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## Dual Functions of Infinitives and Gerunds in Urdu and English: A Paradigm Function Morphology Analysis

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### Abstract:

This paper examines the role of the infinitives and gerunds of Urdu and English in the light of the theoretical concept of Paradigm Function Morphology developed by Gregory Stump to analyze the dual role of the two forms in both languages. This study aims at explaining the correlation between morphology and function of the forms, especially in cases where a form confers several different functions. An infinitive like “to read” and a gerund like “reading” can be used as a subject, direct object, complement, purpose clause or verbal noun in English. In a similar way, Urdu non-finite forms (also termed as nominal non-distinct forms) may have nominal, verbal, complement or purposive syntactic functioning, depending on the environment, especially verbal noun forms ending in -na e.g. *parhna* (to read/reading). The study follows qualitative and comparative linguistic approach in which some examples are selected from the Urdu and English/L2 to examine relationship between morphological and forms and grammatical functions. The Paradigm Function Morphology is used to explain how the grammatical function is systematically realized in the form of morphology, without assuming it as the usage of the morphology that has no basis. It is claimed that both Urdu and English display multifunctionality of nonfinite verbal forms but the multifunctionality is more explicit in English than in Urdu where it is largely dependent on context, postpositions and the syntactic context. The study will be helpful in comparative morphology, Urdu-English grammar and theoretical linguistics.

### Keywords:

Infinitives; Gerunds; Urdu Morphology; English Morphology; Paradigm Function Morphology; Gregory Stump; Non-Finite Verbs; Verbal Nouns; Form–Function Mapping; Comparative Linguistics

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Morphology is central to the study of language, as the structure of word forms and the expression of grammatical meanings are important issues (Bhadra & Banerjee, 2021). Many languages have a single form that performs many different functions. Instead, forms can have multiple functions and be used for multiple roles in grammar based on their syntactic and semantic context (Mustafa, Anwar & Rasool, 2021). This is particularly important when studying the non-finite forms of verbs (noun, gerund, participle and infinity) (Ilyas, 2025). They are intermediate forms between the verbs and the other grammatical classes since they can keep some verbal features while serving in a nominal, adjectival and adverbial function. Infinitives and gerunds are two of the largest classes of non-finite forms of verbs in English grammar. The most common form for the infinitive is "to" plus the form of the verb, so the form is "to read, to write, and to learn", whereas the gerund always is written with the -ing form of the verb: "reading, writing, learning" (Roy, 2025). But the purpose of their words doesn't just stop at what they mean (Carnesale, 2024). Infinitives can serve as subjects, objects, complements, and as purpose clauses, while gerunds can serve as subjects, objects, complements, and objects of prepositions, without losing any verbal properties, such as allowing them to take objects and adverbial modification. Nabi et al., (2025) and other major descriptive grammars of English consider such non-finite clauses as significant grammatical and syntactic constructions in English.

The Urdu language also has the presence of non-finite verb forms which have several grammar functions. The verbal noun or the infinitival form ending in -na is a particularly important form, e.g., *khana* (to eat/eating), *parhna* (to read/reading), *likhna* (to write/writing). Such forms can serve functions similar to the English gerund as well as those of the English infinitive. For instance, you could translate *Parhna muftid hai* as (reading is useful) or (to read is useful), depending on what is required to convey the sense. Forms like the ones in (5) are usually classified in Urdu grammar either as verbal nouns or as infinitive constructions, and are demonstrated to possess both verbal and nominal potential (Hussain & Mangrio, 2021). In this study, the multifunctional forms of these words are analyzed in the framework of a theory proposed by Gregory Stump, called Paradigm Function Morphology. Paradigm Function Morphology (PFM) considers morphology as a system in which paradigm variants make up a word form that expresses a grammatical property. The study of Stump is relevant specifically to the systematic aspect between the morphological shape of word forms and their functional roles in sentences (Batool & Saleem, 2023).

