

5.2. Focus Structure

A significant aspect of Lambrecht's theory is the concept of focus structure that conventionally associates sentence form with focus construal. The syntactic domain in a sentence which expresses the focus component of a pragmatically structured proposition is the focus domain. This notion of focus structure is further refined into the concepts of potential and actual focus domain by VanValin(1993b) who incorporates information structure into the theory of Role and Reference Grammar, using Lambrecht's idea of focus structure.

Lambrecht's information structure theory provides an alternative to Functional Sentence Perspective² (FSP Mathesius, 1983). Pragmatic presupposition is similar to the FSP concept of theme. Rheme and focus are overlapping but not mutually inclusive concepts. Both rheme and focus are associated with the sentence final position in unmarked utterances. As with rhematic information, focus is not always the final element in the sentence, but rather can occur anywhere within the sentence. VanValin and La Polla (1997:209) point out that a given language may have a specific position, called the unmarked narrow focus position; this is where focal material of the length of a single constituent is usually placed. Such focal material may also occur in other positions, in

which case it is marked narrow focus. Consequently, Lambrecht's theory as adopted by RRG allows for a focal position, does not require it to be final position, and allows focal material to occur outside of it in marked positions. Indeed, focus construal is determined by how information is distributed within a sentence. An essential difference between Lambrechtian and traditional FSP approaches is that the former regards information as a separate level of linguistic representation. Lambrecht's theory as adopted by VanValin no longer segments propositional information into 'old' and 'new' parts which are mapped onto syntax. On the contrary, information is considered as a characteristic of denotata, not of lexical items or syntactic constituents. Büring (1997:8) states that focus and topic do not interact with the semantics of specific words or constructions. Lambrecht argues that information structure is not concerned with words and their meanings, nor with the relations between the meanings of words and those of phrases or sentences, but with the pragmatic construal of the relations between entities and states of affairs in given discourse situations.

5.2.1. Focus types

Lambrecht (1994:223, 2001) divides focus structure into three categories: narrow, predicate, and sentence focus. Narrow focus is when a single constituent, such as an NP, is focused. The unmarked

subject-predicate sentence type in which the predicate is the focus and the subject is in the pragmatic presupposition is called predicate focus. In sentence focus, the focus extends over both the subject and the predicate. According to Lambrecht(2001) these three categories correspond to three basic communicative functions: that of predicating a property relative to a given topic (also called “topic-comment” or “categorical” function); that of identifying or specifying an argument in a presupposed open proposition (also called “specificational”, “identificational”, or “contrastive” function); and that of introducing a new discourse referent or expressing an event involving such a referent (also called “all new”, “presentational” or “thetic” function). Lambrecht (2001) describes the functions of these three focus articulations as follows:

In the predicate-focus category, we start out with a given argument and add to it a new predicate; in the argument focus, we start out with a given predicate and add to it a new argument; and in the sentence focus category, we add both a new argument and a new predicate to the discourse.

(Lambrecht 2001: 485)

Lambrecht (1994) illustrates these three types of focus in English, Italian, French and Japanese. His examples will be

reiterated here in order to provide comparison with Farsi. Predicate focus is obtained when the predicate comments upon the topic. The pragmatic presupposition in this type includes knowledge of a certain topic, and the assertion expresses a comment about the topic. Predicate focus, in other words; is a topic-comment structure where the comment, or predicate is in focus (VanValin 1999c).

In order to test theories about focus/presupposition structure we need some handy way of identifying common grounds. Ultimately, the common ground will be determined by the context, the conversational setting plus some selected material from the participants. Lambrecht, like Büring (1997) provides this context by a set of question-answer pairs and error corrections. As pointed out by Büring (1997), it is common knowledge that questions and focus bear an intimate relation to each other.

5.2.1.1. Predicate focus

For example, if someone knows something happened to someone else's car and asks the person about it, the answer by the second person must regard the car as presupposed and what has happened to it as focus. Lambrecht (1994: 223) provides the following examples of predicate focus:

(5.1) Q: What happened to your car?

- A: a. My car/ it broke DOWN. English
 b. (La mia macchina) si è ROTTA. Italian
 c. (Ma voiture) elle est en PANNE. French
 d. (Kuruma wa) KOSOYOO-si-ta. Japanese

As can be seen, in the above sentences, the question concerns the addressee's car. It shapes the presupposition of the answer. The answer tells what happened to it. This assertion encompasses the presupposition and adds what happened to it, forming a relation between the two. The focus is the material 'broke down' which the assertion adds and relates to the presupposition. In the above examples, the predicate focus structure in all four languages is marked prosodically, revealing the predicate as the focus domain. Yet, languages also use morphosyntactic means to distinguish the topic from the focal verb constituent. In French, the topic is a left dislocated NP. In Japanese, it is a wa-marked NP³. In English no additional morphosyntactic marker occurs, the subject-topic is just unaccented. These examples provide a fascinating comparison to marking of the predicate focus in Farsi.

(5.2)Q: mâšin -et či šode?

car -POSS what become

'What happened to your car?'

A: a.mâšin-am XARÂB šode.

car -POSS broken down become

‘My car broke down.’

b. XARÂB šode.

broken down become

‘It broke down.’

In the Farsi predicate focus structure, as in Lambrecht’s examples, the focus takes prosodic prominence. As I mentioned in Section (2.2.6), in Farsi, like many other languages, overt subjects are often not expressed when the referent is presupposed. Dropped subjects can often easily be deduced by a listener even when there are competing multiple referents because of the fact that the verbal morphology shows person and number agreement with the non-overt NP. Accordingly, the most natural way to state the answer to the question (5.2) is to drop *mâšinam* ‘my car’ and simply give the verb as shown in (5.2b).

Following Lambrecht (2001) I can represent the information structure of (5.2) as follows:

(5.3) **Context sentence:** what happened to your car?

Sentence: my car broke down

Presupposition: speaker’s car is a topic for comment x

Assertion: x=broke down

Focus: broke down

Focus domain: VP

5.2.1.2. Sentence Focus

The second type of focus structure is sentence focus. In this type of focus both the subject and the predicate are in focus. The focus domain is the sentence minus any topical non-subject arguments (Lambrecht 2000). In order to obtain sentence focus, a question is asked in which the reply has no presupposition. For example, when asked *what happened?* by someone with no knowledge of what has happened, a speaker can not assume any pragmatic presupposition when replying. Consequently, the answer is largely new information and in focus. In fact, these constructions usually involve existential or presentational sentences⁴. Lambrecht (1994: 223) elicited the following answers in the four languages examined by him.

(5.4) Q: What happened?

A: a. My CAR broke down. English

b. Mi Si é rotta la MACCHINA. Italian

c. J'ai ma VOITURE qui est en PANNE. French

d. KURUMA ga KOOSYOO-si-ta. Japanese

In this situation, when the question is asked, there is no pragmatic presupposition in relation to what happened to the car. In fact, the information given in the response is totally new. Since the assertion extends over the entire proposition, the assertion and the

focus coincide. Thus, in these structures the focus domain is the entire clause and there is no topical subject (VanValin 1999c).

Predicate focus is unmarked and sentence focus is a marked focus type. The responses in (5.4) can be compared with their counterparts in (5.1) as well as with each other. In English, stress on the subject, car, with the same word order as in the unmarked (5.1 a), gives this effect. It is worth noting that in all of the replies the subject is part of the focus and receives a different marking through prosody, word order and morphology.

Now, I examine Farsi to see what happens when the entire utterance is assertion and focus. The following gives an example of such a case with the felicitous and infelicitous responses:

(5.5) Q: *či šode?* ‘What happened?’

A: a. *MÂŠIN-AM XARÂB šode.*

car -1 sg POSS broken down become

‘My car broke down.’

b. *XARAB šode.* ‘It broke down.’

The answer in (5.5) shows that when a sentence is entirely asserted, the subject is always intonationally prominent, as it was in each of the languages in (5.1). This property distinguishes Farsi sentence focus structure from predicate focus structure where the subject may not be stressed and even preferably dropped. The above fact shows that when a sentence is entirely asserted the

occurrence of subject is obligatory because it is not presupposed but part of the assertion. Indeed, as we will see in Section (5.3), the subject in (5.5a) is in the actual focus domain. So it can not be omitted. The answer (b) with a dropped subject is infelicitous. The information structure of (5.5a) can be shown as follows:

(5.6) **Context sentence:** What happened?

Sentence: My car broke down.

Presupposition:-----

Assertion: speaker's car broke down

Focus: speaker's car broke down

Focus domain: Sentence.

VanValin(1999c) points out that sentence- focus structure is most often used in presentational situations, as the following Farsi sentences.

(5.7) a. pâdšâh-i bud ke se doxtar dâšt.

king - was that three girl have-PAST-3 sg.

‘There was a king who had three girls.’

b. yek zabânšenâs ketâbe jadid-i nevešte.

one linguist book new- write-PAST.3sg

‘A linguist has written a new book.’

Unlike the predicate focus and the narrow focus categories, in the sentence focus category the proposition is not articulated into a

presupposed (topical) and a non-presupposed focal portion. Focus and assertion coincide in (5.5).

5.2.1.3. Narrow focus

The third type of focus structure is narrow focus. In contrast to sentence focus, which places an entire utterance in focus, narrow focus places a single constituent in focus⁵. For example, a reply to the question “what broke down?” will be a case of narrow focus. Such a situation might occur when a speaker utters a statement which is correct except for one false constituent. If a speaker says, “I heard your motorcycle broke down” and the addressee wants to inform him that it was not his motorcycle, but his car, the addressee’s answer will put car in focus. Lambrecht gives the following examples for such a situation.

(5.7) Q: I heard your motorcycle broke down.

A: a. My CAR broke down

b. Si e rotta la mia MACCHINA/ Italian

E la mia MACCHINA che si e rotta

c. C’est ma VOITURE qui est en Pane. French

d. KURUMA ga kosyoo-si-ta Japanese.

In the above examples, only car is not presupposed. The addressee of the reply, already knows something broke down. The assertion is

that this something is the speaker's car. The focus, the unpredictable information added to the presupposition, is car.

In English, the focal car is given intonational prominence, and word order remains the same as it was in (5.1) and (5.3). Italian uses either an inverted structure or a cleft construction. French also uses a cleft construction, while in Japanese along with focus accentuation there is a ga-marking on the subject noun phrase. The diverse focus-marking devices found in these four languages share one formal feature: the element under narrow focus is the only one prosodically stressed in a sentence. A similar example in Farsi is given below.

(5.8) Q: mâšin -et xarâb šode?

car - 2sg POSS broken down become

'Is your car broken down?'

A: a. na, MOTOR-am xarâb šode.

no motorcycle-1sgPoss broken down become.

'No, my motorcycle is broken down,

b: xarâb šode MOTOR-am.

The information structure of (5.8) can be represented as follows:

(5.9) **Context sentence:** Is your car broken down?

Sentence: No, my motorcycle broke down.

Presupposition: Speaker's x broke down.

Assertion: "x=Motorcycle"

Focus: Motorcycle

Focus domain: NP

In (5.9a), the addressee wants to inform the speaker that it was not his car but his motorcycle that broke down. Thus, a heavy stress is placed on the single constituent *Motor*. Kiss (1998) calls this type of focus structure, identificational focus. Lambrecht (1994: 236) summarizes the pragmatic articulations of the three focus-structure categories as the following table.

	Argument in focus	Predicate in focus
Predicate focus	—	+
Argument focus	+	—
Sentence focus	+	+

Table 5.1 Pragmatic articulation of the three focus structure.

The feature distribution in Table (5.1) reflects the fact that the argument-focus type is the reversal of the predicate-focus type. For the sentence-focus type, it reflects the non-binary semantic structure which characterizesthetic propositions. The sentence focus structure exhibits neither the topic-comment articulation of the predicate focus structure nor the topic-comment articulation of the predicate focus structure nor the focus-presupposition articulation of the argument focus structure.

5.2.2. The morphosyntactic marking of focus structure and its representation.

Languages employ different grammatical means for marking the various focus constructions; syntax, morphology and prosody are all used. Considering the Farsi examples presented above, I showed that the same syntactic structure can be used for all three types of focus structure. Each type of focus structure is distinguished only by differences in accentuation and it is possible for the focal stress to fall on any constituent of the sentence. In Farsi, like Russian, (Rodionova 2001) aside from accentuation, it is also possible to use marked word orders to express narrow focus structures (see Section 5.3). In addition to prosody and word order, there are cleft constructions to mark narrow focus in Farsi as well. In these constructions, the focused element of the sentence is followed by a verb, usually a copula, and the relative pronoun *ke* ‘that’ (Mahootian 1997: 118, Gholam - Alizadeh 1996: 225). This can be illustrated by the following examples:

(5.11) Q: Sâsân bâ šomâ âmad?

Sassan with you come-PAST-3 sg.

‘Did Sassan come with you?’

A: na, Farid bud ke bâ mâ âmad.

no, Farid was that with we come-PAST-3sg.

‘No, It was Farid that came with us.’

(5.12) Q: ki birun raft?

who out go-PAST-3sg.

‘Who went out?’

A: Zohre bud ke birun raft.

Zohre was that out go-PAST-3sg.

‘It was Zohre who went out.’

Although the analysis of cleft constructions is an important topic concerning the information structure of the language, I exclude these constructions from the present study because they are complex sentences⁶. VanValin (1993a, 1999c) has made a distinction which is crucial to focus structure. It is the distinction between the potential focus domain and the actual focus domain. As I stated in section (5.2), the syntactic domain in a sentence which expresses the focus component is called by Lambrecht the focus domain. However, in RRG, the potential focus domain refers to the syntactic domain where focus can possibly occur. On the other hand, the actual focus domain is where the focus is occurring in a given structure.

