Semantics of Persian Light Verbs

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	Following a critical examination of prevailing scholarly perspectives regarding the semantics of light verbs, this article advances a hypothesis concerning the formation of complex predicates. It posits that these predicates are fundamentally rooted in the process of incorporation, which commences with a complete sentence encompassing two constituent elements and culminates in the elimination of others. The formation of each complex predicate, in turn, gives rise to the constructional schema X+LV0, facilitating the creation of new complex predicates utilizing the same light verb within the same semantic domain. Consequently, the semantic import of a light verb in a direct incorporation scenario aligns with that of its corresponding heavy verb, while in an indirect incorporation context, it becomes integrated into the constructional meaning of the endorsing schema. Notably, the meaning of a light verb in each of these two contexts may diverge, with each potentially mirroring one of its primary heavy verb meanings. Additionally, a third scenario emerges in which the light verb functions as a verbalizing element, enabling a nonverbal predicate to adopt verb inflections. Consequently, light verbs exhibit a spectrum of meanings, ranging from entirely schematic and non-thematic interpretations to their intrinsic primary heavy verb significations.

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1. Introduction

Different researches have been done from various viewpoints on the semantics of the verbal element of complex predicates, generally called light verbs. Apart from analyses suggesting that light verbs have no content, or those which regard complex predicates as having idiomatic meaning, most researchers have tried to confine the meaning of light verb to one or a few specific features. In such generalizations, usually made over a limited collection of data, exceptions or counterexamples are frequently missing from analysis.

In our opinion, specifying syntactic and semantic properties of complex predicates and their component parts is impossible unless we develop a hypothesis about the way in which complex predicates are formed. After criticizing the most significant views on semantics of Persian light verbs, this study tries to propose a hypothesis on formation of light verb constructions rather than merely focusing on specific features of light verbs in particular. By doing this, we try to throw light on semantic features of light verbs and the way they are selected.

2. Previous Works on Semantics of Light Verb

Karimi Doostan (1997:66) argues that the lexical conceptual structure (LCS) of a light verb (LV) is partially specified, in a way that its non-aspectual part or Thematic Tire is lost or unspecified and the light verb is left with nothing more than some aspectual information or an Aspect Tire. He emphasizes that 'an LV, having a pale LCS, lacks full a-structure and does not contribute any other semantic content, apart from its aspectual roles, to the semantic formation of an LVC [light verb construction]' (1997:144).

The aspectual role of light verbs is divided into two main groups of stative and dynamic by Karimi-Doostan, the latter of which is divided into two sub groups of transition and initiatory. These three aspectual roles show the beginning, changing state, and static state of an event respectively. He classifies 16 most frequently used Persian light verbs as follows:

1. Stative: *da:štan* 'TO HAVE'

2. Transition dynamic: *xordan* 'TO COLLIDE', *ya:ftan* 'TO FIND', *šodan* 'TO BECOME', *ʔa:madan* 'TO COME', *gereftan* 'TO TAKE, TO HOLD', *raftan* 'TO GO', *didan* 'TO SEE, TO UNDERGO'

3. Initiatory dynamic: *zadan* 'TO BEAT', *da:dan* 'TO GIVE', *baxšidan* 'TO FORGIVE', *ʔa:vardan* 'TO BRING', *kešidan* 'TO PULL, TO TOLERATE', *bordan* 'TO TAKE, TO CARRY', *goza:štan* 'TO PUT'

4. Initiatory/Transition dynamic: *kardan* 'TO DO'

If, however, the semantic contribution of a light verb to complex predicates is confined to its aspectual role, and if we accept Karimi-Doostan's classification of light verbs, the following results will be obtained:

1.   Complex predicates consisting the same preverb (PV) but different light verbs with the same aspect are supposed to be near synonyms. Nevertheless, it is often not the case. For instance, the verbs *raftan*, *ʔa:madan*, *šodan* and *xordan* belong to 'transition dynamic' and the verbs *kešidan*, *da:dan* and *zadan* belong

to 'initiatory dynamic' aspectual class. But such pairs as the following can hardly be considered synonymous:

xis	*xordan* /	*xis*	*šodan*
wet	collide /	wet	become
'to soak'	/		'to get wet'
kam	*ʔa:madan* /	*kam*	*šodan*
little	come /	little	become
'to be short'	/		'to decrease,

2. Complex predicates which have the same PV but different LVs with different aspects are supposed not to be synonyms, while it is not always true. For instance, although the verb *da:štan* has stative aspect while the verb *da:dan* has dynamic aspect, *guš da:dan* (lit. ear give) and *guš da:štan* (lit. ear have) both denote 'to listen'.

