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Male and Female Naming Nexus: A Morphosemantic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Urdu is an Indo-Aryan language and there are a few works in the language on the nexus between male and female naming patterns with reference to their morphosemantic analysis. With the affixation of a single vocabulary item, a male name is changed into a female name. Sometimes, a female name is derived from a male name with null affixation. The present research is a theoretical study that highlights and interprets morphosemantic features of female names derived from male names. The data for the analysis have been taken from the dictionaries of Urdu and Arabic, text books, grammar books, and brochures. The researcher has applied Distributed Morphology (DM) that deals with syntactic, morphological and semantic levels of a word simultaneously. It was first postulated in the early 1990s at MIT by Halle (1990), Marantz (1993, 1994), Harley and Noyer (1999). It was Marantz (1984) who first proposed the idea of replacing syntactic structure with morphological structure. The theory of DM can be applied to the local languages of Pakistan to decipher their morphosemantic richness.

KEYWORDS Distributed, Female, Male, Morphology, Morphosyntax, Urdu

Introduction

A linguistic Langendonck (2007) devoted much of his attention to the etymologies, i.e. the origin of names, while their morphosemantic domains were given the least attention. Names have their distinctive internal structures which vary between language systems. Diachronically within the same language, name creation patterns evolve and change, just as the language itself and the surrounding society to which they are closely linked. Lipka (2000) dedicates an article to the neglected field of names and their formations. He points out that names are highly productive regarding their metonymic and metaphoric process, and also in a variety of morphological structures.

Anderson (2007), Schramm (2013) and Debus (2012) illustrate that Indo-European names offer examples of anthroponyms whose structures seem to share common structural principles and are generally classified into bipartite and monothematic names, depending on the number of elements they are composed of. According to Anderson (2007), the total of names in a language is called onomasticon. The onomasticon offers a 'pool of names' from which language users can choose names as per their needs and choices. The different lexemes in the lexicon can be classified into lexical categories such as nouns or verbs, determiners or pronouns, and so forth. As a whole, we find that Indo-Aryan names have been the center of interest for researchers but mostly from sociological perspectives. We find rare works on morphological as well as semantic dimensions of personal names. The personal names undergo various

derivational and inflectional processes to offer morphological patterns that need to be scrutinized, categorized, and investigated properly. The present research aims at filling such gaps through the morphological as well as semantic analysis of Urdu male/ female names.

Literature Review

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The study of proper names, regarding their semantic issues, has been a serious concern of philosophers and linguists. In this regard, Willems (2000) refers to the discussion between Kripke (1980) and Coseriu (1987). Kripke (1980) belongs to the philosophical school of thought and argues that there is a 'form' of a proper name. 'Form' is an idea and is *a priori* in nature. It is fixed and has no further specifications. There exists a link between form and reference like signified and signifier. A person with the name 'A' has a fixed form of value and information that are transferred synchronically and diachronically. This is what Kripke (1980) calls a 'causal chain'.

On the contrary, Coseriu (1987) argues that 'linguistic form' pertains to language. If the names are lexical items and have linguistic forms, they have meanings too, which can be generalized. He believes that a proper name is a lexical unit with linguistic and scientific meaning but of one type. A proper name can't have more than one meaning at the same time.

The philosophical and scholarly discussion of Kripke (1980) and Coseriu (1987) deals with names epistemologically and ontologically. In other words, Coseriu (1987) tries to explain the relationship between name and meaning. These two approaches are like those of structuralists and lexicalists. It is only DM that can help to evaluate names and their meanings distributively. Even the issues of allomorphy and allosemy which remained unresolved with Kripke (1980) and Coseriu (1987) can find a thorough discussion through DM.

Theoretical Framework

There are two approaches for morphological analysis i.e. structural approach (postulated by Saussure) and the generative approach (postulated by Chomsky). The present research is the study of Urdu female names based on DM, which has its roots in the principles of generative grammar. Distributed Morphology is a theory of syntax

which was first postulated in the early 1990s at MIT by Halle (1990), Marantz (1993, 1994) and Harley and Noyer (1999). It is Marantz (1984) who proposes the idea of replacing the syntactic structure with a morphological structure. In other words, he claims that DM deals with the morphological analysis of the pattern of syntax. Furthermore, DM ignores the distinction between derivational and inflectional processes.

