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**Titel:** Turkic-Persian bilateral code copying

**Autor:** Johanson, Lars

**Ort:** Wiesbaden

**Jahr:** 2005

**PURL:** [https://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?666048797\\_0009](https://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?666048797_0009) | LOG\_0037

## Kontakt/Contact

[Digizeitschriften e.V.](#)  
SUB Göttingen  
Platz der Göttinger Sieben 1  
37073 Göttingen

✉ [info@digizeitschriften.de](mailto:info@digizeitschriften.de)

# Turkic–Persian bilateral code copying

**Lars Johanson**

Johanson, Lars 2005. Turkic-Persian bilateral code copying. *Turkic Languages* 9, 223-228.

The paper deals with the convergent development of southeastern Turkic on eastern Persian in Central Asia due to intensive bilateral copying. One aim is to discuss a relative chronology of the copying processes involved, some of which may be of high age, while others are more recent. Certain shared features are due to Turkic influence, e.g. the use of forms of specific auxiliary verbs as markers of focal intraterminality. Iranian influence may be assumed in the use of preterit-presents in Turkic varieties. Further Turkic influence lies behind the formation of various actional periphrases in eastern (Tajik) Persian.

*Lars Johanson, Department of Oriental Studies, Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz, DE-55099 Mainz, Germany. E-mail: johanson@uni-mainz.de*

## **Turkic–Persian contacts in Central Asia**

Turkic and Persian varieties have a long history of symbiosis in Central Asia, resulting in considerable influence in both directions. The convergent development began many centuries before Uzbek and Tajik were established as modern standard languages, intensive bilateral copying already taking place from the 11th century. Certain shared features are due to south-eastern Turkic influence on pre-Tajik eastern Persian. Others are due to eastern Persian influence on pre-Uzbek southeastern Turkic. Since the developments are highly complex, it is difficult to determine the direction of copying and to pinpoint the developmental stages of the languages involved at the time of copying. The following discussion of a complex case of bilateral influence will illustrate these difficulties. (For questions of code copying, see Johanson 1992, 1993, 1996, 1997, 1998a, 1999a, 1999b, 2000a, 2001, 2002a, 2002b.)

## **Focal intraterminals**

Many innovations observed in Tajik Persian are instances of selective copying of semantic and combinational properties from Turkic. Some of them concern grammatical markers of the verb system (Johanson 1992: 245-246, 2000: 99-101). The issue to be discussed here is a case of renewal of focal intraterminality.

The viewpoint aspect of intraterminality, typical of present/imperfect categories, means envisaging an event between its outer limits. Intraterminals show various degrees of focality. Focal intraterminals (“progressives”) express actional concentration, focus, on the event at a given intraterminal viewpoint (Johanson 1971: 100-101, 133-134, 2000b: 76-78, 85-93).

Persian forms intraterminals by means of the prefix *mi-/me-*, e.g. *mikærd/mekærd* ‘was doing’. Eastern Persian displays focal intraterminal markers derived from the verbs *istōdæn* ‘to stand up, to stand’ and *xōræftæn* ‘to lie down, to lie’. These devices seem to have been copied from Turkic markers derived from the corresponding verbs *tur-* ‘to stand up, to stand’ and *jat-* ‘to lie down, to lie’.

### Types based on ‘to stand’

The focal intraterminal periphrases in Tajik Persian are mostly based on *istōd-æ* plus a copula (‘to be’). The non-past item is *-æ istōd-æ æst*, e.g. *ræftæ istōdæ æst* ‘is going’. The corresponding past item is *-æ istōd-æ bud*, e.g. *ræft-æ istōdæ bud* ‘was going’ (Kerimova 1966: 225, Windfuhr 1990: 544). Northern dialects exhibit contracted forms such as the non-past items *ræfsvdæs* or *ræfsvs* ‘is going’ and the past items *ræfsvde bud* or *ræfsvdut* ‘was going’ (Rastorgueva 1964: 108-109).

The form *istōd-æ* is a postterminal (“perfect”) participle formed from the stem *istōd-* of *istōdæn* ‘to stand up, to stand’. The viewpoint aspect of postterminality, typical of resultative/perfect categories, means envisaging an event after its relevant outer limit (Johanson 2000b: 104-106). The postterminal participle in *-æ* is also used in finite forms such as the present perfect, e.g. *ræftæ (æst) ~ ræftæs* ‘has gone’, and the past perfect (pluperfect), e.g. *ræftæ budæ (æst)* ‘had gone’. The Turkic postterminal converb in *-(I)b* is a close functional equivalent of the postterminal participle in *-æ*. Thus, non-past postterminals in *-(I)b*, e.g. Uzbek *barib*, Uyghur *berip* ‘has gone’, correspond to *ræftæ (æst)*. Past postterminals in *-(I)b ærdi* such as *-(i)b edi*, *-(u)widi*, *-(i)w-idi*, e.g. Uzbek *barib edi*, Uyghur *beriwidi* ‘had gone’, correspond to *ræftæ bud ~ ræftæs bud*.

