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THE ANALYSIS OF THE MEANING EXTENSIONS OF THE DEICTIC MOTION VERB RAFTAN 'GO' IN PERSIAN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Verbs are found to be the most polysemous in Persian language. The senses of the verbs of the language under investigation are outnumbered because of the uniqueness of the language and its collocations. By adding any suffix or prefix to a verb and according to the context, the sense and meaning of it will change. Motion verbs typically focus on parts of the complex Source-Path-Goal schema. To come, to arrive, to reach and to bring inherently profile the goal of a movement whereas the verbs like to go, to leave, to depart and to take inherently profile the source of a movement, and to move, to pass, to travel inherently profile the path of a movement. In the present study, the domain of deictic motion verb raftan 'go' in the framework of cognitive semantics is analyzed in terms of Polysemy and the data used for the study were gathered from Persian dictionaries that are available and used by the Persian language speaking community.

KEYWORDS: Polysemy, motion verb, deictic, Persian language, cognitive semantics.

1. INTRODUCTION

In most languages coming and going verbs are assumed to have a deictic in nature. Motion, i.e. change of location plays an important role both in our perceptual organization and in our conceptualization of reality through the use of language. Lakoff ¹ and Johnson ² argue that our understanding of motion is based on an abstract image schema which includes *Source*, *Path*, *Goal* and *Direction* as its structural elements. The *Source-Path-Goal* schema typically involves a force which imparts a vector, i.e., directionality, on the moving object. Forces are experienced in a causal chain; they have origins, directions and paths of motion. Radden (1996) ³ observes that the most typical verbs of motion



in English - as in probably most other languages - are the deictic motion verbs to come and to go. These are also the two verbs that are most commonly used to express changes of state. The Persian deictic motion

¹ Lakoff, George. (1987). *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind*. Chicago and London: Chicago University Press.

² Johnson, M. (1987). *The Body in the Mind: the Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination and Reason.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

³ Radden, Gunter. (1996). Motion metaphorized: *The case of coming and going*. In Rene Dirven, Ronald W. Langacker and John R. Taylor (eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics in the Redwoods, the Expansion of a New Paradigm in Linguistics*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

verb *raftan* 'go' has number of extended senses. The prototype meaning of the deictic motion verb raftan 'go' denotes movement of an animate away from the speaker.

2. THE APPROACHES

Before beginning the actual analysis of the deictic motion verb *raftan* 'go' in Persian language, some of the approaches to the study of deictic motion verbs are reviewed. There are two main and prominent approaches to the field of semantics of deictic motion verbs:

- 1. The classical approach of "deictic center" (Talmy 1975, 1985, 2000).
- 2. Fillmore's approach based on the notions of person, space and time.

2.1 Motion-from-the-center vs. Motion-toward-the-center

It has been commonly understood that GO shows motion from the deictic center, whereas COME describes motion toward the deictic center.^{4 5 6} According to Talmy, deictic motion verbs are a kind of Path-conflating verbs, in which "the deictic component of Path typically has only the two member notions "toward the deictic center". In Talmy's framework motion events are Goal Source analyzed as consisting of an object (the Figure) and its movement across a path (the Path) with respect to another reference objects (the Ground). 'Move' is an abstract verb which shows the act of motion in a Motion event, and 'toward' is a component of the Path which is called Vector. The Vector exhibits "the basic types of arrival, traversal, and departure that a Figural schema can execute with respect to a Ground schema" ⁷ and is then presented in terms of abstract prepositions, which can be called "deep prepositions", such as the words 'toward' and 'to'. It defines the meaning of a preposition as well as the Path information conflated within the semantics of motion verbs. The Conformation is also another important component and defines the spatial relation of the Path and the Ground.