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Traditional grammar considers that infinitives and gerunds are distinct but they are stable when treating gerunds in their pedagogical description. In many cases, the gerund is introduced as a 'to + verb' structure, and in many accounts of English, the gerund itself is described as 'verb + -ing' structures functioning as nouns. This distinction is useful at the basic level but is not comprehensive enough for the multifunctional nature of the forms. For example, "to read" is a subject-like nominal that is used in place of functions, and "to read" is a complement used after I want to read. So also, "reading" in reading improves knowledge is nominal, while "reading books" carefully improves knowledge is verbal, that is, it takes an object and is modified adverbially. The same one crop up in Urdu where -na forms may represent either English infinitives or gerunds. The form *parhna* has a meaning of (to read or reading), depending on

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context. Hence, the problem that this study is trying to solve here is that the dual appearance of the both gerund and gerund participle for infinitives in Urdu and English language needs a formal morphological explanation. Paradigm Function Morphology is an appropriate mechanism since it clarifies that the morphological form can be systematically used to create different functions.

### **1.3 Research Aim and Objectives**

The goal of this article is to discuss the dual role of Infinitive and Gerund in Urdu version of English language in light of Paradigm Function Morphology.

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To identify the morphological forms and grammatical functions of infinitives and gerunds in English and their corresponding non-finite forms in Urdu.
- To examine how infinitives, gerunds, and Urdu non-finite verb forms perform dual nominal and verbal functions in different syntactic contexts.
- To analyze the relationship of Urdu and English non-finite structures through Gregory Stump's Paradigm Function Morphology.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the major morphological forms and grammatical functions of infinitives and gerunds in English and their corresponding non-finite forms in Urdu?
2. How do infinitives, gerunds, and Urdu non-finite verb forms perform dual nominal and verbal functions in different syntactic contexts?
3. How does Paradigm Function Morphology explain the relationship between morphological form and grammatical function in Urdu and English non-finite structures?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This research holds importance in comparative Urdu-English morphology and an explanation of multifunctionality of non-finite verbs is given in the light of theory as well. This will be useful for grammarians, Urdu-English translators and language teachers who are working on Urdu-English grammatical comparison.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Infinitives and Gerunds in English Grammar**

Infinitives and gerunds in English have been ample subject for traditional, descriptive and theoretical grammar (Alghamdi et al., 2025). In English, the basic form of a verb in the infinitive is often conveyed by the combination "to + the form", such as to go, to read, and to understand. But English also has bare infinitives: those that do not include to, particularly following modals like can, may, must and should as in (she can speak Urdu or they should leave early). Infinitives, which do not exhibit tense or subject agreement like finite verbs, are non-finite. However, they can serve many grammatical roles in the sentence (Stroński et al., 2020). The infinitive clause may perform different grammatical functions depending on its position in the sentence, for instance "to learn" a language requires patience; "she wants to study; his goal is to succeed; he went to the library to read". In these examples an infinitive retains the sense of a verb but fills an environment typically reserved for a noun phrase or an adverbial clause (Kostadinova et al., 2021). Kortelainen, (2020) categorized such structures

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with the system outlined in this paper under the more general umbrella of non-finite verbs in English grammar, in which the verbal form is conditioned by the function and distribution of the clause.

Gerunds on the other hand are typically formed by adding the -ing form to the verb. Often, they are called 'verbal nouns' as they can be used in a nominal position to possess verbal properties (Afzal et al., 2025). In reading improves vocabulary, for instance, reading is the topic of the sentence. She enjoys reading novels: reading is the object of enjoys and also the object of reads (novels). In the Urdu, he has an interest in learning, the gerund is used after the preposition in. Thus, these examples illustrate that gerunds have a hybrid syntactic and internal structure, acting like nouns in their syntactic structure but like verbs in their inner structure (Zymla, 2023).

## 2.2 Verbal Nouns, Infinitival Forms, and Gerundial Structures in Urdu

Indo-Aryan languages have a rich system of verbal morphology, such as finite verbs, participle, conjunctive participle, Verb Infinitives and Verbal Nouns (Mustafa, Anwar & Rasool, 2022). In Urdu, the form -na is significant because it reflects the English gerund as well as the English infinitive. These include: *khana* (to eat/eating), *pina* (to drink/drinking), *paṛhna* (to read/reading), and *likhna* (to write/writing). In Urdu grammar, these forms are frequently referred to as 'verbal nouns' or 'infinitives' as they are formed from verbal roots but can be used in a noun-like context.