Siddiqi (2009) gives the idea of syntax within a word and reduces the syntactic operations to the word level. In other words, he tries to prove that the same machinery which operates syntactic structures can also operate morphological structures. Anyhow, it is Harley (2010) who gives the idea of applying DM to the morphosemantic analysis of words. The present research undertakes the morphosemantic analysis of Urdu male/female names through the application DM.

DM and its Core Features

The core idea of the DM is that there is no difference between the construction of a word and that of a sentence. There is the same generative engine that is called syntax which establishes sound-meaning correspondence in complex phrases and complex words. Following are the three operations;

a. **Late Insertion** is the basic feature of DM which differentiates DM from the Lexicalist approach and informs that the words are not already fully formed and loaded with meanings; they are rather abstract entities which are manipulated by syntax and in the case of a word by morphosyntactic features such as 'Noun/Verb', 'Singular/Plural', 'Masculine/Feminine' and 'Present/Past' are assigned from the fixed list of abstract feature bundles. These feature bundles are available as Formative List A. These features are assigned through LVI and FVI from of some particular language. The lexicon does not play any role here. About 'late Insertion' hypothesis, Halle and Marantz (1994) state that the phonological features are allotted after the syntactic operations are over or after the Spell-Out stage. The PF is prescribed to the word late as it is not present prior to Spell-Out.

b. **Underspecification** contrasts with the idea of full specification in lexical approaches where the lexical entries are fully specified and carry all the necessary features of some lexical item. On the other hand, in DM, the many available vocabulary items compete for insertion at the terminal node of abstract morpheme, and the most highly specified vocabulary item, whose identifying features are the sub-set of the features of the terminal node, wins the competition for insertion. Such a principle is called a Sub-set Principle, where the abstract morpheme and some particular vocabulary item merge. The feature is dissociated under the specific situation, and the terminal node is called a dissociated node.

c. Hierarchical Structure All the Way Down highlights that elements of some words are diagrammed through binary branching trees or phrase structure patterns. In other words, in the DM, the pieces both in syntax proper and in morphology are taken as discrete units which cannot be treated as in the morphophonological process. There is, hence, a hierarchical structure all the way down till we get the basic constituents. These basic constituents are the root forms in the sense that they show the morphemes and the vocabulary items in separate forms.

Three Lists in DM

List A: Formative List: Abstract Morphemes (Roots and Functional head morphemes)

Halle (1990) divides morphemes into two kinds: 'concrete' morphemes and 'abstract' morphemes. Later on, Harley and Noyer (1999) suggests alternative types as 'f-morphemes' and 'l-morphemes'. These types correspond to the conventional division between 'functional' and 'lexical' categories or closed-class and open-class categories. This also shows that the traditional division of 'free' and 'bound' are not recognized in DM. In a nutshell, morphemes in DM are divided into two categories: functional head morphemes shown with the symbol (< >) and root morphemes shown with the symbol (√). The functional head morphemes are the functional feature bundles that give syntactic realization to the roots. Both morphemes are abstract generative morphemes. Furthermore, VIs are not generative; they are expandable.

Noun, Gender and Number are the functional head morphemes that can be realized in Urdu names as Noun (common, proper, abstract), Gender (masculine, feminine) and Number (singular, plural). The f-features are closed set categories, and their insertion into the abstract nodes is called FVI (Functional Vocabulary Insertion). The roots are open set categories, and their insertion into abstract nodes is called LVI (lexical Vocabulary Insertion). Through the insertions, the abstract morphemes become concrete ones. There is a 'Universal Features Inventory' (UFI) which helps to select and bundle together the particular features of some language for its communication. Such features are called 'active features' of that language, while the abandoned features are called 'non-active features'.

Moreover, both 'roots' and 'f-morphemes' must undergo the 'late insertion' principle. Root '√' morphemes always refer to the domain of the extra grammatical information with a-categorical features, while functional category morphemes '< >' contribute grammatical information to roots. Both render syntactic-semantic features as a whole. It is important to note that square and capitalized [√TAHIR] in Distributed Morphology indicates abstract and a-categorical root, linked to a particular concept, while roots in lower case [√Tahir] indicate concrete root in a particular language. It is also important to note that the elements of List A have no phonological content.

