Reflections on Persian Grammar Vol. II

Reflections on Persian Grammar Vol. II:

Further Developments in Persian Linguistic Scholarship

By

A. Soheili

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE

All language teaching must be based on some knowledge of and about the language to be taught. The more that is known about the language, the more complete the method may become. But there are different ways of finding out about a language and describe what it is made of; many differences rest on different ideas of what Language is.

(William Francis Mackey, 1965)

I. Contributions to Linguistic Theory:
Jespersen and Sibawaihi

It is not surprising to find that many foreign scholars have contributed to the description and analysis of the various components of English grammar. Mackey (1978: 500-1) presents a list of forty-five sources on English grammar, among which is the Dutch tradition of writing English grammars, which include Jespersen's *Essentials of English Grammar* (1933), Kruisinga's *A Handbook of Present-Day English* (1931), Poutsma's *A Grammar of Late Modern English* (1914-29) and Zandvoort's *A Handbook of English Grammar* (1945). The names of the same authors are cited in the bibliography of the book by Quirk et al. (1986).

Haislund (1943) argues that Jespersen's contributions to grammatical theory lie in his concepts of rank, nexus, and junction. The concept of rank refers to the levels of modification in a phrase such as 'cleverly worded remark', in which 'remark' is modified by 'worded', which again is modified by 'cleverly'. Nexus refers to sentences in which two ideas are expressed in one unit, as in 'It rained, he ran indoors'. Junction, on the other hand, represents one idea expressed by two or more elements. Haislund concludes that these concepts integrate elements which in previous grammatical frameworks were kept apart.

Another outstanding example of a scholar who has contributed significantly to the systematic analysis of a foreign language may be demonstrated by what Sibawaihi has done for the Arabic language. He was born in around 750 in Persia and learned Arabic as a second language. His book titled *al-Kitab* ('the book') is unrivalled in the Arabic linguistic tradition to the point that some biographers have referred to it as "the

Qur'an of grammar" (Versteegh, 1997: 39). As regards the impact of non-European linguistic traditions on the European tradition, Robins (1997: 115) talks about Hebrew and Arabic grammatical scholarships and says "Arabic grammatical scholarship reached its culmination at the end of the eighth century in the grammar of Sibawaihi of Basra, significantly not himself an Arab but a Persian."[1]

According to Guillaume and Kouloughli (1990: 34), Sibawaihi's analysis of 'cognitive verbs' in Arabic demonstrates how a cognitive verb like 'suppose' can govern the predicate of a nominal sentence, as in:

(1) aẓunnu Zaydan ḍâhiban
    I suppose Zayd-acc going away-acc
  "I suppose Zayd is going away."

Sibawaihi's analysis may be interpreted in the spirit of modern linguistics in terms of a special type of Case-marking which is generally referred to as 'exceptional Case-marking' or ECM in small clauses. As Radford (1992: 324-31) argues, small clauses are typically of the form [NP XP] in which XP = AP, NP, PP, etc. in English.[2]

An example of a small clause in English is:

(2) I believe [him to be a liar].

A similar small clause in Persian may be illustrated by:

(3) man [Bahram-ra: a:qel mi-dan-am]
     I   [Bahram-obj wise pres-know-1sg]
   "I consider Bahram to be wise."

In Sibawaihi's analysis, government is 'suspended' if the governing verb does not occur to the left of the predicate. Interpreted differently, government works from left to right rather than vice versa. The following sentence shows that the governing verb is extraposed to the end of the sentence, where it fails to govern the predicate:

(4) Zaydun zahibun azunnu
    Zayd-nom going away-nom suppose

As we see in (4), both the subject and the verb appear in the nominative Case, as opposed to (1) where they are assigned the accusative Case.[3]

Ryding (2008: 176-9) argues that in addition to "verbs of perception or cognition", there are two other groups of verbs that shift the predicate of an educational sentence from the nominative Case to the accusative Case. All these verbs are called 'nawaasix' (converters to accusative), which include *zanna* and its sisters, *kaana* and its sisters, and *'inna* and its sisters (for more information about ECM verbs in English, see Culicover, 1997; Ouhalla, 1999; Haegeman, 1998; Radford, 1992, 1998; Chomsky, 1997; and Quirk et al., 1986. For an analysis of ECM verbs in Persian, see Khayyampour, 1386/2007 and Karimi, 2005). The following sentences show the effect of such a Case-shift in the latter two categories of verbs:

(5) kann-a juz'-an min haadhaa l-Hulm-i
   "It was a part of this dream."

(6) 'anna l-ziraa'at-a lughat-un 'aalamiayyat-un
   "That agriculture is a world language."

