

Noun Phrases in Vafs Dialect

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Abstract: The dialect of Vafs is one of the dialects on the northwest of Iran. Rich, original vocabulary, idioms, phones, verbs and grammar of this dialect characterize this dialect as one of the ring of the chain connecting medial Persian to modern Persian. This paper tries to study the structures and the forms of the "nouns" of this dialect, and to compare some of its words with their counterparts in ancient and modern languages of Iran.

[Fatemeh Moosavi mirak, Nasrin Safavizadeh. **Noun Phrases in Vafs Dialect.** *Life Sci J* 2012;9(4):1698-1703] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 260

Key words: Vafs, dialect, language, Noun Phrases, Iranian Languages.

Introduction

Local languages and dialects are rich sources for studies in the fields of language, literature, sociology, anthropology and history. Due to the development of public education, the widespread presence of mass media, and as the result, people becoming literate, local languages and dialects are replaced with official languages. Ethnic linguistics provides the opportunity for reconstructing the unwritten history based on the existing data. Developing the studies about, and writing and codifying dialects in order to preserve cultural identity and historical heritage, and to clarify the ambiguous points about the ancient languages of Iran and discovering their grammatical and lexical structure, alongside with the culture of people speaking those languages, is the key objective of dialectology, and this study is to serve this objective.

The Lingual Descent of the Old Language of the Village of Vafs

The region of Vafs, in local dialect "Veous", is one of the sub regions of the city of Arak, in Markazi Province of Iran, which is 5 kilometers from Park to the west, and 16 kilometers from Komijan to the north, located in "Kuh Sefid". "Chehraqaan" /čeræqān/, "Gurchan" /qurčān/ and "Park" /færk/ are among the villages speaking the dialect of this region.

Most linguists believe that the dialect of Vafs is rooted back in the main branch of Indo-European – Indo-Iranian – Northwest Iranian – Central Iranian (Schmitt, 1983, 313). Stillo has stated that "the exact linguistic chain of Vafsi is under question; while it is classified as one of the sub branches of Tatic, particularly southern Tatic, some researchers regard Vafsi as one of the accent of the Central Plateau. Pierre Locoke believes that Vafsi and other dialects of the region of Tafresh have some grammatical features in common with the accent of the Central Plateau. He also thinks that this group has a richer

vocabulary than that of Tatic. Vafsi also has some features close to that of Kurdish (12, Stillo).

Azeri Turkish and modern Persian are also spoken in this village. Azeri-speaking residents of Vafs call this village "Bouws" and call its dialect "tāt dil" (Moqadam, 10, 1949). The dialects related to this accent are Alviri, Vidari, Ashtiani and Rudbari. The residents of Vafs and the three villages of Chehraqaan, Gurchan and Park speak Vafsi.

Nominal Phrases

Nouns in Vafsi dialect are categorized into "masculine" and "feminine" based on gender, "singular" and "plural" based on count, and "direct" and "indirect", based on the mood. Plural nouns are used in the same for both genders and adjectives have feminine and masculine terminals.

Tables 1 and 2 represent noun and adjective suffixes, categorized based on gender, count and mood.

Gender

Feminine nouns: feminine nouns in this dialect are divided into two subcategories:

1. Nouns ending to "æ", e.g. kúgæ (cat), čúæ (wood)
2. Nouns ending to "é ", e.g. keljé (girl), āhré (mill)

Masculine nouns: these nouns are divided into three subcategories:

1. Nouns ending to a consonant, e.g. zævin (earth), ayr (fire)
2. Nouns ending to diphthongs, e.g. hæssew (account)
3. Nouns ending to vowels, e.g. lā zæ (boy), juānxau (blanket), āmu (uncle), duiā (human), šo (night)

Adjectives:

Adjectives are of two types in Vafsi dialect:

1. Adjectives which follow the main noun with a particular bonding single word and show the accordance of gender with the noun:

Feminine: mišæ isbiæ (white sheep), æhāmmúa nāzók (fine giveh (a kind of hand-made shoes))

Masculine: penjæ xunin (bloody hand), bawæ pir (old father)

There is another combination typical to this dialect, in which a single word joins the main noun to

the following adjective. This one is different from persian possessive.