3. Since the aspect of a complex predicate is ascribed to its light verb, complex predicates with the same light verb must, in principle, have the same aspect. It is, even though, not the case at least about the aforementioned light verbs. The author himself has declared this aspectual duality regarding the verb *kardan*. For each of the rest of 16 light verbs, two complex predicates with different aspects are provided below:

1) *da:štan*: *dust da:štan* (lit. friend have 'to love')(stative); *taɣdim da:štan* (lit. offer have 'to proffer')(initiatory)

 xordan: *del xordan* (lit. heart eat 'to sorrow')(stative); *šekast xordan* (lit. break collide 'to fail')(transition)

 ya:ftan: *neja:t ya:ftan* (lit. survival find 'to survive')(transition); *ra:h ya:ftan* (lit. way find 'to reach')(initiatory)

 šodan: *bida:r šodan* (lit. awake become 'to wake up')(transition); *pa: šodan* (lit. foot become 'to stand up)(initiatory)

 a:madan: *juš a:madan* (lit. boiling come 'to boil')(transition); *kam a:madan* (lit. littlecome 'to be short' (stative)

 gereftan: *košti gereftan* (lit. wrestling take 'to wrestle')(initiatory); *šekl gereftan* (lit. form take 'to form')(transition)

 raftan: *a:b raftan* (lit. water go 'to shrink')(transition); *keš raftan* (lit. rubber band go 'to snitch')(initiatory)

 didan: *a:sib didan* (lit. hurt see 'to be hurt')(transition); *tada:rok didan* (lit. provision see 'to provide')(initiatory)

 zadan: *latme zadan* (lit. hurt hit 'to hurt')(initiatory); *ta:val zadan* (lit. blister hit 'to

 da:dan: *šekast da:dan* (lit. break give 'to defeat)(initiatory) *tašxis da:dan* (lit. diagnosis give 'to distinguish')(stative)

 baxšidan: *šefa: baxšidan* (lit. healing give 'to heal') (initiatory); *sud baxšidan* (to be profitable) (stative)

 a:vardan: *juš a:vardan* (lit. boiling bring 'to boil') (initiatory); *xašm a:vardan* (lit. anger bring 'to be angry') (transition)

 kešidan: *dard kešidan* (lit. pain pull 'to be hurting') (stative); *a:b kešidan* (lit. water pull 'to wash') (initiatory)

bordan: *hamle bordan* (lit. attck take 'to attack') (initiatory); *pey bordan* (lit. footstep take 'to find out') (stative)

goza:štan: *ehtera:m goza:štan* (lit. respect put 'to respect') (initiatory); *a:za:d goza:štan* (lit. free put 'to free up) (stative)

According to Dabir-Moghaddam (1997) formation of complex predicates is the product of incorporation and combination. He believes that a verb preserves its lexical identity and semantic transparency after incorporation, while in a combination of a noun and a verb, the verb undergoes lexicalization. Indeed, it changes into aktionsart-marker, 'a sort of aspectual character'. From his point of view, alternative pairs exemplified in (2) clearly support the lexicalization of the verbs as aktionsart-markers.

2)
jār	zad-an	jār	kešid-an	'to call (someone's name)
dād	zad-an	dād	kešid-an	'to shout'
sar	zad-an	sar	kešid-an	'to pay a short visit'
nafas	zad-an	nafas	kešid-an	'to breath'
dār	zad-an	dār	kešid-an	'to string up on the gallow'

In his own words, '[the verbs] reflect the manner of the realization of the event as perceived and conceptualized by the speakers'. In the set (2), if language users intend to highlight the force and disconnectedness of the action, they will choose the verbs in the left column, i.e. *zadan* 'to hit' viewpoint, and if prolongation and duration of the action is to be highlighted, the alternative verbs in the right column, i.e. *kešidan* 'to pull' viewpoint will be selected. Further examples are mentioned bellow:

3)
otu	zadan	otu	kardan 'to iron'
telefon	zadan	telefon	kardan 'to telephone'
šāne	zadan	šāne	kardan 'to comb'
rang	zadan	rang	kardan 'to point'
tur	zadan	tur	kardan 'to capture, to make victim'

Both *zadan* and *kardan* imply action, but *zadan* viewpoint indicates a forceful, specific, and disconnected act, while *kardan* viewpoint indicates a general act. Mentioning some pairs and triples such as *tā zadan* 'to fold'/ *tā xordan* 'to become folded' *qarz kardan* 'to borrow'/*qarz gereftan* 'to borrow'/*qarz dādan* 'to lend', and *hers dādan* 'to make angry'/*hers zadan* 'to be greedy'/*hers xordan* 'get angry', Dabir-Moghaddam tries to show that the mode of activity is implied verbal element and the act itself is expressed by nonverbal element. Thus he contends that regarding the verbal element as a light verb in complex predicates is incorrect and counter-intuitive. Comparing incorporation with combination he also remarks that complex predicates formed through incorporation are referentially transparent, whereas the ones formed via combination are usually involve metaphoric extension.

