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## MORPHOLOGICAL VERB FEATURES OF JOOSHANI DIALECT OF PERSIAN

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### Abstract

Jooshani dialect is a dialect of Persian which belongs to Jooshan village, near Golbaf town in Kerman province in Iran. The data were gathered during eight years of one of the authors living in Jooshan. In this research, the morphology part of Jooshani dialect was studied. Verb morphology in the normal form is the same in Jooshani and Standard Persian (SP), but the structure “verb + subject inflectional ending + object inflectional ending” is different between Jooshani and SP. In Jooshani, the place of the last two parts of this structure (subject inflectional ending + object inflectional ending) is reversed. So, the verb “/zæd æm etun/” (I hit (past) you) in SP which consists of the three parts as the above structure, is pronounced as “/zed tun æm/” in Jooshani. The unique verb form of /dɒfte bud/ (past participle of ‘to have’) with special meaning, is among other morphological features of Jooshani.

**Keywords:** Jooshani dialect, morphology, verb morphology, standard Persian

## CARACTERÍSTIQUES DE LA MORFOLOGIA VERBAL EN EL DIALECTE JOOSHANI DEL PERSA

### Resum

El dialecte jooshani és un dialecte del persa que es parla al poble de Jooshan, prop de la ciutat de Golbaf, a la província de Kerman a l'Iran. Les dades de la investigació es van recopilar durant vuit anys per part d'un dels investigadors, que viu a Jooshan. En aquest treball s'ha estudiat la morfologia d'aquest dialecte. La morfologia verbal en la forma normal és la mateixa en jooshani que en persa estàndard (SP), però l'estructura “verb + terminació flexiva del subjecte + terminació flexiva de l'objecte” és diferent en jooshani i en SP. En jooshani, les dues darreres parts d'aquesta estructura (terminació flexiva del subjecte + terminació flexiva de l'objecte) estan invertides. Així, el verb “/zæd æm etun/” (“Et vaig pegar” (passat)) en SP, que consta de tres parts, com a l'estructura anterior, es pronuncia “/zed tun æm/” en jooshani. La forma verbal única /dɒfte bud/ (participi passat d'haver) amb un significat especial, es troba entre les altres característiques morfològiques del jooshani.

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**Paraules clau:** dialecte jooshani, morfologia, morfologia verbal, persa estàndard

### **CARACTERÍSTICAS DE LA MORFOLOGÍA VERBAL EN EL DIALECTO JOOSHANI DEL PERSA**

#### **Resumen**

El dialecto jooshani es un dialecto del persa hablado en la aldea de Jooshan, cerca de la ciudad de Golbaf, en la provincia de Kerman en Irán. Los datos de la investigación se recopilaron a lo largo de ocho años por parte de uno de los investigadores, que vive en Jooshan. En este trabajo se ha estudiado la morfología de este dialecto. La morfología verbal en la forma normal es la misma en jooshani que en persa estándar (SP), pero la estructura “verbo + terminación flexiva del sujeto + terminación flexiva del objeto” es diferente en el jooshani y en el SP. En jooshani, las dos últimas partes de esta estructura (terminación flexiva del sujeto + terminación flexiva del objeto) están invertidas. Así, el verbo “/zæd æm etun/” (‘Te pegué’ (pasado)) en SP, que consta de tres partes, como en la estructura anterior, se pronuncia como “/zed tun æm/” en jooshani. La forma verbal única de /dafte bud/ (participio pasado de ‘haber’) con un significado especial, se encuentra entre las otras características morfológicas del jooshani.

