



STRUCTURAL AND SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF ADJECTIVES EXPRESSING THE EMOTION OF ANGER IN THE PERSIAN LANGUAGE

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Abstract. *The article examines the qualitative adjectives of the modern Persian language that nominate the emotion of anger. On the basis of word-formational, componential and cognitive-metaphorical analysis, the principal structural models of such adjectives are identified, their semantic parameters are described (the intensity of the emotion, the temporal stability of the feature, stylistic colouring and etymological layer), and their figurative basis is characterised. It is demonstrated that the lexico-semantic group under study has been formed from both the Iranian and the Arabic lexical strata, while heat, fire, nervous tension and disorder serve as its basic images. The findings show that the semantic field of anger in Persian is organised as a system of intersecting oppositions - weak versus strong anger, transient state versus permanent character trait, bookish versus colloquial register, and inner experience versus outward manifestation - and that its figurative motivation largely coincides with universal cognitive models while retaining culture-specific features.*

Keywords: *Persian language; adjective; emotion of anger; word formation; lexical semantics; emotive vocabulary; conceptual metaphor; componential analysis.*

INTRODUCTION

Emotional vocabulary belongs to those areas of the lexicon that are most difficult to describe, since the nominative, evaluative and expressive components are closely interwoven in the semantics of the corresponding units (Shakhovsky, 2008:12). Anger is one of the emotions that are distinguished in most languages and that are designated by a developed series of lexemes belonging to different parts of speech. Studies based on Russian, English and a number of other languages have shown that emotive words form lexico-semantic fields with a distinct internal organisation (Shakhovsky, 1987:43; Wierzbicka, 1999:17). In this respect the Persian language has been investigated



considerably less: its grammatical structure and word formation have been described in detail (Rubinchik, 1970:187; Windfuhr & Perry, 2009:453), whereas specialised works devoted to the semantics of adjectives of anger are, as far as we are aware, few.

The aim of the present article is to identify the structural models and semantic features of Persian adjectives expressing the emotion of anger. Three tasks are addressed in order to achieve it: to describe the word-formational types of these adjectives; to determine the parameters along which they are opposed to one another semantically; and to characterise the figurative basis and the combinatorial behaviour of the units under study. The material consists of lexemes presented in Persian explanatory and Persian-Russian dictionaries (Rubinchik, 1985:II/421; Anvari, 2002:III/2608; Moin, 1963-1973:I/358). Word-formational analysis, componential analysis of meanings, the method of synonymic comparison and the techniques of cognitive-metaphorical description are applied. Examples are given in simplified scholarly transliteration with an indication of the Persian spelling.

The adjective in Persian is distinguished by a combination of morphological and syntactic features: it does not change according to gender, number or case, it follows the word it modifies and is attached to it by means of the ezafe (mard-e xasmgin "an angry man"), and it forms degrees of comparison with the suffixes -tar and -tarin (Rubinchik, 1970:191; Rastorgueva et al., 1982:114). At the same time the boundary between adjective, participle and noun is permeable: participial forms not infrequently function as qualitative adjectives, while adjectives are capable of substantivisation. For this reason the range of units considered includes words that are used in speech and in dictionaries as qualitative adjectives irrespective of their original part-of-speech affiliation.

In theoretical terms the study rests on four propositions. First, the meaning of an emotive word is regarded as a structure consisting of components that are revealed when units close in sense are compared; this approach was elaborated in Russian lexicology (Shmelev, 1973:95). Second, the differences between synonyms are described in terms of intensity, stylistic characterisation and combinatorial behaviour, as proposed by Yu. D. Apresyan (Apresyan, 1974:218). Third, the linguo-cultural specificity of emotional concepts is taken into account: A. Wierzbicka emphasises that words denoting emotions rarely have exact equivalents in other languages and should be described with the help of universal semantic primitives (Wierzbicka, 1996:326; Wierzbicka, 1999:24). Fourth,



the theory of conceptual metaphor advanced by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson is drawn upon (Lakoff & Johnson, 2004:46): according to Z. Kovecses, many linguistic expressions of anger are based on the image of a heated liquid in a closed container, although the concrete realisations of this image differ from culture to culture (Kovecses, 1995:183). For the Persian material, works devoted to the cultural conceptualisation of the inner world of the human being, in particular to the role of the heart (del), are also significant (Sharifian et al., 2008:7).

MAIN PART

The analysis shows that the adjectives under consideration are formed according to several models that differ in productivity and in the degree of participation of borrowed vocabulary.

