

Semantics and Pragmatics

Aspects of Locative Alternation in Persian

Zahra Ghane

Heinrich Heine University
zagha100@uni-duesseldorf.de



Agenda

- ✓ Persian
- ✓ Research questions
 - Describing locative alternation in RRG
 - Holistic/Partitive effect (Anderson, 1971; Beavers, 2006; Kailuweit, 2001)
 - Pragmatic aspect
- ✓ Conclusion

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Data Analysis

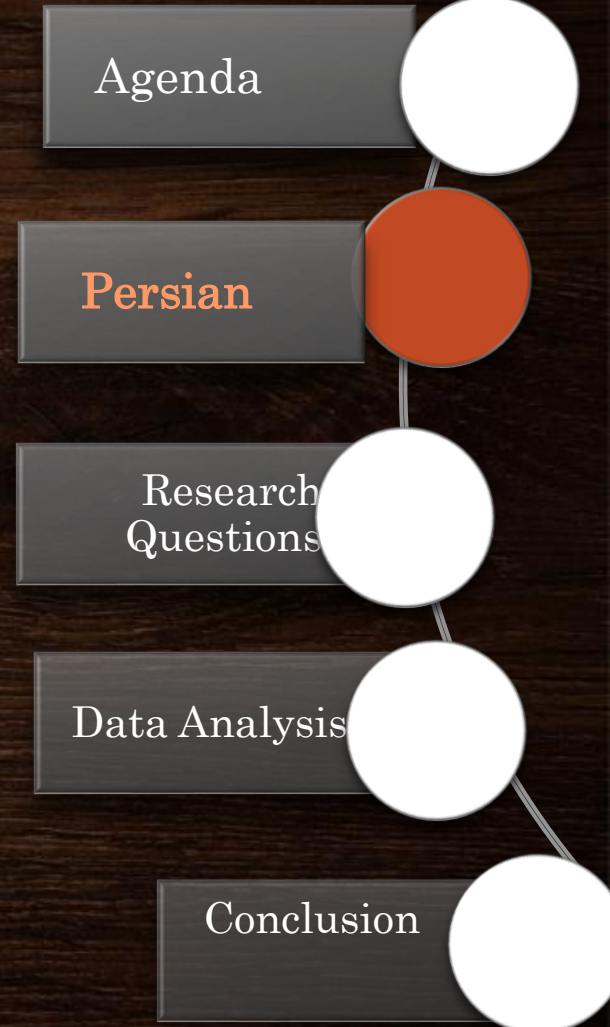
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- Persian is one of the Indo-Iranian languages predominantly spoken and used officially within Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan.
- It is verb-final language (Mahootian & Gebhardt 1997); it has free word order.
- It is written from right to left.
- /râ/ is a multifunctional marker in Persian:
 - a. There is a consistency that specific direct objects can be marked by /râ/, but not all specific objects are followed by /râ/.
 - b. /râ/ marks contrastive topic/ focus.
- Incorporation is a process that, in its surface structure, there is a verbal element and a bare noun which both constitute a structural unit in a way that the noun stem becomes part of the predicate and it leads to verb change valence.

Example:

rang	zadan
paint	to hit
	to paint



مریم رنگ را به دیوار می زند.

- a. Mary **rang** (râ) be divâr mi-zan-ad
PN paint on wall IPFV-brush.PRES.3sg
“Mary is brushing (the) paint on (the) wall.” (**specific**)
- b. Mary be divâr, **rang** (râ) mi-zan-ad
PN on wall paint IPFV-brush.PRES.3sg
“On (the) wall, Mary is brushing (the) paint.” (**specific**)
- c. Mary be divâr, **rang** mi-zan-ad
PN on wall paint IPFV-hit.PRES.3sg
“Mary is painting the wall.” (**non-specific/ incorporated**)
- c. **Rang** (râ) Mary be divâr mi-zan-ad
paint PN on wall IPFV-brush.PRES-3sg
“As for the paint, Mary brushed it on (the) wall.” (**specific/topicalized**)

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Research questions

1. How can locative alternations in Persian be described in RRG?
2. What semantic or pragmatic factors affect locative alternations in Persian?

