

Spatial, Temporal and Structural Usages of Pashto Case Marker ‘Ta’

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Abstract

Pashto is an Indo-Iranian language which expresses different semantic aspects and functions with the help of case markers. The post-position & case marker *Ta* has the quality to posit many types of usages i.e. temporal, spatial and structural in Pashto language. In the research on Pashto syntax, Khan (2009), Roberts (2000) and Tegey and Robson (1996) have described the phenomenon of case marker ‘*Ta*’ but have not been investigated extensively. This study follows Ahmed (2006) to analyze in detail different functions and usages of *Ta* in terms of semantic and syntactic principles and provides a unified account for these diverse usages and their meanings. The analyses confirm that *Ta* as a case marker is not only used for Dative case as a subject but it has a polysemous nature in terms of spatial and non-spatial (structural, temporal) usages. The non-spatial usages are the extension of its spatial origin in the semantic field that is metaphorically spatial by default. Besides temporal and structural *Ta* usages can be extended to *purpose, reason, obligations, immediate future, perception, ability and inability* in relations to DAT (as a SUBJ or OBJ) in Pashto language.

Keywords: Spatial, Temporal, Structural, Pashto Dative case marker, Ta, Post-position

1. Introduction

Pashto as an Indo-Iranian language is mostly spoken by 25 million speakers as a national and first language in the south, southwest and east Afghanistan, regional language in the north west of Pakistan called Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and most of the central Asia, Europe and America by the migrants as their first language (Hamid & Bukhari, 2017; O’Leary, Rensch, & Hallberg, 1992; Penzl, 1961; Roberts, 2000; Skalmowski, 1996). Pashto is written in Arabic script (Aslamzai & Saad, 2015; Zuhra & Khan, 2009). Many studies (Khan, 2009; Penzl, 1954, 1961; Tegey & Robson, 1996) have been conducted to study Pashto language in different perspectives. One area of increasing attention, is to study ad-positions (pre-position, post-position and ambi-position) in Pashto language in detail. This paper focuses on the only one post-position “Ta” with different spatial, temporal and structural usages in Pashto language.

Table 1. Case markers in South Asian languages

Cases	Pashto	Urdu
Nominative	Ø	Ø
Ergative	Ø	Ne
Accusative	Ø	Ko
Dative	\ta\ - or \la\	Ko
Instrumental	Sara/puh +N+ bandi	Se
Genitive	Da/sara/na	Ki
Locative	Pe/pe.ke/de...para etc	Me/par/tak

The paper is organized as follows, Section (2) provides relevant literature, section (3) describes method and material. Section (4) outlines different usages of “Ta” as a case marker at SUBJ and OBJ positions, section (5) deals with its analyses and their meaning, while section (6) provides conclusion, section (7) consists of acknowledgement and section (8) provides relevant references.

2. Literature Review

Khan (2009, pp. 55–56) has investigated Pashto prepositions and post positions in terms of spatial usages. According to Khan (2009) ‘*ta*’ and ‘*la*’ as case markers can be used allative and benefactive in Pashto language. As his study focuses on spatial expressions in South Asian language, so, he has not paid full attention to study ‘*ta*’ as a case marker in detail. Tegey and Robson (1996, p. 154) have discussed Pashto grammar in which they have tried to describe most of the grammatical aspects of Pashto language but they have not examined this case marker in minutiae.

Similarly, Khattak (1988) has studied Pashto verbs with inflections that pinpoint tense, case, voice, mood and aspect. He further adds that position of subjects and objects of verbs also require inflections for person, number and genders. According to Khattak (1988) morphologically, Pashto has only two tenses: past and present but he has rarely identified and discussed the role of case maker ‘*ta*’ extensively. Penzl (1954) and Babrakzai (1999) also support that agreement in Pashto language is based on inflections that records a nominal’s inherent features usually person and numbers. Likewise, David (2013) has also provided certain details about preposition and post-positions in Pashto but has not rigorously investigated the phenomenon of post-position ‘*ta*’ in detail. MacKenzie (2003) has also described Pashto language traditionally. He has mentioned that in Pashto, case relationships are expressed by pre and post position or combination of both but failed to provide a clear picture of post-positioned “*Ta*” in his work on Pashto. Masood and Rahman (2013) are the other researchers who have provided data on structural case assignment in Pashto according to Minimalist perspective. Masood (2014) and Masood and Rahman (2015, p. 105) have concluded that “ ϕ -features agreement between the functional head T and a nominal results in assigning nominative Case to that nominal while ϕ -features agreement between the functional head small *v* or Voice (depending on tense) and a nominal results in assigning accusative Case to that nominal”. The study of Masood (2014) and Masood and Rahman (2015) were not able to discuss this phenomenon of case marker “*Ta*” semantically and syntactically in a unified manner. Similarly, Rahman and Bukhari (2014) have worked on Pashto case system and provided a good review on Pashto case allocation. They were unable to describe this case marker solely in their study.

