# Exploration of Balochi as a Pro-Drop Language

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- Parameters
- Pro-drop
- Null-subject
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- Logical Form

## Abstract

*This paper presents data from Balochi language which demonstrates that subject or object can be elided in the Phonetic Form (PF) which can be inferred, identified and recovered through rich morphological inflections (Participation of verbal agreement) in the Logical Form (LF).The contribution of this paper is to provide an exploration of null argument structures at subject, object and subject and object both together positions and extends it to the systems of null subjects traditionally discussed in the literature. The analysis is based on the objective of the study to explore Balochi as a pro-drop language. Null argument such as null subject and zero object of Balochi is explored and analyzed under three (03) theoretical frameworks , Chomsky's Principles and Parameters theory (PPT) (Chomsky,1981a) and Extended Projection Principle (EPP) (Haegeman,1994). The Recoverability Condition of Haegeman (1994) is applied to infer, identify and recover (i.e. Logical Form (LF) & Phonetic Form (PF).Through unstructured interviews, data were collected for said research paper from two native speakers of Balochi language. Thus, the findings of the concerned research paper show that the unusual sentential constructions such as verbs with null/zero/omitted subjects, objects and both the subjects and objects together in the oral or spoken Balochi.*

## 1. Introduction

This research paper is pertaining to Exploration of Balochi as a pro-drop language. According to Cook (1991) the languages like Russian, Chinese, and Spanish allow sentences without the agents (subject) are said to be 'pro-drop languages' and on the other hand, non-pro-drop languages do not have the liberty to permit sentences without subjects for instance, English, French and German.

The term 'pro-drop' has been formed in the masterwork of lectures on Government and Binding (Chomsky, 1998). Certain classes of pronouns may be elided in pro-drop languages which can be semantically and syntactically identifiable, inferable and recoverable through the rich verbal morphological inflections. The phenomenon of dropping the pronoun is also generally referred to as null or zero category. In the prospective of Universal Grammar (UG) the concept of pro-drop is justified by linguistic evidences in the Principles and Parameters (PP) framework.

### 1.1. Background of the study

Faridah (2012) defines that "Balochi language appertains to the Indo-European language and it is included in the sub branch of Iranian family. Jahani (2003) is at the notion that Balochi language was established in the late 20th century researchers that Balochi language belongs to the North-western group of Iranian languages. According to Jahani (2003) Balochi language has three dialects which are Mekrani Dialect, Rakshani Dialect and Sulamani dialect.

In the prospective of the research paper, Rizzi (1986) explores that null-subject languages (NSLs) are often referred to as pro-drop languages. Taraldsen (1978), his generalization defines that null-subject can occur with inflectionally and morphologically rich languages. Therefore, the pro-drop languages are associated with inflectionally and morphologically rich languages (Zahid, A., 2016; Veesar, Z. A., & Mustafa, G., 2021; Veesar, Z. A., Sriniwass, S., & Kadhim, K. A., 2015b).

In this concerned, it is claimed that the null-subjects are permitted by the pro-drop languages because the native speakers of the concerned languages can easily infer, identify and recover the content of pro from the Agreement (AGR) features of Inflection (INFL) on the verb. Radford (2004), gives example of a null subject language and a non-null subject language. The said example is given below.

### 1.2. Example shows non-null subject in English and null-subject in Italian

**i.**     *(A) Maria speaks French.*
                *(English)*

   *(B) Parla Frances.*
            *(Italian)*

   *Parla (to speak), Frances (French).*
   *(Transliteration)*

In the prior (1A), example an English verb speaks requires subject argument while in the example (1B), Italian verb phrase (speaks) is without subject argument. Thus, Italian is a null subject language while English is non-null subject language Radford (2004).

According to Jahani (2019), Balochi language is a pro-drop language. Null-subject arguments exist in Balochi language where the speaker deletes the subject while he or she speaks or utter sentences in his or her daily conversation unexpectedly and unintentionally. So in this prospective examples from Balochi language are being narrated below to meet the current research work 'Exploration of Balochi as a pro-drop language' and to attain the research objective of the research paper.