Figure 1: Example of [√Tahir]

Abstract Morphemes/a-categorial		**Morphemes Concretized/ categories allotted**		
L-morpheme	**F-morpheme**	**LVIs**	**FVIs**	**Impoverishment**
√TAHIR	<N°, Gen, Num>	√Tahir	<Npro, mas, sing>	<Ncom, fem, Pl>

Then, the process of formation comes to a point where it needs to be explained by the phonological and semantic dimensions. At such a stage, the derived forms are called PF and LF. At/after Spell-Out (Siddiqui 2009) the derivation process bifurcates into two. Towards the phonological interpretations, the structure undergoes some morphological operations, before the optimal PF form is realized. Similarly, towards the semantic representation, some specific operations apply to reach a Logical Form (LF).

List B: Exponential List, List of Phonological Exponents, Vocabulary Items (VIs)

The elements of the List B are termed 'Vocabulary Items' (VIs). The phonological form to the root is given through Late Insertion operation. For the PF realizations of the roots, there are vocabulary items or phonological components that specify phonological realizations through particular features. The suitable or the best-fit vocabulary items are inserted under the sub-set principle and the irrelevant ones are deleted through the principle of impoverishment. For example, there is an Urdu name as a terminal node

specified for [N°+fem+Sing] (where N° indicates a Nominal head), and there are the three hypothetical VIs with different feature specifications as:

Figure 2: Vocabulary Insetion

Terminal node	**Vocabulary items <a, o, u>**
√Tahir Sub-Set Principle, UHF [N°, mas, sing]	Tahir+a *Tahir+o *Tahir+u

The VIs /o/ and /u/ are not eligible to realize the terminal node because they refer to the clashing features with the terminal node. Only /i/ is eligible for insertion, as its features are a subset of the terminal node to make it an eponym. This best-fit competition for insertion thus obeys the sub-set principle. If 'Tahira' is the best-fit eponym, this one is selected under the Universal Hierarchy Feature Inventory, which is always language-specific (Noyer,1998b). In the case of syntax proper, the other segments of the sentence determine whether it is a simple plural or the oblique one but in the case of a single word, Sub-Set Principle and UHF control and determine the derivation process. We see that /z/ is also a plural marker as in Kitabz 'books', but it is not compatible with *'Kitabz', for its features are incompatible with Urdu pluralization; it is rather an English plural marker. Hence it does not come under the umbrella of UHF of the Urdu language.

List C: Encyclopedia

Encyclopedia guides how the words are used with their conceptual and intentional interfaces. Towards the semantic interpretations, the LFs interface with the internal world of meanings which is Encyclopedia or List C. Through such an interface the meanings of the derived expressions are accessed. It is important to note that all the derived forms are idiomatic expressions in one sense or the other. They have their denotative as well as connotative meanings. At this stage, the expressions may be called lexes or lexical items which are loaded with meanings. They express their meanings in their syntactic and social contexts. So, there is a syntactic-semantic context in which they now appear. Both idiomatic and conventional interpretations of roots find their interpretations in this third list of idiosyncratic information, i.e. Encyclopedia or List C. According to Morita (2016), the compositional meanings stem from syntactic features and are distributed to Pure Lexicon. Lexical meanings, which are the senses of roots and affixes, are allocated to Vocabulary. And finally, idiosyncratic meanings, which are the senses of complex words, unpredictable from the senses of internal elements, are stored in Encyclopedia. Only regular and compositional meaning is thus handled in the universal syntactic computation to LF.

Following three patterns have been categorized and analyzed in this research paper.

