

# INDIFFERENCE *KE*-CONSTRUCTION IN MODERN CONVERSATIONAL PERSIAN

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## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

This paper deals with a construction in modern conversational Persian. This construction, in which a propositional content coexists with a propositional attitude is viewed as a lexical entry with a phonological, a syntactic, and a semantic/conceptual component. The attitude expressed by the construction is that of 'indifference' mixed with a degree of 'defiance' directed towards a proposition which has a mental representation in the minds of the interlocutors and which is also part of the construction itself. This construction is declarative and has a specific intonation pattern. I have called this construction the Indifference-*ke* Construction or, for short, the IKC. An example is given in (1).

(1) Speaker 1 (= S1): puya ræft.  
Puya leave.PAST.3SG  
'Puya left.'

Speaker 2 (= S2): ræft ke ræft.  
leave.PAST.3SG PTC leave.PAST.3SG  
'It's not important to me that he left.'

In (1), S2 uses the IKC to state her attitude of indifference with regard to the propositional content of S1's utterance (i.e. 'Puya's leaving'), this propositional content being (partly) present in S2's utterance. In other words, through using the IKC, S2 says that she does not care about what Puya did. As is seen from example (1), the construction uses the particle *ke*, which is surrounded by two identical verbs, that is, the verb following *ke* reduplicates the one preceding it.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 gives a complete description of the IKC including its behavior in different structural environments, such as with compound verbs and passives. Here I show that the element reduplicated after *ke* is always a  $V^0$ . Section 3 puts the IKC in the theoretical framework of Parallel Architecture (Jackendoff 1997, 2002). In this way, the phonological, syntactic, and semantic/conceptual components of this construction are worked out. Two similar constructions, from English and from Japanese, are contrasted with the IKC in section 4. The conclusion of the paper comes in section 5.

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<sup>1</sup> The dialect investigated in this paper is informal conversational Persian spoken in Tehran, the capital city of Iran, and the data used are based on the judgement of 7 native speakers of Persian including myself. The abbreviations used in the paper are EZ=the Ezafe vowel (-e), OM=object marker, PART=participle, PL=plural, PTC=particle, 1SG, 2SG,...=the subject agreement affixes; '+' separates the two parts of a compound verb.

## 2. The Indifference-*ke* Construction (IKC)

In the IKC, *ke* (which is mostly a complementizer in Persian but is a particle here) comes between two constituents, A and B. Constituent A, preceding *ke*, must be a clause, its simplest form being a verb.<sup>2</sup> Constituent B, following *ke*, is always only a verb. This verb is the reduplication of the verb in A.<sup>3</sup> In (2) and (3), we see examples of grammatical and ungrammatical IKCs (parentheses show optionality).

- (2) S1: be    golnaz        majera-ro    goft-æn.  
       to    Golnaz        story-OM    say.PAST-1SG  
       ‘I told the story to Golnaz.’
- S2: (majera-ro)    goft-i                    ke    goft-i.<sup>4</sup>  
       story-OM    say.PAST-2SG        PTC    say.PAST-2SG  
       ‘I don’t care that you told (the story).’
- (3) S2: \*majera-ro    goft-i                    ke    majera-ro    goft-i.  
       story-OM    say.PAST-2SG    PTC    story-OM    say.PAST-2SG

Example (3) is ungrammatical since it has the direct object and the verb in constituent B.

The diagram in (4) shows the basic structure of the IKC.

- (4) [<sub>IP</sub> A ]    *ke*    [<sub>V</sub> B ]

Note that, as mentioned before, the IKC is used to convey indifference towards a proposition which already has a mental representation in the mind of the IKC user and her addressee. We can refer to this existing proposition as ‘identifiable’. Lambrecht (1994), drawing on Chafe (1976), uses identifiable for discourse referents (including propositions) for which a representation exists in the addressee’s mind. This identifiable mental representation acts as a ‘felicity condition’ for the IKC to be meaningful. Felicity conditions assure the successful performance of speech acts, for example, in *I promise to pay you tomorrow*, felicity conditions such as ‘the speaker wants to pay the addressee’, ‘she believes she can pay the addressee’, ‘both speaker and addressee are in a healthy state of mind’, etc. must be met for the action to be performed. The IKC might be categorized under Searle’s (1976) ‘expressive’ or Bach and Harnish’s (1979)

<sup>2</sup> The default order of a Persian clause is SOV (see, for example, Karimi 1994). Variations are possible which cause pragmatic nuances. The behavior of the IKC with regard to different word orders will be discussed in section 2.2.

