



## RESEARCH PAPER

### The Argument Structure of Intransitive Verbs in Pashto

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#### ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the description and categorization of intransitive verbs in terms of its argument structure. The study concludes that the unaccusative verbs only project an internal argument. It does not require the event argument. However, the said verb can be causativised by adding external argument and at the same time the event argument gets included in the valency of the derived causative of the unaccusative root. The unergative, on the other hand, requires an external argument as an obligatory argument while the internal argument is not the obligatory argument of the verb. The event argument is also a part of the valency of the verb. The APFs require one argument which is the internal argument of the verb. However, since the external argument is not available, the internal argument of the verb gets realized as the subject of the verb. The verb does not project event argument. The ergative predicates are derived by the suppression of the external argument and by the externalization of the internal argument.

## Introduction

According to Grimshaw (1990, pp. 1-4), the term argument structure refers to the lexical representation of grammatical information about a predicate. The argument structure of lexical item is thus part of its lexical entry. It represents the prominence relations among arguments. The said relations are jointly determined by the thematic properties of the predicate via thematic hierarchy and by the aspectual properties of the predicate. The maintain that the meanings of verb are decomposed into the basic predicates at the level of semantic form mediating between syntax and conceptual structure Bierwisch (1990, 1996, 1997) Wunderlich (1997) (McIntyre, 2004) (Mahajan, 1997) (Hale & Keyser, 1991). This decomposition would yield the numbers as well as the hierarchy of the arguments in the lexicon. It is, therefore, plausible to say that argument structure is a part of verb's lexical entry. He further claims that lexical entries are complex data structures whose organization and basic components are provided by the principles of Universal Grammar (UG) (Bierwisch, 1996, p. 129).

Hale and Keyser (1998) argue that argument structure is the systematic structural relations holding between heads and arguments linked to them in the roster of syntactic properties listed for individual items in the lexicon. It deals with the structure of arguments in the lexicon and its morpho-syntactic realization in a structure. The hierarchy of the arguments is related to the level of dominance of the argument. External argument is considered to be the most prominent argument while direct object is considered next in dominance to the external argument. The indirect argument is the lowest in this order (Bhatt & Pancheva, 2006) (Duguine, Huidobro & Madariaga 2010) (Levin & Rappaport, 1988).

It is a general assumption that arguments have a hierarchical structure. They are structured such that their relative hierarchical status is clear. This concept of argument structure is called thematic hierarchy. The following presents variant views of thematic hierarchy.

- a. <AGENT, EXPERIENCER, LOCATION/SOURCE/ GOAL, THEME> (Grimshaw 1990)
- b. <AGENT, THEME, GOAL/BENEFACTIVE/ LOCATION> (Baker 1989)
- c. <AGENT, THEME, GOAL, OBLIQUES> (Larson 1988)
- d. <AGENT, LOCATION/SOURCE/GOAL, THEME> (Jackendoff 1972)

There is no uniformed theory of argument hierarchy. Researchers differ on the hierarchical status of arguments. For example, according to Larson (1988) and Baker (1988, 1989, 2003) theme is higher than goal while Jakendoff (1972) and Grimshaw (1990) believe that theme is lower than goal. I will not use these terms to refer to argument hierarchy rather I have chosen the notations used by Chung (1998) as illustrated in the following:

*warko*: x, <y, z>

In (22), x is the external argument which is higher than both y and z. y and z are the two internal arguments of the verb *warko* 'give'. Among the two internal arguments y which is underlined is the direct argument while z is the indirect argument. The direct argument is higher than the indirect argument in the argument hierarchy. Based on the above mentioned theory, I am going to present the argument structure of Pashto verbs in the following section. In our discussion of argument structure, we turn now to examples starting from the intransitive verbs and its argument structure representation. The purpose is to present different types of intransitive verbs in Pashto which are distinct as far as their argument structure is concerned. The aforementioned verbs project different types of arguments. Following are the illustrations of intransitive verbs in Pashto:

#### *Un-ergative predicates*

1.

- e. *Sara*                      *kar*                      *kai*.  
      Sara(NOM)      work                      do (PRS F 3SG)  
      Sara is working.

- f. *Khalid garzi.*  
 Khalid(NOM) walk (PRS M 3SG)  
 Khalid is walking.