Pattern:1 Insertion of VI <a/>

DM is a branch of generative grammar and claims that only the root forms process in the computational system of man and the complex forms are generated through syntactic and morphological operations. Many of the female names are derived from male names after the syntactical and morphological operations. They refer to the

male proper names from where they are derived. They are very particular to Indo-Aryan languages. Female names are derived from male names with the insertion of <a> as;

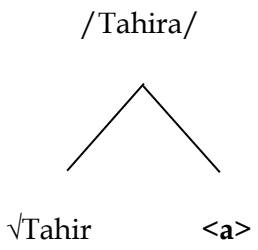
Figure 3: insertion of Vocabulary Item <a>

Masculine Names	VI	Feminine Names
Tahir	<a>	Tahir**a**
Majid	<a>	Majid**a**
Saddiq	<a>	Saddiq**a**
Raheel	<a>	Raheel**a**
Abid	<a>	Abid**a**
Sajid	<a>	Sajid**a**

The names [Tahira, Majida, Saddiqa**,** Raheela, Abida, Sajida, etc.] are the derived names from [Tahir]. [Tahir, Majid**,** Saddiq**,** Raheel, Abid, Sajid] are the proper name. Here the VI **<a>** works as a feminine marker with all the eponyms. Though these female names seem very simple, yet they have the association with their roots which are the male names. In Urdu all the female names are not like these. Only some specific female names refer back to male names. For example, [Khadija] is in itself a root form and is not derived from any masculine name whereas [Tahira] is derived from Tahir.

The total semantic features of these names are perceived from the male names. The male names work as root forms. These root forms have their own morphosyntactic and semantic features. Morita (2016) argues that the compositional meanings of some eponym, which stem from the syntactic features, are stored in encyclopedia. Searle and Searle (1969) also believes that a proper name is "backed up" by encyclopedic information held by the speakers of referents. So the list C tells that these particular names have feminine concept, though derived from a masculine gender. For example, [Tahira] is derived from [Tahir]. Literally, [Tahira] means 'a chaste lady'. This name religiously refers to the *laqab/*epithet of Hazrat Khadija (RA); the wife of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW). Such patterns are very typical where the roots are masculine but the derivations are feminine.

Figure 4: Hierarchical structure all the way down



Pattern:2 Insertion of VI <aN̆>

Figure 5: Female Names with the insertion of /aN/

Masculine Names	VI	Feminine Names

Hameed	<aN>	Hameed**aN**
Basheer	<aN>	Basheer**aN**
Nazeer	<aN>	Nazeera**N**
Saddique	<aN>	Saddiq**aN**
Haleem	<aN>	Haleem**aN**
Majeed	<aN>	Majreed**aN**

Here the <aN̆> is nasal consonant (Nun-e-ghunna); speific to Urdu.

Only one example has been discussed below as all the examples have the same morphosyntactic patterns.

Figure 6: Application of DM

Syntactic Operations				**Morphological Operations**		**Semantic Operatio**	
Abstract Root	**Concrete Root**	**Active & Impoverished Features**	**List B VIs**	**Morpl Merger**	**PF**	**LF**	**List C**
√HAMEED <N°, Gen, Num>	√Hameed <NProp, mas, sing >	**Acti:**<NProp, mas, sing > **Impr:<**Ncom ,fem,pl>	<aN̆, oN̆,uN̆>	√Hameed **aN̆**	/Hameed**aN̆** /	Hameed**a N** <NProp, fem, sing >	The name referring to the feminine gender of Hameed

Analysis and Discussion of Pattern: (Example 1)

A. Syntactic Operations, (Pre Spell-Out Operations)

In the List A, [√HAMEED] is an l-morpheme and <N°, Gen, Num> are its f-morphemes. It is basically a-categorical root which means it has still no specific category. Similarly, <N°, Gen, Num> are also abstract in the sense that they have no particular categories; they are just the feature bundles from UFI of Urdu eponyms. The category of the root is specified through LVI where it becomes √Hameed as a concrete morpheme. Similarly, the f-morphemes are specified where <N°, Gen, Num> surface out as <NProp, mas, sing>. The root [√Hameed] provides non-grammatical information. It is through the feature bundles that the syntactic nature of the root is determined. The features that do not match with the root √Hameed such as <Ncom, fem, pl> are delinked or impoverished. Now the root morpheme √Hameed is a proper noun, masculine and singular but without any specific phonological realization. The phonological features are assigned after syntax, and even after the morphological operations. In other words, they are given through the principle of 'late Insertion'.