For instance, *Paṛhnā mufīd hai* can be translated as (reading is useful) or (to read is useful). In this case, *paṛhna* is used as the sentence's subject. In sentence as *woh paṛhna chahta hai* can be translated as (he wants to read), the same form is used as the complement to the verb *chahta hai* (wants). In another construction, in order (to read or for reading), the oblique form of *parhany* is combined with the postpositional phrase of *ke liye*: *paṛhne ke liye*. It indicates that Urdu non-finite forms cannot be restricted to a specific grammatical function but change its function depending on its syntactic position and postpositional markers (Khan et al., 2020).

The latter is particularly valuable when trying to understand the structures found in Urdu, as Urdu forms are shown in Urdu script (and also in the Roman script) and the grammar patterns are explained specifically in terms of learning Urdu by an English-speaking learner (Khan et al., 2023). In a similar way, older grammatical works on Hindustani/Urdu like those of Platts (1874) also consider these forms of "infinitives" or verbal noun forms as significant elements in the grammar of the language.

## 2.3 Dual Grammatical Functions of Non-Finite Forms

Non-finite forms have various dual functions that noun forms can be used as more than one type of word yet also have an identifiable structure (Kebeda & Kekeba, 2021). This phenomenon is clearly found in the use of infinitives and gerunds in English. To forgive is difficult' has the infinitive in a nominal subject position and 'She came to apologize' shows the infinitive being used as a purpose clause. Form unchanged, but function different (infinitival.) Similarly, Swimming takes a complement phrase in Swimming across the river was dangerous, the gerund swimming serves as an agentive subject, still it has partly verbal characteristics, since it combines with the complement phrase (Aziz et al., 2020).

The Urdu form is similar but different in structure. The word *tairna*, could be read as (to swim) or (swimming). In sentence as *tairna sehat ke liye acha hai* the form is used as a subject, translating as either (swimming is good for health) or (to swim is good for health). The same form is used in the complement of a want verb: *main tairna chāhtā hun* (I want to swim).

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Therefore, one Urdu morphological shape might be associated with two English non-finite categories (Nabi et al., 2025).

In these examples, the form/function dichotomy has proven to be important. It is not possible to always intuit the meaning of a form from morphology alone. It can have very different meanings and uses, depending on its context, form, and situation. Hence there is a necessity to provide a theoretical model to account systematically possible relationships between a form and its functions (Hussain & Mangrio, 2021).

#### **2.4 Cross-Linguistic Studies on Urdu and English Morphology**

The differences like morphological and syntactic organization of Urdu and English are quite inappropriate. English tends to be very analyzable and is dependent on word order, auxiliaries and prepositions. The Urdu language, on the contrary, makes a more frequent use of postposition, agreement pattern, oblique form and complex predicate. These differences in structure carry over into the use of the non-finite forms of the verbs in both languages (Batool & Saleem, 2023).

The difference between the two is frequently more apparent in English than it is in German because the formal markers of an infinitive -to and a gerund -ing are present in English. The formal distinction between an infinitive and gerundial use is not always so clear in Urdu. Rather, the -na form can serve both purposes and the rough indication of postpositions, oblique-marking and syntactic position will suffice to fix the interpretation. This gap is significant for translation and second language learning. Urdu-speaking learners of English are sometimes confused when they have to reconcile whether to translate an Urdu -na ending as an English infinitive or gerund. So *padhna zaruri hai* or (to read is required) can be expressed in two grammatical structures: *padhna zaruri hai* or (to read is necessary), (Kortelainen, 2020).

Comparative study is, thus, significant for it is in comparative study that one sees how the languages can be used to convey the same grammatical meaning by different morphological structures. It also reveals that non-finite forms cannot be simply treated as an individual label of a unit, they need to be understood in the light of their function in the sentence.