II. Persian Grammars: Eastern and Western Branches

Many Persian grammarians have composed annotated biographical lists of both Persian grammarians as well as foreign scholars who have contributed to the description and analysis of Persian grammar. Here we have selected four representative lists to introduce our underlying assumption of classifying Persian grammars into two major Eastern and Western branches. Bassari (1348/1969), the first female Persian grammarian, divides her list into two sections. In the first section she traces the history of writing grammar in general with reference to the Bible and mentions the names of Pāṇini, Aristotle, Dionysius Thrax and Apollonius Dyscolus as the pioneers in the field of grammar, with ever-lasting influences on its future.[4] In the second section of the list, we have about one hundred and forty-two sources on Persian grammar written by both Persian and foreign scholars. Homayun Farrokh (1379/1961) offers another bibliographical list in which we have one hundred and one sources on Persian grammar in the native language as well as Arabic and Turkish. The reader may be surprised to find, however, that out of all these sources only ninety-five exceed more than one hundred and fifty pages in their description of the language. The fundamental question for the author to ask is: how can a grammarian describe the complex grammar of a rich language like Persian in such a limited number of pages?[5]

Another comprehensive bibliographical list on Persian grammar has been compiled by Windfuhr (1979) in which he arranges the sources in

alphabetical order, written by both Persian grammarians as well as foreign scholars. Here we see the name of De Dieu, a European scholar who wrote the first Latin of Persian grammar in 1639, with its influence on contemporary Persian grammarians and linguists.[6] Windfuhr distinguishes two paradigms within which Persian grammar has been described: the Muslim/Near Eastern paradigm and the Western Paradigm. The most comprehensive bibliographical list was compiled by Mahyar (1381/2003) in which he collected about two thousand five hundred sources by Persian grammarians, linguists, and foreign scholars on various aspects of Persian grammar, including phonetics, phonology, morphology, and syntax. We also have sources on the history of the Persian language, Persian dialectology, diachronic grammars of Persian, and the grammars of Middle Persian and Ancient Persian.

Based on the aforementioned lists and other sources, we may distinguish two major branches of Persian grammars, namely, the Eastern Branch and the Western Branch. This classification does not accurately represent the geographical distribution of the grammars, but simply refers to their authors' nationality. In the Eastern Branch we have included those works that have been written by native Persian grammarians and linguists whose books are written in Standard Persian where it is recognized as the official language of the country. The Western Branch consists of those books that have been compiled by foreign scholars. The language of each grammar largely depends on its author's native language such as Latin, English, Arabic, Turkish, etc. We have also included a subgroup of Persian grammars in this branch due the fact that the grammar is written in Persian but the author belongs to a different speech community like Turkey, India, China, etc.[7] We will argue later that such a difference may ultimately affect the author's description and analysis of the language.

III. Selectional Criteria: Linguistic and Non-linguistic Information

We have selected twenty-one sources from the Western Branch of Persian grammars to review in this volume. The criteria for our selection include the author's nationality, linguistic tradition, publication date, and the comprehensive treatment of the grammar. First of all, it is necessary to justify the considerations that have determined our selection. Regarding the second criterion, we have attempted to collect sources from scholars of various linguistic traditions – European, American, Arabic, Indian, Turkish, etc. This criterion is *a priori* in nature and rests on the assumption that it helps us find Persian grammars written within a multiplicity of

linguistic traditions in terms of their theoretical orientation and methodological procedures. We assume that an Indian grammar of Persian differs from a European Persian grammar in many respects. The former may have been written under Pāṇini's linguistic heritage, and the latter heavily affected by the linguistic achievements of the ancient Greek and Roman grammarians.[8] The third criterion concerns the fact that we should have some older or traditional grammars in our sources in order to enable us to compare them with their modern versions in order to trace the historical developments of linguistic scholarship. The fourth criterion is obviously significant in the sense that a comprehensive grammar is preferable to a concise one due to the fact that it is larger and richer and incorporates further descriptions into the components of grammar.

   In addition to the aforementioned criteria, we also consider each author's linguistic competence, sociolinguistic knowledge (Beeman, 1986), and stylistic variations, as are evident through their grammatical descriptions, which may have crucial implications for both linguistic theory and the field of second language pedagogy. Here we have to deal with the concept of the 'knowledge of language' and its types (Smith and Wilson, 1990), and how it is possible for a learner of a second language to attain a comprehensive knowledge of it, let alone to a standard to be able to compile a systematic grammar for it.[9] Many linguists have expressed pessimism about such a possibility. Chomsky talks about "a partial knowledge of English" that may be acquired by a foreign learner of the language (1986: 16). Similarly, Cook (1989: 175) finds most people are less proficient in their second language than their native language. In our research we will investigate the issue raised by Chomsky and Cook in terms of its theoretical status and its empirical consequences, based on the descriptions of Persian grammar (see also the Persian translation of Cook's book by Lachini and Ghaemi, 1374/1995).[10]