#### Un-accusative predicates

- g. *Hameed rawaraseed.*  
 Hameed(NOM) arrive (PRS M 3SG)  
 Hameed has arrived/ Hameed arrived.
- h. *Shahid khandi*  
 Shahid(NOM) laugh (PRS M 3SG)  
 Shahid is laughing.

#### Verbal passives formation

- i. *da kitaab likhale shawe de.*  
 The book(NOM) write do(PASS) be (PRS M 3SG PF)  
 The book has been written.
- j. *da assaymint likhae shawe de.*  
 The assignment(NOM) write do(PASS) be (PRS M 3SG PF)  
 This assignment has been written.

#### Adjectival passive formation

- k. *da elan tez wo.*  
 This announcement(NOM) loud (M 3SG) be (PST M 3SG)  
 This announcement was unexpected.

#### Middle formation

- l. *da kalin pa asana inzale kigi.*  
 This carpet(NOM) easily wash do (M 3SG)  
 This carpet washes easily/ this carpet get washed easily.

#### Ergative predicate formation

- m. *hagha raza sho.*  
 He(NOM) convince become (PST M. 3SG)  
 He became convinced.

The above examples illustrate different types of intransitive verbs in Pashto. A predicate describes an event in which different participants are involved. They are called arguments of the predicate. Such arguments are of different types. The following illustrates different types of arguments associated with intransitive as well as transitive verbs in Pashto. Transitive verbs have been discussed later in section 2

#### Intransitives

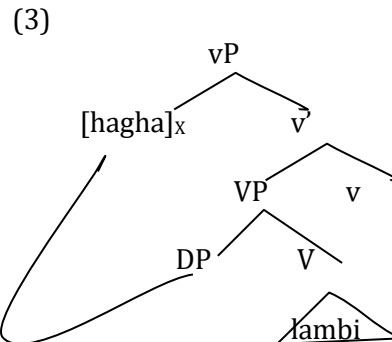
#### Unergatives

The following are examples of unergative and unaccusative verbs in Pashto.

(2)

- a. *Shahid kar kai.*  
 Shahid(NOM) work do(PRS M 3SG)  
 Shahid is working.
- b. *hagha lambi*  
 She/he(NOM) bath(PRS M 3SG)  
 She is taking bath.
- c. *haghwi garzi*  
 They(NOM) walk(PRS M 3PL)  
 They are walking.
- d. *Salma darogh wai*  
 Salma(NOM) lie tell(PRS F 3SG)  
 Salma tells lie.

In (2a-d) unergative verbs have been illustrated. Ergative verbs describe an agentive action which means that the action is initiated by the agent subject. In (2a) *Shahid* is the agentive subject who initiates the action of *kar* (work). Another striking thing about un-ergative verb is that it has an event argument as well. However, the only difference between un-ergative and ergative verbs is that ergative verbs take theme while the former do not. In (3) below, the subject is non agentive, thus the sentences are ill-formed. The following structure illustrates un-ergative verbs.



In the given example, the one and only argument of the un-ergative verb *lambi* 'bath' has been generated at the specifier position of V and is subsequently raised to specifier v position to get the agent role assigned from the little v. However, an unanimate entity cannot be the subject of an ergative verb as can be seen in the grammaticality of the constructions in (4)

4)

- a. *\*gelas lambi*  
 glass (NOM) bath(PRS 3SG)  
 Glass is taking bath

- b.    *\*gade*                      *lambi*  
          vehicle (NOM)                      bath (PRS 3SG)  
          Vehicle is taking bath

(4a-b) are ungrammatical owing to the fact that the subject of the verb cannot be assigned agent role since they are not animate. The verb, however, requires an agent subject argument.

Un-accusatives

Un-accusative verbs, on the other hand, describe a non-agentive action. The following (5) illustrates un-accusative verbs in Pashto. The subject of un-accusative verb is semantically a theme though syntactically it behaves like a subject as explained in (5) below. The subject of the un-accusative verb is actually the internal argument which has been moved to the subject position in the course of derivation.

(5)

- a.    *gelas*                      *wartao sho*  
       glass(NOM)    fall       do/become (PST M 3SG)  
       Glass fell down.
- b.    *Jinai*                                      *pranjigi.*  
       Girl(NOM)                                      sneeze (PRS M 3SG)  
       A girl is sneezing.
- c.    *Humaid*                      *bemar*                      *sho*  
       Humaid (NOM)    sick                      become (PST M 3SG)  
       Humaid became sick.