2.2 Fillmore's Person-based Analysis

Fillmore's classic works (1966, 1971, 1975, 1982, and 1983) are often taken as showing how complex coming and going verbs really are. He analyses the use conditions of these verbs in terms of the deictic categories of person, place and time. The relevant parameters of person are: speaker and addressee; of place the goal of motion; and of time, coding time and reference time. Coding time is defined by Fillmore as the time of the speech or communication act, and reference time as "the point or period that is the temporal focus for the event described in the clause". ⁸ Fillmore (1997, among others) shows the characterized distribution of English deictic motion verbs 'go' and 'come' as follows: ⁹

- 1. Come indicates motion towards {the location at the utterance time, the location at the event time, or the "home base" of {the speaker or the addressee}.
- 2. Go indicates motion toward a location distinct from the speaker's location at the utterance time.

To begin with, the following section attempts an analysis of the polysemy of the deictic motion verbs *raftan* 'go' in Persian in terms of prototypes, image-schemas (such as SOURCE, PATH and GOAL), as well as metaphor that are central to Cognitive Linguistics and shows the possible semantic extensions.

⁴ Talmy, Leonard. 1975. Semantics and syntax of motion. In J. P. Kimball, ed., Syntax and Semantics, vol. 4, 181-238. New York: Academic Press.

⁵ Oe, Saburo. 1975. Nitieigo no hikakukenkyuu: syukansei o megutte [A compara-tive study of Japanese and English: On subjectivity]. Tokyo: Nan'un-do.

⁶ Wilkins, David P. and Deborah Hill. (1995). When GO means COME: Questioning the basicness of basic motion verbs. Cognitive Linguistics 6(2):209-259.

⁷ Talmy, L. (2000). *Typology and Process in concept structuring. Toward a Cognitive Semantics*, Vol.2. (p.53)Cambridge, London: The MIT Press.

⁸ Fillmore, J.C. (1971). Toward a Theory of Deixis (p.52). In *University of Hawaii working papers in linguistics*, vol. 3, 219-242.

⁹ Fillmore, J.C. (1997). *Lectures on Deixis*. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The diverse uses *raftan* 'go' are grouped under two major categories: one signifies 'prototypical' meaning; the second designates metaphorically extended senses in physical domain, conceptual domain as well as in changes of states. These two major categories are semantically related to each other by means of a metaphorical shift from prototypical meaning to physical space and mental space

3.1 Prototypical meaning of raftan 'go'

The domain for the spatial motion verb *raftan* 'go' in Persian is physical space. There is a spatial movement of the theme; that is, the theme (animate) physically moves through a spatial path towards a concrete location. *raftan* indicates motion away from the location of the speaker. Consider the following example:

To move, to go

من به ایران می روم *man be iran mi ravam* I will go to Iran

Here, the word *miravam* (am going) which is the present continuous form of the simple verb raft and the infinitive verb *raftan*, is the prototypical meaning of the word *raftan* 'to go'. In almost all the dictionaries, the meaning associated with it is: "move from one place to another; travel". This sense will be the main sense of the verb and all other senses are collected with this sense being the central meaning.

3.2 Non-prototypical meaning (in physical domain)

Metaphor represents a transfer from one conceptualized domain onto another conceptualized domain. As a result, there is one meaning involved that is called the 'prototypical' or central meaning and another one that is called the 'transferred' or metaphorical meaning. While the domain for the spatial motion verb *raftan* is physical space, in the following examples, it is found that the inanimate theme moves through a spatial path towards a concrete location. There were 18 different senses found for the deictic motion verb *raftan* 'go' and are shown in the table 1 below:

