

Extended Abstract

Construction of Compound Verbs and Verbal Phrases in Some Middle Persian Texts

Samira Narmashiri

MA in Ancient Iranian Languages, Velayat
University, Iranshahr, Iran
narmashiri2019@gmail.com

Shima Jaafari Dehaghi¹

Assistant Professor in Ancient Iranian Languages,
Velayat University, Iranshahr, Iran
sh.jaafari@velayat.ac.ir

Introduction

Middle Persian is one of the Middle Iranian Languages. Traditionally, historical linguists divide the history of Iranian languages into three stages namely, Ancient, Middle and New Iranian languages. Therefore, Old Persian which is one of the Ancient Iranian languages has changes to Middle Persian and Middle Persian has changes to New Persian. At each stage, these languages have different features, for example, Old Persian has a different verbal and noun structure and Middle Persian has some special features too. One of the major changes of Old Persian is the structure of verbs and verbal phrases. When Old Persian changed to Middle Persian, the verbal stems, the tense, the mood and many other features in verbs were made much simpler. This could also be seen in compound verbs and verbal phrases in Middle Persian. As in many other languages, in Middle Persian compound verbs and verbal phrases are used to convey meanings which could not be conveyed by verbs alone. Compound verbs are linguistically a multi-word compound that function as a single verb. One component of the compound is a light verb or vector, which carries any inflections, indicating tense, mood, or aspect, but provides only fine shades of meaning. In the present research, this definition of compound verbs is used.

Many researchers have given definitions for compound verbs and verbal phrases in Middle Persian. Rostorgueva has mentioned compound verbs and verbal phrases in Middle Persian in her research and said that we do not have many compound verbs in Middle Persian. Mansouri has also paid attention to compound verbs and verbal phrases. He believes that the structure of the verb in Middle Persian can be categorized in two ways. 1- Main verbs 2- So-

¹ Corresponding Author

called light verbs. In his opinion, the course of linguistic and historical evolution of such verbs shows that they are the remnants of the verbal system of ancient Iranian languages, which under certain rules and systems have reached Middle Persian and then to New Persian. Bruner has also mentioned compound verbs in his research. He has dealt with the syntactic structure of Middle Iranian languages. He discussed the role of the verb in simple sentences and then the verb in compound sentences. Henning in his doctoral dissertation, has investigated the grammatical structure of verbs in Turfān Middle Persian and Parthian Pahlavi and how it evolved.

The aim of this paper is to collect and analyze the compound verbs and verbal phrases in three Middle Persian texts of *Kārnāmey-e Ardašīr-e Bābakān*, *Andarz-e Mehraspandān* and *Pahlavi Ravāyat*. In order to do that, all three texts have been studied carefully and compound verbs and verbal phrases have been selected. The construction of compound verbs and verbal phrases in Middle Persian was presented according to the evidence in these three texts. It should be noted that in this research, the definition of compound verb is based on the definition given above. This is that a compound verb is formed by linking a non-verb structure such as a noun, adjective, object noun, preposition, or an adverb with a present structure, and this is what is intended in this research. Regarding the current term, since there is a consensus among most researchers, the definition intended by the majority was considered. This means that the verbal phrase is a set of words in which the meaning of the current component is completely clear and non-metaphorical and includes several words (for example, preposition + noun, adjective + verb).

Analyzing the compound verbs in question, which are extracted from the three Middle Persian texts of *Kārnāmey-e Ardašīr-e Bābakān*, *Andarz-e Mehraspandān* and *Pahlavi Ravāyat*, shows that light verbs such as "kardan", "burdan" and "grifan" used with nouns, have made compound verbs. Therefore, it can be concluded that in Middle Persian language, nouns, adjectives, adverbs and groups of prepositions are used with a limited set of light verbs to form a compound verb. Verbal phrases, according to the definition based on the work, usually consist of three components, whose general meaning is obtained by relating the components with each other. The construction of the verbal phrase in these texts is actually made in three ways. One is the combination of preposition, noun and verb; second preposition, noun and verb and third preposition, adverb and verb. Most present participles are equivalent to a simple verb or a compound verb, but a few are used only in the present participle form (e.g. *pad paymān kardan*). Therefore, *āfrīn kardan*, *pādifrāh kardan*, *namāz burdan*, *bēš burdan*, *abām grifan* are examples of compound verbs which are constructed using a noun and a light verb. In addition, compound verbs such as *grāmīg dāštan* and *abē-bīm būdan* are constructed using an adjective and a light verb. Compound verbs such as *andar āmadan*, *andar šudan* and *abāz dāštan* are constructed using adverbs and light verbs. Compound verbs such as *andar ēstādan* and *pay grifan* are constructed using prepositions and light verbs. For verbal phrases we had *pad paymān grifan*, *pad bēš budan* which are structured by a preposition and noun and light verb; also *pad zanīh grifan* and *pad dāmādīh*

griftan are other verbal phrases structured by preposition, abstract noun and light verb. In conclusion, there was many compound verbs and verbal phrases found in these three Middle Persian texts. It is recommended to do the same research for other Middle Persian texts in order to collect more data about compound verbs and verbal phrases. By conducting such research, a complete dictionary of Middle Persian which consists all the compound verbs and verbal phrases can be compiled. This will be very useful for students and beginners who start learning Middle Persian and the structures can be compare to New Persian as well. There are some projects for compiling Middle Persian Dictionaries currently under way which can benefit from such research.