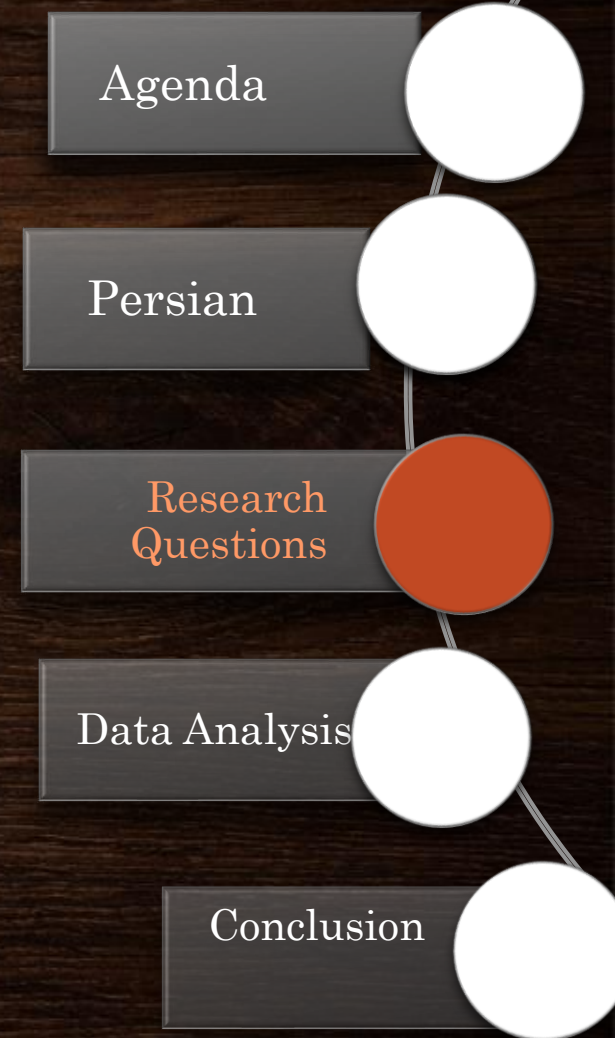
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Locative alternation

The locative alternation is a type of multiple argument realization involving expression of a location argument and a locatum or theme argument.

- (1) a. The worker loaded the fruit on the truck. [straight Construction]
b. The worker loaded the truck with (the) fruit. [inverted construction]

(2) a. kârgar mive (râ) tuy=e kâmiyun bâr zad-Ø
worker fruit RÂ inside=EZ truck load hit- PAST. 3sg
'The worker loaded (the) fruit on the truck.'

b. kârgar kâmiyun râ mive bâr zad-Ø
worker truck RÂ fruit load hit- PAST. 3sg
'The worker loaded the truck with fruit'

$NP_x NP_{y+} (r\hat{a}) PNP_z V$
 $NP_x NP_z + r\hat{a} NP_y V$

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- (3)
- a. ?U pomâd=e giyâhi (râ) be pâ-hâ=(y)e isâ mâlid-Ø
 s/he ointment=EZ herbal on foot.pl=EZ Jesus rub.PAST-3sg
 "She/He rubbed (the) herbal ointment on Jesus' feet."
- b. ?U pâ-hâ=(y)e isâ râ pomâd=e giyâhi mâlid-Ø
 s/he foot.pl=EZ Jesus ointment=EZ herbal rub.PAST-3sg
 "It was Jesus' feet that s/he rubbed (the) herbal ointment on."
- c. ?U pâ-hâ=(y)e isâ râ bâ pomâd=e giyâhi mâlid-Ø
 s/he foot.pl=EZ Jesus with ointment=EZ herbal rub.PAST-3sg
 "It was Jesus' feet that s/he rubbed with (the) herbal ointment."

NP_x NP_y+ (râ) PNP_z V
 NP_x NP_z + râ PNP_y V

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(4)

a. Mary **rang** (râ) be divâr mi-zan-ad
PN paint on wall IPFV-brush.PRES-3sg
"Mary is brushing (the) paint on (the) wall."

a'. Mary be divâr, **rang** (râ) mi-zan-ad
PN on wall paint IPFV-brush.PRES.3sg
"On (the) wall, Mary is brushing (the) paint."

a". **rang** (râ) Mary be divâr mi-zan-ad
paint PN on wall IPFV-brush.PRES-3sg
"As for the paint, Mary brushed it on (the) wall."

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b. Mary divâr (râ) rang mi-zan-ad
PN wall paint IPFV-brush/hit.PRES-3sg

"Mary is brushing (the) wall with (the) paint."

