

**Mismatching¹ in Persian Complex Predicates:
A focus on Dual-Nature of Non-Verbal Element**

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Persian complex predicates in the standard dialect of Iran, display a sort of mismatching, acting as a single unit in some ways and more than a unit in other ways. In the cases under this study, the Pre-verbal element (PV) might be considered both: as a part of a predicate and as an argument of it. In the instances like 1. (b), the PVs can appear with a determiner, behaving like a full NP, and According to this behavior, PVs show a dual nature. Some researchers who worked on Persian complex predicates (CPs) have ignored cases like 1. (b) (Megerdoomian 2001, Goldberg 2003; among others). Some others described this phenomenon but they did not explain why it occurs or why it is natural in the language (Folli et al 2005, Karimi-Doostan 1997, 2011, among others). This study aims to answer such these questions and claims that, the emergence of the cases like 1.(b) in Persian are typologically natural, based on some central notions of Construction Grammar (Goldberg, 1995, 2006); namely: *Construction, Generalization, Motivation, and Inheritance*.

1. (a) Iranian avalin medal-e banoo-ye keshvar-eshan ra **jashn gerft**-and. A part of the predicate

Iranian first medal EZ lady-EZ country –their DOM **celebrate**.3pl.

“Iranians celebrate their women’s first medal.” (<http://www8.irna.ir>)

(b) Bache-ha surperayz-am kard-and va ?in **jashn** ra **gereft**-and. An argument of the predicate

Child-pl surprise-me did.3pl and this celebration DOM **took**.3pl.

“The guys surprised me and **held** this celebration”. (<http://www.farsnews.com>)

All levels of grammatical analysis involve *constructions*, ‘learned pairings of form with semantic or discourse function’. According to this description, in examples 1(a) & (b) the CP *jashn gereftan* is considered a construction (cf Goldberg 2003, Folli et al 2005, Family 2006, Samvelian & Faghiri 2014). Then, how the differences between two form of CPs, 1 (a) & (b), could come into account. In constructionist approaches, syntactic constructions or configurations themselves bear meanings. In addition, based on the Principle of “No Synonymy” (see Goldberg 1995), semantic synonymy between the two constructions implies a pragmatic difference. According to these principles, the CPs which exist in the instances like 1(a) & (b) which are different in the form and semantically synonymous, exhibit some functional differences to a degree. The approach adopted here is in concert with Dabir-Moghaddam (1997), saying, “Semantic difference exists between a non-incorporated construction (1.b) and its incorporated counterpart (1.a)”.

By looking at the instances like 1 (b), one can see the footprint of the Persian “transitive pattern”. As the grammatical patterns also stored as constructions in mind, we draw a pattern for the “Transitive Construction” in Persian (Figure1). This research claims that the differences between