B. Morphological Operations, (Spell-Out Operations)

During the Spell-Out operations both root (as syntactic host) and f-morphemes or VIs undergo the 'late Insertion principle'. First of all, there is morphological merger

or insertion of VIs (from List B) into the terminal node √Hameed. The root morpheme √Hameed comes as choice (from the Formative List A) and without any competition but the VIs such as <a**Ň**, u**Ň**, o**Ň**> come into competition for insertion. The VIs are deterministic in nature as they attached to the abstract morpheme to determine its grammatical category. After the morphological merger, the morpheme [√Hameed] gets its PF. The terminal sound **<a Ň>** is a nasalized one.It is inserted as it has the sub-set features of the terminal node. In this way the morphemes are pieced together to make complex word forms. See the insertion of VIs under the specific environment:

Figure 7: Morphological operations

Terminal Node	**VIs in competition**	**Readjustment**	**PFs**
√Hameed	<a**Ň**>	No	/Hameed**aŇ**/
√Hameed	<u**Ň**>	Realignment	*/Hameed**uŇ**/
√Hameed	<o**Ň**.		*/Hameed**oŇ**/
<Nprop,mas, sing>			

Out of the three dissociated morphemes (a dissociated morphemes is the morpheme that is realized when a VI is inserted into the terminal node) that appear after the insertion it is /Hameed**aŇ**/ (as an optimal candidate) wins the competition as the vocabulary item **<aŇ>** has the features that are the most suitable for the terminal node. The other VIs such as **<uŇ>** and **<oŇ>** are Impoverished as they are unable to comply with the features of the terminal node. They are unmarked.

C. Semantic Operations

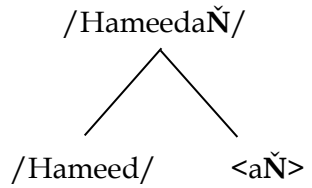
Towards the LF there is [Hameed**aN**] as the derived name from [Hameed]; a masculine proper name, and [HameedaN] is an eponym. The total semantic features of this eponym are not clear yet. It is the encyclopedia that helps to understand the referential meaning of the eponym. Morita (2016) argues that the compositional meanings of some eponym, which stem from the syntactic features, are stored in encyclopedia. Literally [Hameed**aN**] means a female servant of the Praiseworthy. [Hameed] is masculine one and is an attributive name of Allah (SWT). So this eponym has a religious alignment, culturally it is taken only as feminine noun. Such patterns are very typical where the roots are masculine but the derivations are feminine.

The whole mechanism can be seen through the 'Mirror Principle' as:

Hierarchical Structure all the way down

The whole process can be viewed through syntactic fashion (syntactic hierarchical structure all way down), as:

Figure 8:



As a whole, above given diagrams sketch the the application of DM rules for the formation of the eponym /Hameed**aN**/.

All the eponymic formations in the give patter have the similar morphosyntactic and morphosemantic features as:

i. All the roots are masculine in gender

ii. The roots take nazalised sound as **<aN̆>** at the terminal position

iii. The realized forms at the final stage become feminine genders

iv. The VI **<aN̆>** is a feminine marker in the sense that its insertion converts a masculine name into a feminine name.

Pattern:3 Insertion of Null <∅> morpheme: Gender neutrals

In Urdu there are also many names that are gender neutrals (as given below). They are used both for male and female genders but mostly an honorific [Bibi] is added with the female names as feminine indicator or marker.

Figure 9: Insertion of Null /∅/ morpheme

Masculine Names	**VI**	**Feminine Names**	**Addition of an honorific** [Bibi]
√REHMAT	<∅>	Rehmat + <∅>	Rehmat Bibi
√SALEEM		Saleem+ <∅>	Saleem Bibi
√KAREEM		Kareem+ <∅>	Kareem Bibi
√RAHEEM		Raheem+ <∅>	Raheem Bibi
√HAYAT		Hayat+ <∅>	Hayat Bibi

Findings and Conclusion

Female names are derived from male names through suffixes as **<-a>**, **<-aN>** and **<∅>** such as 'Umair**a**' and 'Basheer**aN**' and 'Kareem 'respectively. If compared with male names, the female names are less productive as they don't allow more than one VI to be inserted. See the comparison as:

Comparison of male and female eponymous derivations

Male Names/Eponyms	**Female Names/Eponyms**
Farooq>Farooq**i**, Farooq**ia**, **Al**-Farooq**i**, **Al**-Farooq**ia**	Tahira>*Tahir**i**, *Tahir**ia**, **Al**-Tahir**a**, *__Al__-Tahir**ia**

So [Farooq] as a male name has allomorphs as **<*i*>**, **<*a*>** and **<*al*>** which [Tahira] as a female name lacks.