<sup>3</sup> There are some marginal cases where, for some speakers, the B verb is not the exact reduplication of the A verb. This happens when the A verb is durative which results in the subjunctive present of the same stem for the B verb (or the imperative if the person ending is 2<sup>nd</sup> plural). This phenomenon is studied in Sadat-Tehrani (Forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> Note the change of person from 1SG (S1’s utterance) to 2SG (S2’s utterance), which is natural because S2’s utterance is directed towards her addressee, S1.

‘acknowledgment’ speech act types, types which express a psychological state or a feeling. The felicity condition for the IKC can be in the form of the previous utterance (S1’s utterance) or in the form of an identifiable unuttered proposition in the minds of the interlocutors. As an example for the latter case, i.e. when the felicity condition is only in the minds of the interlocutors and not physically uttered, suppose that I have told my sister a secret. Later, my mother and I find out that everybody knows about this secret so we implicitly conclude that my sister has told everyone about it. Now, I may use the IKC and say to my mother *goft-e ke goft-e* ‘I don’t care that she’s told [everybody],’ based on the proposition MY SISTER HAS TOLD THE SECRET TO EVERYONE which serves as an identifiable proposition for us even if it has not been uttered in the immediately preceding discourse. Clearly, if the felicity condition is not met, either in the form of S1’s utterance or in the form of an identifiable unuttered proposition, the IKC would be meaningless: For example, if I see my mother and without any background I say *goft-e ke goft-e*, the utterance would not mean a thing.

An additional point about constituent A is that there is a tendency for speakers to keep it as short as possible. For instance, in cases where a clitic follows the verb, it usually does not enter the IKC, e.g. the IKC for *did-ešun* ‘S/he saw them’ would normally be *did ke did* and not *did-ešun ke did-ešun*.

In subsections 2.1 to 2.4 below, we see how the IKC interacts with compound verbs, scrambled sentences<sup>5</sup>, and passives. Its behavior in different T/A/M (tense/aspect/mood) environments will also be discussed.

## 2.1 The IKC and Compound Verbs

Compound verbs in Persian are verbs that are formed with a non-verbal element plus a verbal element (Mohammad and Karimi 1992, Dabir-Moghaddam 1995, and Goldberg 1996 among others). The non-verbal element can be a noun, an adjective, a prepositional phrase, an adverb, or a particle, e.g. *baz+kærdaen* (open (adj.)+to do) ‘to open’. The process of forming a compound verb is productive in Persian. In the IKC, when the verb in constituent A is a compound verb, only the verbal element is repeated in B.<sup>6</sup> (5) is an example (parentheses denote optionality).

- (5) S1: *belæxære særma+xord.*  
 finally cold+eat.PAST.3SG  
 ‘S/he finally caught cold.’
- S2: (*særma+*)*xord ke xord.*  
 cold+eat.PAST.3SG PTC eat.PAST.3SG  
 ‘It’s not important to me that s/he caught cold.’

<sup>5</sup> ‘Scrambling’ does not carry with it a theoretical orientation in the present paper. ‘Scrambled’ here is used as a generic term for changed word-order sentences.

<sup>6</sup> For one native speaker among my Persian speaking consultants, the non-verbal element too can be reduplicated for ‘emphasis’ purposes, e.g. *særma+xord ke særma+xord*.

The separation of the two elements of compound verbs in the IKC is an interesting fact. These verbs exhibit, on the one hand, lexical properties, which make them qualified to be treated as a single lexeme (e.g. inseparability by direct objects), and on the other hand, phrasal properties, which suggest that they can be dealt with as consisting of independent elements (e.g. separability by the durative prefix *mi-*). The behavior of compound verbs in the IKC can be added to the set of phrasal properties that these verbs possess.

