



## The Syntactic Functions of Valencies in Farsi Language

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### Abstract

*One of the major problems addressed in today's linguistics is the problem of valency. Valency that is also called with other names such as argument, phrase, component, argument, basis, etc. has been applied in various linguistics books and references and is representative of nominal groups which any verb needs them to complete its meaning. This article aims to both analyze syntactic functions of valencies in Farsi language and examine related issues and present problems closely related as well.*

**Keywords:** Farsi language, valency, syntactic elements, syntactic functions, grammar, meaning.

### Introduction

Valency is the number of grammatical elements that a word, especially a verb combines with in a sentence to complete its meaning. For the authors, one-valency verbs in Farsi language include intransitive, passive, incorporated and attributive verbs; and two-valency verbs include transitive ones that require subject, object and obligatory complement. This article first discusses verbs valency and verbs arguments, and then definitions of grammarians and linguists from verbs and valency as well as problems that are related to their issues are presented. Then, their categorization from verbs is also studied. Then these classifications are analyzed and finally, the authors express their suggestions about classification of verbs in terms of valency.

### Valency

Radford knows argument as a term which has entered from philosophy into linguistics and to describe a role in meaning structure. He considers statements such as John hit Fred and enumerates its verb as two-valency verb; John and Fred are representative of two persons involved in hitting. He expresses that generally, we term subject of the verb as "external argument" and passive (such as direct and indirect) as "internal argument"<sup>1</sup>. Summarily, Radford says that argument structure is a descriptive composite from arguments along with composite and arguments of a verb are its composites and complements. Radford addresses that all components of the statement which are beside verb are not argument but also some of them are adjunct and are removed from statement without damage main meaning of the statement. In the following statement, on Saturday is adjunct and therefore, it is removable from the statement: The police arrested the suspects on Saturday.

Spencer also introduces valency as complements related to verb<sup>2</sup>. Chomsky in any statements has termed nominal groups which have theta role (semantic) as argument and named syntactic position in which an argument is placed as "argument

position". Semantic role (Theta) at the level of structure of the any statements is emerged. This means that within entrance of any verbs in words, number and sort of theta roles required for that verb was recorded that it is awarded to its arguments under some conditions in structure. Thus, arguments of any verbs are obvious in words<sup>3</sup>. Miremadi expresses that any verb has a circuit and is placed around this phase circuit which are constituent elements and number of these phases depends on verb meaning<sup>4</sup>. In fact, a part of meaning of the verb is detected so that we know whether which phases are appeared with what role and how is their relation with verb which constitutes central core of the circuit? He also says in book of Farsi and English syntactic within syntactic of quantity plan that role of phases in relation with verb is functional and obligatory role, while role of adjunct in relation with verb is marginal role. Kind and role of phases completely depend on kind of verbs and these are verbs which make role for their phase<sup>5</sup>. Yarmohammadi enumerates argument as names and entities which are along with main component in a base statement<sup>6</sup>.

Nobahar believes that any statement constitutes from some elements which some of them are main elements of statement structure, so that their elimination from speech texture will make the statement imperfect and vacuous. Thus, substantial and core elements of the statement are obligatory and elements. He terms obligatory elements as "basis" in above book. He also doesn't know obligatory elements of different statements equal and knows them dependent on particular pattern of the statement<sup>7</sup>.

### Argument in Linguistics

Generally, argument is referred to nominal or prepositional groups which in different statements are required to complete verb meaning and their removal leads to statement deficiency. As we observed, in references related to modern linguistics and new grammar, argument of valency was considered as an

important problem, but writer didn't observed argument of valency in traditional books but also issues in these books have addressed otherwise.

## One-valency and two-valency Verbs

**History:** As mentioned above, traditional grammars haven't pointed out to verbs valency. Even early grammar writers of Farsi including Khanlari haven't pointed out to this problem. In traditional grammars, intransitive and transitive verbs have been addressed which we can typically attribute this problem to classification by tolerance. Some instances will be pointed out at follow: Khanlari writes about characteristics of intransitive and transitive verbs that: intransitive verb is a verb which per se has complete meaning and transitive verb is a verb which its meaning is completed by other word which is called object<sup>8</sup>.

Farshid Vard states that transitive verb is a verb which verb action would not be terminated to subject and from which be permeated to object such as I read the book. Symptom of transitive verb is that its meaning is imperfect without object. Since, transitive verb in terms of requirement of complement is somewhat like defective verb<sup>9</sup>.

