



Past Perfect Tense: from Old Iranian to Feyli Dialects

Mansour Bozorgmehr

Department of Archaeology of Ahvaz Shahid Chamran University, Susa World Heritage Center and Carleton University, Iran.

Abstract: *Feyli Lurish is a Southwestern Iranian dialect. Historically, it can be considered as continuation of the Middle Persian and Old Persian. Present perfect tense is derived from Simple past tense in Old Persian. Afterwards, Present perfect tense has led to past perfect tense in Middle Persian. Feyli Lurish has two types of past perfect tense. One of them is derived from Middle Persian and the other is like that in Modern Persian. Feyli Lurish is losing what has inherited from Middle Persian. Feyli Kurdish or “Kurdi-ye Vali” as a northwestern Iranian dialect is closer to the Parthian. Past perfect tense is attested in the Parthian literature and it also exists in the Feyli Kurdish, however, It seems above mentioned tense finally will be absolved from the Feyli dialects.*

Keywords: *Old Iranian, Old Persian, Middle Persian, Feyli Dialects, Past Perfect Tense.*

INTRODUCTION

According to the typological classifications, Lurish or Luri language and its subset, i.e. Feyli Lurish, along with Modern Persian language belong to Southwest Iranian Languages family. Therefore, Feyli Lurish is derived from the Middle Persian and the latter is derived from Old Persian. As the result, we should think that past perfect tense of the Feyli Lurish backs to the Middle Persian and Old Persian. Historically speaking, since the collapse of Old Iranian languages, particularly Old Persian (Kent, 1953, 21) in South and Southwest Iran, up to this day, current Iranian dialects in Southwest Iran have undergone through deep changes. These changes have occurred and become reflected in different linguistic categories. For example, eight declensional cases in Old Persian have been reduced into two oblique and nominative cases in Middle Persian. (Amoozgar and Tafazoli, 1995, 66-67) In the late Middle Iranian the phoneme /ā/ (Kent, 1953, 25) has been gradually changed to the phoneme /â/ in Lurish.(Bozorgmehr, 2019, 59) The aforementioned changes are not just limited to the declensional cases and phonemes, rather they include such categories as mood, aspect and tense. Past tense has also experienced a deep change from Old Persian and Middle Persian to Modern Persian and Lurish dialect. Today, in Southwest Iran the past perfect tense is under extensive changes. Feyli Lurish and Feyli Kurdish in their encounter with Persian have experienced a type of dualism in past perfect tense. In the present article, I have sought to study the formation process of the past perfect tense from Old Persian to Middle Persian and in line with them in Feyli Lurish dialect.

Historical Geography of Southwest Iran

Fahlavieh is one of Iranian languages that kings spoke to in their sanctum. This word is attributed to Pahlav the name that was used to refer to five cities: i.e. Isfahan, Rey, Hamadan, Mah-Nahavand and Azerbaijan.(Kharazmi, 2010 translated by Khadivjam, 112) The extensive mountainous area which Greeks

