Lexicalization of Motion Event in Persian

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Abstract—In this paper we will have a short look at Persian language structure and discuss about expressing change of state and motion in Persian. Persian is considered among languages with a few simple verbs, and most of Persian verbs are compound. We can categorize the Persian verbs indicating motion event as following: 1. PATH is expressed in a non-head framed construction, and the main verb shows the MANNER of motion. Compounds in this pattern are combined verbs and non-separable. 2. PATH is indicated by the main verb (head-framed construction type) and is emphasized or explained in the non-verbal (satellite/non-head) part, and the MANNER of motion comes in the adverb. 3. The main verb indicates both PATH and MANNER of motion: Although, it may be considered as an incorporated compound verb in which the prepositional disappears after incorporation. Both head-framed and non-head framed construction of path are available in Persian, but except deictic verbs in which path is specified, in other cases, path is expressed mostly in a non-head construction type. The main verb almost expresses manner of motion, and path is mentioned in the non-head part of a clause. Of course, it needs more studies in order to judge and prove whether Persian is a non-head framed (S-Language) or not.

Index Terms—Persian, motion, compound verb, path and manner

I. INTRODUCTION

Persian is an Indo-European Language with SOV structure. The most verbs in Persian are compound as there are few simple verbs in this language. I discuss the article “compound verbs in Persian” of Dabir moghaddam (1997) before the main discussion in order to get a general knowledge about the construction of Persian compounds.

Persian is a SOV language. Verbs are marked for tense and aspect and agree with the subject in person and number.

(1) ali be madrese raft-∅
   ali to school went-3S
   ‘Ali went to school.’

(2) man tā xāne david-am
   I until house ran-1S
   ‘I ran to the house.’

Although verbs come at the end of sentence and it is a head-last language, Persian is otherwise head-first as in Noun-Genitive (Ezafe), Noun-Adjective, and Preposition-Noun. It is observed in the following examples that heads are initial.

(3) barādar-e man
    brother-EZ I
    ‘my brother’

(4) doxtar-e zibā
    girl-EZ pretty

(a) pretty girl

(5) dar xāne
    in house
    ‘in the house’

II. COMPOUND VERBS IN PERSIAN

Though many traditional grammarians have argued compound verbs in other languages and in Persian, still we don’t have a satisfactory treatment of this category in Persian. We may say that compound verb is a verb consists of a nonverbal part and a verb. Non-verbal part may be a noun, adjective, past participle, etc. Persian compound verb is considered as a whole word although its morphological structure is not simple.

Barjasteh (1983) also has discussed Persian compound verbs in his Ph.D. thesis. According to him, compound verbs may be divided into separable and nonseparable ones. In separable compounds, the nominal parts of compounds can take the accusative case marker -rā in a different structure and hence function syntactically as the direct object of their clauses.

(6) hasan az mā [tān tagāzā] rā kard-∅
    hasan from we this request OM did-3S
    ‘Hasan made this request to us.’
Actually lots of Persian verbs expressing the motion event are compound and we may consider the same element in those verbs. Here we have a glance at Dabir moghaddam’s article (1997) about the lexicalization of compound verb formation in Persian.

Dabir moghaddam (1997, p. 25) gives a suggestion about Persian compound verbs. He defines compound verb as a verb which “is made up of two otherwise independent constituents that form a compound word”. He spotlights the formation processes of compounds and makes a distinction between compound verbs formed through combination and those formed through incorporation and believes that these two vary in degree of productivity: “In compounds formed through combination, an adjective, noun, prepositional phrase, adverb or past participle has combined with a verb. In the formation of compound via incorporation, a nominal element functioning as a direct object loses its grammatical ending(s) and some prepositional phrases functioning as adverbs of location lose their preposition and incorporate with the verb. Therefore, in incorporation there is always a corresponding nonincorporated construction.”

**A. Combination**

Following him compound verbs formed through combination are constituents from a nonverbal element with a verb. This type is constituent of and adjective and an auxiliary, in which the verb can not be used in a separated form and thus no uncombined form of the verb can be considered. This is the kind that Barjasteh (1983) considers it as non-separable compound. The auxiliaries budan ‘to be’, šodan ‘to become’ and kordan ‘to make’ are used in this kind of compound verbs.