¹ Form-function incongruity

1 (a) & (b), accrue because of the properties inherited from the “transitive construction” by CPs like 1 (b), in other words, the constructions like 1 (b), is motivated by the “transitive construction”. Motivation can be provided by factors outside of the language-particular grammar; alternatively, motivation may come from within the grammar. There is two basic motivations both inside and outside the language. The main motivation outside the language, in these cases, is “discourse demand”, in which case we need to focus on the part of the predicate (PV) and make it somehow referential rather than generic. In order to fulfill this discourse demand, language and mind cooperate to supply the demand. The main motivation inside the language is the syntactic independence of the elements of CPs to a certain degree. Some reasons for this claim are listed here: CPs are separated by the future auxiliary, imperfective and negation prefixes. Verbal element in CPs can also serve as input to the gerundive nominalization and adjectival past participle constructing (cf, Karimi-Doostan 1997, Folli et al 2005), according to these properties; the verbal element still preserves its verbal features. These two basic motivations are supported by some additional motivations inside and outside the language; we call them “supporting motivations”. Here we consider some of them, namely: being able to take part in the Ezafe construction outside the CP, making PVs that bear [+N] feature so they can be definite by determiners ?in ‘this’ and ?an ‘that’. Moreover, whenever direct object is definite/ specific, it is never used without “Ra” (cf. Sadeghi, 1349). Another supporting motivation comes from the cognitive ability of categorization and generalization, in some cases; we can categorize the meaning of the PVs, which co-accuse with a certain LV into one category. For example, in the case of the verb *Gereftan*², as a light-verb in the CP construction, its PVs such as “arusi, jafn, mehmani, khatm, etc”³ can categorize into the ‘*social ritual meetings*’ category. This mechanism motivates a new sense for the verb *Gereftan* e.g. “*holding a ceremony, meeting, etc*” and makes its function more like a full verb than a light verb (C.f. Samvelian & Faghiri, 2014, Family 2006, Ghanbarian 2016). For the last supporting motivation that is presented here, we can consider that in the CPs under this study⁴, the external argument should be semantically licensed by the meaning of the CP as an agent. According to Samvelian (2006, 2014), as you can see also in 1. (b); “projecting an external argument by the CPs which is also the semantic agent of it implies the condition of necessity for emerging accusative CPs, and this is a possibility for Ra –marking of the nominal element”. In contrast with these CPs, there are CPs like; *xak gereftæn* (get covered with dust) which cannot occur in the construction like 1. (b), because they are unaccusative⁵.

The constructions from a network are linked by inheritance relations, which motivate many of properties of particular constructions (Goldberg, 1995: 67). As is shown here, the more a CP inherits from the “transitive construction”, the more motivation exists for it to become a construction, which we call it, “Separated Ra-marked CP” or “transitive CP”. The CPs under this study might show mismatching in a certain discourse because of the syntactic independence of their elements which motivates (in)separability between their elements when they co-occur with the certain other elements in a network of language constructions.

² to take

³ wedding, celebration, party, mourning

⁴ separated Ra-marked CP

⁵ An unaccusative verb is an intransitive verb whose syntactic external argument is not a semantic agent; unaccusative verbs thus contrast with unergative verbs.

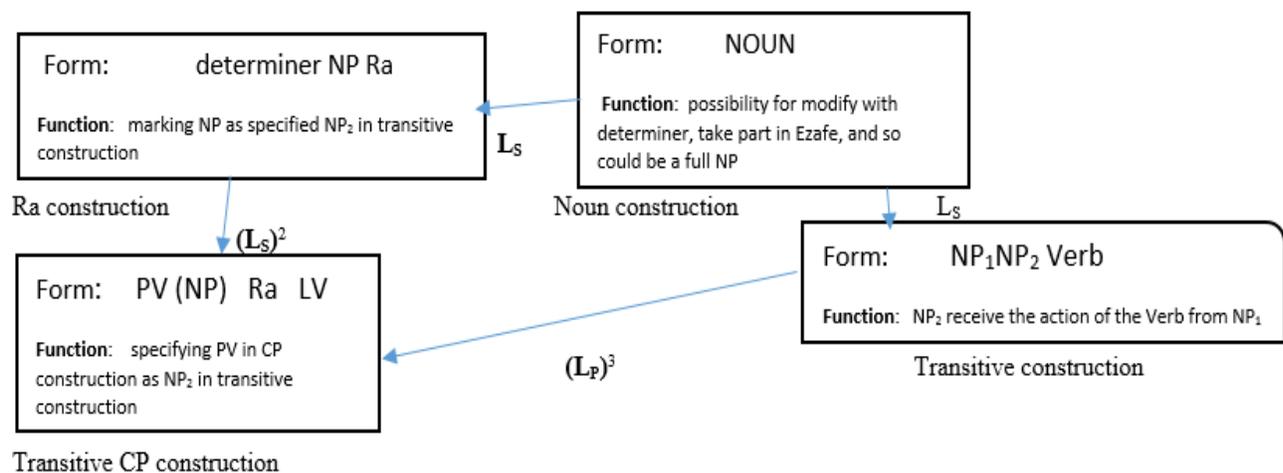


Figure 1. Inheritance in the CPs (²Subpart link, ³Polysemy link)

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