

Abd-El-Malek Lamuwal & Adam Baker

Academy of Sciences of Afghanistan
adam.baker@iam-afghanistan.org

This illustration focuses on the variety of Pashayi (also, Pashai) spoken in the Dara-i-Nur valley of Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan (approximately, N 34.682 E 70.581); the ISO 639-3 code for this variety is psi. According to Lewis (2009) there are 54,400 speakers of this variety, and about 216,000 speakers of all Pashayi dialects. The most comprehensive published study of Pashayi to date is Morgenstierne's two-volume grammar (Morgenstierne 1973, 1944), which is helpfully summarized in Bashir (2003).

The present work is based primarily on the phonemic analysis produced as a prerequisite to an alphabet by the first author, who is a native speaker of Pashayi. It has also benefited from an independent phonemic analysis performed for the creation of a different orthography, by the Pashai Language Committee (Yun, Pashai Language Committee & Sadiq 2006). The speaker in the recordings – also the first author – is in his early fifties. He was raised in the lower part of the Dara-i-Nur Valley, and has lived in Kabul (a non-Pashayi-speaking city) for about 30 years. The recordings represent a fairly careful speech register.

Consonants

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Plosive	p b	t d		t̪ d̪		k g	(q)	
Nasal	m	n		ɳ				
Fricative	(f)	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ		x y		h
Lateral fricative		ɬ						
Affricate			tʃ dʒ					
Tap or Flap		r		t̪				
Approximant	w				j			
Lateral approximant		l						

p	para:l ^e	پارال	'apple'	ʃ	ʃāni	شانی	'stick of dry oak'
b	bõ	بو	'mosquito'	ʒ	ʒuk	ژوک	'partridge'
t	to	تو	'you (informal)'	ʂ	ʂela	شلا	'clay'
d	do:r	دور	'face'	x	xam	خام	'boy'
t̪	tera	تېرا	'to wink'	y	yam	غم	'sadness'
d̪	d̪ia:	يېاء	'sound of a bullet'	h	ahã:	اها	'yes'
k	ka:o	کاو	'what kind'	t̪	t̪a:m	لام	'work'
g	ga:l ^e	گال	'curse'	tʃ	tʃo:r	چور	'thief'
q	qand	قند	'sweet'	dʒ	dʒaja	جايا	'Stay!'
m	mã:n ^e	مان	'nest'	t̪	t̪o:ra:	لورا	'handle'
n	no:r	نور	'fingernail'	w	woda:j	وداء	'from'
ɳ	ʂānji	شانۍ	'wooden chest'	r	re:ʃa	رېشا	'mirror'
s	sewana	سونا	'string'	j	jeti:m ^a	پېتېم	'orphan'
z	zeji:p ^e	زېبې	'woman'	l	lohã:n	لون	'easy'

The example words above are transcribed phonetically. Here and subsequently in the article, vowel length is transcribed phonetically, and pitch is not transcribed at all. Although there is reason to believe that there is a contrastive vowel length distinction in Pashayi (see the 'Vowels' section below), such a claim must await a full description of the prosodic system of the language. Transcription of a voiced release to some consonants ([^c]) follows the recording. It should be noted, however, that this release occurs only variably.

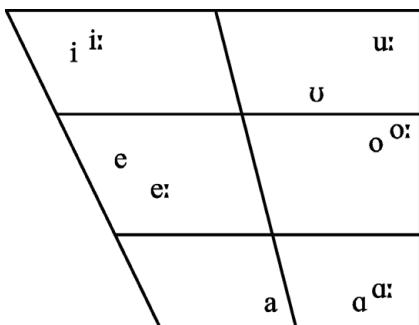
The orthographic transcription in the word lists uses the orthography of the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan (see section 'Orthographic versions' below). All consonants are represented in word-initial position, save the three that do not occur in word-initial position, namely [t̪], [ɳ], and [h].

The bilabial approximant is variously produced as [w], [v], or an intermediate sonorant labial, transcribed below as [β]. The alveolar trill is generally realized as [r] intervocally, as in [warek^h] 'to cry', or 'apple' and 'to wink' in the list above. The retroflex flap /t̪/ is variably realized as the retroflex approximant [ɻ] in word-final position. Phonemically voiceless plosives are variably realized as voiced intervocally; in the transcribed passage below, a phonemically voiceless stop that is phonetically fully voiced is indicated with a diacritic (e.g. [pøqāʃai:]). Vowel-initial words are consistently realized in our data with an initial glottal stop at intonational boundaries.

There is dialectal variation in the realization of /ʒ/ among dialects of Pashayi: the Dara-i-Nur dialect frequently has /j/ where the Kapisa and the Laghman dialects have /ʒ/. For example, the Pashayi pronunciation of 'louse' in Dara-i Noor is [ju:], while in Kapisa and Laghman it is [ʒu:].

Contra Morgenstierne (1973), who includes /f/ in the phonemic inventory, we have included /f/ only as a marginal case. This segment is present only in loanwords, and is not always maintained as /f/. For instance, in the transcribed passage, the last instance of the loanword [musafer] 'traveler' (originally Arabic, borrowed via Dari or Pashtu), the /f/ is pronounced as [p]: [musaper-i]. Similarly [q] is a marginal sound in Pashayi, produced by certain speakers in loanwords, but by others replaced with [x].

