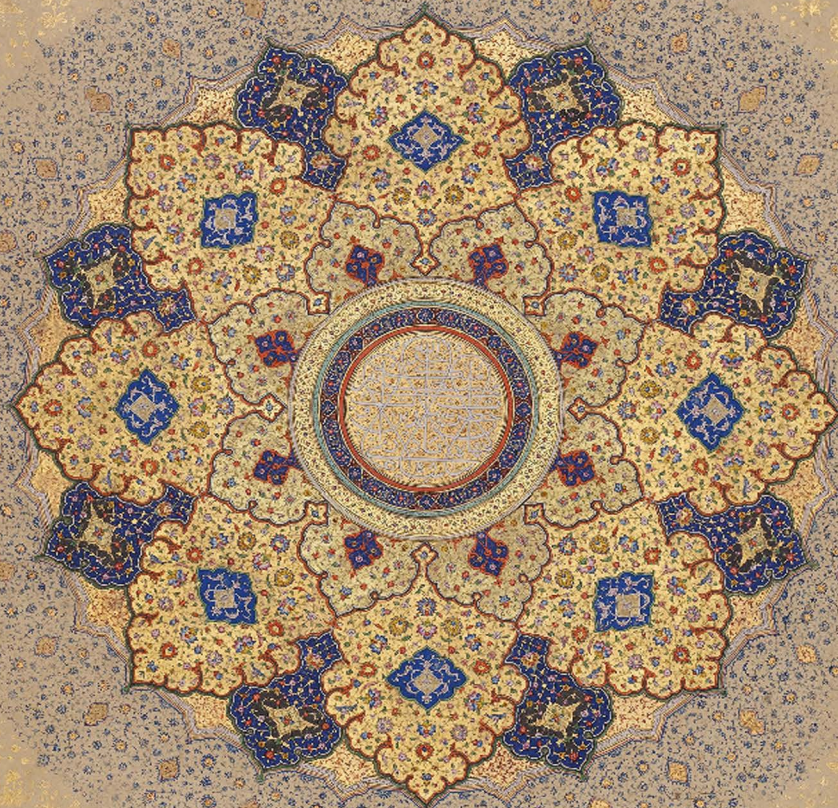




ROUTLEDGE  
HANDBOOKS



# The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy of Persian

Edited by Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi

# THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND PEDAGOGY OF PERSIAN

*The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy of Persian* offers a detailed overview of the field of Persian second language acquisition and pedagogy.

The Handbook discusses its development and captures critical accounts of cutting-edge research within the major subfields of Persian second language acquisition and pedagogy, as well as current debates and problems, and goes on to suggest productive lines of future research.

The book is divided into the following four parts: I) Theory-driven research on second language acquisition of Persian, II) Language skills in second language acquisition of Persian, III) Classroom research in second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian, and IV) Social aspects of second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian.

*The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy of Persian* is an essential reference for scholars and students of Persian SLA and pedagogy as well as those researching in related areas.

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HANDBOOK OF SECOND  
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AND PEDAGOGY OF PERSIAN

*Edited by Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi*

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# ABBREVIATIONS

1	First Person
1s.	First Person Singular
1st	First Person
2	Second Person
2nd	Second Person
2s.	Second Person Singular
3	Third Person
3rd	Third Person
AAPPL	Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages
AATP	American Association of Teachers of Persian
ACC	Accusative
ACIE	American Councils for International Education
ACTFL	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Add	Additive Presupposition
Adj	Adjective
Adv	Adverb
AFF	Affective Strategies
AGENT	Agentive
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASLPR	Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings
BALLI	Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory
BL	Blended Learning
BLL	Blended Language Learning
CA	Contrastive Analysis
CAH	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
CAI	Computer-Assisted Instruction
CALL	Computer-Assisted Language Learning
CAP	Computerized Assessment of Proficiency
CASL	Center for Advanced Study of Language
CAUS	Causative

## *Abbreviations*

caus	Causative
CBI	Content-based Instruction
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CL	Classifier
CLB	Canadian Language Benchmarks
CLT	Commonly Taught Languages
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CMC	Computer Mediated Communication
COG	Cognitive Strategies
COM	Compensation Strategies
CSTR	Center for Speech Technology Research
CTL	Commonly Taught Languages
DCT	Discourse Completion Task
DEF	Definite
Diff	Different
DLI	Defense Language Institute
DLIFLC	Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center
DLL	Difficulty of Language Learning
DLPT	Defense Language Proficiency Test
DO	Direct object
DPM	Declarative/Procedural Model
DUR	Durative
Dur	Durative
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
EZ	Ezafe
F	Feminine
F0	Fundamental Frequency
f2f	Face-to-face
FE	Formal Education
FL	Foreign Language
FLA	Foreign Language Aptitude
FRH	Features Reassembly Hypothesis
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
H-variety	High variety
L-variety	Low variety
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
HL	Heritage Language
HLL	Heritage Language Learner
HS	Heritage Speaker
HTML	Hypertext Markup Language
IBQ	Individual Background Questionnaire
IC	Indefinite Clitic
ID	Indefinite Determiner
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ILR	Interagency Language Roundtable

## *Abbreviations*

IMP	Imperfective
Incl	Inclusive
INDEF	Indefinite
INT	Interpretive
IP	Interpersonal
IP	Intonational Phrase
IPA	Integrated Performance Assessment
ISLA	Instructed Second Language Acquisition
IT	Information Technology
JLU	Joint Language University
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LARC	Language Acquisition Resource Center
LCS	Learning and Communication Strategies
LCTL	Less Commonly Taught Languages
LMS	Learning Management System
LOP	Learners of Persian as a Second/Foreign Language
M	Masculine
M	Mean
MALL	Mobile-Assisted Language Learning
Max	Maximum
MEM	Memory Strategies
MET	Metacognitive Strategies
Min	Minimum
ML	Minority Language
MOT	Motivation and Expectations
MSRT	Iranian Ministry of Science, Research and Technology
MT	Machine Translation
MTB-MLE	Mother-tongue-based Multilingual Education
N	Name
N	Noun
NEG	Negation
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NL	National Language
NLL	Nature of Language Learning
NLP	Natural Language Processing
NLU	Natural Language Understanding
Nom	Nominative
Non-caus	Non-causative
NP	Noun Phrase
NPI	Negative Polarity Item
NS	Native Speaker
NYU	New York University
OM	Object Marker
OPI	Oral Proficiency Interview
OPIc	Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer
P	Presentational
PART	Participial

## *Abbreviations*

PAST	Past tense
PC	Personal Computer
PERF	Perfective
PL	Plural
PLPT	Persian Language Proficiency Test
PLPT-AV	Persian Language Proficiency Test- Academic Version
POS	Part of Speech
Poss	Possessive
PP	Prepositional Phrase
Prep	Preposition
PRES	Present tense
PRF	Persian Reference Framework
Prt	Past Participle
PSLL	Persian as a Second Language Learner
PST	Past Tense
PT	Pedagogical Task
SĀMFĀ (SAMFA)	Standard Persian Language Proficiency Test
SBU	Shahid Beheshti University
SCAL	Scalar Presupposition
SD	Standard Deviation
SG	Singular
SILL	Strategy Inventory for Language Learning
Sing.	Singular
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SOC	Social Strategies
SOV	Subject-Object-Verb
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
STAMP	Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency
Stm	Stem
SUBJ	Subjunctive
SVC	Serial Verb Constructions
TBLA	Task-based Language Assessment
TBLT	Task-Based Language Teaching
TELL	Technology-Enhanced Language Learning
TL	Target Language
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
Top	Topic
TPFL	Teaching Persian as a Foreign Language
TPSOL	Teaching Persian to Speakers of Other Languages
TTS	Text-to-speech
UC	University of California
UCB	University of California at Berkley
UCLA	University of California at Los Angeles
UM	Uniqueness Marker
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
UT	University of Texas (at Austin)
UTA	University of Texas at Austin

*Abbreviations*

V	Verb
VOT	Voice Onset Time
VR	Virtual Reality
WELL	Web-Enhanced Language Learning
WPT	Writing Proficiency Test

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Editing a book such as this one has been my long-lasting passion and aspiration – a book in which linguistic intricacies and applied linguistics subtleties are put together to provide a more holistic view of the field.

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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

*Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi*

The aim of the present volume is to offer a bird's-eye view of the most recent, cutting-edge research on second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian. To this end, top scholars from around the world have come together to share with us their expertise and the most recent research on heritage language and second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian. Different subfields of second language acquisition of Persian, Persian heritage language learning, Persian language pedagogy, and social aspects of second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian are each pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that, put together, make a whole and comprehensive view of the field.

Linguistic research on the Persian language has previously centered around historical linguistics, especially study of the ancient languages of greater Iran, including Old Persian, Avestan, Pahlavi, and also Middle Persian. Over the last few decades, Persian linguistics, including Modern Persian, has been an active topic of research, and many noteworthy volumes on different subfields have been published both in Iran and in the West. The latest single-volume surveys of Persian linguistics are *Trends in Iranian and Persian Linguistics* (Eds. Korangy, A. and C. Miller, 2018) and *The Oxford Handbook of Persian Linguistics* (Eds. Sedighi, A. and P. Shabani-Jadidi, 2018).

Today, there is a high need for a comprehensive handbook of second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian, as there are numerous new positions in teaching Persian, and there are continuous efforts made by universities to develop programs in Persian language and culture. Although there have been several articles written on various topics of second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian, they have been somewhat fragmented. *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy of Persian* connects these loose fragments by bringing together into one cohesive volume research on various topics in the domain of second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian.

Recent works on Persian linguistics include *The Iranian Languages* (Routledge, 2010, edited by Gernot Windfuhr), *Aspects of Iranian Linguistics* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008, edited by Simin Karimi, Vida Samiiian, and Donald Stilo), *Topics in Iranian Linguistics* (Reichert Publishers, 2011, edited by Agnes Korn), *Trends in Iranian and Persian Linguistics* (Mouton De Gruyter, 2018, edited by Alireza Korangy and Corey Miller), and *The Oxford Handbook of Persian Linguistics* (Oxford University Press, 2018, edited by Anousha Sedighi and Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi). The first volume provides a comprehensive typological study of



Iranian languages and functions as a resource for the study of the entire family of Iranian languages. However, that book does not cover many aspects of Persian linguistics such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, and pedagogy. The next two volumes comprise selected articles from the proceedings of the *International Conference on Aspects of Iranian Linguistics* (2005 and 2009). While both books contain cutting-edge articles authored by renowned scholars, the articles have been picked from conference presentations and therefore do not cover the entire spectrum of the subfields of Persian linguistics. The choice of subject matter in these volumes depends on what papers were accepted, and there is no attempt to systematize subjects, make them accessible to non-specialists, or provide a general overview. The two last books contain state-of-the-art research on various subfields of Iranian and Persian linguistics. Although they are both very helpful to a linguistics connoisseur audience, they can be too technical for the growing number of second language specialists in charge of teaching in Persian language and culture programs the world over.

*The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy of Persian* offers a detailed overview of the field, discusses its development, and captures critical accounts of cutting-edge research within the major subfields of the acquisition and pedagogy of Persian as a second language. The handbook also discusses current debates and issues in the field and suggests productive lines of future research.

The book is divided into the following four parts: I) Theory-driven research on second language acquisition of Persian, II) Language skills in second language acquisition of Persian, III) Classroom research in second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian, and IV) Social aspects of second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian. Throughout the volume, transliterations and transcriptions have been based on the focus and topic of each chapter as well as the choice of each writer.

Part I investigates the heritage language and second language acquisition of Persian from a linguistics lens, through linguistics and second language acquisition theories. This part forms the building blocks of the field and contains fundamental discussions of the topics that are discussed later on in the book. In the following parts of the book, the focus is more on the practical and applied aspects of heritage language and second language acquisition of Persian in the classroom and in society. Topics relevant to the theory-driven research on second language acquisition of Persian are found in Chapters 2–8.

In Chapter 2, **Reza Falahati** begins with a review of the past and current state of research in Persian second language phonological acquisition, followed by a discussion of an experiment that he conducted, including the methodology used as well as the results. **Yasaman Rafat** in Chapter 3 discusses some of the different ways in which Persian heritage phonetics and phonology have been analyzed and compares them with some of the previously reported patterns in second language speech learning. In Chapter 4, **Karine Megerdooian** reviews the research previously conducted on Persian heritage linguistics, with a focus on the domains of phonology, morphology, and syntax. The author compares the linguistic competence of Persian heritage language learners with that of second language learners of Persian to identify similarities and differences between the two groups. **Azita H. Taleghani** in Chapter 5 focuses on the structural description of Persian progressive tenses, followed by the morpho-syntactic analysis of these tenses. In the empirical study presented in this chapter, the acquisition of Persian negative progressive tenses in monolingual, second language learners and heritage speakers of Persian is discussed and compared. The acquisition of second language morphology is investigated in Chapter 6 by **Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi**, who presents a series of experimental studies on second language learners of Persian and the way they process, comprehend, and acquire morphologically complex idiomatic expressions in Persian. In Chapter 7, **Masoud**

**Jasbi** presents some semantic features and markers specific to the Persian language and highlights the core semantic contribution of each marker in the process of second language acquisition of Persian. In Chapter 8, **Marzieh Mortazavinia** investigates to what extent English second language learners of Persian succeed in the acquisition of the system that the target language has for the expression of the additive presupposition associated with their first language, *hattā*, ‘even’.

Part II examines the acquisition and teaching of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as the subskills of grammar and vocabulary. This section will be particularly useful to instructors and material developers, since it includes specific studies carried out on each of these skills and subskills. This part of the book encompasses Chapters 9–14.

In Chapter 9, **Michael Craig Hillmann** gives a personal account of his journey learning Persian and discusses the most effective ways to teach Persian vocabulary. The chapter contains many sample exercises that can be used by instructors. **Behrooz Mahmoodi-Bakhtiari** in Chapter 10 examines a series of grammatical complexities of Persian that instructors of English-speaking learners of Persian encounter and offers some suggestions as to how to tackle them in class. **Yass Alizadeh** in Chapter 11 focuses on improving the listening skill of second language learners of Persian by introducing various audio models, such as the instructor’s voice, audio stories, songs, movies, speeches, interviews, and conversations, in class or at home via the internet and other media outlets. The author gives some examples of such material and discusses their effectiveness. In Chapter 12, **Musa Nushi** concentrates on the development of speaking skills by introducing some features of spoken Persian that may make acquiring the skill a challenge for non-Persian speakers, followed by the most effective ways to teach the speaking skill. The chapter ends with assessment criteria and procedures for evaluating performance on speaking activities. The development of reading skills in Persian is discussed in Chapter 13 by **Nahal Akbari** and **Ali Reza Abasi**, who examine the nature of reading, orthographic demands, textual authenticity and accessibility, vocabulary knowledge, frequency of reading, reading literature, and the specific challenges these topics pose to second language learners of Persian. In Chapter 14, **Ali Reza Abasi** focuses on the development of writing skills in Persian language classes and the pivotal role it plays in Persian language curricula. The chapter also discusses the integration of writing with other skills as well as the interaction between language proficiency and writing expertise.

Part III examines different teaching methodologies and suggests which methodologies and techniques work best for Persian language classrooms. This part is focused on classroom research in second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian, and it encompasses Chapters 15–22.

In Chapter 15, **Mehdi Marashi** focuses on the development of teaching Persian for proficiency in academia. The chapter starts by presenting a series of teaching methodologies that were adopted in the past in Persian language classes in the U.S., followed by its gradual development to proficiency-based teaching of Persian. Then the guidelines for proficiency-based teaching and testing of Persian as a second language are proposed and discussed. In Chapter 16, **Latifeh Hagigi** and **Michelle Quay** highlight some of the ways in which recent advances in the communicative approach, task-based learning, and content-based instruction can be applied to Persian language teaching. The tenets of each of these approaches are discussed, followed by a discussion of how these approaches can be adopted for Persian heritage language learners, second language learners of Persian, and mixed classes. Some hands-on techniques that the authors have found most effective are also presented. In Chapter 17, **Daria Mizza** and **Mohamad Esmaili-Sardari** present a series of practices supporting effective

blended language learning experiences, which has proven challenging for language educators. Throughout the chapter, the more traditional face-to-face approach is compared and combined with the on-line component. The authors of this chapter present their argument for this kind of blended teaching for Persian, and they give clear examples for an advanced Persian class that is taught using a blended teaching approach. Examples of efficient and inefficient multimedia-based instructional materials for the Persian language are presented by **Peyman Nojournian** in Chapter 18, followed by guidelines for the development of efficient instructional materials using modern technology, based on pedagogical principles of task-based language teaching. Some hands-on examples of such tasks are also presented in this chapter.

Also in Part III, **Anousha Shahsavari** discusses the development of reading skills through literature for Persian language courses in Chapter 19. This is followed by a description of the materials for such a course and the specific methodology that can be adopted in an intermediate level Persian language university class. The author gives an example of adopting Persian short stories in a reading course to help students improve their reading skill while acquiring the rich idiomatic forms of Persian literature. In Chapter 20, **Asghar Seyed-Gohrab** focuses on teaching Persian literature through a content-based approach. This chapter introduces the most important materials to be included in a Persian literature course whose language of instruction is Persian. The author of this chapter provides guidelines for material developers for a Persian literature course, with a focus on Persian poetry. In Chapter 21, **Amirreza Vakilifard** concentrates on Persian language assessment and the standard Persian language test developed in Iran that is widely used in different universities both within and outside Iran to measure students' Persian proficiency level. The author of this chapter first gives some general criteria for standard tests and then introduces the step-by-step development of the standard test he has devised, namely, SAMFA. **Nahal Akbari** in Chapter 22 also focuses on Persian language assessment and critically reviews different kinds of tests that have been devised for Persian language proficiency, such as the ACTFL's Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) test for Persian.

Part IV moves away from the specific linguistic features of the language, skills, and sub-skills of language acquisition, and teaching methodologies and techniques employed in Persian language classrooms, to the society where the language is spoken, acquired, and taught. This part, entitled 'Social aspects of second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian', includes Chapters 23–29.

In Chapter 23, **Negar Davari Ardakani** gives an overview of Iran's language landscape by presenting the Iranian languages and dialects spoken in Iran, with special attention to the most prominent ones. The author also discusses language minorities in Iran in the context of the dominant standard national language, Persian. This chapter also investigates multilingual education strategies in contrast to the dominant discourse of language planning and education in Iran. **Mahinnaz Mirdehghan** and **Saeed Reza Yousefi** in Chapter 24 discuss core and peripheral dialectal varieties of Persian. The chapter also gives a world-wide list of Persian teaching centers. Though not exhaustive, the list presents some useful information about the extent to which the Persian language is taught all over the world. The authors of this chapter highlight the necessity for a well-structured framework for teaching Persian to speakers of other languages. Then the authors introduce the *Persian Reference Framework* that they have developed and which is widely used in Iran. According to the authors, this framework has been developed based on the *Common European Framework of Reference* for teaching languages. The effect of learning context on the pragmatic competence of second language learners of Persian is investigated in Chapter 25 by **Zahra Hamedi Shirvan**. The author of the chapter also examines the extent to which the prevailing teaching materials have dealt with

and paid attention to pragmatic competence, whether implicitly or explicitly. Finally, a survey is presented and discussed, in which a questionnaire is used to assess the knowledge of conversational implicature and presupposition of second language learners of Persian. In Chapter 26, **Mahbod Ghaffari** discusses the phonological, morphological, semantic, and syntactic characteristics of Persian interlanguage of English native speakers who are learning Persian as a second language. **Shahzad Mahootian** and **Lewis Gebhardt** in Chapter 27 examine second language acquisition of Persian with special attention to Persian-English interlanguage and codeswitching. The chapter investigates the phonological and grammatical interlanguage phases of Persian second language acquisition and discusses the status of codeswitching vis-à-vis interlanguage. Learning strategies and learners' attitudes toward learning the language in several U.S. universities is investigated in Chapter 28 by **Azita Mokhtari**. Finally, **Ramin Sarraf** in Chapter 29 focuses on the importance of teaching the neologisms developed by the Academy of Persian Language and Literature in Persian language classes, especially in the advanced levels. The chapter begins with an overview of the activities of this academy and ends with some techniques and some sample lessons designed to teach neologisms in Persian language courses.