Interestingly enough, Dabir-Moghaddam, though not theoretically commited to cognitive linguistic, based his semantic analysis of light verbs on such cognitive concepts as perception, conceptualization, highlighting, and viewpoint. He concludes from his observations that these viewpoints could be identified in his corpus: DO-ing viewpoint, STRIKE-ing viewpoint, GIVE-ing viewpoint, TAKE-ing viewpoint, DRAW-ing viewpoint, HAVE-ing viewpoint, and EAT-ing viewpoint. In

comparison with Karimi-Doostan who confines the aspectual meanings of verbal elements to stative, transition, and initiatory, Dabir-Moghaddam's analysis is a step forward in that he sees different meanings of light verbs as many as their number, each LV expressing one aktionsart. Nevertheless, the semantic content he ascribes to LVs, like Karimi-Doostan, is nothing more than aspect. In this respect the following considerations worth mentioning:

1. Even if the verbal element in complex predicates merely indicates aktionsart, ascribing only one aktionsart to each light verb seems to be far from realistic. For instance, according to Dabir-Moghaddam, STRIK-ing viewpoint (expressed by light verb *zadan*) and DRAW-ing viewpoint (expressed by *kešidan*) are choosed by speakers to highlight "force and disconnectedness" and "prolongation and duration" respectively. But in many cases these verbs do not convey those meanings. For instance, in *telefon zadan* 'to telephone' and *gul zadan* 'to deceive' neither force nor disconnectedness is relevant. Also *kešidan* in *saf kešidan* (to line up) indicates length of a line not the prolongation of the action involved. Likewise, in *enteɣa:m kešidan* 'to take revenge' and *mennat kešidan* 'to belittle oneself' prolongation and duration of an act is not at issue. This suggests that the semantic analysis of light verbs cannot be regarded as conclusive by ascribing only one kind of meaning (aspectual or something) to them.

2. The general thesis that in complex predicates 'the activity itself is expressed by the nonverbal constituent' is far from realistic too. For example, in clusters *gul da:dan/gul zadan/gul xordan* and *tā zadan/tā xordan*, non-verbal elements *gul* (stupid) and *ta*: (fold (n.)) indicate no specific act by themselves. More examples are presented in Dabir Moghaddam's data (46) cited here as (4):

4)   pas   dādan   'to give back; to refund; to recite as a lesson'
      pas   raftan   'to go back; to decline'
      pas   zadan   'to draw back'
      pas   gereftan   'to take back'
      pas   kešidan   'to retreat'
      pas   āvardan   'to bring back'
      pas   andāxtan   'to beget'
      pas   oftādan   'to fall behind'
      pas   bordan   'to take back'
      pas   ferestādan   'to send back'
      pas   rāndan   'to push back'

In the above mentioned data it is not clear how nonverbal element *pas* which is an "adverbial element" according to the author could express an activity. In particular, in *pas dādan, pas raftan, pas gereftan, pas āvardan, pas bordan, pas ferestādan, and pas rāndan* it is obvious that the light verbs *dādan* 'give', *raftan* 'to go', *gereftan* 'to take', *āvardan* 'to bring', *bordan* 'to carry, *ferestādan* 'to send' and *rāndan* 'to repulse' indicate the activity itself not its mode or manner. It does not seem, then, that we can reduce the variety of meanings contributed by verbal elements to aspect, aktionsart or any other single category.

Dabir Moghaddam (1397) correctly affirms that 'semantically the verbs formed via combination and incorporation constitute conceptual wholes'. Given this fact, we cannot, at least easily and everywhere, analyse the meaning of complex predicates into two components i.e. 'action' and "aktionsart" and ascribe each of them to one of two constituents of complex predicates. In many examples such as *dast gereftan* (lit. hand take 'to ridicule'), *jā xordan* (lit. place strike 'to be surprised), and *sorāγ gereftan* (lit. trace take 'to inquire') there cannot be found a one-to-one correspondence between the two meaning components in one side, and the two constituents of complex predicates on the other side. This becomes more obvious when the nonverbal element bear no clear meaning independently for speakers (at least at the synchronic level), in CPs like *bol gereftan* 'to seize the opportunity', *sok zadan* 'to gaze', Gāp *zadan* 'to snatch', and *bor xordan* 'to be shuffled'.

Vahedi-Langrudi (1996:42) regards light verb as existential bleached predicate which are bleached, empty (fully or partially), and unspecified on the thematic tire, thus lacking the ability to predicate a property. This means that the semantic relation between LV's variables in the Lexical Conceptual Structure (LCS) is unspecified (1996:45).

He proceeds to pose the question as to what, then, the semantic contribution of the LVs is. He assumes that '[t]hey appear to contribute aspexual properties, (a)telicity, perfictivity, conception, completion, inception, and logical content CAUSE, BECOME, BE in a STATE/EXISTENCE, etc.' (1996:49). These properties are called logical constants. Despite affirming the importance of aspectual properties of LVs in their choice and matching for the proper predicative nominals, Vahedi-Langrudi doesn't approach this issue his study (1996:49f).

Vahedi-Langrudi assumes that the lexical component is composed of Lexical Conceptual Structure (LCS), a syntactic level argument structure called Lexical Relational Structure (LRS), and lexical phonological properties/formations as well as the idiosyncratic properties of lexical items. He regards both LVs and their heavy counterparts as having identical argument structures, i.e. a lexical syntactic structure that corresponds to their common logical constants (1996:48).