Vowels



i zeji:p ^e	زېپ 'woman'	i: atʃi:m ^e	اچيم 'eye (PL)'
e ekala:	اکلا 'future'	e: e:la	اېلا 'whey'
a anda:	اندا 'blind'	a: ga:l ^e	گال 'curse'
ə aʃe:k	اشېك 'to get'	o: do:r	دور 'face'
o dor	دور 'Get lost!'	u: du:r	دۇر 'door'
ʊ sur	سور 'sun'		

Pashayi has a six-vowel system. There is length distinction that appears to be phonemic; see the minimal and similar pairs in the text below. All of the vowels except [a] have long counterparts.¹ In the absence of a full prosodic analysis of Pashayi, however, we cannot rule out the possibility that vowel length is determined by some lexical prosodic factor, and is not in itself contrastive. Phonetic length is also influenced by non-lexical prosodic factors; for instance the word transcribed [dena:] in the text below is pronounced [dena] in isolation. In the transcribed text below, this effect has not been factored out.

Anticipatory nasalization of vowels is present to some extent on all vowels, but is particularly salient on [ɑ]. Nasalization seems to be stronger when the vowel precedes [n], see the pronunciations of ‘wooden chest’ with ‘nest’ or ‘boy’ in the list of consonant examples above. Strong nasalization preceding (and even following) [n] is also evident in the word [ānqā:] ‘egg’. Further research is needed to identify the factors affecting this variation.

The vowel quality of corresponding short and long vowels is generally very similar, with the exception of the short counterpart of [u:], which is perceptually and acoustically less peripheral than its long counterpart. Accordingly, this vowel is transcribed [u]. The locations of the vowels on the above chart is a schematic representation of acoustic measurements of F1 and F2, measured at the midpoint of the vowel.

Transcription of recorded passage

The recorded passage is a Pashayi translation of ‘The North Wind and the Sun’, the story typically used in IPA illustrations.

dewase: ij dewas 'βa:yan qw sureje mandʒa dawaje ge: kuti: bu takqa aw zorawar as || je dena: i: musaferi: keranaji puli ge: mandʒana veři taw kewi aqk megen | arkige: musafer madžbur kegen ge: veřaj pařaqaj ḥabəl gedi sime tekqa aw qawi as | awal wariyani buziad koſaš kagen magar arka:w ge βa:yan pake gik musaferi: la:ge dʒa ne pařaraje taw kegen |

¹ Since long and short vowel systems tend towards symmetry, this is surprising. This claim is based on a careful search of Morgenstierne’s published texts, and also on the native speaker intuition of the first author.

wa:yan bu: wa:go gudaz bik lemb^cji: suri: garmia: bu: kamen ne:gen
 musaperi: þe:ra taw kewa pa:ka:jai: duraja:j kegen || ?a:xeri: wa:yan
 madzbur bik eqraf kegen ge: sure:s zure bu: fi

Orthographic versions

The orthographic representation of the story and of the example words presented above is based on the first author's orthography, which was devised under the auspices of the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan.

دواسی ای دواس واغن او سوری منجه داوای گی کوتی بو تکرا او زوره اس، یه دنه
 ای مسافری کرانی پولیک گی منجا وری ی تاو کیوی اپیک، میگن ارگبگه مسافر
 مجبور کیگن گی ورای، پکرای لبل کدی سیمه تکرا او قوی اس، اول واغنی بوزیات
 کوشش کن مگر ارکاو گی واغن پکه گیک مسافری لاگه جانه پکرایه تاو کیگن،
 واغن بو وتو گوداس بیک، لمبی سوری گرمیا بو کمن نیگن، مسافری ورای تاو کیوا
 پکری دوریار کیگن، اخري واغن مجبور بیک اقرار کیگن گی سوریس زوره بو شی.

Another orthography is being used in literacy education in Dara-i-Nur, by the Pashayi Language Committee; this orthography is also illustrated here.

دپوسي ای د بواس واغن او سوری منجا داوا آیک گی کوتی بو تکرا او زورر اس.
 یدپنا ای مؤساپیری کپرانی پولیک گی منجنها وپری تاو کپوی آیک مېگین، آر کی گی
 مؤساپیر مجبور کېگین گی وپرای پکرای لبل کدی سبمی تکرا او خوي اس. اول
 واغنی بو زپاد کوشش کېگین مگر ار کاو گی واغن پکگیک مؤساپیری لاكا جانی
 پکرایا تاو کېگین. واغن بو وتو گوداس بیک. لمبی سوری گرمبا بو کمپن نېگین
 مؤساپیری وپرپا تاو کپوا پکری دوریار کېگین. اخري واغن مجبور بیک اپخار
 کېگین کی سورېس زوری بو شی.

References

- Bashir, Elena. 2003. Dardic. In George Cardona & Danesh Jain (eds.), *The Indo-Aryan languages*, 818–894. London: Routledge.
- Lewis, Paul M. 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*, 16th edn. Dallas, TX: SIL International.
- Morgenstierne, Georg. 1944. *Indo-Iranian frontier languages*, vol. III: *The Pashai language, Part 2: Texts and translations*. Oslo: H. Aschehoug & Co. (W. Nygaard).
- Morgenstierne, Georg. 1973. *Indo-Iranian frontier languages*, vol. III: *The Pashai language, Part 1: Grammar*, 2nd edn. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Yun, Ju-Hong, Pashai Language Committee & Sohrab Sadiq. 2006. *Pashai primer*. Kabul: SERVE ERCDP Project.