Intransitive *verb* is that not require to the object: I went, Hooshang came. Bateni classifies verbs based on presence or absence of complement. Farsi clauses are divided into two subclasses: i. A subclass which its individuals have complement; ii. A subclass which its individuals have no complement from his point of view, a subclass is divided into three classes of one-complement, two-complement, and three-complement<sup>10</sup>. Sadeghi and Arjang refer to this problem by another attitude. They classify Farsi verbs into two classes by subtitle of "direction" which is observer of quality of verb relation with subject, Farsi verbs are divided into two classes: i. If result of action is reminded in subject and reached to another word, verb would be called as transient such as transitive verbs. ii. If verb doesn't require to other word except subject is called as intransient, such as intransitive and passive verbs<sup>11</sup>. Meshkat Aldini classifies transitive and intransitive verb by referring to related verb groups. He believes that intransitive verb is a verb which its verb group is only consisted of one component, but transitive verb is a verb consisted of nominal group+ the+ transitive verb<sup>12</sup>. Shariat states that "transitive verb" is a verb that its verb group doesn't exceed from active and reaches to the independent object<sup>13</sup>. If we could ask after verb that "what", "who", and this question was favorable. We say it transitive: Did I beat? (Who)? If we can not ask after verb "what", "who", this verb is said intransitive: I ran ((whom)), ((what))? Anvari and Givi also in classification of Farsi terms a verb as intransitive which completes meaning of the sentence without object or in other word, doesn't need to object: Saeid came.

Transitive verb from their point of view is a verb which without object, meaning of the statement wouldn't be complete, or in other word, it requires to object to complete its meaning and to reach from subject to object: Saeid brought the book. If we

eliminate object and its symptom, statement will lose its complete meaning: Saeid brought<sup>14</sup>. Nobahar also believes so. Shafaei believes that in meaning of every verb, there is a characteristic which gives flow of its performance and its realization in terms of its quality and duration of its conduction<sup>15</sup>; for example, in verb: go, except subject or action itself, nothing else is required.....unique executive of action of go is subject itself and no other element which is off that subject is not required, but in conducting action of "eat", the problem is completely as another way. But conducting action of "eat" is not feasible only with subject and object is also certainly necessary. Thus, in this kind of verbs, to realize action, it is necessary that event of transition from subject to object be conducted. Nobahr realizes three pillars (subject, attribute, and connector) in nominal statements<sup>7</sup>: He became sad. He enumerates verb sentence as a sentence which its verb is of particular type and its least element is a word. Smallest verb sentence includes a verb which lonely implies concept of the complete message because of having ID (obligatory subject).

Three -basis verb sentences are sentences with transitive verb in which object is of obligatory cases of the sentence: Parvin bought the book. Complement verbs also from his point of view are sentences which need complement and if complement is eliminated, would make the concept imperfect: I nursed him. Nobahar knows passive sentences also as three-basis sentences in above book, and assumes them necessary. He points in another where that some constitutive elements of the sentence can be omitted in different applications of the speech chain, so that their omission doesn't damage to main concept of the message. Such elements are termed as optional elements or speech components: substitute, possessive adjective, complement, and adverb. He uses from omission method to identify sentence pillars from its components. For example, there two classes of complements which a group of them are from pillars and requirements of the verb; such as verb complement: "nursing from..." And another group of complements are parts of speech components which can eliminate them: I saw the book in her hand. Haghshenas et al in Farsi Grammar Book of three class grade of high school states that verb of the sentence would determine number of component of the sentence and to find correct number of component of the sentence, we should refer to sentence verb<sup>16</sup>. Some verbs only require subject and some seek also another components in addition to subject.

These writers divide sentences of Farsi into two-component, three-component and four-component (by calculating verb as one component); Two-component sentences (having one-valency verbs) are sentences which have intransitive verb, i.e. they want only subject: flower opened. Three-component sentence (having two-valency verbs) has transitive verb and is dividable into three kinds: i. Three-component sentence with object: (two-valency verb having the subject and the object): technical prose has no advocate. In this kind of verbs, in addition to verb come a nominal group which is called object. ii.

Three-component (attributive) with attribute: this story is repetitive; ii. Three-component sentence (attributive) with complement: this cloth is from silk; iii. Three-component sentence with complement: these kinds of words require complement in addition to subject: Iranians were gravitated to Islam army; These authors point out that omission of complement in above sentence make sentence imperfect but omission of adverbial complement doesn't damage meaning. They enumerate complement as a kind of object which comes with preposition or like object; we can not eliminate it without symmetry. Omrani and Sabati also have applied the same classification about e verbs<sup>17</sup>.

