Verb Morphology of Kohistani

Parvaiz A. Ganai[*]

Abstract

Kohistani is a Dardic language spoken in the upper parts of the Swat and Panjkora valleys (Swat Kohistan and Dir Kohistan), in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (Grierson, 1919). Kohistani speakers are also settled in the area of Hyhama, Kupwara district and Ganderbal district of Kashmir valley. Kohistani spoken in Kashmir has not been explored so much. The present paper takes up the description of Kohistani verb morphology spoken in Kupwara district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords:
Kohistani, Dardic, Verb, Morphology, Tense, Aspect.

Introduction

Kohistani is a Dardic language spoken in the upper parts of the Swat and Panjkora valleys (Swat Kohistan and Dir Kohistan), in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province. In the literature, the language is known by different names, the most familiar of which are Garwi and Bashkarik. The name Garwi occurs in the *Linguistic Survey of India* (Grierson, 1919, Vol. 8, Part 2:507), while Bashkarik is used by Morgenstierne (1940), which is the standard reference on the language to date. Among the speakers of the language, these names are hardly used, if at all familiar. They themselves call their language simply Kohistani (Barth, 1956:52; Rensch, 1992:5; Baart, 1997:4).

[*] Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, India.

Kohistani of Swat Kohistan has been already described by Grierson (1919) and Hallberg (1992) to a large extent but the Kohistani spoken in the valley of Kashmir is yet to be taken into consideration. The present paper is an attempt to describe the verb morphology of Kohistani spoken in Jammu and Kashmir. The Kohistani spoken in the valley has about 5000 speakers comprising 2600 males and 2400 females in migrant Gujjar Dynasty of Jugtiyal Hyhama, Kundnar, Kanibahak and Balhama of Kupwara District and Lar Kangan of District Ganderbal (Jammu & Kashmir).

Verb Class
In meaning terms, verbs may be said to express processes which can be classified in one of the three broad ways. Firstly, they can denote actions. Secondly, they can record events which involve something happening or a change of state and are identified by 'what is happening/happened?' Lastly, they can refer to states which relate to any point in time – past, present or future.

Verb morphology of languages differs at the level of classification. Generally, verbs are classified as intransitives, transitives, and causatives, with further sub classification such as statives and actives. Kohistani language share rules with other Indian languages. The said language has transitive and intransitive verbs. When we talk in terms of verb classification, Kohistani verbs are inflected for tense, aspect and voice. The description of Kohistani verb morphology is as follows:
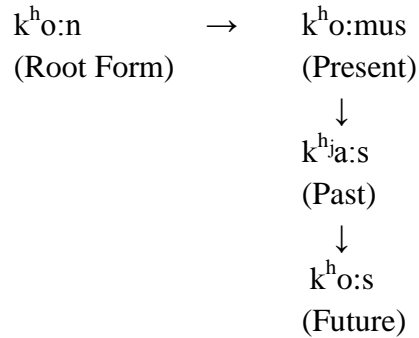
Tense
Kohistani has three-tier tense system: present tense, past tense and future tense. The examples are tabulated below:

k^ho:n	k^ho:mus	k^{hj}a:s	k^ho:s
'to eat'	'eat'	'ate'	'will eat'
p^jo:s	p^jo:mus	p^ja:s	p^jo:s
' to drink'	'drink'	'drank'	'will drink'
lik^{h}o:n	lik^{h}o:mus	lik^{hj} a:s	lik^{h}o:s
'to write'	'write'	'wrote'	'will write'
paḍ^{j}o:n	paḍ^{j}o:mus	paḍ^{j}a:s	paḍ^{j}o:s

'to read'	'read'	'read'	'will read'

The above words when undergo inflectional changes under particular paradigm. The affixes used to show different inflections are as:

$$k^ho:n \quad \rightarrow \quad k^ho:mus$$
$$\text{(Root Form)} \quad \text{(Present)}$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$k^{hj}a:s$$
$$\text{(Past)}$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$k^ho:s$$
$$\text{(Future)}$$

In this example we find that the final consonant of the root form is deleted and morpheme [mus] is affixed to inflect present form.

$$k^ho:n \text{ (Root Form)} \rightarrow k^{hj}a:s \text{(Past)}$$

To inflect past form the first consonant is palatalized and [o:n] is replaced by [a:s].

$$k^ho:n \text{ (Root Form)} \rightarrow k^ho:s \text{ (Future)}$$

To inflect future tense [n] of root word gets replaced by [s].

There are some other patterns of inflections as well.

Example 1

$$b^jon \text{ (to sit)}$$

$$b^jomus \rightarrow bet^hos \rightarrow b^jo:s$$

Here instead of [a:s] the morpheme [et^{h}os] is used to make past form.