### 1.2.1    Pronoun dropping at subject position in Balochi

**i.**    پہ واتی سنگتن وارگ بی کاراین
(Persian Script, Balochi)

(Ahmed, 2021)

Pa wati sangatan b warag Karen.
(Roman Script, Balochi)

*(I) also bring food for my friends.
(Translation)

I also bring food for my friends.
 (English)

Pa (for), wati (my), sangat (friends), an (suffix added to make plural), b (also), warag (food), Karen (to bring).

(Transliteration)

**ii.**    هر نیمگا کہ بچارئے ، اے ملک آباد انت
(Persian Script, Balochi )

(Jahani, 2019)

Har nemaga ke becharay, e molk abad enth.
    (Roman Script, Balochi)

In any direction *(you) may look, this country is fertile.
     (Translation)

In any direction, you may look, this country is fertile.
    (English)

Har=any; nemaga=direction; ke=may, becharay; see; e=this, molk=country; abad=fertile, enth=is.

(Transliteration)

In the view of the above captioned sentences, the agent which is the subject has been dropped and the subject is discernible, recoverable from the context and the null argument which is the Noun phrase (null argument) is identified, inferred and recovered which is at subject position through the free morpheme and the bound morpheme (Inflection). The free morpheme shows the number of the person, tense and the bound morpheme demonstrates

the aspect (tense). Therefore, we can say that Balochi is a pro-drop language, so due to which we can omit, elide and delete the subject.

### 1.2.1  Pronoun dropping at object position in Balochi

i.  **ماجد کاغذان ءَ دست رند کُت، و واحید مہر جتن**

(Persian Script, Balochi)

(Ahmed, 2021)

Majid kaghazanan dast rand koth, o Waheed mohr jathan.
(Roman Script, Baloch)

Majid signed the documents, and Waheed stamped *(them).
(Translation)

Majid signed the documents, and Waheed stamped them.
(English)

Majid (Name /Subject), kaghazan (the documents /object) an (ergativity), dast rand koth (signed /verb), ho (and/conj), Waheed (Name/Subject), mohr jathan (stamped /verb).

(Transliteration)

ii.  **تنی برات آتکگ اَنت ، من دستگ اَنت**
(Persian Script, Baloch)

(Jahani, 2019)

Tai brat atkaganth, man destaganth.
(Roman Script, Baloch)

Your brothers have come, I have seen *(them).
(Translation)

Your brothers have come, I have seen them.
(English)

Tai=your; atkaganth=have come, man=I; destaganth=have seen.
(Transliteration)

In the light of the afore narrated sentences which are lacking object (something on which the work is done to) which can inferred, identified and regained through the previous context, verb transitivity by applying the Principles and Parameters Theory (Chomsky, 1988), Recoverability Condition (Haegeman, 1994). Therefore we can say that Balochi is a pro-drop language.

### 1.3. Research Problem

A lot of research studies exist in Balochi literature but a very few studies have been conducted in linguistics prospective. However, the morpho-semenatic and syntactic aspect of Balochi have been ignored all this while. However; no extensive or comprehensive research study has been done on Balochi Syntax on this aspect (pro-drop). Two surface research works have existence on this linguistics aspect of Balochi which is pro-drop parameter).

But there is lake of an extensive study of Balochi as a pro-drop parameter, secondly it is to analyse null-subject and null-object in Balochi to fill the grey areas and gaps to examine and explore the features and properties of the usage of the null-subjects in Balochi. Thirdly, the leaners of the concerned language will have the access, potentiality, credibility, grip and capability to reset the pro-drop parameter by inferring, recovering and identifying.

### 1.4     Research Objectives

Appending is the objective of the study.

