

Polyptoton for the purpose of emphasizing within Iranian languages

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Polyptoton, basically defined as the repetition of a word in different inflected forms, is originally a rhetorical stylistic device that appears usually in literary genres. The figure is therefore similar to the *figura etymologica*. Polyptoton was a common facet of Latin and Greek poetry, however, modern literature shows also examples of this structure.

There is a special type of polyptoton in different periods of Iranian languages, where an inflected verb is used with another word sharing the same root. Both elements are used in a sentence for the purpose of emphasizing an emotion or idea and highlighting a deeper meaning in the text.

In his article on “Maf’ūl-e moṭlaq dar zabān-e Fārsī” [absolute object in Persian language], Molayi (2002) presents some of these constructions in early New Persian texts under the title of absolute object and criticizes the scholars who consider it as an Arabic influence on Persian.

It seems that the examples of this kind of polyptoton are attested at least in one New Iranian spoken language. In their article, Karimi and Naghshbandi (2011) discuss Emphatic Progressive Verbal Constructions in Hawrami. In Hawrami, there is a special type of polyptoton forming progressive aspect and emphasizing the verb. The construction is composed of two conjoined parts: the infinitive plus present continuous, past continuous, and simple past verbs; nothing but agreement clitics (either subject-referring clitics in ergative constructions or object-referring clitics in non-ergative constructions) can separate these two parts:

1. ɾæmən wetiæj mæ-s-u
 I to sleep IPRF-sleep.PRS-1SG
 “I am sleeping” or “I am on the edge of falling asleep”
2. ɾemæ sipaʔæke=man æs-e=ne
 we clothes=1PL buy.PST-3PL=tobe.1PL
 ɾistæ ʃordəj=ʃan mæ-ʃor-me
 now to wash=3PL IMPRF-wash.PST-1PL
 “We have bought the clothes. Now we are washing them.”

However, it is worth mentioning that varieties of Hawrami differ slightly as to how they form the first constituent of this specific construction.

Drawing on data taken from Avesta, Old Persian, Middle Persian and the Pavei variety of Hawrami, this presentation seeks to examine the specific type of polyptoton within these languages. An important question arises: whether the emphatic progressive verbal constructions in Hawrami can be viewed as an archaic feature that originally goes back to the Old Iranian period?

Bibliography:

Karimi, Yadegar, Naghshbandi, Zaniar (2011): "Emphatic Progressive Verbal Constructions in Hawrami." In *Language Research*. 2. 83-100.

Molayi, Changiz (2002): "Ma'ūl-e moṭlaq dar zabān-e Fārsī" [absolute object in Persian language]." In: *Našriye-ye dāneškade-ye adabiyāt va 'lūm-e ensānī*. 185.95-102