| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

A Comparative Analysis of Passive Voice in Farsi and Pashto Languages

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| **ABSTRACT**

Two prominent languages of the Indo-Iranian branch, Pashto and Persian, have different passive voice formulations that reflect their own grammatical structures and cultural backgrounds. This article analyzes the passive structure of the Pashto language. The Pashto language has a passive structure that shares many structural similarities with the Persian language. This study aimed to educate EFL learners, teachers, and interpreters in Afghanistan on how to effectively use English, Pashto, and Persian in learning and teaching. A qualitative study was undertaken to analyze the passive voice structures in Persian and Pashto languages. The study utilized library-based techniques. Various structures of passive within tenses were analyzed in detail. The results showed that both Farsi and Pashto use almost the same pattern in changing an active into a passive one. The study found that passive voice is not only limited to some verb identifiers and past participle forms, but also involves transitivity alternation in both Farsi and Pashto languages.

1. Introduction

Linguistics has traditionally focused on language comparison and contrast as a means of illuminating the nuances of various linguistic systems and their cultural ramifications. The passive voice is one of the many linguistic phenomena that need to be studied since it provides a lens through which to examine the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic structures of languages (Fahmi & Rachmijati, 2021). The structure and meaning of sentences in many languages are greatly influenced by the use of the passive and active voice.

When describing an activity or event, a passive sentence is a grammatical form in which the subject of the sentence is not the agent of the action. In passive sentences, the action's agent is either left out or introduced with a preposition, making the sentence's object the subject. For instance, "John kicked the ball" is an active phrase but "The ball was kicked by John" is a passive one. In academic writing, scientific study, and journalism, passive phrases are frequently employed to explain events or activities without highlighting the agent accountable for them.

Linguists and writers have disagreed on the use of passive sentences. While some contend that passive phrases are more formal and objective than active ones, others think they might be ambiguous and hide the action's agent. Passive sentences, according to Halliday and Hasan (1976), are employed to change the subject of the sentence from the agent to the patient or action recipient. When the agent is unknown, irrelevant, or purposefully hidden, this can be helpful. In scientific study, passive words are frequently

employed to explain experimental protocols and outcomes. Passive sentences here highlight the procedure or approach rather than the investigator or test subject. For instance, the statement "The samples were analyzed using gas chromatography" highlights the analytical technique more than the investigator. Comparably, in journalism, incidents are reported using passive phrases that absolve parties of accountability or guilt. For instance, saying "The building was destroyed by a bomb" absolves anyone of accountability for the explosion. Passive sentence construction, nevertheless, can also be troublesome. Sentences that are passive might be ambiguous and fail to identify the agent behind an action. Particularly in legal and political circumstances, this can result in uncertainty and confusion. To avoid placing blame for a mistake, the phrase "Mistakes were made" is a classic example of a passive sentence. It is common to criticize this kind of wording for being evasive and evading responsibility (Orfan & Seraj, 2022). When describing occurrences or acts where the subject is not the agent of the action, passive sentences are a grammatical structure that is employed. In academic writing, scientific study, and journalism, passive phrases are frequently employed to highlight the procedure or approach rather than the individual in charge of the activity. On the other hand, using passive sentences can sometimes cause ambiguity and confusion. Passive sentences should be used sparingly, and their context should be taken into account.

2. Literature Review
Language grammar and discourse depend heavily on passive voice patterns, which make it easier to express a variety of pragmatic and semantic purposes. The distinction between active and passive constructions is the most well-known voice contrast in many languages. According to Trask (2008), a passive construction is one in which the surface subject of an intrinsically transitive verb is the object of the verb.

Two prominent languages of the Indo-Iranian branch, Pashto and Persian, have different passive voice formulations that reflect their own grammatical structures and cultural backgrounds. In order to clarify the syntactic, morphological, and pragmatic distinctions between Pashto and Persian passive voices, this literature review examines the existing body of research on the subject (Dabirmoghaddam, 1985; Meshkattoldini, 2005).

In Persian grammar, there appears to be disagreement regarding how the passive is constructed (Seraj & Mujadidi, 2023). Many earlier research have minimized the meaning of the Persian passive and substituted phrases like partial verb (Khayampoor, 2010), compound verbs (Vahedi-Langroodi, 2010), and intransitive constructions (Moeen, 2011). For example, the verb shodan, which means "become," is employed in a passive construction; however, Khayampoor (2010) disputes this, arguing that the verb is actually a partial verb that is paired with an adjective. It should be noted, nonetheless, that the passive case is also syntactic, as seen by the lack of a component, in addition to being an inflectional one.

