

EFFECTS OF PERSON AND NUMBER HIERARCHIES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS IN NEW PERSIAN

Zahra Etebari¹
Ali Alizadeh²
Mehrdad Naghzhuy-Kohan³

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1. INTRODUCTION

This article studies the diachronic development of reflexive pronouns derived from *xod* in New Persian, i.e. 10th to 20th centuries. Not in all centuries of New Persian one can find the indexation of *xod* by pronominal clitics and it is mostly believed that the indexation is a characteristic of colloquial Persian. The current study, employing a typological perspective, tries to investigate the sequence of the emergence as well as the development process of the reflexive pronouns with different persons and numbers in New Persian. We assume that the process follows the universal referential hierarchies.

In Persian, similar to for example English, Turkish and Finnish, one and a same set of reflexive pronouns show both reflexive and emphatic functions. The reflexive pronoun *xod* in New Persian is derived from *xwad* in Middle Persian with adverbial function (Mackenzie, 2011), and *xwad* is a development from the prefix *uva* with possessive meaning in Old Persian (Kent, 1950). New Persian uses *xod* as both emphatic and reflexive pronouns. Moyne (1971) considers possessive function of *xod* as emphatic. However, Davari (2016) points out that the use of *xod* as a possessor is to denote reflexive function and based on this concludes that the reflexive uses of *xod* in Persian precede the emphatic uses.

Regarding person and number indexations of different grammatical categories, different hierarchies are introduced (Greenberg, 1966; Comrie, 1989, 1999; Woolford, 1999; Corbett, 2000; Croft, 2003). In some hierarchies (according to certain languages), animacy plays a bigger role, dominating first and second persons over third person. However, for some languages, animacy is indifferent and they follow the hierarchy with the domination of third person. Furthermore, specifically

¹ PhD Candidate of Linguistics, Linguistics Department, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad; etebari.zahra@mail.um.ac.ir

² Associate Professor of Linguistics, Linguistics Department, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (corresponding author); alalizadeh@um.ac.ir

³ Associate Professor of Linguistics, Linguistics Department, Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamedan; mehrdad.kohan@basu.ac.ir

for the presence of reflexive markers with different persons among languages, Comrie (1989; 1999) introduces the hierarchy that dominates third person over first and second persons, and Faltz (1985) believes that second person also dominates first person in reflexive pronouns.

This study aims to determine what referential hierarchies play role in the emergence and development of the reflexive pronoun *xod* into personal reflexive pronouns *xodam*, *xodat*, *xodaš*, *xodemān*, *xodetān*, and *xodešān*. It also takes a brief look at the influence of different functions of *xod* in the process.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Since the study is diachronic, the given data at first place are of written type and only the prose of this period is investigated. Among various available texts, three manuscripts are selected per century, in total 33 texts. The criteria of the selections are the simplicity of the language of the texts, the narrativity of the texts, and the certainty on the dates they were written. From each text, 15000 words are compiled which resulted in a half a million word corpus¹. The corpus includes 192 constructions where the reflexive pronoun *xod* is used with one of the pronominal clitics. The current article takes a diachronic typological approach and regarding the frequencies of the personal reflexive pronouns in different centuries of New Persian, investigates the influence of different referential hierarchies (Greenberg, 1966; Faltz, 1985; Comrie, 1989a, 1989b Comrie, 1989, 1999; Woolford, 1999; Corbett, 2000; Croft, 2003), on their development. It also takes a look at the role of the emphatic and reflexive functions in the developments.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the corpus, the first uses of personal clitic pronouns attached to *xod* belong to the third person singular and are not older than 14th or 15th centuries (8th or 9th in Hijri calendar). The third person singular reflexive pronoun *xodaš*, in both sequence of emergence and frequency in different centuries, overtly dominates the first and second reflexive pronouns. As illustrated in figure 1, first person also dominates the second person and singular is placed over plural in the hierarchy of number. Furthermore, according to the figure 2, the first cases of personal reflexive pronouns are used in the corpus in possessive constructions. Then emphatic function and later reflexive function are observed.