#### **2.5 Research Gap**

Studies on English infinitives and gerunds have been studied widely in the realm of existing scholarship, while Urdu, as it relates to this topic, has been studied in terms of verbal nouns and infinitival forms according to the Urdu grammars available. Still, a more focused comparative study is needed, which considers these twin-roles of the forms in Urdu and English by a formal morphology. While most of the information out there describes the nature of these forms, there are less publications showing how a form has multiple grammatical functions systematically in two languages. Paradigm Function Morphology fills this gap as it offers a theoretical underpinning for the analysis of relation between morphological forms and functions. This study implies infinitival and gerundial multifunctionality through the settings provided by Urdu and English non-finite forms and based on Stump's framework.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### **3.1 Overview of Paradigm Function Morphology**

This study is based on the theory of Paradigm Function Morphology which is proposed by Gregory Stump. Paradigm Function Morphology (PFM) is an approach to morphology which accounts for association between word forms and grammatical properties in a paradigm. Unlike approaches which view only the "fusibility" of morphemes in words, PFM is focused on the connection between the ways in which the word is realized morphologically and the roles it

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plays in the grammar. In this use the investigation of morphology is not only the investigation of the structure of the word, but also the investigation of the expression of grammatical relations systematically with the help of forms (Abdullah, 2023).

A core tenet of PFM is the conception of paradigm in which forms of language reside. Paradigm: A system of related forms of words that express different grammatical properties. For instance, in a verb paradigm, there can be forms indicative of tense, aspect, agreement, mood and/or non-finiteness. Paradigm function: Map from lexeme + set of grammatical features to a specific form. This has led the theory to be very relevant on cases involving the realization of more than one grammatical function by the same form (Khan et al., 2023).

In the present study, the problem area of PFM is for the infinitives and gerunds, since both forms demonstrate an important morphology-meaning connection. To read is used as a subject, complement, and purpose expression; reading is used noun-like as a subject or object but still has the characteristics of a verb. Likewise, in the case of Urdu -na formation, for example, the translation of *parhna* can be the two (to read and reading). Thus, PFM serves as a handy means to describe the different nexus a given form can assume in the realization of different grammatical functions in context.

### 3.2 Gregory Stump's Concept of Form–Function Mapping

Among the other things that make Stump's theory important is the idea of mapping systematically from forms to grammatical properties, rather than only focusing on single forms. In PFM, a word form is not just formed by adding morphemes to a root. Instead, it is the outcome of a paradigmatic function that implements a certain configuration of grammatical values (Aziz et al., 2020). That is, the same or a similar form can be understood in different ways when it appears in different places in a system of the grammar (Abdullah, 2023).

Form–function mapping is a key idea of the present article. The surface forms of English infinitives and gerunds can't be understood without understanding English as well. For example, the form to read is morphologically recognized as an infinitive, but semantically it is used in various ways in “to read” is useful, “she wants to read, and he came to read”. It is used as a subject-like nominal clause in the first sentence, as a complement in the second sentence and as a purpose expression in the third sentence. Thus, the same morphological pattern is used in different grammatical functions.

Likewise, the English gerund reading can e.g. act as a subject (reading improves vocabulary), as an object (she enjoys reading), or as the object of a preposition (he is interested in reading). The form is morphologically constant but the function is changing in terms of syntax. *Parhna* has a similar usage as it can also act as a verbal noun, an infinitive or as a complement in Urdu. PFM can thus be used to explain this multifunctionality as a systemic, grammatical phenomenon and not a deviation from this.

### 3.3 Relevance of Paradigm Function Morphology to Infinitives and Gerunds

Paradigm Function Morphology is pertinent to the study of infinitives and gerunds because it throws away the absolute dichotomy between morphology and syntax. The status of non-finiteness can be morphologically marked for the case of infinitives and gerunds; the function of these is marked syntactically. This duality renders them appropriated to a theoretical model which links form and function.

The usual form for the infinitive in English is to + base verb and the gerund is usually expressed in the -ing form. Both of these forms are morphologically different, and they both may be used in a nominal position. For instance, to learn English is useful and Learning English is useful

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are both semantically equivalent but at the same time structurally different. In both instances, a verbal idea is used in the subject position. The distinction is that of its mapping of the verbal meaning on to the available set of finite non-finite forms of the language.

In Urdu, the case for PFM is even stronger: the -na form is often used to express meanings which are split in English between the infinitive and gerund. For instance, *sikhna zaruri hai* can mean either: (to learn is necessary or learning is necessary). It is also used in complement constructions as in *woh Urdu sikhna chahta hai* (he wants to learn Urdu). The Urdu version, therefore, does not directly align with just one of the English categories. The grammatical function is determined by its syntactic environment and other indication of the function.