The previous studies have not directly addressed ‘*ta*’ case marker in Pashto language in detail that is why this study aims to investigate this polysemous phenomenon in a unified way.

3. Method and Material

The researchers have used descriptive method to explain and analyze Pashto language structures. The material used in this study is based on Pashto grammar books, written in Pashto, Urdu and English languages. The researchers have selected the past research (traditional or modern) as a source for the selection of sentences for the purpose of analysis. After selection of sentences, they were checked by two native speakers for grammaticality and semantic acceptability. Furthermore, the researcher is also a native speakers of Pashto language and has spent his life in Pashto language community. Therefore, he has utilized his own knowledge of Pashto language in this research.

4. Uses of Case Marker ‘*Ta*’

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1) Ma | bilal-ta (Note 2) chegha | owahalla. | (Dative Object) |
| I. Sg. NOM | bilal. Sg-DAT | cry do (PRS-PRF) | |
| I cried to Bilal. | | | |
| 2) Ali | Imad-ta milavida-la | laro. | (Dative Object) |
| Ali.Sg.NOM. | imad.SG.NOM | meet go (PST) | (Purpose) |
| Ali went to meet imad. | | | |
| 3) Hagha-Ta | aram wargy. | | (Dative Subject) |
| He=SG-DAT | rest | came (PST) | (Experiencer) |
| He is relieved. | | | |
| 4) Maa | ahmad-ta | kitab workro, | (Dative Object,) |
| I=SG.M | ahmad=SG,M-DAT | book give (PST) | (Recipient/Goal) |
| I give a book to ahmad. | | | |
| 5) Ahmad-ta | kitab | milao shoo. | (Dative Subject) |
| Ahmnad=SG.M-DAT | book | recieve be (PST) | (Recipient/Goal) |

- Ahmad receive the book.
- 6) Ahmad-ta cancer dey. (Dative Subject)
 Ahmad=M.Sg-DAT cancer have/suffer (PRT IMP) (Experiencer)
 Ahmad is suffering from cancer.
- 7) Ali jumath-ta laro. (Spatial Adverb)
 Ali=Sg. M mosque-DAT go (PST)
 Ali went to mosque.
- 8) Ahmad makham-ta raghaly wo (Temporal)
 Ahmad evening- DAT. Come (PST) (Point in time)
 Ahmad came at evening.
- 9) Cha-ta obe pekar de. (Dative with question)
 Who.PI-DAT. water need be) (PRST)
 Who do need water?
- 10) Ali ahmad-ta jerra rawostha. (Dative Object)
 Ali.Sg.NOM ahmad.SG.DAT weep make (PRS.PRF) (Causee)
 Ali makes ahmad to weep.
- 11) Ali karachi-ta laro. (Dative object)
 Ali.SG.NOM. karachi.To. All. go PRST.PRF (Goal)
 Ali went to krachi

5. Analysis of Usages of *Ta*

The previous section has provided multiple usages of “*ta*” as a case marker in Pashto language. Most of these usages are different but related in terms of its locative and recipient roles as primary in nature, other allocations are based on semantic extension with temporal and eventual properties of ‘*ta*’.

5.1 Spatial Usages

‘*Ta*’ as a case marker is used as locative adjunct to pinpoint the semantic movement of an agent ‘*towards the point or goal*’ or ‘*at end point of an action*’.

- 12) Ahmad kor ta orasedo.
 Ahmsad.M. Sg . Home SG DAT reach. Pst.Perf
 Ahmad has reached to home.
- 13) Shahid Islamabad-ta laro.
 Shahid.M.Sg.NOM. Islamabad.M.Sg-DAT go.Pst-Perf
 Shahid has gone to Islamabad.
- 14) Moter showroom-ta ra-worasedo.
 Car.M.Sg. showroom.M.Sg-DAT arrive. Pst.
 The car arrived at home.

In (12)–(14) *ta* is used in the sense of end point. Other usages of this case marker can be extension in terms of the spatial meanings of *ta*.

5.2 Temporal Aspect of ‘*ta*’

The case marker ‘*ta*’ is also used for ‘*a point in time*’ just like ‘*ko*’ in Urdu language (Ahmed, 2006). It can be referred to specify a part of time or portion of time at day, night, months and years. These temporal usages are shown in (15)–(17).