IV. Persian Grammars: The Western Branch

In this volume we will review twenty-one Persian grammars written by Western scholars in chronological order, beginning with Ibn Muhanna's Persian grammar in Arabic titled *Ḥilyat al-Insan fi Ḥalbat al-Lisan* (The Ornament of Men on the Race-course of the Tongue) (d. 828/1424). This is followed by *Minhaj al-Ṭalab* (1070/1659) by a Chinese author, a Latin grammar of Persian by De Dieu (1639), *A Grammar of the Persian Language* by Sir William Jones (1771), *A Grammar of the Persian Language* by Matthew Lumsden (1810), *Qawa'id al-Farsiyya* by Murad Efendi (1262/1845), a Turkish scholar, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*

by Duncan Forbes (1869), *A Grammar of the Persian Language* by John T. Platts (1894), *Higher Persian Grammar* by Douglas C. Phillott (1919)*, Nahaj al-Adab* by Muḥammad Najm al-Ghani (1919) written in India, *A Grammar of Contemporary Persian* by Gilbert Lazard (1957), a French scholar, *Persian Grammar* by Ann K. S. Lambton (1953), *Elementary Persian Grammar* by Laurence P. Elwell-Sutton (1963), *A Grammar of Modern Persian* by John Andrew Boyle (1966), *Lehrbuch der Persischen Sprache* by Bozorg Alavi and Manfred Lorenz (1972), the Persian and German scholars, *The Modern Persian Grammar* by Yu. A. Rubinchik (1971), a Russian scholar, *Persian Grammar: History and State of its Study* by Gernot L. Windfuhr (1979), *Persian Grammar* by Georgy M. Nalbandiyan (1980), an Armenian scholar, *A Comparative Grammar of Arabic and Persian* by Aḥmad Kamal al-Din Ḥilmi (1992-3), an Arabic scholar, *An Introduction to Persian* by Wheeler M. Thackston (2009) and *Persian Grammar* by John Mace (2003).

Every grammar will be reviewed in its entirety, including the author's possible motivation for learning Persian and writing a grammar for it (political, academic, personal, etc.), its theoretical framework (traditional, structural, transformational, etc.), its methodological procedures (prescriptive, proscriptive, descriptive, analytical, etc.), its stylistic variations (literary, standard, colloquial, dialectal), its levels of adequacy (observational, descriptive, explanatory, universal), the author's sociological knowledge (knowledge of social environment, use of various forms, language variables in interaction, etc.), the grammatical developments (diachronic, synchronic), and the discourse study (sentence level or beyond sentence level).

These scholars have worked in many subfields of Persian linguistics and are credited with producing influential works therein. In this survey we exclusively focus on their works on Persian grammar, wherein they have expounded their linguistic opinions and grammatical descriptions. We must acknowledge, however, that our survey provides scant biographical information and the major achievements of these scholars in other subfields of Persian scholarship such as literature, history, dialectology, lexicography, etc. Those interested in obtaining detailed information pertaining to these fields should consult encyclopedias and other relevant sources.

Notes

1- Robins mentions two important contributions by Sibawaihi to Arabic grammar, namely, his three word classes (noun, verb, and particle) and his independent phonetic description of the Arabic script.

2- Radford argues that ECM works in both special clauses and small clauses. An example of a special clause in English is: "I consider [*him* to be a liar]."

3- Haegeman demonstrates that the maximal projection CP is a barrier to ECM: "* John believes *for him* to be a liar."

4- Bassari may refer to the origin of language, as the story is in Book II of Genesis (see Chapter 3 in Harris and Taylor, 1997).

5- It is unclear what Homayun Farrokh means by the size of a Persian grammar. He does not define what a comprehensive grammar is and how many pages it should contain (for a description of such a grammar, see Chapter 1 in Quirk et al., 1986).

6- According to Windfuhr (1979: 13), the first European grammar of Persian was by Raymundus of Cremona (d. 1614), but no copy of his grammar has been found yet.

7- By speech community, we mean the people who speak a common language (for more information, see Hockett, 1958: 8).

8- For information about Pāṇini's work, see Robins (1997: 176-82).

9- For the notion of the knowledge of language and its types, we have relied on the criteria discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 of Smith and Wilson (1990).