Focus structure, like operator and constituent projections is represented as a separate projection in RRG. The focus structure projection is closely related to the constituent projection because of the influence of focus structure on constituent structure in many

languages and because the constituents of the constituent projection define the focus domains. The focus structure projection is also closely related to the operator projection in that the potential focus domain must fall within the scope of the illocutionary force operator. The node anchoring the focus structure projection is labeled ‘speech act’, because the focus structure projection represents the division of the utterance, which is a speech act of some type into non-focal and focal parts.

Within each focus structure projection both the Potential Focus Domain(PFD) and the Actual Focus Domain(AFD) will be represented. VanValin (in press: ch 3) gives the following figure for predicate focus in English.

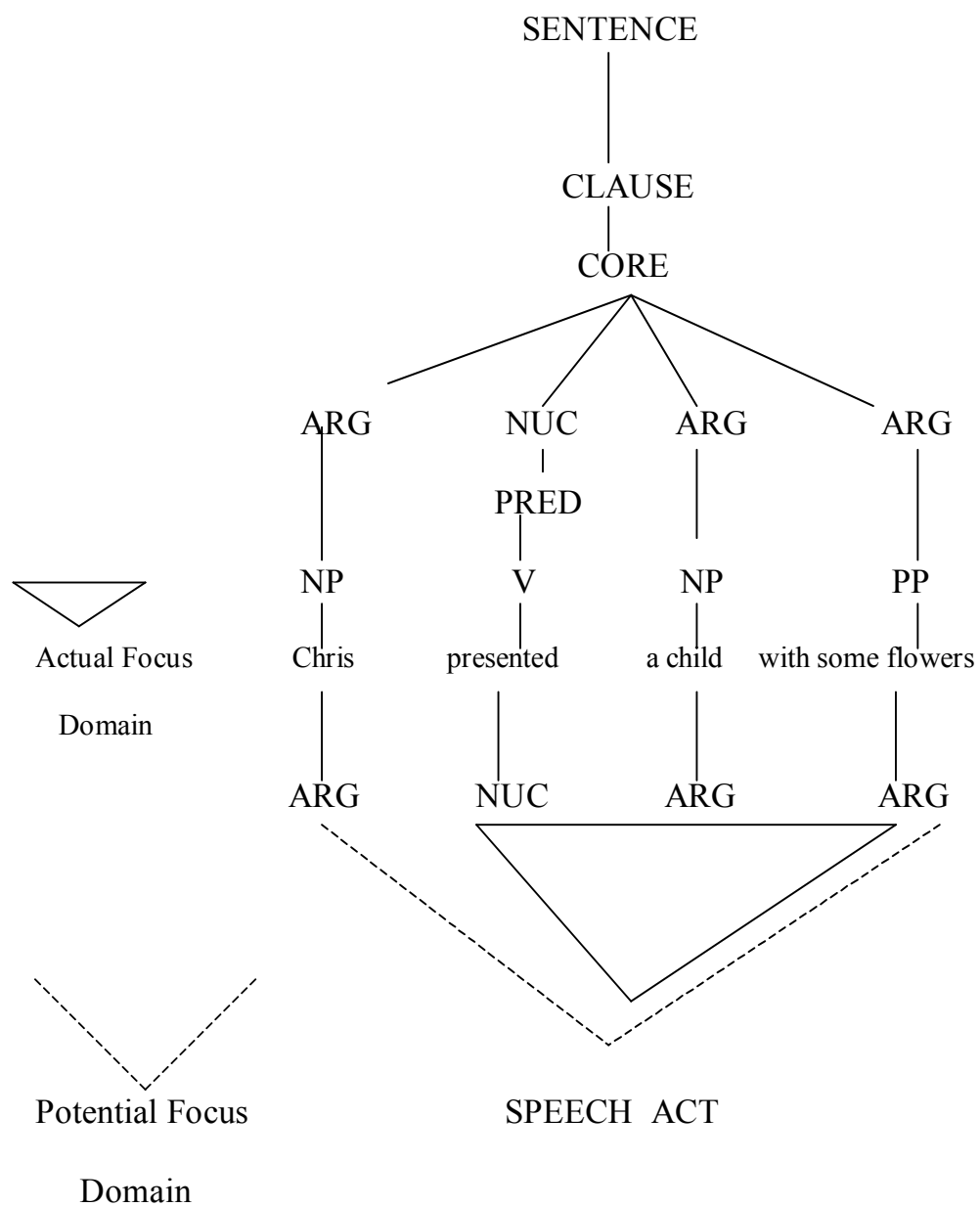


Figure 5.1 Predicate focus in English.

5.3. The interaction of focus structure and syntax

As it was stated earlier, information structure is seen as a component of sentence grammar on a par with morphosyntax, semantics, and prosody. These components interact with each other in various language specific ways. RRG rejects the radical functionalist view that the communicative requirements of discourse directly determine not only the content but also the form of sentences. Lambrecht (1994:27) believes that information structure can not determine the differences in formal structure between sentences by itself. This view is compatible with RRG's assumptions. As VanValin and Foley (1980) point out, syntax can not be reduced entirely to semantics and pragmatics. Some aspects of the morphosyntactic structure of a language can not be described in purely functional terms. Thus, RRG is concerned with how structure, meaning and communicative function interact in human languages. From an RRG perspective, one of the most important ways in which languages differ from each other is in terms of the manner in which discourse pragmatics interacts with the linking between syntax and semantics. In fact, RRG seeks for the interface of syntax-semantics- pragmatics (see VanValin: in press).

With respect to the interaction of focus structure and syntax, RRG is concerned with comparing languages in terms of the rigidity vs. flexibility of their word order and the rigidity vs.

flexibility of their focus structure. (VanValin and LaPola 1997, VanValin 1999c). Some languages like English and French (Pavey 2001) represent the ‘rigid word order’ type, while languages like Russian (Rodionova 2001), Polish (Eschenberg 1999), Latin and Farsi represent the ‘flexible word order’ type. This is, of course, a continuum and not an absolute opposition, and there are languages which fall between these two extremes. The concept of rigid and flexible focus structure refers to the restriction on the potential focus domain. Languages in which the potential focus domain is the entire main clause in simple sentences will be considered to have flexible focus structure, whereas those in which the potential focus domain is restricted to a subpart of the main clause will be considered to have rigid focus structure. VanValin (1999c) proposes the interaction of these two oppositions as the following typology in Table (5.2).

	Rigid Focus Structure	Flexible Focus Structure
Rigid Syntax	French	English
Flexible Syntax	Italian	Russian, Polish

Table 5.2 Typology of the interplay of focus structure and syntax.

In the following section, I will examine the interaction of focus structure and syntax in Farsi simple sentences. In order to

explain this interaction, I examine the variability of word order in Farsi declarative sentences.

5.3.1. Focus structure and word order in Farsi

5.3.1.1. Intransitive sentences

In Section (5.2) , I presented three basic focus types in Farsi. All examples there were intransitive sentences containing a subject and a predicate. In this section, I will explore the information structure of intransitive sentences in order to evaluate whether there are any restrictions on the ordering of constituents or not. As discussed in Section (2.2), Farsi exhibits flexible word order to a great extent. This section examines the word order flexibility in terms of constituent projection and information structure.

As stated in Chapter 2, minimal intransitive sentences contain a subject and a predicate. Predicate may be a verb, noun or prepositional phrase. In the following sentence the predicate is an intransitive verb.

(5.13) Q: ki âmad? ‘who came?’

A: a. REZA âmad

b. âmad REZA

c. âmad

‘Reza came.’

The above answers show that when the subject is focused, it should occur pre-verbally. The post-verbal occurrence of the focal subject (5.13b) is infelicitous. Infelicitous sentences, marked with ‘#’ are syntactically grammatical but are inappropriate in a given context because of certain pragmatic considerations. Ungrammatical sentences marked with (*) are judged by native speakers to be wrong in any possible context.

In (5.13) the focal subject receives sentence phonological stress, as noted by the small caps. This is an instance of narrow focus because only the subject argument is focused. As I noted earlier, Farsi is a pro-drop language and from a purely syntactic point of view subject is an optional element. Nevertheless, as (5.13c) shows when subject is focal it cannot be omitted. Lambrecht (1994: 274) states that a constituent in focus can by definition not be omitted without depriving the utterance of some or all of its information value. In fact, subject in the above answers is not topic. Topical subjects may occur pre or post-verbally but focal subjects always occur pre-verbally. This can be illustrated by the following example:

(5.14) Q: šomâ čekâr mi -kon- id?

you what IMP-do- 2 P1

‘What are you doing?’

A: a. mâ bâzi mi-kon-im.

We play IMP-do-1Pl

‘we are playing.’

b. bâzi mikonim mâ.

‘We are playing.’

The above answers regard *šoma* ‘you’ as presupposed and what you are doing as focus. Therefore, they are instances of predicate focus. The sentence stress falls on the predicate and the subject is non-focal. Thus, the subject in (5.14 a-b) is presupposed as a topic, while in (5.13) it is a new information.

So far, we have seen that when the narrow focus is on the subject argument, it should occur pre-verbally and when the predicate is focused, subject may occur pre or post-verbally. The following example shows the word order in an intransitive sentence which is under sentence focus.

(5.15) Q: *či šode?* ‘What happened?’

A: a. *Râmin rafte.* ‘Ramin has gone.’

b. *rafte Râmin.*

c. *rafte.*

The oddness of (5.15c) shows that the subject NP *Râmin* can not be dropped because it is in actual focus domain.

To reiterate the findings of this section, Table (5.3) provides a summary of possible word orders observed with various focus types in Farsi intransitive sentences.

Focus Types	Word orders
Predicate	<i>SV</i> or <i>VS</i>
Sentence	<i>SV</i> or <i>VS</i>
Narrow	<i>SV</i> <i>SV</i> <i>VS</i>

Table 5.3. Word orders in Farsi intransitive sentences.

5.3.1.2. Transitive sentences

Transitive sentences contain direct objects, which in RRG layered structure of the clause are represented as arguments of the predicate. In the semantic structure of the clause, transitive sentences have two macroroles. In this section, the effect of transitivity and the focus structure on word order will be examined. In the following examples the subject of transitive sentences are under narrow focus:

(5.16) Q: ki šišē rā šekast?

who glass OBJ break-PAST- 3sg

‘Who broke the glass?’

A: a.FARID šišē rā šekast. (SOV)

b. šišē rā FARID šekast. (OSV)

glass OBJ Farid break-PAST.3sg.

c. šiše rā šekast FARID (OVS)

glass OBJ break-PAST.3sg Farid

This question requires a focal subject. Similar to intransitive sentences shown in (5.14) the focal subject of a transitive sentence is placed either clause-initially as (5.16a) or between the object and the verb as (5.16b). Post-verbal focal subject as in (5.16c) is completely infelicitous. The oddness of post-verbal subject in intransitive and transitive sentences provides evidence in support of in-situ focus position in Farsi.

After examining the position of focal subjects in transitive sentences, now let us look at the same question concerning the objects. The following WH-question requires focal object:

(5.17)

Q: Zohre ki rā dust dârad?

Zohre who OBJ like have-3sg.

‘Who does Zohre like?’

A: a. Zohre MINU rā dust dârad. (SOV)

‘Zohre likes Minoo.’

b. MINU rā Zohre dust dârad. (OSV)

Minoo OBJ Zohre like have-3sg

c. Zohre dust dârad MINU rā. (SVO)

‘Zohre likes Minoo.’

The above answers to the question show that the focal objects can occur either clause-initially or in-situ. The oddness of (5.17c) reveals the fact that focal objects can not occur post-verbally. As seen, the focal object in (5.17a) occurs after the subject and before the verb. This is the in-situ position in the unmarked SOV order. A question that arises here is that if focus in Farsi is in-situ, why can focal objects occur clause initially as (5.17b)? To answer this question let's look at some other examples.

(5.18) a. Ahmad yek mâšîn xarid-e.

Ahmad a car buy-PAST-be 3sg

‘Ahmad has bought a car.’

b. na, Ahmad yek XÂNE xarid-e. (SOV)

No, Ahmad a house buy-PAST-be3sg

‘No, Ahmad has bought a house.’

c. na, yek XÂNE Ahmad xarid-e. (OSV)

d. na, Ahmad xaride-e yek XÂNE. (SVO)

no Ahmad buy-PAST- one house

e.na, xarid-e Ahmad yek XÂNE.(VSO)

buy-PAST-PERF Ahmad one house

The above sets up an error correction paradigm where the object is being corrected, thus receiving narrow focus. Like the former example, the corrected object occurs either in-situ or clause-initially

as in (5.18 b-c). Again, in (5.18.d-e) where the object appears post-verbally, it is judged to be infelicitous.

The observation above, leads us to the assumption that there are two choices for focus position in Farsi: in-situ and clause initial. The postulation of an in-situ focus position is also supported by the following observations: First, Meshkatodini(1998) has pointed out that WHNPs can not occur in the post verbal position in Farsi. He has given the following examples:⁷

(5.19) *a. in maqâle râ nevešt-e ast če kasi?

this paper OBJ write -PERF be who

‘Who has written this paper.’

*b. Ali in ketâb râ xarid-e key?

Ali this book OBJ buy-PAST when

‘When has Ali bought this book.’

*c. in dânešju maqâle râ nevešt čegune?

This student paper OBJ write-PAST how

‘How did this student write the paper.’

The ungrammaticality of above sentences is due to the fact that WHNPs are occurred post-verbally. WHNPs in these examples are the only focal elements and form the actual focus domain. The remainder of the sentences are presupposed and old information. Interestingly, this is a good piece of evidence in support of the in-situ focus position in Farsi.