**Palabras clave:** dialecto jooshani, morfología, morfología verbal, persa estándar

## **1. Introduction**

Dialects have, in many cases, been ignored among the various researches of morphology. Studies on morphology have mostly paid attention to the rules governing the standard variety of any language. This is while dialects, the non-standard varieties of the language, possess an enormous amount of unique morphological features are the signs of beauty of any language. It has long been claimed that non-standard speech behaves in a more ‘natural’ way than standardized varieties (e.g. Kroch 1978). And as Anderwald (2010) claims, it has been easy and documented for phonological features, but it has been difficult to show the same thing for non-standard morphological features. Jespersen (1924: 52) also believes that “no-one has ever dreamed of a universal morphology”. Wells (1982) proposed a standard reference for comparative works on accents. But there is no similar reference for comparing of non-standard morphology and syntax.

On the road of language studies, where morphology meets dialectology, fresh and unseen cases emerge. Cases which in many cases tend to mix up all the efforts, researches and rules presented for explaining the language behavior. But maybe studies on these non-standard and out-of-rule cases may yield in rules much more generalizable and more sensible. Or put it in other words, as believes, “dialectal

phenomena offer a rich testing ground for morphological theoretical claims and proposals” (Ralli 2009). Also, “dialectal evidence may offer additional insights about linguistic change and typology; i.e., it can shed light on how a grammar of a particular language may look like, and what its structural limits are” (Ralli 2009). And these unique various dialect-based rules are not rare. Even among the language varieties of one province which share a lot of linguistic features, we can see many differences in various areas of lexicon, phonology and even syntax and morphology.

Persian has a large number of varieties differing at various levels. Among Iranian varieties of Persian, the situation for Kerman province varieties is among the most interesting cases. The varieties look so similar and share many features specifically in phonological rules. Yet, there are some unique features in some small areas which have almost no similar cases in their counterparts. Kermani variety is among the accents belonging to Iranian central dialects and is a remaining of Southern New Iranian languages (Rezaei Bagh Bidi 2009).

Jooshan village is part of Golbaf town in Kerman province. This village is located 80 kilometers southward from Kerman city and has 30 kilometers to the town center of Golbaf. The name of the village (Jooshan) lexically means “boiling” and the strongest prediction about the history of this name is the natural hot water spring located four kilometers from the village which is named “Ghadir Hot Water” and from the most typical feature of a hot water spring which is being “boiling”. The Standard Persian (SP) pronunciation of the village name is /dʒuʃʌn/ which by the settlers of the village is called /dʒewʃʌn/. Jooshani variety, caused by geographical closeness to the center of the province, has gained many similarities to Kermani dialect; but despite this fact, considerable differences between Jooshani and Kermani and generally Standard Persian are still observed.

In the present research, we tried to study the morphological system or verb word-formation in Jooshani. This paper presents a study prepared based on evaluation of dialect data, interpretation of the unique patterns and determination of the specific tenses and persons, or in other words the context, in which the unique morphological rule applies.

Probably the closest research to the present one, based on content, is Asadi Gowki's *Golbaf Folk Dictionary* (2000). The book contains words, idioms, stories, metaphors, local beliefs and some local songs of Golbaf people. We call it the closest because the data in the book are closest to the data in the present study, due to the short distance between the two places. There are still various studies with similar procedure and purpose on different language varieties in Kerman province and other parts of Iran. Babak (1996) in the book *Linguistic Study of Zarand Dialect* has precisely studied and presented the linguistic features of the dialect which is so close to the present study both methodologically and content based.

Some other similar studies according to the content which have considered the dialects and varieties of Kerman province are Hosseini Moosa (2005) who investigates morphology in Shahr-e-Babak dialect which considers different parts of speech like noun, adverb, pronoun, object, verb structure, elision, etc. Another research on Kerman province varieties is Farhadi Rad (2003). He studies the Kermani variety used in Baft city which is specifically etymological research. Nik-Nafs Dehghani (1998) conducted a general investigation on Jiroft and Kahnouj dialects (cities in Kerman province). In another study, Mo'ayyed Hosseini (2002) studied the dialect used in Sirjan. Kord Zaferanlou Kambuzia (2002) conducted an analysis of shared phonological features in Kerman province dialects.

