

Lesson 16

Transformative verbs
Impersonal constructions

Transformative verbs

There are a limited number of verbs that both express change of state and continuous state in Balochi. In Swedish and English there are two separate verbs for movement and state.

The two most frequent of these verbs are:

nendag, nesht 'to sit' or 'to sit down'

óshtag, óshtát 'to stand' or 'to stand up'

sit and stand are continuous state

sit down and stand up are change of state

Transformative verbs, change of state

In the present tense indicative these verbs express change of state:

Man edá nendán, 'I will sit down here.'

Óshtét. 'You.PL stand up.'

Transformative verbs, change of state

In the past perfective (and also past imperfective) these verbs also express change of state:

Sháhi diwáná nayátk o mehmán o mardománi démá ham nanesht.

‘He did not come to the royal court and did not take his seat in front of [his] guests and the people.’

(sháhi= royal, diwán=court, démá=in front of)

Wájah Panchkosh cha hamé satáyán garm gept o yak páday sará óshtát.

‘Mr. Five-Slayer got encouraged (lit. got warm) from this praise and kept insisting (lit. stood up on one foot)...’

(satá=praise, garm gerag=get encouraged, get excited)

Transformative verbs, continuous state

In the present perfect, these verbs normally express a continuous PRESENT state:

Taw kojá óshtátagay?

‘Where are you standing?’

(but in *Mani omr óshtátag* (in one of your texts) ‘My life has come to a standstill’ one can feel that there is a change of state)

Sajjahén mardom neshtagant.

‘All the people are sitting.’

Transformative verbs, state

In the past perfect, these verbs normally express a continuous PAST state:

Taw kojá óshtátagatay?

‘Where were you standing?’

Sajjahén mardom neshtagatant.

‘All the people were sitting.’

Transformative verbs, both alternatives possible

The present subjunctive and imperative forms of these verbs can denote change of state or continuous state. Context will determine what is intended.

Examples with imperatives:

Hamedá bósht.

‘stand right here’ STATE (keep standing) or MOVEMENT (stop walking and stand here)

É korsiay sará manend, haráb ent.

‘Don’t sit (or maybe rather sit down) on that chair, it is broken.’ MOVEMENT (from standing to sitting position)

Transformative verbs, both alternatives possible

The present subjunctive and imperative forms of these verbs can denote change of state or continuous state. Context will determine what is intended.

Examples with present subjunctives:

Hamedá bóshtán?

‘Should I stand right here?’ STATE (keep standing) or
MOVEMENT (stop walking and stand here)

Nabáyad é korsiy sará benenday, haráb ent.

‘You should not sit (or maybe rather sit down) on that chair, it is broken.’ MOVEMENT (from standing to sitting position)

Impersonal constructions

There are some verbs, particularly verbs where the “subject” is not actively doing something but is rather experiencing something such as fear, love, acceptance etc. The ownership constructions also belong here.

Typical of these constructions is that the subject is not expressed with the nominative form but rather with the form that is also used for the indirect object (to me). Instead of saying ‘I fear’ one says ‘to me there is fear’, instead of saying ‘I love’ one says ‘to me there is love’.

There is a grammatical term that is used for such subjects: non-canonical or dative subjects

Dative subjects in Balochi

We have already looked at the ownership construction. Instead of saying 'I have', Balochi uses the construction 'to me there is'.

See lesson 11.

Dative subject for 'love'

In Balochi 'to love, to like' is often expressed with a dative subject:
'to me is friend'

e.g.

Taw maná dóst ay.

'I like/love you.' (lit. you are friend to me)

Man tará dóst án.

'You like/love me.'

É kár chokkán dóst naent.

'Children don't like this job/thing/issue.'

Dative subject for 'get news/information'

Instead of saying 'I got to know, I was informed, I got news' Balochi uses the construction 'to me there was news, to me information arrived'

e.g.

Maná hál raset ke taw nájórh ay.

'I was informed (lit. to me news arrived) that you are ill.'

Dative subject for 'need'

Instead of saying 'I need, I needed' Balochi uses the construction 'to me ... is/was needed'

e.g.

É bachaká tai komak pakár ent. 'That boy needs your help (lit. to that boy your help is needed).'

Dative subjects, examples from the texts

Maná cha chokkáni mosibat o dardán sakka torsit.

‘I am very scared (lit. to me there is much fear) of the troubles and pains children meet.’

(mosibat=trouble, dard=pain, torsag (torset)=to fear)

Áiá azhdiá chokkay kesásá dósta bit.

‘He likes the dragon as if it was his own child (lit. to the extent of a child).’

(kesás=measure, extent)

Maná torsit.

‘I am scared.’