Thus, PFM allows the researchers explaining these patterns in the light of morphological realization and grammatical function. It indicates that the non-finite forms are not 'accidental' these forms are part of a structured paradigm and present realizations of various grammatical functions under specific conditions in other words.

### **3.4 Analytical Categories Adopted for the Study**

The categories used in the study are the morphological form, syntactic position, grammatical function, nominal, verbal, complement function, purposive and cross-linguistic equivalence. These categories facilitate Urdu as well as English to be systematically compared. Every instance is analyzed and their surface form, sentence location and functional use is determined. The PFM viewpoint is then applied in explaining the manner in which the form realizes a particular grammatical value in a broader paradigm of non-finite structures.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1 Research Design**

Qualitative descriptive and comparative linguistic research approach is used in this study. The goal is not to statistically measure the frequency of a particular word, but to study the role played by gerund and infinitive in Urdu language and English. This study is descriptive study which explains the forms and functions of the selected samples. Comparative: as it compares and contrasts Urdu and English non-finite structures. It is also theory-driven, as the analysis is directed by Paradigm Function Morphology. One of the reasons for using a qualitative method in this study is that the main problems are in the context of the interpretation of grammar. Form, context and function of infinitives, gerunds and Urdu verbal noun forms is crucial. Hence selected examples are explored instead of as numerical data.

### **4.2 Data Sources**

The data set for this study comprises of some selected Urdu and English sentences with infinitives and gerunds etc. comparable non-finite verb forms. English examples are chosen from typical uses as described in main reference grammars (Bhadra & Banerjee, 2021). The Urdu examples have been chosen from accepted descriptions of Urdu (Schmidt 1999; Platts 1874), in which the main typological focus is on how the Urdu forms ending in *-na*, and oblique non-finite forms, as well as postpositional constructions are formed. There are examples containing grammar aspects as well as researcher made examples for controlled comparison. It is useful to have such examples where equivalent meanings can be contrasted in Urdu and English. For instance, an English sentence like (to read is useful) is comparable to Urdu sentence like *parhna mufid hai*. This enables one to see how one Urdu form can be used to represent more than one English non-finite form.

### **4.3 Sampling Criteria**

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Examples are chosen based on linguistic criteria. The first one is that the English form must be an infinitive form (e.g. to read) or a gerund form (e.g. reading). Secondly, there has to be a non-finite form such as a verbal noun (such as *parhna* in Urdu) or its oblique case in the Urdu data (such as *parhne* in Urdu). Third, in each example there should be a clear grammatical use, as an object, a subject, a complement or a purpose expression. Fourthly, samples are preferred in which the same form is used for more than one grammatical role. Finally, some instances of examples are chosen suitable for the Urdu-English comparison.

#### **4.4 Data Collection Procedure**

The data collection method is as follow: Identification of relevant examples from Urdu and English grammatical patterns. The examples in English are classified as either Infinitives or Gerunds and the examples in Urdu are classified as *-na* constructions, Oblique non-finite constructions or Postpositional non-finite constructions. Then, each sentence is categorized based on its syntactic position and its grammatical function.

The collection process also includes couples of Urdu and English samples whenever possible. For instance, an English infinitive subject clause can be contrasted with an Urdu *-na* subject construction. Here again, consider English gerunds following a preposition, as a contrast with Urdu oblique forms following a postposition. This comparative pair helps in the study to find out the equivalence as well as divergence of the two languages.

#### **4.5 Analytical Procedure**

The analysis is made in five major steps. Firstly, the structural form of every non-finite structure is identified. Part of the use in English is to differentiate the uses of the infinitive and gerund. In Urdu, it is a process of recognizing the oblique forms of *-na*. Secondly, the syntactic function of each form is explored, whether it is the subject, object, complement or a postpositional phrase. Finally, the role of the form in the syntactic system is identified. Fourth, the analysis of the form is done with the help of Paradigm Function Morphology in order to explain how the particular form functions in realizing a grammatical function. Fifthly, the comparison is done between Urdu and English examples to see the same meaning (grammatical) is conveyed by similar or different morphologic means.