According to Sahraayi and Kazeminahad (2006), there is another kind of passive voice known as the intermediate voice, in which a passive verb is generated by changing the delexical (or light or support) verb. One delexcial verb is substituted for another verb to create a passive verb in this passive voice structure. For instance, the verb xordan, which means to consume, can be used in place of the verb daadan, which means to give, in Shekast daadan, which means to be conquered.

Ferreira (2008) investigated whether speakers' choices to build active or passive sentences would be influenced by the thematic structure of verbs. He discovered that speakers should typically create active sentences when using a typical agent-theme verb, like "ordered," because the active structure positions the agent as the subject and the theme as the object.

In Pashto, compared to Persian, there are very limited research conducted on the passive voice structures. Mayar & Dabirmoghadam (2022) explored the passive structure of the Pashto language. The Pashto language has a passive structure that shares many structural similarities with the Persian language. It examines the understandings and explanations of passive structures supplied by Pashto grammarians and linguists. However the world's languages create passive structures in diverse ways, which we might categorize as "analytical passive" and "morphological passive."

Pashto does not employ passive voice as frequently as other languages, such as English. Passive sentences are commonly employed in Pashto and are classified as Cases due to the Case filter. Pashto passive voice formulations are notable for the absence of an agent in most sentences. Speakers may employ transitive phrases if the agent is understood from context, if they are not significant enough to mention, or as a last option (Masood, 2014).

3. Methodology
A qualitative study was undertaken to analyze the passive voice structures in Persian and Pashto languages. The study utilized library-based techniques. Various structures of passive within tenses were analyzed in detail.

3.1 Data Collection :
Data for the comparative analysis was collected from a number of Pashto and Farsi grammar resources found in academic libraries. The grammar books were carefully reviewed to locate portions devoted to passive structures or issues in which passive constructs are discussed and explained.

3.2 Data Analysis
Passive structures in both languages were found and extracted from selected grammar books. This technique entailed systematically going through the material of each grammar book to find sections or chapters that discussed passive constructions. The obtained passive structures were classified according to their syntactic features, such as verb forms, word order, and use of auxiliary verbs. This classification allowed for a thorough comparison of passive constructions in Pashto and Farsi.

4. Results and Discussion
According to Pakravan (2002), the passive voice fundamentally describes a sentence structure where the subject, or agent, is relegated to a supporting position relative to the object, purpose, or activity of the sentence. The downgrading varies depending on the language. For example, Persian does not typically reintroduce the agent in its "true" passive structure while in Pashto, the present tense is divided into two tenses: imperfective and perfective.

Generally, passive voice is used in the following cases.
- a. When the doer of the action is unknown. *The bridge was built in 1934.*
- b. The doer is irrelevant and not important. *A bridge will be built on Oxus River between Afghanistan and Tajikistan.*
- c. You want to be ambiguous about who is accountable. *Mistakes were made.*
- d. When you talk about general truths. *Smartphones are used for communication*
- e. You want to highlight the person or thing acted upon. *The cell phone was first invented by Martin Cooper in 1973.*

In Persian, passive voice is derived from the past active participle and the auxiliary word شدن (šodan). Persian typically does not reintroduce the agent in its "true" passive structure (Guilani & Tan, 2016). In Persian grammar, the terms MALOOM (known) and MAJHOOL (unknown) refer to the presence or absence of an agent. Because of this, the agent cannot be reintroduced in the "true" passive voice of Persian.

When a statement is in active voice, the verb expresses an action that is carried out by the subject. In Persian, an active sentence has the following basic structure:

Subject + object + verb

I read a book	من کتابی را می خوانم
	Man kitabi ra mi khanam

The procedures below must be followed in order to create a passive voice from an active sentence.
1. Removing the subject of the sentence
2. Putting the object of the sentence instead of the subject
3. Removing the object sign "ra" from the sentence
4. Converting the verb to shodan (be/become)

To convert the active sentence into passive in Persian-Dari in the first step, it is necessary to remove subject of the sentence. For instance in the sentences below:

Ahmad closed the door.	احمد دروازه را بست.
The door was closed.	دروازه بسته شد.