## **2. Methodology**

The present research is mainly a field study. The data were observed and collected through conversations and questions and answers with Jooshani informants during 8 years of one of the authors living in Jooshan village and then considerable linguistic points and properties were extracted from the variety. Most of the informants who took part in the research and those whose utterances were recorded and studied during the research process, were among the old and the illiterate; those who were born in the village and who had rarely gone on out-of-village travels during

their lifetime. Collecting of Jooshani dialect data was performed with the help of 50 male and female informants in the age-range of 20 to 70 years old.

### 3. Findings

In Jooshani dialect, verb word-formation is the same as Standard Persian (SP) and Kermani variety in the general form. The case which is different from SP is the unique form of verb word-formation in the structure:

verb + subject inflectional ending + object inflectional ending

In the above structure, for *some subject persons* in Jooshani, when the structure “verb + subject inflectional ending + object inflectional ending” is made, the two last parts, i.e., subject and object inflectional endings are replaced with each other. The two forms are compared in (1):

(1)

a. Standard Persian:

verb + subject inflectional ending + object inflectional ending

zæd + æm + eʃun        /'zædæmeʃun/

b. Jooshani variety:

verb + object inflectional ending + subject inflectional ending

zed + ʃun + æm        /'zedʃunæm/

This replacement of subject and object inflectional endings does not occur for all subject and object persons. Below, are two examples in which the replacement does not take place. The example (2) shows a case for object person and the example 3 shows a case for subject person.

In example (1) which was simple past, if the object inflectional ending is third person singular, instead of third person plural, there will not be a replacement:

(2)

a. Standard variety:

/zædæmeʃ/ → zad (verb) + -am (subject inflection) + -esh (object inflection)

b. Jooshani variety:

/zedmæʃ/ → zed (verb) + -m (subject inflection) + -æʃ (object inflection)

\* /zedʃæm/

The difference between the vowels preceding the object inflection in two cases of SP and Jooshani variety is a phonological process in Jooshani which is introduced later.

The next example, in which the replacement does not occur, is a case in which the subject inflection is second person, instead of first person:

(3)

a. Standard variety:

/zædɪʃun/ zæd (verb) + ɪ (subj infl) + ʃun (obj infl)

b. Jooshani variety:

/zedɪʃun/ zed (verb) + ɪ (subj infl) + ʃun (obj infl)

\* /zedʃunɪ/

In order to make clear the fact that for which object and subject persons the replacement process occurs, all verb tenses in Persian with all subject and object persons were studied and it was observed that the mentioned process follows a specific and same pattern in choosing the object and subject persons in all verb tenses. The cases for which the process works in all verb tenses are shown in Figure 1:

