

Lexicalization of The Semantic Dimensions of Modality in Persian Modal Adjectives¹

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Received: 2013/01/19
Accepted: 2013/08/20

Abstract

In this article, the three semantic dimensions of modal force, modal base and ordering source are investigated in Persian modal adjectives and it is shown that the three modal forces of necessity (as in *qat?i* ‘certain’), possibility (as in *momken* ‘possible’) and good possibility (as in *?ehtemâli* ‘probable’) have been lexicalized in Persian modal adjectives while weak necessity, slight possibility and better possibility have not been lexicalized in these adjectives. The epistemic and circumstantial modal bases have also been lexicalized in Persian modal adjectives (as in *?ehtemâli* ‘probable’ and *qâbel-e-?e?temâd* ‘reliable’, respectively) other than *momken* ‘possible’, in whose lexical entry modal base is unspecified and whose syntactic position determines its

(DOI): 10.22051/JLR.2016.2319

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epistemic or non-epistemic interpretation. Among stereotypical, hearsay, doxastic, deontic, teleological and bouletic ordering sources, none has been lexicalized in Persian modal adjectives and they are determined by the context.

Keywords: *modality, modal adjectives, lexicalization, modal force, modal base, ordering source.*