10- The fundamental problem to investigate is why some learners of a foreign language succeed and some do not. Our study may shed some light on this issue and other related ideas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER ONE

AḤMAD JAMAL AL-DIN MUHANNA:
ḤILYAT AL-INSAN FI ḤALBAT AL-LISAN

> Since our time requires learning Turkish and Persian as an essential tool
> for travel, safeguarding interests, avoiding further damages, and obtaining
> a high standard of accomplishment, I embarked upon writing this grammar
> book.
>
> (Jamal al-Din Muhanna, d. 424)

Homa'i (1377/1988) cites an Arabic source in which the first Arabic
grammar of Persian is attributed to an Arabic syntactician named Abu
Ḥayyan Naḥvi (654/1256-745/1345) whose full name was Muḥammad
Yusuf Qarnaṭi. The title of the book was *Manṭeq al-Khors fi Lisan al-Fors*
(The Eloquence of the Mute Concerning the Persian Language). Homa'i
remarks that unfortunately a copy of this book does not exist anywhere in
our public or private libraries.[1]

A later Arabic grammar of Persian titled *Ḥilyat al-Insan fi Ḥalbat al-
Lisan* (The Ornament of Men on the Race-course of the Tongue) was
written by another Arabic scholar named Aḥmad Jamal al-Din Muhanna
(d. 828/1424). According to Sani' (1371/1993), it is possible to conclude
from the introduction of the book that the author hailed from a noble
family living in Ḥijaz (a region in the west of present-day Saudi Arabia),
but died in the city of Kerman, in the southeast of Iran.[2]

Ibn Muhanna lived during the reign of Tamerlane, also known as
Timur, the Mongolian (1336-1405), and believed that it was necessary for
everybody to know three languages at that time: Arabic, Persian, and
Mongolian. Thus, Ibn Muhanna's book is divided into three major
sections, the first of which is devoted to the analysis of Persian grammar.
Our knowledge of this first source of grammatical speculation in Persian is
based on the division of the book into fifteen main chapters and twenty-
five sections, as Sani' shows, in the following order:[3]

Chapters
1. Plural Numbers
2. Diminutives
3. Agent Suffixes
4. Possessive Particles
5. Negative Elements
6. Comparative Forms
7. Copulative Verbs
8. Definite and Indefinite Markers
9. Imperative, Negative, and Prohibitive
10. Object Markers *be* and *ra*:
11. Nominal and Verbal Complements
12. Persian Letters
13. Arabic Letters
14. Colloquial Forms
15. Arabic Loanwords[4]

Sections
1. Names of God
2. Tenses and Inflections
3. Various Particles and Forms
4. Antonyms of Nouns and Adjectives
5. Parts of the Body
6. Family Relationships
7. Time Adverbials
8. Celestial Bodies
9. Seasons
10. Terrestrial Entities
11. Countries and Buildings
12. Drinks and Foods
13. Trees, Fruits, and Vegetables
14. Grains
15. Furniture
16. Clothes and Jewelry
17. Colors
18. Animals and Insects
19. Names of the Horses, Based on Their Colors
20. Weaponry
21. Diseases and Disabilities
22. Names of Birds
23. Voices and Tunes

24. Numerals
25. Professions[5]

I. Origin of Language

From the title of the book we may plausibly assume that Ibn Muhanna was a proponent of the 'revelation' theory concerning the origin of language. In the Islamic world, this theory attributes the creation of language to God, according to certain verses in the Qur'an (Versteegh, 1997: 109).[6] Furthermore, the title shows two remarkable attributes of language. The followers of the 'revelation' theory conceived of language as an 'ornament', a 'gift', or a 'blessing' that God bestowed upon man to crucially distinguish him from other animals. In a sense this idea is tantamount to saying that man is a rational animal and that language is a natural property of the human mind. The second attribute of the language, as the title implies, refers to the creative aspect of its use and its freedom and unboundedness. In other words, language is free from stimulus response and serves as an instrument for the free expression of thought. (Chomsky, 2009: 65-6).[7]

The chapters and sections of Ibn Muhanna's book may be divided into linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge. The grammatical points covered in the chapters mostly relate to what a native speaker of Persian has at his disposal concerning the lexicon and grammar of the language. On the other hand, what is provided in the sections of the book is information that does not constitute linguistic knowledge *per se*. As Smith and Wilson remark (1990: 38), the aim of writing the grammar of a particular language is to give a full account of the various aspects of linguistic knowledge, principles of sentence construction, and interpretation. For instance, a native speaker of Persian intuitively knows whether a particular noun is definite or indefinite, according to their markers discussed in Chapter Eight of the book. But the fact the name of a horse is *xeng* because it is white or gray, as presented in Section Nineteen, is a piece of information about human non-linguistic behavior. Analogously, the information that a native speaker of Persian has about the sun, the moon, and the stars is a special case of some general knowledge that may be obtained from various sources with no special abilities involved.[8]

II. Morphology and Syntax

Most of the chapters in the first part of the book are devoted to the morphological structure of the language, including nouns, verbs, particles, prefixes, suffixes, inflectional paradigms, etc. On the syntactic level, the

grammar does not cover a systematic analysis of units larger than lexical categories. There is no discussion on the internal structure of phrasal categories (NP, VP, AP, PP, and ADVP), clauses (noun clauses, adjective clauses, adverbial clauses, and small clauses) or sentences (simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex) in Persian. The description of the phonological component of the language is limited to the division of the letters of the alphabet between Persian letters and those peculiar to Arabic. The correct pronunciation of each letter, the stress patterns of the words, and the intonational patterns of sentences are left to the tacit knowledge of the speakers to guess.[9]