**i.**    To explore Balochi as a pro-drop language.

### 2.   Research Methodology

The corresponding research study is descriptive, analytical and exploratory in its type which deals with its description, analysis, exploration and qualitative method is used which is based on primary source of data (Cresswell, 2013, 2014). The data had come from daily conversation and communication of Balochi language (Spoken form) which was taken in unstructured interviews in oral form to observe to explore the role of pro-drop parameters in Balochi. The researcher used the convenience sampling to select the participants for gathering data for this purpose.

Through the interviews, the data have been collected from two native speakers of Balochi, among them, one participant was from Mekrani dialect and the other was from Rakhshani dialect. The concerned data have been converted from oral form into written form by the process of transcription. The data were analysed on theoretical framework of Chomsky's Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT).

Secondly, the theory of Recoverability Condition was applied for the analysis and investigating through Recoverability Conditions (Haegeman, 1994) by inferring, recovering and identifying the null arguments, tense, aspect and mood on the bases of agreement (AGR) and inflections (INFL), because Balochi language is  rich verbal inflectional language. Several characteristics were predicted statistically through lexical order through Extended Projection Principle (EPP) theory. In Balochi, lexical order is in Subject + Object + Verb, (SOV), Reza (2013).

### 2.3. Theoretical/conceptual frameworks

In the current study, three theoretical frameworks are employed which were proposed by Chomsky (1981a, 1981b, 1986a, 1986b) and Haegeman (1994).
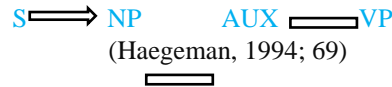
### 2.1.1 Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT)

This study will investigate the phenomenon of analysis of null subject in Balochi language within Chomsky's *Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT),* (Chomsky 1981a, 1981b, 1986a, and 1986b).

### 2.1.2 Extended Projection Principle (EPP)

In English all sentences possess a subject as mandatory Chomsky (1988) and Haegeman (1994). According to this theoretical framework, irrespective of their argument structure, sentences contain or carry subjects as mandatory, in this prospective, a graphical representation of lexical order is given as under. All sentences possess subject; (EPP).

**Extended Projection Principle**

S⟹ NP      AUX ⟹VP
(Haegeman, 1994; 69)

### 2.1.3 Recoverability Condition

The elided argument in the Phonetic Form (PF) or surface structure can be regained in the Logical Form or deep structure of the sentence (LF). The elided argument (subject) can be recovered through the verbal inflections (INFL) and agreement in the morphologically rich languages, whereas, in Phonetic Form (PF) the deleted argument is governed by inflections and agreement (Chomsky, 1988). However, through verbal inflections (INFL) and agreement (AGR), which can be recovered (Haegeman, 1994).

### 3. Data Analysis
### 3.1. Analysis of Null Subject in Balochi

The description, exploration and analysis of the null-subject sentences are being presented in Balochi language which have been dropped, elided in phonetic evidences by the interviewee but the elided subjects are identifiable, inferable and recoverable by the terms of morphological rich inflections (INFL) and agreement, previous context in the null-subject languages (NSL) (Chomsky, 1988) and through applying Recoverability Condition (Haegeman, 1944).

**i:**

انگریزی   زبان وانگ ءَ    بوتگ أوں۔    (Persian Script, Balochi)

Angarazi  Zubaan  wanaga  botag hon    (Roman Script, Balochi)

⬇       ⬇       ⬇⬇

English  Language  studying       was
          (Transliteration)

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*(I) was studying English language.
(Translation)