The first group consists of suffixal derivatives from nominal stems. The most typical are formations in -gin and -nak. The adjective xasmgin (خشمگین "enraged") is derived from the noun xasm "anger", which is Iranian in origin and goes back to Avestan aesma; the affix -gin expresses the meaning "seized by, full of something" (cf. qamgin "sorrowful" from qam "sorrow") (Rubinchik, 1970:196; Windfuhr & Perry, 2009:471). The adjective qazabnak (غضبناک "angry, furious") represents a hybrid formation: the Arabic stem qazab "anger, fury" is joined to the Iranian suffix -nak, which denotes possession of a feature (cf. dardnak "painful"). A similar meaning is conveyed by the formations xasm-alud (خشم‌آلود) and xasm-agin (خشم‌آگین), in which the second components transmit the idea of being saturated and filled with anger. A special position is occupied by asabani (عصبانی "angered"): it is formed from the Arabic asab "nerve" with the help of the suffix -ani and appears to be one of the most frequently used words for designating anger in contemporary colloquial speech, whereas the cognate asabi (عصبی "nervous, irritable") points rather to nervousness than to anger as such. The same model also includes atasi (آتشی "quick-tempered"), motivated by the word atas "fire", and parxasgar (پرخاشگر "aggressive, quarrelsome"), a derivative of parxas "quarrel, aggression" formed with the agentive suffix -gar.

The second group is formed by compound words. Possessive compounds following the model "adjective + noun" are widely represented: tond-xu (تندخو "quick-tempered"; literally "having a sharp temper") and bad-xolq (بدخلق "ill-natured") (Rubinchik, 1985:I/253; Moin, 1963-1973:I/612). The second subgroup is built on the model "noun



+ present-tense stem": kine-ju (کینهجو "vindictive") comprises the noun kine "malice, vindictiveness" and the stem ju- of the verb juyidan "to seek" (Rubinchik, 1970:208). The units of this group characteristically designate not a momentary outburst of anger but a stable trait of character, which corresponds to the opposition between temporary states and dispositional properties established in the description of synonymic series (Apresyan, 1974:230).

The third group consists of participial formations from prefixal verbs: barasofte (برآشفته "agitated, enraged") from barasoftan "to fall into confusion, to become angry" and barafuxte (برافروخته "blazing, infuriated") from barafuxtan "to kindle; to flare up" (Anvari, 2002:II/1104). The prefix bar- has the meaning of upward direction and lends the verbs the nuance of an abrupt change of state (Rubinchik, 1970:312). The participial nature of these words preserves their processual semantics: they describe anger as a state that has arisen as the result of some event.

The fourth group is formed by units in which anger is conveyed through the loss of calm and emotional equilibrium. These include narahat (ناراحت "upset, dissatisfied"), built with the help of the negative prefix na- from the Arabic rahat "calm"; delxor (دلخور "offended, vexed") with the component del "heart"; the participle ranjide (رنجیده "offended") from ranjidan "to be grieved, to take offence"; and also kalafe (کلافه "worn out, irritated"), formed from kalaf "skein, tangle" with the help of the suffix -e (Rubinchik, 1985:II/134; Moin, 1963-1973:IV/4718). These lexemes express weak forms of anger - vexation, irritation and resentment - and their componential distinction from the units of the first group follows the procedure of comparing semantically adjacent items (Shmelev, 1973:102).

On the whole, the group under study is characterised by a combination of Iranian and Arabic roots, with Arabic stems not infrequently taking Iranian affixes (qazab-nak, asab-ani), which reflects the deep integration of the Arabic stratum into the Persian lexical system (Rastorgueva et al., 1982:118).

A comparison of meanings makes it possible to distinguish four principal parameters along which the adjectives of anger are opposed to one another. The selection of these parameters follows the practice of describing synonyms through intensity, stylistic characterisation and combinatorial behaviour (Apresyan, 1974:218), supplemented by the requirement that the emotive component be isolated from the nominative one (Shakhovsky, 2008:24).



The first parameter is the intensity of the emotion. Three degrees may be distinguished provisionally: weak (narahat, delxor, ranjide, kalafe), medium (asabani, barasofte) and high (xasmgin, qazabnak, barafuxte). Such a distribution is provisional in character, rests on the semantic analysis of meanings and is subject to refinement on corpus material (Shmelev, 1973:108).