2. Adjectives which precede the noun and do not change based on count or gender, which include adjectives of referral, question, finite ordinal numbers showing physical or abstract situation, adjectives used as curses, etc.: ðhre seyyómi (the third mill), zerí ðhre (the mill on the down), kæzan (which one), hævin (this one), læ:næti lazæ (damn boy)

Table 1: Noun suffixes

Gender	Masculine								Feminine			
	to a consonant		to -a		to -æ		to -u		to -æ		to -é	
Noun ending	Horse		Boy		Dog		Child		Cat		Girl	
Count and mood												
Direct singular	Ø	æsb	Ø	Zawá	Ø	æsbæ	Ø	zarru	Ø	kúg-æ	Ø	kelj-e
Indirect singular	-i	æSb-i	-y	Zawá-y	-y	æSbé-y	Øy	zarru-Ø zarru-y	-é	kug-e	-i	kelj-i
Direct plural	-e	æsb-e	-y -e	Zawá- y-e	-e	æsb-i-e	-e	zarrú-e	-é	kúg-e	-e	kelj-e
Indirect plural	-án	æsb- án	-án	Zawa-y	-án	æSbi-án	-án	zarru-án	-án	kug- án	-án	kelj-án

Table 2: Adjective suffixes)mæzæn(Big:

Gender	Masculine		Feminine	
Count and mood				
Direct singular	Ø	mæzæn	-æ	mæzæn-æ
Indirect singular	-i	Mæzæn-i	-é	mæzæn-é
Direct plural	-e	mæzæ-e	-e	mæzæn-e
Indirect plural	-án	Mæzæ-án	-án	mæzæn-án

Omission and Inversion in Vafsi Dialect and Its Accordance to Other Iranian Languages

As mentioned before: "In rural areas of central and western Iran, and also in Azerbaijan, there are some separate islands of northwest dialects which are the remains of dialect which were once prevalent in a wide area of this region, and have lasted to date ... namely, the dialects of Vafs, Ashtiyani, Tafresh, and the area between Hamedan and Saveh." (Aranski, 1999, 144)

The changes which happen to the speech sounds during the evolution of each language follow a rule, and if languages of the same family follow the same rule, there should be accordance between them, in

terms of their speech sounds. This systematic sound accordance is seen between all Iranian languages. The differences between the speech sounds which has separated northwest Iranian accents from southwest Iranian accent since ancient times, is distinctly seen in Iranian languages." (Aranski, 2000, 331)

To show the relationship between Vafsi and ancient and medial languages of Iran, the historical process of some words left from these times is presented here.

* The accordance between "z" from northwest and "d" from southwest, which reflects the difference between "z" in Avestaian and "d" in Ancient Persian, or "z" in Parti and "d" in median Persian.

English	Avestaian	Parti	Median Persian	Southwest	Northwest	Ashtiyani	Amerehi	Kurdish	Vafsi
Groom	zāmātar	zumā	dāmāt	tat.dumbor	tal.zomo	zāmā	zumā	zāmā	Zāvvā
Know	zān	zān	dān	tat.dunstan	tal.zənə	zānān	bazu	zān	zānān
Heart	zərəd	zird	dil	taj.dil	gu.ziL	del	dil	zil	Del

* Vafsi and the central dialects, in addition to having a relationship with northwest languages, are close to southwest languages too: the reflection of "ur" in Avestaian and "ur" in ancient Persian, in the form of "hr" and "si" in southwest and medial Persian accents, and also the reflection "j" in ancient Persian and "z" in Parti and medial Persian, in northwest and southwest accents:

English	Avestaiaian	Parti	Median Persian	Southwest	Northwest	Ashtiyani	Amerehi	Kurdish	Vafsi
Three	θri	hrē	se	taj.se	tal.hai	se	se	se	Se
Boy	puθrā	puhr	pus	taj.pisar	las.pur	pūr	pur	pur	Lāzā
Woman	janay	zan	zan	tat.zan	tal.žen	zenni	zena	žin	Zene
Hit	jan	žan	zan	taj.zan	tal.žae	-	-	kotain	Ajjané (میزند)