In (5a), *gelas* 'glass' is the internal argument of the verb *wartao sho* but since there is no subject (external argument), the former surfaces as a sentential subject. The said is the internal argument of the verb as it is not involved in any activity (agentive action). The following diagram illustrates argument structure of unaccusative verbs. In (5b) *jenai* 'girl' is the internal argument of the verb. The ungrammaticality of the structures in (6) arises from the fact that the un-accusative verbs cited in (5) cannot be causativized thus can have no external argument. The unaccusative verbs cited in (5) have been causativized in the following:

(6)

- a.    *\*ma*    *jinai*                                      *wapranjawala*  
       I(ERG) girl(NOM)                                      sneeze (PRS M 3SG)  
       I sneezing.
- b.    *\*ma*    *Humaid*                                      *bemar ko*  
       I(ERG) Humaid                                      sick       become (PST M 3SG)  
       Humaid became sick.

The examples cited in (6) are ungrammatical since the verbs are un-accusative; the subject of the said verbs cannot be assigned agent theta role. In said examples, we attempted to

assign agent theta role to the subject of the said verb but it resulted in the ungrammaticality of the structure.

(7)

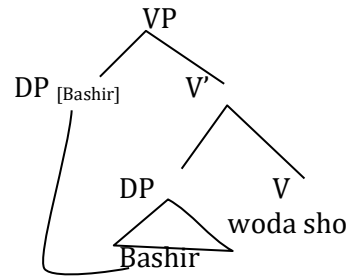
a. *wartao sho*: <y>

b. *pranjigi*: <y>

c. *bemar sho*: <y>

The structure shows that the un-accusative verb, *wartao sho* 'dropped down' takes only one argument: the internal argument. The following diagram shows the structure of arguments of the verb.

(8)



In (8) the un-accusative verb has been illustrated. As given, the un-accusative *woda sho* 'slept' does not have any external argument but the internal is raised to the position of the external argument.

According to Chun (1990, p. 401) English de-verbal nominal are derived from un-ergative verb by *-er* suffix. In Pashto, the said is derived by adding *-way* suffixes to un-accusative. The following examples demonstrate the difference.

(9)

a. *kar kai* 'work doing' →  
*Kardar* 'doer of work'

b. *garzi* 'walking' →  
*garzinda* 'walker'

c. *lambi* 'taking bath' →  
*lambozan* 'one who baths'

(10)

a. *woda sho* 'slept' →  
*wwoda shawey* 'one who slept'

b. *wartao sho* 'fall down' →  
*wartao shawey* 'one who fall down'

c. *wran sho* 'damaged' →  
*wran shawey* 'the thing which became damaged'

- d. *nilam sho* 'bid' →  
*nilam shawey* 'the thing available for bid'.

In (9a-c) un-ergative verbs are demonstrated while in (10a-d) unaccusative verbs are demonstrated. An interesting thing that I noticed about de-verbal nominals is that the said also show some traces of the meaning of the verb. The agentive and non-agentive meaning of the verb is also present there in the derived nominal. The following example demonstrates the difference:

(11)

- a. *woda shawey* (the one who is asleep)  
 b. *wran shawey* (the one which is not in sound condition)  
 c. *lambozan* (the one swims/bath)  
 d. *kardar* (the one who works)

In (11a-b), the meaning of the de-verbal nominals is stative as it refers to the state of an entity while in (11c-d) the meaning of the nominal is agentive. The latter refers to the action of an agent while the former in (11a-b) refers to the state/non agentive attributes of the subject.

#### Verbal passive formation (VPF)

The verbal passive are formed by suppressing the external argument. The subject argument which carries agent role and functions as an external argument is suppressed while the internal argument is moved to the subject position (see Chung, 2000 for details about English VPF). Consider the following examples:

(12)

- a. *hagha khat likhale de*  
 he(ERG) letter(NOM) write (PRS M 3SG) be(PRS M 3SG)  
 He has written the letter.
- b. *khat likhale shawe de*  
 Letter(NOM) write(PRS M 3SG) do(PASS be PRS M 3SG)  
 Letter has been written.