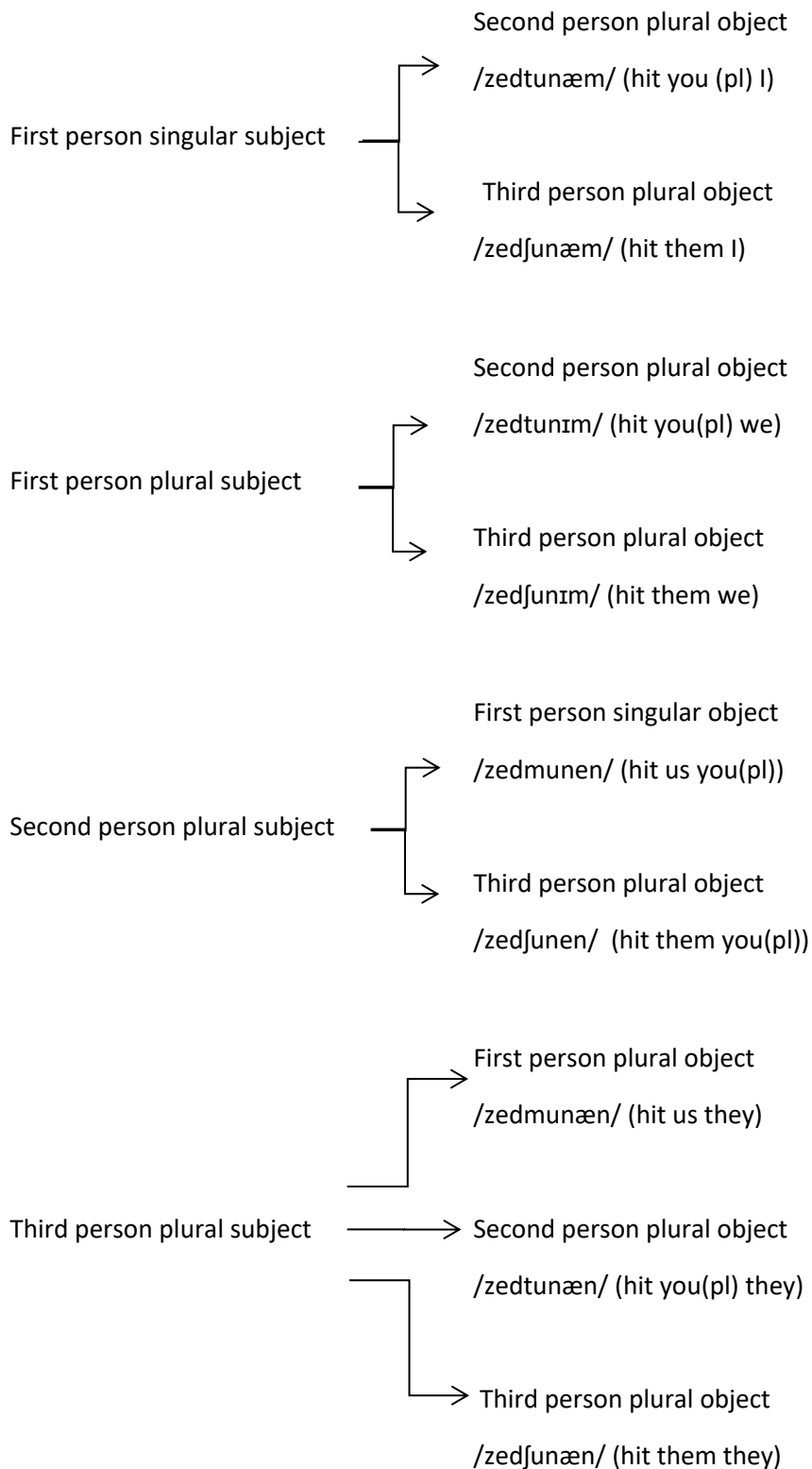


Figure 1. Subject and object pronouns in which Jooshani verb morphology process applies.

In those verb tenses in which a prefix or a suffix is added to the verb, like continuant ones in which prefix /mɪ-/ (continuant indicator) is added, subjunctive or past perfect that has suffix /bu:d/, these prefixes and suffixes have no effect on the process application and the Jooshani form is made just by changing the standard form through replacing the subject and object pronouns, regardless of whether these two parts are located after a suffix or immediately after the verb root.

### 3.1 Phonological processes in this structure and similar structures

Here, there are two phonological processes in which vowels are involved and occur along with the process of subject and object pronouns replacement.

#### 3.1.1 Elision of vowel before the “subject pronoun + object pronoun” pair

Elision of vowel before the “subject pronoun + object pronoun” pair, means that the vowel before this set is deleted and the order of these two pronouns (whether they are replaced or not) has no effect on the vowel deletion. It is good to mention that this deletion occurs optionally. For example:

(4)

- |    |                   |                       |                 |
|----|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| a. | Standard variety: | /zædæmeɪ/             | (hit I him/her) |
| b. | Jooshani variety: | /zed $\emptyset$ mæɪ/ | (hit I him/her) |

As you can see in example (4), the vowel at the beginning of subject pronoun is deleted. Example (5) shows that this vowel is also deleted before object pronoun:

(5)