* The accordance in referral pronouns which are rooted in the referral pronoun of ancient Iranian of (hauv):

English	Avestaiaian	Parti	Median Persian	Southwest	Northwest	Ashtiyani	Amerehi	Kurdish	Vafsi
This	ima	im	ēn	taj.in	tal.em	yān	yo	ya	In
That	ahmāi	hō	ān	taj.on	tal.āv	ān	enovv	āw	ān

* There are some differences in the vocabulary of the current languages of the west of Iran, which are rooted in the accordance of "važ" in northwest language (Parti) with "gōβ" in southwest language (medial Persian). There root "wāč" does not exist in southwest accents. The Institute of Linguistics has derived the word "vak" from a Persian root, while Persian has not kept this word during its historical process. Northwest languages and Kurdish has kept "ž", e.g. "bež" which is rooted in "vāž", or the word "zæn" which is made with "ž" in all dialects of the northwest of Iran, and is pronounced as "z" in Persian, or in the verb "arvazom" (I make) which leads Vafsi far from Tati and makes it closer to the central dialect.

English	Avestaiaian	Parti	Median Persian	Southwest	Northwest	Ashtiyani	Amerehi	Kurdish	Vafsi
Say	mrav	vāž	goβ	taj.gūy	tal.vote	vottan	boeā	vāž	Vāttan

* A comparison between some words in Avestaiaian and Vafsi

	wind	door	I	hand	male	mountain	brother	arm	water
Avetaiaian	vāta	dvar	azem	zasta	nar	gairi	brātar	bāzu	āp
Vafsi	vā	bar	az	dast	nere	ku	berā	bāzu	Auw

* A comparison between some words in the languages of the east of Iran and the west of Iran

English	Eastern Iranian	Western Iranian	Vafsi
partridge	as.kāf	tat.zerej/zāš	Kōuk
cow	as.yog	tat.gou	Gā
dog	as.kudz	tal.səpa	Asba
fish	as.kāf	taj.mohi	Muhi
ear	as.yos	tat.guš	Gūš
eye	išk.com	tal.čaš	čē
four	af.curpar	taj.čahar	čahār
five	af.pindzə	kr.penj	penj
seven	as.aud	tat.hāft/kr.haft	Haft
leather	af.cermən	kr.č'arm	čarm
To be	vx.vit	tal.be/kr.bu	Biyan
brother	as.ārvād	tal.boa/kr.bərā	Berā

Some Examples of the inversion of consonants in Vafsi

Inversion of "x" to "h"

Persian	xurd kardan	xis xurdan	xešt	āhur
Vafsi	hurd kardan	his hurdan	hešt	āhura

* The inversion of "x" before "t" and "f" before "t" into "t" can be seen in some dialect of Iran, especially in verb declensions. Also, in some Vafsi words "x" is omitted.

Persian	mextan	sāxtan	suxtan	furuxtān	gorixtan	poxtan	toxm	talx	surx	kulux
Vafsi	mettan	sāttan	suttan	ruttan	verittan	pettan	tum	tal	sur	Kulu

* one of the main features of Vafsi, as compared to other dialect in Persian, is using "v" or "vv" instead of "m" in old Iranian, which is one of the three features "McKenzie" introduced for the languages which are related to Kurdish:

Persian	mān (possessive pronoun)	xamir	vabā	namad	šumā	zamin	āsemān	gandom	deim	kamān
Vafsi	vān	haviz	vāvvā	neva	suvān	zavin	āsuvān	gendov	div	Kavān

* Also, the inversion of "f", "l" and "g" into "x", and the inversion of "k" into "x" under the impact of "t", can be observed in some words in this dialect. Historically, all these processes are rooted back in Old Iranian. At synchronic level, "xt" is inverted into "z", which is called "palatalization", and is one of the requisite features of Indo-Iranian languages and one of the most important keys to identify a language as related to Iranian languages.