The goal of the editor of this volume has been to create connections between the various topics and subtopics of heritage and second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian. Furthermore, she aims to highlight the research done inside Iran, in Europe, and in North America so that the specialists of heritage and second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian working throughout the world may be informed of the research carried out beyond their immediate geographical locations. This is especially important for research done in Iran, as many studies are written in Persian and published only in Iran. It is hoped that by showcasing the cutting-edge works of top scholars of the field throughout the world, this volume will provide a platform for future research in the field of heritage and second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian.



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## PART I

# Theory-driven research on second language acquisition of Persian



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## 2

# THE ACQUISITION OF SEGMENTAL AND SUPRASEGMENTAL FEATURES IN SECOND LANGUAGE PERSIAN

A focus on prosodic parameters of politeness

*Reza Falahati*

### 2.1 Introduction

Studies in the field of second language phonology and prosody are relatively new, and few date back more than 50 years. In the case of Persian as a second language (L2), both the spread and timeframe for such research is more limited. The lack of studies on the sound system of L2 Persian contrasts sharply with the wealth of research that has been conducted on other aspects of the language. In fact, the literature is quite rich on many topics, including, but not limited to, morpho-syntax (Hung 2011; Shokri 2017; Tāherzādeh 2017; Dehqāni 2019), writing (Eslāmi 2014; Zandi 2016), verbal voice and aspect (Ahmadbeygi 2011; Hosseyni 2018), and prepositions (Kalāntari 2010; Alshā'er 2015). The goal of this chapter is twofold. First, it reviews and discusses studies concerning the acquisition of L2 segmental and suprasegmental features in Persian. Next, it presents the findings of an original research on the acquisition of prosodic parameters related to the expression of politeness by Persian L2 speakers as well as native Persian speakers. It is hoped that this study will encourage other scholars in the field to consider applying their own methodology to topics related to phonetics, pragmatics, and their interface.

This chapter is composed of two major sections and its outline is as follows. The first section contains a review of the past and current state of research in Persian L2 phonological acquisition. The next section will introduce a new study by reviewing the research related to the experiment that was conducted in the study. The methodology used in the experiment will be presented next. The general discussion and conclusions will make up the last two parts of this chapter.



## 2.2 Previous studies on Persian L2 phonological acquisition

The earliest studies on the Persian sound system either were not motivated by pedagogical purposes or did not consider Persian as the target for L2 acquisition. The first group of studies were mainly aimed at providing a description and comparison between the consonants and vowels in Persian versus other languages such as English (Āfāri 1978; Ghāderpour 1993), French (Mohseni Shabestari 1977; Kuhi 2000), Italian (Sālehi 2000), Azeri Turkish (Maryami 1997), and Japanese (Moghadam Kiyā 2006). These studies were primarily interested in finding cross-linguistic similarities and differences in the sound systems of languages. The second group of studies were conducted with some pedagogical goals. The main target of these researchers was finding the potential areas of difficulty for Persian native speakers learning other languages. The methodology adopted by this group was similar to that of the previous group in making a one-to-one comparison between the sounds in Persian as an L1 with those of other languages; however, the main drive of the research by the second group was presenting a list of phonemes that could be challenging for Persian native speakers learning other languages (e.g., Yarmohammadi 1969; Khalili 1995 [English]; Homāyounfard 1975 [Russian]; Rajabi Zargāhi 2001 [German]; Vakilifard 2003 [French]). Yarmohammadi (1969), for example, used a comparative method in order to predict the pronunciation errors Persian speakers make when learning consonants in American English. He used the manner of articulation as the starting point for classifying the sounds of the two languages. He divided the types of errors made by Persian learners of American English into four types: phonemic, phonetic, allophonic, and distributional. Phonemic errors happen when there are some phonemes in English such as /θ/ and /ð/ which are absent in Persian. An L2 learner of English might replace these two consonants by /s, t/ or /z, d/, respectively. In contrast to phonemic errors, the second type of errors (i.e., phonetic errors) happens when there is a mismatch between some of the features in English and Persian sounds. For example, the coronal stops /t/ and /d/ are alveolar in English while they are dental-alveolar in Persian. The phonetic errors happen when the Persian phonetic habits are transferred into English. This means that a Persian native speaker will pronounce the English phonemes /t/ and /d/ as dental-alveolar consonants. The third type of errors happens when the allophonic features of a Persian sound are being transferred into English. The voiceless plain stops /p, t, k/, for example, are unaspirated word-finally and medially after /s/, and before unstressed vowels in English, whereas these consonants are strongly aspirated (i.e., p<sup>h</sup>, t<sup>h</sup>, k<sup>h</sup>) in all positions in Persian. The Persian native speaker learning English will produce the English voiceless unaspirated stops /p, t, k/ with aspiration in all positions. According to Yarmohammadi, the errors of the last type are due to phonotactic constraints where some sequences of sounds are not allowed in either language. For example, Persian does not allow consonant clusters in syllable onset position, word-initially. So an English word like “student” will be rendered as “es.tu.dent” by a Persian speaker. The author considers such contrastive studies as guidelines for those who teach English to Persian native speakers to predict what pronunciation errors students may make. These studies were mainly interested in comparing the sound system of Persian as an L1 with that of other major languages as the L2. For an overview of some of the previously reported patterns in second language (L2) speech learning and different ways in which Persian heritage phonetics and phonology are analyzed, refer to Chapter 3.

In the past two decades or so, scholars have gradually shifted their attention to Persian as the target of L2 acquisition. However, they are still mainly under the influence of their predecessors by choosing goals similar to those of the earliest studies. This means that, similar to the authors of previous studies, they have set their main goal as finding the potential problem areas for Persian L2 learners. These studies have investigated L2 learners of Persian with a wide range

of L1 backgrounds such as English (Majd 2002); Russian (Bābāyi 2014); French (Osati 2015); Chinese (Sām 2011); Turkmen (Qarebāqi 2005); Italian (Osati 2015); Arabic (Sām 2011); Kurdish (Dārābi 2001; Mehdi Zādeh 2008); Danish (Ābediyān Kāsegari 2016); Azeri Turkish (Morādkhāni 2008); Spanish (Osati 2015); and Urdu (Mirdehghān 2009; Najafi Eskandari 2016). Most of these studies have used the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (Lado 1957) as the theoretical framework in their analyses. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) as a theory of phonological acquisition was quite dominant in the 1960s and 1970s. According to this theory, which was heavily inspired by Behaviorism, language learning is a process of habit formation. The fundamental accepted hypothesis in CAH is that the errors made by language learners during their language learning process are from the influence of their mother tongue. Researchers were supposed to systematically compare language learners' L1 and L2 in order to find the similarities and differences between them. The wide application of this theory led to three different versions of CAH: strong, weak, and moderate versions. According to the strong version of contrastive analysis, we could predict all the areas of problems for language learners by systematic comparisons of L1 and L2. Greater differences between L1 and L2 would cause bigger problems for language learners. The strong version of CAH soon proved to be not very realistic and practical. One problem was overprediction in the sense that it predicted errors that did not happen. The second problem with the strong version of CAH was that some of the errors made by L2 learners could not be attributed to their L1. This made scholars like Wardhaugh (1970) to propose the weak version of CAH, where one should study the errors made by L2 learners and try to come up with an explanation for such errors. This approach still depends on the errors that are due to the influence of language learners' L1. It differs from the strong version in the way that it tries to account for an error once it has happened, while the strong version tends to predict errors before their occurrence. According to the weak version, and contrary to the strong version, which assumes that mother tongue always interferes with the process of second language learning, language learners' L1s could function as facilitators in L2 communication. Both strong and weak versions of CAH were challenged by Oller and Ziahosseiny (1970), who argued that these two are either too extreme or too weak and proposed a moderate version of CAH. They believed that the theory should not be simply based on comparing and contrasting languages. Scholars should also include the process of language learning and the nature of language in their analyses. They stated that where a precise and fine distinction is needed between the two languages, the acquisition of the new item would prove to be difficult. L2 learners would have less difficulty with very new structures or sounds in the L2 compared with structures or sounds that are somehow similar to those in their L1. Minor differences might be missed by language learners while major differences are easily noticed. In this approach, intralingual errors are as important as interlingual errors.

In addition to CAH, the majority of the more recent studies cited previously focusing on the acquisition of the Persian sound system by L2 learners have also used the hierarchy of difficulty proposed by Prator (1967). This ranking suggests a level of difficulty for the acquisition of both phonological and syntactic elements in L2 learning. In this classification, the first level (i.e., zero) is the easiest, and the last level (i.e., five) is the most difficult level. Second language learners are expected to find elements belonging to level zero the easiest and the categories designated as level five the most difficult to learn. The six levels in the hierarchy of difficulty as suggested by Prator (1967) are presented in the following with some examples.

- 1 **Level zero or transfer:** The phonemes in the L1 and the L2 are the same. Language learners can transfer their L1 knowledge to the L2 with no interference. Examples are the labio-dental phonemes /f/ and /v/ in English and Persian.

- 2 **Level one or coalescence:** Two phonemes in the L1 merge into one in the L2. For example, English speakers learning Persian merge the two English phonemes /ʊ/ and /u/ into one phoneme /u/ in Persian.
- 3 **Level two or underdifferentiation:** A phonemic distinction existing in the L1 is absent in the L2. This could be like interdental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ in English, which are absent in Persian.
- 4 **Level three or reinterpretation:** Some of the features of a phoneme in the L1 need to be changed in L2. For example, English speakers learning Persian should replace the alveolar feature of /t/ and /d/ with a dental feature in order to achieve native-like production for these two phonemes in Persian.
- 5 **Level four or overdifferentiation:** A number of phonemes existing in the L2 are absent in the L1. Examples are the glottal stop /ʔ/, uvular stop /g/, and uvular fricative /χ/ in Persian which are absent in English.
- 6 **Level five or split:** One phoneme in the L1 is split into two in the L2. For instance, the phoneme /b/ in Arabic could be split into /p/ and /b/ in Persian and English.

The hierarchy of difficulty based on a comparison of Persian and English sound systems is provided in Table 2.2.1 following with some examples from English as an L1 and Persian as an L2.

According to the hierarchy of difficulty presented in Table 2.2.1, some sounds such as /p, b, f, v/ are the easiest for English native speakers learning Persian, and /χ, g, ʔ/ are the most challenging Persian sounds for them. Sām (2011) investigated the potential areas of difficulty for English, French, Russian, Turkish, Chinese, and Arabic native speakers learning Persian as a second language. In her research, she used CAH, as the theoretical framework, and the hierarchy of difficulty to determine which Persian sounds are the most challenging for these native speakers. Level four (i.e., overdifferentiation) was determined as the basis for selecting the target phonemes in her research. Table 2.2.2 following presents the phonemes selected based on level four of the hierarchy of difficulty for these six languages.

Table 2.2.1 Hierarchy of difficulty for English (L1) and Persian (L2) sound systems

Level 0: Transfer	p, b, f, v, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ, m, n, l, j, i, a, o, u, e, ε, ɔ
Level 1: Coalescence	.....
Level 2: Underdifferentiation	θ, ð, ŋ, w, ɪ, ʊ, ʌ
Level 3: Reinterpretation	t, d, k, g, ɹ, ŋ, h
Level 4: Overdifferentiation	χ, g, ʔ
Level 5: Split	.....

Source: adapted and modified from Sām (2011)

Table 2.2.2 Persian phonemes selected based on overdifferentiation level for English, French, Russian, Chinese, Arabic, and Turkish languages as L1

Language	Level four: overdifferentiation
English	χ, g, ʔ
French	h, r, ʔ, tʃ, dʒ, a, g, χ
Russian	h, ʔ, dʒ, a, g
Chinese	b, d, v, r, z, h, dʒ, g, ʔ, j
Arabic	j, p, v, ʒ, a, tʃ
Turkish	χ, g, ʔ

The first goal in Sām's study was to determine challenging and target sounds for all six of these groups of language learners in Persian. As the second goal, she developed some teaching lessons and incorporated these sounds into that material. Then she applied a specific teaching methodology (i.e., communicative language teaching) using the developed materials to see the effectiveness of the teaching method used in language learning. In a similar research, Ābediyān Kāsegarī (2016) studied the sound systems in Danish and Persian in order to provide a descriptive analysis regarding the similarities and differences between vowels and consonants in these two languages. Following the same methodology as in Sām, she classified the Persian sounds based on their level of difficulty for Danish learners of Persian. Vowel /a/ and uvular fricative /χ/ (out of seven phonemes absent in Danish /tʃ, dʒ, ɟ, χ, z, ʔ, ʒ/) were selected as the target phonemes for the experiment in the study. Vowel /a/ belongs to level three (i.e., reinterpretation) in the hierarchy of difficulty since this phoneme is a back vowel in Persian, whereas it is central in Danish, while the uvular fricative /χ/ belongs to level four. The primary goal of most of such studies was to provide pedagogical guidelines for L2 Persian teachers by presenting a list of challenging sounds in the language as well as giving feedback to syllabus designers and curriculum developers. The approach (i.e., CAH) adopted in these studies has received some criticisms in the field. Some argue that there is no fixed criterion for comparison across languages in this approach. Classifying sounds based on the hierarchy of difficulty is very shallow. For example, Dutch has only voiceless velar stop /k/ and lacks voiced velar stop /g/ in its inventory. Native Dutch speakers should split the voiceless velar stop in their language into /k/ and /g/ when learning English or Persian. According to the classification in the hierarchy of difficulty, this would be a good example for the level five difficulty level. However, assigning the same level of difficulty to /k/ and /g/ in English and Persian as an L2 and Dutch as an L1 could be quite superficial in this classification. The phonemes /k/ and /g/ are palatal in Persian, while these two phonemes in English and /k/ in Dutch are velar. English and Dutch share the same place of articulation for the voiceless velar stop, while the place of articulation for this sound in Persian is different. According to the hierarchy of difficulty, the acquisition of /k/ and /g/ in Persian for a Dutch native speaker can be both the difficulty levels three and five at the same time. The theoretical framework used in most of these studies does not allow one to correctly capture all the fine and allophonic distinctions across languages.

The hierarchy of difficulty also predicts that unfamiliar sounds which are absent in the L1 will be the most difficult to learn and the sounds which exist in both L1 and L2 are easy to learn. In fact, research in the acquisition of L2 phonology has shown that this claim is not quite viable. Elliot (1997) found that English native speakers learning Spanish made a major improvement in their pronunciation of the voiced alveolar trill (a sound which is absent in English) versus the voiced stop and nonfricative continuant allophones. It seems that the acquisition of allophones requires more time and instruction than the acquisition of new phonemes.

In addition to the weaknesses in the theoretical framework (i.e., CAH) adopted in most of the recent studies on the acquisition of the Persian sound system, the research in this area is mainly limited to the segmental level. The number of studies that have included the suprasegmental features in their analyses is quite low. Osati (2015) investigated the sound systems of French, Italian, and Spanish versus Persian and included syllabification, phonotactics, and stress patterns in her comparative study. She considered the syllable types in Persian as CV, CVC, and CVCC.<sup>1</sup> Persian onsets can have a maximum of one consonant, and codas can have two consonants. Italian shows bigger variety with eight syllable templates (i.e., CV, CVC, V, VC, CCV, CCVC, CCCV, CCCVC). This language can have a maximum of three consonants in the onset position and one consonant in the coda position. A single vowel can make an independent syllable in Italian. French with twelve syllable templates (i.e., CV, CVC, CVCC, V,

VC, VCC, CCV, CCVC, CCVCC, CCCV, CCCVC, and CCCVCC) shows the biggest variety among the four languages. French can have a maximum of three consonants in the onset and two consonants in the coda position. The syllable templates in Persian are just a small subset of French. Spanish has nine syllable templates (i.e., CV, CVC, CVCC, V, VC, VCC, CCV, CCVC, CCVCC), which is three times bigger than Persian. In Spanish, a syllable can start and end with zero to two consonants. Osati states that only Italian speakers will have problems with CVCC syllables in Persian since it is absent in their L1 language. The Persian words with consonant clusters in the coda position will be challenging for Italian speakers. French and Spanish learners of Persian will face no problem with Persian syllabification since they have all three of the syllable types in their languages. Stress in Persian, as the second suprasegmental feature investigated in this research, tends to fall on word-final position. But if the word contains negative, imperative, or present continuous prefixes, then stress falls on those prefixes. In Italian and Spanish, most words have stress on the penultimate syllable. Stress in French is quite predictable and falls on the last syllable of any syntactic group. Based on the stress patterns in these three languages, Osati predicts that the speakers of all three of these languages learning Persian should have problems with this prosodic feature in Persian. As for phonotactics, the combinations of /ml/ and /mr/ in the codas of Persian words are expected to be the most difficult for Italian speakers. Spanish learners are also expected to have problem with {r/dʒ/b} + /d/ and s+{k/t} combinations in coda position. Table 2.2.3 summarizes the potential areas of problems that speakers of Italian, French, and Spanish may have when learning Persian as an L2. These phonemes are selected based on level four (i.e., overdifferentiation) in the hierarchy of difficulty.

In a similar study, Bābāyi (2014) pursued the same research questions as Osati did with Russian as the L1 and found Persian consonants /G, h, ʔ, dʒ/ and vowel /a/ the most challenging sounds for Russian speakers learning Persian. Syllabification in Persian was not found to be an issue for Russian learners of Persian. All these studies have only tried to predict the potential problem areas of L2 Persian learners, and there is no attempt made to collect data from L2 learners to investigate the actual errors made by them. There are two studies, however, that have tried to provide a classification of error types by collecting data from Persian L2 speakers. They used three different tasks for data elicitation, such as reading a short story, retelling a story, and reciting a memory. Najafi Eskandari (2016) has reported that the errors of female Urdu speakers in her study were due to vowels (92.6%), consonants (0.09%), and syllabification (6.5%). Vowels /æ, e, v, o/ and consonant /g/ had the highest rate of errors among Urdu speakers learning Persian as an L2. In another study on Iraqi Arabic students learning Persian, Vāsegh (2009) stated that students' errors could be classified into three different groups: interlingual (97.5%), intralingual (1.9%), and educational (0.6%). The highest rate of interlingual errors was due to using alveolar trill /r/ rather than alveolar tap /r/ and also

Table 2.2.3 Potential areas of problem for Italian, French, and Spanish speakers learning Persian as an L2

Language	Phonemes	Syllable	Stress	Phonotactic
Italian	h, ʔ, ʒ, g, ʒ, a	CVCC	Penultimate stress	/ml/, /mr/
French	h, r, ʔ, tʃ, dʒ, ʒ	.....	No specific stress	.....
Spanish	v, z, h, dʒ, g, ʔ, j, f, ʒ, æ	.....	Penultimate stress	{r/dʒ/b} + /d/ s+{k/t}

producing pharyngeal fricative /ħ/ in place of glottal fricative /h/. The intralingual errors were mainly due to overgeneralization, such as adding /h/ before definite marker /-e/ where it was not needed, such as /muħe-h-e/, and devoicing coronal stop /d/ where it is not allowed, such as /kilit-o/ rather than /kilid-o/. Missing some common alternations such as changing /a/ to /u/ in words such as /goldan/ were considered to be educational errors. These two studies were either limited to having impressionistic analysis of data or using very young students as participants, which does not allow cross-study comparison.