- delxor kordan annoyed do ‘to annoy’
- or constituent of noun and verb
- qadam qadan foot strike ‘to stroll’

A constituent of a prepositional phrase and a verb is another combined compound verb. This type consists of some motion expressing verbs, but mostly is understood metaphorically.

- (8) qadam qadan foot strike ‘to stroll’
- (9) be-donyā āmadan to-world come ‘to be born’
- (10) dar miăn nahādan in middle put ‘to discuss’

Compound verbs formed through combination can be made of an adverb and a verb. Some motion verbs are made through this construction.

- (11) forud āmadan down come ‘to land’
- (12) piš kešidan before draw ‘to bring forward’

The last type of combined compounds is the compound which includes past participle and passive auxiliaries. These are passive of compound verbs. The auxiliary involved is šodan ‘become’. Any transitive verb that may be passivized belongs to this set.

- (13) košte šodan killed become ‘to be killed’

Although Dabir moghaddam (1997) separates this kind of verbs as a compound formed through combination, I think it may be considered just as the passive form of simple verbs, as in the above example the active verb is koštan, and just the past participle follows the verb šodan to form the passive verb as the process of formation applies.

**B. Incorporation**

Compounds formed through incorporation are those in which direct object or preposition phrase are incorporated with a verb. In Persian when the direct object looses its grammatical endings (e.g., the postposition -rā, the indefinite marker -i) it may incorporate with the verb and then create an intransitive compound verb which is a conceptual whole. For instance 14 (a) contains an independent direct object qazā-yēš-ān which is incorporated with the verb xord-and in 14(b).

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{(7) * ali} & \text{[[in qadam]} & \text{rā} & \text{zad-Ø]} \\
&\text{Ali} & \text{this step} & \text{OM} & \text{struck-Ø}
\end{align*}
\]

Incorporation occurs in Persian also in the case of prepositional phrases functioning as adverbs of location also according to Dabir moghaddam (1997). After incorporation the prepositional disappears. Examples (a) and (b) below exemplify this possibility.

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{(14) a. bačče-hā qazā-yēš-ān rā xord-and} \\
&\text{child-pl food-his/her-pl OM ate-3P} \\
&\text{‘The children ate their food.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{b. bačče-hā qazā xord-and} \\
&\text{Child-PL food ate-3P} \\
&\text{‘The children did food eating.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Incorporation occurs in Persian also in the case of prepositional phrases functioning as adverbs of location also according to Dabir moghaddam (1997). After incorporation the prepositional disappears. Examples (a) and (b) below exemplify this possibility.

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{(15) a. bačče be zamin xord-Ø} \\
&\text{child to ground ate-3S} \\
&\text{‘The child fell to the ground.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{b. bačče zamin xord-Ø} \\
&\text{child ground ate-3S}
\end{align*}
\]
The child fell down.
This kind of incorporation may be observed in expressing the motion event in Persian and it will be discussed later.

III. PERSIAN PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions may be divided into two groups: bare prepositions and *ezafe* prepositions (those which are always used in genitive case). Following are lists of the preposition used in motion expressing, divided according to whether express vector of motion or conformation.

A. Prepositions Which Show Confirmation

outside of: birun-e, xârej-e
inside: dâxel-e, tu-ye
in front of: jolo-ye, piš-e
behind of: pošt-e, pas-e
on, above: bâlây-e, ru-ye
under: zir-e
between: bein-e

These prepositions (except bein-e ‘between’) may be combined with the verb to constitute a compound verb, and then they lose the form of *ezafe*, e.g., birun raftan ‘to go out, exit’.

B. Prepositions Which Show Vector

from: az
to: be
as far as: tâ

These prepositions with their following names may come before a motion verb to be the satellite and show the PATH of the motion. Most of them (except be-taraf-e ‘toward’ appear without *ezafe*, e.g., tâ xâne davidan ‘to run until the house’.

IV. EXPRESSING THE MOTION EVENT IN PERSIAN

Following Talmy (1985) one can distinguish two types of languages –perhaps a universal split- in terms of whether they prefer to express change of state in verbs or in elements associated with verbs. He divides languages to verb-framed languages, in which PATH is indicated by the main verb in a clause, and satellite-framed languages, which PATH is given by a satellite to the verb in those languages. These two types of lexicalization pattern entail two types of grammatical construction for motion events. Here we study and discuss this idea in Persian. We explained before that compound verbs in Persian are considered as a whole word, it is difficult to distinguish whether path is mentioned by the verb or the satellite. So we may distinguish two terms for expressing change of states, one head framed construction and the other is non-head framed construction. Still we can not decide about Persian to be one of these two patterns. In this paper after an examination we could have a hypothesis and in the next steps of paper we will try to find out whether Persian is a head framed language or non-head framed language in expressing motion event. First we have a look at Persian verbs describe change of location, the core feature of a motion event.