This can be seen through an example: in the word "čitāb" (book) in Turkish (Azeri), "k" is inverted into "č", hence, it can be concluded that the residents of this region were previously speaking Iranian. "č" of Ancient Iranian has been inverted into "ž" or "z" in medial era. Languages having "z" should belong to the southwest. In Vafsi, either there has been a second inversion under the impact of Persian, in which the "ž" from the northwest has been Persianized into "z", e.g. tājeme<tāzem (tāxtan: ride), or there might have been an intra-lingual inversion, since it is more difficult to pronounce "j" as compared to "z".

saxt	doxtar	yaqe	xāle	fešar
sākta>sāxt	daukta>doxta	yāxa	lālla	Xošar

* Also, the inversion of "g" to "š", "g" to "v", "š" and "s" to "č", "č" to "z", and "j" to "y" or "vi"

jušāndan / jo	zardčube	gorg	angošt	give	miraft
višāndan / yav	zardzuvā	varg	angest	šive	basse>ače

* The inversion of "b" to "v" or "f", "f" to "v", "k" to "g", and "j" to "z", from Persian into Vafsi

sargije	tiq	qalbār	kalāq	banafš	hefdah	sebil	barf	abr	bare
sargize	tik	kalbā	gālaya	banuš	hevdah	sefil	farfa	avr	Varah

* Some examples of the omission of (f, d, v, h, k, i, y), and also the replacement of sounds in Vafsi

tubre	gofl	dalv	xāk	šaftālu	dūd	gāv	dahān	divār	čerāg
torba	golf	dol	xā	eštālu	dū	gā	dān	duār	čerā

One of the most important confirmed theories about Indo-European linguistics is the theory of "Wave promotion". Basically, Iranian languages are formed in a wave form. As seen in the parameters mentioned above, Vafsi has borrowed items from many languages, and it cannot be defined which sub-language it belongs to for sure; however, based on the wave theory and the form of the promotion of this dialect over a geographical district, it can be seen that Vafsi has been promoted to Ashtiyan, then to Hamedan toward the north (there should have been some dialect to connect Vafsi to Taleshi, however, Turkish has separated them), and then towards Arak, Isfahan, Yazd, etc., and as it has been promoted towards south, it has changed into another language (Persian) and has lost its (Maadi) features (two geographical districts have been defined as related to this promotion: the triangle of Rey- Isfahan-Hamedan = The Great Maad, and the district of Azerbaijan and the north = The Small Maad). This process can be

historically explained: at the era of Old Iran and the immigration of Partis from Khorasan, Maadi dialect begins to form in north and promotes from Azerbaijan and Tabriz, which is the central area speaking this dialect, towards Hamedan. There it changes into Hamedani dialect, and from there, it promotes towards Isfahan, while being subjected to more changes due to the wave promotion, and it changes into the Yazdi dialect, and from there it is promoted further to change into Persian. As Iranian immigrated to different places and were blended with Partis, a diversity starts to grow inside the languages of Maads. In Ancient Persian which is the oldest form of Persian, there are some adoptions from Maadi, e.g. there should have been (bodorg = big), which is (bozorg<), or (demestān<zemestān). These chains are broken during the time, Persian rejects some dialects, and one Iranian dialect omits another.

Nowadays, the social class component of language has dominated other components, and all

dialects are at the danger of being changed into the standard language used in mass media, which makes it hard to reconstruct languages.

Economic Resources and Language

Languages reflect social processes. We always tend to emphasize on the motives with recognized roles in our lives and in satisfying our basic needs. This rule is called "selective attention" which holds true for languages too. "Those thing of no particular importance for the members of a particular society, may have no specific names or be classified under a general name. However, basic issues may have not only one name, but several names, in order to show the delicate differences between them that the people speaking that language understand and feel the need for them to be separated. These linguistic classifications are one of the main issues emphasized by lingo-anthropologists. They call a group of related issues in a language or the terms of a particular subject, such as relationship, diseases, working tools, animals, plants, etc., "Connotative Territory". The connotative structure of a society can be tracked down through studying connotative territories. This connotative structure not only includes common interests of a society, but also shows how these interests have structured the mental framework of the people of that society (Bates, 456).