Key words: Middle Persian, Compound verbs, Verbal Phrases, Kārnāmey-e Ardašīr-e Bābakān, Andarz-e Mehraspandān, Pahlavi Ravāyat.

References

- Amouzadeh, Mohammad, Sharif, Babak, 2017, "Persian Compound Verb Formation from a Cognitive Grammar Viewpoint", *Journal of Language Related Research*, Vol.8, Issue 2, pp. 149-170.
- Arzhang, Gholamreza, 2006, *Contemporary Persian Grammar*, Tehran: Ghatre.
- Brunner, C., 1977, *A Syntax of Western Middle Iranian*, Delmar, Caravan Books: New York.
- Dabir Moghadam, Mohammad, 1997, "Compound Verbs in Persian", *Journal of Linguistics*, year 12, No. 1&2, pp.18-44.
- Farahvashi, Bahram → *Kārnāme-ye Ardešīr-e Bābakān*.
- Grenet, F. 2003 → *La Geste...*
- Guyova, Rostor, 2000. *Grammar of Middle Persian*, Translated into Persian by Dr. Valiollah Shadan. Tehran: Association of Cultural Works and Figures of Tehran University.
- Henning, W.B., 1977, "Das verbum des Mittelpersischin der turfanfragmente", im *Acta Iranica* 14 (Selected Papers), Leiden, pp. 65-160.
- Kārnāme-ye Ardešīr-e Bābakān*, 2016, Trans. Bahram Farahvashi, sixth edition, Tehran: University of Tehran.
- Khanlari, Parviz, 1987, *History of Persian Language*, Vol 2. Tehran, Nashr-e Now.
- La Geste d'Ardashir Fils de Pābag, Kārnāmag ī Ardaxšēr ī Pābagān*, 2003, Traduit Du Pehlevi Par Frantz Grenet, Editions A Die, Paris.
- MacKenzie, D.N. 1971, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary*, Oxford University, Oxford.
- Mansoori, Yadollah, 2003, "Analysis of the Structure of Denominative Verbs in Middle Persian", *Nāme-ye Farhangestān*, Vol.22, pp.108-124.
- Mansoori, Yadollah, 2005, *An Etymological Study of Pahlavi Verbs*, Tehran: Āsār.
- Mansoori, Yadollah, 2015, *An Etymological Dictionary of Middle Persian (Pahlavi) Verbs*, Tehran: Āvā-ye Khāvar.
- Mirfakhrai, Mahshid → *Ravāyat-e Pahlavi*
- Naghzguay-Kohan, Mehrdad, Davari, Shadi, 2012, "Light Verb Development", *Grammar*, Vol.8, pp. 227-244.

- Oriyān, Saeed → Pahlavi Texts. *Pahlavi Texts*, ed. Jamasp Asana, Tehran: Iranian Cultural Foundation.
- Ravayat-e Pahlavi*, Transliteration, Translation, Commentary, 2012, trans. Mahshid Mirfakhrai, Tehran: Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies.
- Rezai Baghbidi, Hassan, eds. 2008, *Compendium linguarum Iranicarum*, Vol.1, Tehran: Ghoghnoos.
- Rezai Baghbidi, Hassan, 2009, *History of Iranian Languages*, Tehran: Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia.
- Roohi Baygi, Zahra, 2017, “Explanation for Co-occurrence of Preverbs and the Light verb “KARDAN” in Persian Complex Predicates”, *Journal of Linguistics and Khorasan Dialects*, Issue 15, pp. 122-148.
- Soltani, Akram, 2008, “A Study on Substitutional Verbs in Modern Persian”, *Journal of Literary Text Research*, Issue 34, pp.47-67.
- Tabatabai, Ala’eddin, 2005, “Compound Verbs in Persian”, *Nāme-ye Farhangestān*, Vol.7. Issue 26, pp.26-34.
- Tabibzāde, Omid, 1994, “Classification and Recording of Idiomatic Verbs in Persian”, *Nashr-e Dānesh*, Vol.14, Issue 3-4, pp. 31-36.
- Tafazzoli, Ahmad, 1997, *History of Persian Literature before Islam*, Tehran, Sokhan.
- Williams, A, V, 1990, *The Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying the Dādestān ī Dēnīg*, Copenhagen: Munksgard.
- <https://www.parsigdatabase.com/>