The above null argument structure is lacking null subject. The null/zero subject has been elided in the Phonetic evidence or Form (PF) which can be identified, inferred and regained by the means of the rich verbal inflection (INFL) and Agreement in the Logical Form. It is understandable and perceivable through the bound morphemes which are the inflections (a, botag &hon), we came to know that the tense is past, aspect is continuous, number is singular and the omitted subject can be *(I). Thus, the null argument which is the subject can be regained by the means of (through) the inflection of the used verb in languages which are pro-drop (Chomsky, 1988).
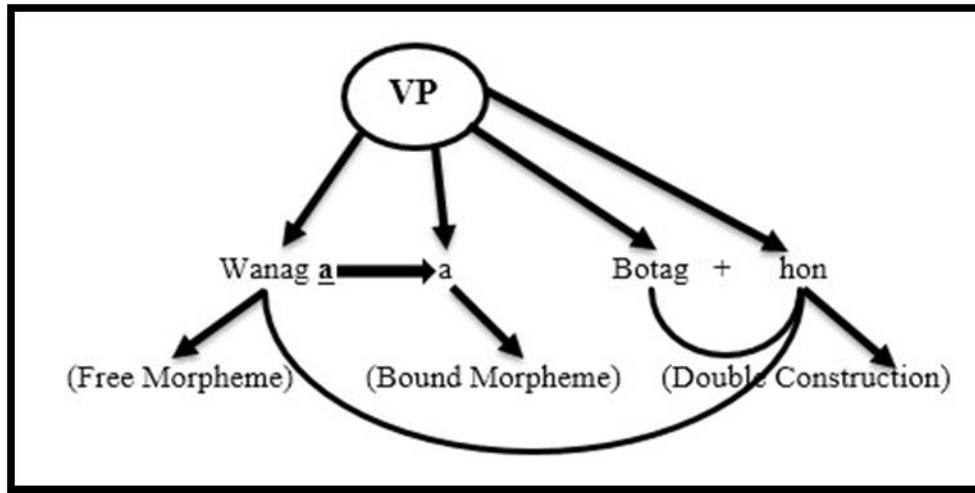


*Figure 1:* **Tthe free morpheme, cupola (bound morpheme and double construction).**

The result of the descriptive, analytical and exploratory analyses declare that Balochi native speakers exhibit null arguments at subject position. Thus, we can conclude that Balochi is a pro-drop language. Therefore the conclusion is drawn on account of null arguments at subject position.

**ii:**

شپ ءِ ساهت ءَ کمُو وانیں
*(Persian Script, Balochi)*

*Shapa      sahata      kamo      wanan*
*(Roman Script, Balochi)*



*At night      time      a little bit      study*
*(Transliteration)*

*\*(I) study a little bit at night time.*
        *(Translation).*

The above mentioned sentence is a null sentence in Balochi which the speaker has elided (subject), therefore we can say that the subject has been deleted in surface structure (Phonetic Form) which can be inferred, identified and regained by the means of (through) the inflections and agreement in the deep structure (Logical Form).

The infection (INFL) which is attached with the main verb '*وانیں*=wan**an**' demonstrates that the deleted subject can be first person singular \*(I), tense can be present tense and the aspect can be present simple tense. Therefore, the null argument "subject" can be recovered by the help of inflections of the utilized verb in the languages which are pro-drop (Chomsky, 1988) and Recoverability Condition (Haegeman, 1994). So conclusion draws our attention that Balochi is a pro-drop language.

### 3.2     Analysis of Null Object in Balochi

Distribution of null objects has been examined by Hung (1989). According to Hung prediction, null arguments at object position are possible in languages which have morphological rich verbal infections, with rich object agreement morphemes like Pashto, and these null arguments at object position which are pros indexed with object Agreement.

**i:**

پس ءَ مجبور کُت ءَ     (Persian Script, Balochi)

Pessa      majboor Kota              (Latin Script, Balochi)

**⬇**        **⬇**

Dad     has compelled
             (Transliteration)


Dad has compelled \*(me)
        (Translation).

The above stated sentence is a sentence of Balochi language which is carrying a null / zero argument at object position which the interviewee has omitted in the surface structure which latter can be regained by the virtue of morphological rich verbal inflections and agreement in the deep structure (Logical Form).