Second, Karimi (2001a) has claimed that scrambling in the case of the identificational focus (Kiss's [1998] equivalent of Lambrechtian narrow focus) is optional. The optionality of scrambling in the case of narrow focus also substantiates the theory of in-situ focus. The occurrence of focal objects in the initial position like (5.18c) is a case of marked position. Thus, Farsi like many languages has a primary unmarked focus position which is in-situ, and a secondary marked focus position which is clause initial. Example (5.20) provides a useful contrast.

(5.20) a. *bačče SIB rā xord.*

child apple OBJ eat-PAST-3sg

‘The child ate the apple.’

a. *SIB rā bačče xord.*

apple OBJ child eat-PAST-3sg.

In both sentences *sib* ‘apple’ is a narrow- focused constituent. In (5.20a) the canonical SOV order is preserved with prosodic stress falling on *sib* which, as a direct object of the verb, remains in its canonical pre-verbal position. This is an instance of unmarked narrow focus. Figure(5.2) represents the LSC and the focus structure of (5.20a).

In (5.20a) the focus interpretation is ambiguous between a predicate focus reading, in which *sib rā xord* ‘ate the apple, is the actual focus domain, and a narrow focus reading. To avoid the

ambiguity of focus interpretation, in (5.20b) the narrow focused constituent is moved to the pre-core slot. In (5.20b) there is no ambiguity in the focus interpretation. As VanValin and LaPolla (1997: 228) state, the default interpretation of elements in the pre-core slot is focal. Thus in (5.20b), the speaker reinforces the focal interpretation of the object by placing it clause-initially. It is represented as Figure (5.3).

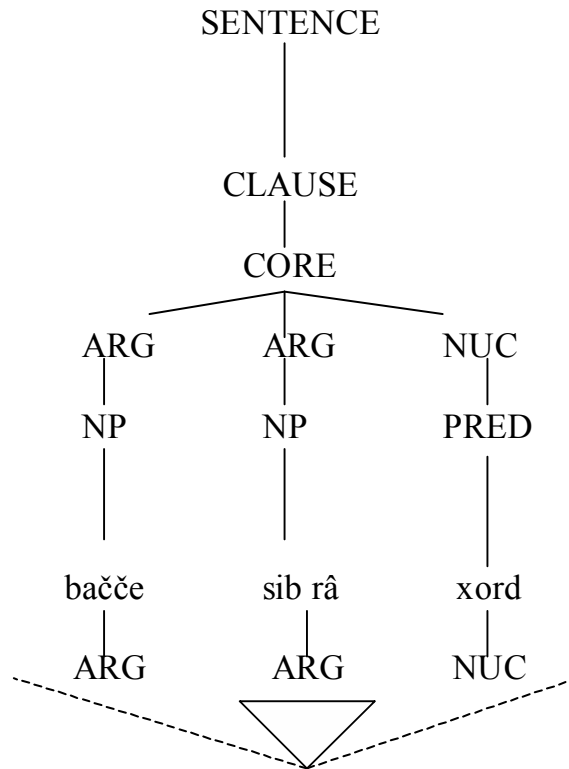


Figure 5.2 Farsi unmarked narrow focus structure.

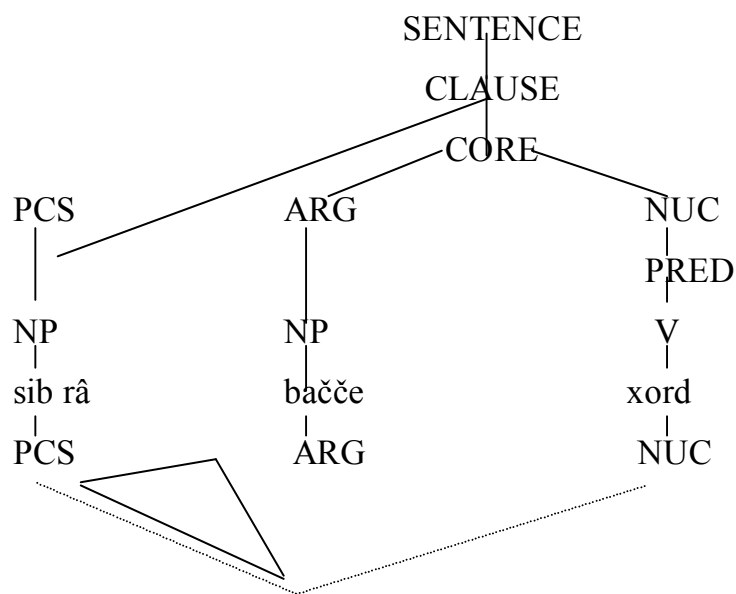


Figure 5.3 Farsi marked narrow focus structure.

It is important to note that the occurrence of non-referential objects in the pre-core slot is infelicitous. This can be observed from the following examples:

(5.21) Q: *bačče či xord?*

child what eat-PAST-3sg

‘What did the child eat?’

A: a. *bačče SIB xord.*

b. *SIB bačče xord.*

In (5.21a) above, the second argument *sib* ‘apple’ has no marker of specificity or quantity, so it is a non-referential argument⁸. As seen in (5.21a), this non-referential argument is focused in its in-situ position. But as (5.21b) shows the object *sib* can not appear in clause-initial position. We can conclude from this that only

referential objects can occur in the marked narrow focus position in Farsi transitive sentences.

Thus far, I have found variable word orders in transitive sentences for only narrow focus. Now, let's examine the same issue in cases of predicate and sentence focus types. As mentioned before, in order to elicit sentence focus, a question is asked in which the reply has no presupposition.

(5.22) Q: *či šode?*

‘What happened?’

A: a. *yek nafar šišē rā šekast-e.* (SOV)

one person glass OBJ break-PAST-PERF

‘Someone has broken the glass.’

b. *šišē rā yek nafar šekast-e.* (OSV)

glass OBJ one person break-PAST-PERF

c. *šišē rā šekaste yek nafar.* (OVS)

glass OBJ break-PAST one person

#d. *šekast-e šišē rā yek nafar.* (VOS)

break-PAST-PERF glass OBJ one person

From the sentences above, we see that when the subject NPs occur post-verbally, the sentence is judged odd by native speakers. This observation supports my claim in the former section that focal subjects can not appear post-verbally. As demonstrated before, in the sentence focus constructions, the focus domain is the entire

sentence. Thus, the NP subject is also in the actual focus domain, the following figure represents the sentence (5.22a).

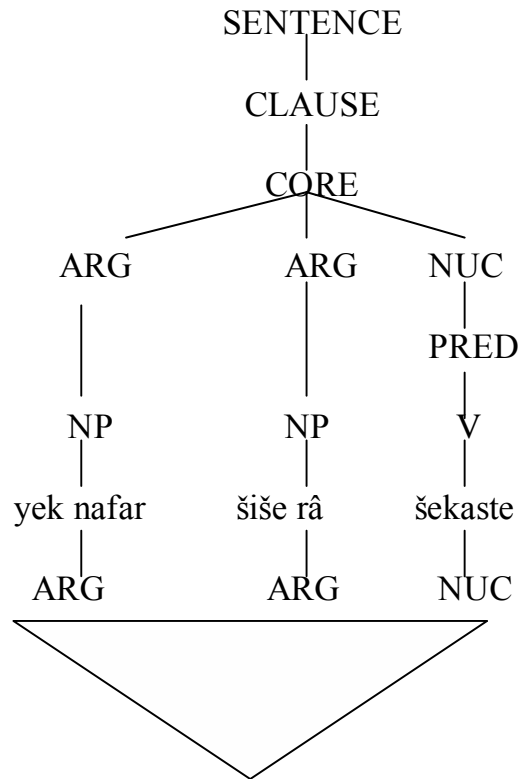


Figure 5.4 Sentence focus construction

Having examined the word order in sentence focus and narrow focus, let us now look at the same question regarding the predicate focus in transitive sentences.

(5.23) Q: če xabar az Ahmad?

What news from Ahmad

‘What about Ahmad?’

A: a. Ahmad yek mâšin xarid-e. (SOV)

Ahmad one car bought-PERF

b. yek mâšin xaride Ahmad (OVS)

one car bought-PERF Ahmad

c. yek mâšin xaride-e. (OV)

one car bought-PERF

d. yek mâšin Ahmad xaride. (OSV)

one car Ahmad bought-PERF

e. xaride yek mâšin Ahmad. (VOS)

bought-PERF one car Ahmad

f. Ahmad xaride yek mâšin. (SVO)

Ahmad bought-PERF one car

‘Ahmad has bought a car.’

(5.24)Q: Bahman çe kâr karde?

Bahman what work do-PAST-PERF.

‘What has Bahman done?’

A: a. Bahman yek nafar râ košt-e. (SOV)

Bahman one person OBJ kill-PAST-PERF

b. yek nafar râ košt-e Bahman. (OVS)

one person OBJ kill-PERF Bahman

c. yek nafar râ košt-e. (OV)

one person OBJ kill-PERF

d. yek nafar râ Bahman košt-e. (OSV)

one person OBJ Bahman Kill-PERF

e. košt-e yek nafar râ Bahman (VOS)

kill-PERF one Person OBJ Bahman

f. Bahman košt-e yek nafar râ .(SVO)

Bahman kill-PERF one Person OBJ

‘Bahman has killed a Person.’

As demonstrated before, the subject in predicate focus, unlike the sentence focus, is not part of focus but a topic which is within the pragmatic presupposition. In Farsi, the sentence focus construction is syntactically similar to the predicate focus construction. The sole difference is the fact that in the predicate focus the subject NP is optional while in the sentence focus the subject NP is obligatory and can not be omitted.

The above responses to the question(5.23) and (5.24) show that the topical subjects of predicate focus constructions in transitive sentences can occur clause initially as well as clause finally. Therefore, the subject NP in these constructions are non-focal and presupposed. Since the subject NP is not within the actual focus domain, it can be dropped without depriving the sentence of its information.

The sentences (d-f) in (5.23) and (5.24) are judged infelicitous by native Farsi speakers. As it can be seen from these sentences, in the predicate focus construction both object and verb

are in the focus domain. The only non-focal and topical element is the subject. The oddness of (d) sentences in (5.23) and (5.24) is due to the fact that the topical subjects *Ahmad* and *Bahman* are placed between the object and verb. From this observation, I can conclude that in predicate focus structure of transitive sentences, the subject can not appear between the object and the verb. As stated before, in this type of focus structure both object and verb are focused. Therefore, the occurrence of subject between these two constituents separates them, and yields an infelicitous sentence.

Let us now, look at sentences (e-f) in (5.23) and (5.24). As seen, the VOS order in (e) and the SVO order in (f) are infelicitous. The reason why these sentences are odd is that the objects occur post-verbally. I have argued in the previous section that the unmarked focus position in Farsi is in-situ. Since both object and verb are in focus in these sentences they should occur in their in-situ positions. Figure (5.5) represents the focus structure of sentences like (5.23a) which are examples of predicate focus structure.

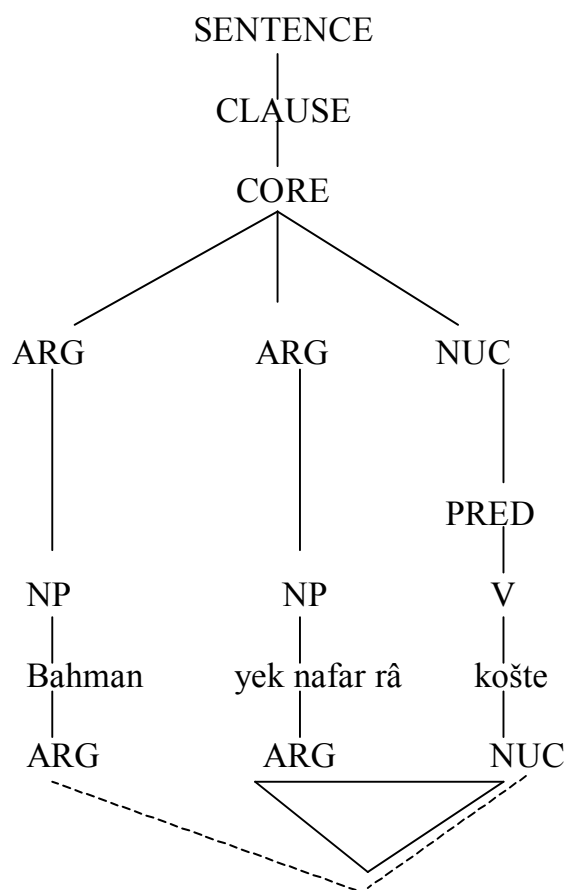


Figure 5.5 Predicate focus in Farsi.

To sum up, let me reiterate the findings of this Section. Table (5.4) provides a summary of possible word orders in different focus types in Farsi transitive sentences. The focused element is marked by the bold italics.

Focus Types	Word Orders
Predicate	<i>SOV</i> OVS
Sentence	SOV <i>OVS</i>
Narrow	
unmarked	<i>SOV</i> <i>SOV</i> <i>SOV</i>
marked	<i>OSV</i>

Table 5.4 Word orders in Farsi transitive sentences.

Comparing Table (5.4) with Table (5.3) reveals that the main word order patterns in intransitive and transitive sentences are similar. As indicated above, transitivity does not govern word order in Farsi by itself. The word ordering is determined by the information structure of sentences. As stated before, Tables (5.3) and (5.4) show that focus is primarily in-situ in this language. No focal element (subject, object) can appear post-verbally while topical and presupposed elements can occur in this position. The only marked focus position is the PCS where focal objects can occur on the condition that they are referential.