The grammatical information about the morphological categories discussed is inadequate. For instance, in Chapter Two we have two tenses, namely, the present tense and past tense forms and their derivatives. In one paradigm we have فرستاد *feresta:d*, 'sent', فرستد *ferestad*, 'sends', فرستادن *feresta:d-an*, 'to send', فرستنده *ferestande*, 'sender', فرستاده *feresta:de*, 'sent', بفرست *be-ferest*, 'send', and مفرست *ma-ferest*, 'Do not send'. This paradigm includes a simple verb in its past tense form, present tense form, infinitive form, present participle form, past participle form, imperative form, and negative/prohibitive form, respectively. We also have some examples of compound verbs in which a non-verbal element combines with a light verb, such as نماز کردن *nama:z kardan*, 'to pray'. The author mentions the idiosyncratic characterization of compound verbs in Persian, in that each non-verbal element combines with its own light verb. For instance, the noun دروغ , *doruq*, 'lie', does not occur with the same light verb as in the above verb, but combines with گفتن *goftan*, 'to tell'. So the new compound verb is دروغ گفتن *doruq goftan*, 'to tell a lie'. The author gives a list of ten different light verbs, but we use a vast number of light verbs to form compound verbs in formal and informal styles of Persian (Soheili, 2007). Within the verb patterns in Persian, irregular verbs and the changes that take place from the past stem to the present stem cannot be predicted by analogy or general rules from the infinitive. Shari'at (1367/1989), for instance, has set up eight subclasses of irregular verbs in terms of their internal changes. We note that in one subclass the letter خ, *xe*, in the infinitive changes to زِ *ze*, in the present stem, as in ساختن *sa:xtan*, 'to make', which changes to ساز *sa:z*, in the present stem.[10]

Ibn Muhanna presents the verb patterns in Persian under the influence of Arabic grammar because the standard citation forms in Arabic begin with the third person singular forms in the past tense and present tense, respectively (Ryding, 2008: 437). Versteegh (1997, cf. Chapter 13) argues that Arabic grammarians tended to analyze foreign languages with reference to the model of their own language chiefly for two reasons.

Firstly, they believed in the prestige of the Arabic language. Secondly, they were not familiar with any linguistic models other than those of their own traditional grammarians. However, contrary to the restricted verb patterns that Ibn Muhanna uses in Persian, Natel Khanlari (1377/1998, 198-274) shows that the synchronic data collected from one hundred and fifty-six representative sources during the first period of the history of the Persian language, which extends from the early Islamic era to the fourteenth century, are expressed in a wide variety of moods and verb tenses. The moods include indicative, subjunctive, conditional, imperative, and optative. The tenses consist of the simple present tense, simple past tense, past progressive tense, past perfect tense, future tense, and very occasionally a remote present perfect tense to express an action occurring continuously before a definite time in the past.

If we accept the idea that Ibn Muhanna's grammar is a pedagogical grammar designed to teach Persian as a foreign language, it should fulfill certain requirements. It should be based on a larger research corpus and offer a representative sample of the language in a principled manner (Willis, 2007). By "a larger research corpus", Willis may mean a theoretical framework from which the pedagogical grammar should take its forms, patterns, and usages.[11]

In sum, Ibn Muhanna's contributions to Persian grammar may be evaluated in terms of the extent to which he provided a full account for a variety of facts in Persian grammar, including the sound system, the word-formation rules, the syntactic structure, and the semantic interpretations of the words and sentences. Ibn Muhanna's analysis of definite and indefinite markers in Chapter Eight demonstrates his awareness of the difference between مردى, *mard-i*, 'a man' and مرد, *mard*, 'the man', but most of the odd items of information he provides in the book's sections do not constitute part of a Persian native speaker's knowledge of his language.

Notes

1- For more information about this Arabic grammarian and his analysis of the Turkish language, see Chapter 13 in Versteegh (1997).
2- See the sources that Sani' cites about the life and works of Ibn Muhanna.
3- In translating Ibn Muhanna's grammar into English, I have used Chapter for *Fasl* and Section for *Ba:b*.
4- There may be miscellaneous topics covered under each section.
5- As can be noticed, the sections on non-linguistic knowledge are more extensive than the chapters on the grammar of the language.
6- For more information about another theory called *Waḍ'* 'convention', see Chapter 8 in Versteegh (1997).

7- These ideas are similar to the Cartesian view of language. See Chapter 1 in Chomsky (2009).

8- Smith and Wilson refer to non-linguistic knowledge as one's *encyclopedic* information.

9- In traditional grammars the discussion of letters replaces the phonetic/phonological analysis of the language.

10- For more information about irregular verbs in Persian, see Chapter 4 in Shari'at (1367/1989).