## 2.2 The IKC and Word Order

In cases where the IKC is directed towards a non-verb-final clause, again only the verb is reduplicated after *ke*. Consider the ‘default word-order’ sentence in (6).

- (6) S1: diruz            jæ'be-ha-ro    be-šun            dad-im.  
           yesterday    box-PL-OM    to-CLITIC        give.PAST-1PL  
           ‘We gave them the boxes yesterday.’

Some possible scrambled versions can be *dad-im diruz be-šun jæ'be-ha-ro*, *diruz be-šun dad-im jæ'be-ha-ro*, and *jæ'be-ha-ro diruz be-šun dad-im* with almost the same meaning and some minor pragmatic nuances which are irrelevant for our discussion. The IKC utterance for (6) and all its scrambled versions is given in (7) below, in which we see that only the verb has been reduplicated after *ke*.

- (7) S2: dad-in                    ke            dad-in.  
           give.PAST-2PL            PTC        give.PAST-2PL  
           ‘You gave [them the boxes yesterday], see if I care!’

## 2.3 The IKC and Passives

The passive in Persian is formed by the past participle of the verb and the auxiliary *šodan* ‘to become’ (Lambton 1957: 53). (8b) below is the passive counterpart of (8a).

- (8) a.    namæ-ro        ferest-ad-aŋ.  
           letter-OM    send-PAST-3PL  
           ‘They sent the letter.’  
       b.    name ferest-ad-e            šod.  
           letter send-PAST-PART    become.PAST.3SG  
           ‘The letter was sent.’

Of the two elements of passives, only the second (i.e. the *šodan* ‘to become’ element) appears in constituent B of the IKC, so the IKC utterance for (8b) is as given in (9).

- (9) S2: (ferest-ad-e)            šod                            ke            šod.  
 send-PAST-PART    become.PAST.3SG    PTC    become.PAST.3SG  
 ‘I couldn’t care less [that it was sent].’

It must be mentioned that while some linguists, e.g. Soheili-Isfahani (1976), and Dabir-Moghaddam (1982), hold that passivization exists in Persian, others argue otherwise. For example, Moyne (1974) argues that there is no active-passive opposition in Persian but there are inchoative structures with *šodan* ‘to become’. Whether or not there is passive in Persian is not relevant for the analysis of the present paper. The related point for our discussion is that the two elements, i.e. the past participle and *šodan* ‘to become’, are two independent elements and only the latter comes in constituent B, a behavior which is similar to that of compound verbs.

## 2.4 T/A/M analysis

To check the behavior of the IKC with regard to different tense/aspect/mood combinations, 7 T/A/Ms were selected out of all possible Persian T/A/Ms since they are the more commonly used ones and also they all can be used in conversational Persian. (10) shows how the verb is reduplicated in the B constituent of the IKC for each of the 7 T/A/Ms.

- (10) a. Simple past *xord ke xord*. ‘I don’t care that s/he ate.’  
 b. Perfect *xord-e ke xord-e*. ‘I don’t care that s/he’s eaten.’  
 c. Pluperfect *xord-e-bud ke xord-e-bud*. ‘I don’t care that s/he’d eaten.’  
 d. Durative past (*dašt*) *mi-xord ke mi-xord*.<sup>7</sup> ‘I don’t care that s/he was eating.’  
 e. Subjunctive past *xord-e-baš-e ke xord-e-baš-e*. ‘I don’t care if s/he’s eaten.’  
 f. Durative present (*dar-e*) *mi-xor-e ke mi-xor-e*. ‘I don’t care that s/he’s eating.’  
 g. Subjunctive present *bo-xor-e ke bo-xor-e*. ‘I don’t care if s/he eats.’

## 2.5 Generalization

Based on the description of the IKC I have presented in section 2 so far, I propose the following generalization:

- The B constituent of the IKC is always a  $V^0$ .