In (12a) the external argument is present while in (12b) the said argument has been suppressed. In the former, the internal argument *khat* has been externalized. The argument structure of verbs in (12a) is as follows:

(13)

- a. *likhale*: e, x, <y> →  
 b. *likhale shawe* e, <y> x\*

In (13a) *e* is the event argument. *x* and *<y>* represent external and internal arguments respectively. The structure in (13a) is the argument structure representation of (12a).

In (12b) the external argument *hagha* 'he' has been suppressed. The internal argument is externalized subsequent to the suppression of the external argument as illustrated in 13b above.

Adjectival passive formation (APF)

APF does not have external argument. However, in the absence of the external argument the internal argument surface as a sentential subject. The following examples illustrate APF in Pashto.

(14)

<i>baran</i>	<i>deer</i>	<i>wo.</i>
rain(NOM)	heavy (M 3SG)	be(PST)
Rain was heavy.		

In (14) *baran* 'rain' is the only argument of the VPF functioning as an internal argument of the verb. However, it surfaces as subject of the sentence. The argument has been externalized. The said can be represented as the following:

(15) *<y>*

Another example of the same:

(16)

<i>kitabona</i>	<i>gran</i>	<i>wo.</i>
Books(NOM)	expensive(M 3PL)	be(PST M 3PL)
Books were expensive.		

In (16) *kitabona* has been externalized since the verb does not have external argument of its own. The following demonstrates the externalization of the internal argument.

(17)

a. *<y>* →  
b. *y < >*

APF formation in Pashto like English does not allow *bandi* 'by phrase'. It does not take rational clause or any agentive adverb too (as Chung 2000 argues the same about English APF). The following examples show how APF is different from its verbal passive counterpart.

(18)

a.	<i>ma</i>	<i>khat</i>	<i>waliko</i>
	I(ERG)	letter(NOM)	write (PST M 3SG)
	I wrote a letter.		
b.	<i>khat</i>	<i>walikale</i>	<i>sho</i>
	letter(NOM)	written (PASS)	be(PST M 3SG)
	Letter was written.		
c.	<i>khat</i>	<i>(pa ma)</i>	<i>walikhle sho.</i>



Letter(NOM) (by me) write (PASS) be(PST M 3SG)  
The letter was written by me.

d. *kitab gran wo*  
Book(NOM) expensive be(PST M 3SG)  
The book was expensive.

e. *\*kitab (pa ma)\* gran wo.*  
Book(NOM) (by me) expensive be(PST M 3SG)  
The book was expensive for me.

In (18d) the sentence is active while the one in (18e) is its passive counterpart. The said VPF in (18b) is shown to allow *bandi* 'by' phrase in (18c). However, APF shown in (18d) does not allow *bandi* 'by' phrase as demonstrated by the ungrammaticality of (18e).

Furthermore, the said APF in Pashto neither allows rational clause nor agentive adverb. The following examples show the same.  
(19)

a. *\*Kitab gran wo pa asana*  
Book(NOM) expensive be(PST M 3SG) easily  
Book was expensive easily.

b. *Kitab walikale sho pa asana.*  
Book(NOM) written (PASS) be(PST M 3SG) easily.  
Book was written easily.

In (19a) the structure is ungrammatical merely due to the fact that agentive adverb has been used to modify the APF. However, the APF does not allow the agentive adverb to modify it. Conversely, the structure in (19b) is grammatical due to the fact that agentive adverb *pa asana* 'easily' modifies the VPF; because VPF allows the co-occurrence of adverbial *pa asana* 'easily' with it but APF does not allow the said adverb.

### Middle formation

Middle verbs are considered to be a voice between active and passive (Chung, 2000). They are active but their meaning is like that of passive. Middle verbs are found in English too. Consider the following middle verb constructions in English.

(20)

- a. The bottle breaks easily.
- b. The potato cuts easily.
- c. The car drives nicely.
- d. Joseph writes neatly.

(Chung, 2000)

Middles are active in their form but they are like passive in terms of meaning. They describe the property of a surface subject. The subject of middles does not bear agent theta role. Pashto exhibits this type of constructions.