Elsewhere in his dissertation, he mentions that light verb *dādan* (lit. to give) is used in an abstract, figurative sense, and does not convey the sense of transfer of possession (p. 265). Drawing on Partee & Rooth's (1982) Type Theory, Vahedi argues that the relation between the nominal PV in CPs in modern Persian is that of predicate modification. That is, the PVs of CPs acts as predicate modifiers irrespective of their syntactic category, i.e. NP, PP, Adj, Adv (p. 78). His general analysis of the formation of complex predicates goes like this: 'semantically, LVs induce existential interpretation and DR within V-bar;the PVs are predicative with a weak existential reading and enter into Predicate Modification with the LVs. Syntactically, the predicative PVs count as the single complement of the LVs and substantiate them' (p. 276).

Whereas Vahedi-Langrudi assumes a variety of semantic contributions for light verbs to have in complex predicates, his account could be criticized in following respects:

1. According to common definitions, logical consonants comprise logical connectives and quantifiers. Logical connectives include consonants such as "not", "or", "and", and "if...then" are used to connect two or more sentences. Quantifiers include constants such as "every", and "some" (and their equivalents) which are parts of the sentence involved. It is not clear, however, in what sense that the content Vahedi- Langrudi ascribes to the light verbs (such as CAUSE, EVENT, STATE, (COME to) BE EXISTENT, COME to BE in a STATE, BECOME GO TO, etc.) are logical consonants.

2. The most outstanding property of logical constants is that they can come with any sentence or variable (depending on whether the logical constant involved is a connective or a quantifier). Nonetheless there is almost no light verb that can be used with every preverbal element (PV).

3. To avoid terminological controversy on using the term "logical connective" for light verbs, we can follow the principle of charity, sympathetically interpreting it as 'content poverty'. That is to say, light verbs have no full meaning by themselves. For instance, the meaning of *šodan* 'to become' needs a noun or an adjective as its complement so that the question 'what did it become?' would not remain unanswered. Also the meaning of CAUSE is incomplete unless the two sides of the relation, namely the cause and the effect, are mentioned. For verbs such as *raftan* 'to go and *āmadan* 'to come', however, it is not the case and we cannot consider them as having incomplete content and merely logical signicifance.

4. Following Szabolcsi (1984), Vahedi Langeroodi considers light verbs as Definiteness Effect (DE) verbs. This claim is disputable for different reasons which we are not going to discuss here due to the space limitations. So we content ourselves only two one comment concerning it. The constituents of some complex predicates may come separately, in which case, the preverbal element can be used as a definite noun, contrary to Vahedi-Langrudi's claim. He supports his hypothesis by giving the two following examples for the complex predicate *šefā dādan* (lit. cure give 'to cure) (1996:49):

5) a. pezešk sārā-rā   šefã   dād
      doctor Sara-acc.   cure   give. Past. 3sg.
      The doctor cured Sara

   b. *pezešk   šefã-rā   be   sārā   dād
      doctor   cure-def. art.   to   Sara   give. Past. 3sg.

Considering, however, the CP *šefã gereftan* (lit. cure receive 'to be cured', which is the non-causative counterpart of *šefã dādan*, we observe that the preverb *šefã* could be definite as well:

6) a. belʔaxare   šefã   gereftam
      Ultimately   cure   receive-pst.1sg
      Ultimately I was cured.

   b. belʔaxare   šefã-y-am-rā   az   xodā   gereftam
      ultimately   cure-1sg-def. art.   from   God   receive-pst.1sg
      Ultimately I received my cure from God.

In 6 (b) the 1ˢᵗ person singular possessive pronoun (*-am*) as well as postposition *rā* added to *šefā* indicate that it is a definite noun here.

3. Formation of Complex Predicates
3.1. Incorporation and Compositional Path

As it was mentioned before, Dabir Moghaddam (1376) classifies the process of formation of complex predicates into two general topics of combination and incorporation. He argues that 'despite the existence of sustematic differences between compound verbs formed through combination and incorporation, there is phonological, syntactic, and semantic evidence which substantiates the categorization of the two types as compound verbs'. If incorporation is to be regarded as a product of combination of verb and its argument, complex predicates such as *γazā xordan* (food-eat), *māhi gereftan* (fish-catch), and *zarf šostan* (dish-wash) would be typical examples of incorporational verbs. Moreover, in complex predicates which have *kardan* 'do' as their light verb, and that their preverb denote an act or action, we can consider preverb as object of *kardan* and thus incorporated in it. There are many complex predicates of this sort, such as ?este?fā kardan (resignation-do), *pareš kardan* (jump-do), *pazirāyi kardan* (service-do), *nasb kardan* (installation-do), *?atse kardan* (caugh-do), *šut kardan* (shoot-do). Some examples of combinational CPs are *faryād zadadn* (lit. shout hit 'to shout'), out kardan (lit. iron do 'to iron'), and γarz gereften (lit. loan take 'to borrow') whose preverbs could not being assigned theta role by light verbs.