In other words, what comes after *ke* in this construction is a syntactic word or terminal node which is not dividable into smaller units syntactically. Below, I will show the validity of this claim for different cases, i.e. simple verbs, compound verbs, passives, the two T/A/Ms containing a form of *daštan*

<sup>7</sup> The conjugated form of *daštan* ‘to have’, which is optionally present in durative past (d) and durative present (f), emphasizes the progressive nature of the verb. According to Lazard (1992: 141), in colloquial Persian, it is more likely that the progressive contains the verb *daštan* along with the durative prefix *mi-*.

(durative past and durative present), and the two T/A/Ms pluperfect and subjunctive past.

The easiest cases are those like simple past where the main verb is not accompanied by any element. For these, the A verb, which is a  $V^0$ , is reduplicated in B. Diagram (11) illustrates this.

- (11) A constituent: ... $v$ [ $v^0$  [raft]]                      B constituent:  $v$ [ $v^0$  [raft]]

The elements represented by the ellipsis sign ‘...’ in the A constituent, namely subject, object, and adjunct, are irrelevant for our discussion and therefore not shown.

For compound verbs, I follow Ghomeshi (1996) in assuming that the non-verbal element of compound verbs is a phrasal category. In its fullest form, it can be a PP ( *až+dast+dadan* [‘from’ + ‘hand’ + ‘to give’] ‘to lose’), an NP ( *jiq-e+boland+kešidan* [‘scream-EZ’ + ‘loud’ + ‘to pull’] ‘to scream loudly’), or an AdjP ( *vared-e+otaq+šodan* [‘versed-EZ’ + ‘room’ + ‘to become’] ‘to enter a room’).<sup>8</sup> Therefore, compound verbs can be represented by diagram (12).

- (12)  $v$ [[XP][ $V^0$ ]]

Now we move on to passives. Passives can be represented by the diagram in (13).

- (13)  $v$ [[PartP/AdjP][ $V^0$ ]]

The above diagram is similar to that of compound verbs (12), the difference being the type of the phrasal category accompanying the  $V^0$  which must be a Participial Phrase or an AdjP for passives.<sup>9</sup> With regard to the IKC, passives behave like compound verbs in that only the second of their two elements (i.e. the  $V^0$ , *šodan* ‘to become’) is reduplicated.

Leaving compound verbs and passives behind, we now deal with the two durative T/A/Ms (durative past and durative present), both of which contain a form of *daštān*. Following Marashi (1972) and Windfuhr (1979), I consider *daštān* an auxiliary since it adds to the durative aspect of the main verb and following Ghomeshi (2001), I place it under the INFL node leaving the main verb under  $V^0$ , which is the element that is reduplicated.

Our last category to analyze is the one containing the two T/A/Ms pluperfect and subjunctive past, which consist of the participle and the elements *bud/baš-e*. Darzi (1996) argues that the element *bud* in the pluperfect forms a syntactic unit with the past participle (his evidence concerns inseparability by direct objects, gapping, and c-command domain of the subject (pp. 36-37)). Following Darzi and contra Marashi (1972), I do not consider *bud* (and *baš-e*)

<sup>8</sup> However, certain elements like Determiner or Number cannot precede the N of the NP: \**in* ‘this’+ *jiq+kešidan* ‘to scream’; \**do* ‘two’+ *dast+dadan* ‘to shake hands’.

<sup>9</sup> Some past participles can be used as an adjective (e.g. *bast-e* ‘closed’) while some others cannot (e.g. *goft-e* ‘said’). This is why I have used two labels for the first daughter node in (13), i.e. PartP and AdjP.

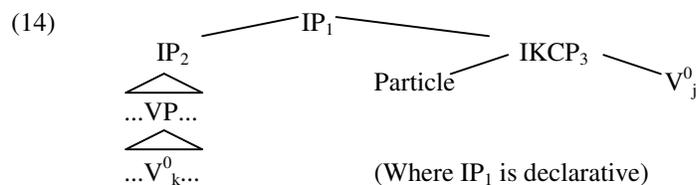
auxiliaries here since they are not separable from the past participle.<sup>10</sup> This inseparability makes pluperfect and subjunctive past different from compound verbs (separable by auxiliaries, modals, clitics, the durative, subjunctive, and negative prefixes, PPs, adjectives and adverbs), passives (separable by the durative, subjunctive, and negative prefixes, and adverbs), and durative T/A/Ms (separable by PPs, direct objects, adverbs, and the durative, subjunctive, and negative prefixes). It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that the two elements of pluperfect and subjunctive past both fall under the  $V^0$  node and are repeated in B (unlike compound verbs, passives, and the durative T/A/Ms where only the second element is the  $V^0$ ).