5.4. Focus domain in Farsi

Focus domain is a very important notion. It subsumes two distinct concepts, the potential focus domain and the actual focus domain. In some languages the potential focus domain is limited to a specific position in the clause⁹. As I demonstrated in the former sections, all constituents of the clause can be focused. Consider the following Farsi sentence with different focal stress positions.

(5.25) a. PARVIZ diruz šišē rā bâ sang šekast.

Parviz yesterday glass OBJ with ston break-PAST-3sg.

b. Parviz DIRUZ šišē rā bâ sang šekast.

c. Parviz diruz ŠIŠĖ rā bâ sang šekast.

d. Parviz diruz šišē rā bâ SANG šekast.

e.Parviz diruz šiše râ bâ sang ŠEKAST.

‘Parviz broke the glass with the stone yesterday.’

These sentences show that all elements (actor, undergoer, adverbials and verbs) can take a focal stress. The PCS which is the position of WH-elements or Non-WH focal or topical NPs is also under the potential focus domain. As VanValin and LaPolla (1997:210) pointed out a WH-element in the pre-core slot is always unmarked narrow focus, but Non-WH-elements in focus in the pre core slot are types of marked narrow focus. It should be noted that not all Non-WHNPs in the pre core slot are focal, but as I indicated in Chapter2, some topical NPs may occur in this position.

Thus far, I have shown that all clausal elements including PCS may take a focal stress and fall under the focus domain. As stated in Section (2.2.5), in addition to the PCS there is also an initial position, set off from the rest of the sentence by a pause or intonation break. To examin the information structure of these clause-external elements I reiterate the sentences in (2.11) here with a sentence accent on the LDPs.

(5.26) #a. DAR VÂQE’, man hargez u râ na-dide-am.

in fact I never he OBJ NEG-See-PERF-1sg.

‘In fact, I have never seen him’.

#b. BE HAR HÂL, man u râ mi- pazir-am

however I he OBJ IMP-accept-1sg.

‘However I accept him.’

c. BE NAZARE ŠOMÂ, čerâ Ahmad mâ râ da’vat
na-kard?

in opinion you, why Ahmad we OBJ invite NEG- did.

‘In your opinion, why did not Ahmad invite us?’

The oddness of above sentences show that LDP elements can not take focal stress. Hence, LDP is outside of the potential focus domain.¹⁰

Having examined the different focus types and the actual and potential focus domains in Farsi, I represent the clause structure with constituent and focus structure projections of the sentence (5.26c) in order to demonstrate focus domain in this language. It should be noted that the WHNP in the PCS is the only focal element in this sentence. Thus this element is a case of narrow focus.

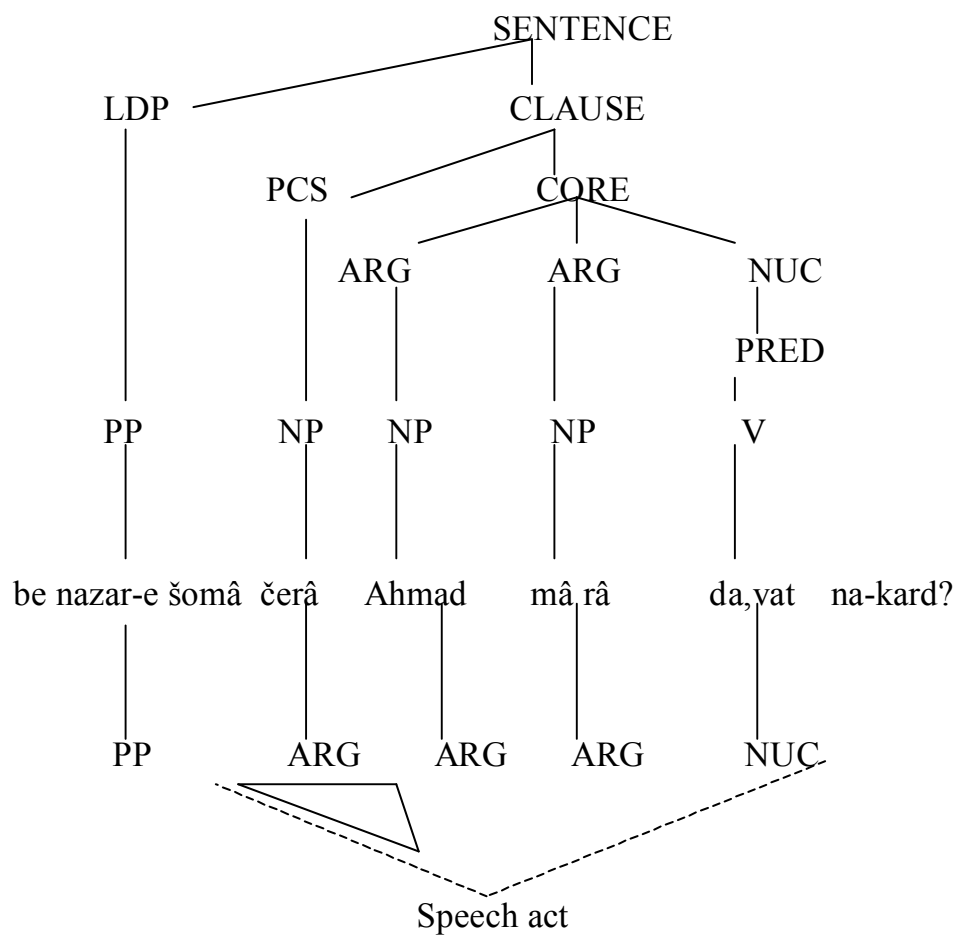


Figure (5.6) Clause structure with constituent and focus structure projections.

This Figure indicates that, in Farsi simple sentences, the entire clause including core and PCS is under the potential focus domain, while the LDP position is outside of potential focus domain and always non-focal.¹¹

5.5. Summary

This chapter has examined information structure in Farsi simple sentences. Having presented the development of information structure in RRG, I have analyzed different focus types in Farsi simple sentences in light of the basic Lambrechtian focus paradigms. The morphosyntactic marking of focus structure and its representation has also been discussed. It was shown that focus structure is marked primarily by accentuation. However, marked word orders and cleft constructions are also used to express narrow focus structure. The interaction of focus structure and syntax as the main purpose of this chapter, was examined. To bring to light this interaction, word orders in transitive and intransitive simple sentences under different focus types were studied. I have concluded that the seemingly free word order in Farsi is much less free in terms of focus structure. In other words, alternative word orders do not merely result from stylistic changes but are motivated by specific constraints on focus placement. One of the most significant constraints is the fact that focal elements can not occur post verbally.

I have also demonstrated that all constituents of the clause can be focused. The sole element of the sentence which is out of the potential focus domain is LDP. To summarize, this chapter has shown the importance of the syntax, semantics and pragmatics

interface. It demonstrates the interaction of form and function in language. The findings of this chapter show that syntax and semantics must be integrated with information structure.

Notes to Chapter 5

- 1 The term focus, like topic, is used in literature in several conflicting ways. The present use is different from what is common among phonologists, who use it simply to denote the material marked by the pitch accent (Steedman 2000).
- 2 FSP looks at the utterance from the point of view of the information conveyed by it. In this approach, utterances are said to be composed of two components: the Theme, which expresses material familiar to the addressee, and the Rheme, which represents what is new and asserted about the Theme.
- 3 See Pavey (2001) for the morphosyntax of topic in French and Shimojo(1995) for Japanese.
- 4 For a detailed discussion of the properties of sentence focus constructions cross-linguistically the reader is referred to Lambrecht(2000) and VanValin(1999c).
- 5 Lambrecht (1994,2001) refers to this focus type as ‘argument focus’; however, RRG uses the term ‘narrow focus’ since it is possible to have narrow focus on arguments as well as adjuncts.
- 6 For a detailed analysis of cleft constructions in English, in terms of information structure, see Lambrecht (2001).
- 7 It should be noted that Meshkatodini (1998) explains the ungrammaticality of post verbal occurrence of WHNPs in terms of X-bar phrase structures and argues that there is no A-position and non-

A position in post verbal position in Farsi. However, I suggest that this constraint is justified in terms of focus domain. For recent studies of WH- questions from a GB point of view, the reader is referred to Kahnemuyipour (2001b)

- 8 See Chapter 3, Section (3.5.4).
- 9 For example, in French and Italian there is a restriction on focal elements appearing pre-verbally.
- 10 This shows that the potential focus domain is the entire clause (Core+PCS) not the whole sentence, since sentential elements like LDPs are outside of the potential focus domain.
- 11 It is interesting to note that in languages such as Japanese that have two additional elements, the right detached position [RDP] and the post core slot [PoCS], the RDP is outside the focus domain and the PoCS is within the focus domain. Hence RDP and PoCS correspond to LDP and PCS respectively. For more information on this see Shimojo (1995: ch7).

Chapter 6

Grammatical relations

6.0. Introduction

As indicated at the beginning of Chapter 2, there are two types of structure in human languages, relational and non-relational. Relational structure deals with the relations that exist between one syntactic element and another, whereas non-relational structure expresses the hierarchical organization of phrases, clauses, and sentences. Non-relational structure was discussed in Chapter 2, while semantic and pragmatic relational structures were the topics of Chapters 3 and 5. In this chapter, I study the syntactic relational structures in Farsi. The organization of this chapter is as follows: Section (6.1) presents RRG's assumptions regarding grammatical relations and introduces notions like privileged syntactic argument (PSA), Pivot, Semantic and Pragmatic pivot, etc. Section (6.2) is devoted to grammatical relations in Farsi. I examine coding and behavioural properties of grammatical relations. Agreement, equi/control deletion, conjunction reduction, etc. are studied and it will be shown that these phenomena are sensitive to syntactic relation. In Section (6.3), the problem of case-marking will be discussed. In Section (6.4), passive constructions in Farsi will be analyzed using

the framework of RRG's formulation. I will demonstrate that there are two types of passive constructions in Farsi. Section (6.5) presents the basics of the linking for a simple sentence in Farsi. Finally, Section (6.6) will be the summary of this chapter.

6.1. Grammatical Relations in RRG

In main stream transformational approaches, grammatical relations have generally been defined derivationally in terms of configurational structure (Newmeyer 2002). A subject, for example, was originally defined simply as an NP immediately dominated by S, while the definition of direct object was the NP immediately dominated by the VP. The terms 'subject' and 'object' were later replaced by 'external argument' and 'internal argument' respectively¹(Chomsky 1986).

Rather than using the traditional grammatical terms subject and object, RRG relies on the concept of a privileged syntactic argument (VanValin and LaPolla 1997). Indeed, they have presented an alternative view of grammatical relations. This view is different from the very common view of grammatical relations, in that, it does not recognize the three traditional grammatical relations subject, object and indirect object as primitive notions. In this

theory grammatical relations, i.e. subject, direct objects, and indirect objects, differ from other theories in four respects: (Nakamura 1997: ch2)

- a. Grammatical relations are neither primitives (unlike RG and HPSG) nor derived from structural configurations (unlike GB).
- b. Only subjects are recognized as grammatical relations; RRG has nothing corresponding to direct objects or indirect objects.
- c. Grammatical relations are not universal; there are languages such as Acehenese (Durie 1985, 1987) which do not require us to postulate grammatical relations.
- d. Subjects are not the only controller of syntactic processes.

RRG does not assume that grammatical relations must be manifested in the same way in each of the languages that has them, and moreover it is not claimed that all languages will have grammatical relations.

VanValin and LaPolla state that grammatical relations exist in a language only where the behavioral patterns of a language give evidence of a syntactic relation independent of semantic and

pragmatic relations; that is, only where the behavior patterns are not reducible to semantic or pragmatic relations can we say there is evidence of syntactic relation independent of semantic and pragmatic relations. In RRG, a grammatical relation is defined by a restricted neutralization of semantic relations for syntactic purposes (VanValin 1991). If there exists at least one construction in the language in which there is a restriction on the noun phrase types functioning in the construction which involves a neutralization of semantic or pragmatic relations for syntactic purpose, then the language has grammatical relations.

As an example, let us consider whether the restrictions on which argument can appear as the subject of *seem* in a raising construction in English are best described in terms of semantic or syntactic relations.

(6.1) a. Jack seems to be running in the park.

b. Jack seems to be taller.

c. Jack seems to be eating a hot dog.

d. *Jack seems the panhandler to have accosted.

e. Jack seems to have been accosted by a panhandler.

In (6.1) an argument of the dependent clause appears in the matrix clause. There are restrictions on which argument can so appear, as the ungrammaticality of (6.1d) shows, but the crucial question is whether the restriction is to be stated in syntactic or semantic terms. The raised argument is the actor of an intransitive verb in (6.1a) and the actor of a transitive verb in (6.1c) and it is the undergoer of an intransitive verb in (6.1b) and the undergoer of a transitive verb in (6.1e). In (6.1d) the raised argument has the same macrorole as in the grammatical (6.1b) and (6.1e) examples; this is crucial evidence that the restriction can not be stated in semantic terms. Therefore, there is a restricted neutralization of semantic relations with respect to which argument of the dependent clause functions as the raised NP in (6.1) and this neutralization defines a grammatical relation, in this case, the traditional subject in English. It is significant that the contrast between actor and undergoer is neutralized with both intransitive verbs (6.1 a-b) and transitive verbs (6.1 c-e).

