

## **Linguistic study of Sadegh Hedayat`s hypomania and depression phase: Bipolar disorder effect<sup>1</sup>**

Elmira Esmaeelpour<sup>2</sup>  
Farhad Sasani<sup>3</sup>

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### Abstract

Bipolar affective disorder is a mood disorder in which the sufferer experiences marked mood swings which are beyond what most people experience. About one percent of people around the world have had a diagnosis of bipolar disorder at some point in their lifetime, most of whom have heightened level of creativity. With respect to descriptive psychiatry, a host of artists, including authors, have been seen with bipolar disorder. This study provides a linguistic analysis of bipolar disorder; the case study is Sadegh Hedayat's letters. Actually it makes an attempt to find out whether it is possible to diagnose bipolar disorder via studying linguistic features in people's texts. The results of the present research might contribute to clinical studies as well. It seems that language and cognition are aligned. In addition, on the basis of ideational metafunction of language, language is the reflection of human's

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<sup>2</sup>M.A. in Linguistics. University of Alzahra;showaani@yahoo.com

<sup>3</sup> Associate Professor of Linguistics. University of Alzahra  
;fsasani49@yahoo.com

mind and it interprets human's experience. In this research, Sadegh Hedayat's letters to Shahid Nourai are studied. The addressee is fixed to minimize the effective factors. The data is semantically analyzed and to study pressured speech and poverty of speech, topical shifts and moves are analyzed as well. Based on linguistic study of each letter, the result shows that each bipolar disorder episode, i.e. hypomania, depression, euthymia and mixed can be diagnosed by using the mentioned linguistic criteria as shown below.

The number and the date of the letters written in hypomanic episode are

shown in the table.

|                       |                        |                        |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 3- March 15, 1946     | 5- June 7, 1946        | 8- July 25, 1946       | 10- October 2, 1946   | 11- October 17, 1946  |
| 12- November 17, 1946 | 16- January 13, 1947   | 17- January 25, 1947   | 18- February 9, 1947  | 19- February 13, 1947 |
| 20- February 22, 1947 | 24- April 9, 1947      | 25- April 19, 1947     | 26- May 5, 1947       | 27- May 15, 1947      |
| 28- June 5, 1947      | 32- September 15, 1947 | 33- September 29, 1947 | 36- November 10, 1947 | 37- May 3, 1948       |
| 41- July 11, 1948     | 42- July 11, 1948      | 45- August 5, 1948     | 48- September 5, 1948 | 49- September 8, 1948 |
| 54- November 29, 1948 | 55- December 11, 1948  | 56- January 19, 1949   | 57- February 6, 1949  | 58- February 19, 1949 |
| 61- April 16, 1949    | 63- May 7, 1949        | 64- May 22, 1949       | 65- June 10, 1949     | 66- June 18, 1949     |
| 68- July 29, 1949     | 69- August 24, 1949    | 71- October 29, 1949   | 73- January 20, 1950  | 77- August 13, 1950   |

The number and the date of the letters related to mixed episode are shown in the table.

|                      |                      |                        |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1- January 7, 1946   | 2- February 19, 1946 | 4- May 8, 1946         | 6- June 28, 1946     |
| 7- July 14, 1946     | 9- August 30, 1946   | 13- November 24, 1946  | 14- December 2, 1946 |
| 21- March 3, 1947    | 22- March 21, 1947   | 23- April 2 or 3, 1947 | 29- July 14, 1947    |
| 30- August 10, 1947  | 31- August 25, 1947  | 34- October 11, 1947   | 35- November 3, 1947 |
| 38- May 22, 1948     | 39- June 10, 1948    | 40- early June, 1948   | 43- July 18, 1948    |
| 44- July 25, 1948    | 46- August 18, 1948  | 47- August 29, 1948    | 50- October 3, 1948  |
| 51- October 19, 1948 | 52- November 8, 1948 | 53- November 15, 1948  | 59- April 3, 1949    |
| 62- May 1, 1949      | 67- July 12, 1949    | 70- October 2, 1949    | 74- June 3, 1950     |
| 75- July 2, 1950     | 76- July 22, 1950    | 78- August 27, 1950    | 79- October 10, 1950 |

The number and the date of the letters related to euthymic episode are shown in the table.

|                         |                   |                         |                          |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 15- December 8,<br>1946 | 60- April 4, 1949 | 80- November 2,<br>1950 | 81- November 17,<br>1950 |
| 82- November 23, 1950   |                   |                         |                          |

In addition, only one letter was spotted to be related to depression.

The findings of this research confirm psychiatric achievements. Obviously, other semantic criteria (such as humiliation and ridicule) are introduced, which are in line with psychiatric definitions. The existence of the mixed episode in the episodes of bipolarity which Sadegh Hedayat had experienced is one of the achievements of this research. Also, the semantic characteristics, the rate of topical shifts and moves of these episodes have been studied. In addition, the study of letters in terms of the time of writing, clearly indicates the characteristics of bipolar disorder episodes in the intervals such as hypomania which is accompanied by pressured speech, and the depression episode which is accompanied by poverty of speech. Moreover, it seems that Hedayat suffered from rapid cycling bipolar disorder.

**Keywords:** rapid cycling bipolar disorder, semantic scope, mixed episode, phase, hypomania