- 15) Ali ba makham-ta razi.
 Ali.M.Sg. fut. Evening.N.Sg-DAT come. Fut.
 Ali will come at evening.

16) Hagh ba jummy-ta duai raweri.
 He.M.Sg fut Friday.N.Sg-DAT medicine.N.SG bring. Fut.
 He will bring medicine on Friday.

17) Tha saba-ta pukhtona okra
 You.M.Sg tomorrow.F.SG-DAT ask be Fut.
 You ask tomorrow.

In all the above usages (15)–(17), the semantic features of ‘**ta**’ are ‘*point in temporal semantic field*’ instead of an end point in spatial field. These above temporal aspects can be represented with another post-position “**la**” (18) and (19) can provide a clarity to this replacement.

18) Hagma ba jummy-la duai raweri.
 He.M.Sg Fut FridayN.SG-DAT medicine.N.Sg bring.Fut.-
 He will bring medicine on Friday.

19) Thə saba-la pukhtona okera.
 You.M.Sg. tomorrow.N.Sg-DAT ask be.Fut.
 You ask tomorrow.

5.3 Causal Domain of ‘**ta**’ and Its Extension to Other Semantic Aspects

Use of ‘**ta**’ inside the argument structure of a verb allow this case marker to extend end point semantics to the causal domain. It is used as a recipient that receive something either physical or abstract.

5.4 Dative Object

“**Ta**” marks the indirect object of the ditransitive verbs where the object plays the role of the recipient as a participant in the argument structure of the clause in Pashto language. (19) and (20) explore this semantic aspect of second argument in the clauses.

20) Asad ahmad-ta kitab workero.
 Asad.M.Sg. ahmad.M.Sg-DAT book.N.Sg give.Pst.
 Asad gave book to ahmad.

21) Ali asad-ta khat wolekelo.
 Ali.M.Sg. asad.M.Sg-DAT letter Sg. Write. Pst.
 Ali wrote a letter to asad.

In (20) the book is received by Ahmad who is the indirect object in the sentence. While in (21) Asad is the recipient of the letter who is also the goal of the letter. In (20) and (21) ‘**ta**’ confirms the role of the recipient and goal respectively. According to Ahmed (2006, p. 6) and Grimm (2005), ‘recipients are sentient who undertake a quality change, relative to the state of affairs before at the onset of an event i.e., a direct action’. Ahmad (2009) further explains that ‘recipient is a location which is the goal or destination of the object’.

Besides the recipient role of indirect object, dative subjects in Pashto also adhere to the role of recipient in terms of both physical and abstract levels. In (22) and (23) the dative subjects confirm the role of recipient.

22) Ahmad-ta kitab milao sho.
 Ahmad.M.SG-DAT book.N.Sg. receive/get.PST.
 Ahmad got/received the book.

23) Asad-ta saza warkery shwa.
 Asad.M.Sg-DAT punishment give be.Pst
 Asad received the punishment.

In (22) and (23) the verbs *malao* (get/receive) and *warkery* (give) in Pashto language require a sentient recipient. According to Butt, Grimm, and Ahmed (2006) and Mohanan (1994, pp. 141–150) the sentient recipients are used as dative subjects because they fulfill the requirements of subject-hood of sentient as human argument in the clause. Verma and Mohanan (1990) support that dative subjects are found cross-linguistically and are a standard part of South Asian languages in terms of receiver role.

5.5 *Psyche Verbs and Dative Subjects*

In above (20)–(23) the dative subjects performed the role of a recipient but this phenomenon can be extended to human mental domain in terms of psyche verbs. These verbs show the dative subjects (the sentient agents) as an experiencer of an action in the structure. These sorts of constructions involve semantic properties of experiencer (mental state) and unintentional actions by the subjects.

5.5.1 Experiencer

One of the well-known qualities of psyche verbs are generally the shifting of recipient role into an experiencer in dative constructions because the object that was receiving something (goal) is now allocated to the subject and is psychologically affected by some event of the action. Examples (24)–(26) are explain this concept.

- 24) Ahmad-ta cancer dey.
 Ahmad-DAT cancer be (PST-IMF)
 Ahmad suffers from cancer.
- 25) Asad-ta aqal raghy.
 Asad-DAT wisdom come (PST-PRF)
 Asad has become wise.
- 26) Ali-ta khabera oraseda.
 Ali-DAT matte/problem reached/listened. (PST)
 Ali listened the matter/Lit: Ali listened about the problem.