(21)

- a. *frij*                      *pa asana*                      *kharabigi*.  
 Fridge(NOM) easily                      breaks down (3SG)  
 Fridge breaks down easily.
- b. *hagha*                      *frij*                      *khrabai*  
 He(NOM)fridge (ERG) damage (3SG/PL)  
 He damages the fridge.
- c. *da bojai deera pa asana gandale*                      *kigi*.  
 This sack(NOM) very easily                      stitched(PRS M 3SG) be (PRS)  
 This sack can be stitched very easily.

In (21) the verb *kharabigi* 'break down' is similar in meaning to those of English middles cited in (21a-d) thus exemplify the existence of middle verbs in Pashto. *Kharabigi* 'break down' in its form is isomorphic with the present form of verb. However, when modified by *pa asana* 'easily' then it gives the reading of middles just like English. The difference between the passive and middle verbs in Pashto can be captured in the following examples:

(22)

- a. *frij*                      *pa asana kharabigi*. **(middle)**  
 Fridge(NOM) easily                      breaks down(PRS M 3SG)  
 Fridge breaks down easily.
- b. *frij*                      *kharab karhe*                      *sho*. **(passive)**  
 Fridge(NOM) damage do (PASS)                      be(PST M 3SG)  
 Fridge was damaged (by someone).
- c. *Hameed*                      *frij kharabai*.  
 Hameed(NOM) fridge damage (PRS M 3SG)  
 Hameed is damaging/damages the fridge.

In (22a) the verb is middle while the one in (114b) is VPF. In other words, in (22a) the verb expresses the attributes of the subject while in (22b), the verb represents the passive form of the active verb *kharabai* as given in (22c).

The difference between the middle and passive is quiet simple to capture. Middles express attributes of the surface subject while passives have got agentive suppressed/implicit subject. Middles also have an implicit subject but the meaning of the two implicit subjects is different: implicit subject of the passive form means 'someone'

while the implicit subject of the middle means ‘anyone, people, anybody’ as demonstrated in the following examples.

(23)

- a. *da kor*                      *pa asana*                      *wranigi*.  
 This house(NOM)              easily                      collapse (PRS M 3SG)  
 This house collapses easily.
- b. *da kor*                      *wranigi*  
 This house(NOM)              demolish (PASS) be (PRS M 3SG)  
 This house is being demolished.
- c. *mashum*                      *khandi*                      *pa asana*.  
 Child(NOM)              laughs (PRS M 3SG) easily  
 The child laughs easily.

(23a and 23c) demonstrates middles while (23b) illustrates passive verb in Pashto. In (23a), the verb *wranigi* ‘collapses’ is a middle verb which describes the property of the subject *da kor* ‘this house’ the meaning conveyed by the verb is that it can be damaged easily by anyone. The verb refers to a state rather than an action. The said verb is in present form and is modified by adverb of manner. According to Chung (1990), the middles in English are adorned with manner adverbs, modals, negation and focus. The implicit subject that gives the meaning of ‘anyone’, is different from the subject of passive verb which means ‘someone’ as illustrated in (23c). The form of the verb in both (115b) and (23c) is the same but the difference can be captured from the fact that the subject of the former is ‘someone’ while that of the latter is ‘anyone, people, anybody’.

According to Robert (1987) and Fagan (1988, 1992), middles can be categorized as stative as far as its aspect is concerned. This means that the said verb does not have an event argument. The latter has been either suppressed or deleted in the course of derivation. The following examples illustrate the suppression of event argument.

(24)

- a. *roja*              *matigi*                      *pa asana*.  
 Fasting(NOM) break(PRS M 3SG)              easily.  
 Fasting breaks easily.
- b.  $e, x, <y> \rightarrow$   
 $y <>, (*e)$

The argument structure of (116a) is represented in (116b). The latter says that external argument has been deleted while the event argument has been suppressed in the course of derivation of middle from its transitive counterpart. The following examples justify whether the external argument has been deleted or suppressed.

(25)

- a. *Hagha*              *mehnat*              *kai*                      *chi kamyab*              *shi*.

He(NOM) hard-work do (PRS M 3SG) so that succeed do (PRS 3SG/PL)  
He works hard so that he may succeed.

b. \**mehnat kigi chi kamyab shi.*  
hardwork(NOM) do(PRS 3SG) so that succeed do (PRS 3SG/PL)  
(Someone) works hard to succeed.

c. \**kor wranigi chi nuqsan washi*  
House (NOM) collapse (PRS 3SG so that damage do(PRS 3SG)  
The house collapses to cause damage (to someone).