Or

"As for the wall, Mary is brushing it with (the) paint."

Or

"Mary is painting the wall." ??

Or

"As for the wall, Mary is painting it." ??

b'. divâr (râ) Mary rang mi-zan-ad
wall PN paint IPFV-hit.PRES-3sg

"As for the wall, Mary is painting it." ??

NP_x NP_y+ (râ) PN P_z V

NP_x NP_z + râ NP_y V

*NP_x NP_z + râ [NP_y V]

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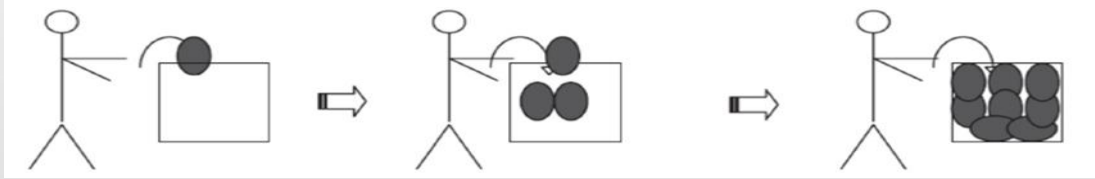
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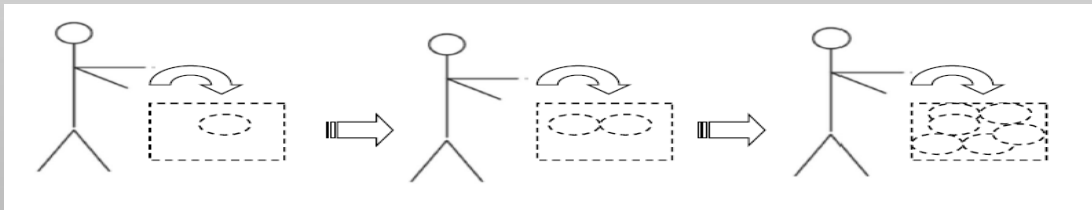
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How can locative alternations in Persian be described in RRG?



a. kârgar mive (râ) tuy=e kâmiyun bâr zad-Ø
worker fruit RÂ inside=EZ truck load hit- PAST. 3sg
'The worker loaded (the) fruit on the truck.'



b. kârgar kâmiyun râ mive bâr zad-Ø
worker truck RÂ fruit load hit- PAST. 3sg
'The worker loaded the truck with fruit'