Meaning extension	Additional lexical units to be combined with the deictic motion verb	Persian example
To move	-	من رفتم
To flow	- <u>-</u>	آب به زیر درخت رفت
To escape/ slip away	dar 'out'-prefix	مو <mark>ش در رفت</mark>
To waste/disappear	az dast 'from hand'	زمان از دست رفت
To destroy	az bein 'within'	خانه از بین رفت
To travel	50	او به هند رفت
To begin		برويم سر اصل مطلب
To pass away/die	az donya 'from world'	او از دنیا رفت
To disconnect		برق ر <mark>فت</mark>
To eat/ drink	bala 'up'	نوشابه را ر <mark>فت</mark> بالا
To pass	1913	دوران جوانی هم رفت
To do a certain exercise	129 L	<mark>صد تا بارفیکس رفت</mark>
To express/ say		ذکر خیر شما می رفت
To praise	qorban 'sacrifice'	ق <mark>ربان شما می رو</mark> م
To continue		او راه پدرش را رفت
To get surprised	vaa 'melt, splash'	او وا رفت
To end something		شب رفت و خور شيد آمد
To be sent		پيام برا ي او رفت

Table 1 Non-prototypical meanings of the deictic motion verb raftan 'go' in physical domain

3.3 Non-prototypical meaning (in conceptual domain)

The mappings between different conceptual domains are carried out by means of metaphors. Metaphors are understood as transfers, where properties from one concept are transferred to another, and in this way, it is how they "allow us to understand one domain of experience (target) in terms of another (source)". ¹⁰ The conceptual mappings manifest that the source domain is concrete and the target domain is abstract, and the physical sense is viewed as being more basic. There are 20 meaning extensions in this domain that are presented in table 2 below:

¹⁰ Lakoff, George, Johnson, Mark. (1980). Metaphor we live by (p: 135). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Meaning extension	Additional lexical units to be combined with the deictic motion verb	Persian example
Abdication/resignation	Kenar 'side'	رییس اداره کنار رفت
To affect someone	-	با من چنین بازی ها نرود
To be used	Bekar 'usage'	در خانه، چوب به کار رفت
To be on a job	Sarekar 'on the job'	س <mark>ىر كار رقت</mark>
Make fool of someone	Sarekar "on the job 11	حسابی سر کار رفت
To proceed	Pish 'forward'	سرطان بسی <mark>ار پیش رفت</mark>
To extremely desire	2	دلم برایش رفت
Accept/take responsibility	Zirebar 'under burden'	او بلاخره زير بار رفت
To become hungry	Zaf 'weakness'	دلم ضعف رفت
To penetrate/enter	Foroo 'go inside'	چاقو فرو رفت
Make mistake	Kaj 'not straight/crooked'	او کچ رفت
To behave	=	أنطور كه امر كردى، رفت
To miss (a shot)	Khata 'miss'	تيرم خطارفت
To pass out	Haal 'present'	از حال رفت
To get angry	Dar 'out'- prefix	از کوره در رفت
To be wasted	Hadar 'waste'	آب هدر رفت
To go far	2	او از دیدہ رفت
To get bored	Sar 'head'-prefix	حوصله ام سر رفت
overflow	Sar 'head'-prefix	کتری سر رفت
To forget	Yaad 'memory'	حرف هایت یادم رفت

Table 2: Non-prototypical meanings of the deictic motion verb raftan 'go' in conceptual domain

As it is presented in both the table, there are 17 (the first one is excluded because it is considered as the prototypical meaning) transferred senses for the deictic motion verb raftan 'go' in physical domain and 20 extended meanings for it in conceptual domain. Not all of them were collected from the dictionaries but some of them were added to the list by going through the colloquial usage of the verb raftan 'go'.

4. CONCLUSION

The prototypical and metaphorical extensions of the deictic motion verb raftan (go) in Persian language in both physical and conceptual domains as extracted from dictionaries are analyzed and listed by the present paper. The 38 meaning extensions have been gathered from Persian glossaries and dictionaries and most of them are in the form of compound nouns and verbs. In the case of this deictic motion verb. According to the analysis carried out in this study, there were number of meaning extensions that were created using other lexical items along with this verb to make compound verbs. It should be noted that there are always meaning extensions that are not included in dictionaries and therefore studies related to Polysemy in any lexical domain are considered very useful in updating dictionaries and adding more senses to words.

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