¹ The corpus is compiled in a dissertation by Etebari (2020).

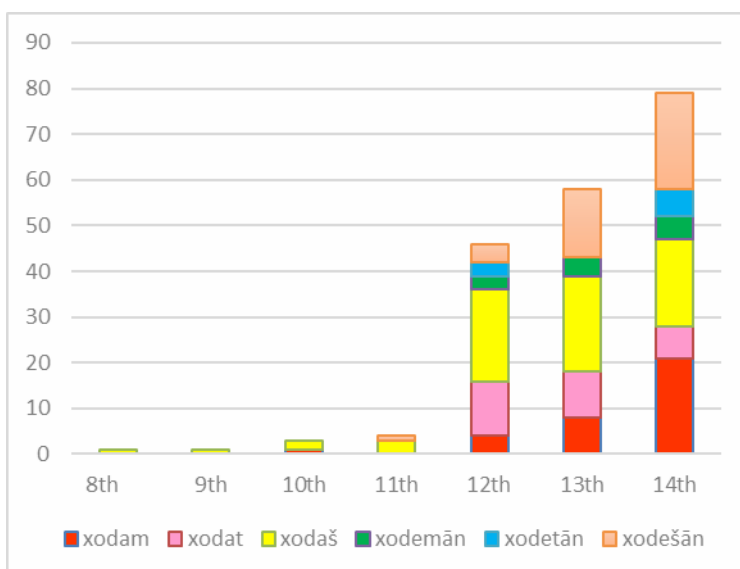


Figure 1. Frequency of different personal reflexive pronouns in New Persian centuries

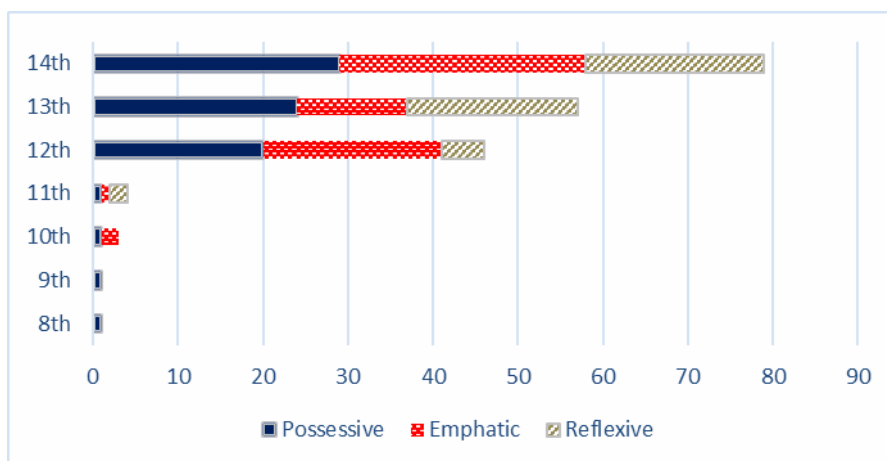


Figure 2. Frequency of different functions of personal reflexive pronouns in New Persian centuries

4. CONCLUSION

The above mentioned results indicate that animacy does not play an important role in the indexation of Persian reflexive pronouns. Thus the development process is in consistency with the person hierarchies introduced by Greenberg (1966) and Comrie (1989; 1999) but portrays a counterexample to the hierarchy introduced by Faltz (1985), which considers a dominance of second person over first person for reflexive markers. Moreover, the development follows the number hierarchy introduced by Woolford (1999). If, opposed to Davari (2016), we follow Moyne (1971) asserting that possessive uses of reflexive pronouns demonstrate an emphatic function in Persian, we conclude that the development of personal reflexive pronouns in New Persian follows the universal tendency introduced by König and

Siemund (2000), indicating the preference for emphasis over reflexivity in the development of reflexive markers.

Keywords: Typology, Reflexive pronouns, Emphatic, Pronominal clitics, New Persian