In more recent years, there have been some studies that have used other theoretical frameworks to test the Persian L2 data against different approaches. Falahati (2015), for example, investigated the acquisition of rhotics by Mandarin speakers learning Persian. The major goal of his study was to test one of the predictions made by the Speech Learning Model (Flege 1995). According to this approach, sounds in L1 and L2 are related perceptually to one another at a position-sensitive allophonic level, rather than at a more abstract phonemic level. A new phonetic category can be established for an L2 sound that differs phonetically from the closest L1 sound. This is conditioned by the fact that language learners detect at least some of the phonetic differences between L1 and L2 sounds. Falahati in his study examined whether Mandarin speakers learning Persian as a non-native language acquire all position-sensitive variants of the phoneme /r/ in Persian. This sound has four allophonic variants in Persian: tap, trill, fricative, and approximant. According to Samareh (2002), rhotics in Persian could be realized as either trills or fricatives word-finally, depending on the preceding vocalic environment, and as taps or approximants intervocally. Mandarin lacks trill, one of the allophonic variants of Persian rhotics, and this is considered to be a new sound for Mandarin speakers learning Persian. Falahati ran a series of casual interviews to collect data, resulting in 1252 tokens. He reported that all speakers produce the trill allophonic variant, which exists in Persian but is absent in Mandarin. However, their contextual distribution did not show the same pattern as that produced by native speakers. He suggested that extra-linguistic factors should also be considered in order to get a fuller picture of non-native allophonic production (see Rafat 2010, for a similar study on Persian native speakers). You can read more about Rafat's research on Persian heritage and second language phonology in this volume in Chapter 3.

The research on Persian L2 phonological acquisition is quite limited in its use of existing theoretical frameworks in the field. Besides, most of the L2 studies on the Persian sound system have focused on the acquisition of segments. Studies directed toward the phonetic realization of stress and prosody in Persian L2 are quite few. Sadeghi and Mansoori Hararehdasht (2016) conducted the first study on the acquisition of sentence stress in Persian by Mandarin native speakers. Persian uses the F0 contour as the primary acoustic correlate of stress followed by duration and intensity, which serve as other acoustic cues to distinguish stress contrast in this language. The main goal in this study was to see whether Mandarin native speakers learning Persian will use the three most reliable acoustic correlates in Persian in a similar way to that of native speakers. The results showed that despite the fact that the two groups (i.e., Mandarin speakers of Persian and native speakers of Persian) use F0 variation in Persian to differentiate stressed from unstressed words, Mandarin speakers produced stressed words with a significantly higher F0 than did Persian native speakers. The two groups similarly produced stressed words with longer durations; however, Mandarin speakers showed significantly less difference between the duration of stressed versus unstressed words than did Persian native speakers. The results of this study also showed that intensity is the most comparable acoustic measure across stressed and unstressed words in the two groups. In addition to this study on the acquisition of L2 stress, Hosseini, Bijan Khān, and Moqadamkiyā (2009) also conducted one of the earliest studies comparing Persian and Japanese at the suprasegmental level using

the Autosegmental-Metrical Phonology framework. The main goal of their study was to see whether language learners will transfer the prosodic features of their L1 to the target language. Persian has an intonational property in which nuclear pitch accent is followed by the deaccentuation of the upcoming elements in WH-questions. In contrast, Japanese does not show such a behavior, and all the accentual phrases in this language keep their pitch accent in interrogatives. The findings of this study showed that Japanese speakers learning Persian and Persian native speakers learning Japanese are influenced by the intonational properties of their L1, and the accentuation of their read utterances and words in the target language follows the same rules and constraints as their L1.

In this section, we presented a historical overview of second language (L2) phonological acquisition in Persian. A large number of studies working on Persian L2 segmental acquisition have followed a similar methodology and adopted the same theoretical framework. Among the work reviewed in this section, there is a notable bias toward using CAH as the research paradigm as well as using Prator's hierarchy of difficulty. This has both advantages and disadvantages. Using a similar methodology allows one to control for methods of elicitation, data coding, and analysis. This is good since the researchers can explore how much the findings across studies are generalizable. However, the field of Persian L2 phonological acquisition can benefit from a variety of frameworks for second language speech (e.g., Markedness Differential Hypothesis (Eckman 1977), Perceptual Assimilation Model (Best 1995), Speech Learning Model (Flege 1995), Perceptual Interference Model (Brown 1998)), and each research study can provide insights into a better understanding regarding the true nature of L2 phonological attainment.<sup>2</sup> Learners' characteristics such as language aptitude, motivation, attitude, and age of acquisition can contribute to individual variation and have an impact on the acquisition of segmental and suprasegmental features (see, for example, Gardner (1968), Flege, Munro, and MacKay (1995), Piske, MacKay, and Flege (2001), Rafat and Stevenson (2018)). Contextual factors such as learning a language as a second or foreign language could also open another window to research in the growing field of Persian L2 phonological acquisition (see Moyer (2009) for the role of L2 input).

The field of Persian L2 phonological acquisition could also expand more by the initiation of studies on the perception of speech. Research has shown that the lack of native-like competency for producing L2 sounds is mostly related to the loss of perceptual sensitivity to non-native sounds in childhood. The L1 sound system acts as a filter that affects the perception of L2 sounds, and this is specifically reflected in the ones that are acoustically different from L1 sounds. Different models of speech perception such as the Perceptual Assimilation Model (Best and Strange 1992; Strange 1995; Tyler et al. 2014) can be explored to see how their predictions can explain different aspects of phonological acquisition in Persian.

The studies reviewed in this section showed that the field of L2 phonological acquisition in Persian is growing, but areas such as L2 prosody still remain underinvestigated. There is a pressing need for further investigation on this aspect of Persian L2 phonology. The following section presents an original study that aims at exploring the interaction between prosodic parameters and pragmatic strategies used by Persian L2 speakers as well as those used by native speakers of Persian.

### 2.3 Present study

Language, as one of the most complex communication systems in the world, requires the interaction of different linguistic aspects such as syntax, semantics, morphology, phonology, and pragmatics. In order to produce an acceptable and native-like sentence, L2 learners need to have a good command of these linguistic aspects. Pragmatics, as a subfield of linguistics,

deals with how context and interlocutors would affect the meaning that is being communicated between speaker and listener. This aspect of language is normally the most challenging part for L2 learners (Taguchi 2011). Knowing the appropriate way of saying things requires an interplay among different levels of linguistic knowledge. The current study aims at exploring the phonetics-pragmatics interface by looking at how L2 learners of Persian have acquired different levels of formality used in formal and informal registers. This research, more specifically, explores the interaction between prosodic measures and the expression of politeness. Despite the fact that research on the interface between prosody and politeness is fast growing, the number of empirical studies investigating this area is still quite limited (Orozco 2008, 2010; Winter and Grawunder 2012). There is an even larger scarcity of studies exploring the contribution of prosodic features to the expression of politeness in an L2 setting. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study investigating the acquisition of prosodic features used in politeness strategies among Persian L2 learners. Because of this, it is necessary to include a review of work conducted outside the field of L2 Persian since certain important issues and topics have not yet been covered in Persian L2 acquisition. In the following, a review of the theory on politeness and then a review of the studies showing the interaction between phonetic parameters and pragmatic strategies for showing politeness are presented.

## **2.4 Politeness and phonetic features**

Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory on politeness is certainly the most influential in the field. The primary aim of this model is to account for politeness in face-to-face interaction. According to this theory, some speech acts will threaten the face of the hearer (e.g., advice and orders), the speaker (e.g., confession and apologies), or both (e.g., requests and offers). The extent of the threat in a speech act depends on three variables: the social distance between the interlocutors, the relative power of the speaker and hearer, and the cost of imposition. For example, if a student is making a request like asking for a recommendation letter from his professor, the socio-pragmatic level of his/her speech is different from the level when s/he asks for a dictionary from a peer. The earliest reference on the interaction between pragmatics and phonetics dates back to Pike (1945), who attributed rising contours to polite and cheerful contexts. Ohala (1984), in an in-depth study on cross-species unrelated phonological and phonetic facts, stated that the biologically determined Frequency Code is responsible for a number of disparate phenomena including the expression of politeness. This approach explained the similarities and differences for using pitch across languages and cultures. Ohala said that high and/or rising fundamental frequency (i.e., F<sub>0</sub>) is associated with politeness and other sociopragmatic meanings such as submission, lack of confidence, and deference, while speech with low pitch and/or falling F<sub>0</sub> is connected with authority, dominance, and assertion. There are also other studies that have emphasized the interplay between high pitch and polite speech (Brown and Levinson 1987; Pike 1945; Gussenhoven 2004). Higher pitch range is also reported to be correlated with perceived politeness in British English and Dutch (Chen, Gussenhoven, and Rietveld 2004) as well as for a number of Spanish varieties in Latin America (Nadeu and Prieto 2011). The universal nature of the Frequency Code and pitch range was used later, in other studies, to explain other sociopragmatic meanings such as different degrees of surprise and emphasis (e.g., Chen, Gussenhoven, and Rietveld 2002, 2004). Additionally, there have been some studies that have proposed a correlation between politeness and segmental alternation. Basque speakers, for example, palatalize some consonants when they talk to good friends, children, or people with whom they want to show solidarity (Corum 1975). The palatalization rule is also applied in Japanese, where words



such as *Taro-san* are changed to *Taro-chan*. Brown and Levinson (1987, 267) consider the application of such a phonological rule as a strategy that “the language provides specifically for positive-politeness usage”. In addition to such phonetic alternations, there are also other suprasegmental features that are stated to have an interaction with the realization of politeness. Features such as creaky voice in Tzeltal and breathy voice in Japanese (for females) are two examples (Brown and Levinson 1987).

The universality of the Frequency Code has been questioned in recent years. Also, research has shown that there are other acoustic cues which contribute to the expression of sociopragmatic meanings such as politeness in speech. To pursue such a goal, Winter and Grawunder (2012) investigated the phonetic profile of Korean formal and informal speech registers. The formal register is characterized as a normative form of politeness in this language. Contrary to the predictions made by the Frequency Code, the authors found that in formal speech, Korean speakers lowered their average fundamental frequency and pitch range. Additionally, this study showed that low intensity and breathiness as well as a bigger number of hesitation markers and filled pauses are other peculiar acoustic characteristics of formal register. Grawunder, Oertel, and Schwarze (2014) tested the findings of Winter and Grawunder’s (2012) research in a new experiment collecting both acoustic and electroglottographic data with participants from Germany and Austria. While both groups showed lower speaking rates as well as higher rates of filled pauses and hesitation markers in polite (i.e., formal) conditions, it was only the German group that revealed lower pitch, intensity, and harmonics-to-noise ratio in formal register.

In a more recent study, Hübscher, Borràs-Comes, and Prieto (2017) examined the prosodic components of politeness in Catalan in both formal and informal registers. In addition to F0, the authors included other prosodic parameters such as duration, voice quality, and intensity in their analyses. The results of their study showed a slower speech rate, a lower mean pitch, less intensity, less shimmer and less jitter, and an increase in H1–H2 in the formal register. The authors state that the Frequency Code appears not to hold for Catalan. Rather, they suggest that the speakers of this language use a phonetic mitigation strategy involving various prosodic correlates. Despite the growing literature on the interaction between prosody and politeness, there is still a gap in this field. The universal nature of the Frequency Code hypothesis is not settled yet. The current study aims at adding to the body of literature in this field by exploring this hypothesis in L1 and L2 and a language pairing that is novel (i.e., Persian and Russian). Research has shown that L2 learners may transfer linguistic and pragmatic knowledge from their first language to their new language (Félix-Brasdefer 2004; Wannaruk 2008; Allami and Naeimi 2011). The current study aims at exploring the interaction between prosodic features and the realization of politeness among Persian native speakers and L2 learners. This study aims at addressing the following six research questions:

- Q1:** Is there a correlation between the usage of lexical and morpho-syntactic markers and the application of formal register among Persian native speakers?
- Q2:** Is there a correlation between the usage of lexical and morpho-syntactic markers and the application of formal register among Persian L2 speakers?
- Q3:** Is there a correlation between the higher pitch and the application of formal register among Persian native speakers?
- Q4:** Is there a correlation between the higher pitch and the application of formal register among Persian L2 speakers?
- Q5:** Is there a correlation between other prosodic parameters (i.e., intensity, jitter, shimmer, and H1–H2) as well as duration and the application of formal register among Persian native speakers?

**Q6:** Is there a correlation between other prosodic parameters (i.e., intensity, jitter, shimmer, and H1–H2) as well as duration and the application of formal register among Persian L2 speakers?

In order to address our research questions, we analyze a wide range of syntactic (e.g., verbal endings and personal pronouns) and acoustic cues related to the expression of politeness such as F0, intensity, voice quality, breathiness, pitch contour, and duration. The formal speech register is used on a daily basis when speaking to strangers or people belonging to a higher echelon of society. Therefore, the formal register is associated with expressing politeness in our study. Our prediction is that Persian L2 speakers should show similar syntactic and prosodic features in formal situations as native speakers. The methodology adopted in our study is very similar to Winter and Grawunder (2012) and Hübscher, Borràs-Comes, and Prieto (2017). However, this study departs from previous work by considering a new language (i.e., Persian) and including L2 speakers in the analyses. Our findings will help to see how the predictions made by the Frequency Code and other studies supporting this hypothesis are borne out. They also reveal whether other syntactic and phonetic factors have any interactions with formality levels. Finally, we discover whether L2 speakers exhibit patterns similar to those of native speakers regarding the adjustments made to morpho-syntactic markers and phonetic cues in formal and informal situations.

## **2.5 Methodology**

### **2.5.1 Participants**

Four Russian native speakers learning Persian as an L2 (two male and two female), aged 22–24, volunteered to participate in our experimental task. They were all at the advanced level and had started learning Persian three years ago as a requirement for their program. They were studying either linguistics at the University of Moscow or humanities at the University of Russia. They all knew some English at the time of this study. Additionally, six female native speakers of Persian, aged 21–26, also participated in our study. They were all living in the Iranian capital city and had Tehrani Persian accents. None of the subjects were aware of the objectives and the questions of the study.

### **2.5.2 Materials**

In our experiment, we elicited semispontaneous speech data using Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT, henceforth). DCT has been widely used for pragmatic and phonetic studies with great success (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989; Billmyer and Varghese 2000; Félix-Brasdefer 2010; Winter and Grawunder 2012; Hübscher, Borràs-Comes, and Prieto 2017, among others). The advantage of using DCTs is that such tasks provide participants with a situational prompt and control for a set of contextual factors at the same time. As a result, DCTs provide data that is comparable, systematic, and quantifiable. According to Hübscher, Borràs-Comes, and Prieto (2017, 149), “[a]lthough spontaneous, naturally-occurring data would be ideal, when recording spontaneously-produced speech data, it is very difficult to control for social variables such as gender, age, social distance and power and create fully comparable situations”. DCTs have proved to be an ideal method of examining the pragmatic speech data in a controlled way.

The speech acts “making a request” and “information-seeking” were incorporated into five formal situations and five informal situations in our DCT (three “making a request” and two

“information seeking”). These speech acts both require certain degrees of face-threat. They served as an initiation for collecting close-to-natural speech data (see Appendix for full scripts of DCTs in Persian and English translations). These situations allowed for controlling the three variables (i.e., social distance, relative power, and cost of imposition) that affect the extent of face-threat in an interaction. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), interlocutors mitigate their level of formality (i.e., degree of politeness) based on these three factors. Since the participants in our study were all university students, the interlocutors in the formal context were well-established professors versus students. The interlocutors in the informal setting were students versus a peer or a roommate. The following examples provide two prompts used in formal (1) and informal (2) situations.

### (1) *Formal situation*

Shomā beh daftar-e ostād Alavi miravid tā yek mo‘arrefi nāmeḥ begirid. Shomā qasd dārid dar Āmrikā beh edāmeḥ tahsil bepardāzid va in nāmeḥ joz'-e mohemmi az darkhāst-e bursiyeh-ye shomā ast. Chegūneh az ostādetān in darkhāst rā mikonid?

Suppose that you go to the office of Professor Alavi to ask for a recommendation letter. You are going to continue your studies in the U.S. and this letter is an important part of your scholarship application. How do you make such a request from your professor?

### (2) *Informal situation*

Shomā bā seh ham otāqi-ye Irāni dar khābgāh-e dāneshjuyi zendegi mikonid. Sen-e tamām-e ānhā kamtar az shomāst. Yeki az ānhā ke Mohsen nām dārad farhang-e loḡhat-e elekteroniki-ye shomā rā qarz gereftēh ast. Fardā āzmun-e engelisi dārid va emshab ān rā bāyad pas begirid. Beh Mohsen cheh miguyid tā farhang-e loḡhat rā pas begirid?

Suppose you live with three Iranian roommates in a dormitory. They are all younger than you. One of them named Mohsen has borrowed your electronic dictionary. You have an English exam tomorrow and must take your dictionary back tonight. What do you say to Mohsen to have your dictionary back?

In order to stimulate more natural data, participants were presented with a picture for each situation illustrating the location and the interlocutors involved in that setting. This could be like a professor and a student in an office or a few young university students in a dormitory room (this method is similar to what Winter and Grawunder (2012) have used).

## 2.5.3 *Procedure*

The acoustic data for L2 speakers was collected in the Center of Teaching Persian to Speakers of Other Languages located at Allame Tabataba'i University. Each participant was recorded individually using the digital tape recorder Zoom H4n. Data was recorded at the sampling rate of 44.1 KHz/16 bits. Participants first received instructions about the experiment. A native speaker of Persian (i.e., the author of this chapter) explained the whole procedures to the participant. Then they received 10 cards in a sequence describing the prompt contexts, five for formal situations and five for informal situations. They were given one formal card followed by one informal card. Participants were asked to imagine that the situations were quite real between them and one of their professors/peers and were asked to do their best to perform the tasks as naturally as possible. This led to them producing 40 utterances (4 participants × 5 situations × 2 conditions). Of this total, five of them had to be

discarded since they did not contain the intended speech acts due to misunderstanding of the prompt by L2 speakers.

All the native speakers of Persian were recorded individually in a sound-attenuated booth located at the Linguistic Laboratory in Alzahra University. Microphone Roland DR-80C was used on a fixed stand for recording acoustic data with 44.1 kHz/16-bit sampling. The procedure for eliciting data for native speakers was similar to that of L2 speakers except for the fact that a research assistant helped to run the experiment. The data collection for the native speakers resulted in 60 utterances (6 participants × 5 situations × 2 conditions).

### 2.5.4 Labelling and data coding

The annotation and labelling procedure was conducted with Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2019). Two research assistants annotated and labelled the data in the study. The author of this chapter then selectively checked a subset of annotated data for accuracy. Figure 2.1 following shows an example of the annotation scheme used in this study (this procedure is mainly based on Hübscher, Borràs-Comes, and Prieto 2017).

The first tier in the annotation contains the orthographic transcription of utterances, separated by words. The second tier marked the boundaries between syllables. Four different categories were indicated on this tier: regular and fluent syllables marked with the letter “s”, filled pauses due to breath intakes marked with the letter “b”, silent pauses marked with the letter “p”, and syllables that were prolonged due to hesitation, etc. marked with “es”. Such a coding allowed us later to calculate the mean duration of words, syllables, and pauses. In the third tier, intonational phrases (IP) were marked first. The pragmatic category of each IP

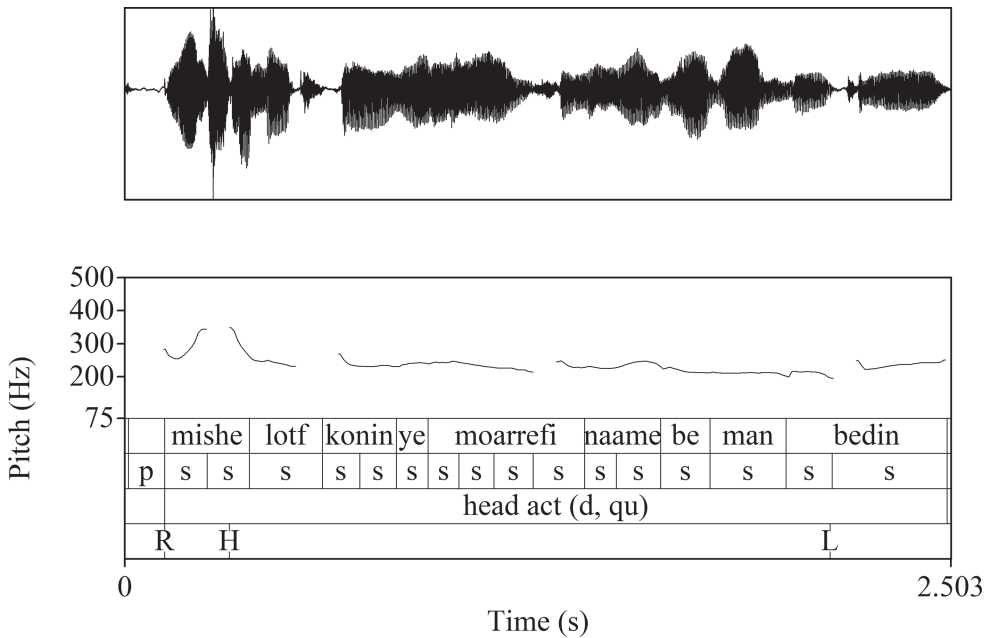


Figure 2.1 Waveform and F0 contour of a request (formal register) followed by orthographic, pragmatic, and prosodic annotations (tiers 1–4)

was then determined based on their functions. The sentences that were the actual realization of the speech acts were labelled as “head acts”. This could be a sentence like “can I borrow your dictionary for my exam tomorrow?”. The other strategies used along with head acts such as preparators, precursors, reason, and appreciators were marked in tier three as well (for more information on this classification, see Félix-Brasfeder 2005). In this chapter, for some of the analyses, the head acts in the IPs are distinguished from the other strategies. The next piece of information annotated in tier three was the grammatical structure of head acts (e.g., imperative, declarative, direct question, and indirect question) as well as their mood (e.g., imperative, indicative, conditional-imperative, and conditional-indicative). This coding scheme was based on the classification presented by Mahootian (1997). You can read more about Mahootian’s work in Chapter 27 in this volume, where she talks about interlanguage and code-switching.