According to Landau (2005, p. 9) and Ahmed (2006) experiencers are mental location and psyche predicates project human minds as the location of these experiences and are considered as GOALS. There are two types of experiencer i.e., *Self-experiencer* and *Caused experiencer*.

5.5.2 Self-Experiencer

According to Khattak (1988, p. 146) the self-experiencer undergoes an experience on his own with reference to some objects. No other agent is required to enforced the subject to experience the action as in (27 & 28) respectively .

- 27) Ma-ta larr maloma-shwa,
 I-DAT way/track know be (PST-IMPF)
 I got the way. (Lit: I get the knowledge of journey)
- 28) Badsha-ta xapla wada rwyada shwa.
 The king-DAT his promise remember be (PST-PRF)
 The king has remembered his own promise.

5.5.3 Caused-Experiencer

In this regard the experiencer needs a causee to let him experience something. This experience may be enforced or volitional in terms of the subject as an experiencer. (29) and (30) provide clarification of this phenomenon.

- 29) Ma-ta ahmad larr okhidulo.
 I -DAT Ahamd (causee) track show/lead (PST-PRF)
 Ahamd had shown me the way/ahmad had lead me to the way.
- 30) Badsha-ta ma xpela wadha reyada kara.
 King-DAT I (causee) his promise rememeberd. (Khattak, 1988)
 I remembered/reminded the king his promise.

The above examples (29) and (30) indicate that the Dative subjects could have the role of self-experiencer or they can be caused by another causee to experience certain abstract concepts as in (28) and (29). Saksena (1980) calls the causee-expreincner as the affected agents. According to Saksena (1980) and Ahmed (2006), affected agents are subjects of intransitive and ingestive verbs.

- 31) Asad-ta loga olageda.
 Asad-DAT Hunger feel (PST)

Asad felt hungry/the hunger.

- 32) Asad-ta de-salan-boea-na loga olegeda.
Asad-DAT loc dish aroma=loc hunger feel. (PST)

Asad felt hunger due to the scent of the dish.

The subjects in (30) and (31) are affected by the action/state (hunger) and they are considered as the recipient of the action. The affected agents are marked with “ta” case marker in (28)–(31). All these subjects are caused by someone or something in the action. According to Ahmed (2006), the syntax of these causative structure is similar to ditransitive verbs as an indirect object. In the above examples (30) and (31) “ta” refers to the receiving of the hunger of subject (Asad).

5.6 Extension of “ta” to Event Argument

5.6.1 Purpose/Reason

Like Urdu “ko” (Ahmed, 2006; Rizvi, Butt, & King, 2008), in Pashto language the Dative case marker “ta” is used with clausal adjunct to express the purpose and reason of the action. Examples (33) and (34) explore the same phenomenon of purpose and reason.

- 33) Halakan lobe/sair-ta lalal.
Boys match/walk-DAT go (PST)

Boys went for the match/walk.

- 34) Pallar wadhe/dua=la/ta (Note 3) laro.
Father marriage/ pray-DAT go (PST)

Father went for a marriage/pray (on death of someone).

The usages of “ta” in (33–34) are similar in nature with spatial usages, though it is abstract and metaphorically referring to travelling towards an event instead of location which is specific end point event having a specific purpose.

5.6.2 Immediate Future

Most interesting fact of “ta” is to refer to the immediate future of the action that will be accomplished by the subject. In this way “ta” elucidates the beginning of an event in near future. (35) and (36) refer to the action of the subject *Maryam* that will be completed in immediate future.

- 35) Maryam de korr jarroo kolo-ta zea
Maryam (gen) home sweeping-DAT go (pres)

Maryam is going to sweep/clean the home.

- 36) Maryam rotie pakkholo-la/ta zea.
Maryam bread making-DAT go (pres)

Maryam is going to make the dough/bread

According to Ahmad (2006), this immediate future usage is based on the semantics feature of end point. The subject in these constructions is very near to the event at abstract level. Semantically, “ta” has the meaning of very near, or almost there, so it refers to the immediate future.

5.6.3 Obligation

The Dative case marker “ta” usages can be extended to the constructions that manifest certain types of obligation and needs. These constructions require modal auxiliary “pekar-de” to be used at the end of the sentence with a Dative Subject Construction.

- 37) Aslam-ta de-mesharano adab kwal pekar-dey.
Aslam-DAT gen elders respect do want (perc)

Aslam needs to respect theelders.

- 38) Ahmad-ta xpal karr kawl pekar-dey.
Ahmad-DAT his work do want (perc)

Ahmad needs to do his work.