referred to it as Media was bordered by the Mesopotamian plains on the west and Great Desert of Iran on the east. Arab geographers used the name Aljebal (Montains) for it. This name was later left aside and in 13th century in the era of Seljukians it became wrongly known as Eragh-e Ajam (Persian Iraq) so that it not to be mistaken with Arabian Iraq, i.e. lower part of Mesopotamia. (Le Strange, 1905 translated by Erfan 1999, 200) Yaghut has also named the aforementioned region Aljebal while Qazvini who was contemporary with Yaghut used the word Gohestan (Koohestan) to refer to this region and this is a Persian translation of Arabic Aljebal. It seems that after the Mongol invasion of Iran the name Aljebal was no longer used as Hamdollah Mostowfi in 14th century has not mentioned its name and instead he has divided this region into two parts of Kurdistan in west and Eragh-e Ajam in east. Isfahan, Hamadan, Rey and Kermanshah have always been the great cities of the four regions of Aljebal State. Ibn Hughhal states that during the reign of Daylamites, Rey city was the administrative center of Aljebal State. However, Isfahan has always seemed to be the largest and most affluent city in the aforementioned state. The main homeland of Lur tribes is located on the south Hamadan. This mountainous province has been divided into two parts by the main tributary of Upper Karoon river. The territory of Major Lur is located on the south of this river while the territory of Minor Lur is located on the north. Hamdollah Mostowfi describes Khoramabad, Burujerd and Shpurkhast as the cities of Minor Lur. (Le Strange, 1905 translated by Erfan 1999, 201-216) Lurestan the territory of Lurs was always divided into two major regions of Northwest for Minor Lur and Southwest for Major Lur. According to Curzon, Dez River that is a tributary of Karoon serves as a border between these two regions. The territory of Minor Lur has been divided into two parts of Pishkooch and Poshtkooch by Kabir Kooch mountain.(Bartold, 1930 translated by Sanatizadeh 1999, 234) Lurish dialects are spoken in a wide area of Fars and Khuzestan provinces and also in Isfahan. Lur migrating nomads speak in these dialects. These dialects can be classified in different forms which seem to be compatible with nomadic classifications.(Mann, 1904, 1175-1177) A. Major Lur Dialects: Mamasani and Kuhkilooyeh dialects that are prevalent in Fars; B. Bakhtiari dialect that is spoken in a wider region ranging from the west Isfahan to Dezful and Shushtar; C. Minor Lur Dialect: Feyli dialect that its cultural center is Khormabad.(Lecoq, 1989 translated by Baghbidi 2003, 563)

Typological Position of Feyli Lurish Dialect

Indo-European languages family includes most of the languages spoken in Europe Continent and also Iranian and Indian languages. (Arlotto, 1981 translated by Modaresi 1994, 52) The Indo-Iranian branch includes languages of India, Iran and some neighboring regions. (Arlotto, 1981 translated by Modaresi 1994, 121) Iranian Languages have been grouped by linguists in three stages, i.e. Old Iranian, Middle Iranian and modern Iranian.(Windfuhr 2009, 12) The time line of which ranges from fourth and third centuries BC to eighth and ninth AD, i.e. since the time of fundamental political transformations after the collapse of Achaemenid and Sassanid dynasties.(Schmitt, 1989 translated by Baghbidi 2003, 60) The modern Iranian languages refers to those languages that are spoken today in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and in the republics of the Central Asia or other oriental lands. Although these languages were prevalent almost around 800 to 900 AD simultaneous with some of the Middle Iranian Languages, one can find some structural changes in them by which they are distinguished from the Middle Iranian Languages. Modern Iranian languages are divided into two western and eastern groups based on structural and geographical similarities. (Baghbidi, 2010, 161) We can finally classify them under four subgroups. The Northwest subgroup includes Kurdish, Laki, Taleshi, Baluchi, Gilaki, Mazandarani, Zaza, Gorani and other dialects. The Southwest subgroup includes Persian, Dari, Tajiki, Luri, Bakhtiari, Kumzari, Tati, as well as a number of non-Persian dialects in Fars Province (Mahootian, 1997 translated Samaee 2000, 10-11) and Khuzestani including Shushtari and Dezfuli in Khuzestan Province. The Lurestan region has always been divided into two major regions of Minor Lur (Feyli) and Major Lur (Bakhtiari and other Lur tribes). (Bartold, 1930 translated by Sanatizadeh 1999, 233) Luri dialects are spoken in a wide area of Fars and Khuzestan provinces and also in Isfahan. (Mann, 1904, 1175-1177) Major Lur Dialects: A) Mamasani and Kuhkilouyeh dialects that are prevalent in Fars; B) Bakhtiari dialect that is spoken

in a wider region ranging from the west Isfahan to Dezful and Shushtar. Minor Lur Dialects: We just know few local dialects including Giani dialect that is spoken in Gian County. (Lecoq, 1989 translated by Baghbidi 2003, 563) Indeed, Feyli Lurish or Luri-ye Feyli dialect includes four types, i.e. northern, eastern, western and southern types. The Northern type or Veroogerdi is majorly spoken in Boroojerd, Malayer and Nahavand, and to some extent in Hamadan and Arak. The Western type or Minjayi is chiefly prevalent in Khormabad and to some extent in Balageriveh, Koohdasht and Poldokhtar. The Eastern dialect or Amleyi is spoken in parts of Ilam province (Poshtkooch Lurestan) including the village of Haftcheshmeh (village of Feyli people) and of course, chiefly in Shoush and Andimeshk, cities in Khuzestan Province. The Southern Dialect or Misyooni is prevalent in the cities of Dehloran, Moosian, Patak and Pahla in Ilam Province. (Bozorgmehr, 2019, 127)