Dabir-Moghaddam (1376) merely mentions the similar behavior of these two kinds of complex predicates and does not proceed to the identical mechanism residing beyond these similarities.

Shaghaghi (1386), However, adopts incorporational/combinational classification, proposing a hypothesis concerning the formation of CPs, in which combinational complex predicates are regarded as a developoed form of incorporative CPs. She contends that:

We can assume that combinational complex predicates *tāb āvardan* (lit. endurance bring 'to endure'), *bār ?āmadan* (lit. fruit come 'to grow up'), *sar raftan* (lit. head go 'to overflow'), etc. are formed out of structures similar to the sentences [7-9], and it might be argued that they have evolved over time from incorporational complex predicates to combinational ones. Etymological and historical studies will help clarify the way complex predicates have emerged and their evolution process.

7) ?u   tāb-e   mosibat-rā   āvard>   ?u   mosibat-rā
      tāb   āvard > *tāb āvardan*

  he   endurance-EZ disaster-DO   bring-pst.3sg> he   disaster-DO
      endurance   bring-pst.3sg
He endured the disaster.

8) ?in bače xub   be   bār   āmade   ?st>?in bače xub bār āmade
?st> *bār āmadan*

  this child good   to   fruit   come-pp.   is
This child has grown up well.

9) hosele-y-e   ʔu   be   sar   raft> hosele-y-e   ʔu   sar   raft

Patience-EZ   he   to   sar   go-pst.3sg

He lost his patience.

What Shaghaghi calls "evolution process" of complex predicates is not always as simple as examples (7-9).) In this hypothetical process, the head noun of an argument of the verb is occasionally omitted and its complement, considered cognitively more salient with respect to the event involved, is incorporated to the verb, as in the examples (10-12) below (the understood, linguistically uncoded elements are enclosed in square brackets):

10) [pāsox-e   soʔāl-hā-y-e]   emtehān[-rā] dādan   >emtehān dādan

[answer-EZ   question-PL-EZ]   exam [-DO]   give >exam give

'to answer the exam questions > to take an exam'

11) [dood-e]   sigār[-rā   be-darun-e   dahān] kešidan> sigār   kešidan

[smoke$_N$-EZ] cigarette [-DO into   mouth] pull>   cigarette pull

'to inhale the smoke of a cigarette into one's mouth > to smoke cigarette '

12) [az]   bu[-ye   čiz-I   pey   be   ān]   bordan   >   bu bordan

[from] smellN[-EZ   thing-INDEF track to   it]   take > smellN take

'to become aware of something by sensing its smell > to scent'

Shaghaghi's expression "evolution process" implies diachronic studies that definitely elucidate such process in many cases. However, paying attention to the examples10-12 above we find that in many complex predicates this hypothetical process is not supported by historical evidence and is merely based on encyclopedic knowledge. It seems, then, that 'formation path' or, to borrow Langacker's (1987, 2008) term, 'compositional path', is a more appropriate for describing the hypothetical stages of the formation of complex predicates.

It should be emphasized that by positing a compositional path, we would by no means claim that such a path necessarily represents the actual course of development for the Persian complex predicates. Rather, it is only intended to situate the components of the Persian light verb constructions in the contexts that can be justifiably invoked as a motivation for their formation.

Introducing different kinds of incorporation, Shaghaghi (1386) studies only noun incorporation (NI) in Persian language. But a considerable number of complex predicates have an 'adjective+ verb' pattern. Since incorporation, by definition, applies to verb arguments, which are usually nouns or prepositional phrases in Persian (and many other languages) we cannot speak of 'adjective incorporation' in the exact sense of the term. However, as shown in some of the above examples, in compositional path of a complex predicate, sometimes the verb argument is omitted

and its dependant is left. Shaghaghi (1386) herself points that 'speakers may take another verb argument or residual dependant of object as direct object, using it as direct object for an incorporational complex predicate. Accordingly, the following paths of the formation of the CP *rāst goftan* (lit. true say 'to tell the truth') could be suggested:

13) soxan-e   râst   goftan >   râst   goftan
    utterance-EZ true   tell >   true   tell
    'to tell the true utterance '> to tell the truth'

   We can take the example 13 as evidence for extending NI to XI, where X indicates the instances of categories participating in the complex predicate formation, i.e. nouns and adjectives, through incorporation. More importantly, we can discern from these examples a process for specific CPrs to be formed. This process is characterized by the two sequential steps of selecting a nonverbal and a verbal element out of a whole clause and leaving the rest, leading to a CPr.