### **5. Analysis and Discussion**

#### **5.1 Infinitives in English: Morphological Form and Grammatical Function**

The English infinitive is one of the most vital non-finite verb forms. It is most frequently used with to, to read, to write, to study, to learn etc. This is non-finite, that is, the verb does not have any indication of tense or subject-verb match. It still, however, has verbal meaning and can occur with object, complement, and adverbial modifier. This renders the infinitive a form that is somewhat flexible.

The one big use of the infinitive is the use of it as a subject. In sentences such as “to learn” a language requires effort, for instance, an infinitive clause (to learn a language), is the subject of the sentence. It is composed of a verb but appears in a place of noun phrase. This shows that it has a double nature: that is verbal form, but nominal function.

The infinitive can also be used as an object or complement. In She wants to study, to study is a finite verb that is used as a stage complement of the other verb wants. In His ambition to succeed, the infinitive is used as a subject complement too. It can also be used as an infinitive to tell you the goal of an action such as He went to the library to read. In this context read implies a function of going to a library.

According to Paradigm Function Morphology, the form of the infinitive realizes other functions

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based on its location in the clause. The form still can be recognized morphologically, and its syntactic role changes in certain environments. Thus, the grammar of the English infinitive is not monofunctional: it is a form that can represent more than one function.

### **5.2 Gerunds in English: Nominal and Verbal Functions**

English gerunds are the same base form of the verb with the addition of -ing, such as reading, writing, learning, and speaking. Usually, gerunds are said to be verbal nouns since they share both verbal and nominal attributes. They are verbal in that they are based on verbs and can be modified by an object or an adverb. They are nominal as they can be used in the place of nouns. For instance, gerund (reading) is the subject of (reading improves vocabulary). In, (she enjoys reading novels), reading is both the direct object of enjoys and it has a direct object (novels). The gerund follows the preposition as in (he is interested in learning Urdu). The following are examples of gerunds in sentence nominal position in which gerunds are still internally verbal. The two uses of gerunds are easier to see when contrasted with ordinary nouns. In Reading books carefully, reading is the gerund that takes books as its object, and the word carefully indicates how the reading is to be done. Such verbal dependents would not normally be used with an ordinary noun. Thus, the gerund forms a complex grammatical nature.

PFM does this because it considers the gerund to be a form which realizes a certain non-finite peripheral, functional, grammatical property and which can then be used at different syntactic locations. Actually, the form -ing is stable, but how it's valued grammatically depends on its function in the sentence. So, this use of the gerund is form-function combination in both morphology and syntax.

### **5.3 Infinitival and Gerundial Equivalentents in Urdu**

The Urdu sometimes fails to differentiate between the infinitival and gerundial meanings with the help of different surface forms like English does. The verbal noun/ infinitival form in Urdu is a central form and it is marked by the addendum -na. Such as *paṛhna* (to read/reading), *likhna* (to write/writing), *khana* (to eat/eating) and *sikhna* (to learn/learning). The forms come from verbal roots, and can be used both nominal and verbal.

The form *paṛhna* provides the meaning of subject of the sentence in the sentence In *Paṛhna muftid hai*. It can be interpreted to mean: (reading is useful, or to read is useful). This indicates that Urdu has one form which English may employ either a gerund or infinitive. The complement in *woh padhna chahata hai* (he wants to read) corresponds to the one represented in the above sentence. The more "natural" English translation here is "he wants to read.

In the case of Urdu (and other Persian languages), a postpositional oblique non-finite form is also permitted. *Padhne ke liye* (for reading or in order to read) are examples of that. Oblique form *paṛhne* occurs before the postpositional form *ke liye*. This schema can be used to convey purpose like in English, in which case it is an infinitival purpose clause.

The examples show that the morphology of Urdu non-finite is highly context sensitive with respect to syntactic and postpositional contexts. The -na form can be used as a verbal noun, as an infinitive or as a complement. One can't simply use its morphology to fully determine its function; context is needed to understand it.

### **5.4 Dual Functions of English Infinitives and Gerunds**

The English gerund and the English infinitive have both double functions; the difference lies in the way they manifest these functions. The typical contexts of the infinitive are those of potentiality, purpose, intention, and complement structure. For example, (I want to learn) is an expression of intention or desire, but (he came to help) is the expression of purpose. The

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infinitive can also be used nominally, however, (to learn) is important. This indicates that the infinitive is not just verbal; it can be used in a position of a noun.