Laki language is spoken in some regions of Lurestan, Ilam, Kermanshah and Hamedan provinces. (Dabir-Moqadam, 2013,91) Laki has two dialects. These two dialects have been traditionally recognized as Laki-ye Pishkooch (Lurestan Province) and Laki-ye Poshtkooch (Ilam Province). (Anonby, 2004, 8) Typologically, Laki is not a Kurdish dialect and it should not be confused with Southern Kurdish dialects. For Laki, Kalhori Kurdish and Feyli Kurdish (Kurdi-ye Vali) are very similar to each other. Feyli Lurish should not be mistaken with Feyli Kurdish. For Feyli Kurdish is a new expression which has been coined as compared to Feyli Lurish. Indeed, it is identical with Kurdi-ye Vali (the dialect spoken by Kurdish tribes that were subjected to the Feyli rulers of the Poshtkooch during the Qajar period). In fact, Feyli Kurdish is a southern Kurdish dialect. Southern Kurdish refers to the group of dialects which are prevalent in Kermanshah province and parts of Ilam province, as well as the eastern part of Iraq. (Dabir-Moqadam, 2013, 601) Feyli Kurdish is prominently spoken in Pahla, Dehloran, Abdanan, Darreh Shahr and of course the neighboring villages of these cities in Ilam province. The types of this Feyli Kurdish dialect do not differ so much and one can state that they constitute a unique linguistic unit. Contrary to what the linguists have imagined so far, Feyli Kurdish dialect is a completely independent dialect from the Kalhori Kurdish of Ilam province. Feyli Kurdish is located where the Southwestern and Northwestern Iranian dialects are adjacent in the chain of the Iranian languages. However, just two dialects of that deluge of dialects are at issue i.e. Feyli Lurish and Feyli Kurdish (Kurdi-ye Vali).