6.1.1. Pivot

RRG preserves the term *pivot*² as an umbrella term for all sorts of controllers of syntactic processes, e.g. reflexivization, agreement, control, relativization, raising, etc. According to VanValin (1993 b) the NP bearing the syntactically-defined privileged syntagmatic function is the syntactic pivot of the construction. VanValin and

Lapolla (1997:275) state that in order for a construction to have a pivot, there must be a restriction imposed on the semantic arguments that can participate in it. If the restriction is purely semantic, then the pivot is a semantic pivot. If, on the other hand, the restriction also involves a neutralization of semantic roles, then the pivot is a syntactic pivot. A syntactically accusative language such as Farsi involves the following markedness hierarchy for accessibility to the primary syntactic pivot.

(6.2) Hierarchy of markedness of pivot choice: accusative languages

Actor>undergoer> other

RRG selection of the argument to function as pivot in a syntactic construction can vary depending upon whether discourse-pragmatic considerations influence this selection. If the discourse-pragmatics plays a role in the selection, it is a pragmatic pivot. If pragmatics plays no role, it is a semantic Pivot.³ The difference is described in terms of [\pm pragmatic influence]. VanValin (in press: ch4) gives the final version of the typology of privileged syntactic arguments as the following Figure:

Privileged Syntactic Arguments:

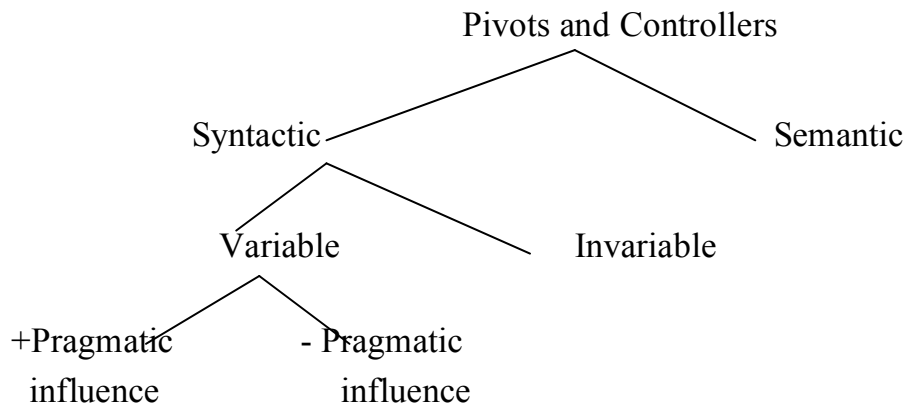


Figure 6.1. Types of privileged syntactic arguments.

It is crucial to keep in mind that whether a pivot is a pragmatic pivot can only be found out by examining clauses with transitive verb, since there is no option as to which argument will be pivot with an intransitive verb.

6.2. Grammatical relations in Farsi

As it was mentioned in previous sections, RRG claims that a language is said to have grammatical relations if there is a restricted neutralization of semantic or pragmatic relations for syntactic purposes. In this section I will try to answer this question: does Farsi have grammatical relations?

Following the distinction proposed by Keenan (1976) VanValin and LaPolla argue that grammatical relations have two clear and independent types of properties, coding properties and behavioral properties. Coding properties refer to such things as case and the other morphological properties, like verb agreement. On the other hand, behavioral properties are those which define the role of the NP in grammatical constructions.

An example of coding property in Farsi is verb agreement; it is illustrated by the following sentences.

(6.3) a. *ân mard âmad.*

that man come-PAST-3sg

‘That man came.’

b. *ân mard-hâ âmad-and.*

that man-pl came-3pl.

In (6.3 a) the NP is singular and the verb takes no suffix. But in (6.3b) the NP is plural and the verb takes the third person plural suffix-*and*. Now, it should be determined whether agreement is sensitive to semantic, pragmatic or syntactic relations. As it can be seen from (6.3), the single argument of *âmadan* ‘come’ is an actor. Thus, one could say that the verb agrees with the semantic

actor and not the syntactic subject. Also, one could claim that the agreement is with the grammatical relation subject. In some transitive sentences the subject is clearly not an actor but the verb still agrees with it; a good example is *mordan* ‘die’ since the single argument of this verb is not an actor.

(6.4) a. sag mord.

dog die-PAST

‘The dog died.’

b. sag-hâ mord-and.

dog-Pl die-PAST-3pl

‘The dogs died.’

In this instance the single argument is an undergoer, not an actor, nevertheless the verb still agrees with it. A semantic analysis which says that agreement is with a semantic relation like actor predicts that there should not be agreement in this instance, while the syntactic relation ‘subject’ says that there should be agreement. From this example, it would appear that the syntactic analysis is correct. Now, let’s look at a sentence with a transitive verb such as *kořtan* ‘kill’.

(6.5) a. *šekârči âhuhâ râ košt.*

hunter deer OBJ killed.

‘The hunter killed the deer.’

b. *âhuhâ bevasileye šekârči košte šodand*

deer by hunter killed become-3pl

‘The deer were killed by the hunter.’

In (6.5.a) *šekârči* ‘hunter’ is the actor and *âhuhâ* ‘deer’ is the undergoer, and the verb agrees with the subject, an actor. Sentence (6.5b) is the passive form of (6.5a) and shows agreement with the subject which is an undergoer. Thus, agreement is with the syntactic relation of subject, and not with any particular semantic relation. This is a neutralization of the semantic opposition between actor and undergoer for morphosyntactic purposes. Therefore, for the statement of verb agreement in Farsi, it is irrelevant whether the subject NP is an actor or an undergoer. This contrast is neutralized and is therefore irrelevant to verb agreement. This neutralization is restricted, because the verb agrees with only the actor or the undergoer. If the verb agreed with any or all of its syntactic arguments, regardless of their semantic roles, then there would

clearly be a neutralization of semantic opposition for syntactic purposes, but would not be restricted.

So far, I have argued that verb agreement in Farsi is sensitive to syntactic rather than semantic relations. However, one can claim that this agreement is with the pragmatic relation of topic. Subject in Farsi is normally a topic, and therefore, it may be argued that the verb agrees with the pragmatic relation of topic.

To demonstrate that the verb agrees with syntactic relation of subject rather than the pragmatic relation of topic, I present the following cases in which the subject is not a topic.

(6.6) Q: ki in nâme râ nevešt-e?

Who this letter OBJ write-PERF

‘Who has written this letter?’

A: a. hamsâye-hâ nevešte-and.

neighbor-Pl write-PERF-3pl

The neighbors have written.

*b. hamsâye-hâ nevešt-e.

* ‘The neighbors has written.’

The NP *hamsâye-hâ* ‘neighbors’ corresponding to the WH-word in the question is in focus and not a topic. The pragmatic analysis predicts that the verb should not agree with this NP, since it is not a topic. As the ungrammaticality of (6.6b) shows, agreement is not sensitive to the pragmatic relation of topic.

From the above observation, we see that the behavioral patterns of Farsi give evidence of a syntactic relation independent of semantic and pragmatic relations.

From the above discussion we find that the subject NP acts as the PSA triggering verb agreement in person and number in Farsi. It acts as PSA in many other constructions as well. Examples of equi/control are seen in the following sentences⁴.

- (6.7) a. Amir(i) mi -xâhad be Shirâz (i) beravad.

Amir IMP-want to Shiraz SUBJ-go-3sg.

‘Amir wants to go to Shiraz.’

- b. mehmân-hâ (i) mi-xâhand (i) bargard and.

guest -Pl IMP-want return -3pl

‘The guests want to return.’

These sentences contain a syntactic gap. Syntactically speaking there is a missing NP in each of the dependent cores. We can paraphrase sentence (a), for example, as *Amir mixâhad + Amir be Shirâz beravad*. As the above examples show the PSA NP is always the target of deletion in complements. This PSA is also the central element of many other grammatical constructions in Farsi such as conjunction reduction. The defining feature of a conjunction reduction construction consists of a zero in the second clause which is controlled by an argument in the first clause.

(6.8) Amir(i) xodâ hâfezi kard va (i) raft.

Amir goodbye do-PAST.3sg and go-PAST 3sg

‘Amir said goodbye and went.’

It is important to note that it is not the semantic MR (actor/undergoer) that acts as pivot in these kinds of constructions. This can be illustrated by the following examples:

(6.9) a. Amir (i) be bazar raft va(i)yek ketâb xarid.

Amir (**Actor**) to bazaar go –PAST and (**Actor**) one book
buy –PAST.

‘Amir went to bazaar and bought a book.’

b. pirmard (i) oftâd va(i)faryâd zad

oldman (**undergoer**) fall PAST and (**actor**)cry hit PAST

‘The oldman fell and cried.’

c.Farid čand qadam jelo raft va oftâd

Farid(**actor**)some step forward go-PAST and
(**undergoer**)fall

‘Farid moved some steps forward and fell.’

d.pesari-i (i) az bâm oftâd va (i)mord

boy- (**undergoer**) from roof fall and (**undergoer**) died

‘A boy fell from the roof and died.’

This set of four sentences exemplify all the possible MR and PSA combinations. They demonstrate that it is not the semantic MR (actor/undergoer) that acts as pivot. Instead, it is the status of the NP as PSA in the second clause which is determining. The PSA in the first clause is acting as the controller of the gap in the second clause, and in the second clause the PSA is realized as a pivot.

We see that, when there are coreferential arguments in two linked clauses, the one in the second clause can be represented by a zero pronoun only if it is the PSA of each clause.

(6.10) a. ân dozd be bânk hamle kard. Polis ân dozd râ
košt.

that robber to bank attack did. Police that robber OBJ
killed.

‘That robber attacked the bank. Police killed that robber.

*b. ân dozd be bânk hamle kard va polis (i)košt.

* That robber attacked the bank and Police killed.

In Farsi, if two sentences are coordinated, usually with *va* ‘and’, the subject of the second is normally omitted, if it is coreferential with that of the first. This is only possible if both nouns are PSA as can be seen from the above sentences. Palmer (1994:88) refers to the first NP as controller and the second NP as the target.

It is interesting to note that an ungrammatical coordinated construction like (6.10b) can be made grammatical by putting the second clause into passive voice (Palmer 1994:89)

(6.11) a. ân dozd be bânk hamle kard. ân dozd bevasileye polis
košte šod.

‘That robber attacked the bank. That robber was killed by
police.

- a. ân dozđ be bânk hamle kard va (i) bevasileye polis košte
šod.

‘That robber attacked the bank and was killed by police.’

The coordinated construction in (6.11b), unlike (6.10b), is grammatical. The reason why this sentence is grammatical is that passivization promotes the undergoer to PSA and the actor to the periphery.

The observation above, tells us that the second coreferential NPs in coordinated constructions can be omitted if both NPs function as the PSA of the clauses.

6.3. Case marking

In syntactic theories in which grammatical relations play a role, case marking and agreement are invariably tied to them. Since RRG has no place for grammatical relations such as subject and object case marking and agreement must be accounted using other notions. RRG handles the case marking and agreement with macroroles and direct core arguments status. VanValin (1991) proposes the following case assignment rules for accusative languages.

(6.12) Case assignment rules for accusative languages

- a. Assign nominative case to the highest ranking macrorole argument.
- b. Assign accusative case to the other macrorole argument.
- c. Assign dative case to non-macrorole arguments.

The application of the rules in (6.12) can be seen in the following Farsi examples.

(6.13) Zohre ketâb râ xând.

Zohre book OBJ read.

‘Zohre read the book.’

á. **dó** (Zohre [(**xândan**´) (Zohre, Ketâb)])

b. Zohre ketâb râ be Minâ dâd

Zohre book OBJ to Mina give-PAST-3sg.

‘Zohre gave the book to Mina.’

b´. [**dó** (Zohre, ∅)] CAUSE [BECOME **havé** (Minâ, ketâb)]

c. Ali mi- davad.

Ali IMP-run-3sg.

‘Ali runs’

d. Pirezan mord.

Old woman die-PAST-3sg

‘The oldwoman died.’

The first example contains the M-transitive verb *xândan* ‘read’ the actor ‘Zohre’ is the highest ranking macrorole and therefore receives nominative case, while the undergoer *ketâb* ‘book’ is the other macrorole and therefore receives accusative case⁴. The same two NPs also occur in (6.13b) with the three-place verb *dâdan* ‘give’. They likewise function as actor and undergoer, respectively, and receive the same cases as in (6.13a). The third core argument, *Minâ* is a non-macrorole core argument and receives dative case. The last two examples (6.13c-d) contain intransitive verbs, one of which takes an actor and the other an undergoer. Since the single macrorole, regardless of the type, is the highest ranking by virtue of being the only one, it receives nominative case.

As the examples in (6.13) show, the direct object is usually marked by the postposition *râ*, unless it is an indefinite noun phrase. In cases of other syntactic relation such as the indirect object, NPs must be marked with prepositions.

From the above discussion, now, I can propose the following case assignment rules for Farsi.

(6.14) Case assignment rules for Farsi

- a. Assign nominative case to the highest ranking macrorole argument.
- b. Assign accusative case to the second macrorole argument.
- c. Assign dative case to non-macrorole arguments.

6.4. Passive constructions in Farsi

In my discussion of syntactic relations I have presented some examples of passive sentences in Farsi. In this section I examine this syntactic process more closely. Passivization has been a debatable matter in both traditional and linguistic studies of Farsi grammar. Some scholars like (Moyne 1974, Khayyampur 1969, Vahedi 1998 among others) have denied the existence of passive constructions in Farsi and interpreted them as inchoative or compound predicates. On the other hand, some other grammarians have admitted several passive constructions (Bateni 1970, Lambton 1984, Dabir-Moghaddam 1985, Tayyeb 2001, among others).