However, the gerund is associated more with nominal function, as was noted. It generally identifies an activity such as Swimming is healthy or Reading develops knowledge. It nevertheless holds verbal properties though. The gerund in Reading books regularly has an object and an adverbial modifier. The gerund, then, cannot be classified simply as a noun.

Notice the difference I like to swim and I like swimming. The Infinitive might mean an act, preference, or a future possibility and the Gerund might mean a general activity or experience. While there can be overlap in the meaning, forms are not necessarily synonymous. This is an evidence that supports the conclusion that morphology is not completely independent of syntax, the same with semantics but it really contributes with the grammatical meaning.

This is explained with the duality of PFM, which sees forms as the realization of grammatical properties within the paradigm. In English, the infinitive and gerund are in distinct morphological positions but can have similar functions. Thus, their duality is not random.

### 5.5 Dual Functions of Urdu Non-Finite Verb Forms

Dual functions can be quite clearly seen in Urdu -na forms. Given their syntactic contexts, the same form can represent infinitives or gerunds of English. The subject in sentence like *tairna sehat ke liye acha hai* is *tairna* which can be translated as (Swimming is good for health) or (to swim is good for health). The same form is used in the sentence, *main tairna chahtā hun*, where it is used as the complement of a desire verb, and it is best translated as (I want to swim).

This alternation implies that the Urdu -nā present is not just one English present. In some situations, they are verbal nouns, in other situations they are the complement of an infinitive. They are context-sensitive, or rely on context, meaning and other grammatical clues. If the form is in the subject position, it may be a gerund/infinitive subject in English. It tends to be used as a complement to verbs of desire, ability, intention or necessity and frequently is equivalent to the English infinitive.

Oblique forms are also employed in the Urdu postpositional constructions. For instance, *kam karne ke liye* can be used to mean (to work to work) or (for work to work) or (in order to work). Postposition such as *ke liye* adds a meaning of purpose. Here, the form of the verb *kerne* is not read out only according to its morph; its function is determined based on the appositional string. Therefore, Urdu non-finite forms support the PFM stance referred to above, which posits a systematic connection between form and function. One morphological pattern can mean more than one grammatical function and functions of a pattern have to be understood in the context of the wider grammar.

### 5.6 Paradigm Function Morphology Analysis of Form–Function Relations

An analysis of the Urdu and English infinitives and gerunds using Paradigm Function Morphology demonstrates that non-finite forms can be thought of as form–function mapping. To + verb is an infinitive construction that can be used to express the following functions in English: subject, complement, purpose, and nominalized action. Verb + -ing can be a realizer of subject, object, complement or object of preposition. The various forms, though morphologically different, have overlapping functions.

The form -na in Urdu can be used in an even more extensive manner. It can be used with English to + verb in complement constructions, such as *main parhna chāhta hun* (I want to read). It can also be used in the same way as gerunds are used in English in subject constructions, such as *parhna mufid hai* (reading is useful). Its oblique form can be used to

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convey a purpose as in postpositional constructions like *parhne ke liye* (in order to read).

An analysis of these patterns from a PFM view point reveals that the function does not fit in fully with the form. Rather, the form is part of a paradigm where its meaning is ascertained through features and context. Two major forms are used in English for the distribution of functions, one the infinitive, one the gerund, a single major (oblique) form –*nā* and its variants serve a comparable function in Urdu. This not directly indicates that Urdu language is less systematic. Instead, it indicates that Urdu categorizes the form – function relationship in a different manner.

Hence PFM is applicable in the present study to account for both the morphological stability and functional variation. It enables to analyze one form as multifunctional without considering the functions of one form as unrelated to another.

### 5.7 Comparative Discussion: Urdu and English

The comparison indicates that English explicitly marks the distinction between infinitives and gerunds by means of its separate forms to + verb and verb + -ing. Urdu does, however, have (-na) forms to express various senses related to both the English infinitive and gerund. If we look at the form, it is therefore more clearly distinct in English and the functional overlap in one non-finite form is more distinct in Urdu. Both languages exhibit the occurrence of multiple functions for non-finite verb forms and multimodal interpretation of the form in various syntax positions in relation to its context.