The first example can be quoted of nicknames, where with the change of a single phonological exponent, the whole semantic dimension is changed. We can see many name-formations, from [Kareem**]**, through the VIs as **<i>**, **<a>**, **<ʊ>**, **<an>**, **<aN>**, **<O/>** and **<Ø>** and gives different semantic versions as;

Figure 10: Derivations from [Kareem**]**

Roots	**exponents**	**LFs**	**Semantic Shades**
√Kareem	<i>	Kareem**i**	Diminutive
√Kareem	<a>	Kareem**a**	Augmentative
√Kareem	<ʊ>	Kareem**ʊ**	Male name in social derogation
√Kareem	<an>	Kareem**an**	Female name
√Kareem	<aN>	Kareem**aN**	Female name/ eulogy, elation
√Kareem	<o>	Kareem**o**	Female name in social derogation
√Kareem	<Ø>	Kareem**Ø**	a feminine name in general [Kareem Bibi]

√Kareem	<Ø>	Kareem**Ø**	a masculine name as [Kareem Ali, Kareem Buksh, Kareem Dad, etc.]

[Kareem**],** with null morpheme **<Ø>**, is also gender neutral as we see in the last two examples. Such derivations are rampant both in Urdu and Punjabi. So [Kareem], semantically, gives various social and gender interpretations with the change of single phonological exponent. In other words, the above given table shows that with the change of morphological pattern, there is change in semantic domain. The phonological exponent ***/i/*** creates the sense of littleness and **<*a*>** gives the contrary effect i.e. bigness. The features of littleness and bigness are in the social domains and not in physical parameters. The insertion of the exponent **<ʊ>** gives social derogation. The exponent **<Ø>** is gender neutral. Quite interestingly the exponents such as **<*an*>** and **<aN>** change the gender category i.e. they convert the masculine names into feminine names. These two VIs are the gender markers and such feature is very typical to Indo-Aryan languages and especially to Urdu. In the case of [Kareem**ʊ**] and [Kareem**o**], we see that in [Kareem**ʊ**] the affix **<ʊ>** is masculine gender maker while in [Kareem**o**], the affix **<*o*>** is a feminine gender marker. In this way the Urdu eponyms are highly productive in their morphosemantic domains. We rarely find such vivacity in derived names in any other language.

In another way, we can see that there is gender change with the insertion of just one VI with male names; there are even gender neutral names such as:

Figure 11: Three patterns of the derivations of female names from male names

Male names	VIs	Female Names	Semantic Divergence
Hameed	**<aN>**	Hameed**aN**	Typical cultural name in Punjab
Tahir	**<a>**	Tahir**a**	Female name
Kareem	<Ø>	Kareem	Gender neutral name

With the change of just one morpheme the dynamics of social and gender relations is changed absolutely. As a whole, the interface between morphology and semantics creates allomorhy as well as allosemy.

The present study deals with the morphosemantic analysis of the naming patterns of female gender based on male names. There is still need to work on the morphosemantic study of Urdu Proper names. The researchers need to elaborate proper names also, side by side their derivations, as there were no earlier works on the morphology of Urdu proper names. Urdu has some dictionaries on names such as 'Dictionary of Islamic Names', etc., but it does not encompass the whole onomasticon of Urdu. These dictionaries simply give a list of Muslim names while the Urdu speakers have the naming patterns other than Islamic ones. There may be some other patterns of name-taking on the part of female gender that need to be studied. There is sufficient room available for comparative and contrastive study of Urdu eponyms with those of any other language particularly concerning their morphosemantic features.

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