In (25a), the subject of the matrix clause *hagha* controls the PRO of the embedded clause *chi kamyab shi*. PRO in the embedded clause encodes the meaning of *hagha* which is the subject of the matrix clause. Conversely, in (25b), there is no controller of the PRO in the matrix clause; the sentence is thus ill-formed. (25b) illustrates passive structure which does not allow controlled subject of the embedded clause when the external argument of the matrix clause is not given or that it means 'someone'. The reason why (25b) is ill-formed is that the verb of the embedded clause agrees with a particular pronoun *hagha*, *haghoi* 'he/she, they' respectively' while the implicit subject of the matrix is 'someone'. However, whenever the external argument is understood or given, the PRO of the embedded clause is controlled. Consider the following examples:

(26)

d. *ta mehnat kawa chi kamyab shi*  
you(NOM) hardwork(NOM) do (PRS 2SG) so that (PRO)succeed do(FUT 2SG)  
You work hard so that (you) may succeed.

e. *ma ta farigh krhe chi mutalia waki.*  
I(ERG)you(NOM) free do (PST 2SG) so that(PRO) study do(FUT 2SG)  
I let you go for study.

In (26a), the subject of the matrix clause is given so there is no issue with the agreement of the verb of the embedded clause. However, sometimes, the subject of the matrix clause is in ergative case, but since the object is in nominative case as in (26b), the verb of the embedded clause agrees with the object of the matrix clause indirectly. The verb of the embedded clause agrees with PRO which is controlled by the subject of the matrix clause. However, sometimes the implicit subject argument of the passive verb in the matrix clause controls the PRO of the embedded clause. Consider the following examples:

(27)

f. \**kor nave kigi chi faida washi.*  
house(NOM) renovate do (PASS) so that (PRO) benefit do(PRS 3SG)  
The house renovates PRO to get benefit.

- g. \*kor pa asana nave kigi chi faida washi.  
house(NOM) easily renovate do (PRS 3SG) so that benefit do(PRS 3SG)  
The house renovates easily so that benefit is taken.
- h. rotai khuram chi kar wakam.  
PRO(I) food(NOM) eat (PRS 1SG) so that work ( I, PRO) do(PRS 1SG)  
I take food so that (I) work (after eating).

In (27a-b) the external argument of the passive verb is implicit/ suppressed but since the said is not definite pronoun rather it reads as 'someone', it cannot control the PRO subject of the embedded clause. So 'someone' being the implicit argument of the verb in the matrix clause cannot be duplicated into the subject position of the embedded clause. However, in (27c) the case is different. In this case, the subject of verb in the matrix clause is understood from the morphology of the verb in matrix clause. Similarly, the subject of the embedded clause is understood from the morphology of the verb but it is not a definite subject while the subject of middles as in (28) is indefinite which cannot be controlled by the subject of the matrix clause. Thus the sentence is ill-formed.

(28)

- \*imtihan pa asana pas kigi chi nawkari milao shi.  
exam (NOM)easily qualify do (PRS 3SG) so that job get be PRS 3SG/PL  
Exams are easily qualified (by someone) to get a job.

Another important characteristic of Pashto middle is that it suppresses the external argument and externalizes its internal argument as can be seen in the following examples.

(29)

- a. da kitab pa asana patigi.  
This book(NOM) easily steal(PRS 3SG)  
This book gets stolen easily.
- b. da gade pa grana rawanigi.  
This vehicle(NOM) hardly start(PRS 3SG)  
This vehicle gets started hardly.

(30)

$$e, x, \langle \underline{y} \rangle \rightarrow \\ y \langle \rangle, (e^*)$$

In (29a) and (29b), the external argument has been deleted while the event argument (e) has been suppressed. Owing to the fact that the external argument has been deleted, the sentence gives stative reading. Finally, the structure presented in (29) has been summarized as (30) above.

## Ergative Formation

This term was originally applied to languages like Basque in which the complement of a transitive verb and the subject of an intransitive verb are assigned the same case. However, by extension, it has come to be used to denote verbs like *break* which occur both in structures like *Someone broke the window* and in structures like *The window broke*, where *the window* seems to play the same thematic role in both types of sentences, in spite of being the complement of *broke* in one sentence and the subject of *broke* in the other. The ergative formation is distinguished by its ability to occur in transitive structure as well. The sentential subject originates as the object of the verb. The following examples illustrate ergative verbs in English:

(31)

- a. The glass broke.
- b. The mobile damaged.
- c. The issue settled.
- d. The ID card renewed.