- |    |                   |                         |                 |
|----|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| a. | Standard variety: | /zædæmetun/             | (hit I you(pl)) |
| b. | Jooshani variety: | /zed $\emptyset$ tunæm/ | (hit you(pl) I) |



### 3.1.2 Alternation of /e/ with /æ/ before object pronoun

The process of changing /e/ into /æ/ before object pronoun works as follows: In Jooshani, in structure “verb + subject inflection ending + object inflection ending”, if the object pronoun (inflectional ending) is one of the three singular persons (in which case the process does not apply), and there is a consonant before object inflectional ending (i.e. there is no /ɪ/ which is the inflectional ending for second person singular), an /æ/ is placed before that consonant, while in the same environment in standard variety, there is an /e/, example 6:

(6)

- |    |                   |           |                    |
|----|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| a. | Standard variety: | /zædɪmet/ | (hit we you(sing)) |
| b. | Jooshani variety: | /zedɪmæt/ | (hit we you(sing)) |

A same process applies in this dialect in the structure “noun + enclitic possessive pronoun”.

(7)

- |    |                   |           |             |
|----|-------------------|-----------|-------------|
| a. | Standard variety: | /cetabet/ | (your book) |
| b. | Jooshani variety: | /cetabæt/ | (your book) |

### 3.2 Syllable elision

In conversational standard variety, in verb /mɪkoʃædet/ (he kills you), phoneme /d/ changes into /t/ affected by voicelessness of two consonants /ʃ/ and /t/.

(8)

- |    |                               |             |
|----|-------------------------------|-------------|
| a. | Written standard form:        | /mɪkoʃædet/ |
| b. | Conversational standard form: | /mɪkoʃætet/ |

When making the same verb in Jooshani, some processes apply:

First, caused by the process of “Elision of vowel before the ‘subject pronoun + object pronoun’ pair”, vowel /æ/ is deleted before the syllable whose consonant has altered with its voiceless form, i.e., the syllable /te/:

(9) /mɪkoʃætet/ → /mɪkoʃtet/ A

The form we get here, i.e., /mɪkoʃtet/, and which we call form A, is one of the forms that is used for this verb form.

Form A can also be made with another form, the process of making which is as follows:

First, the syllable /te/ is deleted (of course application of this process is optional). If the process of syllable elision applies, the result form will be like the following:

(10) /mɪkoʃtet/ (he kills you) simple present → /mɪkoʃt/ (he was killing) past continuous

The result form has a different meaning and tense from form A. So, a vowel should be inserted between /ʃ/ and /t/ so that the new form (past continuous) will differ from our old tense (simple present). The vowel which is normally inserted in such environments in varieties of Kerman, is /e/ which also applies in Jooshani. So, we will have the following form:

(11)  
/mɪkoʃt/ → /mɪkoʃet/ B

We call the new form, i.e. /mɪkoʃet/, form B.

Of course, in some cases, such as those with second person singular subject, the verb inflection ending, i.e., /ɪ/ is remained and there is no longer need to insert a vowel:

(12) /mɪkoʃɪteɪ/ → /mɪkoʃɪɪ/

Now according to the rule “alternation of /e/ with /æ/ before object pronoun”, in both forms A and B, /e/ can change into /æ/. So, there will be two more forms which we call C and D.

(13)

A/mɪkoʃtɛt/    →    /mɪkoʃtæɪt/    C  
B/mɪkoʃɛt/    →    /mɪkoʃæɪt/    D

So, for this verb structure, there are four different forms in Jooshani, which are the result of application of a vowel alternation process and a syllable elision process and all four forms were observed in Jooshani.

### 3.3 Same verb forms with different meanings

Compare form B in previous section, i.e., /mɪkoʃɛt/ ((he kills you) present continuous), with one with the same verb root and tense, but different subject and object. Here in 14, subject pronoun is second person singular (you), and object pronoun is first person singular (me). Based on the application of same processes in the previous section, the final form in 14 is gained:

(14)    /mɪkoʃɪtæm/ (continuous kill you me)    syllable elision →    /mɪkoʃɪm/    E

We call the result form, i.e., /mɪkoʃɪm/, form E.