In the above examples, we have both active and passive sentences in Persian. As it is seen, in the second sentence, there is no subject (Ahmad). Also, the object-marker "ra" is omitted. The past form of the verb "bast" is conjugated to the past participle "basta shod". It is possible to use a transitive verb in third person plural without bringing up a third person subject in Persian. An example with the verb "bordand" meaning "took" is used.

The patient was taken to the hospital.	مریض را به بیمارستان بردند.

- A few partial verbs, including "mishawad" (to be possible) and "mitavan" (it can be) can also make contributions in changing a sentence from active voice to passive voice.

Note: After making the verb passive, we match its aspect with the new subject (object). Note that the tense of the passive verb is determined by the tense of the auxiliary verb. So, the most important part of converting an active verb into a passive one is the agreement of the tense of the active and the passive verb; That is, if the tense of the active verb is past continuous, the passive verb must also be past.continuous.

Therefore, the structure of the passive verb is as follows:

مفعول + صفت مفعولی + شد + شناسه

Verb aspect + became + object adjective + object

Note: Some compound verbs, transitive verbs and verbs that come with an auxiliary verb sometimes have a different way to become a passive verb.

You may look at the table below for a quick read.

Simple Past	The boy wrote the letter. پسر نامه را نوشت.	The letter was written. نامه نوشته شد .
Past Continuous	The boy was writing the letter..پسر نامه را می‌نوشت	نامه نوشته می‌شد The letter was being written. .
Past Perfect	The boy had written the letter. پسر نامه را نوشته بود.	نامه نوشته شده بود The letter had been written.
Present Perfect	The boy has written the letter. پسر نامه را نوشته است.	نامه نوشته شده است The letter has been written .
Past Continuous	پسر داشت نامه را می‌نوشت. The boy was writing the letter.	نامه داشت نوشته می‌شد. The letter was being written.
Past Subjunctive	امیدوارم پسر نامه را نوشته باشد. I hope the boy would have written the letter.	امیدوارم نامه نوشته شده باشد. I hope the letter would have been written.
Present Indicative	The boy is writing the letter. پسر نامه را می نوشت.	نامه نوشته می‌شو The letter is written. .
Present Subjunctive	امیدوارم پسر نامه را بنویسد. I hope the boy will write the letter.	امیدوارم نامه نوشته بشود I hope the letter will be written.
Present Continuous	پسر دارد نامه را می‌نویسد. The boy is writing the letter.	نامه دارد نوشته می‌شود. The letter is being written.

In Pashto, the structure of passive verbs originates from the structure of compound verbs, because it has not yet been seen that an objective verb has been used in passive sentences. First, there is an agreement of a pattern of (main verb + auxiliary verb) verbs the second is the agreement of (main verb + auxiliary) verbs. When a subject is present in a sentence and an action is issued from it, then it is called active voice or form.

احمد مقاله ولیکله	احمد مقاله لیکي
Ahmad wrote an article	Ahmad writes/is writing an article

And in case the form of the verb is said to be unknown when the subject is not present in the sentence and the object becomes the substitute of the subject. It is, then, passive.

مقاله ولیکل شوه / کېدله	مقاله لیکل کیږي
The article was/was being written.	The article is being written.

In the passive sentence, the auxiliary verb has come with the third person (ی), but in the past tense, the verb has been conjugated in the form of (شوه) in the past perfect and (کېدله) in the past continuous (Rahimi, 2022).

There are a number of verbs in Pashto, the first part of which is the main part and the second part is formed from the auxiliary verb (کېدل – یدل), which in some cases comes together with the main verb (یدل) and in some cases the auxiliary verb (کیدل) is associated with it.

The passive verbs, which are formed from the auxiliary verb, can be divided into two parts.

1- Leaving out the (ک) from the auxiliary verb:

There are many verbs in the Pashto language where the main verb ends in passive voice, so when it is used in sentences, the first (ک) of the auxiliary verb is removed from the base of the verb in a standard way, and the auxiliary verb is used only in terms of the person and shows the agreement with the object (Rahman, 2012).