In tier four, three landmarks were manually indicated in each IP. The start time of the pitch contour in each IP was marked with the letter “R”, the lowest F0 in each IP marked with the letter “L”, and the highest F0 within each IP marked with the letter “H”. A script was used to extract the means of F0, intensity, jitter, and shimmer in annotated syllables.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the amplitude difference between the first and second harmonics (i.e., H1–H2) was obtained automatically using a separate script.

## 2.6 Results

In this section, the results of different syntactic and phonetic measures for Persian L2 speakers are presented along with the corresponding results for Persian native speakers. The results should be interpreted by comparing the informal condition versus formal condition in the same group (i.e., Persian L2 speaker group and Persian native speaker group). No attempt is made here to compare the absolute values and measures across the two groups. The results related to lexical and morphological marking in the two groups are presented first followed by the results for the pitch measures. Next, the results for voice quality and intensity measures are reported. In the last part of this section, the speech rate dependent variables are reported. The statistical package R (R Core Team 2016) was used for data analysis in our study.

Persian uses a number of lexical and morpho-syntactic markers to tease apart the formal (i.e., polite) from informal (i.e., casual) registers. We extracted the information for such a distinction from tier one (i.e., orthography). This included the verbal endings and personal pronouns. The plural verbal endings [id] or [in] and personal pronoun *shomā* were classified as formal register, while singular verbal endings [i] and the personal pronoun *to* were treated as informal register.<sup>4</sup> Only head acts were used for this analysis (see Table 2.6.4). The number of head acts in the L2 group ( $N = 37$ ) and native group ( $N = 71$ ) were higher than the total number of approved utterances in each group, since participants sometimes used more than one head act within the same utterance. Tables 2.6.1 and 2.6.2 present the mean number of utterances produced by each speaker containing different lexical and morpho-syntactic markers in native and L2 groups, respectively. These tables also contain the results of a series of *t*-tests for dependent samples. Persian L2 learners use singular verb morphology in informal conditions more than in formal conditions. This is very similar to the results from native speakers; however, the native participants use the singular and plural verb morphology in a very categorical way. This means that they use singular verb morphology in all informal conditions and plural verb morphology in all formal conditions. Contrary to native speakers, L2 learners use singular verb morphology in formal conditions as well. The native group displayed more indicative and conditional-subjunctive moods in formal register conditions, whereas L2 learners used

Table 2.6.1 Mean number of utterances produced by each Persian native speaker (and standard deviations) for different lexical and morpho-syntactic markers in the two formality conditions. The table also includes the results of a series of *t*-tests. The degrees of freedom for the *t*-tests are 5

Measure	Informal		Formal		t-Test results	
	M	SD	M	SD	t	p
Singular verb morphology	5.50	0.83	0.00	0.00	-16.102	0.00
Plural verb morphology	0.00	0.00	6.33	1.21	-12.810	0.00
Imperative	1.50	1.87	0.00	0.00	1.964	0.10
Indicative	1.16	1.47	2.16	1.33	1.732	0.14
Conditional indicative	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	NA	NA
Conditional subjunctive	2.83	0.98	4.16	0.98	2.169	0.08
Indirect questions	1.05	1.03	3.66	1.03	5.398	0.00
Declaratives	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	NA	NA
Direct questions	2.83	1.60	2.50	0.55	-0.598	0.58
Imperatives	1.66	1.75	0.16	0.41	-1.964	0.11

Table 2.6.2 Mean number of utterances produced by each Persian L2 speaker (and standard deviations) for different lexical and morpho-syntactic markers in the two formality conditions. The table also includes the results of a series of *t*-tests. The degrees of freedom for the *t*-tests are 3

Measure	Informal		Formal		t-Test results	
	M	SD	M	SD	t	p
Singular verb morphology	5.00	0.82	0.75	1.50	-8.878	0.00
Plural verb morphology	0.00	0.00	3.50	1.00	7.000	0.00
Imperative	0.25	0.50	0.00	0.00	-1.000	0.39
Indicative	1.50	1.73	1.75	1.71	1.000	0.39
Conditional indicative	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	NA	NA
Conditional subjunctive	3.25	0.96	2.50	1.29	-1.567	0.21
Indirect questions	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.96	1.566	0.21
Declaratives	0.50	1.00	0.00	0.00	-1.000	0.39
Direct questions	4.25	0.50	3.50	1.29	-1.192	0.32
Imperatives	0.25	0.50	0.00	0.00	-1.000	0.39

more conditional-subjunctive mood in informal conditions. Imperative mood is only used in informal conditions by the two groups. Indirect questions are the most frequent form used by native speakers in formal register while direct questions are used the most by L2 speakers in this register. Imperatives are used in informal conditions more often than formal conditions in two groups.

Tables 2.6.3 and 2.6.4 display the means and standard deviations of four pitch measures in the study for the two groups in both hertz and semitones. Average pitch was extracted automatically for all fluent syllables in utterances. Three other measures, namely reference line, top line, and baseline, were marked manually (see Table 2.6.4). These two tables also present the results of a series of *t*-tests for dependent samples. For the native speakers, all the values for the four pitch measures were lower in the formal condition than in the informal condition. The

Table 2.6.3 Mean F0 and standard deviation for four pitch measures (overall pitch, reference line, baseline, and top line) for Persian native speakers in the two formality conditions. The table also includes the results of a series of *t*-tests. The degrees of freedom for the *t*-tests are 5

Measure		Informal		Formal		t-Test results	
		M	SD	M	SD	t	P
Average pitch	(Hz)	242.08	52.46	234.00	55.84	-2.727	0.04
	(st)	14.80	3.73	14.08	0.09	-3.431	0.01
Reference line	(Hz)	240.14	47.06	233.58	54.57	-0.449	0.67
	(st)	14.83	3.39	14.24	3.96	-0.804	0.45
Top Line	(Hz)	295.60	52.17	282.37	52.94	-2.607	0.04
	(st)	18.49	3.05	17.66	3.25	-2.613	0.04
Baseline	(Hz)	207.32	54.68	186.47	53.84	-4.556	0.00
	(st)	18.49	3.19	9.96	5.64	-3.984	0.01

Table 2.6.4 Mean F0 and standard deviation for four pitch measures (overall pitch, reference line, baseline, and top line) for Persian L2 speakers in the two formality conditions. The table also includes the results of a series of *t*-tests. The degrees of freedom for the *t*-tests are 3

Measure		Informal		Formal		t-Test results	
		M	SD	M	SD	t	P
Average pitch	(Hz)	170.47	49.61	174.73	54.51	-0.507	0.64
	(st)	8.50	4.66	8.77	4.78	-0.850	0.45
Reference line	(Hz)	171.59	47.98	166.90	49.93	-0.528	0.63
	(st)	8.68	4.84	8.13	5.06	-0.603	0.59
Top Line	(Hz)	202.67	52.56	193.24	51.65	-1.849	0.16
	(st)	11.67	4.40	10.81	4.76	-1.703	0.18
Baseline	(Hz)	148.45	41.00	146.53	40.63	-0.896	0.43
	(st)	6.18	4.82	5.96	4.76	-0.739	0.51

results of the *t*-tests showed that such differences, except for reference line values, were statistically significant. The Persian L2 speakers do not show a similar pattern across the four pitch measures. While the values for reference line, top line, and baseline were slightly lower in the formal condition than in the informal condition, the value for average pitch was a bit higher in the formal register. The results of a series of *t*-tests proved that none of these differences were statistically significant. The results of L2 speakers for pitch measures are very different from the results displayed by native speakers. The pitch range (i.e., the distance between the lowest and highest F0 mean values) was much bigger for native speakers in both formal and informal conditions than for L2 speakers. Native speakers showed a bigger pitch range in formal conditions than in informal conditions, while this was reversed for L2 speakers.

Tables 2.6.5 and 2.6.6 present the results of measures of voice quality in each syllable for the two groups. These include intensity (in dB), H1-H2 in dB (i.e., the difference in amplitude between the first and second harmonics), jitter (i.e., perturbation by F0 period), and shimmer (i.e., perturbation by amplitude). The results of a series of *t*-tests for dependent samples are

Table 2.6.5 Mean and standard deviations for the prosodic measures related to voice quality and intensity in the two formality conditions for Persian native speakers. The table also includes the results of a series of *t*-tests. The degrees of freedom for the *t*-tests are 5

Measure	Informal		Formal		<i>t</i> -Test results	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Intensity (dB)	66.40	7.30	65.85	6.93	-2.110	0.08
H1-H2 (dB)	4.64	6.96	4.95	7.58	-1.420	0.21
Jitter	0.019	0.02	0.021	0.02	2.218	0.07
Shimmer	0.099	0.06	0.105	0.06	1.678	0.15

Table 2.6.6 Mean and standard deviations for the prosodic measures related to voice quality and intensity in the two formality conditions for Persian L2 speakers. The table also includes the results of a series of *t*-tests. The degrees of freedom for the *t*-tests are 3

Measure	Informal		Formal		<i>t</i> -Test results	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Intensity (dB)	60.66	4.12	60.26	4.03	-0.580	0.60
H1-H2 (dB)	6.16	7.75	5.16	8.85	-0.084	0.93
Jitter	0.026	0.02	0.026	0.02	-0.656	0.56
Shimmer	0.160	0.05	0.157	0.06	-1.108	0.34

also presented in these two tables. Table 2.6.5 shows a near-significant difference for both intensity and jitter across the two conditions for native speakers. Native speakers tend to lower their voice (loudness) in the formal register. H1-H2 voice quality measure is higher in the formal register than in the informal register for the native speakers. While L2 speakers, similar to native speakers, employ a lower voice in formal conditions, this does not come close to a significant difference with the informal register. The other measures of voice quality do not show significant differences across formal and informal conditions for L2 speakers.

Tables 2.6.7 and 2.6.8 display the results of different measures related to speech rate. This includes the average duration of words, regular syllables, (silent) pauses, and elongated syllables (in seconds). The elongated syllables are the ones produced with a hesitation. The native speakers show a similar speech rate measured by the average duration of words, fluent syllables, and elongated syllables across the two conditions. However, the mean duration of pauses in the formal condition is much shorter than in the informal condition. This is quite unexpected since research has shown that the rate of speech in a formal register is usually slower than in an informal register (e.g., Ofuka et al. 2000). This peculiar feature made us dig more into our data and calculate the proportion of the number of pauses and elongated syllables to the total number of syllables in the two registers separately. The results show that the proportions of pauses in formal and informal conditions were 0.785 and 0.677, while these values for elongated syllables in formal and informal registers were 3.954 and 1.869, respectively. This means that the native speakers make up for the duration of pauses and elongated syllables in formal condition by increasing their number. The results for L2 speakers in Table 2.6.8



Table 2.6.7 Averages and standard deviations of four speech rate dependent variables in the two formality conditions for Persian native speakers. The table also includes the results of a series of *t*-tests. The degrees of freedom for the *t*-tests are 5

Measure	Informal		Formal		t-Test results	
	M	SD	M	SD	t	p
Mean duration of words	0.38	0.20	0.38	0.19	-0.123	0.90
Mean duration of fluent syllables	0.18	0.09	0.18	0.08	-1.355	0.23
Mean duration of pauses	0.50	0.55	0.37	0.53	-0.771	0.47
Mean duration of elongated syllables	0.40	0.18	0.42	0.23	0.773	0.47

Table 2.6.8 Averages and standard deviations of four speech rate dependent variables in the two formality conditions for Persian L2 speakers. The table also includes the results of a series of *t*-tests. The degrees of freedom for the *t*-tests are 3

Measure	Informal		Formal		t-Test results	
	M	SD	M	SD	t	p
Mean duration of words	0.42	0.18	0.43	0.18	0.414	0.71
Mean duration of fluent syllables	0.22	0.12	0.21	0.12	-2.049	0.13
Mean duration of pauses	0.57	0.39	0.56	0.51	-0.434	0.69
Mean duration of elongated syllables	0.52	0.38	0.61	0.44	6.173	0.00

show similar speech rate across the two conditions, except for elongated syllables. The speech rate for elongated syllables in formal register is slower than in informal register. This agrees with the findings of previous studies regarding the slower speech rate in formal register (e.g., Winter and Grawunder 2012; Hübscher, Borrás-Comes, and Prieto 2017).

## 2.7 Discussion

This experiment investigated the different strategies Persian native speakers and Persian L2 speakers use in confrontation with formal and informal situations. This study provided new insights into the complexities of the realization of politeness via prosodic measures for both native and L2 speakers in a new language. The findings showed that in addition to morphological and syntactic devices, speakers use a combination of prosodic variables to express the appropriate level of formality. From the diverse list of variables examined in this study, it was only lexical and morpho-syntactic markers that were used in a similar way by native and L2 speakers to express politeness. Both groups more often used verbs with singular person endings and the personal pronoun *to* in informal situations and plural person endings and the personal pronoun *shomā* in formal situations. This is consistent with our predictions regarding the similar patterns for expressing politeness in formal register across the two groups. As for F0 measures, the results showed that three out of the four pitch parameters (i.e., overall pitch, top line, and baseline) were significantly lower in the formal register of native speakers compared to informal situations. This is in contrast with the predictions made by the Frequency Code hypothesis (Ohala 1984) and some other studies that have made an association between politeness and high F0 (e.g., Brown and Levinson 1987; Ofuka et al. 2000). The results of pitch in our study mainly support the findings on Korean (Winter and Grawunder 2012), Catalan

(Hübscher, Borràs-Comes, and Prieto 2017), and German (Grawunder, Oertel, and Schwarze 2014), which have reported a lower F0 in formal situations. In contrast to native speakers who used lower F0 to increase the formality level in their speech, L2 speakers did not make major phonetic adjustments across the two conditions to signal different levels of formality. This could be surprising since L2 learners in our study have acquired the distinction between formal and informal registers at least at lexical and morpho-syntactic levels (see Tables 2.6.1 and 2.6.2). One explanation for finding different results across the two groups could be the influence of L1. This means that Russian native speakers, in contrast to Korean, Catalan, German, and Persian speakers, do not lower their F0 in a formal setting, and the L2 speakers in our study transfer this feature from their L1. In fact, research shows that this should not be the case. Brown et al. (2014) found that Russian native speakers, similar to Korean and German speakers, used a lower F0 for formal register than for informal register speech. They found this result quite unexpected since Russian, contrary to Korean, does not have a morphological honorific system. The different results among the two groups for pitch patterns in our study could be also due to a small sample size or the not-high proficiency level of the L2 speakers. The accurate adjustments of prosodic cues reflecting expressive sociopragmatic meanings are quite demanding and require a native-like competence. It is possible that such advanced pragmatic and prosodic knowledge is acquired only during the last stages of L2 learning. The L2 learners in our study who were at an intermediate stage require more competency in the language to reach these fine-tuned stages in phonetics-pragmatics interplay.

The two groups also showed differences regarding the use of the lowest and the highest F0 values. The pitch range (i.e., top line value minus baseline value) used by the native speakers in informal and formal conditions were 88 Hz and 96 Hz, while these values for L2 speakers were 54 Hz and 47 Hz, respectively. Native speakers used a wider range of pitch than did L2 speakers. This difference was noticeably larger in the formal condition. Brown and Levinson (1987) have emphasized that increasing the pitch range contributes to a higher degree of politeness. Cross-linguistic studies of the expression of politeness have also found that expanding pitch range in certain parts of intonation contours will trigger a higher degree of politeness (e.g., Chen, Gussenhoven, and Rietveld 2004, for British English and Dutch; Orozco 2008, 2010, for Mexican Spanish). However, the results of the pitch range in our study contradict the results found for Korean and Catalan. In these two languages, the formal condition shows a lower pitch range than in the informal condition.

It is hard to explain the interaction between politeness and acoustic variables. One of the challenges regarding such interplay is that some of the notions existing in the literature are not still very clear. Hübscher, Borràs-Comes, and Prieto (2017) have pointed out that the number of theories for politeness in the field is more than one and no agreement has yet been reached regarding a stable definition for politeness. A complex social phenomenon like politeness has a number of dimensions that make it really hard to capture within a single framework. This challenge is not limited to politeness, and other concepts in the field such as “modality” and “hedging” also have such complexity (see Falahati (2004) for further discussion on this topic). A comprehensive framework of politeness should include finer nuances that could be added as various dimensions to politeness. For example, the realization of phonetic cues associated with politeness could be different when a student asking for a recommendation letter from a well-established scholar *is not sure* whether his/her request will be accepted versus the time that the same student *is certain* about his/her request being accepted by the same professor or when s/he wants *to raise the chance* of his/her request being accepted through adding different emotional moods (e.g., being eager or enthusiastic). All these situations could be described as polite or formal, but the implication hidden in each situation is

different. This implicational meaning that is concealed in the text could trigger the realization of different phonetic features.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

This chapter started by reviewing the past research on the acquisition of L2 phonology in Persian. The main goal was to display how much this area of research has grown and shed light on the domains which need further work. It was shown that the field of Persian L2 phonological acquisition is growing, but a great deal more still needs to be done in order to generate sufficient literature to allow a cross-linguistic comparison on different aspects of Persian L2 phonology.

The original experiment presented in this chapter made an empirical contribution to the field by examining the expression of politeness by L2 speakers as well as native speakers from a language pairing that is novel. Moreover, it showed that Persian, similar to Korean and Catalan, uses lower F0 in a formal register but contrary to these two languages uses a wider pitch range in formal condition. The interaction between overall pitch and pitch range and its contribution to the expression of politeness is a topic that remains to be explored in future research.

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# Appendix

## Discourse Completion Task (Persian version)

**Formal (1).** Shomā beh daftar-e ostād Alavi miravid tā yek mo‘arrefi nāmeḥ begirid. Shomā qasd dārid dar Āmrikā beh edāmeḥ tahsil bepardāzid va in nāmeḥ joz’-e mohemmi az darkhāst-e bursiyeh-ye shomā ast. Cheguneḥ az ostādetān in darkhāst rā mikonid?

**Informal (1).** Shomā bā seh ham otāqi-ye Irāni dar khābgāh-e dāneshjuyi zendegi mikonid. Sen-e tamām-e ānhā kamtar az shomāst. Yeki az ānhā ke Mohsen nām dārad farhang-e loḡhat-e elekteroniki-ye shomā rā qarz gerefteḥ ast. Fardā āzmun-e engelisi dārid va emshab ān rā bāyad pas begirid. Beh Mohsen cheḥ miguyid tā farhang-e loḡhat rā pas begirid?