By studying connotative fields of Vafsi, various words related to farming tools reveal that this language community has a long history of farming behind. Different words for "wheat" in different phases of growth, different uses of a plant in growing phases, different names for mills and its parts, names for different plants alongside with their healing and medical properties, different storage rooms for different products which were of great importance for the survival of these people, different tamed and wild animals used for farming and plowing, the names of pest and insect which killed pests, sowing and harvesting methods, the veneration of birth, growth and harvest seasons, lingual taboos related to farming, beliefs, sayings, songs with this economy as their central themes, etc, all can only be seen in the memories of old men and women and their nostalgic tales.

Conclusion

Some phonetic specifications of Vafsi dialect and the reasons to relate this dialect to the languages of ancient and medial Iran are as following:

1. Vafsi nouns are of the two genders of masculine and feminine, two counts of singular and plural, and two moods of direct and indirect. Plural forms are the same for the two genders, and the bases

of adjectives are differentiated into masculine and feminine (Stilo, 223).

2. There is often a particle after a noun, e.g. "čāla da" (in a hole), "s daēlē" (in his heart)

3. Closing the last syllable of the words in "a" and "e", while in modern Persian they are closed in consonants, e.g. "detta" (daughter)

4. The inversion of "f" followed by a "t" into "t", mostly in verbs, e.g. " rettan" (pour), "ruttan" (sell)

5. The inversion of "m" in ancient Persian into "v" and "vv" ("m" at the beginning of a word is usually maintained the same).

6. There are two symbols for tenses: "at" for continuous tenses and "ba" for non-continuous tenses

7. The addition of "s" to the nouns, as for the third person pronoun hidden in the verb in Modern Persian, e.g. "āgeles darda"

8. The inversion of "x" followed by a "t" into "t", mostly in verbs, e.g. " rettan" (pour), "ruttan" (sell)

9. Using aspirate sounds of "h " and "?" both in originally Arabic words and Persian words, e.g. āhra, hoqqa, ħaris, s? ūn, ? sb (Kia, 1956).

10. One of the main aspects of Vafsi grammar is the signs and the moods of objects and subject and their accordance pattern, particularly in past tenses. In Stilo's idea, is some minor changes in auxiliary ergative old languages in order to have more complex uses in modern languages. This kind of change in transitive-accusative past tenses can show that Vafsi has lost its ability to differentiate between subject and object (as for Persian) and is in its way towards causative-nominative for all tenses.

Being ergative is one of the main features of ancient languages, like African and Indian languages. This feature is seen in also in the languages of Raji, Khor and Biabanak, and Kurdish. This feature confirms the grammatical relationship between Vafsi and ancient languages. Ergative structure of this language, particular verb prefixes and suffixes, etc, shows its relationship with other Indo-European languages.

11. Sound system accordance between Vafsi and the languages of the northwest of Iran proves this dialect to be the chain connecting modern Persian to medial Persian, Parti, ancient Persian, and at last, to Avestaian.

12. The structure of some words, possessives and genitives, and particles show the relationship between this dialect and Maadi and Avestaian languages.

13. Some primitive handmade tools, potteries, and buildings made in the architecture style of Achaemenid have been discovered in this area, and regarding that Vafs is close to Ecbatana (the capital

of Achaemenids), this is now regarded more probable that Vafs had once been one of the key cities of Achaemenids.

14. By studying old plays, beliefs and sayings of these people, it is revealed how old this culture is, and that this culture has been passed from Aryan ancestors through generations.

15. The etymology of some words of this language confirms that this tribe have had a community life in old eras.

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Abbreviations:

/as/: Asi
 /af/: Afqani
 /išk/: Ishkashmi
 /tat/: Tati

/tag/ Taleshi

/taj/: Tajiki

/kr/: Kurdish

/gur/: Gurani

/las/: Lasgerdi

/vx/: Vaxani

>: After a word shows its evolution and next developed form

<: After a word shows its root.

-: On the vowels on which the accent falls

_: separates the syllables of a word

/: represents "and", "or"

=: represents equivalence and phonetic equivalence

ε =?

ç =h

ġ = γ

10/6/2012