11- In his article, Willis shows how to collect materials for a pedagogical grammar and how to organize them according to the needs of a particular group of learners.

12- Non-linguistic knowledge does not help us to develop our linguistic competence.

Chapter Two

Muḥammad b. al-Ḥakim al-Zaynimi al-Shanduni al-Sini:
Minhaj al-Ṭalab

> The expressions in Persian and Arabic are the same, but the number in the former is more limited than in the latter on the grounds that one expression in Persian may signify more than one interpretation. Therefore, we will deal with this multiplicity of meaning in detail so that learners can understand as to why an expression has a particular meaning in this context and a different meaning in another. **God is aware of all facts**.
>
> (Muḥammad al-Shanduni al-Sini, 1070/1659)

In a trip to Beijing (Peking), Shari'at (1360/1981) discovered three manuscripts of a Persian grammar titled *Minhaj al-Ṭalab* in the library of a mosque. He selected the most comprehensive one for editing (manuscript A), which he believed to be the oldest manuscript of a Persian grammar, written by a Muslim Chinese grammarian in 1070/1659. This manuscript is divided into two major books and chapters as follows:

Book One
1. Parts of Speech
2. Differences between the Present and Past Tenses
3. Changing an Intransitive Verb into a Transitive Verb
4. The Forms Derived From the Infinitive
5. The Past Tense Inflections
6. The Future Tense Inflections
7. Imperative and Prohibitive
8. Present Participle and Past Participle
9. Adjectives
10. Kinds of Verbs

Book Two
1. Nouns
2. Subject and Predicate

3. Subject
4. Verb Complements
5. Ezafe Construction
6. Accompaniments
7. Generic Nouns and Adjective Nouns
8. Definite and Indefinite Markers
9. Plural Markers
10. Kinds of Nouns
11. Verbs
12. Particles
13. Conclusion

Al-Zaynimi analyzes the structure of Persian within the framework of an Arabic model, in terms of its underlying assumptions as well as concepts, categories, grammatical terminology, and patterns. In order to demonstrate how Persian is described within the model of a language which is from a different language family, we have selected two different sets of categories. The first set includes parts of speech, nominal and verbal sentences, accompaniments (*tawabe'*), conjugational patterns, verbs of appropinquation (*mutaqarib*), and defining/descriptive appositives (*'atf bayan*). The second set consists of word order, compound verbs, small clauses, plural numbers, and the copulative verb 'to be'.

Al-Zaynimi classifies the words in Persian into three classes of nouns, verbs, and particles, exemplified by مرد *mard*, 'man'; اسب *asb*, 'horse'; زد *zad*, 'killed'; and در *dar*, 'in'. These examples show that the parts of speech are defined in notional terms, referring to the name of a person, an animal, an action, and a grammatical function. Al-Zaynimi uses this tripartite system of parts of speech to divide Persian words because Arab grammarians considered it to be a universal feature of languages. The early Persian grammarians used the same system, but Mirza Habib Esfahani (1324/1946) changed this traditional doctrine and used a multipartite system of parts of speech for the first time, thereby setting a precedent for future grammarians to use a new system of word-classes. A modern grammar of Persian by Ahmadi Givi and Anvari (1383/2005: 2) divides Persian words into seven classes, including nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, particles, and interjections (for a history of parts of speech in Arabic see Versteegh, 1977, and for Persian see Soheili, 2017).

In addition to declarative, interrogative, and negative sentences, al-Zaynimi makes a distinction between a nominal sentence and a verbal

sentence in Persian. A nominal sentence contains the copulative verb 'to be', but a verbal sentence has a full verb as its predicate, as shown below:

(1) Zeyd 'a:lem ast
    Zeyd scholar is
    "Zeyd is a scholar."[1]

(2) mardom-a:n a:mad-and
    people-pl arrived-3pl
    "The people arrived."

This distinction shows a sphere of syntactic influence from Arabic. According to Ryding (2008: 58-9), the traditional criterion for distinguishing a nominal sentence from a verbal sentence is that the former begins with a noun or a noun phrase and the latter with a verb. Thus, al-Zaynimi has used the same canonical criterion for classifying sentences in Persian. Persian is an SOV language and all the sentences, as the glosses in (1-2) illustrate, begin with a noun or a noun phrase, and therefore the above distinction is inapplicable to the analysis of the above sentences.[2]

Other areas in which al-Zaynimi analyzed sentence expansion (*tawabe'*) in Persian with reference to Arabic terms consist of modification (*na't*), coordination (*'atf*), emphasis (*tawkid*), apposition (*badal*), and defining appositives (*'atf baya:n*). Modification refers to a syntactic process in which adjectives may be used to modify their nouns. Some of the adjectives given to exemplify the process are: خوب *xub*, 'good'; بد *bad,* 'bad', زشت *zesht,* 'ugly', and نیک *nik,* 'beautiful'. The process of coordination is to link two grammatical units of equal ranks, which is achieved through coordinators such as و *va,* 'and', یا *ya:,* 'or', إمّا *amma,* 'but', etc.[3] Emphasis in Persian is generally shown by the reflexive pronoun خود *xod,* 'self', as in the following sentence:

