

Lexical Aspect of compound verbs in the Birjandi dialect

Dr. Zahra Abbasi³

Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

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1- Introduction

Birjandi dialect is one of eastern Iran dialects. Compared to standard Persian, this dialect is more diverse and vast in terms of using verb, and it has morphological varieties and diverse forms that cannot be observed in Persian and other dialects. Syntax of Birjandi dialect follows the principles of Persian sentence making, and the main difference between Birjandi dialect and standard Persian lies in phonology and morphology (Rashed Mohassel, 1998).

In this paper, in addition to studying aspect and its types in Persian, durative lexical aspect in compound verbs in Birjandi dialect is investigated. Furthermore, Corresponding compound verbs with the light verb of “kardan” [do] and “dashtan” [have], and continuous lexical aspect in these verbs in Birjandi dialect would be dealt with.

2- Theoretical framework

Aspect is a main feature of the structure of Indo-European languages. Today it distinctly exists only in Slavic and Greek languages, and in other Indo-European languages aspect is in contrast with the concept of tense. In this work, lexical aspect in Birjandi dialect is investigated and the categorization of lexical aspect made by Abolhasanai (2011) and Golfam (2006) is used as the framework of the study.

The lexical aspect of a verb is a part of the way in which that verb is structured in relation to time. (Comrie 1976:3) Any event, state, process, or action which a verb expresses (collectively, any eventuality) may also be said to have the same lexical aspect. Lexical aspect is distinguished from grammatical aspect: lexical aspect is an inherent property of a (semantic) eventuality, whereas grammatical aspect is a property of a (syntactic or morphological) realization. Lexical aspect is invariant, while grammatical aspect can be changed according to the whims of the speaker. (Bybee 2003:157)

According to Abolhasani (2011, p. 102), aspect shows the process of doing the verb in terms of continuity, repetition, and duration, and lexical aspect is in contrast with grammatical aspect. Lexical aspect is obtained from verb's lexical features and grammatical aspect is taken by verb during its inflexion. Golfam (2006, p. 74)

1- Corresponding Author: abasiz@modares.ac.ir

believes that lexical aspect is of four types, including punctual, durative, stative and dynamic.

In the initial categorization of lexical aspect, Abolhasani (2011) refers to situational- and not morphological- distinction between stative and dynamic verbs. He divides dynamic verbs into two groups of punctual and durative, and {according to Cameri's categorization (1976)} divides them into two groups of telic and atelic.

3- Methodology

By using categorizations of Abolhasani and Golfam as the theoretical framework of the study, Birjandi compound verbs were studied. Data consisted of sixty corresponding compound verbs with the light verb of "kardan" and "dashtan" and the sentences in which these verbs were used. These corresponding verbs were compared in terms of being stative or dynamic, punctual or durative, and telic or atelic. The data were chosen based on the author's linguistic intuition and among compound verbs of standard Persian compared to Birjandi dialect, and their sentences were made by native speakers of this dialect.

Based on lexical aspect and the type of situation, data were divided into two groups: a) activities, b) achievements. Several examples of these two groups of verbs were presented and their aspect and semantic differences were taken into account. Data show that in Birjandi dialect compound verbs with the light verb of "kardan" are in contrast with their corresponding compound verbs with the light verb of "dashtan". These corresponding verbs are different from each other in terms of lexical aspect.

4- Discussion

Data related to activities are expressed in the form of ten sentences. In these data, compound verbs, which express the activity and have dynamic, durative and atelic lexical aspect, are in contrast with each other with two light verbs of "kardan" and "dashtan". Although it seems that, in these samples, lexical aspect has not changed, in compound verbs with the light verb of "dashtan" there is more emphasis on the continuity and duration of action over time. Therefore, continuation of action and as a result durative aspect of these corresponding verbs are different for Birjandi speakers.

Data of the second group (achievements) consist of fifty sentences, reflecting higher frequency of this group of verbs. These data show that compound verbs with the light verb of "kardan" have dynamic, punctual and atelic lexical aspect, however, their corresponding compound verbs with the light verb of "dashtan" possess dynamic, durative and atelic lexical aspect. Thus, using the light verb of "dashtan" in this group of compound verbs creates durative lexical aspect instead of punctual lexical aspect, and atelic lexical aspect instead of telic lexical aspect.

Therefore, it can be said that in Birjandi dialect there is aspectual difference between corresponding compound verbs with the light verb of “kardan” and “dashtan”, and compound verbs with the light verb of “kardan” possess *durative* and *atelic* aspect. Furthermore, as Estaji has stated, this aspect in Tehrani dialect is not as frequent as in Birjandi dialect, and just a few verbs of this type can be mentioned. However, regarding systematic representation of durative aspect in Birjandi dialect by using compound verbs with the light verb of “dashtan” instead of the light verb of “kardan”, it seems that this aspect can be traced and investigated in other dialects of Persian too.

5- Conclusion

Data of this study show that corresponding compound verbs with the light verb of “kardan” and “dashtan” in Birjandi dialect have two different aspects, and the use of the light verb of “dashtan” in such compound verbs expresses two aspectual concept of “atelicity” and “duration of action”. Therefore, “dashtan” in such compound verbs has an aspectual function, adds the sense of duration and continuity of action to the verb and turns punctual and telic verbs into durative and atelic ones. This point is in line with Khanlari’s (1998) idea regarding using such verbs in Old Persian and shows that Birjandi dialect has maintained this aspect up to the present time.

Key words: Aspect, Birjandi dialect; lexical Aspect; punctual verb; durative verb.

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