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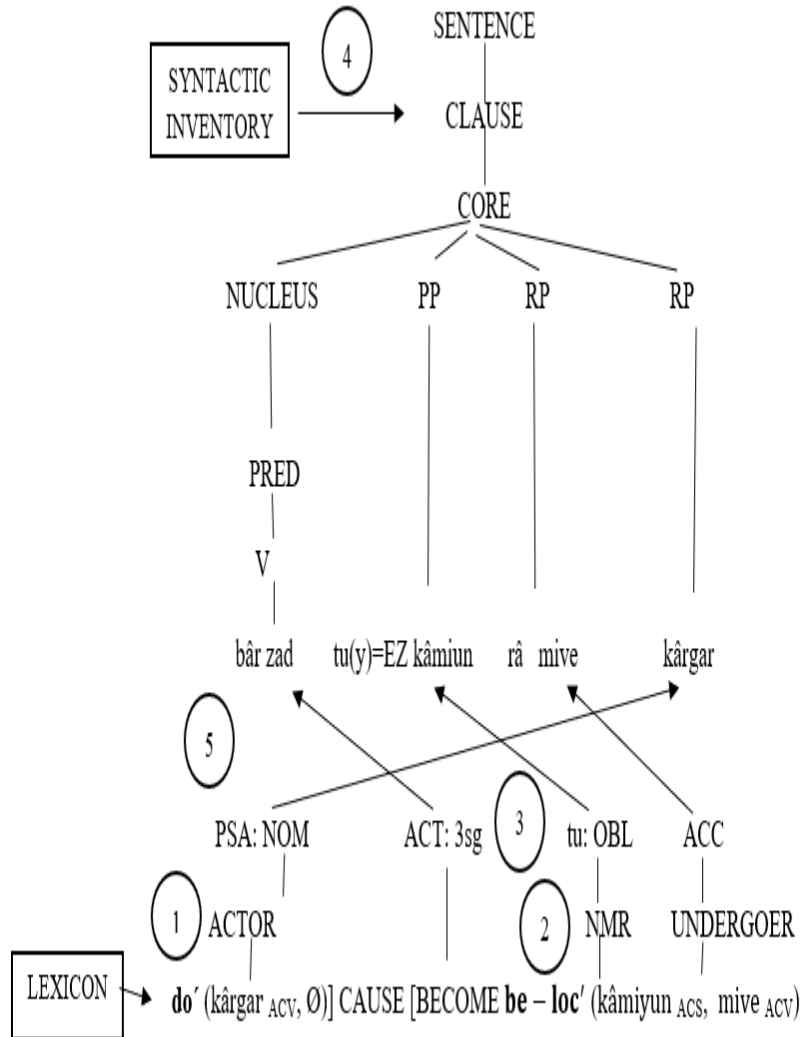
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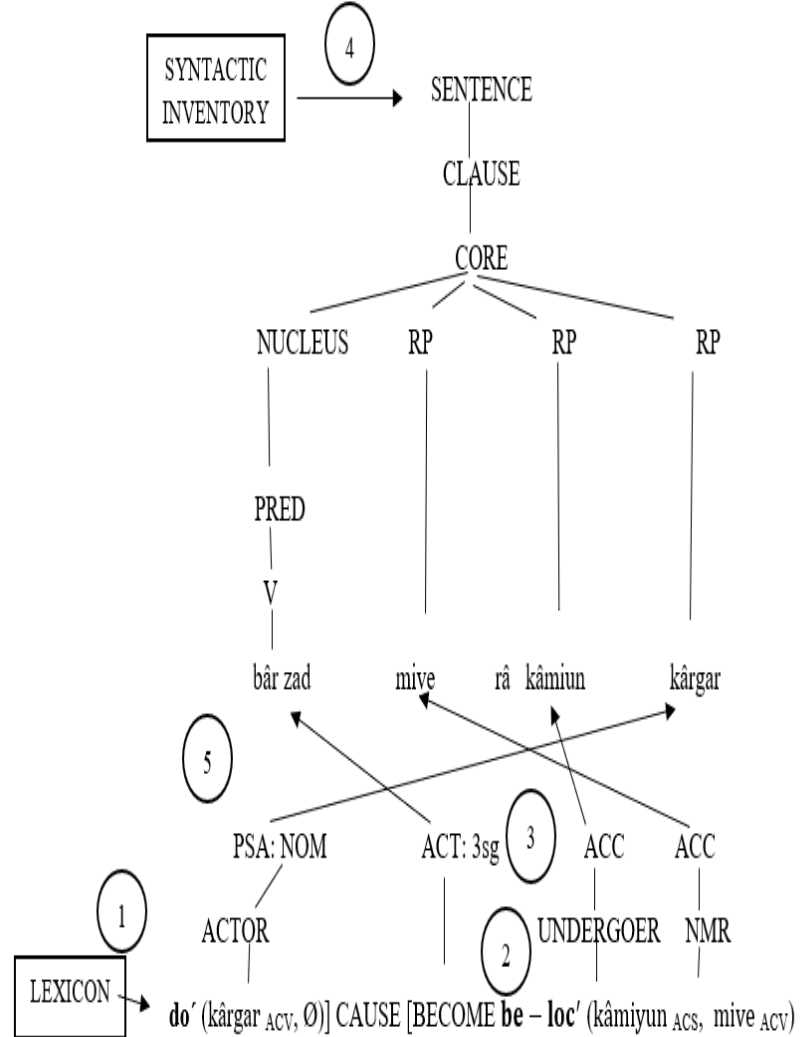
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Unmarked Undergoer Choice



Marked Undergoer Choice



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How different are the two alternates semantically or pragmatically?

Semantic effect of marked Undergoer:

“If an argument is a marked choice for undergoer in a given logical structure, it is interpreted as a prototypical undergoer' i.e. as having at least one of the properties 'causally affected', 'change of state', 'incremental/ extensional theme'.”
(Kailuweit, 2008:350)

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❑ a. ali mix râ be divâr kubid-Ø
Ali nail RÂ into wall hit- PAST. 3sg
'Ali hit the nail into the wall.'

b. ali divâr râ mix kubid-Ø
Ali wall RÂ nail hit- PAST. 3sg
'Ali hit nail into the wall./' 'It was wall that Ali hit nail into.'