The above cited verb 'مجبور کُت ءَ =majboor kot=has compelled' which is composed of a noun which is 'مجبور=*majboor*=compel', and the second one is the second form of the verb 'کُت=kot=did', which is stemmed from the infinitive verb 'کنگ=kanag=to do' which have various meaning individually but when the**y** both come collectively it would become مجبور کنگ=majboorkanag=to compel' which is a transitive verb which is requiring an object.

The is the inflection which is attached with the free morpheme "kot**a**" which helps us to identify the tense and its aspect, so the said sentence is in present tense and its aspect is perfect and on the other hand, through the previous context of the interview of the interviewee, the deleted object which is 'منا=mana=me' can be regained. So after the analysis, description and exploration and applying the Recoverability Condition of Hageman (1994) along with the Extended Projection Principles of (Chomsky; 1988), the omitted object was found, which is 'me'. We can conclude that Balochi language possesses null arguments at object position.

**ii:**

من یل کُتءَ                                                              (Persian Script, Balochi)

Man     yal Kota                                                        (Roman Script, Balochi)

⬇       ⬇

 I        have left
         (Transliteration)

 I have left *(English language).
         (Translation).

The above given example 2 is showing a null argument structure in Balochi language at object position which the speaker has unuttered in the phonetic form which can be identified, regained and inferred from the nature of the verb and from the previous context, through the inflection of the said verb the tense, its aspect and mood can be identified. The type of the verb 'یل کُت ءَ =yal Kota = have left' is a preverbal verb in Balochi and by nature it is a transitive verb.

However, we can assume that the object which has been in the phonetic Form (PF), can be identified, inferred and regained by the means of the rich morphological inflections (INFL) and (AGR) and from the previous context and nature of the verb in the deep structure (Logical Form) of the uttered sentence. Thus, the verb 'یل کُتءَ =yal kota=have left' is providing us clue that there could be something or someone which or who has been left by the speaker, which could be a game, studies, a language such as English, Urdu, Balochi or Punjabi, house and it could be someone who has been left such as a friend etc. So from the previous context of the interview we can recover the deleted '*(English language)' which is the null object in the said sentence which the speaker has left during the conversation.

### 3.3      Analysis of null subject and object sentences in Balochi

Null subjects and null objects are those sentences or arguments which are lacking null arguments at subject position and object position. These null arguments can be recovered through Recoverability Condition of Haegeman (1994) and (Ali, 2016). Although the null arguments have been deleted in the Phonetic Form, yet they do exist in the Logical Form.

**i:**

وانین             (Persian Script, Balochi)

wannenan       (Roman Script, Balochi)

⬇

*Teach*
        *(Transliteration)*

*\*(I) teach   \*(them).*
        *(Translation)*

The above argument is lacking null arguments at subject and object positions which the speaker has omitted them in the phonetic form where the null subject can be recognized, inferred and regained by the terms of the rich verbal inflections and null object through the previous context and deep evidence. In the context of the said transitive verb phrase ' وانین اَں = wannenan an=teach', where 'وانین =wanen=teach' is a free morpheme and 'اَں=an=shows inflection' is a bound morpheme and attached with the stem of the main verb which indicates the tense, aspect, number and person.

Through this inflection (اَں/an) we will come to know that it could be a first person singular \*I and the tense can be present and its aspect be independent. The verb teach shows the activity or function or process or action of teaching so the action of teaching can be performed on somebody that somebody can be a student, a younger brother, a sister and family members.  It cloud be known through the previous context (unstructured interview) that the deleted object can be grasped, identified  regained in the Logical Form (LF) or deep structure and from the previous context which could be 'آیانء=aayana=them/brothers' through the Recoverability Condition (Haegman, 1988).

