A Comparison of somePhonological-morphological Aspects ofVerb System in AdkaniTati Dialect and StandardPersian

Abstract

Languages and dialects are considered as the most important cultural elements and as a great human asset. Since more and more dialects -and even languages- are becoming extinct every year, it would be necessary to study, collect, and describe this human heritage. This research aims at describing the phnological-morphological aspects of verb system in Adkani dialect, the dialect of Adkan, a village of Esfarayen, a town in North Khorasan Province in the northeast of Iran. Adkani is classified as one of Khorasani Tati dialects which has not been studied fully yet. This paper is, in fact, part of the first comprehensive description of the dialect, carried out by the writers. It should be mentioned, however, that such major neighbouring dialects as Ghuchani, Sabzevari, and Neyshabouri –which share many features with Adkani dialect– had already been described according to scientific linguistic criteria. The linguistic data of this research was gathered by interviewing ten old and middle-aged, uneducated Adkani speakers of both genders; it was because one of the goals of this study was to collect and record older verb forms. At the same time, one of the writers, a native speaker of the dialect, has also made use of her own linguistic intuition. The speakers had to answer some prefabricated questions so that they could be able to produce more language material in a natural manner. The collected data were later transcribed using IPA phonetic symbols. According to the data collected, it was clearly evident that Adkani verb system is completely different from that of Standard Persian. The results showed that 1) Unlike Standard Persian, Adkani dialect lacks present perfect progressive tense, distant past perfect tense, and progressive tenses; 2) Adkani inflectional endings are completely different from those of Standard Persian; 3) Adkani past tense morphemes are different from those of Standard Persian; 4) this dialect, because of the highly frequent verbal prefix vowel harmony with the main verb stem vowel in Adkani verb forms shows phonetically different verbal prefixes. For example, Standard Persian prefix /mi-/ which indicates both declarative form and present progressive tense is sometimes changed into /mo-/, and /mu-/; similarly, Standard Persian prefix /be-/ for subjunctive form is occasionally changed into /bo-/, and finally

Standard Persian verb negation prefixes /næ-/ is often changed into /ne-/ and /no-/; 5) In Adkani, the difference between present perfect and simple past tenses is a matter of the place of stress. By moving the strss from the last syllable which is a defining characteristic of simple past tense verbs and moving it to the penultimate syllable, they are changed into present perfect form ; 6) In Adkani, future tense can be composed in two different ways: it can be formed by using declarative present tense; it can also be formed by using the non-finite form of the auxiliary *x stæn*(want), i.e. *mexa* plus present stem and adding the proper inlectional ending; 7) In both Adkani, and Standard Persian, making the imperative forms follows the same pattern, i.e. for second person singular by adding prefix /be-/ (or one of its forms) to the bare present stem: no inflectional ending is needed except for such few verbs as *?ist dæn* (to stand), which take the inflectional ending /-æg/. For second person plural, the inflectional ending /-in/ is added. It is worth mentioning that the imperative form of the verb *bæstæn*is made by its past stem. Imperative verbs are negated by prefix /mæ-/ which was used in Middle Persian as well. 8) In Adkani dialect, auxiliary verb form /bud/ is reduced to /-d/; this complex prominent phonological phenomenon can be explained based on the following stages; for example, for the past perfect of the verb *goftæn*(to tell), in the first person singular in this dialect (Standard Persian /goftebudæm/), the following stages have to be considered: at the first stage, we have the underlying form /goftebudom/; at the next stage, long vowel /u/ -because of lacking stress- changes into weak vowel /ə/ (/goftebədom); then, the weak vowel schwa is deleted and a new syllabification takes place (/goftebdom/); later, /d/ and /b/ are merged (/gofteddom/); then, there would be the deletion of one of the consonants of the geminate /-dd-/ (/goftedom/); and at the final stage, we have compensatory lengthening because of the deletion of one of the «/d/»'s in the geminate (/gofte: dom/). It is suggested that in order to facilitate the process of designing a comprehensive dialect atlas of the verb forms for the area, other dialects in the area to be studied and described fully; this helps the historical linguists to study the process of verb form change and trace it much easier.

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