To summarize so far, we have seen the behavior of the IKC with regard to simple verbs, compound verbs, scrambled sentences, passives, and different T/A/Ms. This behavior suggests that the repeated element in the B constituent is always a  $V^0$ .

### 3. The IKC and Parallel Architecture

In this section, I present an analysis of the IKC using Jackendoff's Parallel Architecture theory. Jackendoff (1997, 2002) posits three parallel components in the grammar, i.e. phonological, syntactic, and semantic/conceptual, which are in correspondence with one another with none being the core. A lexical item is an interface rule which links the three structures to each other and licenses the construction of sentences. The Parallel Architecture model seems suitable for treating the IKC since the meaning of this construction does not depend on the verbs used in it and it can be seen as a lexical item which freely combines with any verb yielding the desired concept.

I propose the following tree for IKC's syntactic component.<sup>11</sup> I have chosen the abbreviation IKCP (=IKC Phrase) for the category of '*ke*+ $V^0$ ', since it does not have any canonical syntactic category.



$IP_1$  is the whole construction. Constituent A is  $IP_2$ . The subject, direct object, and adjunct are optional in  $IP_2$  and the only obligatory element in it is the verb ( $V_k^0$ ).  $IKCP_3$  specifies the particle *ke* and constituent B (the reduplicated verb  $V_j^0$ ) in it. The ellipsis sign represents elements that are irrelevant to our discussion, elements (e.g. the subject) that are not reduplicated and may appear either before the verb or, in scrambled utterances, after it. The  $IKCP_3$  comes

<sup>10</sup> Persian orthography can be misleading in this regard due to the fact that it separates the participle and the *bud/baš-e* element from one another.

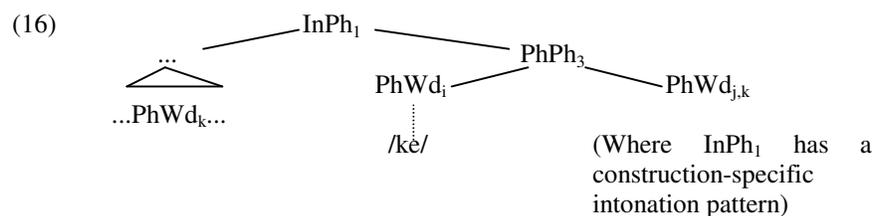
<sup>11</sup> Subscripts, which will be discussed shortly, are used for relating the syntactic, phonological, and conceptual components with each other.

from a separate node from the  $IP_2$ . The justification is that in the conceptual component, the attitude of indifference is conveyed towards constituent A (or  $IP_2$ ), hence, we need this constituent to be a separate node from the rest of the utterance (i.e.  $IKCP_3$ ). As an example, for the utterance *raft ke raft* ‘It’s not important to me that he left’ (example (1) of this paper), the  $V^0_k$  corresponds to the first *raft* ‘left’, the  $particle_i$  to *ke*, and the  $V^0_j$  to the second *raft*.

To work out the representation of the phonological component of the IKC, we need to adopt a prosodic hierarchy. The one chosen here is in line with the syntactic approach (e.g. Selkirk 1986) in which prosodic constituents larger than a word are derived indirectly from the syntactic structure. I assume the relation between syntactic and prosodic hierarchies as that given by Truckenbrodt (1995):<sup>12</sup>

(15)	<u>Syntax</u>		<u>Prosodic Hierarchy</u>
	(Root) Clause	-----	Intonational Phrase (InPh)
	XP	-----	Phonological Phrase (PhPh)
	$X^0$	-----	Phonological Word (PhWd)

Based on the above assumptions, the phonological component of the IKC is given in (16).