Form E is understandable in Jooshani and it means “you kill me”. With a closer look, we will find out that form E has a different meaning in Standard Persian which is the verb “kill” in present continuous with first person singular subject without object (we kill):

(15)

{	Standard:	/mɪkoʃɪm/, present continuous, we kill, no object
	Jooshani:	/mɪkoʃɪm/, present continuous, you kill me, with object

Below, are some other examples of cases with two meanings that result from the application of Jooshani processes.

(16)

{	Standard:	/mɪzænæm/, present continuous, I hit, no object
	Jooshani:	/mɪzænæm/, present continuous, he hits me, with object
{	Standard:	/mɪzædæm/, past continuous, I was hitting, no object
	Jooshani:	/mɪzædæm/, past continuous, he was hitting me, with object
{	Standard:	/bezænɪm/, present subjunctive, we (should) hit, no object
	Jooshani:	/bezænɪm/, present subjunctive, you (should) hit me, with object

### 3.4 Alternation of /u/ and /a/ with /ɪ/ in some verbs and a unique verb form

Another point according to which, verbs in Jooshani are different from verbs in Standard Persian, is the alternation of /u/ and /a/ with /ɪ/ in some verbs and verb forms. This difference is observed in many varieties of Persian including most of Kermani varieties. In such varieties, some verbs like /ʔoftad/ (fell), are pronounced as /ʔoftɪd/. Such verbs are available in Jooshani like:

(17)

<i>Standard</i>	<i>Jooshani</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
/ʔoftad/	/ʔoftɪd/	fell
/ʊajsad/	/ʊastɪd/	stood
/bud/	/bɪd/	was

The verb /bud/ is one of these verbs that is pronounced /bɪd/, instead of /bud/. But our special verb form is the past perfect form of the verb /daʃtæn/ (to have); i.e.

“(He) had had” which is pronounced as /doʃtebid/ in Jooshani. However, there is no such verb form in Standard Persian, nor is in English!

In Persian, past perfect tense is used to show that an action in the past was done before another action in the past (somehow same in English), such as:

(18) Tom *had gone* to school when Jack called.

In 18 the action of going to school was completed before the action of calling. In Persian the structure in 19 is also true (same in English):

(19) Tom had gone to school.

However, the same verb tense from the verb “have” is not true, neither in Persian nor in English:

(20) \* Tom had had a ball.

However, the structure /doʃtebid/ ((He) had had) is a commonly used structure in Jooshani. Of course, this structure, in Jooshani, has a different meaning and usage from past perfect and has a meaning close to that of simple past of verb “have”.

What is worth mentioning here is that this verb form is used while simple past is also used. There can be two reasons for this phenomenon that these two verb forms are used and no one has been deleted from this dialect with the passage of time. First is that, this verb structure had been used in isolation to state the concept of simple past in this dialect, and the simple past form, as we use today, did not exist; and today, caused by the adjacency of the dialect to SP, the new simple past form has also entered into the dialect, and the old form is going to die away. The second possibility is that this verb form is different from simple past according to its meaning which has caused the old form to survive and be used along with the newer form. After gathering sentences in which the verb forms were used, and interview and questioning the

settlers of the village, more evidence was obtained on the side of the second hypothesis; and it was made clear that there is a meaning difference between the two verb forms, though it is significantly small. The difference is that the unique form “(He had had)” compared to the form in Standard Variety, refers to a time more back in time.

(21) Joe had pomegranates.

(22) Joe had had pomegranates.