It is important to note that Modern Persian (Farsi) does not have morphological passive⁵, thus, the verb is not inflected to represent passive voice. This has led some people to the assumption

that Farsi lacks passive constructions. In this section, I will show that passivization is a matter of syntactic argument selection rather than the inflectional morphology of the verb. Also in this section, I will also show that the RRG theory and its notions of actor and undergoer, privileged syntactic argument and core arguments account for passivization in Farsi.

In RRG (VanValin and LaPolla 1997, VanValin, in press) unlike other syntactic theories, passive is formulated in terms of the hierarchy of privileged syntactic argument selection⁶. Passive always involves a marked privileged syntactic argument choice. In active constructions the actor occurs as PSA, while in passive constructions the undergoer functions as PSA. As VanValin (in press) has pointed out passive constructions have usually two phases: the occurrence of a marked privileged syntactic argument choice, and the omission of the actor or its appearance as an oblique element in the periphery. These two facets are also called foregrounding and backgrounding processes in Foley and VanValin (1984). The former is referred to as PSA MODULATION, the latter as ARGUMENT MODULATION, in VanValin and LaPolla (1997). VanValin and LaPolla have presented the universal formulation of the basic voice opposition as follows.

(6.15) General characterization of basic voice constructions.

- a. PSA modulating voice: permits an argument other than the default argument to function as the privileged syntactic argument.
- b. Argument modulation voice: gives non-canonical realization to a macrorole argument⁷.

According to VanValin and LaPolla an important motivation for factoring voice constructions into these two parts is that they occur independently of each other in some languages.⁸

6.4.1. Basic Passive

There are three major constructions which have been analyzed as passives in Farsi by scholars inside and outside of Iran. The first, that is called Past Participle Passive by Tayyeb (2001), is formed by adding the conjugated auxiliary *šodan* ‘become’ occurring after the past participial form of the verb. The actor is marked by a preposition such as *bevasileye* ‘by’ or *be daste* ‘by’. This can be illustrated by the following examples:

- (6.16) a. Rostam Sohrâb râ košt.

Rostam Sohrab OBJ kill-past-3sg.

‘Rostam killed Sohrab.’

b. Sohrâb *be* dast-e Rostam košt-e šod.

Sohrâb by hand-EZ Rostam killed become.

‘Sohrab was killed by Rostam.’

c. Sohrâb košt-e šod.

Sohrâb killed become.

‘Sohrab was killed.’

In (6.16 a) the active sentence, *Rostam* is the actor and the controller of the agreement, thus it is the unmarked PSA. On the contrary, in (6.16b) the undergoer *Sohrâb* occurs as the subject (PSA) and the controller of agreement, while the actor *Rostam* appears as an oblique constituent marked by the preposition *be daste* ‘by’. Moreover, the lexical verb is changed to past participle followed by the auxiliary *šodan* ‘to become’. In the (c) sentence the peripheral actor *Rostam* is omitted. This type of passive construction is more common than (6.16b) in Farsi notably in spoken language. As Mahootian (1997: 143) points out, the passive construction is used in Farsi when one does not know the agent or

does not want to mention it. Thus, passives in this language are typically agentless.⁹ Let us look at some other examples:

(6.16) a. mâ nâme râ nevešt-im.

we letter OBJ write-PAST-2Pl.

‘We wrote the letter.’

b. nâme nevešt-e šod.

letter written become- PAST-3sg

‘The letter was written.’

(6. 18) a. bačče-hâ šíše râ šekastand.

child -Pl glass OBJ break-PAST-3Pl

‘The children broke the glass.’

b. šíše šekast-e šod.

glass broken become-PAST,3sg.

‘The glass was broken.’

As seen, the above passive constructions fully follow the RRG’s universal formulation presented in (6.15). Thus this type of

passive construction involves both PSA modulation and argument modulation voice.

Thus far, I have demonstrated that an RRG analysis proves the existence of at least one type of passive construction in Farsi. It is important to note that this type of passive construction is almost indisputable among various scholars (See Khanlari 1974:207, Bateni 1997, Keenan 1985: 257, Vahidian 1994, Tayyeb 2001, among others). Following Keenan (1985), I name this type of construction basic passive.¹⁰

6.4.2. Impersonal Passive

The second type of construction, which has been considered as passive by some grammarians is a subjectless transitive sentence with a 3rd person plural agreement marker on the verb regardless of the person and number of the potential agent of the verb (Lambton 1963: 54, Bateni 1970:136, Vahidian 1994a, Tayyeb 2001).

(6.19) a. Ahmad râ zad-and.

Ahmad OBJ beat-3pl

‘They beat Ahmad = Ahmad was beaten.’

b. mâšin râ dozdid-and

car OBJ steal-PAST-3pl

‘They stole the car = The car was stolen.’

Bateni (1970) calls these constructions semantic passives, whereas Tayyeb (2001) refers to these as Fixed Person Passives.¹¹ These constructions are not a specific feature of Farsi. Keenan (1985: 247) states that languages without passives have some grammaticalized means for expressing functional equivalents of basic passives. According to him the most common means is to use an active sentence with an impersonal third plural subject. In Keenan’s view, impersonal means that the third plural marker is not understood to refer to any specific group of individuals. Furthermore, he points out that this functional equivalent to passive is commonly used in languages having productive basic passives. He gives the following examples from Russian (6.20a) and Hebrew (6.20b).

(6.20) a. včera ego ubili

yesterday him killed-3pl

‘yesterday they killed him = yesterday he was killed.’

d. ganvu li et ha-mexonit

stole 3pl to me do the car

‘They stole my car’= my car was stolen.’

Thus, Keenan’s findings substantiate the view that considers (6.19) as passives. Moreover, Song (2001) points out that in some languages like Nanai, Finish and Ute the passive involves only demotion of the agent of the active transitive clause with the patient remaining intact.

As Tayyeb (2001) has pointed out, even if we know that the agent has been one person, the verb takes a 3rd plural agreement marker. Third singular marker on the verb yields an active clause.

(6.21)a. Ahmad râ zad.

Ahmad OBJ beat.PAST 3sg.

‘He beat Ahmad.’

b. mâšin râ dozdîd

car OBJ steal-PAST

‘He stole the car.’

The difference between (6.20) and (6.21) can also be explained in terms of focus structure. In sentences (6.21a,b) the subjects are considered as presupposed information and as I stated in chapter 5,

presupposed subjects are usually dropped since agreement markers represent persons and numbers. On the contrary, in the case of sentences in (6.20) the absence of subject does not mean that they are presupposed and old information. But these constructions are often uttered in a universe of discourse where neither the speaker nor the hearer knows who is the actor of the predicate.

Now, let us see how RRG formulation of voice construction, presented in (6.15), accounts for these constructions. As seen in (6.19), the single arguments of the predicates *Ahmad* and *mâšin* ‘car’ are undergoers but they don’t function as PSA. They still take the postposition *râ* as the marker of accusative case. Moreover, the predicates do not agree with these arguments. Therefore, these constructions involve only (6.15.a). Indeed this type of passivization suppresses the actor leaving the undergoer as a non-privileged syntactic argument. As I mentioned earlier, the two facets of the universal formulation of basic voice opposition occur independently of each other in some languages. This type of passivization has also been referred to as back grounding passive. (Keenan 1985, Foley and VanValin 1984, 1985).

From the analysis above, it can be concluded that an RRG analysis maintains the existence of an argument modulation passive, besides the basic passive.

6.4.3. Transitivity alternations

The third type of constructions which has been considered as passive by some linguists, is the derivation of an intransitive verb from a transitive one (Bateni 1970, Nowbahar 1993, Tayyeb 2001). Let us consider the following pairs of sentences.

(6.22) a. Farid dar râ bâz kard.

Farid door OBJ open did

‘Farid opened the door.’

b. dar bâz šod.

door open become

‘The door opened.’

(6.23) a. u man râ gul zad.

he I OBJ deceit hit

‘He deceived me.’

b. man gul xordam

I deceit eat-PAST-1sg

‘I was deceived.’

(6.24) a. ânâ loqat râ be kêr bord-and.

they word OBJ to work take-3pl

‘They used the word.’

b. loqat be kêr raft.

word to work go-PAST-3sg

‘The word was used.’

(6.25) a. Majles lâyehe râ tasvib kard.

Parliament bill-EZ OBJ approve did.

‘The Parliament approved the bill.’

b. lâyehe tasvib šod.

Bill approve become

‘The bill was approved.’

The above examples show that the verb’s valency of (a) sentences is decreased in (b) sentences. As can be seen, each nucleus consists of a complex predicate formed from a noun phrase followed by a light verb.¹²

Comrie (1985a) and Zubizarreta (1985) have recognized the same derivational procedure in languages like Russian, Swahili, Hungarian and Spanish. Both authors have referred to this process as anticausative. Comrie (1985a) characterizes his view as follows:

The anticausative is similar in many ways to the passive: in both constructions typically the direct object of the basic verb appears as subject of the anticausative or passive, for example *Anton opened the door*, the door opened (anticausative) and the door was opened (passive).

(Comrie 1985a: 325-6)

According to Comrie the anticausative differ from passive in that the former falls within the domain of derivational morphology and the latter within the domain of syntax.

Although the detransitivized sentences are similar to the passive constructions in Farsi, there is a significant difference between them in that the verbal elements in the complex predicates are changed. This alternation may lead the analyst to the assumption that the detransitivization in (6.22-25) is a lexical phenomenon. To examine

this view, let us look at the logical structure of the examples in (6.22) and (6.23) repeated here as (6.26) and (6.27), respectively.

(6.26) a. Farid dar râ bâz kard.

Farid door OBJ open did.

[**dó** (Farid, \emptyset)] CAUSE[BECOME **open** (dar)]

b. dar bâz šod.

door open became

BECOME **open** (dar)

(6.27) a. u man râ gul zad.

he I OBJ deceit hit

[**dó** (u. \emptyset)] CAUSE BECOME **deceived** (man)

b. man gul xordam.

I deceit eat-PAST-1sg

BECOME **deceived** (man)

The logical structures of these transitive-intransitive pairs show that they have different aktionsart types. The first LSs are the causative counterparts of the second ones. The observation above,

tells us that the alternation of the lexical verbs in these sentences is not a syntactic process but a lexical matter. Thus, it can be concluded that the (a) sentences are different from the (b) sentences in terms of logical structure. Indeed, they are considered as different predicates.

This assumption is supported by the following observations. First, as mentioned above, my claim conforms to Comrie's (1985a) observation about the anticausative constructions. Second, my claim is substantiated by VanValin and LaPolla's (1997: 391) view about the Aktionsart alternation. They state that any operation on the logical structure of the verb is lexical in nature. As I indicated in Chapter 3, for each of the basic Aktionsart classes there is a corresponding causative class, which corresponds to the induced state of affairs.

Third, my suggestion is supported by Karimi (1997). Karimi, following Burzio (1986), claims that Farsi has a large class of complex verbs that are the unaccusative counterparts of transitive verbs. She gives the following examples:

(6.27) Kimyâ man râ šekast dâd.

Kimya I OBJ defeat give-PAST-3sg

'Kimya defeated me.'

b. man šekast xordam.

I defeat eat-PAST-1sg

‘I defeated.’

In karimi’s view in (6.28a) *šekast dâd* is the complex verb which contains the transitive light verb *dâd*. The unaccusative counterpart of *dâd* is the light verb *xord* in (6.28b). She points out that the unaccusative complex verb *šekast xord-am* in (6.28b) can not host the external argument *kimyâ*. The unaccusative hypothesis predicts that this verb would not be able to assign accusative case to its object NP. Accordingly, it has to move to the subject position in order to receive nominative case.

Ultimately, further evidence supporting my suggestion is presented in Megerdooian (2002: ch2) which investigates light verb constructions in Farsi. In Section (3.2.2) of her dissertation, Megerdooian presents an analysis of transitivity alternations and argues that the transitive predicate is formed when a CAUSE event is added on top of the underlying intransitive structure.

Her analysis, as well as the analysis proposed by Dowty (1991), suggests that the transitive use of an alternating verb consists of two events of CAUSE and BECOME. Moreover, she has demonstrated that in the alternation pairs such as (6.26-27) the

main meaning of the complex verb remains untouched, and the preverbal element provides the main core of the meaning. According to Megerdooain, the function of the light verbs in these alternation pairs is to contributing aspectual properties such as inception to the verbal predicates.

From the discussion above, I conclude that in the transitive alternation pairs in (6.22-25) each sentence has a different lexical verb with its own logical structure. Consequently, the (b) sentences in (6.22-25) are not passive constructions in spite of the fact that they are similar to passives at the first glance. Indeed, the (b) sentences above include an intransitive verb and a single argument that is always undergoer. These constructions have semantic pivots in that there is no choice to PSA selection.

To summarize the present discussion of the voice constructions in Farsi, I reiterate the major findings of this section. First, it was shown that voice construction in RRG, is explained in terms of privileged syntactic argument selection rather than the verbal morphology. Second, it was demonstrated that RRG's formulation proves the existence of two types of passive constructions. The first type which I refer to it as basic passive, involves both PSA modulation voice and argument modulation voice. On the other hand, the second type, the impersonal passive,

involves only the second facet of voice construction. The analysis presented in Section (6.4.3) shows that the so -called detransitivized sentences can not be considered as passive constructions despite the fact that they are similar to passives. I think that this RRG analysis of passive constructions in Farsi, brings one of the disputatious issues to an end.

6.4.4. Pivot status in Farsi passives

According to VanValin (1993a) and VanValin and LaPolla (1997), there are many languages in which only undergoers may appear as pivot in a passive construction; German, Italian and Indonesian are three examples. In English, pivot status in passives is not restricted to the undergoer argument of a transitive verb. It should be noted, however, that pivot status in Farsi passive is restricted to only undergoer. It is demonstrated by the following examples.