It has often been claimed that Tajik Persian focal intraterminals of the type *-æ istōdæ* + copula are copies of Turkic items. Nothing speaks against this assumption. Soper, however, remarks that the Uzbek focal intraterminality marker is derived from *jat-* ‘to lie, to lie down’, and not from *tur-* ‘to stand up, to stand’. If an Uzbek marker had been copied, he argues, it should have been the one derived from *jat-*. The Uzbek marker would have been expected to be derived from *xōræftæn* and not from *istōdæn* (1987: 86-87, 1996:67-68). This is obvious: Tajik Persian items such as *ræfsv(dæ)s* ‘is going’ could not possibly have been modeled on Uzbek items such as *barjæpti*. They may, however, have developed from an older type of Turkic focal intraterminals copied into eastern Persian at a much earlier time.

### Renewal of focal intraterminals

Renewals of the expression of focal intraterminality are known from the history of many languages. Most Turkic languages have undergone at least one renewal during their known history (Johanson 1976, 1989, 1995, 1998b: 113-116, 1999c, 1999d). The formal starting-point has been a postverb construction consisting of a lexical verb + a converb marker + an auxiliary verb. The auxiliary is a desemanticized verb that modifies the actional content of the lexical verb, describing the way the action is

performed, e.g. *jaz-a tur-* ‘to write continuously’. Here *jaz-* means ‘to write’, *-a* is the converb marker, and *tur-* conveys the notion of durativity.

Further grammaticalization of certain postverb constructions has led to the creation of aspect-tense markers. The expression of focal intraterminality has been renewed by means of periphrases of this kind, the starting-point being a postverb construction indicating durativity, habituality, nontransformativity, etc. (Johanson 1995). Southwestern Turkic has used *jori-* ‘to move’ for this task, e.g. Turkish *yazıyor* ‘writes, is writing’. Most Turkic languages, however, have employed *tur-* ‘to stand up, to stand’. The pattern for this first known renewal of focal intraterminality was *-A turur*, with the auxiliary (‘stands’) in the old intraterminal form in *-(V)r*, producing items such as *jaz-a turur* ‘stands writing’ > ‘is writing’, later on with a reduced the material shape, e.g. *jazadi*, *jazat*, *jaza*. In modern southeastern Turkic, these items are represented by Uzbek *-æ-di* and Uyghur *-i-du*, which are now defocalized so-called “present-future” forms, e.g. Uzbek *jæædi*, Uyghur *jazidu* ‘writes, will write’.

The Tajik Persian focal intraterminal type *-æ istod-æ æst/bud*, which is based on ‘to stand’, may well be a copy of this earlier Turkic type. The type *ræftæ istodæ æst* is analogous to the southeastern Turkic type *bara turur* ‘is going’ < ‘stands going’.

It is, however, impossible to pinpoint the stages of grammaticalization of the relevant items at the time of copying. We do not know at what stage of development of the model code the item was copied, whether the item was still an actional marker or already a viewpoint aspect marker, what stage its material shape represented, at what developmental stage of the basic code the copy was acquired, etc. The model for *-æ istodæ æst* may have been the above-mentioned form *-A turur*. But it may also, as we will see, have been a more recent, less grammaticalized item of the type *-(i)b turub* (*turur*).

### Products of later renewals

In many Turkic languages further renewals of the expression of focal intraterminality have taken place. Southeastern Turkic has employed periphrases with *jat-* ‘to lie down, to lie’, consisting of a lexical verb + a converb marker + the auxiliary *jat-* + a converb marker + a copula verb. Patterns of this type have produced a variety of forms. *\*-A jat-ib turur* has yielded Uzbek *-(æ)jotibt(i)* and *-jæp(ti)*, e.g. *jææjotibt(i)*, *jææjæpt(i)* ‘is writing’. The type *\*-(I)b jat-ib turur* has yielded Uyghur *-iwati(du)*, e.g. *jeziwatidu* ‘is writing’. Even this type may have influenced Tajik Persian. In the dialects displaying the strongest Uzbek impact, the marker of focal intraterminality can also be based on *xɔræftæn* ‘to lie down, to lie, to sleep’ (in the literary register: *xɔb ræftæn*), which is the equivalent of Uzbek *jot-*. Given the formal and semantic analogies, these markers actually seem to be selective copies from Uzbek (Ras-torgueva 1952b: 230; 1964: 111-113). Nevertheless, it is impossible to define exactly which developmental stages and variant forms they go back to.

