

The Study of Adpositions as Case Marker in Sangesari and Shahmirzadi Languages

Adposition is a word which accompanies with a noun phrase and represents the grammatical or semantic relations of that NP with the verb of the sentence/clause. There are two types of adpositions in languages: preposition and postposition. Preposition precedes the NP while postposition follows it. In some languages both of them exist simultaneously while in some other only one type of adposition may be used (Dryer 2005:346-347; Dryer 2007:81,86). There are some correlations between typological word order components, for example OV languages tend to be postpositional while in VO languages the tendency is being prepositional. Therefore adposition and noun phrase form a correlation pair (Dryer 1992:82). Blake (2004) in his book declares that case marking includes two systems: analytic case marking: the system in which adpositions play at least some part in marking the relations of dependent nouns to their heads like Japanese; and synthetic case marking (or inflectional case marking in traditional view) in which affixes are case markers like Latin (p 1,9). Croft also believes in the role of adposition and affixes as case markers in different languages (2003:34-35). Dabir Moghaddam states that there are three macro linguistic areas in Iran. One of them is the northern linguistic area in which languages are basically postpositional such as Gilaki, Mazandarani and Taleshi. On the other hand in the southern linguistic area the languages are prepositional like Persian, Lori, Bakhtiyari and Larestani. In the third area the mixed type can be observed, in other words in these languages there are both preposition and postposition (2007:120-121).

The importance of the study of case marking in languages makes the authors to survey the different case markers in Sangesari and Shahmirzadi languages based on Blake's (2004) theoretical framework believes in existing two systems (using affixes or adpositions) for case marking. Therefore, we aim to study adposition case markers including dative, ablative, accusative, committive, instrumental, source-goal and locative cases in Sangesari and Shahmirzadi languages. The method of gathering data is to interview with the native speakers¹ by the provided questionnaire.

Sangesar and Shahmirzad are two cities in Semnan province which are 6 Kilometers far from each other. The languages of these two cities belong to west-northern Iranian languages (Dabir Moghaddam 2013:1034), while Schmitt (2004) has classified Shahmirzadi language in Caspian Sea languages (p 490).

In the following table some of the data from these two languages are provided:

No.	Shahmirzadi	Sangesari	English
1	ʔöšön kətab-rə <u>mæryəm-ʃən</u> hagetənæ	ʔunnun kətab-də <u>mærəm-mo</u> hægertæ	They took Maryam the book.
2	<u>xune ta mædrəsə</u> ræ du bædamæ	<u>ʔæz kə ta mædrəsə</u> bədovi	I ran from home to school.
3	ʔü <u>kæli væri (ba)</u> dær-æ va hakərdæ	ne bær-de <u>vore-mun</u> va kæ	(S)he opened the door with the key.
4	hær ruz <u>xöštene per ba</u> anæ mædrəsə	hær ru no <u>ʔəštun pəšə-mo</u> mædrəsə-re inda	(S)he comes to school with her/his father every day.
5	mə dæl <u>ʔöšön-ey</u> tæng bæveæ	mæ dæl <u>ʔənun-re</u> tæng bebiyæ	I missed them.
6	færda <u>tænire dælə</u> nun pæjenni?	səbayi <u>tænduri dälə</u> nun bəʔənun?	Will you bake bread in the oven tomorrow?
7	xöštene gusfənnə <u>ali-r</u> bærütæ	əštun pæs də <u>æli d(ə)</u> bəršut	(S)he sold his/her sheep to

¹ We thank for Ms. Faranak Jamaledin for gathering data in Sangesari. Meanwhile Shahmirzadi language data are gathered by one of the authors' native language knowledge.

			Ali.
8	ʔöšön zəmin-(e)- səɾ böxötenæ	ʔunun zəmin-(i)- səɾ bəxo(t)	They slept on the ground.
9	ʔašqal hələb ræ miz-e ʔer veštemæ	ʔæšqaldun-də mizi-žir hundiya	I put the dustbin under the table.

As it has been shown in the above table, in Shahmirzadi and Sangesari postpositions function as the basic adpositions, therefore they are considered as postpositional and subsequently OV languages. As another conclusion, in both languages, cases mark by adpositions (not by affixes). These adpositions can be seen as either preposition or postposition. Based on Blake view, the case marking system in these two languages is the analytical; one in other words, different cases such as dative, ablative, accusative, committive, instrumental, source-goal and locative are marked by adpositions attaching to nouns. These adpositions are listed in the table below:

No.	adposition	case	Shahmirzadi	Sangesari
1	from	ablative	--ʔən	--mo
2	from ... to	source-goal	(ʔæz)... ta ...	ʔæz ... ta
3	with	instrumental	--væri (ba)	--mun
4	with	committive	--ba	--mo
5	for	accusative	--ev / v	--re
6	in	locative	--dələ	--dələ
7	to	dative	--r	--d(ə)
8	on	locative	--sæɾ	--sæɾ
9	under	locative	--ʔer	--žir
10	ra	accusative	--ræ/ æ r	--də

In these two languages there can be seen some similarities between adpositions, sometimes in complete form such as “(ʔæz)... ta ... (from-to), --sæɾ (on)”, or sometimes in incomplete form such as “—ʔer, --žir (under), --dələ , --dələ (in)”, in the other cases the adpositions are completely different. Furthermore, all the adpositions appear as postposition except the source-goal adposition (ʔæz... ta ...).

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