**ii:**

نیبشتا کنین
        *(Persian Script, Balochi)*

Nebeshta kanan
        *(Roman Script, Balochi)*

⬇

    *Write*
        *(Transliteration)*

*\*(I) write \*(letters).*
        *(Translation).*

The above example 2 is lacking null object at object position and null subject at subject position. The subject and object have been deleted in the Phonetic evidence, but they exist in the deep structure.The verb phrase 'نیبشتا کنین = nebeshta kanan=write' is a combination of two morphemes 'نیبشتا کن =nebeshta kan=write', which is a free morpheme and the other one is a bound morpheme 'ین=an= agreement' which declares the person, number, tense and its aspect. The bound morpheme 'ین=an', assists us to recover, recognize and infer the omitted subject which can be first person singular \*I.

The main verb 'نیبشتا کنین =nebeshta kanan=to write', shows the action of writing, in the context of the verb, it can be assumed that the verb 'write' is clearing indicating us that the action of writing will take place for something, this something which can be a book, an

article, an application, an editorial and a letter. Thus, it can be said that deleted object is *(letters) which is regained by the means of the Recoverability Condition (Haegeman, 1994) from the previous context of the daily conversation of the speaker and the inflection.

## 4. Discussion

The gigantic purpose or the aim of the corresponding research study is confirming, evaluating whether Balochi is a pro-drop language or not. On the basis of this, the researcher strains to explore Balochi as a pro-drop language. On the basis of the attained results and findings of the study, Balochi is found to be a pro-drop language. Languages which possess rich verbal inflections come in the class of pro-drop languages, such as Persian and Sindhi languages etc (Ali, 2016). The results of the prospective study contribute in supporting the previous research on pro-drop languages. Jahani (2019) claims Balochi language is a pro-drop language.

The current study drawn results and findings support the null argument structures that Balochi possesses null arguments at subject, object, and the subject and objects positions both together. Broadly speaking, a massive literature on this aspect (a pro-drop language) supports the notion that Balochi comes in the category of the pro-drop language.

The native speakers do not feel or feel discomfort, difficulties and hardships to perceive, grasp, and attain the embodying central point of view of the null arguments at subject, object and the subject and object positions both together while communicating, speaking and having conversation with each other or one another easily. Retaining and highlighting this unique characteristics in respect of null arguments paves the ways to research the related or the remaining other hidden qualities to safeguard the a language from attrition.

### 4.1. Findings

In the concerned study, the researcher has found and discovered the native speakers of Rakhshani and Makrani dialects, utilizing, uttering null arguments at subject, object, and both the subject and object positions and also being associated with null arguments in their daily communication and conversation. Balochi is also a pro drop language where in the phonetic form of the sentences 'pro (s) are normally deleted, unuttered, omitted, dropped at the agent (subject) or object positions in the said language, yet they were accepted in terms of grammar, syntax, semantics and pragmatics.

However, the omitted, dropped, unuttered pronouns or the elided arguments can be regained by the terms of the rich verbal morphological inflections. The objective which is 'to explore Balochi is a pro-drop language' has been proved by the investigator that Balochi language may drop, omit and un-utter the subject which is the doer of the action, object on which the action is done to and even though the within one argument or sentence subject and object both are dropped, omitted and deleted in the Phonetic Form. So, for regaining, inferring and identifying the Recoverability Condition of Haegeman and Extended Projection Principles (EPP) (1994), and Chomsky's Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT) (1988) were utilized for the attainment of the objective.

The findings, analysis and exploration have proved that Balochi is a pro-drop language like the other pro-drop languages of the world such as Sindhi, Pashto and Italian etc. (Ali, Khan

& Gulkhanda, 2021; Ali, Roonjho & Brohi, 2021; Amin & Ali, 2021; Jahani, 2019; Zahid, 2016; Ali, Bagddu & Maimota, 2014).

### 5. Conclusion

This paper examines the exploration of Balochi language as a pro-drop language. The current paper is associated with pro-drop parameters at subject, object, subject and object positions both of Balochi language. In the corresponding study, Rakhshani and Makrani dialects are the targeted dialects of Balochi language. The concerned paper explored Balochi to be a pro-drop language in terms of uttering null arguments at subject, object and both subject and object positions in particular and the Balochi language in general.

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