Example 2

jazon (to walk)

jazomus → jazilos → jazo:s

In this example [ilos] is used to make past form.
Example 3

dujon (to cut)

dajum (present) → dajan (past) → dujo:s (Future)

In this example [um] morpheme is reported instead of [omus] and [un] is affixed where [as] is seen in other patterns so both present and past forms vary here.

Kohistani verbs are classified as intransitive and transitive:

Intransitive Verbs
Intransitive verbs follow the general rule, i.e., having only one argument, namely the subject e.g.

mo: ro:ndʲa:s	'I wept'
mo: noṭo:dav	'I danced'
mo: jazilo:s	'I walked'

Transitive Verbs
Transitive verbs have more than one argument. The arguments may be subject, direct object and indirect object e.g.

i)   likʰo:n   'to write'

        mo: ʧiṭʰi: likʰʲa:s

i letter write-pst
I wrote a letter.

ii)   maro:n   'to kill'

muʃa:v ḍĩ: marav
man-erg lion kill-pst
Man killed the lion.

Aspect
Kohistani language has progressive and perfective aspect.

Progressive Aspect
In Kohistani, the suffixes [-mus] and [-musos] are added to the main verbs root (with some other morphophonemic changes) to form progressive aspect e.g.

kʰo:n   →   kʰo:mus   →   kʰo:musos
'to eat'   'is eating'   'was eating'

bʲo:n   →   bʲo:mus   →   bʲo:musos
'to sit'   'is sitting'   'was sitting'

jazo:n   →   jazo:mus   →   jazo:musos
'to walk'   'is walking'   'was walking'

Perfective Aspect
In order to form perfective aspect, the suffix [-a:s] replaces [-o:n] of the verb root to make present aspect and the suffix [os] is added to stem as past aspect marker e.g.

pʲo:n   →   pʲa:s   →   pʲa:sos
'to drink'   'have drunk'   'had drunk'

kʰo:n   →   kʰʲa:s   →   kʰʲa:sos
'to eat'   'have eaten'   'had eaten'

paḍʲo:n   →   paḍʲa:s   →   paḍʲa:sos

‘to read’   ‘have read’   ‘had read’

Voice

Kohistani has two voices: Active and Passive.

The passive formation in Kohistani involves changes in the verb form and addition of auxiliary verbs e.g.

      mi: varjo: ʧa: pʲo:n a:j

      i-gen.abl by tea take-inf-abl come-pr

      Tea is taken by me.

      mi: varjo: ʧa: pʲo:n ælis

      i-gen-abl by tea take-inf-abl come-pst

      Tea was taken by me.

      su za:j mi: varjo: paʧa:s

      that place i-dat by visit-pst

      That place is visited by me.

      mi: varjo: kita:b lik^{h}e:nan

      i-gen.dat by book write-fut

      Book will be written by me.

Conclusion

The verb morphology of Kohistani reports that the verbs of said language are inflected for tense (present, past and future), aspect (progressive and perfective) and voice. The passive formation in Kohistani involves changes in the verb form and addition of auxiliary verbs.

References

Baart, John L.G. 2011. *A Sketch of Kalam Kohistani Grammar.* Gulshan Books: Srinagar.

Barth, F. 1956. *Indus and Swat Kohistan; an Ethnographic Survey*. Oslo: Fovenede Trykkerier.

Bashir, E. 2003. *Dardic.* In Cardona, G. & Jain,D. (eds.) *The Indo-Aryan languages.* London/New York: Routledge.

Ganai, P. 2012. *Kashmiri and Kohistani: A Word Class Comparison.* Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing.

Grierson, G. A. 1990. *The Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. VIII, Part II.* 1919. Delhi: Low Price Publications.

Hallberg, Daniel G. 1992. *Languages of Kohistan.* In Rensch,C.R., et al.(eds.). *Sociolinguistic Survey of Northern Pakistan Vol. I.* Islamabad: National Institute of Pakistan Studies and Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Masica, Colin P. 1991. *The Indo-Aryan Languages.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mock, John. 1940. *Dards, Dardic, and Dardistan: An Ethnographic, Geographic and Linguistic Conundrum.* Retrieved from *http*://www.mockandoneil.com/dard.htm.

Morgenstierne, Georg. *Notes on Bashkarik. Acta Orientalia* 18:206-257,

Morgenstierne, G. 1965. *Dardic and Kafir Languages*. In Lewis B, Pellat C & Schacht J. (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Islam* 2 (new edition). Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Rensch, C.R. 1992. *Patterns of Language Use Among the Kohistani of the Swat valley*. In Rensch, C.R. ,et al. *Sociolinguistic Survey of Northern Pakistan, Volume 1, Languages of Kohistan*. Islamabad: National Institute of Pakistan Studies and Summer Institute of Linguistics. Retrieved from http://www.mockandoneil.com/dard.htm

❑❑❑