Here are some Persian verbs which express motion event. As mentioned before in Persian, compound verbs are considered as a whole and we can not say that which part of the verb is the main in those verbs. Anyway, the verbal part of a compound is considered as the head of the clause. Persian motion verbs can be divided as following:

1-The main verb expresses path of motion: (mostly auxiliaries or deictic verbs, except *gozâstan* ‘pass’).

| raftan | go | go |
| ámadan | come | come |
| vâred šodan | enter become | go into, enter |
| dâxel šodan | inside become |
| xârej šodan | outside become | go out, exit |
| birun raftan | out go |
| bâlây raftan | up go | go up, rise |
| bâlây ámadan | up come |
| soud kardan | rise do |
| päin ámadan | down come | come down, fall |
| päin raftan | down go |
| nozul kardan | falling do |
| rad šodan | pass become | get across, cross |
| obur kardan | pass do |
| gozâstan | pass |

2-Verbs express manner of motion:

| qadam zadân | foot hit(strike) | walk |
Verb expressions both path and manner of motion:

- piăde-ravi kardan on foot-going do
- davidan run
- parvāz kardan flying do
- paridan fly, jump
- harekat kardan motion do

Verbs express both path and manner of motion:

- reże raftan troop go
- piăde raftan walking go
- parvāz kardan flying do
- harekat kardan motion do

As it is observed, most of motion verbs are compound, and just a few simple verbs are included. Reviewing the compound verbs, we may find some patterns for construction of these verbs:

(a) (preposition + raftan "to go"): (Path):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>raftan</th>
<th>Path</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>birun</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>go out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>go into</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>păin</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>go up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pas</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>go down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piš</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>go forward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) ([N/Adj/Adv] + raftan "to go"): (Manner + Path):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/Adj/Adv</th>
<th>raftan</th>
<th>Manner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>răh</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yartme</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>trot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piăde</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reże</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>troop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sinexiz</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>chest crawl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>şirje</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>dive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in Persian compounds, the main verb (deictic verb) refers to PATH and emphasized by the non-head part of the compound (satellite), the preposition which is an adverb here, so the compound verbs formed in this way express the PATH of motion as it is observed above. It is possible also to add the prepositions to the deictic verb ămadan "come" and have the opposite meaning of above verbs. This kind of verbs can be considered as incorporated compound verbs which occur when prepositional phrase functions as adverbs of location.

(b) ([N/Adj/Adv] + raftan "to go"): (Manner + Path):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/Adj/Adv</th>
<th>raftan</th>
<th>Manner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>răh</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yartme</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>trot (for horse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piăde</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reże</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>troop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sinexiz</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>chest crawl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>şirje</td>
<td>raftan</td>
<td>dive/plunge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This kind of verbs is a different pattern of expressing motion event. As in Persian compounds are considered as a whole word, and in this kind of compounds the former part express the manner of motion and the later indicates the PATH and it is a whole, there is no special emphasize on PATH or MANNER of motion in this verbs. We can use another word by a conjunction referring to the first part of the verb. Also in the following sentence

| 16 | sarbâzān moqâbel-e rahbar reţa raftand. | soldiers troop in front of the leader. |

there is no special ground for the verb. The compound verb is just expressing the act of trooping as there is no reţe ămadan. For more explanation, we may have the word piăde-ravi ("walking/on foot going") ‘walking’ that can be used in

| 17 | Man piăde-ravi-rā az savârî bištar dust dâram. | ‘I like walking more than riding.’ |

Thus we may consider this pattern of verbs as a third type which indicates both PATH and MANNER of motion. Though in this type, the verb is deictic, but the compound verb is used to express the manner of motion.