(6.26) a. Farid ketâb râ be Parviz dâd.

Farid book OBJ to Parviz give-PAST.3sg.

‘Farid gave the book to Parviz.’

b. ketâb be Parviz dâde šod.

book to Parviz given become

‘The book was given to Parviz.’

c.* Parviz ketâb dâde šod.

Parviz book given become.

‘Parviz was given the book.’

In (6.29a) there are three core arguments. *Farid* is the actor, *ketâb* ‘book’ is the undergoer and *Parviz* is a non-macrorole core argument. In the passive form (6.29b) *ketâb* ‘book’ appears as the PSA. The ungrammaticality of (6.29c) indicates that a non-macrorole argument can not function as the PSA of the sentence. However, it should be noted that in some cases a non-macrorole argument may appear clause initially as a topical or focal element in the PCS position. Of course, these elements are still marked by prepositions and do not function as PSA. This can be illustrated by the following sentence.

(6.30) be Parviz ketâb dâde šod.

to Parviz book given become.

‘The book was given to Parviz.’

In this sentence *ketâb* ‘book’ functions as pivot and the prepositional phrase *be Parviz* has occurred in the PCS position as a topical element. Of course, it is still a non-macrorole element.

6.5. Linking Syntax and Semantics

So far, the various components of the grammatical structure of simple sentences in Farsi have been presented using the RRG framework. Clause structure, lexical representation and semantic roles, syntactic functions and focus structure are linked together in linking system.¹³ This linking system illustrates the working of the syntax-semantics-pragmatics interface. The linking algorithm is vital to this theory of grammar because it posits a single level of syntactic representation. Following VanValin and LaPolla (1997: 318) I sketch the linking system in Farsi simple sentences as in Figure (6.2). The relation between logical structure and macroroles is mediated by the Actor-Undergoer hierarchy in Figure (3.3).

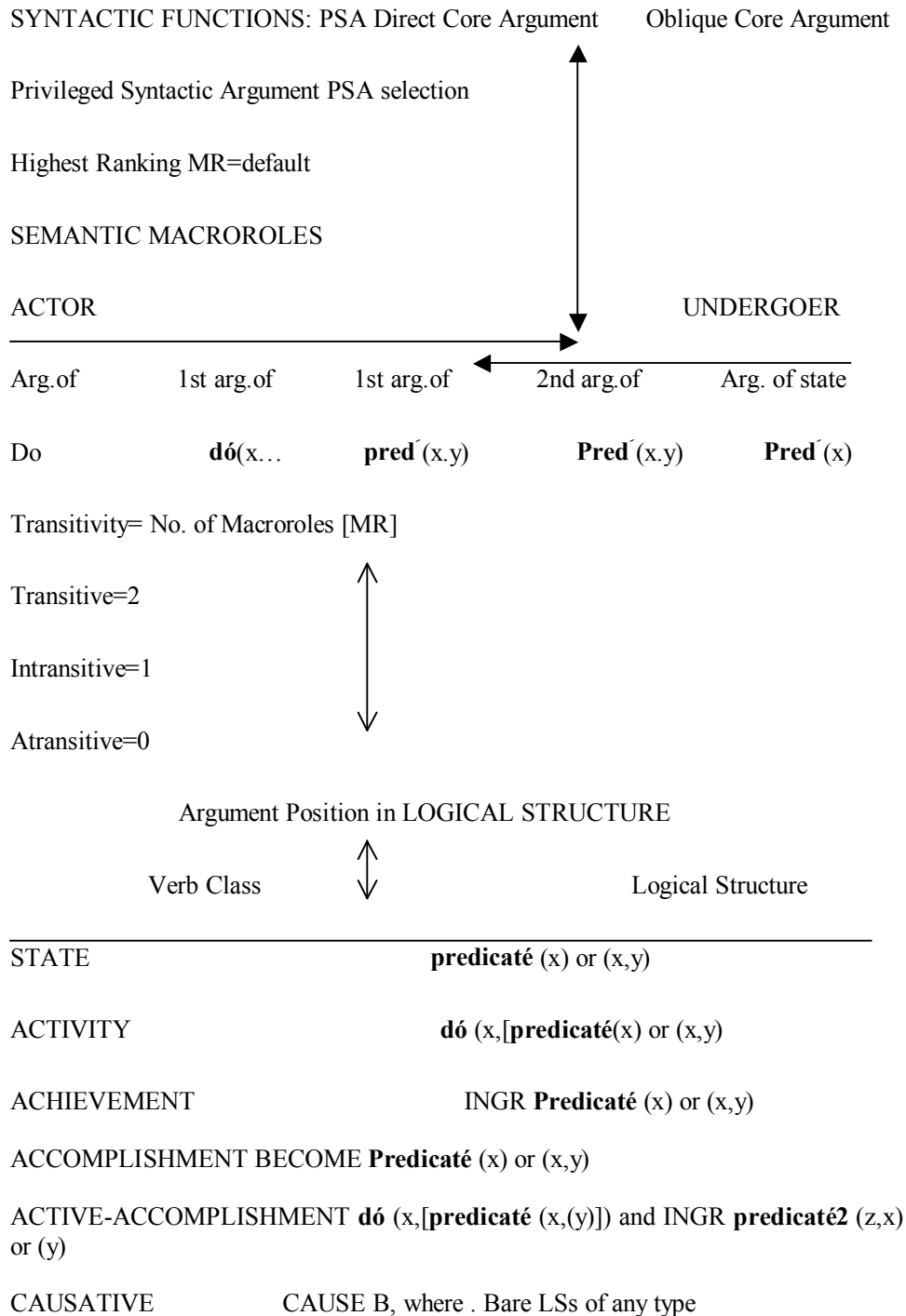


Figure 6.2: Farsi Linking System

It is important to note that the relationship between the semantic representation and the syntactic representation is not derivational. The syntactic representation is not derived from the semantic representation and the semantic representation is not derived from the syntactic representation. Instead, the two independent representations are linked to each other, in the sense that argument variables in the semantic representation are associated with referring expressions in the syntactic representation, and vice versa. As VanValin and LaPolla (1997: 318) point out, the relationship between the two representations is not analogous to the relationship between deep structure and surface structure in classical theories of Transformational Grammar or among D-structure, S-structure and logical form in GB. Hence, the arrows in diagrams like solely represent the associations between argument positions in the semantic representations and referring expressions in the syntax.

The macrorole labels do not constitute a distinct level of representation. Determining which argument is actor and which is undergoer does not produce a new level of representation; rather, it simply adds information to the semantic representation of the sentence. Figure (6.3) illustrates the linking in a Farsi simple sentence like (6.31).

(6.31) diruz Ali yek ketâb be Rezâ dâd.

yesterday Ali one book to Reza give-PAST-3sg.

‘Ali gave Reza a book yesterday.’

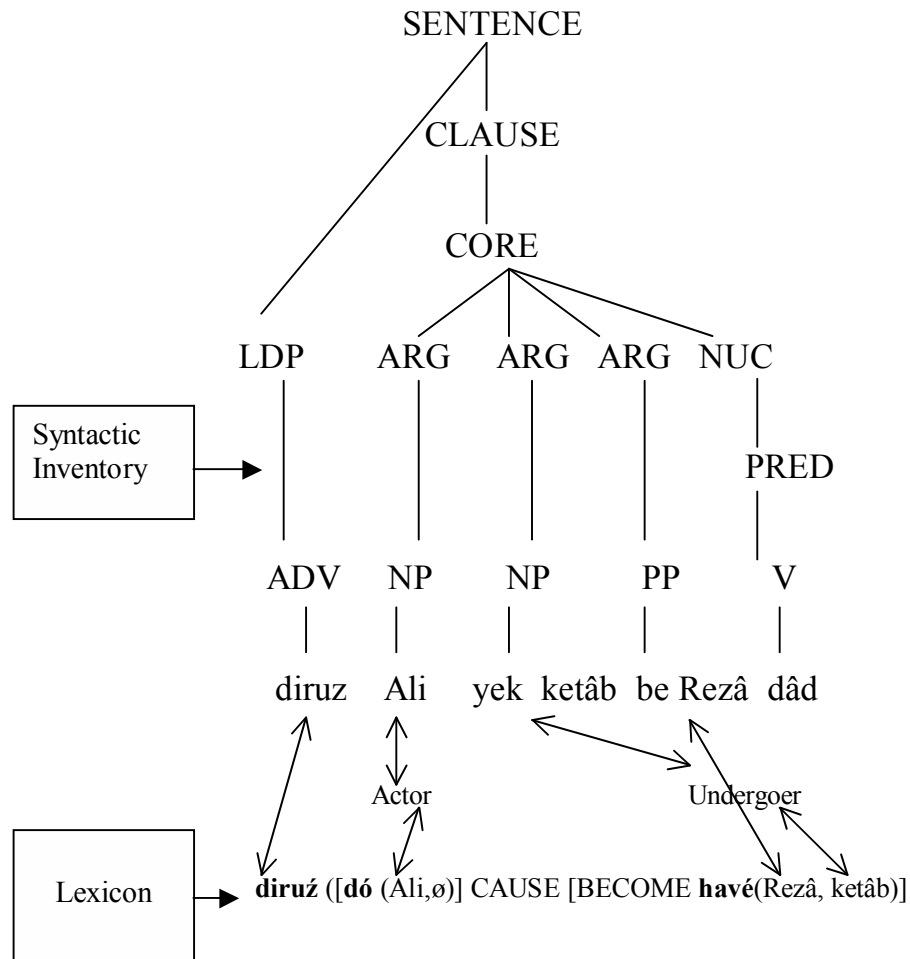


Figure 6.3 Linking syntax and semantics in a simple sentence in Farsi.

6.6. Summary

In this chapter, I studied the syntactic relational structures in Farsi using RRG framework. At the beginning of the chapter, I

introduced RRG's assumptions concerning grammatical relations and showed that this theory differs from other theories on several points: First, RRG does not consider the grammatical relations to be basic, nor does it derive them from structural configurations. Second, RRG recognizes only one syntactic relation, not three as in other theories, since there is nothing in RRG such as direct or indirect objects. Third, grammatical relations are not universal, but semantic roles are universal. The central concept in RRG used for grammatical relations is privileged syntactic argument.

In Section (6.2), coding and behavioral properties of grammatical relations in Farsi are examined. I have shown that the PSA in Farsi is the argument that triggers verb agreement. In addition to agreement, other constructions like equi/ control deletion and conjunction reduction are sensitive to PSA.

In section (6.3) the question of case marking has been studied and I have shown how RRG handles case marking with macroroles and direct core arguments.

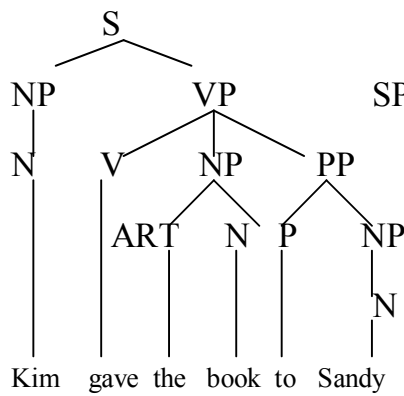
Since RRG defines the passivization in terms of the modulation of privileged syntactic argument, an analysis of passive constructions in Farsi was presented in Section (6.4). I have argued that Farsi has two distinct types of passive constructions.

The first type that involves both PSA modulation voice and argument modulation voice has been labeled as basic passive in this discussion. The second type that involves only argument modulation voice is a subjectless sentence with a 3rd person plural agreement marker on the verb. I have claimed that the detransitivized counterparts of transitive sentences can not be regarded as passive because this process is a lexical phenomenon in nature, not a syntactic one.

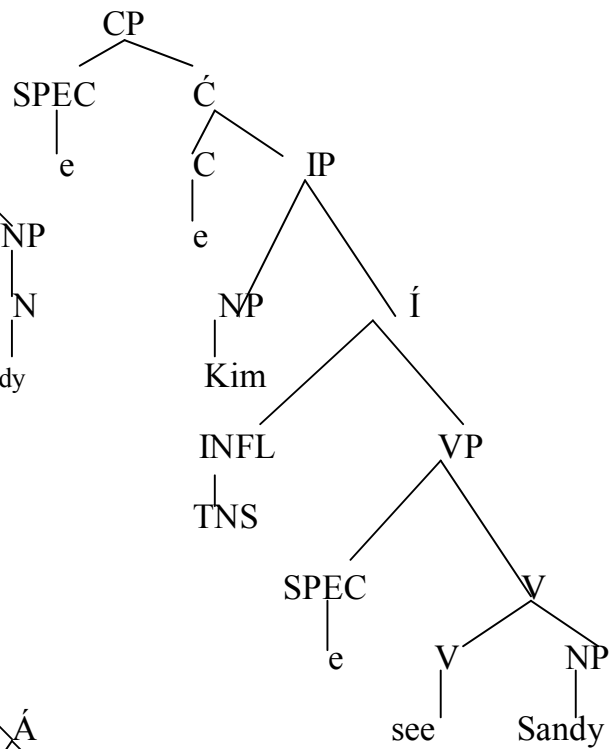
Ultimately, in Section (6.5) the basics of the linking system for a simple sentence are presented. I have shown how this linking system illustrates the working of the syntax-semantics-pragmatics interface.