3.2. Constructional Schema and *kardan*

The concept of compositional path helps us to account for collocation of components of many complex predicates. There are many complex predicates, however, for which finding compositional path in this way is extremely difficult or almost impossible. Some examples are *telefon zadan* (lit. telephone hit 'to telephone'), *javāb kardan* (lit. answer do 'to reject'), *rang kardan* (lit. paint do 'to paint'), *yax kardan* (lit. ice do 'to get cold'), and *harf zadan* (lit. utterance hit 'to speak'). In some of these CPs if we could assume a putative path, the semantic content of the omitted element(s) overweigh the residuals and our path would therefore be accusable of being unnaturally adhoc. Consider this path:

14) kasi-râ [bâ]   javâb[-e   manfi   rad] kardan>   kasi-râ
    javâb kardan
    sb-DO [from] answer [-EZ   negative   reject] do>   sb-DO
answer do
    'to disappoint sb with one's negative answer > to reject'

   We notice here that the meaning of the residual element javâb _answer is virtually neutral with regard to the 'core' of the CP's semantic pole, namely [DISAPPOINT]. In some other cases, depicting a compositional path requires recursion, making our path unnecessarily lengthy and a bit far-fetched. For instance, if we consider *metr kardan* 'to measure' (lit. to metre-do) as resulting from a compositional path like (15), then we have to assume also another compositional path for *hesâb kardan*.

15) [tul-e   čizi-râ be]   metr   {[hesâb]   kardan}>   metr
    kardan
    [length-EZ   sth-DOto]   metre {[calculation] do} >   metre do
    'to measure the length of sth in metres > to measure'

   That being so, it seems that we can regard *kardan* as a light verb proper, or a verbalizing functional element for producing verbs out of nonverbal elements. This is in keeping with Vahedi-Langrudi's (2000) account who considers the role of *kardan* in CP formation as exactly the same as that of suffix *–idan* (which he calls

'zero abstract light verb') in forming Persian denominal verbs like *jangidan* 'to fight', *raqsidan* 'to dance' and *fahmidan* 'to understand' with nonverbal bases *jang* 'fight_N', *raqs* 'dance_N' and *fahm* 'understanding_N' respectively. We accept this account for three reasons. First, many CPs containing *kardan* make little, if any, sense of action on the part of their subjects. Examples such as *vafât kardan* 'to pass away' (lit. to death-do), *eftexār kardan* 'to be proud of' (to honour_N-do), and *araq kardan* 'to sweat' (lit. to sweat_N-do) can provide evidence for *kardan* to be a grammatical element in constructions of these sort, for no clear contribution to their semantic pole could be attributed to *kardan*. The second evidence is provided by CPs whose PV are loanwords which are originally Arabic infinitives, like *moʔâmele kardan* 'to deal' (lit. to deal_N-do), *saʔy kardan* 'to attempt' (lit. to attempt_N-do), *tarjome kardan* 'to translate' (lit. to translation-do), *esteʔmâr kardan* 'to colonialize' (lit. to colonialism-do), *tahrik kardan* 'to stimulate' (lit. to stimulation-do), *tašakkor kardan* 'to thank' (lit. to thank_N-do), *eqtebâs kardan* 'to adapt' (lit. to adaptation-do), *enqelâb kardan* 'to revol' (lit. to revolution-do), *eqfâl kardan* 'to deceiv' (lit. to deception-do), and *hesâb kardan* 'to calculate' (lit. to calculation-do). These infinitives are categorized as nouns both in Arabic and in Persian and need to be able to inflect in order to convert into verbs. Persian allows this through attaching such nouns either to a schematic light verb, namely the verbalizing suffix *–idan*, or to a specific one, which is most frequently *kardan*. According to Tabataba'i (2004) the second component of both denominal verbs and CPs is 'a grammatical element which allows the first [nonverbal] component to function as a verb'. The former possibility which results in formation of denominal verbs is not so much productive in Persian and thus 'during the past thousand years, not only every new verbal notion has been formed periphrastically, but also regular simple verbs have been day by day replaced by periphrastic forms' (Sadeghi 1993).

Third, perhaps most importantly, grammatical markers (alternate terms for which include 'grammatical morpheme', 'function word', 'empty word', 'formative', and 'closed-class element') are characterized in CG as being specific at the phonological pole and tending at the same time to be quite schematic at the semantic pole, their meaning being tenuous, abstract, and hard to elucidate (Langacker 2008:22-3). Having this definition in mind, we observe that [*KARDAN*] (which stands for the semantic pole of *kardan*) denotes by itself none of the senses of *kardan*, nor the processes profiled in relevant CPs (e.g. in *ʔomr kardan* 'to live' (lit. to life-do) and *tafâvot kardan* 'to differ' (lit. to difference-do)); it evokes those processes only schematically. The schematic unit PV + *kardan* can thus be validly posited as a constructional schema that provides the basis for composition of LVCs (with PVs of different sorts).

4. Lightening of Other Verbs

According to what we said in section 3 about the role of *kardan* as a verbalizing element, our general assumption in explaining the way light verbs are chosen in the process of complex predicate formation is that the default light verb for convertnig noun (an Arabic infinitive, a European loanword or something else) into an inflecting Persian verb is *kardan*. If, then, a complex predicate has another light verb, for

example *zadan*, this light verb must be 'inherited' from another complex predicate with the light verb *zadan*. The latter complex predicate is either incorporational (whether via direct incorporation or through compositional path) or is descended, through one or more intermediates, from an incorporational complex predicate whose verbal element is *zadan* (with its heavy meaning) and that has handed down the constructional schema 'X+ *zadan*' for other CPs to be formed, providing a path for combining *zadan* and a new element with which no relationship or collocation is otherwise conceivable. We clarify the point by a couple of examples.

