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Persian simple modal verbs modality

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ABSTRACT

Verbs which drives from "bayestan" (must,should),"tavanestan"(can) and "shodan" are simple modal verbs in Persian. Syntactically, these verbs are defective. Semantically ,these verbs at least receives two readings :epistemic modality and root reading. whenever they conveys concepts like "permission", "necessity" or "will" they have root reading, which divides into two sub_ classes root_ deontic and root_ dynamic. epistemic modality conveys "possibility" or ""probability". Epistemic_ objective is based on scientific data but epistemic_ subjective is based on personal judgments .Root modality co-occurs with subjective forms and epistemic modality co-occurs with indicative forms.

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Introduction

Syntactic properties of verbs which represents attitudes of speakers _listener towards the actuality or hypothetically ,certainty or uncertainty of the action of the verb is called mood. Iranian linguists and Grammarian disagree about the number of moods in Persian. One of the oldest grammar books introduces six moods in Persian (panj ostad ,1965:223). Arzhang (1995:124) introduces three moods in Persian: indicative ;subjunctive and infinitive. Taleghani (2006:124) believes that Persian has two moods :indicative and subjunctive.

Unfortunately, semantics properties of Persian simple modal verbs hasn't been studied comprehensively inside or abrude .this article tries to do a small part of this task based on Generative approach. studying semantics of modal verbs is a difficult job because includes wide range of issues. Crystal (2003:299) "mood is a term used in the theoretical and descriptive study of sentences /clause types, semantically ,a wide range is involved." Leech(1995:109)"we can speak about modal verbs base on logical, pragmatical or pragmatic features". semantic of modal verbs involves logical concepts such as "permission" and "necessity". but we should consider factors such as psychological stresses in human relations factors like ;agreement ,politeness, satire and so on.

Modality associates with context of discourse (Lyons; 1997:84.). modality is a semantics /pragmatics device. Butler(2003:969) "modality signals speaker,s attitude towards or opinion of either a proposition <P, or the relationships between a predicate and a subject".F0r example accesses to prior knowledge about the statues of speaker is necessary in adapting epistemic or root reading for "bayad'(must ,should)

Kinds of modality

There is no full agreement on how many types of modality exists ,but the major distinction is made between epistemic and root modality . Epistemic modality makes judgements on actual or possible situation in the world and states concepts like :"probability ,possibility ,and necessity "Root modality mediates in various ways between an activity and its subjects .It deals with "permission ,obligation and ability"

Sara   bayad be madresa be_rav _ad.
   Sara must to school SUBJ_ go _3rsg.
   Sara must go to school.

In this sentence bayad receives root modality ,because states "obligation" .Sara is obliged to do some action which is going to school

Sara bayad be madresa raf _te_ba _shad.
   Sara should to school go_PAST _3rsg _have +3rsg.
   Sara should have gone to school.

In sentence 2 bayad receives epistemic interpretation , It convays "possibility" and states knowledge of the speaker,s towards contents of this proposition.

A Epistemic modality

Epistemic modality states speaker,s opinion and his /her anticipation about a proposition and defines truth or false vale of that proposition .Epistemic word drives from a classical Greek word means "knowledge"(Lyons;1997:797). Epistemic modals involves speaker,s _orinted qualification of the truth of a proposition(Palmer;2001:8).It refers to possibility or uncertainty and sometimes reveales certainty about the truth of the event . It expresses speaker,s judgement on actual or possible situation in the world(cann;1993:279).

Dar damaye otagh ?ab bayad maye? Ba_shad.
   At temperature room must liqide SUBJ_be _PAST_:3rsg.
   Water must be liqide in room temperature .

Bayad receives epistemic modality .these sentence is true if (and only if)water is liquid at room temperature in every world consistent with what is known objectively about the temperature of the room and about properties of the water.

Epistemic modality has two sub_classes :subjective and objective .Subjective reading expresse the views of someone who reasons on the bases of personal (and perhaps falsiable and incomplete)evidence(Papafragou,2006:1690). Epistemic_ objective modality is used to express confusions based on scientific data and measurements,which accesses to experiment to every one .Subjective modality states ideas ,interferences and possibilities not actual measurable facts.Lyons(1997:797) believes that epistemic _subjective modality is more salient than epistemic modality. Subjective interpretations are illocutionary

force indicators and have higher scope than objective interpretation(Butler,2003:1698).

Ahmad : fada hava bayad sard bashad.

Ahmad: tomorrow weather should cold be.

Ahmad: Tomorrow weather should be cold .

If ahmad speaks ,here ,as a layman "bayad" receives epistemic _ subjective modality ,but if Ahmad speakes as weathearman and speacialist "bayad" has epistemic _objective reading .so ,epistemic interpretation occur when modal operatores are understood in terms of "what is known "but known by whom and when? The distinction between subjectivity and objectivity is indexical (Papafragou,2006:1695). It is indexical because the possible worlds in the background of conversation are restricted to what the current speaker knows as of the time of utterance and also relavent to speakear_listener prior knowledge and the context of discourse.