The Intonational Phrase (indexed 1) corresponds to the whole IKC. The index shows its relation with  $IP_1$  in the syntactic component, which has the same subscript. The PhWd indexed k corresponds to the  $V^0_k$  in constituent A, which is reduplicated after  $PhWd_i$  (/ke/ or  $Particle_i$  in syntax) in the form of  $PhWd_{j,k}$ . The reduplication in the IKC is ‘total reduplication’ where the whole Phonological Word is reduplicated. The base is the Phonological Word indexed k. This index connects the base to its syntactic content, which is the  $V^0$  in the  $IP_2$  also indexed k. The reduplicant is the last Phonological Word in the Intonational Phrase and bears two indices. One is j, which relates it to  $V^0_j$  in syntax, and the other is k, which means it also corresponds to  $V^0_k$  in syntax. The latter index thus creates the reduplication. In other words, two things can be said about  $PhWd_{j,k}$ : One, it is the realization of  $V^0_j$  and two, it fills its empty phonological content from  $V^0_k$ . Note that the act of copying in the IKC is done in a somewhat ‘blind’ way in the sense that when  $PhWd_k$  is reduplicated, the important thing is the correspondence of this PhWd to a node in the syntax ( $V^0_k$ ) without the content of that node being

<sup>12</sup> The levels lower than the Phonological Word and higher than the Intonational Phrase are not relevant to our discussion.

seen. In other words, the morphosyntactic features of  $V_k^0$  do not play any role, and although it may consist of different morphemes, they are all seen as a bundle and are repeated intact.

The conceptual component can be demonstrated as in (17).

- (17) Modality tier: [Speaker expresses ‘indifference’/‘defiance’ towards  $Y_2$ ] <sub>1</sub>  
 Register tier: Only used in conversational register

There are two tiers in the conceptual component: modality tier which encodes the type of propositional attitude that an utterance contains, and register tier which determines the register in which an utterance is made use of. The indices in the modality tier are used as before, to relate this component to other components. The index 2 means that indifference is conveyed towards what had index 2 in the syntactic component, i.e.  $IP_2$ , which is constituent A of the IKC. The index 1 signifies that the element that conveys this indifference is the whole construction, corresponding to  $IP_1$  in the syntax.

#### 4. Similar Constructions in English and Japanese

There is a reduplicative construction in English which produces nearly the same semantic/pragmatic effect as the IKC. Let us call this construction the ‘Fatalism Construction’: The speaker expresses a fatalistic view towards an utterance, stating that the occurrence of the proposition is beyond her control. The S2 utterance in (18) is an example of this construction.

- (18) S1: What if he goes ?

S2: If he goes, he goes. [= It’s beyond my control; I don’t care]

A comparison between the Fatalism Construction and the IKC reveals the following facts. First, in both constructions, there are the propositional attitudes of ‘indifference’ and ‘fatalism’ which are conveyed towards a propositional content that is also present in the same construction. Second, reduplication plays a role in both constructions; however, there are two differences in this regard. One difference is that the IKC has an element between the base and the reduplicant (*ke*), while in the Fatalism Construction, there is no intervening element between them. The other difference is that in the Fatalism Construction, elements larger than  $V^0$  can be reduplicated too (e.g. *If he goes today, he goes today*), but in the IKC, it is only the  $V^0$  that is repeated. Third, both constructions are non-compositional, in the sense that the semantics of the whole construction cannot be decoded from the semantics of the single elements used in it. Fourth, some T/A/Ms and structures do not seem to work well with the Fatalism Construction, e.g. the pluperfect (*??If she’d gone, she’d gone*). Fifth, in both constructions, there are length limitations for the utterance and speakers tend to keep the utterance as short as possible.

The *koto wa* Construction of Japanese is structurally similar to the IKC (cf. Okamoto 1990). It has the general reduplicative structure of ‘verbal *koto wa*

verbal’.<sup>13</sup> *koto* is normally a complementizer nominalizing the preceding clause and the particle *wa* marks this clause as the topic and this construction literally means ‘That...verbal, verbal’, but its true meaning is something like ‘It is true/I admit that...verbal’. (19) exemplifies this construction.