(3) Zeyd xod a:ma-ad
    Zeyd self came-3sg
    "Zeyd himself came."[4]

Apposition is another syntactic process which refers to a coreferential relation between two noun phrases. Al-Zaynimi divides the appositive structures into complete, partial, and inclusive. The last subclass in this list is an appositive structure in which the second element defines and describes the first (Mokhtar et al. (1992: 395-430) provide detailed information about *tawabe'* in Arabic).[5]

It is hardly surprising to see that al-Zaynimi orders the conjugational paradigms of tenses in terms of person and number according to the order that is generally presented in Arabic grammars. It begins with the third person, as in:

(4) zad, zad-and, zad-i, zad-it, zad-am, zas-im
     He hit, they hit, you hit (s./pl.), I hit, we hit.

The canonical order in Persian is shown below:

(5) I hit, you hit, he hit, we hit, you hit, they hit.[6]

The last category refers to a set of verbs that indicate proximity or nearness of an action, as in the following sentences:

(6) ba:shad ke   xasm   be hazimat rav-ad
     be   that enemy to defeat go-3sg
   "The enemy is likely to be defeated."

(7) sha:yad ke morad ha:sel shav-ad
     perhaps that goal become-3sg
   "The goal may be achieved."[7]

Ryding (2008: 452) remarks that the semantic implication of these verbs in Arabic may be the equivalent of 'to almost do something' or 'to be on the point/verge of doing something'. An example in Arabic is as follows:

(8) kaad-at-i l-shams-u tu-shriq-u
     "The sun had almost risen."

Al-Zaynimi's analysis of the above structures is heavily influenced by Arabic grammar and the level of competence that he developed in that language. Now, a fundamental question to raise is how he would treat those structures that are peculiar to Persian when he had no Arabic linguistic knowledge about them. One of the controversial issues in Persian grammar relates to 'compound verbs' and their morphosyntactic and semantic complexities.

Al-Zaynimi defines a compound verb as a verb in which a noun or a verbal noun combines with a verb that bears a relation to it, as in the following sentence:[8]

(9) Zeyd Mon'em-ra: sepa:s kard.
   Zeyd Mon'em-obj thanks did
   "Zeyd thanked Mon'em."

In (9) the noun *sepa:s* combines with the verb *kard* to form the compound verb 'to thank'. Having defined a compound verb, al-Zaynimi presents a short list of verbs which may be used to form compound verbs, such as بودن *budan,* 'to be'; شدن *shodan,* 'to become', گشتن *gashtan,* 'to turn', ماندن *ma:ndan,* 'to remain', etc.[9]

We can raise at least five questions about al-Zaynimi's analysis of compound verbs in Persian. First, in addition to nouns, as in (9), what other lexical categories may be used in this process? Second, how do the non-verbal and verbal elements combine? Is it a process of combination or integration? Third, what is the categorical status of a compound verb? Is it a lexical category or a phrasal category? Fourth, there is a problem that relates to the semantic compositionality of the compounds. Is the meaning of a compound verb the sum of the meanings of its constituents, or does it convey a new meaning? Fifth, is a compound verb separable or inseparable? Some are and some are not. These questions and other possible ones remain unaccounted for in al-Zaynimi's analysis. In general, traditional grammars just provide some hints about the grammar of a particular language, and the reader has to use his tacit knowledge to understand the facts about that language (Chomsky, 1997: 4). For more information about compound verbs in Persian and some relevant sources, see Shaqaqi (1386/2008).

Another morphological category that al-Zaynimi has dealt with is the plural number in Persian. He makes a semantic distinction between the substances to which the plural markers attach. The marker *-a:n* is suffixed to animates and *-ha:* to inanimates, as illustrated by مردان *mard-a:n,* 'men' and آسمانها *a:sman-ha:,* 'skies'. He then continues to argue that if a noun ends in a silent *-ha:,* the consonant /g/ is added before the marker *-a:n,* as exemplified by بنده گان *bande-g-a:n,* 'slaves'. From a diachronic perspective this is an inaccurate analysis because the consonant /g/ is the final part of the residue suffix /-ag/ from Middle Persian, which appears in an intervocalic position in Modern Persian (Amuzgar and Tafazzoli, 1385/2007: 84; Mostasharniya, 1382/2003: 140). Two phonological rules are involved in this process, as follows:

(10) UR: /bandag/
A: Final consonant deletion: /banda/
B: Vowel raising: /bande/
PR: [bande]

Although diachronic information may not constitute part of one's linguistic knowledge, it shows "that the surface structure is often misleading and uninformative and that our knowledge of language involves properties of a much more abstract nature, not indicated directly in the surface structure" (Chomsky, 2015: 33).