In the complex predicate *ʔimeyl zadan* (lit. email hit 'to email'), the PV *ʔimeyl* could by no means be regarded as an argument or adjunct of the LV *zadan* 'to hit'. There has already existed, however, *telegrâf zadan* 'to telegraph' (lit. telegraph_N-hit) whose LV (*zadan*) has a more clear semantic relationship with 'telegraph' (after all, in earlier telegraphy systems the message used to be sent actually by pressing Morse keys, construed in Persian as 'hitting the keys'). Accordingly, this CP has handed down the schematic assembly *X + zadan* for designating communication via systems emerged after telegraphs, like telex, telephone, [two-way] radio, facsimile, e-mail, and SMS, thus sanctioning the formation of the novel CPs *teleks zadan* 'to telex' (lit. telex_N-hit), *telefon zadan* 'to telephone' (lit. to telephone-hit), *bisim zadan* 'to make a radio call' (lit. radio-hit), *faks zadan* 'to fax' (lit. fax_N-hit), *ʔimeyl zadan* 'to e-mail' (lit. email_N-hit), and *esemes zadan* 'to send an SMS' (lit. SMS-hit) respectively.

Another example of this process is formation of the complex predicate *harf zadan* (lit. utterance hit 'to speak') which is a rather recent complex predicate in modern Persian and the semantic relation between whose two elements (at least for prototypical senses of *zadan*) is quite opaque. If we refer to the usage history of *zadan* as a light verb in Persian, however, we find complex predicates whose PVs (directly or metonymically) denote a kind of speech act or its associates, and in which *zadan* denotes the act of performing that action. Here are examples:

16) PV= onomatopoeia: *GahGahe zadan* (lit. guffaw hit 'to guffaw')

17) PV = utterance: *marhabā zadan* (lit. welcome hit 'to welcome')

18) PV = name of a sound (speech or non-speech): nāle zadan (lit. moan hit 'to moan'); *bang zadan* (lit. cry hit 'to cry'); *šeyhe zadan* (lit. neigh hit 'to neigh'); *naʔre zadan* (lit. roar hit 'to roar'); *xande zadan* (lit. laughter hit 'to laugh')

19) PV = name of a locutionary act*: sedā zadan* (lit. voice hit 'to call'); *notG zadan* (lit. speech hit 'to speak')

20) PV = name of an illocutionary act: *tasxar zadan* (lit. ridicule hit 'to ridicule'); *taʔne zadan* (lit. taunt hit 'to taunt'); *lāf zadan* (lit. boasting hit 'to boast')

21) PV = name of a discoursive-textual unit or genre: masal zadan (lit. proverb hit 'to say a proverb')

Here the constructional schema 'X+*zadan*' could be abstracted from these complex CPs. We can observe the productivity of this schema in forming new complex predicates such as *harf zadan* (lit. utterance hit 'to speak'); *sut zadan* (lit. whistle hit 'to whistle'); *čāne zadan* (lit. chin hit 'to bargain'); *jiɣ zadan* (lit. scream

hit 'to scream'), *fak zadan* (lit. jaw hit 'to chat'), *belof zadan* (lit. bluff hit 'to bluff'), *befarmā zadan* (lit. go ahead hit 'to welcome'), and *tohmat zadan* (lit. accusal hit 'to accuse') in all of which PV is subcategorized under one of the kinds mentioned in examples 16-21. In other words, the abovementioned complex predicates have 'inherited' their light verbs from the complex predicates with PVs of which they have some semantic relation.

Drawing on the notion of constructional schema, we can now give a more reasonable formulation for how the complex predicates mentioned in 10-12 have been formed as illustrated in 22-24 below. In these CPs there is no semantic or collocational relation on syntagmatic axes between PV and LV (namely exam/give, cigarette/pull, and smell/take (unless by appeal to the putative compositional paths proposed in 10-12). Now if we regard these complex predicates as being formed by filling X position with an approprirate PV in the constructional schema V_i+X (which is inherited from the existing complex predicates and where V_i is one of the light verbs *dādan*, *kešidan*, and *bordan*), the syntagmatic relation between these two elements would be justified and the formation process of some other complex predicates would become more clear as well.