Zakaria Mehrvar also classifies verb into following kinds from point of view of function and relation with other components<sup>18</sup>: i. Verbs which have application in two-basis sentences: bases of the sentence are subject and verb; ii. Verbs which have application in three-basis sentences: First group: bases of the sentence include: subject, object, and verb; Second group: bases of the sentence include: subject, complement, and verb; Third group: bases of sentence include: subject, attribute, and verb; iii. Verbs which have application in four -basis sentences; Verbs of class "a" are intransitive and if they become transitive, they would be altered to second class; verbs of class "b" are generally transitive.... Omrani in article of "valency dictionary" discusses valencies and knows compilation of dictionary related to it necessary. He says in this article that (became, and was) requires attribute, thus they are two-valency verbs and "leaves" demands object in addition to subject; thus, it is a three-valency verb. He points out that in mentioned dictionary, valency comes along with considered word and this valency consists of object, attribute, complement or second object and because of presence of subject with all verbs, it has prevented from its term<sup>19</sup>.

## Analysis

As it was observed, early grammarians have used from "valency" term and have studied its similar words and requirement or lack of requirement of verb to object (with intermediate or without intermediate) from point of view of transient. But latest scientists of grammar and linguists followed by foreign linguists have addressed this discussion in Farsi and have classified Farsi verbs into some sorts. Among these classifications, Nobahar classification and Ali Mohammad Haghshenas et al (in Farsi grammar book of three class grade of high school) are appeared more accurate. As it was observed, verbs are dividable into three groups of one-valency, two valency and three valency verbs. One-valency verbs are verbs which only require subject and don't require to another component to complete meaning of the verb: Ali slept, flower opened, etc. Two-valency verbs are referred to verbs which require to the object or attribute or complement. In case of lack of these components, meaning of the sentence will be imperfect: Ali ate food, Ali boasts of his father, Ali is well. It should be noted that some verbs having attributive verb are termed as one-valency, such as: Yarmohammadi who enumerate English

sentence like John is clever as one-valency. Some one-valency verbs in Farsi are: to rest, to rain, to jump, to blight, to decay, to rupture, to bubble, to drop, to roar, to cry, to vibrate, to fall out, to get up, to wallow, To have a rough time, to occur, to continue, to fly, to expire, to late, to lie, to accomplish, etc<sup>6</sup>.

Two-valency verbs with object: to annoy, to test, to drink, to create, to weave, to close, to kiss, to pick up, to provoke, to remove, to pull the legs of, to do, to like, to hold,... Two valency verbs with complement: to look, to think, to revolt, to fight, to escape, to reach, to put, to be distressed, etc. Two-valency verbs with attribute: to be, to become, to turn, to appear/to come, to name, to stay, etc; As it is observed from above examples, one-valency and two-valency verbs all have simple, prefixed, and combined form. What should be pointed here is that according to classification of intransitive verbs in traditional grammar based on mentioned classification are either one-valency (slept, opened, etc), or two-valency (Ali is well); Whereas, some such as Yarmohammadi and Nobahar also enumerates such attributed sentences as one-valency and intransitive. Others such as Khanlari, Meshkat aldin and Sadeghi and Arjang haven't specified intransitivity or transitivity of attributive structure.

If we look at the case in terms of structure-orienting, passive, intransitive and attributive structures negligently have similar structures: Passive: Ali was killed. Intransitive: Ali became glad (adjective+ become); Attributive: Ali is glad; Thus, it is appeared that to keep uniformity, it is better that we know attributive verbs also like passive and intransitive structure (in above classification) as intransitive verb and regard all as one-valency. Annexed combined verb also according to idea of Dabirmoghadam are intransitive without exception. Thus, we can also know such verbs as one-valency: Ali ate food (annexed combined verb) such verbs only require subject<sup>3</sup>.

## Conclusion

As it was observed, different classifications from verbs, transitivity, and their valency have been conducted. In opinion of writer, it is better that classification of verbs be conducted as follow:

**One-valency verbs:** i. Intransitive verbs: Ali slept, Flower opened, It rained, etc., ii. Attributive verbs: Ali is well, Hossein is sick, etc., iii. Passive verbs: Ali was killed, car was punctured, etc., iv. Annexed combined verbs: Ali ate food; people took fish.

**Two-valency verbs:** i. Verbs transient into object: Ali ate food; people took fish; ii. Verbs transient into complement: Ali boasts of his father, people fought with the enemy; Generally, it is better that intransitive verbs (in traditional grammar), attributive verbs (connected), passive structure and one-valency annexed combined and transitive verbs which have object or complement be referred as two-valency.

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