Southeastern Turkic has produced another type of similar forms, consisting of the lexical verb + a converb marker *-(I)b* + an auxiliary verb + the converb marker *-(I)b*

(+ *\*turur*). The auxiliary verb is derived from verbs meaning ‘to stand’, ‘to sit’, ‘to lie’ or ‘to move, to go’. Uzbek thus exhibits forms with *tur-* ‘to stand’, *otir-* ‘to sit’, *jot-* ‘to lie’, *jür-* ‘to go, to walk’, e.g. *jözib turibdi*, *jözib otiribdi*, *jözib jotibdi*, *jözib jüribdi*. Modern Uyghur has similar forms with *tur-* ‘to stand’, *oltur-* ‘to sit’ and *žür-* ‘to go, to walk’, e.g. *jezip turup*, *jezip olturup*, *jezip žürüp*. These items represent relatively young stages of grammaticalization. The material reduction is minimal, and the desemanticization of the auxiliaries, three postural verbs and one motion verb, has not been completed. The constructions still imply shades of meaning of the corresponding lexical verbs. Thus, Uyghur *jezip turup* means ‘writes/is writing in a standing position’, *jezip olturup* ‘writes/is writing in a sitting position’, *jezip žürüp* ‘writes continuously, regularly, periodically’. The constructions serve to express actional modification rather than forming aspect-tense items. At the beginning of their development, new aspectual items may, however, be difficult to distinguish from actional items (Johanson 1991, 1995, 1999c, 199d, 2000b: 95-97).

Tajik Persian displays similar constructions, consisting of the postterminal participle in *-æ*, which corresponds to the Turkic converb in *-(I)b*, plus one of the verbs *istvdæn* ‘to stand’, *xvræftæn* ‘to lie’, *šišæn* ‘to sit’ and *gæštæn* ‘to go’. We have already mentioned the types *-æ istvd-æ æst/bud* and *-æ xvræft-æ æst/bud*, which are similar to Turkic constructions with *tur-* ‘to stand up, to stand’ and *jat-* ‘to lie down, to lie’.

Turkic patterns have certainly served as models for the corresponding Persian Tajik periphrases. But at what developmental stages of the model code elements did the copying take place? Was it one of the items *-A turur*, *-(I)b turur*, *-(I)b tur-ub turur* and *-(I)b jot-ib turur* that served as the model? Or was it some corresponding item at a later stage of grammaticalization? The item *-æ istvdæ æst* is most probably a selective copy from Uzbek (Rastorgueva 1952b: 230, 1964: 132-133), but it is impossible to determine whether it ultimately goes back to *-A turur*, to *-(I)b turur* or to *-(I)b tur-ub turur*. Even if *xvndæ istvdæs* ‘is reading’ corresponds directly to Uzbek *oqup turibdi*, it cannot be excluded that it goes back to a different pattern, maybe an older pattern such as *oqub turur*.

### Initiotransformative markers

Southeastern Turkic exhibits postterminal forms with *turub*, *jatib* etc. serving as intraterminal markers, e.g. Uzbek *jözib turibdi*, *jözib jotibdi* and Uyghur *jezip turup*, *jezip olturup*. The postterminal forms *turub*, *jatib*, etc. correspond to intraterminals such as *turur* and *tura* ‘stands’ in comparable periphrases of other Turkic languages. How can postterminal forms be used for forming focal intraterminals in Uzbek and Uyghur? The reason is that they are postterminal forms of initiotransformative verbs, a kind of preterit-present items (Johanson 2000b: 161-163). Initiotransformatives are verbs such as *tur-* and *jat-*, each covering two phases of an action: (i) ‘to stand up, to stop’ and (ii) ‘to stand’; (i) ‘to lie down’ and (ii) ‘to lie’. The postterminal aspect of initiotransformatives envisages an event after its initial limit. Items such as *turub* and

*jatib* thus convey the meanings ‘having stood up’ = ‘standing’ and ‘having lain down’ = ‘lying’. They may refer to the same objective situation as described by corresponding intraterminals, cf. English *is hidden* = *has hidden* = *is hiding*.

Southeastern Turkic may thus use the preterit-present items of the type *turub*, *jatib*, *olturub*, *jürüb* in the conjugation instead of *-(V)r* forms. The lexical verbs meaning ‘to stand’, ‘to lie’, ‘to sit’ and ‘to go’ do not need the normal auxiliary-based markers to express focal intraterminality; postterminals such as *turub* and *jatib* are used instead. This usage, which is typical of the southeastern Turkic conjugation, is most probably the result of a very old Iranian influence; cf. the Persian type *nišastah* ‘seated, sitting’. The corresponding eastern Persian postterminals *istvdæ*, *xvræftæ*, *šišṭæ* and *gæštæ* are used in the same way, e.g. *istvdæ* (*æst*) = *turub* ‘(has stood up)’ ‘is standing’.

### Conclusion

The copying processes dealt with above are obviously bilateral. We find a clear southeastern Turkic impact on eastern Persian verb forms, but also traces of a reverse influence. On the one hand, Turkic influence is observed in the use of forms of certain auxiliary verbs as markers of focal intraterminality. On the other hand, Iranian influence may be observed in the use of preterit-presents in Turkic varieties. Further Turkic influence may be assumed behind the formation of various actional periphrases in Tajik Persian. Some of the copying processes leading to innovations in the verb systems may be of high age, whereas others may be more recent. In order to establish a relative chronology of the copying processes involved, we would need more precise historical data concerning the developmental stages of the elements copied.

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