Ergative verb has the following characteristics.

Firstly, it cannot be modified by an adverb. See the following examples.

(32)

- a. *halak woda sho.*  
Boy(NOM) sleep become (PRS M 3SG)  
The boy slept.
- b. *\*gilas mat sho pa asana*  
Glass(NOM) break become (PRS M 3SG) easily.  
The glass broke easily.
- c. *gilas mat sho.*  
Glass(NOM) break become (PST M 3SG)  
The glass broke.

The examples in (32) depict ergative formation in Pashto. (32a) and (32c) are grammatical because they are not modified by an adverb while (32b) is ungrammatical because it is modified by an adverb. Thus ergative in Pashto does not allow adverb to modify it. Secondly, modals auxiliary can be used concurrently with Pashto ergative formations as can be seen in the following examples.

(32)

- a. *Hameed kamyab kide sho.*  
Hameed (NOM) successful can be(PST M 3 SG)  
Hameed could succeed.
- b. *Hameed pa asana woda kide sho.*  
Hameed(NOM) easily sleep can be(PSTM 3 SG)  
Hameed could get asleep easily .

In (33) the examples depict that Pashto ergatives can be used concurrently with models.

Thirdly, Pashto ergatives describe an event and not a property of the subject. This property of the verb is evident from the following examples.

(34)

- a. *kamra safa shwa.*  
 Room (NOM) clean become (PST F 3SG)  
 The room got cleaned.
- b. e, < > y

In (34a), the verb expresses an event. It does not describe the property of the subject like APF. In 34b), the argument structure of ergative given in (34a) has been illustrated. The verb has got two arguments; one is event argument while the other is the internal argument of the verb.

Fourthly, the tense of Pashto ergative verbs is not limited to present tense like middles. The verb can appear in any tense namely present, past and progressive form.

(35)

- a. *gilas guzar sho.*  
 Glass(NOM) fall become (PST M 3SG)  
 Glass fell down.
- b. *gilas guzarigi.*  
 Glass(NOM) fall (PRS 3SG)  
 Glass is going to fell down.
- c. *Gilas guzarido*  
 Glass (NOM) fall (PST M 3SG)  
 Glass was going to fell down.

The examples in (35) depicts that ergatives can be used in different tenses. In (35a), the verb is ergative while in (35b) and (35c) its present and past tense alternates have been given.

Fifthly, it has got its corresponding transitive construction as given in below.

(36)

- a. *ma Hameed guzar ko.*  
 I(ERG) Hameed(NOM) fall do (PST M 3SG)  
 I made Hameed fell down.
- b. *Hameed guzar sho*  
 Hameed (NOM) fell become (PST M 3SG)  
 Hameed fell down.

In (36a), the transitive counterpart of the ergative in (36b) has been given. The transitive counterpart has been derived by replacing the verbal clitic *sho* by *ko*. In Pashto the said verbs are quite unique as far as its syntactic sub-categorization is concerned. The

said verb is made of adjective and auxiliary verb. The following represents the argument structure of the predicate:

(37)

*guzar sho: e, y < > x\**

In (37), *e*, *y* and *x\** represent event, internal argument externalized and suppressed external argument respectively.

### **Conclusion**

In this study, the focus was on the argument structure of verbs in Pashto. Unaccusative, middles, ergative, unergative, APF and VPF, besides the two and three place predicates, have been identified in Pashto and at the same time the AS of the predicates have been presented. On the basis of the data, it was concluded that the unaccusative verbs only project an internal argument. It does not require the event argument. However, the said verb can be causativised by adding external argument and at the same time the event argument gets included in the valency of the derived causative of the unaccusative root. The unergative, on the other hand, requires an external argument as an obligatory argument while the internal argument is not the obligatory argument of the verb. The event argument is also a part of the valency of the verb. The APFs require one argument which is the internal argument of the verb. However, since the external argument is not available, the internal argument of the verb gets realized as the subject of the verb. The verb does not project event argument. The ergative predicates are derived by the suppression of the external argument and by the externalization of the internal argument.



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