(c) (noun + kardan ‘to do’):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun</th>
<th>kardan</th>
<th>Manner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nozul</td>
<td>kardan</td>
<td>falling do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soud</td>
<td>kardan</td>
<td>rising do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harekat</td>
<td>kardan</td>
<td>move do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piăde-ravi</td>
<td>kardan</td>
<td>on foot-going do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parvāz</td>
<td>kardan</td>
<td>flying do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(d) ([N/Adj] + şodan ‘become’):
These two kinds of motion compound verbs are constituent of nouns and auxiliaries. As the verbal part of these compounds has no special motional meaning, actually the meaning is understood from the former part of compound (non-head part). Thus in a case the first part refers to manner of motion, compound is understood to be a manner expression of motion, e.g., nozul kardan ‘descend’ or rad šodan ‘pass’, and if the first part of compound includes the PATH in its meaning it may be adjusted to be a Path expressing compound, e.g., parvâz kardan ‘fly’.

Here are some sentences which include different motion verbs in written Persian.

(18) (man) (be/tă) istgăh raftam. 
   Deictic
   I went to the station.

(19) (man) tă istgăh  
   (I) to station  
   {qadam zadam/ ♦piâde raftam} 
   Non-head / Deictic
   I walked to the station.

(20) (man) be dăxel-e xăne davidam. 
   (I) to inside-EZ. house ran-1S
   I ran into the house.

(21) (man) (qadamzanăn) be dăxel-e xăne davidam. 
   (I) (walking) to inside of house went1S
   I walked into the house.

(22) ♦(man) az xăne birun davidam/ {be xărej-e xăne davidam} 
   (I) from house out ran-1S. / {to outside-EZ house ran1S}
   I ran out of the house.

(23) (man) az arze rudxăne qadam-zanăn goząštam. 
   Head framed
   (I) from across-EZ river footing passed/crossed-1S
   I walked across the river.

(24) (man) az arz-e rudxăne davăn davăn goząštam 
   Head framed
   (I) from across-EZ river running running passed-1S
   I ran across the river.

(25) ♦(man) az tappe bâlă davidam/ {tă nok-e tappe davidam} 
   (I) from hill up ran-1S / {until top-EZ hill ran-1S}
   I ran up the hill.

(26) (man) tă {bâlă-ye/nok-e} tappe qadam zadam 
   Non-head
   (I) until [up/top-EZ] hill foot hit-1S
   I walked up the hill.

(27) (man) be dăxel-e salon negăh kardam. 
   Non-head
   (I) to inside-EZ hall look did-1S
   I looked into the hall.

(28) ♦(man) yek tup (ră) be dăxel-e jabe partăb kardam. 
   Non-head
   (I) a ball (OM) to inside-EZ box throw did-1S
   I threw a ball into the box.

V. LEXICALIZATION OF PERSIAN VERBS EXPRESSING MOTION EVENTS

Considering the above points we can categorize the Persian verbs indicating motion event as following:

1. PATH is expressed in a non-head framed construction, and the main verb shows the MANNER of motion. Compounds in this pattern are combined verbs and nonseparable.
(29) (man) tā bālāy-e tappe qadam zadam.
   I walked up the hill.
(tā as far as top-EZ hill foot hit-1S.
(30) tā nok-e tappe davadam.
   I ran up the hill.
(tā as far as top-EZ hill ran-1S.

2. PATH is indicated by the main verb (head-framed construction type) and is emphasized or explained in the non-verbal (satellite/non-head) part, and the MANNER of motion comes in the adverb:

(31) a. qadamzanān az tappe bālā raftām.
    walking from hill up went-1S
    I walked up the hill.

3. The main verb indicates both PATH and MANNER of motion:

(32) jōqd az surāx-e derāxt birun parid
    Owl from hole-EZ tree out flew-3S
    Owl flew out of the hole.

Another example:

(33) (man) az tappe bālā davadam.
    (I) from hill up ran-1S.
    I ran up the hill.

Although, it may be considered as an incorporated compound verb in which the prepositional disappears after incorporation. (32) may have been as below before incorporation.

(34) jōqd az dāxele-e surāx be birun parid.
    Owl from inside-EZ hole to out flew-3S

Both head-framed and non-head framed construction of path (Talmy’s verb-framed and satellite-framed patterns) are available in Persian as it is observed above, but except deictic verbs in which path is specified, in other cases, path is expressed mostly in a non-head construction type. The main verb almost expresses manner of motion, and path is mentioned in the non-head part of a clause. Of course, it needs more studies in order to judge and prove whether Persian is a non-head framed (S-Language) or not.

REFERENCES


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