22) *pāsox dādan* > X + *dādan* > emtehān dādan; mosābeɣe dādan

Answer give > exam give; competition give

to answer to take an exam to compete

23) *nafas kešidan* > X + *kešidan* > sigār kešidan

breathe pull > cigarette pull

to breath to smoke cigarette

24) *pey bordan* > X + *bordan* > bu bordan; goman bordan

footstep take > smell take surmise

take

to find out to suspect to surmise

5. Semantics of Light Verbs

Based on the hypothesis suggested in sections 3 and 4 above about the formation of complex predicates, we are now in a position to say that the semantic contribution of LVs falls into one of the three following alternatives depending on how the CP in question is formed.

i) If the complex predicate is formed by incorporation (directly or through a compositional path), the meaning of the so-called LV is naturally the same as its heavy meaning. The important point here is that the heavy meaning could be objective, abstract or figurative. For example, one of the senses of *gereftan* is to receive, whose (object) argument could be either a concrete object or something abstract (*jān* 'soul', *hāl* 'mood', and *bahre* 'benefit') where in the latter case, 'receiving' has a metaphorical meaning. thus, in complex predicates like *ejāze*

gereftan (lit. permit receive 'to get a permit') and *dars gereftan* (lit. lesson receive 'to take lessons'), PVs are objects incorporated into the verb *gereftan*. Moreover, one of the abstract meanings of *gereftan* is 'to take a mood or state', whose object is always an abstract noun. Accordingly, complex predicates such as *kāsti gereftan* (lit. decrease receive 'to decrease'), *mātam gereftan* (lit. grief receive 'to mourn'), and *dard gereftan* (lit. pain receive 'to ache') must be regarded as a product of direct incorporation of the verb argument (which denotes a state or mood) to the light verb.

ii) Alternatively, if the complex predicate is built on some constructional schema (which in turn is originally abstracted from some incorporational CP of kind (i) above), the meaning we are dealing with is not that of light verb, but the constructional meaning of the schema which, in combination with PV, yields the meaning of the whole complex predicate. For instance, as mentioned in the previous section, *ʔimeyl zadan* 'to e-mail' is the product of combining *ʔimeyl* with constructional schema X+*zadan* whose constructional meaning is 'to communicate via X'.

iii) Finally, the light verb may come to function as a verbalizing grammatical element, thus being a "light verb" in the exact sense of the term: it is virtually empty of lexical meaning and contribute a grammatical meaning. The most prominent examples of this case are many complex predicates with light verb *kardan* such as *negāh kardan* (lit. look$_N$ do 'to look'), *donbāl kardan* (lit. pursuit$_N$ do 'to puesuit'), havas kardan (lit. desire$_N$ do 'to desire'), *sekte kardan* (lit. apoplexy do 'to have a stroke'), and *tab kardan* (lit. fever do 'to have a fever').

6. Conclusion

In this article we argued that complex predicates, by default, could be thought of as being produced by output of XI, passing through a compositional path. In such a path, a given verb (V_0) incorporates one of its (direct or oblique) arguments or dependants, maintaining its primary or extended 'heavy' sense(s). The process may yield a constructional schema PV + LV_0, which in turn sanctions V_0 (with its own literal or figurative meaning) to compound with another element, obtaining an CP whose meaning is a function of its components, rather than the sum of them. Such a constructional schema can then provide a new 'compositional path' for other CPs to be formed, to the extent that the meaning of LV may not be easily apprehended in the novel composite units.

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معنی شناسی افعال سبک فارسی

چکیده

دربارۀ معنیِ جزء فعلی افعال مرکب که معمولاً فعل سبک نامیده می‌شود، تاکنون تحلیلهای مختلفی صورت گرفته است. اغلب پژوهشگران کوشیده‌اند معنی فعل سبک را در یک یا چند ویژگی خلاصه کنند. مقالۀ حاضر پس از نقد اهم آرای مطرح شده دربارۀ معنی فعل سبک، فرضیه‌ای دربارۀ تشکیل فعل مرکب ارائه می‌دهد که در آن همۀ افعال مرکب به طور مستقیم یا غیر مستقیم ریشه در فرایند انضمام دارد. این فرایند با جمله‌ای کامل آغاز و با انضمام دو عنصر از آن و حذف سایر عناصر ختم می‌شود. با تشکیل هر فعل مرکب، طرحوارۀ ساختی $X + LV0$ شکل می‌گیرد که جوازبخشِ ساخت افعال مرکب جدیدی با همان فعل سبک و در همان حوزۀ معنایی خواهد بود. بر این اساس، معنی همکرد در حالت انضمام مستقیم، همان معنی سنگین آن و در حالت انضمام غیر مستقیم، منحل در معنیِ ساختیِ طرحوارۀ جوازبخش است. معنیِ فعل سبک در هر یک از این دو حالت می‌تواند متفاوت باشد و هر یک از این معانی برگرفته یا مشابهِ یکی از معانیِ سنگین آن است. حالت سومی نیز هست که در آن فعل سبک، نقش فعل‌سازی را ایفا و تصریف فعلی را برای یک عنصر غیر فعلی ممکن می‌کند. بدین ترتیب افعال سبک روی طیفی قرار می‌گیرند که از مواردِ کاملاً طرحوار و فاقد معنیِ تماتیک تا معنیِ سنگین آنها را در بر می‌گیرد.

واژه‌های کلیدی: فعل مرکب، فعل سبک، انضمام، طرحوارۀ ساختی، دستور شناختی