B :Root modality

Simple modal verbs which convays "permission ,obligation ,ability or will" usually receives root interpretation .Root modality relates subject of the sentence with the

Proposition- Root modals involves the "will", ability, permission or obligation to perform some actions or bring about some state of affairs (Palmer, 2001: 9)

Amir bayad dar khane be-man-ad.

Amir must at home PRES_stay_3rsg.

Amir must stay at home.

In this sentence b àyad(must) has root interpretation, because Amir is obliged to stay at home and b àyad conveys obligation.

In this sentence "obligation" emerges from an external source, root modality divides into two sub-classes root-deontic and root-dynamic. In root-deontic the source of obligation or permission external but in root-dynamic the source of obligationor permission is internal in regard to the subject . here its better to mention some differences in terminology. In formal semantics modal verbs which receives root modality in generative approach receives deontic reading. Deontic is a word derived from the Greek word meaning "to be binding" has to do ^{which} permission and obligation. (Cann, 1993:279)

Deontic modality is widely used by philosophers in modality branch of logic (Lyons, 1997:823).

Obligation is usually caltured-dependent and originates from a source. In root-deontic modality the conditioning factors are external to the relevant individual. In root-dynamic modality the the conditioning factors are internal.

So, the dynamic modality relates to the ability or willingness from the individual concerned.

Armin mi-tavan-ad dar in mosabeghah barande-shav-ad

Armin DUR_can_3rsg at this match win _be_3rsg.

Armin can win at this match.

At this sentence Armin "who" is the doer, based on his willingness and his ability can win in this match, so "mitavanad" (can) receives root-dynamic modality.

Armin mi-tavan-ad dar manzel be-man-ad.

Armin DUR_can_3rsg at home PRES_stat _3rsg.

Armin can stay at home.

In sentence (7) mitavanad (can) convey external permission. Armin got permission from an external authority. So, "mitavanad" receives root-deontic.

Syntactic distinction between root and epistemic modality

The distinction between root and epistemic drives from the mapping of syntax to the semantics. In Persian "b àyad" (must or

should) receives both root and epistemic reading depends on its syntactic structure.

Sina bayad be madresa be-rav-ad.

Sina must to school PRES_ go _3RSG.

Sina must go to school.

B àyad in sentence has root-deontic interpretation, which co-occurs with present tense.

Sina bayad be madresa raf-t-e basha-ad.

Sina should to school go_PAST_3rsg_have_3rsg.

Sina should have gone to school.

In this sentence b àyad (should) is accompanied with past-subjunctive form. In sentences (8) and (9) b àyad have the same lexical items. In epistemic and root modals have unitary lexical semantics as propositional operators, which allows them to be merged in either of two syntactic positions, one associated with the VP phase and the other with CP phase (Butler,2003:968).

In English modal within CP phase receives root reading, while those within VP phase receives epistemic reading.

In Persian root modality only accompanies with subjunctive verbs, but epistemic modality accompanies with both subjunctive and indicative verbs.

Pro_ mi-tavan-ad be-rav-ad

He/she DUR_can_3rsg PRES_go_3rsg.

He/she can go.

* b àyad be mosaferat raf-t-e basa-d

He/she should to trip go_PAST_3rsg have _3rsg.

He should have gone to trip.

* b àyad be Tehran mi-raf-t.

He/she should to Tehran indic-go-past : *

She/he should went to Tehran.

In sentence (10) "mitavanad" (can) receives root –deontic interpretation. in (11) and (12) b àyad (should)receives epistemic modality, in (11) it accompanied with subjunctive form but in (12) the main verb miraft (went) has indicative form.

Verbs from "b àyestan" infinitive

B àyad, mib àyes, b àyesti, mib àyesti are drives from "b àyestan" infinitive. These verbs are deficient.

Reza b àyad be khane be-r-e

Reza must to home PRES_go_3r

Reza should go to home

Reza b àyad be khane raf-t-e bash-e.

Reza should to home go_PAST_3rsg have _3rsg:PASt

Reza should have gone to school.

In sentence (13) b àyad (must) has root-deontic interpretation and conveys obligation. Reza as a has an obligation to do some action which is going to school thus, has a root, deontic reading because the obligation emanating from an external source.

In sentence (14) b àyad has epistemic reading, the speaker infers from some pieces of evidence that Reza has gone to school. Here, b àyad (school) shows the speakers* attitude towards the truth of the proposition. So, b àyad in sentence (14) has an epistemic reading with a necessary interpretation.

pro b àyad* be-rav-am

Pro_Must SUBJ_go_1rsg

I must go

Persian is a pro-drop language and subject place can be empty because of rich verb inflection.

Here, subject is first person singler because of "am" suffix at the of verb. "b àyad" here receive root-dynamic interpretation. But consider(16)

b àyad raft

Must go:PAST

Roughly meaning to go is a must.

Here, b àyad desnot inflected. Perhaps it is just some temporal feature of "b àyad" that makes it still a present sentence. Lotfi(2001:1) considers these kinds of subject-less sentences in Persian a violation of the extended projection principle . semantics can help here, "b àyad" receives root reading. The subject of this sentence determines based on context of conversation and can be the speaker, the listener, or another person. Semantically sentence (16) doesn't cause any ambiguity for the listener.