**Formal (2).** Tasavvor konid dar hāl-e qadam zadan dar rāhrow-ye dāneshkadeh-ye khodetān hastid keh ostād-e 50 sāleh-ye khod rā mibinid. Shomā ru-ye mozu‘i kār mikonid va qasd dārid barāye rowshan shodan-e barkhi sowālāt sā‘at-e 2 ba‘d az zohr-e fardā dar daftar-e kārash hozur dāshteh bāshid. Ebtedā bā ishān salām va ahvālporsi konid va sepaḥ vaz‘iyyat rā tozih dahid va bebinid āyā ishān dar sā‘at-e mored-e nazar vaqt dārand?

**Informal (2).** Tasavvor konid dar rāhrow-ye dāneshgāhetān hastid keh beh surat-e ettefāqi yeki az hamkelāsi-hā-yetān rā mibinid. Diruz ostād dar ghiyāb-e dustetān beh shomā gofteḥ ast keh mikhāhad har dow-ye shomā rā molāqāt konad va dar mored-e porowz-hehi bā shomā sohbat konad. Ostād ruz-e chahārshanbeh sā‘at-e 10 va nim rā pishnahād midahad. Bā hamkelāsi-ye khod salām va ahvālporsi konid. mowqe‘iyyat rā barāyash sharḥ dahid va az u beporsid keh āyā sā‘at-e pishnahād shodeḥ tavassot-e ostād monāseb ast?

**Formal (3).** Beh tāzegi bā khabar shodehid keh yeki az behtarin dustānetān qarār ast hafteḥ-ye āyandeh dar Shirāz ezdevāj konad. motma‘ennan dust dārid keh dar jashn-e ‘arusi-ye u sherkat konid vali az ānjāyi keh in marāsem dar shahr-e digari ast va shomā koll-e hafteḥ rā kelās dārid bāyad chand ruz az kelās-hā-ye khod rā bezanid. Pas beh molāqāt-e yeki az asātid keh bishtarin kelās rā bā ishān dārid miravid va az u mikhāhid dar surat-e emkān hafteḥ-ye āyandeh sar-e kelās-hā naravid. Shomā cheguneḥ in mozu‘ rā bā u matrah mikonid?

**Informal (3).** Beh dalil-e bimāri dar kelās-e tāriḡh ghāyeb budid. Beh hamin khāter mikhāhid yāddāsht-hā-ye dust-e samimi-yetān rā qarz begirid tā az kelās ‘qab namānid. Cheḥ chizi beh dustetān miguyid tā yāddāsht-hā-yash rā beh shomā qarz bedahad?

**Formal (4).** Shomā dar kelās-e sokhanrāni keh dar āmfi te‘ātr-e bozorgi tashkil shodeḥ ast neshastehid. Az ānjā keh beh emtehānāt-e pāyān term nazdik shodehid, ostād miguyad keh emtehān ruz-e sehshanbeh 28 om-e bahman bargozār mishavad. Ammā shomā qablan dar portāl didehid keh dar barnāmeḥ-ye emtehāni, emtehān-e in dars ruz-e chahārshanbeh 29 om-e bahman ast va hamchenin dar ānjā e‘lām shodeḥ bud keh emtehān beh surat-e ketāb bāz ast va mitavān az farhang loqat-hā-ye gheyr-e elekteroniki estefādeḥ kard. Ostād chizi rāje‘ beh in joz‘iyyāt nagofteḥ ast. Shomā mikhāhid ruz, tāriḡh va chiz-hā-yi keh dāneshju mitavānad beh hamrāh dāshteh bāshad rā rowshan konid. Cheguneḥ bā ostādetān goftogu mikonid keh in mozu‘āt barāye shomā rowshan shaved?

**Informal (4).** Shomā dar kāfishāp bā hamkelāsi-ye khubetān dar hāl-e goftogu hastid. In term shomā va dustetān vāhed-e moshtaraki bardāsh tid va qarār ast beh surat-e moshtarak erā'ehi dāshteh bāshid. Shomā mikhāhid qarār-e digari bogzārid tā darbāre-ye erā'eh bahs konid. U ba'd az zohr-e ruz-e chahārshanbeh dahom-e ābān rā pishnahād midahad. Ammā ān ruz gerdehamāyi-ye dāneshjuyān ast keh az qabl ta'yin shodeh bud. Shomā mikhāhid bā u hamāhang konid keh āyā gerdehamāyi rā farāmush kardeh va yā manzurash chahārshanbeh budeh ast. Beh u cheh miguyid?

**Formal (5).** Hafteh-ye avval-e kelās-hā ast va ostād Hayāti darbāre-ye bārembandi-ye nomarāt nazir-e emtehān-e miyān term, pāyān term, va erā'eh-ye Kelāsi tozih midahad, vali u darbāre-ye bārembandi-ye hozur va fa'āliyyat-e Kelāsi sohbat nemikonad. Shomā mikhāhid bedānid keh hozur va fa'āliyyat-e Kelāsi chand dar sad az nomreh rā beh khod ekhtesās midahad. Barāye hamin manzur beh daftar-e ostād Hayāti miravid. Shomā chegunch bā ostādetān sohbat mikonid tā in mas'aleh barāyetān rowshan shavad?

**Informal (5).** Shomā qarār ast keh ruz-e jom'eh bā dustān-e khod darbāre havākhorī va piknik be bustān-e shādi beravid. Mohsen, dust va hamkār-e samimi-ye shomā, hamāhangī-ye hameh-ye kār-hā rā beh 'ohdeh dārad. U az tariq-e payāmak beh har kas gofteh keh cheh chizi bāyad biyāvarad. Mobāyl-e shomā dochār-e moshkel shode va shomā beh tor-e kāmelan tasādofi Mohsen rā dar khiyābān mibinid. Az u beporsid keh shomā cheh chiz-hā-yi qarār ast barāye ruz-e jom'eh biyāvarid.

### Discourse completion task (English version)

**Formal (1).** Suppose that you go to the office of Professor Alavi to ask for a recommendation letter. You are going to continue your studies in the U.S. and this letter is an important part of your scholarship application. How do you make such a request from your professor?

**Informal (1).** Suppose you live with three Iranian roommates in a dormitory. They are all younger than you. One of them named Mohsen has borrowed your electronic dictionary. You have an English exam tomorrow and must take your dictionary back tonight. What do you say to Mohsen to have your dictionary back?

**Formal (2).** Walking along the corridor in your faculty, you meet your 50-year-old professor. You are working on a project and in order to clarify some points, you want to meet with him in his office tomorrow afternoon at 2:00 p.m. First greet your professor and explain the situation. Then see whether your proposed time is a good timing for him?

**Informal (2).** Being in the corridor of your faculty, you meet one of your classmates quite by chance. Yesterday, in your friend's absence, your professor said to you that he wants to meet both of you and talk to you about a project. The professor suggested Wednesday at 10:30. Greet your classmate and explain the situation. Ask him whether the proposed time by the professor is a good timing for him or not.

**Formal (3).** Recently, you have been informed that one of your best friends is going to get married in Shiraz next week. Surely, you would like to participate in his wedding. Since this ceremony is held in another city and you have classes for the whole week, you have to miss some of them. So you meet one of your professors with whom you have the most classes and ask to be away for a few days. How do you make such a request and explain this issue?

**Informal (3).** You missed your history class due to being sick. Because of this, you want to borrow the notes of a very close friend so that you do not fall behind. How do you ask such a request and what do you say to your friend to borrow his notes?

**Formal (4).** You are at a lecture being held in a big auditorium. Final exams are approaching and the professor says that the exam will be on Tuesday, February 17. But, according to the university calendar, the exam of this course is scheduled for Wednesday, February 18. Besides, the website says that the exam will be open book and non-electronic dictionaries are allowed to be used. The professor has not talked about these details. You want to be sure about the exam date and the things that students could have with them on the exam day. How do you speak to your professor to ask about these pieces of information?

**Informal (4).** You are speaking with one of your classmates at a coffee shop. This semester, you and your friend have a course together and you are supposed to have a joint presentation. You want to make another appointment with him to discuss about your presentation. He proposes the afternoon of Wednesday, November 1. But the student's association is scheduled to have their gathering on the same day. You want to ask your friend whether he has forgotten the gathering or he really meant Wednesday. What do you say to him?

**Formal (5).** It is the first week of the course. Although Professor Hayati talks about the distribution of score for midterm exam, final exam, and class presentation, he does not refer to the weight of the scores for students' presence and class activity. You want to know what percentage of score is dedicated to the presence and class activity. So you go to the office of Professor Hayati. How do you speak to your professor and ask about this information?

**Informal (5).** You and your friends are going to have a picnic in Boustan Shadi on Friday. Mohsen, your close friend and colleague, is responsible to organize everything. He has sent messages to people regarding what they should bring for the picnic. Your cell phone has a problem and accidentally you see Mohsen on the street. Ask him about what you are supposed to bring on Friday.

## Notes

- 1) Some linguists believe that syllables in Persian can also start with a vowel. This will change the number of syllable types in Persian to six: V, CV, CVC, VC, VCC, and CVC. For further discussion on this topic see Samareh (2002).
- 2) See Colantoni, Steele & Escudero (2015) for a full review of these models.
- 3) We would like to thank Iris Hübscher, John Borràs-Comes, and Pilar Prieto for sharing their script with us.
- 4) The *to* and *shomā* distinction in Persian is similar to *tu* and *vous* in French.

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# 3

## HERITAGE VERSUS SECOND LANGUAGE PHONOLOGY

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### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on discussing some of the different ways in which Persian heritage phonetics and phonology have been analyzed, and will draw parallels with some of the previously reported patterns in second language (L2) speech learning. Although there is a rich body of literature on L2 speech learning (e.g., Best and Tyler 2007; Brown 1998; Colantoni and Steele 2007; Flege 1995), less is known about heritage speech. The need to expand on the scarce research on heritage speech also applies to Persian heritage and L2 speech. Chapter 4 in this volume is an overview of the research previously conducted on Persian heritage linguistics, with a focus on the domains of phonology, morphology and syntax. It compares the linguistic competences of Persian heritage versus the second language learners of Persian.

The rest of this chapter is organized as follows. Section 2 offers various definitions of heritage speakers and calls for a need for a definition that depicts heritage speech as a more transient phenomenon. Section 3 provides a more holistic approach to viewing both L2 speech learning and heritage speech as a multimodal event, highlights the role of orthography in L2 speech learning, and points out some of the differences in the different modalities with respect to Persian and English. Heritage speech is analyzed from a more diachronic and sociophonetic lens in Section 4, where Persian heritage speech is considered in the context of language change across generations. This section also draws parallels between heritage and L2 speech. Section 5 discusses heritage speech from a developmental point of view and discusses Persian-English-speaking children. Section 6 concludes the chapter and provides future research directions. This chapter reviews evidence on characteristics of heritage speech and L2 speech in order to contextualize the existing studies on two infrequently studied topics: Persian heritage speech and L2 speech. For further research on the Persian heritage learners versus second language learners of Persian, read Chapter 4 in this volume, where there is an elaborate comparison made between these two groups of learners in the domains of phonology, morphology and syntax.

### 3.2 Heritage speakers

There is currently no consensus on what constitutes a heritage speaker. The definition of heritage speaker and heritage language (HL) started to be developed during the '70s in Canada, but

it gained the attention it deserves only twenty years later. Regardless of the definition chosen, it is important to remember that typically heritage speakers have a *first* and a *second* language (order of acquisition), a *primary* and a *secondary* language (functional dimension), a *majority* and a *minority* language (sociopolitical dimension; Montrul 2012).

Draper and Hicks (2000) state that a heritage speaker is someone who has been exposed to a non-English language outside the formal educational schooling setting. They also included speakers who grow up speaking a different language at home and speakers with a strong in-depth exposure to another language. This definition is a very broad description of heritage speakers.

While Campbell and Peyton's (1998) definition of a heritage speaker as an individual who speaks a first non-English language at home or who is born in a different country is widely accepted, they seem to have overlooked an important connection made later by Valdés (2001). That is the individual's personal connection with the language. Valdés (2001) suggested that heritage speakers are individuals who have a historical and/or personal connection to a language that is not normally taught at school, e.g., indigenous or minority. She added that heritage speakers are individuals who grow up speaking a non-English language at home, with all levels of proficiency in the heritage language and all levels of bilingualism. Valdés' (2001) main goal however is strictly pedagogical.

Recently, Montrul (2012) proposed that heritage speakers are early bilinguals, because of the exposure they have had to both the heritage and the majority language. As bilinguals, heritage speakers can be simultaneous when they grow up speaking both languages, or sequential when they learn the second language after the age of five or six. She suggested that regardless of when a heritage speaker starts learning both languages, by the time they enter adulthood, the heritage language is weaker.

Recently a new debate has ensued about whether heritage speakers should be considered native speakers (Rothman 2006, 2009; Rothman and Treffers-Daller 2014; Kupisch and Rothman 2018). Rothman's definition for heritage speakers starts where Montrul's ended: heritage speakers are bilinguals, but not all bilinguals are heritage speakers. According to his studies, heritage speakers are on the continuum between monolingual and bilinguals, as they have been naturally exposed to a multilingual environment since childhood, if not even birth, and have competence in both languages. Rothman (2009) suggested the idea that the essential condition for heritage speakers is the naturalistic environment in which they need to learn the language. Rothman (2006) has suggested that heritage speakers can present different levels of proficiency, depending on personal and social factors. More recently, Kupisch and Rothman (2018) divided heritage speakers into two categories: early bilinguals, who have been exposed to the language in a naturalistic environment outside of the school setting and have strong personal connection to the language such as family, culture and intrinsic motivation, and those who learned the language as adults and therefore lack the naturalistic environment. In their opinion, the former and the latter can also be considered native speakers of the home language (Rothman and Treffers-Daller 2014; Kupisch and Rothman 2018), regardless of the level of proficiency or the hypothesized incomplete acquisition that Valdés (2000) and Benmamoun (2013) have proposed.

Although there is not a single definition on what constitutes a heritage speaker, these definitions show that heritage speakers are at some point in their lives exposed to two different languages although their degree of proficiency of each language, the order of acquisition of the two languages, and their affinity with the two cultures might vary. However, these definitions present a static rather than a more dynamic picture of what a heritage speaker might be. For example, all parents of heritage speakers know that their children's proficiency in both

their heritage (e.g., Persian) and the majority language (e.g., English) may vary at a given time. This is highly dependent on the amount and kind of exposure that heritage speakers may have to both languages. To present an extreme situation, child heritage speakers, who barely speak their heritage language, if and when they go back to their country of origin for a summer visit, may become fluent in their heritage language and forget their other language. However, they might start becoming more dominant in English after a couple of weeks of exposure to it again in school. Moreover, Choi, Boersma, and Cutler (2017) found that adoptees, who have been exposed to a home language in infancy for a very short period of time (e.g., 3–5 months), exhibit an advantage in the ability to relearn the language as adults in comparison with controls. The authors concluded that early exposure to spoken language, even in the first half-year of life, may leave traces that can facilitate later relearning. Although adoptees are not typically considered heritage speakers, a more dynamic definition of a heritage speaker and a model of heritage speech, which contextualizes heritage speakers and heritage speech learning and change across the lifespan, are called for.

In the past decade, the body of evidence has been growing on heritage speakers, although more has been done on morpho-syntax (e.g., Montrul 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b) and less on phonetics or phonology (e.g., Au et al. 2002; Rafat, Mohaghegh, and Stevenson 2017). However, as Kupisch and Rothman (2018) wisely pointed out, definitions do matter and there is an urge to continue examining heritage languages, the same way scholars have focused on L2 learners. This chapter considers heritage speakers to be speakers who, very early on in life or as children, have had some exposure to a home language that is different from the dominant language in the societ(ies) that they grew up in, and have some passive or active knowledge of their home language. Similarly to L2 learners, heritage speakers may differ in their proficiency level and exhibit individual differences. Furthermore, their proficiencies in their heritage and dominant languages may differ across their lifespan. The degree of their proficiency in their heritage language may be driven by both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. The latter includes the amount of input, the degree to which they may identify with their heritage culture at any given time in their life, and other social factors such as age, gender, education, socioeconomic background and the density of their network.

### **3.3 L2 and heritage speech learning as a multimodal event: the role of orthography**

Currently, there are a number of models of the acquisition of L2 phonetic and phonological acquisition (e.g., Best and Tyler 2007; Brown 1998; Colantoni and Steele 2007; Flege 1995). However, no specific models explain heritage speech learning. Instead, the Speech Learning Model (SLM; Flege 1995) has been applied to heritage speech learning. Flege's SLM is a perception-based model that predicts that the degree of acoustic difference between the L1 and L2 sounds will determine whether the L2 sound will be mapped on to the L1 sound. In other words, the more dissimilar the sound or the larger the acoustic-phonetic distance between the L1 and the L2, the higher the possibility that this sound will be acquired. On the other hand, the smaller the acoustic-phonetic distance between the L1 and the L2 sounds, the more likely that equivalence classification will take place and the L2 will not be perceived as distinct. For further discussions on the Speech Learning Model, read Chapter 2 in this volume, which employs the theoretical framework of the SLM to test the Persian L2 data against different approaches.

Another well-known model is Best and Tyler's (2007) PAM-L2, a revised version of Best's (1995) Perceptual Assimilation Model (PAM). PAM-L2 is based on the premise that sounds are perceived in terms of articulatory gestures (e.g., Browman and Goldstein 1989, 1990,

1992, 1995). Moreover, the patterns of assimilation to L1 categories determine the accuracy of the discrimination of target language (TL) contrasts and subsequent category formation. Very good to excellent discrimination is predicted for Two Category assimilation, in which two TL phones are perceived as acceptable exemplars of two different L1 phones; poor discrimination is predicted when two TL sounds are perceived as equally good or poor exemplars of the same L1 phoneme; and Single Category assimilation and intermediate discrimination is predicted when two TL sounds differ in the extent to which they are good exemplars in relation to a single L1 phoneme. Of all the formal models of (perceptual) speech learning, this model is the only one that briefly mentions the effect of orthography on the categorization of TL sounds.

Whereas both the SLM and the other models of L2 speech learning have been mostly perception-based, Colantoni and Steele (2007) consider both perception and production. They argue that because previous L2 speech learning models do not consider the degree of difficulty involved in the simultaneous mastery of multiple phonetic parameters across prosodic positions, they do not account for the full range of variability nor for the developmental sequences attested.

Despite our understanding that many aspects of speech processing are multimodal, including speech perception (e.g., Sumbly and Pollack 1954; McGurk and MacDonald 1976; Massaro 1987; Soto-Faraco, Navarra, and Alsius 2004), speech learning (Vigliocco, Perniss, and Vinson 2014), and second language (L2) speech learning (Hardison 1999; Ortega-Llebaria, Faulkner, and Hazan 2001; Erdener and Burnham 2005, 2013), the earlier-mentioned models of L2 speech learning are for the most part based on auditory-input only. One of the most salient examples of the multimodal nature of speech is the McGurk effect (e.g., McGurk and MacDonald 1976; Welch and Warren 1980; Sekiyama and Tohkura 1991; Munhall et al. 1996; Sekiyama 1997). The McGurk effect is elicited by the synchronous or simultaneous presentation of incongruent auditory (e.g., /ba/) and facial/visual cues (e.g., /ga/). The listener often integrates the auditory and visual information leading to either (a) a combination percept, such as /bga/ (McGurk and MacDonald 1976; Green and Norrix 1997) suggesting a strong influence of vision; or (b) a fused percept, such as /da/, where the syllable perceived is not contained in either the auditory or the visual information (e.g., Green and Kuhl 1989; Green et al. 1991; MacDonald and McGurk 1978; Manuel et al. 1983; Massaro 1987; Sekiyama and Tohkura 1991; Summerfield and McGrath 1984; Stevenson et al. 2014). Both combination and fused perceptions are different from the individual original sounds presented separately in each modality, not only in that they are different phonemes, but that they result from an interaction between sensory modalities.