Al-Zaynimi's Persian grammar has a great advantage over Ibn Muhanna's work because it does not contain information that does not count as linguistic knowledge. It does, however, suffer from some serious deficiencies as a result of a heavy Arabic influence and surface structure analysis, both of which obliterate many fundamental properties of the Persian language.

Notes

1- The Arabic loanwords are transcribed as they are pronounced in Farsi. For example, *Zeyd* for *Zayd*.

2- Ryding uses "equational sentence" for verbless sentences and "verbal sentence" for those containing a verb.

3- For more information about coordination, see Quirk et al. (1986: 918-84).

4- Quantifiers may also indicate emphasis. For example, "*all* the students left" (see Radford, 1998: 525).

5- The example given by the author is مذهب ابو حنیفه نعمان بن ثابت.

6- This paradigm indicates the extent to which al-Zaynimi was under the influence of Arabic.

7- In Persian we may use the verb نزدیک بودن, *nazdik budan,* 'to be about to' to indicate proximity.

8- According to Karimi (2005: 15), the non-verbal constituents of compound verbs include PP, particle, A. and Eventive Nominal.

9- For more verbal parts, see Soheili (2007).

10- In Dari the last vowel has not changed. For example, we have *xa:na*, 'house' (see Neghat, 1993).

11- Note that al-Zaynimi uses Arabic names in his examples: *Zayd* and *'Amr*.

CHAPTER THREE

DE DIEU: *RUDIMENTA LINGUAE PERSICAE* (THE RUDIMENTS OF THE PERSIAN LANGUAGE)

> The burning enthusiasm for Oriental languages lives on, which had been long stagnant, whereby I gratefully remember the great man Thomas Erpenius, who did a lot to further my Syriac studies. Particular thanks I owe to the eminently learned Jacob Golius, who I had and still have as an Arabic teacher.
>
> (De Dieu, 1639)

Louis (Ludovicus) De Dieu (1590-1640) was a Dutch Orientalist who studied theology and many Oriental languages. In addition to other works, he wrote an elementary Persian grammar in Latin. The book consists of the following major sections:[1]

1. The Alphabet
2. Verbs (De Verbo)
3. Nouns and Pronouns (De Nomine et Pronomine)
4. Adjectives (De Adjectivis)
5. Numerals (De Numeralibus)
6. Adverbs (De Adverbiis)
7. Prepositions (De Prepositionibus)
8. Conjunctions (De Conjuctionibus)
10. Interjections (Interjectionibus)

We have selected five of the above sections to show De Dieu's analytical approach in the light of his knowledge of Oriental languages and the Western linguistic scholarship. These sections include the alphabet, irregular verbs, compound verbs, infinitive markers, and Cases.[2]

I. The Alphabet

Like many other traditional Persian grammarians, De Dieu starts his analysis with a description of the letters of the alphabet and their division into those from Persian and those from Arabic. The letters پ - چ - ژ - گ are

originally from Persian and the letters peculiar to Arabic are ض -ص -ح -ث
- ط ق - غ - ع - ظ). In addition, he argues that the Arabic letters have been
adapted into the phonological system of the Persian language and
constitute some homophonous groups like (ض – ظ). For pedagogical
purposes, some Persian textbook writers have identified several
homophonous groups. Marashi (2007: 20-22), for instance, has arranged
these letters into seven distinct groups which comprise /h/, /t/, /q/, /hamze/,
/s/, and /z/.[3] De Dieu's rudimentary account of the letters of the alphabet
constitutes the phonetic and phonological descriptions of the language
without specifying the phonetic values of the letters and their phonological
features.

II. Morphology

Verbs in Persian are canonically divided into regular and irregular
categories according to the sound changes that take place from the
infinitive to the past and present stems. For instance, خوردن, *xordan*, 'to
eat' is regarded as a regular verb because the stem خور, *xor*, occurs in both
the past and present stem. Contrariwise, the verb ساختن, *sa::xtan*, 'to make'
is irregular due to the internal sound changes that take place in the present
stem. Note the present stem of this verb is می‌سازم, *misa:zam,* 'I make', in
which /x/ changes to /z/.

In his analysis of the morphology of irregular verbs in Persian, De
Dieu identified the major classes and some subclasses, based on the
variation that typically occurs from the infinitive to the present stem. The
following table shows these changes:

1. Table of Irregular Verbs

No.	Letters	Examples	Glosses
1	x-z	*sa:xtan-sa:z*	To make
2	d-r	*da:shtan-da:r*	To have
3	d-h	*da:dan-deh*	To give
4	r-n	*kardn-kon*	To do
5	s-y	*jostan-juy*	To find
6	s-n	*shekastan-shekan*	To break