Notes to Chapter 6

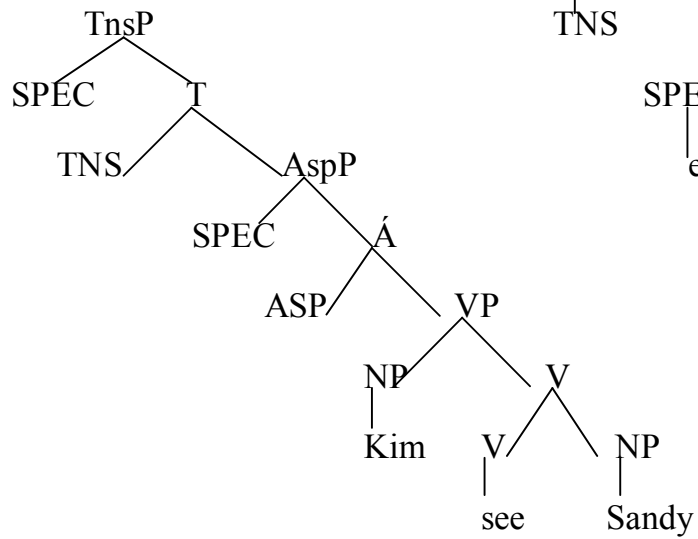
- 1 Configurational bases of grammatical relations in different versions of Chomskyan theory: standard theory (1965), Barriers (1986) and Minimalism (1995) can be represented as following figures.



Standard Theory (1965)



Barriers (1986)



Minimalism(1995)

- 2 This term is originally introduced in Heath(1975). He used the term ‘pivot’, together with ‘controller’, in the analysis of ‘want’ constructions in exactly the same sense they are being used here.
- 3 See Foley and VanValin (1984: ch 4) and VanValin and LaPolla (1997: ch 6) for more information on the distinction between pragmatic and semantic pivots.
- 4 For a recent analysis of control constructions in Farsi within the framework of Minimalism the reader is referred to Gomeishi (2001b).
- 5 It should be noted that Old Persian had morphological passive.
- 6 As VanValin (2001b) points out, one of the motivations for the use of voice constructions is the desire of the speaker to keep the primary topical participant in subject position. Hence, the use of passive is motivated by discourse-pragmatics.
- 7 In Relational Grammar literature, PSA modulation is referred to as ‘promotion’ and argument modulation as ‘demotion’.
- 8 The clearest example of how independent these two parts of passive are comes from passives of intransitive verbs, which are found in languages like Icelandic, German, Latin and Turkish (Comrie 1977, Keenan 1985). Since the verbs in these constructions have only one argument, they are by definition argument modulation only, because there is no second argument to function as the privileged syntactic argument.

- 9 Keenan (1985) has shown that agentless passives are preferred even when the language syntactically permits agent phrases.
- 10 The general properties of basic passives are presented in Keenan (1985) as follows:
- (i) no agent phrase is present, (ii) the main verb is transitive, (iii) the main verb expresses an activity, taking agent subjects and patient objects. Moreover, these types of passives are the most widespread across the world's languages.
- 11 It should be noted that these constructions are more common in the spoken form of this language.
- 12 It is interesting to note that Dabir-Moghaddam (1985), in his analysis of passive sentences, refers to the transitivity alternation. But, he considers only the alternation between *kardan* and *šodan* in sentences such as (6.22 a-b). He concludes that the counterpart of *kardan*, i.e. *šodan* makes an ambiguous construction in that in a certain context it is inchoative, while in a different situation it is passive.
- 13 The detailed presentation of the linking system in simple sentences is found in VanValin and LaPolla (1997: Ch 7) and VanValin (in press: Ch 5).

Chapter 7

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have tried to answer the following two related questions:

- (i) Can RRG's theoretical assumptions, as a structural functionalist theory of grammar, elucidate Farsi morpho-syntactic phenomena with a new outlook in general?
- (ii) Does Farsi follow and support RRG's general assumptions as a theory of universal grammar?

To answer these two questions, I have investigated the interface of syntax, semantics and pragmatics in Farsi simple sentences. Four main representations have been analyzed: (1) a representation of the syntactic structure of simple sentences, which corresponds to the actual structural form of utterances, (2) a semantic representation representing important aspects of the meaning of linguistic expressions, (3) a representation of operator system which corresponds to functional categories such as tense and aspect, and (4) a representation of the information structure of the sentences, which is related to their communicative functions.

In Chapter 2, I have studied the layered structure of simple sentences and noun phrases. The structure of verbal and copular intransitive sentences, transitive sentences, and ditransitive sentences have been surveyed. Having examined these different constructions, I have demonstrated that in addition to the core layer, including a nucleus, one to three core arguments and possibly some peripheral elements, there are a PCS and LDP position in Farsi clause structure. From this study, I have proposed the LSC for Farsi simple sentences as Figure (2.17) in Chapter 2 repeated here as Figure(7.1). This LSC works for Farsi very well and Farsi offers strong support for RRG's layered structure of the clause.

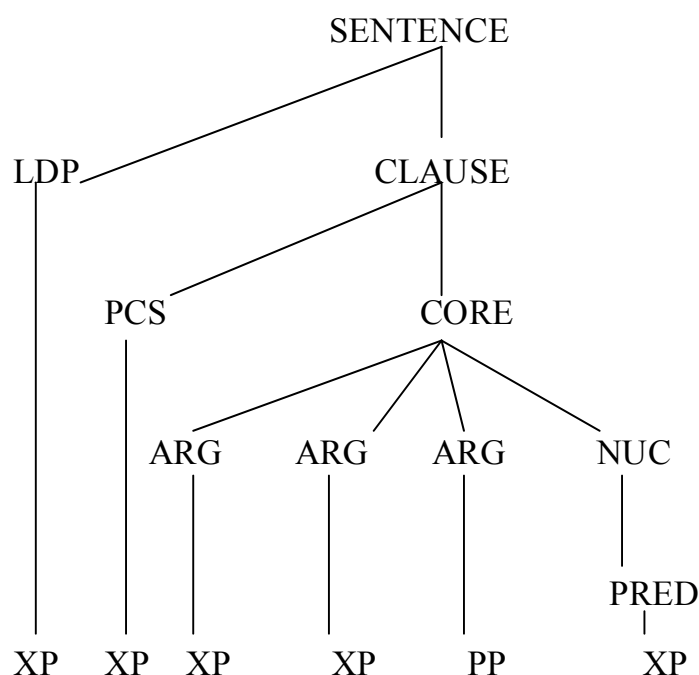


Figure 7.1 LSC for Farsi Simple Sentences

This layered representation is semantically motivated and can explain a wide range of phenomena when combined with other formulations of RRG.

Additionally, the layered structure of adpositionals and simple noun phrases have also been analyzed in Chapter 2. It was shown that Farsi supports the distinction between predicative and non-predicative prepositions. Furthermore, I have investigated the pre-nominal and post-nominal modifiers of Farsi NPs and shown that the layered structure of NPs follow the LSNP proposed by RRG. At the end of this chapter, the concept of syntactic templates was introduced and the main examples of this were proposed in Farsi syntactic inventory. I have also shown how these templates combine with PCS and LDP templates to yield the structure of larger syntactic structures.

In Chapter 3, the semantic representation of simple sentences has been studied. Presenting the system of lexical decomposition and aspectual verb classification in RRG, I established diagnostic tests for verb classification in Farsi and demonstrated that this language fully follows the RRG's system of aspectual verb classification. My proposal for Farsi aspectual verb classification in this chapter is reiterated here as Table (7.1).

Criterion	States	Achievements	Accomplishments	Activities
1 Occurs with dar				
hâle or mašqule 'in process of'	No	No	Yes	Yes
2 Occurs with bešeddat/ bâjeddyat 'vigorously/ actively.'	No	No*	Yes	Yes
3 Occurs with besor'at/ âheste 'quickly/slowly'	No	No	Yes	Yes
4 Occurs with (barâye) yek sâ'at 'for an hour.'	No	No*	Yes	Yes
5 Occurs with dar yek sâ'at 'in an hour.	No	No	Yes	Yes

Table 7.1 Farsi aspectual verb classification.

Having applied these five tests to a large number of Farsi verbs, I presented a sample of each verb class in this language.

The second step in the semantic representation, the semantic relations that obtain between a verb or other predicator and its arguments, is done in Sections (3.4) and (3.5). There are two types of semantic roles in RRG: specific semantic roles which correspond to thematic relations of other approaches were investigated in

Section (3.4), and generalized semantic roles which are labeled semantic macroroles. I have shown that Farsi strongly supports the postulation of two macroroles, actor and undergoer. Besides, it follows the actor-undergoer hierarchy presented by VanValin and LaPolla. (1997)

In the remaining of Chapter 3, the importance of actor and undergoer in explaining transitivity in Farsi has been demonstrated. Throughout the analysis of two-place activity predicates, I have concluded that transitivity can not be determined by just syntactic arguments. But it is the number of macroroles that determines the transitivity of a predicate. Moreover, it was shown that undergoers must be referential. Consequently, two-argument activity verbs with a non-referential second argument take only an actor macrorole.

In short, the findings of Chapter 3 show that the semantic structure in RRG is motivated universally and allows new insights into Farsi. In fact, the significance of notions like aspectual verb classifications, logical structure, thematic relations and generalized semantic macroroles in representing the semantic structure of Farsi simple sentences is indicated.

Chapter 4 was the study of grammatical categories like aspect, tense, negation, etc. within the framework of RRG's

operator system. From the analysis in this chapter, I concluded that Farsi follows the RRG's operator system and supports RRG assumptions that the ordering of the morphemes expressing operators with respect to the verb indicates their relative scopes. This analysis shows that it is not the case that only languages with fixed linear ordering of inflectional morphemes, like Korean or Japanese, follow the RRG operator system.

In this chapter, I have shown that there are three nuclear operators, one core operator and four clausal operators. I have proposed the following operator system in Farsi as (7.1).

- (7.1) a. Nuclear operators Aspect
- Negation
- Directionals
- b. Core operators Modality
- c. Clausal operators Status
- Tense
- Evidentials
- Illocutionary Force.

I have argued that this operator system has several advantages in explaining grammatical categories in Farsi. First, this operator projection distinguishes lexical aspect (Aktionsart) from grammatical aspect. These two different senses are not differentiated in almost all traditional and modern analyses of Farsi. Second, some grammatical categories such as directionals and evidentials, which are disregarded by other grammarians, have been introduced. Third, the controversial category of mood in other syntactic theories, is divided into two separate categories called modality and status and received a satisfactory treatment. Finally, it was argued that this treatment of grammatical categories has advantages over Chomskyan theory in that RRG treats lexical and functional (i.e. operator) categories differently. Indeed, RRG, unlike Chomskyan theory, offers a clear semantic explanation for the hierarchical arrangement of the operators.

In Chapter 5, I have investigated the question of information structure which is a major component system of RRG. Studying different focus types in Farsi simple sentences in light of the Lambrechtian theory, I have also discussed the morphosyntactic marking of focus structure and its representation. It was demonstrated that focus structure is principally marked by

accentuation. Yet, it was also shown that marked word orders and cleft constructions express narrow focus structures.

The main objective of this chapter was to explore the interaction of focus structure and syntax. To discover this interaction word orders in transitive and intransitive sentences, under different focus types were examined. I have demonstrated that the so called free word order in Farsi is much less free in terms of focus structure. Furthermore, the interaction between word order and focus placement in this language shows that the most significant constraint in focus structure is the fact that focal elements can not occur post verbally. To summarize, I have shown in this chapter that the information structure has a critical role in the exploration of the syntax, semantics and pragmatics interface.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I studied the syntactic relational structures in Farsi using RRG's formulation. Having examined coding and behavioral properties of grammatical relations in Farsi, I have demonstrated that the PSA is the argument triggering verb agreement. Additionally, other constructions such as equi/control deletion and conjunction reduction are sensitive to the PSA. I have also shown how RRG handles case marking based on macroroles. In addition, this chapter has addressed the most important intraclausal process in Farsi simple sentences, i.e. passive

construction. Based on RRG's formulation for passivization, I have argued that Farsi has two distinct types of passive constructions: the first type that involve both PSA modulation and argument modulation has been termed as basic passive in this analysis. The second type that involves only argument modulation has been labeled as impersonal passive. This construction occurs as a subjectless sentence with a 3rd person plural agreement marker on the verb. However, I have rejected the assumption proposed by some scholars that there is a detransitivized passive type in Farsi. Providing significant pieces of evidence, I have demonstrated that the detransitivized counterparts of transitive sentences can not be regarded as passive, because this process is a lexical phenomenon in nature and a verb class alternation. Ultimately, at the end of this chapter, the basics of the linking system for a simple sentence are presented. To sum up, the analysis in Chapter 6 demonstrates again the key role of generalized semantic roles, i.e. actor and undergoer in the grammar of language, since grammatical relations, case marking, active and passive voice, etc. are described using these macroroles.

From the observations in different chapters of this dissertation, it is concluded that the four projections postulated by RRG are indispensable for providing an explanatory account of grammatical

phenomena. Indeed, to represent the grammatical structure, we need not only syntactic structure, but also semantic and pragmatic information. For example, the interaction of all four projections for a sentence like (7.2) can be represented in Figure (7.2).

(7.2) Ali diruz aks râ be mâ na-dâd.

Ali yesterday picture OBJ to us NEG-give-PAST-3sg

‘Ali did not give the picture to us yesterday.’

The principal objective of this dissertation has been to apply RRG to Farsi in order to acquire new insights into the structures and the processes of the language. I have also tried to demonstrate that RRG accounts for morphosyntactic phenomena and that Farsi, follows RRG's general assumptions in all respects. In conclusion, RRG allows new understandings into Farsi and Farsi, like many other languages, supports the theoretical assumptions of this theory. This dissertation indicates that RRG can explain and accommodate many morphosyntactic phenomena in Farsi that are problematic for both Traditional and Modern Grammar.

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