- 39) Insan-ta pe har karr-ke soch kawl pekar-dey.
 Human-DAT gen every work-in think do want (perc)
 Human need to think in every work.

Just like ‘*cahiye*’ in Urdu (Ahmed, 2006), *pekar-dey* (needs/want to), in Pashto, is a *percative* form of verb. *pekar* which means ‘want’ and these verbs are bound to use in imperative constructions with nominative subjects whereas, in Pashto it is used with Dative subjects that refers to the needs or obligation on behalf of the subject as in sentences (37)–(39).

This *pekar-dey* (needs/want to) factor above can also be seen in terms of different requirements having necessity on event for the subject.

- 40) Mashom-ta loga lagedally da.
 Child -DAT hunger feel be (PRS)
 The child is hungry/the child feels hunger.

- 41) Ma-ta de-sehath yabi dua okerae.
 I -DAT (gen) healthy pray do (pres)
 I need prayer for my health.

In (40) and (41) the requirement of food (for hunger) and pray (for health) is necessary for the subject respectively. So, we can say that DAT case marker “ta” can be used for necessity as well.

5.6.4 Perceptions, Liking and Disliking

The case marker “ta” can be extended in its usages to the *perception*, *liking* and *disliking* of the subjects towards an object.

- 42) Ma-ta jerra/khenda razzi
 I-DAT weep/smile come (pres)
 I feel like weeping/smiling.

- 43) hagma-ta da gady khe lagi.
 He-DAT Dem-car good be (pres)
 He likes this car.

- 44) Ahmad-ta torr rang maza ne warkawi.
 Ahmad-DAT black color like neg feel.
 Ahmad does not like black color.

In example (42) the subject perceives to weep or smile while in (43) and (44) the dative subjects like the car and dislike the black color respectively. So, these sentences also confirm that “ta” can be used for perception, liking and disliking as well.

5.6.5 Ability and Potentiality

“**Ta**” as a case marker can be used with subjects to show the ability, inability and potentialities of the subject in doing or performing some acts.

- 45) Ma-ta/la khaberi razi.
 I-DAT talk know’PRS.
 I have the ability to talk./I can talk.

- 46) Haghe-la/ta topak chalol warzi.
 He-DAT gun use be. PRS
 I can use the gun/I can use a gun

- 47) Tha-ta jewabona yad de.
 You-DAT answers remember be. PRS
 You remember the answers.

- 48) Haghe-ta English ne-warzi.
He-DAT English neg—know. PRS
He does not know English/ he is unable to speak English.
- 49) Ahmad-ta mauzz ne warzi.
Ahmad-DAT prayer neg do. PRS
Ahmad cannot offer the prayer/Ahmad does not know the prayer.

Example (45) and (46) assume the ability of the subject that he has the skill to talk or use the gun, similarly (47) confirms the ability of the subject to know the answers of all the question while in (48) and (49) both the subjects are incapable to speak/know English and prayer respectively which shows the inability of the doer. All these subjects are DAT-SUBJ in nature so we can say that “ta’ case marker can be extended to these semantic aspects as well.

5.6.6 Possession and Relation

“*Ta*” as a case marker for dative case is sometimes used to express relation or possession of person instead of genitive case.

- 50) Haga thukhfa tche wa plarr ma-ta rawastelli. (Saiful-ul-Muluk cited in raverty: 196)
That curiosity/gift which father -me-DAT sent (PST)
That curiosity/gift which the father had sent for me

6. Conclusion

This study has examined diverse usages of Pashto language dative case marker and post-position “*ta*” and confirms that this post-position is not restricted to the core locative spatial use only but it can be extended to other non-spatial usages like spatial, temporal, eventual, obligation, perception, ability, inability, liking, disliking and perceptions as well. These non-spatial usages are metaphorically spatial by default in nature. Furthermore, DAT SUBJ usage is also stretched to the mental states where the sentient agent receives an experience and these experiences are mental locations. The research also approves that all these diverse non-spatial usages are based on end point results in space and time.

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Notes

Note 1. Dative case is focus of this study.-

Note 2. **La** and **ta** as dative case markers can be replaced for each other. This study is based on Yousufzai dialect of Pashto so preference is given to ‘ta’ only.

Appendix A

Different types of abbreviations that are used in this research.

NOM	Normative case
SUBJ	Subject
OBJ	Object
SG	Singular
PL	Plural
DAT	Dative case
ALL	Allative case
ERG	Ergative case
PRS	Present tense
PRS.PRF	Present Perfect
PST.	Past tense
PST.PRF	Past Perfect

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