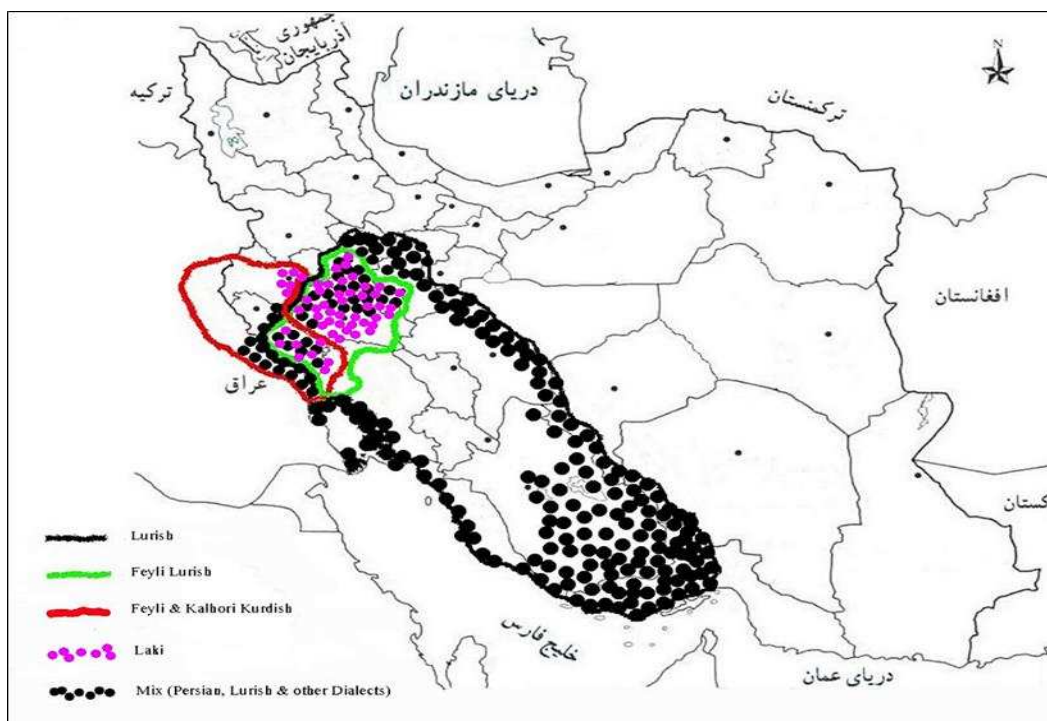


Figure 1: Language Distribution in the Southwest Iran

Evolution of Present perfect and Past Perfect Tenses

The verb of Avestan language are transitive and intransitive. From the point of view of tense, the verb forms are classified based on the sort of derivation or the sort of ablaut in the root into present, past and the present perfect. (Schmitt, 1989 translated by Baghbidi 2003, 95-96) The Tense in the Old Iranian verbs includes the following tenses: present, simple past, present perfect, past perfect, past continuous, future. The past continuous and simple past, present perfect and past perfect verbs all without any difference refer to something that has been done in past. Past perfect verb is made of the present perfect case and specific determinatives of past verb. In Avestan, a is not used in the beginning of the past perfect. (Abolghassemi, 1986, 151) Present perfect is made of an reduplicative syllable and a root syllable. The first syllable is fixed, but the root syllable is moving between the strong form and weak form (bar “taking”: *baouar* (singular third person), / *baōrār ə* (plural third person) = *babhruh/babhāra* in Vedic). The consonant that is reduplicated (and is always simple), is the first consonant of the root and velar stops are replaced with their palatal equivalents (gam "coming" *jaym-*). If the root starts with two consonants, even if these two consonants are in sibilant+obstruent forms, only the first consonant is used in reduplicative form: thus, *sīd* (cutting) *hīsīd-* is better than Vedic form of *chīd*: *cīchīd* for expression of the Indo-Iranian structure of **sīd*: **sīsīd-* > of Indo-European **skhīd*: **sīskhīd-*. As a rule, the vowel that is used in reduplicated form consist of a when the root has *ā* or *r* in middle or at the end; *ī* when the root has *ī* at the beginning, middle or end; *u*, when the root has middling or ending *ū*. In some cases, the vowel *ā* has been used in the reduplication that contrary to the view of Benveniste, does not have declensional value. vowel lengthening is a phonetic phenomenon and occurs only when the next syllable includes an vocalic or consonantal *r* in root or determinative.(Schmitt, 1989 translated by Baghbidi 2003, 100) The present perfect stem is acquired through reduplicating the root. In the syllable which is used for reduplicating at the beginning of the root often some changes are made. For instance in Avestan *dā-dār-əš*: *da*, the first syllable has changed to *dā*. (Abolghassemi, 1986, 150) Past perfect is made of the present perfect and the determinatives of the secondary ending. (Abolghassemi, 1983, 26) Old Iranian has two groups of determinatives that are known as “primary ending” and “secondary ending”: first group includes the determinatives that are used for constructing the present, future and subjunctive verbs. The second group includes the determinatives used for formation of past continuous, simple past, past perfect, subjunctive and optative. (Abolghassemi, 1983, 26) The verb and its tense have close relationship with the stem and root in Old Iranian. Root in Old Iranian is a common element between the words of a word family and carries the main meaning of those words. In Old Iranian, root appears in three forms: 1) weak form of root without a, 2) reduplicative form of root that has a, 3) strong form of root that has *ā* instead of a. If the root emerge with *n* or *m*, its weak form is without *n* and *m* while its reduplicative form has *n* and *m*.

Table 1: Old Iranian Stems

Meaning	Strong	Reduplicative	Weak
to take	<i>bār</i>	<i>bār</i>	<i>bərə / br̥</i>
to close	-	<i>band</i>	<i>bad</i>
to move	<i>āṃ</i>	<i>ṃam</i>	<i>ṃa</i>

Stem is made by adding a new element to the root for creating a new meaning to the root.(Abolghassemi, 1988, 19-21)