There is also an abundance of research that has provided evidence for the *orthographic* (writing) channel interacting with auditory input in L1 speech processing (Dijkstra, Roelofs, and Fieuws 1995; Jakimik, Cole, and Rudnicky 1985; Montant et al. 2011; Seidenberg and McClelland 1989; Seidenberg and Tanenhaus 1979; Van Orden and Goldinger 1994; Ranbom and Connine 2011; Taft 2006; Treiman and Cassar 1997; Ziegler and Ferrand 1998; Ziegler and Muneaux 2007, among others). For instance, Seidenberg and Tanenhaus (1979) claimed that orthographic knowledge can affect spoken word processing. They conducted a rhyme judgment task and found that participants' responses were faster in a rhyme when the pairs of words shared spellings (e.g., <toast> – <roast> vs. <toast> – <ghost>). Similarly, Jakimik and colleagues (1985) conducted priming tasks and found that the participants responded faster to the auditory target with the prior presentation of a phonologically similar prime that overlapped with the spelling of the target (e.g., message – mess) than to a prime with non-overlapping spellings (e.g., <definite> – <deaf>). Orthography has also been shown to affect underlying representations (Ranbom and Connine 2007, 2011). Ranbom and Connine (2007),

for example, provided some evidence that orthographic information affects mental representations of speech, specifically, the representation of lexically stored allophonic representations. They conducted a corpus analysis and found that the nasal flap realization in the /nt/ cluster of the word *gentle* is dominant in spoken American English, even though the production frequency of the nasal flap may vary within individual words. They then conducted a lexical decision task and showed that the highly frequent nasal flap was identified more quickly and accurately than the less frequent flap, but, crucially, [nt] productions resulted in faster and more accurate lexical decisions compared with the nasal flaps. The results of the lexical decision task demonstrated that orthographic information influences spoken word processing. There is also some evidence to suggest that orthography may exert an influence on spoken word production (Bentur 1978; Ravid and Shlesinger 2001; Temkin Martinez and Müllner 2015; Han and Choi 2016). For example, Han and Choi (2016) investigated the role of orthography in production and storage of spoken words by Korean speakers. The participants learned novel Korean words with different variants of /h/ including [h] and [ø]. They were provided with the same auditory stimuli but different exposures to orthography. There were two orthographic groups and an auditory-only group. One orthographic group was presented the letter for [h] (<ㅎ>) and the other with the letter for [ø] (<ㅇ>). The auditory group was presented with auditory input only. In picture-naming tasks, the participants presented with <ㅇ> produced fewer words with [h] than those presented with <ㅎ>. In a spelling recall task, the participants who were not exposed to spelling displayed various types of spellings for variants, but after exposure to spelling, they began to produce spellings as provided in the task. These results were attributed to orthographic input influencing production because of its potential to restructure phonological representations. For further research on priming tasks and processing in Persian, read Chapter 6, which delves into the processing of idiomatic expressions in L1 and L2 Persian speakers and discusses the role of morphology and orthography on the processing of such expressions.

The body of literature has also been expanding with respect to how orthography may interact with acoustic-phonetic input in L2 speech learning. Notably most research has focused on the Roman alphabet. When the learner's L1 and L2 share the same alphabet, learners are faced with two main challenges. First, they have to learn that the L1 and the L2 mappings might be different. The correspondence of one grapheme to different L1 and the L2 sounds often leads to L1-based transfer (Rafat 2011, 2015, 2016). Second, learners may need to learn one-to-many mappings (e.g., <x> in Spanish may map on to [ks] in the word <taxi> but to [x] in <México> and to [gz] in <examen>) or many-to-one mappings in the L2 (e.g., <x>, <gi>, <ge> and <j> correspond to [x] or its other variants in Spanish). The orthographic depth hypothesis (ODH; Katz and Frost 1992) postulates that speakers of languages with shallow/regular/transparent orthographies tend to be more affected by orthographic input than speakers of languages with deep/irregular/opaque orthographies. However, we still do not know the extent to which L1 orthographic depth may modulate orthographic effects in L2 learners whose L1 orthographic system is alphabetic (e.g., Erdener and Burnham 2005; Rafat 2015; Escudero 2015).

English and Spanish both have a Roman alphabetic system. Whereas the English orthographic system is characterized by one-to-many grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences and is therefore considered an irregular/deep orthography, the Spanish orthographic system is mainly characterized by one-to-one mappings. However, L2 speech learning by English-speaking learners of Spanish exhibits orthographic effects due to the differences between English and Spanish grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences (e.g., Rafat 2011, 2015, 2016).

Orthographic effects have also been shown in several L2 perception and production studies. These studies have demonstrated that orthographic input may interact with auditory input and

may promote (e.g., Erdener and Burnham 2005; Steele 2005; Showalter and Hayes-Harb 2013; Bassetti, Escudero, and Hayes-Harb 2015; Rafat 2015), or hinder (e.g., Bassetti 2007; Erdener and Burnham 2005; Hayes-Harb, Nicol, and Baker 2010; Young-Scholten 2000; Young-Scholten, Akita, and Cross 1999; Bassetti, Escudero, and Hayes-Harb 2015; Nimz 2016; Rafat 2011, 2015, 2016; Bassetti 2017; Shea 2017) the target-like production or correct perception of the target L2 sounds, or have no effect (Escudero 2015; Showalter and Hayes-Harb 2013).

Young-Scholten, Akita and Cross (1999) conducted one of the first studies on the effect of orthography on L2 speech production. They examined the effect of exposure to orthographic input on the production of Polish clusters by adult English-speaking L2 learners. They found that exposure to orthography results in less omission and more epenthesis as in older learners.

Hayes-Harb, Nicol, and Baker (2010) examined the interfering effect of orthographic input in novel word learning by English-speaking participants when the grapheme-to-phonemes in the target language do not match. Participants were assigned to three different conditions at training: auditory-only, congruent, and congruent/incongruent orthography. The incongruent stimuli consisted of items spelled with a “wrong” letter (e.g., <faza> – [faʒə]) and items with an extra letter (e.g., <kamand> – [kaməd]). During testing, participants were shown an image and heard a word, and then asked whether the auditory word was the correct word for the image. The results yielded a significant effect of training condition on performance on the wrong-letter items, in which participants had a lower rate of accuracy in the incongruent/congruent orthography condition.

Mathieu (2016) also examined the effect of orthography at the onset of the acquisition of an L2. He reported the effects of three L2 scripts on the early acquisition of an Arabic consonantal contrast word-initially (e.g., /hal/ – /χal/), showing that foreign written input can inhibit learners’ ability to encode an L2 phonological contrast. He tested monolingual native speakers of English with no prior knowledge of Arabic. Participants took part in a word-learning experiment and were assigned to one of four learning conditions: no orthography, Arabic script, Cyrillic script or Roman/Cyrillic blended script. The results showed that the degree of script unfamiliarity does not in itself seem to significantly affect the successful acquisition of the phonological contrast tested. However, the presence of certain foreign scripts in the phonological acquisition yielded significantly different learning outcomes in comparison to having no orthographic representation available. Specifically, the Arabic script exerted an inhibitory effect on L2 phonological acquisition, while the Cyrillic and Roman/Cyrillic blended scripts exercised different inhibitory effects based on whether grapheme-phoneme correspondences triggered L1-based phonological transfer. Mathieu (2016) proposed that L2 speech learning may be multimodal and subject to instantaneous and automatic processing similar to the McGurk effect. Specifically, the processing of the visual input at the early stages of acquisition may prompt the auditory system to strengthen activation of the L1 phonological categories, in turn hindering the accurate perception of the novel L2 sounds.

The effect of orthographic input has also been shown in more advanced learners. Bassetti (2007) investigated the effect of orthographic inconsistency within the L2 on the production of triphthongs by Italian-speaking learners of Mandarin studying at a university in Italy. Participants used the alphabetic pinyin writing system and on average had studied Mandarin for 33 months. Although the participants had not been exposed to pinyin orthography during the character-reading task, the results yielded a 100% target-like realization of the vowel /o/ in the triphthong /iou/ when it was written with three graphemes as in <yow>. However, erroneous productions were attested when the triphthongs were spelled with only two graphemes in pinyin (e.g., <iu> for /iou/). The author explained the results by proposing that pinyin generally is a transparent orthographic system, and the learners had overgeneralized this aspect of pinyin.



There is considerable evidence that when the L1 and L2 grapheme-to-phoneme relationships are incongruent, exposure to orthographic input may result in L1-based phonetic or phonological transfer (e.g., Young-Scholten 2002; Rafat 2011, 2015, 2016; Bassetti 2017). An example can be observed in the production of digraphs (two graphemes such as <tt> in <kitty>) by highly proficient Italian-speaking learners of English. These learners produce digraphs as long/geminate consonants with a significant difference between their CC vs. C productions in English (Bassetti 2017). The authors attributed this to transfer of L1 phonological rules, in this case gemination.

Although several studies have provided evidence of transfer effects, this effect is not categorical and may be modulated by various factors. For example, transfer in English-speaking learners' devoicing of syllable-final consonants is argued to be modulated by the amount of exposure to orthographic input in German (Young-Scholten 2000). In German, obstruents are devoiced in syllable-final position, although this is not cued in the orthography. For example, the word /bʊnd/ "federation" is written as <bund> but is realized as [bʊnt] creating a homophone with [bʊnt] "coloured," which is written as <bunt>. When students learn German as an L2, greater exposure to written text is related to a reduction in the acquisition of this obstruent final devoicing rule (Young-Scholten 2000). Evidence has also been found for orthography-induced transfer in the word initial /z/ production of the same group of learners, where they produced <s>, which corresponds to /z/ in German as [s] (e.g., [si:] for <sie> "she" /zi:/) (Young-Scholten and Langer 2015). An acoustic analysis of the results also revealed evidence for some partially voiced versions of /z/, which the authors suggested is a reflection of the variability in the auditory input that the learners had been exposed to.

Other factors such as type of grapheme-to-sound correspondence, position in the word, and condition of training and testing have been reported to control the rate of orthography-induced transfer in naïve English-speaking learners of Spanish (e.g., Rafat 2011, 2016). Exposure to orthographic input at the time of learning yielded a significantly higher rate of transfer compared to when orthographic input was presented at production or testing only. Additionally, different grapheme-to-sound correspondences resulted in significantly different rates of transfer. For example, whereas <ll>-[j] resulted in the lowest rate of transfer (0.01%), <v>-[b] and <d>-[δ] resulted in the highest rates of transfer (99% and 92%, respectively) in the orthography at training condition. The results suggested that the relative degree of acoustic-phonetic salience between an L2 and an L1 sound determines the rate of L1-based transfer (Rafat 2011, 2016). Rafat (2011) also reported that combination productions for <ll>-[j] had been attested in the data, and attributed this to a process akin to the McGurk effect, although a quantitative analysis of this type of error was not conducted.

A different type of acoustic-orthographic integration related to the effect of orthography has been found during the production of Spanish assibilated rhotics ([r] with a sibilant quality/hissing sound), when naïve English-speaking learners are exposed to both auditory and orthographic input at training (Rafat 2015). Participants were assigned to two groups based on input: auditory only and auditory-orthographic. At training, participants in both groups heard auditory stimuli produced by a Mexican speaker of Spanish, whose rhotics were assibilated (e.g., <ahitar> [aitaɾ]). While the auditory-only group participants were exposed only to auditory words accompanied by their images at training, participants in the auditory-orthographic group were exposed to both auditory and orthographic stimuli. Auditory stimuli and their corresponding images were accompanied by written words, which included the grapheme <r> (e.g., <ahitar>) in the auditory-orthographic group. At testing, participants in both groups were shown images of the words and asked to name them. Whereas assibilated rhotics were for the most part produced as sibilants such as [s] and [ʃ] (e.g., [aitas] and [aitaʃ]) when learners

were only exposed to auditory L2 speech, exposure to the grapheme <r> in the auditory-orthographic group promoted both the production of assimilated rhotics [aitaɾ] and approximant rhotics [aitaɪ]. The acoustic and orthographic cues thus interact in different ways, resulting either in the production of assimilated rhotics or English approximant rhotics. First, rhoticity is the less salient feature compared to assimilation in assimilated rhotics, and exposure to the grapheme <r> enhances the less salient feature in the input, leading to target-like productions. Based on an acoustic analysis of the degree of assimilation of the individual tokens in the input, together with the results in the auditory-orthographic condition, the author proposed that the degree of robustness of assimilation in the input modulates orthographic effects. That is, the more salient the degree of assimilation in the input, the more likely exposure to the grapheme <r> at training will lead to the production of an assimilated rhotic by the learners at testing. In the absence of strong assimilation in the auditory input, exposure to orthography at training may override the input and result in transfer, or it might create a “perceptual illusion” of rhotic features, leading to approximant rhotic productions.

That orthography can lead to perceptual illusion has previously been proposed with respect to L1 processing (Hallé, Chéreau, and Segui 2000). Using a phoneme-monitoring task in French, the authors examined the effect of orthographic and phonological incongruence on the perception of [b] and [p] in French-speaking adults. Because of voicing assimilation in French in words such as <absurd> (/bs/ and /bt/ words), the underlying /b/ written as corresponds to [p] rather than [b] in the prefix {ab-} (e.g., /absyrd/ written as <absurde> is realized as [apsyrd]). The authors found that the presentation of words whose orthographic representation and phonetic realizations were incongruent yielded a higher detection rate of [b] than [p] in <absurd>-[apsyrd]. Hallé, Chéreau and Segui (2000) attributed the results to a “perceptual illusion” effect which overrides the input.

Auditory-orthographic interaction may also result in the production of a sound that is not identical to either the L1 or the L2 sound but rather exhibits characteristics of the L1 sound and approximates the L2 sound. A study on Polish-speaking learners’ perception and production of German vowels found that learners produced the German /e:/, which is written in German as <e>, as a different sound, namely a diphthong [ee] (Nimz 2016). The grapheme <e> corresponds to /ɛ/ in Polish, but it is acoustically closer to /i/. The author explained the diphthongization by proposing that the learners incorporate both the orthographic and perceptual interferences by starting with an orthography-induced /e/ and satisfy the auditory input by moving towards the quality of the higher vowel /i/ (e.g., [ee]).

Rafat (2011, 2015, 2016) and Rafat and Stevenson (2018) provided evidence for the effect of orthography on L2 speech learning of naïve English-speaking learners of Spanish and at the same time proposed that L2 speech learning is a multimodal event despite the fact that previous L2 speech learning models have been based on auditory input only. Although the body of literature has expanded on the effect of orthography on L2 speech learning, there is not much on the effect of orthography on either the L2 speech learning of Persian or heritage speech learning of the Persian language. Persian is an alphabetic language whose script is written from right to left. The modern Persian alphabet is based on the Arabic alphabet with four additional letters. Persian orthography can be considered deep/irregular because some vowels are not marked in writing. These vowels are only marked with diacritics in order to help children learn to read in primary school. Another difficult aspect of the orthography is that several graphemes can map on to the same phoneme. Moreover, Persian orthography is difficult to learn at the initial stages of acquisition because of its particular features such as the number of dots cuing differences in sounds. Therefore, the Persian orthographic system lends itself well to studies on orthographic effects in L2 and heritage speech. L2 learners heavily rely on text

in the classroom setting. As for heritage speakers, a subset of them may not have knowledge of the Persian orthographic system because of lack of instruction, and as a result this may lead to their speech processing, perception and production exhibiting parallels with the migrant L2 learners of English with low or no literacy in their L1 (see Haznedar, Peyton, and Young-Scholten 2018). On the other hand, it is predicted that heritage speakers who receive instruction in Persian will not be immune to auditory-orthographic effects in their speech processing, perception and production.

It still remains a question as to how exposure to two or more orthographic systems, such as the Persian and English orthographies in the case of North Americans, may affect the L2 acquisition and development of heritage phonology. It is predicted that exposure to two or more different orthographic systems may affect the heritage speakers' processing, perception and production in complex ways.

In addition to the effect of orthography, heritage language learning should be considered a multimodal event and the effect of facial cues should also be taken into account when examining the acquisition Persian as an L2 and Persian as a heritage language. In the case of English and Persian, these two languages differ in terms of the degree of lip rounding and jaw aperture. Moreover, there are different cultural norms around gazing at the interlocutor. Therefore, in addition to perceptual and articulatory constraints previously discussed in models of L2 speech learning, it would be crucial to determine the degree of influence of and reliance on auditory, facial and orthographic cues on how Persian is learned as an L2 or a heritage language or may evolve over time across different generations. Although we have discussed L2 and heritage speech learning from a cognitive perspective, future models can also consider integrating social factors (Swiderski and Rafat 2019).

### **3.4 Heritage speech, language change across generations, and parallels with L2 speech learning**

Although heritage speech has been mostly considered from a synchronic point of view and been compared to L2 speech, some studies have also looked at it from a more diachronic perspective, where they have examined sound change across generations in contact situations. This view has been adopted in light of the fact that languages change as a result of contact and thus phonetic and phonological categories merge in bilingual speakers. There is abundant evidence on the attrition of different aspects of the L1 as a result of contact with another language (for a more detailed discussion see Köpke and Schmid 2004). Specifically, the research focusing on L1 phonetic attrition in bilinguals has been growing (e.g., Celata and Cancila 2010; Flege 1987; Guion 2003; Major 1992; Mayr, Price, and Mennen 2012). Phonetic drift in L1 towards the L2 sounds is evidenced in temporal (e.g., Chang 2012; Flege 1997; Major 1992) and spectral aspects of consonant production (Chang 2012; Peng 1993; Ulbrich and Ordin 2014), vowel production (Chang 2012; Baker and Troimovich 2005; Flege 1987; Guion 2003), consonant perception (Celata and Cancila 2010), and intonational features (Mennen 2004).

Flege (1997) was one of the first studies to provide evidence of assimilation of the L1 and L2 phonetic categories. He found changes in the Voice Onset Time (VOT) of French-English and English-French adult bilinguals, where VOT values for French /t/ for both groups were longer than those of their monolingual counterparts. On the other hand, VOT values for English /t/ were shorter than their average native values, again for both groups. Likewise, the second formant frequency (F2) for the vowel /u/ was lower than their native French counterparts for the French group but not for the English group. However, /y/ was produced in a native-like manner by the participants. The results confirmed the predictions that /u/ and /t/ would

be classified as sounds in phonetic categories that already exist in the L1 and /y/ as a sound that is different from an existing category in the L1. Major (1992) also examined VOT values in Brazilian-English bilinguals in the U.S. and similarly to Flege (1997) found evidence of mutual L1-L2 interaction, supporting Flege's (1995) Speech Learning Model.

VOT drifts in /p,t,k/ in L1 of bilinguals have also been examined from a sociolinguistic point of view in Hrycyna, Lapinskaya, Kochetov and Nagy (2011). A drift towards English VOT values was reported in successive generations (first, second and third generation) of Italian-, Russian-, and Ukrainian-English bilingual communities. They also reported differences between the language groups and suggested that social factors, such as (i) the cohesiveness of a community, which would suggest having enough opportunity for casual speech, (ii) the size of a community, and (iii) attitude towards a particular variety of a language may be responsible for the between-group differences. For detailed information about the characteristics of Persian-English interlanguage and code-switching, read Chapters 26 and 27 in this volume.

Although VOT remains one of the best-studied phenomena in studies that have examined the bidirectionality of language influence on speech production, recently there has been a growing interest in examining a phonetic shift in other aspects of L1 in bilingual speakers. De Leeuw, Mennen and Scobbie (2012) examined the change in the production of the lateral phoneme /l/ in the L1 German of late German-English bilingual speakers living in Canada. They found that the F1 and F2 values of the German /l/ of their bilinguals differed from their native German counterparts and showed a shift towards English. Furthermore, there was a high degree of variability both within and between bilinguals, and not all the participants exhibited this change. They proposed a dynamic system theory: maturational constraints cannot be the only cause of attrition, and various predictors which influence language development in individuals must be considered.