"b àyad" group also receives epistemic modality.

physitian: Ahmad b àyesti zodtar bastari shav-ad.

Physitian: Ahmad must hospitalize as soon as possible.

In sentence (17) b àyesti has epistemic-objective reading and co-occur with present-subjunctive form.

b àyesti monazm mi-bud-i

Shoud –2sg on time DUR_be:PAST_2sg.

You should have be on time **

"b àyesti" in this sentence receives epistemic-subjective reading and states knowledge of speaker about a past action. Epistemic-objectivity reading of bayad co-occurs with present verbs, while epistemic-subjective co-occurs with past verbs.

Tavanestan, mitavan, betavan

Verbs derives from "tavanestan" infinitive expresses concepts like, "ability",will, permission or want". Thi-ese verbs have root modality interpretation.

Armin mi-tavan-ad ranandegi be-kon-ad.

Armin DUR_can_3rsg driving PRES_do_3rsg.

Armin can drive.

"mitavanad" can has root-deontic or root-dynamic interpretation . if Amir got permission from someone else such as his parents, …….. to drive a car, "mitavanad" receives root-deontic in regard with external permission . but, if Armin can drive base on his own ability and law, because of getting driving licence for example, "mitavanad" receives root-dynamic modality. In sentences with deontic reading "mitavanad" refers to our behavior(Safari,1383:243) but in sentence with dynamic reading "mitavanad"expresses ability of the subject to perform some actions.

Reza mi-tavan-ad Ashpazi be-kon-ad

Reza DUR _can _3rsg cook PRES_do_3rsg.

Reza can cook.

In the above sentence "mitavanad" receives dynamic-root reading or root-deontic reading. It mi-tavan-ad (can) relates to the abilityor willingness of Reza it is dynamic, it "mitavanad" relates to permission it receives root-deontic reading. If we want to translate internal and external source based on the mantic relations, internal source is represented by an exeperincere the mantic role, while external source is represented by an agent the mantic role . in Persian "tavanestan" has epistemic reading. The distinction between root-dynamic and root-deontic determines contextually, the relation between modality and context of discourse is further than scope of this article, we suggest this issue to further studies and don't pursue this subject here.

Shodan

Mishavad, beshavad, mishod, drivefrom "shodan"(become-be) infinitive. These verbs referse to concepts like "probability, possibility, permission or will".

These verbs have epistemic or root reading.

(20) mi-she az class kharej shava-am.

DUR_may from class leave _1sg.

May I leave the classroom?.

Mishe(may) receives root-deontic reading, and conveys permission.
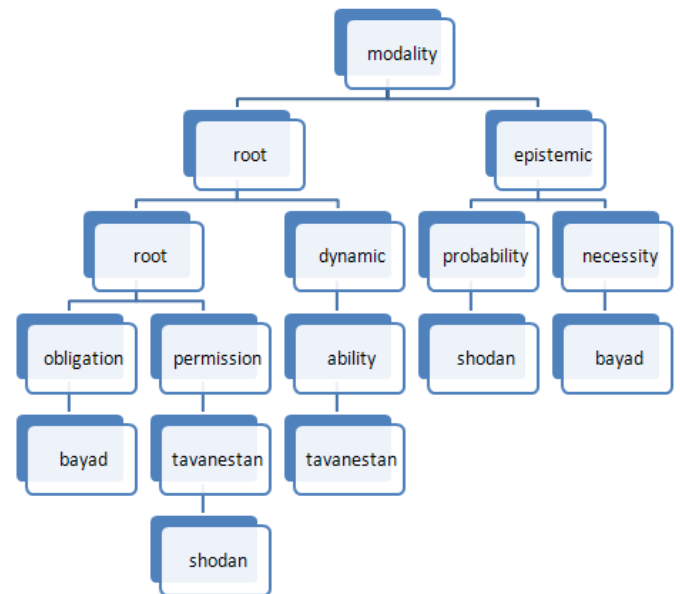
mi sho-d in hadesa rokh-na-de-e

Possible _PAST this event take place not_do_3rsg:PAST.

Possible-past this event take place- not-do

It was possible(that) this event didn't take place.

Mishod conveys "possibility" so, has epistemic reading. In this case "mishod" always co-occurs with past verbs.

Diagram of simple modal verbs in Persian

Summary and conclusion

Simple modal verbs in Persian represents three moods: indicative, subjunctive, and impretivees which have morpho-syntactic distinctions. Semantically, simple modal verbs in Persians have two reading: root and epistemic. Bayad and shodan can receives both root and epistemic reading, while tavanestan can only has root modality. Whenever bayad conveys concepts like permission, obligation has root reading and usually co-occur with present-subjunctive verbs. Bayad has epistemic reading when refers to past possibility, necessity or probability.

Shodan receives root reading whenever expresses "permission" it also has epistemic reading whenever conveys possibility or probability about a past action. The relation between semantics and discourse context of simple modal verbs is suggested to further studies.

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