indror	Wife of brother in law only for woman

One long-standing but incorrect assumption about the Pashto language is the belief that, similar to Arabic, Pashto also contains *semantically feminine nouns* (*mu'annath samā'ī*)—that is, feminine nouns not marked by typical morphological endings. This notion, however, is **unfounded and linguistically inaccurate**. Throughout the historical evolution of the Pashto language, certain lexical items may have undergone phonological or structural changes, but this does not indicate the presence of true semantically feminine nouns.

Pashto does not possess any genuine semantically feminine nouns in the same manner as Arabic. Despite this, some grammar books have erroneously listed the following words as examples of such nouns, even though they do not meet the linguistic criteria for semantic femininity:

Changed	Phonetic	Original	Phonetic	Plural	Phonetic
لمن	laman	لمنه	lamana	لمني	lamani

مياشت	myāšt	مياشته	myāšta	مياشتي	myāšti
لويشت	lwyāšt	لويشته	lwyašta	لويشتي	lwyašti
ستن	stan	ستنه	stana	ستني	stani
برستن	brstan	برستنه	brstana	برستني	brstani

There are hundreds of other words that originally had a final **mutaḥarrik** (vowelized) ending but have transformed into words with a final **sakin** (non-vowelized) ending. This phenomenon is also observable in the Avestan and Sanskrit languages. A good example is the " (*dāman*). This change is a result of **dialectal** "دامن" (*dāmana*) into "دامنه"-transformation of " **and regional influence**, rather than a fundamental linguistic evolution. (5: 101 -103)

Another question that undoubtedly arises in readers' minds is this: We mentioned earlier that (کاکا) are typically feminine in Pashto. However, words like words ending with the letter **alif** ((father) also ابا (**maternal uncle**), ماما (**grandfather**), دادا (**father**), بابا (**cleric**), ملا (**uncle**), , yet they are masculine. How can this be explained? They end with

The answer lies in the fact that these words are originally **adjectives** (**ṣifāt**) whose referents (**musawwafāt**) are masculine. Therefore, grammatically, these words belong to the masculine category. Furthermore, some adjectives in Pashto are **ambiguous in gender**—that is, they agree with the gender of the noun they describe. When paired with masculine nouns, masculine grammatical rules apply; when paired with feminine nouns, feminine grammatical rules are followed. (3: 28 - 30): such as:

Adjective	Sentence	Phonetic	Meaning
اشنا ašnā	اشنا مي راغله.	Ašnā mi rāḷla.	My beloved came.
	اشنا مي راغلئ.	Ašnā mi rāḷlay	My beloved came.

Above, we discussed words ending with a vowel sound. It is important to note that all words ending with a **consonant sound** in Pashto are masculine. However, this generalization does not apply to feminine nouns that are either inherently feminine or semantically feminine, as well as adjectives that agree with the gender of their corresponding nouns.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Pashto is currently one of the most systematic and living languages among the Aryan languages, having preserved many of its ancient structural features. By utilizing some of the comprehensive grammatical principles of Pashto, we can potentially reconstruct and revive certain problematic and deteriorated aspects of other ancient Aryan languages.

Another essential point is that some individuals arbitrarily introduce new formulas and concepts into Pashto. However, these innovations can be effectively checked and corrected through thorough explanation and clarification of the language's traditional structures.

The issue of masculine and feminine in Pashto has gained increased importance because many speakers of other languages are now striving to learn Pashto. Therefore, it is necessary to develop simplified and formulaic approaches to facilitate learning and to attract more learners over time.

This article has discussed some challenges and proposed solutions, but it does not represent the final word on the subject. Further research and achievements will continue to advance this field. For now, the guidelines provided here on identifying masculine and feminine forms should suffice.

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