## 6. Findings

### 6.1 Key Morphological Findings

The study concludes that the infinitives and gerunds in English are morphologically different. Infinitive is often expressed with to + the base form of the verb and the gerund often expressed by the -ing form of the verb. They are known forms that are distinct and could overlap. Thus, English is more clearly surface marked for non-finite categories. The situation is different in Urdu, -na is a key, non-finite verb form which can serve English infinitives and gerunds. It can also be used in an oblique position, like in *parhne ke liye*. In short, apart from the syntactic and postpositional context, Urdu does not make as much use of the use of separate morphological forms for infinitival and gerundial meanings as other languages.

### 6.2 Key Syntactic and Functional Findings

It reveals that the English gerund and its missing counterpart, the 'infinitive' may occur as a subject, object, complement and purpose expression. Infinitives are verbs that are used to show that someone wants to do something or for what purpose when they are used, verbal nouns are present participle nouns. Both forms are, however, capable of being used in nominal position. This is proof that these are really two forms of grammar. The multiple syntactic uses of Urdu non-finite forms also. form e.g. a form like *parhna* may be used as a subject: *parhna mufid hai* (it is good to learn), as a complement: *woh parhna chahta hai* or (he wants/desires to learn), and as a part of a purposive phrase: *parhne ke liye* (for the purpose of learning). The forms shows that an Urdu word may have many uses in the formation of a sentence.

### 6.3 Cross-Linguistic Findings

There is one significant cross-linguistic finding, namely the multifunctionality of both Urdu and English non-finite forms, but with different organization. In English the two concepts of the gerund and the infinitive are distinguished, in Urdu gerunds usually take the same form as infinitives. This difference is explained by Paradigm Function Morphology: Grammatical Forms can be realized by different functions in a Paradigm. The results have confirmed

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somewhat the notion that there is a systematic relationship between form and function but also that the nature of this relationship is different in various languages.

## **7. Conclusion**

### **7.1 Summary of the Study**

In this article, the use of the double role of infinitives and gerunds in Urdu and English language has been discussed on the basis of Paradigm Function Morphology. The study revealed that English infinitives and gerunds are formally different but functionally similar. Infinitives can act as Subjects, Objects, Compliments and Purpose expressions; gerunds can act as Subjects, Objects, Compliments and Prepositional Objects. While both forms are able to hold verbal meaning, they are at the same time able to fill 'grammatical places' belonging to other categories. The researchers have also found that the Urdu -na forms include functions of both the English infinitives and gerunds. A form like *parhna* can have different interpretations, either (to read or reading) as per the context. It is determined by its function, which is given by its syntactic position, by post positions and semantic interpretation. Thus, Urdu exhibits a great amount of functional overlap at a single morphological form.

### **7.2 Contribution to Morphological Theory**

The study contributes to the theory of morphology by showing the applicability of Paradigm Function Morphology in the analysis of the multifunctional ones. A form is not an independent entity but PFM takes a stance best formulated as follows: Rather, it is a paradigm realization of grammatical properties. It is particularly helpful in the analysis of variables like infinitives, gerunds and Urdu verbal nouns, which cannot be understood by relying upon the surface alone. In addition, the study broadens the use of PFM to Urdu/English comparative morphology. It demonstrates that multifunctionality is not atypical or unusual, but is a systematic characteristic of grammatical organization.

### **7.3 Pedagogical and Linguistic Implications**

The results can be significant for grammar teaching, translation and second language learning. A challenge for Urdu-speaking learners of English is finding the infinitives and gerunds as one Urdu -na form may turn out to signify two English forms. Contrastive explanations can be used to indicate the distinction between the two words (to read) *parhna*, and (reading) *parhai* in English and Urdu.

### **7.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

The future studies may be extended to this study by using corpus-based analysis of Urdu and English text. The particulates, conjunctive particulates and complex predicate in Urdu may also be studied with the application of Paradigm Function Morphology in future. Use of a comparative language such as Hindi and Punjabi, or other South Asian languages, could possibly yield a more detailed understanding of the non-finite system of verbs.

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