#### 4. Discussion

Jooshani dialect belongs to Jooshan village, one of the villages of Golbaf in Kerman province of Iran. Because of the short geographical distance, Jooshani dialect has become so much like Kermani variety; but still has many differences with Kermani and Standard Persian. Jooshani dialect is different from Standard variety in many fields such as lexicon, morphology, phonology and phonological processes. In the field of word-formation (morphology), Jooshani is different from Standard Persian in two main parts of noun morphology and verb morphology. In the field of noun morphology, Jooshani was observed to have specific and unique way of counting numbers and active rules in word-formation processes.

In this research, the verb morphology part of Jooshani was investigated in details. Verb morphology in Jooshani, in the normal structure of verbs, is the same as Standard Persian, but in the special structure of “verb + subject inflectional ending + object inflectional ending”, the last two parts, i.e., subject and object inflectional endings, are replaced. So, in Standard Persian the verb /zædæmetun/ (‘hit I you’) with the structure of “verb + subject inflectional ending + object inflectional ending” is as “verb + object inflectional ending + subject inflectional ending”, thus /zed tunæm/ (‘hit you I’). This process applies for all tenses and forms of verbs. But a remarkable point is that this process applies only with a certain number of subject and object pronouns, and not all pronouns (Figure 1).

As far as the investigations in this research showed, this morphological feature was not observed in any of the other dialects and language varieties of Kerman and other varieties of Persian.

Application of all this morphological process is accompanied with other phonological and morphological processes from which we can name Elision of vowel before the “subject pronoun + object pronoun” pair, alternation of /e/ with /æ/ before object pronoun and syllable elision. Application of all these series of processes sometimes results in making verbs with a same form but different meanings; verbs whose meanings are only perceivable through context.

Alternation of phonemes /u/ and /ɑ/ with /ɪ/, in some verbs like /bu:d/ (was), with special meanings, is one of the other morphological features of Jooshani.

It is necessary to point out that this morphological process is not used in all parts of Jooshan and neighboring villages and mainly belongs to the western or up part of the central village of Jooshan. However, this process is completely understood and perceived by all settlers of the area including central Jooshan and neighboring villages.

Language varieties active in Kerman province have much in common as shown as only a small part of them by Kord Zaferanlou Kambuzia (2002). Findings of such researches as the present study can provide perfect raw data for conducting and reforming previously-generalized morphological rules of Persian. From the other side, morphological proved theories can help great deal in analyzing miscellaneous data and forms of various language varieties.

One interesting point observed throughout the study was that in some language varieties a rule can apply to only some persons; to some specific subject persons and to some specific object persons. This is something that can be said to be very rare and challenging and at the same time interesting. Authors could not find the rule which governs the determination of the persons that cause the specific process to occur. In other words, we don't know yet, what causes the rule to apply for some persons and not apply for some others. This requires another research, which might probably need some further data from similar dialects. But for now, it seems to be a state at some point in an ongoing linguistic change. In other words, maybe this rule used to apply for

all subject and object persons in some time far in the past and based on the fact that all languages move towards being simpler, this rule has decreased to only some persons; like many other old Persian syntactic and morphological rules that existed in old Persian and are not present in today Persian.

Another interesting fact was that the rule applies for all tenses. This case in SP is observed in tense and form determinants such as /mi/ as a sign of progressive or /ne/ as a sign of negative verb. This shows that the specific rule in this study is some basic and internalized fact which has a root in some part of the language variety of that area; which of course needs much further studies.

Another point worth mentioning based on the findings of the study, is that it is truly interesting to see how intertwined morphological and phonological rules are within a language variety; in a way that no one occurs without the other one. Jooshani dialect has a very large number of active phonological rules that apply in many different contexts. The phonological rules that occur along with the morphological rule of this study are inseparable from the morphology section.

After all, the cases mentioned here in this study, are only samples of a very broad domain of unique and unknown linguistic features related to dialects. These features are mostly ignored when preparing general language rules. The present study considered a rather small area in the biggest province of Iran. Further investigations will definitely uncover much more fascinating linguistic features in different dialects and these dialectology findings will definitely help broader areas of linguistics such as syntax, phonology, morphology, phonetics and etymology.

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