The news is published   ورځپانه خپريري

ي	خپریر	ورځپانه
Enclitic	The main verb	Object

As above, we can see that the subject of the sentence or the verb has agreed with the predicate of the sentence only in terms of person, but no changes are seen in the main verb and the auxiliary verb (ک) is also changed from the verb in a standard way. Now we will see that if the first (ک) of the auxiliary verb is not omitted.

Malalay is dying   ملالی مره کیر- ی

کیر- ي	مره	ملالی
Enclitic	The main verb	Object

It became clear here and that if (ک) is omitted from the auxiliary verb, then the auxiliary verb alone agrees the subject in terms of person.

But here, since (ک) has not been omitted from the auxiliary verb, we can see that the main verb has been agreed to the masculine, feminine, singular and plural genders, and the auxiliary verb, like the previous verbs, is in agreement with the person.

In the past tense, without the continuous past tense, the second part of the compound verb, ie the auxiliary verb, is in the form of (شول).

Present Continuous		Simple Past	
The newspaper was being published	ورځپانه خپرېده – کېدله	The newspaper was published	ورځپانه خپره شوه
Newspapers were being published ورځپانې خپرېدي خپري کېدلې		Newspapers were published ورځپانې خپري شوي	
The book was being published کتاب خپرېده – خپور کېده		The book was published کتاب خپور شو	
Books are being published کتابونه خپرېدل –خپاره کېدل		Books were published کتابونه خپاره شول	

2- Verbs derived from the auxiliary verb (کیدل):

The group of compound passive verbs that are formed from a root and a complete auxiliary (کیدل) verb, and for the past tense, the auxiliary verb (شول)Let's see what characteristics this group of verbs have.

We are fastened.	ترل کیږو	I am fastened.	ترل کیږم
We were fastened.	وترل شوو	I was fastened.	وترله شوم

The following a table showing different passive pattern in different tenses.

Simple Past	Ali wrote a letter علي لیک ولیکو	A letter was لیک لیکل کیدو written
Past Continuous	Ali was writing a letter عالي لیک لیکلو	A letter was being لیک لیکل کیده written
Past Perfect	Ali had written a علي لیک لیکلی وو letter	A letter had been و لیک لیکل شوی written
Present Perfect	Ali has written a علی لیک لیکه letter	A letter has been لیک یې لیکه written
Past Continuous	Ali was writing a letter. علي لیک لیکه	A letter was being written.لیک لیکل کیدو

Past Subjunctive	هیله لرم علي لیک لیکلی وي I hope Ali has written a letter.	هیله لرم لیک لیکل شوی وي I hope a letter has been written.
Present Indicative	علي لیک لیکه Ali has written a letter	لیک لیکل کیدلو. A letter has been written.
Present Subjunctive	هیله لرم علي لیک ولیکي I hope Ali shall write the letter.	هیله لرم لیک ولیکل شي I hope the letter shall be written.
Present Continuous	علي لیک لیکي. Ali is writing a letter	لیک لیکل کیږي A letter is being written
Future	علي به لیک ولیکي. Ali will write a letter	لیک به ولیکل شي A letter will be written

5. Conclusion

In this study, we compared passive structures in Pashto and Farsi using data from grammar books and library sources. Our findings offer insight on the unique properties of passive formulations in both languages, as well as the steps involved in transforming active sentences to passive voice. In Persian, passive voice is derived from the past active participle and the auxiliary word "شدن" (šodan), with the agent rarely reintroduced in its "true" passive structure. This peculiar aspect of Persian grammar, indicated by the phrases "MALOOM" (known) and "MAJHOOL" (unknown), precludes the agent from being reintroduced in the "true" passive voice. To switch from active sentences to passive voice in Persian, remove the subject, replace it with the object, remove the object identifier "ra," and change the verb to "shodan" (be/become).

Likewise, in Pashto, passive verbs are formed from compound verbs, with an agreement pattern between the main verb and auxiliary verb. Passive verbs in Pashto can be formed in two ways: without the "ک" from the auxiliary verb and with the auxiliary verb "کیدل." The study includes instances and patterns of passive constructions in various tenses in both Pashto and Farsi, demonstrating the differences and complexities of passive structures in each language.

Ultimately, this study contributes to a better knowledge of passive constructions in Pashto and Farsi, highlighting their unique characteristics and processes. Further research might look into more linguistic elements and compare passive structures across a broader range of languages to improve our grasp of language typology and cross-linguistic variability.

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