❑ a. xayât dokme râ be lebâs duxt-Ø
tailor button RÂ to jacket sew.PAST-Ø
'The tailor sew the button on the jacket.'

b. xayât lebâs râ dokme duxt-Ø
tailor jacket RÂ button sew.PAST-Ø
'The tailor sew the button on the jacket./' 'The tailor sew button on the jacket.'

❑ a. šâmpu=(y)e narm.konande râ be mu=(y)e sar mâlide va xub mâsâž dah-id
Shampoo=EZ soft. doer RÂ to hair=EZ head rub and well massage do.IMP-
2sg

'Rub the hair conditioner onto the hair and massage well'

b. mu=(y)e sar râ šâmpu=(y)e narm.konande mâlide va xub mâsâž dah-id
hair=EZ head RÂ shampoo=EZ soft. doer rub and well massage do.IMP-
2sg

'Rub the hair with the hair conditioner and massage well'

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- a. The worker loaded the fruits on the truck, but there is still some more fruit.
- b. The worker loaded the truck with fruits, but it is not full, yet.



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Revised version:

"If an argument is a marked choice for Undergoer in a given LS, it is interpreted as a prototypical Undergoer' i.e. as having at least one of the properties "causally affected", "change of state", "incremental/ extensional theme"; i.e. "affected". This can solely get realized if the encyclopedic knowledge or the context in which the sentence is uttered do not ban its realization."

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Possible activation status of location and theme

- a. Location_{given} Theme_{new}
- b. Theme_{given} Location_{new}
- c. Location_{given} Theme_{given}
- d. Location_{new} Theme_{new}

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Theme_{given} Location_{new} → Theme is the undergoer

A farmer planted wheat every year and did agriculture. One year, he decided to collaborate with God and associated his agriculture. First, during the winter, he vowed that he would devote half the proportion of the crop between the poor for God's sake. Incidentally, that year was a good year and acquired many crops. When reaping, he asked his neighbors to help him and reaped and harvested wheat. However, the greed dominated him, and he loaded the whole crop on his donkey, took it home, stored it, and said, "O my God, this year all the crops will be mine, and next year all yours. The next year, incidentally, became a good year, too. Nevertheless, the greed again hindered him to fulfill his vow. He turned to God and said: "O God let me to take all the wheat again, and I will till for you for the two succeeding years in return." Therefore, he loaded the wheat and carried them.

tamâm=e mahsul râ bar olâq bâr zad -Ø va (tamâm=e mahsul
whole crops RÂ onto donkey load.PAST.3sg and

râ) be xâne bord-Ø va (tamâm=e mahsul râ) anbâr kard-Ø.
to home take.PAST. 3sg and store do.PAST.3sg

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Location_{given} Theme_{new} → Location is the undergoer

*I have talked about God's kindness till now; however, this woman, with her love to Jesus, created such a relationship. She kissed Jesus feet **and rubbed them with ointment.***

U *pâ-hâ=(y)e* *isâ* *râ* *bus-id* *va* *bâ* *pomâd*
PRON.3sg foot.pl=EZ jesus kiss.PAST-3sg and with ointment

mâlid-Ø
rub.PAST-3sg

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Location_{given} Theme_{given}

 Location_{ACT} Theme_{ACS} → Location is the undergoer

 Location_{ACS} Theme_{ACT} → Theme is the undergoer

az hamâm ke birun ?âmad-Ø, šišē=(y)e roqan=e bâdâm
 From bathroom CLM out come.PAST.3sg, glass=Ez oil=EZ almond

râ az ru=(y)e miz=e tovalet bardâšt-Ø va kam-i az
 RÂ from (the area)on=Ez table=Ez toilet pick up and little=IND from

?ân râ be kaf=e dast-hâ=(y)aš mâlid-Ø.
 that RÂ to palm=Ez hand-pl=PC.3sg rob.PAST-3sg.

“When he came out of bathroom, he picked up the glass of almond oil off the toilet table and rubbed some of it onto the palm of his hand.”

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All the semantic and pragmatic factors play a role in argument realization, and what is perhaps surprising is that the effect of pragmatic factors outrank the semantic ones.



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Thank You
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