The second parameter is the temporal stability of the feature. The adjectives asabani, barasofte, barafuxte and xasmgin denote a transient state of the subject, whereas tond-xu, bad-xolq, kine-ju, parxasgar and atasi characterise a permanent property of the personality, a predisposition to anger. This opposition of "state" and "character trait" has parallels in Russian (cf. rasserzhennyi "angered" and vspylchivyi "quick-tempered") (Apresyan, 1974:223).

The third parameter is stylistic colouring. The word qazabnak is associated with bookish, elevated speech, which is connected with the use of the lexeme qazab in religious and poetic texts (Anvari, 2002:VI/5082). The adjective xasmgin belongs to the neutral-literary register, asabani to the neutral-colloquial register, and kalafe pertains to colloquial vocabulary (Rubinchik, 1985:II/296). Such stylistic stratification is one of the constant dimensions along which emotive synonyms are differentiated (Shakhovsky, 1987:51).

The fourth parameter is the character of the outward manifestation of the emotion. The word barafuxte is connected with the visible signs of anger, above all with the reddening of the face (cehre-ye barafuxte "a face flushed with anger"); parxasgar characterises behaviour directed at other people; xasmgin typically combines with nouns denoting gaze and voice (negah-e xasmgin "an angry look") (Moin, 1963-1973:I/581). The semantic field thus constitutes a system of intersecting oppositions: "weak - strong anger", "state - property", "bookish - colloquial", "inner experience - outward manifestation" - an organisation characteristic of emotive lexico-semantic fields in general (Shakhovsky, 2008:31).

The figurative motivation of the adjectives of anger in Persian largely coincides with the universal models described in cognitive linguistics, but it also possesses specific features. The central place is occupied by the metaphor of fire and heat: barafuxte "blazing", atasi "fiery", tond "sharp, hot". The same model also includes the idioms az to lose one's temper"; literally "to jump out of the furnace") (از کوره در رفتن) kure dar raftan



to come to the boil, to flare up"). This accords with the "جوش آوردن" and jus avardan observation that the conceptualisation of anger through heated substance in a container is cross-linguistically widespread while its concrete elaborations remain culture-specific (Kovecses, 1995:187; Lakoff & Johnson, 2004:52). The second figurative schema is nervous tension, embedded in asabani and asabi: anger is conceived as a state of the nervous system, which probably reflects the penetration of medical vocabulary into everyday speech. The third schema is disorder and entanglement (barasofte, kalafe): anger appears as a disruption of the orderliness of the inner state. These images find correspondences in Russian ("quick-tempered", "to flare up", "to come to the boil", "nervous", "to lose one's temper"), which confirms the considerable share of universal cognitive models. At the same time, the prominence of del "heart" in units such as delxor is consistent with the culturally specific conceptualisation of internal organs described (for a number of languages (Sharifian et al., 2008:11

Syntactically, the adjectives of anger function in the role of a modifier in an ezafe construction and in the role of the nominal part of the predicate with the copular verbs budan "to be" and sodan "to become"; the latter conveys the onset of a state: asabani sodan (عصبانی شدن "to become angry") (Rubinchik, 1970:203). The object of anger is introduced by the preposition az: از او خشمگین است (az u xasmgin ast "he is angry with him").

CONCLUSION

The research conducted makes it possible to formulate the following conclusions. First, Persian adjectives of anger are formed according to four principal models: the suffixal model (xasmgin, qazabnak, asabani), the compound model (tond-xu, kine-ju), the participial model (barasofte, barafuxte) and the model expressing the loss of inner equilibrium (narahat, kalafe) (Rubinchik, 1970:196). Second, the group is heterogeneous in etymology: Iranian and Arabic stems combine, forming hybrid derivatives, which reflects the long-established interpenetration of the two lexical strata (Rastorgueva et al., 1982:118).

Third, the semantic differences between the units of the group are determined by the intensity of the emotion, the stability of the feature, stylistic colouring and the character of the outward manifestation (Apresyan, 1974:218; Shakhovsky, 1987:51).



Fourth, the figurative basis of this vocabulary is connected with the metaphors of fire, nervous tension and disorder, which places the Persian data within the range of cross-linguistically attested conceptualisations of anger while preserving its own culture-specific elaborations (Kovecses, 1995:190; Sharifian et al., 2008:11). The prospect for further work consists in verifying the identified parameters on corpus material, refining the frequency and stylistic markedness of the units, and comparing the Persian data with Uzbek and Tajik material (Windfuhr & Perry, 2009:521).

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