Celata and Cancila (2010) investigated the perception of the geminate-singleton contrast in native speakers of Lucchese Italian and among first generation late Lucchese Italian-English bilinguals (those who emigrated to the U.S.) and second generation/heritage speakers of Lucchese Italian bilinguals (those who were born in the U.S.). The results of a real word and a nonce word identification task revealed that bilingual speakers are significantly worse than the control Lucchese monolingual speakers at the perception of the geminate-singleton contrasts. In particular, the second-generation group exhibited a higher degree of attrition than the first-generation group. Therefore, the authors concluded that the perception of the length contrast has become progressively impaired in their bilingual groups. Given the scarcity of evidence of attrition in bilingual speech at the phonological level, and the fact that gemination had not been previously examined in production studies of phonetic or phonological attrition in these languages, Rafat, Mohaghegh and Stevenson (2017) examined the attrition of L1 geminate-singleton length contrast in Persian-English speaking bilinguals living in Canada. The main goal of their study was to determine whether the geminate-singleton consonant length contrast attrites across three different generations of Persian-English-speaking bilinguals living in Canada. The secondary aim of the study was to draw parallels with L2 speech and shed light on the role of universal phonetic factors on the process of geminate-singleton length contrast attrition in the same population. Previously, Sorianello (2015) had examined the effect of manner/class and voicing on the production of Italian geminates by L2 learners. Rafat, Mohaghegh and Stevenson (2017) examined the effect of manner/class of sounds and voicing as predictors of geminate attrition in eight Persian-English-speaking bilinguals living in Toronto forming three categories of generations: first generation, 1.5 generation and second generation. The 1.5 generation category distinguishes children of Iranian immigrants who had acquired Persian as their first language and came to Canada between the ages of five to fourteen from second

generation heritage speakers of Persian. The productions of the bilinguals were compared with the productions of three homeland variety controls. A word-naming task was conducted. Using Praat software, data were acoustically analyzed. Attrition was defined in terms of changes in mean duration of geminates relative to their singleton counterparts, percentage of geminate-singleton degemination, and category overlap. Results showed that geminates attrite across different successive generations. Moreover, there was some evidence to suggest that geminate realization across generations patterns with typological patterns previously reported, showing that universal phonetic principles such as aerodynamic constraints/articulatory difficulty and acoustic/perceptual salience also constrain geminate realization in bilingual Persian-English speakers. However, there was no evidence to suggest that more marked geminates suffer a higher degree of attrition. This was the first study to examine the attrition of a typologically marked contrast, which considers the role of universal phonetic principles, and markedness in an understudied bilingual community across different generations. This study was later replicated by Alkhudidi, Stevenson, and Rafat (2020), where they examined the phonological attrition of the Arabic geminate-singleton contrast (e.g., /hama:m/ “pigeon” vs. /ham:a:m/ “bathroom”) in the speech of native speakers of Arabic who acquired English after puberty with late bilinguals and heritage speakers. Similarly, another goal of the study was to investigate whether universal phonetic/acoustic factors had an effect on the degree of attrition across generations. Participants performed a delayed word repetition task, which tested the production of geminate and singleton words. Results show that late bilinguals and heritage speakers exhibit reduction in duration in their production of geminate consonants when compared with the monolingual group. Similar to the findings of Rafat, Mohaghegh, and Stevenson (2017) no effect of manner of articulation was found, yet there was an effect of voicing, where more voiced geminates showed a higher degree of attrition across both groups. It is plausible that with a larger sample size, an effect of both manner and voicing could be found with respect to geminate attrition, and the authors recommended further investigation of the effect of universal phonetic factors on phonetic and phonological change in immigrant communities, including heritage speech and across generations.

Apart from the potential effects of voicing and manner of articulation, if the same factors that constrain L2 speech learning also constrain heritage speech, then position in the word should also impact heritage speech production. That equivalence classification is position-sensitive as previously mentioned was first proposed in Flege’s SLM. This has also been shown for Mandarin-speaking learners of Persian (e.g., Falahati 2015) and Persian-speaking learners of Spanish (Rafat 2008). Falahati (2015) investigated the non-native production of rhotics by Mandarin speakers learning Persian as a third language. A series of informal interviews were conducted to collect the data. This resulted in 1252 tokens used for the analysis. The results of an acoustic analysis showed that all speakers produced the allophonic variant trill, which exists in Persian but is absent in both Mandarin and English as their L1 and L2. However, their contextual distribution differed from the native speakers. For more research on the acquisition of segmental and suprasegmental features in Persian as a second/third language, read Chapter 2 in this volume.

Although there are currently no studies that have examined the effect of position in heritage speech in Persian, Cornwell and Rafat (2016) investigated the effect of position in the word on the production of /θ/ and /ð/ by three groups of English speakers in the community of Norwich, Ontario, Canada: English monolinguals, heritage Dutch speakers (early bilinguals), and L1 Dutch/L2 English speakers (late-learning bilinguals). /θ/ and /ð/ productions were measured in both naturalistic and reading tasks. Heritage Dutch speakers produced [θ] and [ð] at similar rates to Monolingual English speakers, but the two groups exhibited different allophonic

realizations, especially when /ð/ was word-initial and /θ/ was word-medial. The findings suggested that despite their ability to produce [θ] and [ð], Dutch heritage speakers may manipulate the inherently variable English /θ/ and /ð/ production to communicate their Dutch cultural identity. This was the first study to examine both heritage Dutch bilinguals in Canada.

Although the studies reviewed previously are important because they highlight the fact that languages change as a result of contact and show parallels between heritage and L2 speech, they also show that heritage speech can be studied in the context of sound change across generations. Therefore, the study of heritage speech production or perception can be conducted from a variationist point of view in order to better gain an understanding of sound change in immigrant communities. That is, in addition to the fact that similarly to L2 speech, universal phonetic factors may constrain heritage speech production, it is important to consider that both individual extra-linguistic factors may also play a role in heritage speech production and language change.

### **3.5 Child heritage phonology**

Very little work has been done on child heritage phonology in comparison with adult L2 speech learning or adult heritage phonology. This is partly due to the difficult nature of eliciting speech from children. Some of the questions that received attention in child bilingual phonology have been acceleration, deceleration, transfer, and whether bilingual phonology develops as one or two separate systems.

With respect to Persian-English bilingual child phonological development, Keshavarz and Ingram (2002) have also addressed the issue of whether bilingual children begin phonological acquisition with one phonological system or two. Analyses of data from a longitudinal study of a Persian-English bilingual infant, Arsham, supported the hypothesis that the child had acquired two separate phonologies with mutual influence; that is, he made occasional use of phonological features of Persian in English words and *vice versa*. They suggested that this was due to the pattern of exposure to the two languages, and that other children may show a different pattern, depending on their exposure to the two languages and the role of language dominance.

Fakoornia (2017) is another study that is novel in its approach because it considers the development of both the Persian and English phonology of a newly arrived child heritage speaker from Iran to Canada. This study addresses L1 phonetic attrition, and L2 phonetic acquisition of a 9-year-old Persian-English bilingual child. The study aimed to investigate how the manner of articulation of the rhotics, and the two correlates of stress, F0 peak and syllable duration, may change in both the L1 and L2 speech of a Persian-speaking newcomer to Anglophone Canada within a period of one month. A picture-naming task in both Persian and English was carried out in two sessions. Whereas rhotics are approximants in English, in Persian they have a number of different allophonic realizations in different positions. English and Persian also differ in terms of stress realization (Rafat, 2010). In English, stress in bi-syllabic nouns is often on the first syllable, whereas in Persian stress in nouns is on the final syllable. The results of the acoustic analysis revealed that in the second session the number of approximants in Persian in most positions increased, providing evidence for L1 attrition in Persian, and the stress in Persian words was misplaced on the first syllable, providing evidence for influence of English. Yet, as opposed to syllable duration, the F0 peak was not a consistent factor in determining the change in stress pattern. With respect to English, the majority of rhotics was realized as approximants in both sessions. Moreover, accuracy on the duration of syllables and the location of F0 peak in English increased, resulting in producing more English-like

tokens. Thus, it was concluded that the child was acquiring English L2 phonology at the same time that her Persian was attriting. The findings of this study are novel and contribute to our understanding of attrition and L2 acquisition in child phonology.

These two studies are unique because they consider heritage child phonology as opposed to adult heritage phonology, which is most commonly reported. Particularly, they are longitudinal studies. Longitudinal studies are generally rare because they are more difficult to conduct. For further research on child language acquisition, read Chapter 4 in this volume.

### 3.6 Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter has contextualized some of the studies on the L2 acquisition and development of Persian as a heritage language by considering previous work on heritage speech, second language speech learning patterns, and sound change across generations. In particular, it has attempted to provide both a multimodal and a sociophonetic perspective on heritage speech learning, drawing parallels with L2 speech learning. Moreover, it has pointed out the absence of a model for heritage speech and highlighted some of the issues that have been investigated with respect to heritage and L2 speech. Given the scarcity of literature on this topic, future work can focus on a variety of issues. Namely, the segmental and prosodic aspects of Persian as a heritage language in addition to contact with English is important. Other work can examine other contact situations such as contact with tone languages and languages that have a non-alphabetic orthographic system such as Mandarin. Moreover, given that speech learning including L2 speech learning is a multimodal event, it is advisable to consider all different modalities of speech when investigating the acquisition and development of Persian as a heritage speech. Furthermore, future studies can focus on both production and perception. The field would also immensely benefit from longitudinal studies that would shed light on how heritage language evolves over time and investigate the role of individual differences, social factors and attitudes, and the type of input heritage speakers are exposed to. Finally, we would gain a better understanding of how heritage speakers' phonetics and phonology develop and may change if we examine both the heritage speakers' Persian and the majority language at the same time.

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# 4

## LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE OF PERSIAN HERITAGE VERSUS SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKERS

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### 4.1 Introduction

Research in bilingual acquisition has identified important characteristics distinguishing the linguistic competence of Heritage Language (HL) speakers and second language (L2) learners. Heritage speakers (HS) have been defined as unbalanced bilinguals whose home or heritage language is their first language (L1) but is severely restricted because of insufficient input. As a result, heritage speakers can understand the home language and may speak it to some degree but are more comfortable in the dominant language of their society. In contrast, L2 speakers have only been exposed to the language later in life, typically in a classroom environment, and lack traditional L1 acquisition in the language of study. Research findings have shown that the linguistic characteristics of heritage speakers are distinct from those of both a monolingual speaker of the language and a balanced bilingual who is at ease in both the heritage language and the dominant language of the society. These differences can be seen in the areas of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, lexicon and pragmatics. The divergences in the linguistic competence of heritage speakers, L2 learners and monolingual speakers of the language are of interest on theoretical grounds since they can provide insight into the role of age, input and attrition in bilingual language acquisition. But in addition, the investigation of heritage speakers' linguistic competence may shed light on areas in formal theories of linguistics and universal principles of grammar. Furthermore, understanding the distinct characteristics of HL and L2 speakers can inform pedagogical practices to appropriately address each group's linguistic and cultural needs.

This chapter investigates the linguistic knowledge of heritage language learners of Persian in the domains of phonology, morphology and syntax, and contrasts heritage speakers' linguistic competence with that of L2 learners. Building on previous research on Persian heritage language and second language acquisition, the chapter provides a contrastive picture of the phonological and morphosyntactic knowledge of the heritage speaker and the L2 learner of Persian, and discusses the results in the context of findings in the general field of heritage language linguistics. For further discussion on Persian heritage versus second language phonology, read Chapter 3 in this volume. In addition, refer to Chapter 5 in this volume for a discussion on the acquisition of the functional category of negation in Persian progressive tenses in monolingual, second language learners and heritage speakers of Persian.

The chapter is organized as follows: Section 4.2 defines the heritage speaker and discusses what constitutes the baseline in studying heritage language. Section 4.3 provides an overview of past approaches and methodologies in investigating Persian heritage language in the domains of phonology, morphology and syntax. The results of these investigations form the basis for Sections 4.4 through 4.6: Section 4.4 describes the phonological features of heritage language, including phonemic perception and awareness of phonological patterns; Section 4.5 reviews the heritage speaker's knowledge of morphological and morphosyntactic features of Persian; and Section 4.6 presents the syntactic patterns of heritage language. In each section, the results of the studies are compared with findings on second language learners of Persian, when available. Section 4.7 sets the research findings on Persian HL within the larger context of the field of heritage linguistics and provides directions for further research. Section 4.8 summarizes the findings and concludes the chapter.

## 4.2 Persian heritage language

### 4.2.1 Heritage speakers

Heritage speakers have been described as the children of immigrants born in the host country or immigrant children who arrived in the host country some time in childhood (Montrul 2012). These speakers may be considered *simultaneous* bilinguals who grow up speaking the heritage and the majority language since birth, while others may be *sequential* bilinguals since they become exposed to the majority language when they start school. Adult heritage speakers, however, may have failed to develop full linguistic competence in the heritage language as they began using the majority language more frequently in childhood and did not receive schooling in the heritage language (Long and Doughty 2009). Thus, heritage speakers are bilinguals (simultaneous or sequential) whose weaker language corresponds to the minority language of the host country, i.e., the home language, and whose stronger language is the dominant language of that society (Polinsky 2010).

Much research on heritage language acquisition has focused on understanding the potential causes for the linguistic patterns exhibited by heritage speakers: (1) language change in progress and transfer of the features of the dominant language to the HL (Silva-Corvalán 1994); (2) incomplete or interrupted acquisition whereby certain grammatical aspects of the language are not fully acquired due to insufficient input (Montrul 2008, O'Grady et al. 2011, Silva-Corvalán 2018); (3) a process of attrition of acquired knowledge and gradual loss of the heritage language in a bilingual environment (Polinsky 2011); and (4) changes in the input grammar, the language of the immigrant community that provides the input to the heritage language learner (Rothman 2007).

In recent years, there has also been increasing research on identifying the specific linguistic abilities of heritage speakers and how their abilities compare to those of fully fluent speakers of the language as well as the linguistic characteristics of the L2 speakers. Findings suggest that heritage speakers tend to lie on the continuum between the L2 speaker and the monolingual native speaker, sharing properties with both groups (Benmamoun, Montrul and Polinsky 2013). In contrast with heritage speakers, it is generally agreed that native speakers can be differentiated due to their fluency in their linguistic system, having attained relatively complete acquisition of their native or L1 language. Benmamoun, Montrul, and Polinsky (2013) describe the prototypical native speaker as a speaker who

lives in a monolingual environment, or in a bilingual environment in which his/her original native language has not undergone attrition, [having] 'native' pronunciation

and a sizable, comprehensive vocabulary (about 20,000 words). . . . The speaker will speak in grammatical sentences (except for the occasional slip of the tongue), will not omit or misplace morphemes, will recognize ambiguity and/or multiple interpretations and pragmatic implications of words and sentences, and will be attuned to his or her sociolinguistic environment (social class, social context, gender, register, etc.).

Second language learners or L2 speakers, on the other hand, are native speakers of their dominant L1 language and have been exposed to the second language later in life, typically in a classroom setting. L2 speakers exhibit non-targetlike acquisition in various linguistic areas of the second language such as phonetics, phonology, inflectional morphology, semantics, syntax and discourse/pragmatics.

#### **4.2.2 Characteristics of heritage Persian**

Research on Persian heritage language is still in its infancy and the emphasis has often been on sociolinguistic issues and discussions relevant to language maintenance. A handful of scholars, however, have conducted studies on the morphophonological and syntactic properties of Persian heritage speakers among university level students and among child bilinguals. Results of these studies parallel the findings in the general heritage literature, suggesting that Persian heritage speakers have a number of advantages over non-heritage learners who are learning Persian as a second language. Heritage speakers often demonstrate native-like pronunciation, are typically able to carry out conversations on everyday topics in Persian, can understand rapidly spoken conversational language, and are familiar with the sociocultural behavior of the heritage language community. These speakers have successfully developed core aspects of the HL such as phonological alternations, the verbal morphological paradigm, and tense dependencies in complex clauses. But in most cases, they are unable to read and write Persian, make use of simplified or overregularized morphological patterns, employ a restricted word order, and have developed new linguistic features as a result of reanalysis or contact with the dominant language. In addition, heritage speakers are typically not familiar with idiomatic expressions or high level vocabulary and have difficulty moving from one register or variety of the language to another in order to use contextually appropriate language.

Empirical experiments contrasting Persian heritage language and second language features have shown that heritage speakers often outperform the L2 learners but do not reach native speaker competence. Overall, HL speakers perform significantly better in areas such as argument structure and formation of complex conversational sentences. The studies have identified, however, specific areas where L2 speakers perform better – these include features that are not frequent or salient in conversational language such as Arabic root and pattern morphology. Interestingly, transfer effects from the dominant language seem to play a larger role on the competence of heritage speakers than second language learners.

#### **4.2.3 The baseline**

In order to investigate the linguistic characteristics of heritage Persian, it is important to first determine the appropriate baseline for comparison. Should the heritage language be compared with the linguistic knowledge of a native speaker, a first-generation immigrant, or a second-language learner? Should we consider the formal variant of the language or the conversational variant? The choice of the baseline, of course, will depend on the research question being considered.

If the goal is to provide an understanding of the differences between L2 speakers and heritage speakers, and to shed light on pedagogical methodology and curriculum for the two groups, then a comparison of both L2 and HL characteristics against the standard variety of the language being taught in the classroom would be appropriate. As the standard variety is often represented by the language spoken in the homeland, the focus of study could be a comparison with the language features of the monolingual speaker or of a recently emigrated bilingual speaker. On the other hand, if the research goal is to provide an assessment of heritage language acquisition and whether the bilingual child has successfully learned the language he or she was exposed to, the linguistic features to study should be those of the input language. In other words, the linguistic competence of the heritage speaker should not be contrasted with that of the monolingual speaker but rather with the language of first-generation immigrants who provide the input to the heritage speaker or the *diaspora language* (cf. Polinsky 2010, 31). In the case of Persian, the diaspora language differs in a number of ways from the language of the homeland since both languages have undergone change independently and the immigrants tend to experience transfer effects from the language of their new community. Thus, even if research is conducted with the native speaker or monolingual speaker as the baseline of the study, it is important to consider whether divergences seen in the heritage language have been influenced by variation in the diaspora language.

The characteristics of heritage Persian, however, cannot be fully understood outside of the diglossic context of Persian in Iran. *Diglossia* refers to situations where the language spoken by the people in a society differs considerably from the traditional written variant (Ferguson 1959). Diglossic situations have been documented in many languages where two distinct variants of a language, a High variant and a Low variant, coexist in society. In the case of Persian, the conversational variant of the language has undergone linguistic modifications throughout the years, affecting phonological properties, lexical choice, morphological paradigms, word order and syntactic patterns in the language and resulting in a situation where it is now quite distinct from the literary or formal variant.

In societies where diglossia exists, as in Persian, the literary or High variant maintains a more valuable position in society, while the conversational language or the Low variant is often looked upon as the incorrect and bastardized form of the High variant. Feelings about languages can run high and sometimes obscure the real facts behind the usage and properties of the two varieties. What is important to realize is that both variants of the language are equally valid but there is typically a very clear distinction in the functions of the two varieties corresponding to register variation. The literary variant is used almost exclusively in writing and in newscasts while the conversational variant is used in daily conversations.<sup>1</sup> Even in university and political lectures and in interviews on radio and television, the presenters often use the conversational word forms in their speech but may incorporate many literary variants such as more high-level vocabulary. The language that native speakers acquire as a child is therefore the conversational variant, but educational instruction allows the speaker to gain knowledge of the High variant's morphology, syntax and lexicon.

To establish the baseline for any study of Persian heritage language, one therefore needs to consider the conversational (Low language) variant rather than the High level language characteristics. In addition, even if the language spoken in the home country is taken as the baseline of study, the characteristics of the dialect or variant spoken by first-generation immigrants should be examined.

In the discussion that follows, we consider the conversational variant of the Tehran dialect of Persian as the baseline and refer to it as the native speaker language against which the linguistic characteristics of Persian heritage speakers and L2 learners of Persian are contrasted.

### **4.3 Studies in Persian heritage linguistics**

This section provides an overview of past linguistic investigations of Persian heritage speakers, describing the methodology used in each study, the subjects of the experiments, and the stimuli used.<sup>2</sup> The results of these studies are presented in more detail in Sections 4.4 through 4.6.

