

## Investigating the Function of “Become” (šodan) & “Go” (Raftan) in Persian Dialects of Korasan<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the function of two verbs of “Become” (šodan) and “Go” (Raftan) in the current Persian dialects of Khorasan (all three zones of Khorasan). To clarify the present condition of these verbs in these dialects, their historical course from Indo-European, Old Persian and Middle Iranian languages were tracked and analyzed. These given functions were also compared with their functions in other varieties and current languages of Iran which made us draw significant conclusions .

Not much research has been conducted on “go” and “become”. Two studies indirectly related to the present article are addressed here. The first one is by Golfam et al. (2011) which showed that the standard Persian language tries to lighten the position of “become” in passive tenses. The researchers concluded that the verb “become” plays a crucial role in passive structures and its function is fulfilled by extending the meaning of other functions of “become” in today’s Persian. The second seminal study which is similar in its content and scope to the present one is by Pishghdam et al. (2014) who compared the functions of “go” in English and Mashhadi dialect showing its usage similarity in both.

Given the diversity of the two verbs in the Persian dialects of Khorasan and the paucity of research in this regard, this research was

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initiated on a descriptive-analytical basis to shed light on some aspects of the use of these two verbs. Part of the data in this study was taken from the theses and articles written on these dialects and varieties. Other parts of the data were gathered through field study or via the speech of the researchers themselves. In case of the latter, their sources were cited. The collected samples are mostly from the two dialects of central and southern Khorasan but not much from the northern part as the first two were more easily available .

Based on the etymology and the historical uses of these two verbs, it is known that “become” has been available in Indo-European language meaning “moving” and “going .” This verb has been used in the Old Persian and Avestan texts in the same concept, and it was still regarded a major “motion” verb in the Middle Persian. However, the Indo-European origin of the verb ‘go’ is doubted by some experts. ‘Go’ was probably used instead of ‘become’ or beside it as the main motion verb in some of the Persian varieties since the middle period. In the New Iranian era, ‘become’ stopped functioning as the main motional verb and its function was fully transferred to the verb ‘go’. Following these changes, ‘become’ turned into an auxiliary and complementary verb with a new function.

Studying these verbs in twenty-two dialects of Farsi in triple Khorasan provinces led us to a triple categorization. In the first category of the dialects just like in standard Persian, ‘go’ is used as the main motional verb and ‘become’ as the auxiliary or complementary verb. Dialects such as Taybadi, Khafi, Kakhki, Jami, Ferdowsi, Ghayeni, Gonabadi and Birjandi are all in this category. The following examples clarify the case:

Taybadi (Kazemi, 2000):

1. kuku de kaseqâl xo raf: (cuckoo into nest own went): The Cuckoo went into its nest.

2. haq šemâ porra soda: (right you full become): Your right completed

3. dida mešem: (seen are being become-we): We are being seen

In the second category of the dialects, in all cases, the verb ‘go’ is used as the main motional verb or complementary or auxiliary verb. The Mashadi, Sabzevari, Kashmari, Roueini and Adkani dialects are in this category.

Adkani:

4 . U raftag: He/She Went

5. Ali košta raftag: (Ali killed went): Ali was killed

6 . Rouhani raisjomhur raftag : (Rouhani president went): Rouhani became the president.

In the third category of the Khorasani dialects, both ‘go’ and ‘become’ are used but their functions are not exactly the same as in standard Persian. The dialects of Reqqe, Tabasi and Sedeh are of this kind .

Raqqe (Asadi, 1999):

7. Be koža šodi? (To where became?): Where did you go?

8. Bešoda bodom be Mašad (become was-I): I had gone to Mashhad.

As is seen, in Raqqe dialect ‘become’ is used instead of ‘go’. The following examples shows how ‘become’ is used as a linking verb:

9. Hâšem naxoš soda: (Hashem sick become): Hashem has become sick .

10. šoma ra ke mabinem xošhâl marem (you râ (Do object marker)that see-I happy go-I: I become happy when I see you .

"Become" is used in sentence 9 and ‘go’ in sentence 10 which means both verbs are used in this context.

In passive tenses in these dialects, ‘become’ and ‘go’ are used in terms of time variable. Thus in past simple, future simple and present perfect, passive tense is made by the auxiliary verb of ‘become’, but the in present simple, Going to, and Future in the past, ‘go’ is used to form passive sentences. Apart from the mentioned functions, these verbs were also analyzed in terms of some other functions like their usage as modal verbs. Studying the function of ‘become’ as a modal verb in the discussed three categories resulted in the following findings:

Kakhki:

11. meša beri? (is becoming go-you?) Can you go?

However, speaking to the elderly language users makes it clear that in the past the usage of the verb ‘can’ in this context was more and ‘become’ is new in this function.

In the second category, we have three different kinds. In some dialects such as Adkani, 'go' is used instead of 'become' (like other functions of 'become').

12. mera beri? (is going go-you?) Can you go?

In some of the dialects of the second group, like Mashhadi, the verb 'become' is used under the influence of standard Persian.

13. meše beri? (is becoming go-you?): Can you go?

However, as it was previously said, in this dialect 'go' is used instead of 'become'. In the third kind of the second category of the dialects, there are other modal verbs used instead of 'become' and 'go'. For example in Neyshabouri dialect, the verb 'can' is used:

14. metana bera (is being able go-he/she?) Can he/she go?

Actually, 'can' is one of the modal verbs from the middle era which has the same function in standard Persian Language. In Khafi and Sadeh dialects from the third category, the verb 'become' is used in this context.

Khafi (Amirinejad, 1996):

15. Maša beri (is becoming go-you?): Can you go?

Sadeh (Afzadlnejad, 1998):

16. meše vernegi? (is becoming say-not-you?): Can you not say?

The interesting point in the Sadeh dialect is that this structure is also used instead of 'maybe':

17. meše berefte bede: (is becoming gone be-he/she): Maybe he/she has gone.

Studying such functions in other dialects of the Iranian languages showed that the verb 'become' with the meaning of 'go' as a main motional verb is still highly used and verbs like 'go', 'be', and to a lesser extent the verbs 'come' and 'fall' are used as linking and auxiliary verbs. In some other cases, since the passive form does not have any analytic form and is synthetic, there is no need for using auxiliary verbs.

Analyzing the historical changes of the verb 'become' showed that it is more grammatical now than in the ancient time, that is to say it turned from a main verb into an auxiliary verb and is used in this new usage in most of Khorasani dialects today. In some other dialects, the same happened to the verb 'go' and this verb has become more grammaticalized than it was once in the middle era and it is used as an auxiliary verb in

some Khorasani dialects. Based on the findings, we can conclude that the Khorasani dialects in comparison with other Persian dialects and other varieties of Iranian languages are more distant to the ancient and middle Persian. At the same time, these dialects share many varieties with the modern Persian today.

To sum up, in this article we described the function of the verbs 'become' and 'go' in some Persian Khorasani dialects and the changing of these functions since the ancient time up to the present time, but the reasons of such changes and differences in these dialects are not clear to us. This could be a subject for future research and studies.

**Keywords:** Become, Go, Persian Dialects of Khorasan, Passive Verb, Modal Verb, Linking Verb