- (19) ano okasi wa oisii koto wa oisii.  
 that cake TOPIC MARKER tasty tasty  
 ‘It’s true that the cake is tasty.’ [Okamoto 1990: 248]

The *koto wa* Construction shows propositional content and propositional attitude within the same sentence. For example in (19), the speaker asserts the propositional content of ‘the cake is tasty’; moreover, she expresses her concession with regard to the propositional content. Thus for instance, *kedo takai yo* ‘but is expensive’ can be a logical sequel to the *koto wa* Construction in S2’s utterance in (19) (‘It’s true that the cake is tasty but it’s expensive’).

The *koto wa* Construction and the IKC can be compared in the following ways. First, in both constructions, the propositional content occurs in the same clause with the propositional attitude. In the Japanese construction, the attitude of ‘concession’ is expressed and in the Persian one, that of ‘indifference’. Second, in both constructions, there is total reduplication of an element. This element is a ‘verbal’ (in Okamoto’s 1990 sense) for the *koto wa* Construction and a  $V^0$  for the IKC. In both constructions, there is an element (*koto wa* or *ke*) intervening between the base and the reduplicant. The reduplication behavior, however, is not fully identical in the two constructions. For example, as seen earlier, only the second part of compound verbs are repeated after *ke* in the IKC, but in Japanese, both elements of the compound verb are reduplicated.<sup>14</sup> Third, both constructions are idiomatic or non-compositional. The literal meanings of the constructions are ‘that verbal...verbal’ and ‘...verb...that verb’ respectively for the *koto wa* construction and the IKC, which do not reflect the true meanings of the constructions. The true meanings of the constructions are ‘It is true/I admit that...verbal’ (*koto wa* Construction) and ‘I don’t care that...verb’ (IKC). A related observation is that *koto*, like *ke*, is a complementizer which nominalizes the preceding clause and *wa* is a particle which marks this clause as the topic, but these facts, though valid about the single elements, are not true about the whole constructions. Fourth, neither construction usually allows elements such as manner/time/place adverbials or noun phrases to appear after *koto wa* or *ke*; however, Japanese is less resistant in this regard by letting a few modal adverbials in that location, e.g. this example from Okamoto (1990: 252): *kinoo ame ga fut-ta koto wa tasika ni fut-ta* ‘It’s certainly true that it rained yesterday’.

<sup>13</sup> Okamoto (1990) uses ‘verbal’ to refer to ‘the verb or adjective stem form plus tense’.

<sup>14</sup> Toshi Sugawara (p.c.) tells me that in very few cases, only the second part of the Japanese compound verb is repeated after *koto wa*. His example is *uti-agar-u koto wa agat-ta ga...* ‘It’s true that [fireworks] were actually shot off but...’ from the site <http://www.ibjcafe.com/talk/cafe/cafe/980915000459.htm> (10.21.2003).

## 5. Conclusion

The construction studied in this paper (the IKC) expresses the speaker's attitude of 'indifference' and 'defiance' towards a propositional content which is available in the construction. The IKC has the structure  $A \textit{ ke } B$ , where A is a clause (minimally a verb) and B is a verb which is the reduplication of the verb in A. Examining the behavior of the IKC in different structural environments such as with compound verbs, scrambled sentences, passives, and various T/A/Ms, I showed that the reduplicated element is always a  $V^0$  node. In terms of Jackendoff's Parallel Architecture, I worked out the three components of the IKC, namely the phonological, syntactic, and semantic/conceptual components. Finally, I introduced two similar constructions from English and Japanese and contrasted them with the Persian IKC, presenting shared characteristics by the three languages. Specifically, I showed that: in all three constructions, the propositional content coexists with the propositional attitude, the latter being effected by reduplication; and that, despite the difference in the range of usage, the three constructions are all instances of productive idioms, i.e. on the one hand, they are fixed idioms, and on the other, they can be used somehow productively (for instance with changing of the verb) always creating the same semantic effect.

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