Past Tense in Old Persian

Although Old Persian has retained the Indo-Iranian grammatical categories in the inflection of verb which are seen also in the oldest Vedic literatures, it has undergone through numerous innovations and transformations in many points whether in view of content or expression. In this way, Old Persian is presented as the intermediary between the Old Iranian and Middle Iranian: for example, elimination of the aspectual opposition

between aorist and past continuous, passive structure with transitive endings, transitive singular third person ending –š, et cetera. To show present tenses (and past continuous), aorist and present perfect -no clear evidence is seen for the future- Certain stems were used that primarily denoted the aspectual differences. These stems were made of the roots that sometimes could have been used as the stem of present or past without any further transformations. (Schmitt, 1989 translated by Baghbidi 2003, 139) In Old Persian for expression of a finished action or a constructed situation, a redundant structure was used instead of Old Indo-Iranian present perfect tense that has remained just in optative as *caxriyā* and is made of the participle (past participle) ended by -ta with the linking verb “to be” (usually its singular third person /asti/ is not mentioned) plus the agent that is used in transitive verbs in genitive-dative cases: for example, DB I27 /ima, taya manā kṛtam/<ī-m t-y m-n-a k-r-t-m> “this is, what has been done by me (I have done it)”; DB I32 /taya Br̥diya avajata/<t-y B-r-dī-y a-v-j-t> “that Bardiya had been killed”; DPe 22 /yadi kāra Pārsa pāta ahāti/<y-dī-y k-a-r-p-a-r-s p-a-t a-h-tī-y> “if the Persian Army had been patrolled”. This structure that is considered to be passive since the time of Bernhard Geiger and possessive from the time of Émile Benveniste has been transferred to Middle Persian (Middle Persian /man kart/, and in modern Persian /man kardam/ by adding personal endings) and many Iranian dialects and languages which is today described by “ergative structure”. (Schmitt, 1989 translated by Baghbidi 2003, 144)

Middle Iranian (Pahlavi): Present Perfect

In Pahlavi, transitive present perfect is constructed by setting the real subject before the past stem as agent and then the third person form of the indicative present tense of the verb “estādan: to stand” is added to the past stem:

Table 2: Present Perfect in Pahlavi

um dīd estēd	I have seen him
ut dīd estēd	You have seen him

And like simple past, if the object has been clearly noted in the sentence, the auxiliary verb will be compatible with it in view of number and person.

Table 3: Compatibility of Auxiliary Verb and Object in View of Number and Person in Pahlavi

um tū dīd estē	I have seen you
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Past Perfect

Transitive past perfect is made by the aid of agent that comes at the beginning of the sentence and the aorist forms of the verb “estādan”. These forms are compatible with the real object (grammatical subject) of the sentence in view of number and person:

Table 4: Transitive Past Perfect in Pahlavi

um (ūy) dīd estād	I had seen him
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Sometimes instead of the auxiliary verb “estādan” the past forms of the verb “būdan: to be” are used. The latter case still exists in Feyli Lurish with a few insignificant modifications.

Table 5: Past Perfect in Pahlavi, Feyli Lurish and Modern Persian

Pahalavi	Feyli Lurish	Persian
um dīd būd	dīy-əm bī(y)/dī-m-(b)ī	dide boodam: I had seen

Past Perfect in Parthian and Feyli Kurdish

In Parthian, for construction of past perfect, simple past forms of the auxiliary verb “baw-: to be” comes after the past participle (past stem). Here the verb “kaftan: to fall” has been conjugated as an example (Baghbidi 2006, 131).

Table 6: Past Perfect in Parthian and Feyli Kurdish

Person	Singular		Plural	
	Parthian	Feyli Kurdish	Parthian	Feyli Kurdish
First person	kaft būd hēm	kaft ūw yəm	kaft būd ?	kaft ūw im
Second person	kaft būd ay	kaft ūw i(n)	kaft būd hēd	kaft ūw ən
Third person	kaft būd ø	kaft ūw ø	kaft būd ahēnd	kaft ūw ən

As we can see in the above table, Parthian and Feyli Kurdish have a same method to construct the past perfect tense. Indeed, the historical process of the formation of the past perfect is not different in Parthian and Feyli Kurdish.

Conclusion

As the evidences show, formation of the past perfect tense in Southwest Iran has begun from the Late Old Iranian particularly Old Persian toward the Middle Iranian and then Modern Iranian and has become reflected in Feyli Lurish and Feyli Kurdish. In fact, as a northwestern Iranian dialect, Feyli Kurdish is subjected to Parthian and Feyli Lurish is along the Middle Persian in terms of changes related to the evolution of the past tense.

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