#### ***4.3.1 Learner performance in the classroom***

Moore and Sadegholvad (2013) perform a study on heritage learners' errors in the classroom, as compared to the knowledge of native speakers. This study was conducted on twenty-six undergraduate university students enrolled in the lower-level Heritage Persian course at the University of California, San Diego. The participants are speakers who report moderate to good speech and comprehension, along with little or no literacy. Students were asked to complete a questionnaire on their background and proficiency assessment. Participants' proficiency level is homogenous: based on a five-point scale (5 high), their mean spoken proficiency score is 3.3 (SD .63), accent assessment is 2.73 (SD .59), comprehension is 3.92 (SD .89), and reading and writing are 1.58 (SD .88) and 1.5 (SD .69), respectively. The lower reading and writing scores are due to the fact that most students come to the class with little or no literacy. The authors identify transfer effects, simplification and register features in the speech of heritage speakers.

Sedighi (2010) studies the characteristics of Persian heritage speakers by collecting data through questionnaires, recorded spontaneous speech prior to entering the language classes, and class performance in a mixed class setting with second language learners. The subjects of this study are second- and third-generation immigrants. Sedighi compares heritage speakers' features to those of native speakers to identify areas where heritage speakers perform at near-native levels vs. areas where their knowledge of the language differs from the language of the homeland. She highlights the differences between heritage language learners and second language learners of Persian to be in the areas of language style, polite/honorific form, phonetics, phonology, orthography, lexicon and code-switching, relative clauses, passive construction, prepositions, broken plural formation, and some tenses, such as past continuous tense, present perfect tense and future tense.

Megerdooomian (2009) is an error analysis study conducted at the University of California, San Diego, based on a collection of exercises and essays by eighteen students in low-proficiency heritage language classrooms over six months. The study distinguishes between linguistic patterns that have been acquired by heritage speakers especially in the area of phonology and structures that are not fully acquired and may require instruction in the classroom.

Shabani-Jadidi (2018) conducts an error analysis study on heritage speakers' errors in an advanced Persian classroom and compares them to those of L2 learners. The results of the study suggest that there is no significant difference between the number of errors made by heritage learners versus second language learners, but the sources of these errors are often different. The subjects of the study are seven students of advanced Persian at McGill University, three of whom are non-native speakers of Persian (one with French L1 and two with English L1), and four are heritage speakers of Persian. All participants completed the three levels of the Persian language program where instruction was provided on higher level vocabulary, Arabic root and pattern morphological forms, idiomatic expressions, paraphrasing and use of conjunctions in complex constructions, and writing practice. The task involved subjects writing on a media topic using the expressions learned throughout the year. The author conducts error analysis on the writings and finds that, at a higher proficiency level, heritage speakers and L2 learners of Persian tend to make similar errors due to transfer from the dominant language, especially in syntactic structures such as word order and tense choice in embedded clauses,



and in morphosyntactic constructions involving valency such as passive voice or unaccusative verb formation. However, there are certain errors that are mainly found in the heritage speakers' writings such as neologisms (creation of new words following the morphosyntactic patterns of Persian), use of the wrong part of speech within a sentence, errors in register by using conversational language in formal writing, and erroneous selection of light verbs in compound constructions. L2 speakers are more alert to certain grammatical rules and paradigms and therefore produce less errors in these categories.

### 4.3.2 Experimental studies

Rafat, Mohaghegh and Stevenson (2017) study phonological attrition in heritage Persian by investigating whether the geminate-singleton length contrast undergoes attrition across different generations of bilinguals living in Canada. The participants consist of three first-generation bilinguals, five heritage speakers and three monolingual controls, ranging in age from 30–66. The participants are provided with 108 bi- and tri-syllabic frequent Persian words, containing geminates and singletons, in a word-naming task. The stimuli also include fourteen distracters to divert participants' attention from the main goal of the experiment. Acoustic data analysis results confirm the existence of geminate consonant attrition across generations, with geminates becoming shorter in each successive generation.

The most comprehensive empirical study on Persian HL to date is Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian (2007), which investigates a wide range of features designed to assess the linguistic knowledge of Persian heritage speakers via a comparative analysis of the results with both L2 learners of Persian and native speakers. The research was part of a larger study carried out at the University of Maryland, College Park, with the goal of building a diagnostic battery of tests to examine the underlying linguistic knowledge of L2 and heritage language speakers on a series of languages, including Russian, Korean and Persian. The experiment separately targets fifty-six distinct linguistic features in the areas of phonology, morphology, syntax, collocation and lexis, presented in an oral-aural format (see Table 4.1) and employs a set of distinct perception and production tasks, such as paradigm elicitation, phoneme monitoring,

Table 4.1 Tests targeted per linguistic subdomain

<b>Phonology</b>	Stress shift	<b>Syntax</b>	Tense dependency
	Assimilation		Conjunct choice
	Cluster constraints		Verbal aspect and telicity
	Knowledge of Persian sound inventory		Verbal subcategorization of prepositions
	Ability to perceive non-English phones		Simple versus complex sentences
	Ability to pronounce non-English phones		Classifiers
	Transfer effects from English		Relative clauses
<b>Morphology</b>	Negation	Negative polarity items	
	Compounding morpheme	Causation	
	Pluralization and animacy	Uses of the accusative case marker	
	Plural allomorphy	Existential versus stative copula	
	Arabic templatic forms	Pronominal binding	
	Subject-verb agreement		
	Causative morpheme		
	Pronominal clitics		
	Deverbal nouns		

<b>Collocation</b>	Persian complex predicates and light verbs	<b>Lexis</b>	Vocabulary of different registers
<b>Features</b>	Persian idioms		Specialized vocabulary
	Persian proverbs		Arabic loan words
<b>Holistic</b>	Accent detection		Translation
<b>Features</b>	Register		Classifiers
	Speech perception in noise		Agentive nouns
	Guided narrative		Nominal and adjectival negative lexemes
	Sentence translation		Noun-noun compounds

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian 2007

Table 4.2 Breakdown of test subjects

Subject category	Number of subjects	Age mean (range)	Gender		ILR levels								
			M	F	1	1+	2	2+	3	3+	4		
Native speakers	14	30 (23–46)	7	7				1	1				1
Heritage speakers	17	26 (18–33)	9	8	2	3	2	1					
L2 learners	12	31 (22–57)	3	9	4	3	1	1					
<i>Total</i>	43	29 (18–56)	19	24									

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian 2007

and lexical decision, while controlling for length of utterance, frequency, stylistic variation, number of morphemes, background of the subjects and other interfering factors.

The forty-three subjects in the study are monolingual or bilingual native speakers, English-speaking learners of Persian, and heritage speakers, with the native speakers serving as the baseline<sup>3</sup> (Table 4.2). The Persian Test Battery is computer-based, projecting audio or visual stimuli and automatically recording subject responses. The results are verified for statistical significance.

Overall, the experiment found that heritage speakers are faster than L2 learners across the board. While a number of features do not show a robust difference between HL and L2 error rates, the researchers detected significant differences in certain linguistic features that will be discussed in more depth in the following sections.

## 4.4 Phonetics and phonology

### 4.4.1 Perception and production of phonemes

According to the literature on HL, heritage speakers have knowledge of the phonetic and sound patterns of the language at levels that L2 speakers might never attain. The phonetic competence, in both perception and production, is in fact one of the most significant features that separate heritage speakers and L2 learners (Au et al. 2008). In some instances, heritage speakers are mistaken as native speakers because of their target-like pronunciation. Closer study, however, has shown that hearers often detect a ‘heritage accent’ as speakers of HL do not fully pattern like native speakers (Kupisch et al. 2014). Overall, the literature has demonstrated

that HL speakers perform better than L2 learners in both perception of sound contrasts and production of phonemes. In perception, heritage speakers are quite close to native speakers, and even relatively short exposure to the HL in childhood gives heritage speakers an advantage in distinguishing sound contrasts that may be difficult for an L2 learner (Polinsky 2010). And despite displaying an accent in the HL, they sound closer to a native in the production of language sounds than L2 learners. There seems to be more variation and loss in non-segmental phonology (e.g., intonation, stress, speed of speaking) which tend to contribute to the heritage accent, especially with lower proficiency speakers. For a discussion on the acquisition of segmental and suprasegmental features in Persian second language, read Chapter 2 in this volume.

With the exception of Rafat, Mohaghegh and Stevenson (2017), systematic phonetic studies in the perception and production of sound systems among the Persian heritage population are still lacking. Many of the reported results tend to emerge from examination of student errors in writing, where the orthography indicates missing sound contrasts. In addition, considerable research has been carried out on Persian L1 speakers acquiring English as a second language, but there exists scant second language acquisition research on English L1 speakers' acquisition of Persian L2.

Nevertheless, one of the common issues noted by researchers of Persian HL in countries where English is the dominant language is the substitution of the velar/uvular obstruents that do not exist in English by their corresponding stops. The uvular-velar place distinction is phonemic for voiced stops in standard Persian speech, but this contrast does not occur distinctively in English. Moore and Sadegholvad (2013) provide examples from writing samples, shown in (1), where the voiced uvular stop/fricative allophone /G/ (gh) is substituted by the velar voiced stop /g/ (g) in heritage language.<sup>4</sup>

(1) Standard orthography		Heritage orthography	
a	قشنگ /Gašan/ 'pretty'	گشنگ /gašan/	
b	بشقاب /bošGāb/ 'plate'	بشگاب /bošgāb/	
c	نقاش /naGāš/ 'painter'	نگاش /nagāš/	

Moore and Sadegholvad (2013) find that heritage speakers with lower language proficiency tend to also substitute the velar voiceless fricative /x/ (kh) by the velar voiceless stop /k/ (k), as shown in (2).

(2) Standard orthography		Heritage orthography	
a	خانم /xānom/ 'lady, Mrs.'	کانم /kānom/	
b	خون /xun/ 'blood'	کون /kun/	

Khanzadi (2013) examines production in adult English-speaking learners of Persian using a combination of contrastive analysis (CA), error analysis and learner language analysis, and discovers a similar phenomenon where L2 learners have difficulty with the pronunciation of the two fricative phonemes /G/ (gh) and /x/ (kh). The participants in this study were two female English L1 speakers at different stages of acquisition of Persian as a second language. The subjects were video recorded over a period of three and a half hours while engaging in six unrehearsed communication tasks. Based on CA, Khanzadi expects the English voiceless and voiced velar stop consonants /k/ and /g/ to replace the corresponding Persian velar fricatives since the latter are not part of the English phonemic inventory. Interestingly, Khanzadi finds that both participants of the study tended to replace the voiced velar fricative with the English

voiceless /k/ rather than the voiced velar /g/, suggesting that English speakers may perceive the Persian voiced fricative as voiceless. More importantly, Khanzadi finds that the position of the fricatives within the structure of Persian syllables appeared to affect the two learners' production, providing support for variationist theory. Overall, both learners were most accurate when producing /x/ in syllable-initial position, whether that syllable was open or closed (CV, CVC, CVCC). In comparison, the accuracy rate was much lower for initial /G/ in the same types of syllables. Neither speaker was able to produce /x/ as accurately when it occurred in final position in CVC, or CVCC syllables (e.g., \*/bebakšid/ instead of /bebaχšid/ 'excuse me, forgive'). The voiced fricative phoneme /G/ was much more challenging for both learners than the voiceless velar fricative /x/, regardless of syllabic position or phonemic context.

The inability to perceive the /G/ and /x/ fricatives has also been noted among Russian speaking learners of Persian as a second language as shown in (3) (Eslami, Estaji and Elyasi 2014).

(3) Standard orthography			Heritage orthography
a رعدوبرق	/raʔd-o-barG/	'thunder'	رعدوبرگ /raʔd-o-barg/
b قبلا	/Gablan/	'previously'	گبلا /gablan/
c فرق	/farG/	'distinction'	فرک /fark/

These findings suggest a parallel between heritage speakers and L2 learners demonstrating the significance of dominant language transfer in the perception and production of the /G/ and /x/ sounds. In the case of Russian learners of L2 Persian, one cannot conclude that the substitution seen in orthography is because these fricative sounds are absent in the L1's phonemic inventory since /x/ is part of the Russian sound system. This suggests that the interference effect seen is due to the fact that the uvular-velar place contrast does not occur distinctively in Russian or English. More research is needed, however, to delineate the role of syllabic and phonemic context.

Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian (2007, 2012) conducted phoneme monitoring experiments on both /x/ and /G/ in various word positions: word-initial position (e.g., /Geymat/ 'price', /Gorub/ 'sunset'), medial position at onset of syllable (e.g., /rowGan/ 'oil'), medial position but at coda of syllable (e.g., /naGme/ 'melody'), word-final position (e.g., /bāG/ 'garden') and word-final cluster (e.g., /morG/ 'hen'). The phoneme /G/ was contrasted with /g/ appearing in similar positions: word-initial (/gorosne/ 'hungry'), medial (/zendegi/ 'life', /ragbār/ 'lightning'), word-final (e.g., /sag/ 'dog') and word-final cluster (/jan/ 'war'<sup>5</sup>). Similar conditions are used for the /x/ phoneme-monitoring task which is contrasted with the /k/ phoneme.

Twenty participants are provided with audio recordings for the words and are asked to press a button when they hear the phoneme of interest. The results show that heritage speakers tend to perform close to native speakers in discerning the phonemes, with perception errors occurring mostly among low-proficiency heritage speakers (see Figure 4.1). Test results also show that L2 speakers with higher proficiency (ILR 3 and above) perform at the level of native speakers (not shown in figure). These results suggest that the interference effect from English documented in other studies significantly affects low-proficiency heritage speakers whereas HL speakers who have been exposed to Persian longer perform at near-native levels.

Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian (2012) also found that heritage speakers have difficulty discerning the Persian alveolar flap /t/ from the English /t/ but still perform better than L2 learners on average on a naturalness judgment task where subjects heard the same Persian word recorded once with a native accent and once with the segment pronounced by an American speaker with an accent.

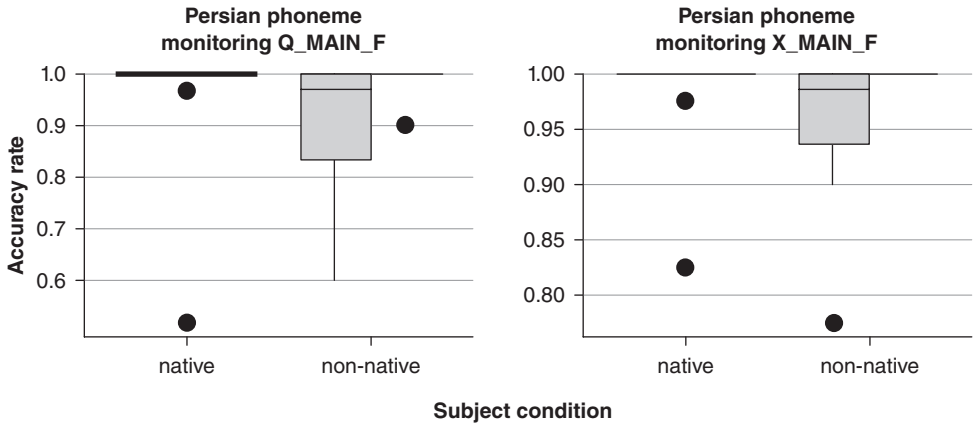


Figure 4.1 Phoneme monitoring tasks for /G/ (left) and /x/ (right). Accuracy scores across speakers with light gray bars indicating heritage speaker output. Native speakers shown to the left of graph provide the baseline. Solid line within the bar indicates average accuracy score for that subject group.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

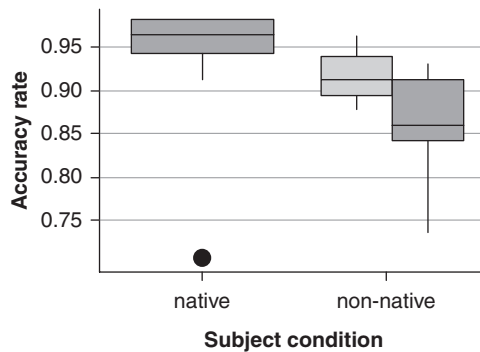


Figure 4.2 Phoneme naturalness judgment task for alveolar flap /r/.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

Findings from this task are illustrated in Figure 4.2, showing accuracy score across speakers. In this figure and all similar figures in this chapter from Cagri, Jackson, and Megerdooian (2007, 2012), native speakers shown to the left of graph provide the baseline, while among the non-native population results, the light gray bar indicates heritage speaker output and the darker gray bar to the right of graph indicates L2 speaker output. A solid line within the bar indicates average accuracy score for that subject group. The results for this phoneme naturalness judgment task suggest minor interference from the dominant language on the perception of approximants in Persian HL. The variation among L2 learners is due to high-proficiency speakers who obtain accuracy scores slightly above 90%.

In contrast to English, Persian does not allow consonant clusters in onset position as can be seen in words that have been borrowed from English or French, such as /kelās/ ‘class’, /peranses/ ‘princess’, and /kerem/ ‘cream’, where a vowel is inserted in the initial consonant

sequence. In coda position, Persian allows certain word-final consonant clusters that would be impossible in English, as in the words /Gofl/ ‘lock’, /saxf/ ‘ceiling’ and /babr/ ‘tiger’. Persian does not allow segments /t/ and /p/ as a cluster sequence, however, nor the familiar English codas *-sts* and *-sks* (as in *lists* and *asks*). Anecdotal observation suggests that Persian heritage speakers tend to allow consonant clusters, especially word-initially, as in the pronunciation of برای ‘for’ as /brāye/ rather than /barāye/, presumably influenced by consonant cluster features in English.

Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian (2012) assess whether speakers have internalized constraints on word-initial and word-final clusters in a Lexical Decision task. Subjects are provided with either a word containing a cluster pattern that will not occur in the Persian language or a pseudoword which contains an onset or coda pattern that is possible in the language. Examples of the illicit words are *livubx*, *hatp*, *qosks*, *skap* and *šraptun*, while examples of pseudowords include *barātor*, *botran*, *saxurak*, and *eskām*. Results show HL speakers performing close to native speakers and slightly better than L2 learners (see Figure 4.3), while interference effects are noted only for heritage speakers with low proficiency in the language. Once again, L2 learners with high proficiency perform on a par with heritage speakers.

Ghadessy (1998) conducts a study on the production of stops and vowels among ten English-speaking L2 learners of Persian in the United States, using ten native speakers of the Tehran dialect as baseline, and concludes that L2 speakers pronounce stops /p/, /t/ and /k/ with shorter Voice Onset Time (VOT) than do native speakers of Persian and produce a longer duration of the vowel /a/ in Persian words than native speakers do. Unfortunately, there are no equivalent acoustic studies of the quality of heritage speaker production, and the results of tests targeting vowel quality and laterals in perception and production conducted by Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian (2007) were not statistically significant.

#### 4.4.2 Phonological patterns

Although there have been several studies on the perception and production of phonological sounds and prosody, the research on the acquisition of phonological rules in heritage linguistics is barely nascent. In the domain of Persian heritage phonology, researchers have identified a number of phonological patterns that seem to have been internalized by heritage speakers by studying errors in writing samples. Since heritage speakers typically do not receive instruction

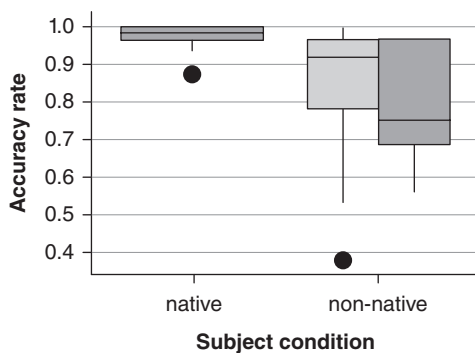


Figure 4.3 Lexical decision task to measure awareness of constraints on clusters.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian 2012

in reading and orthography, once they learn the Persian alphabet, they tend to write the words as they pronounce them. This is particularly salient among heritage speakers with low proficiency in Persian. These orthographic ‘errors’ provide a window into the phonology of Persian HL and suggest potential areas for future study.<sup>6</sup> Many of the features discussed in this section have been obtained from an examination of heritage students’ writing samples.

#### 4.4.2.1 Nasal place assimilation

In Persian, an anterior nasal assimilates to the following consonant in the place of articulation but remains unchanged before laryngeals. One of the more common assimilation patterns is *bilabial assimilation* where the sound /n/ assimilates to the place of articulation of the following bilabial sound (e.g., /b/, /p/ and /m/) and is pronounced as the labial /m/ (Bijankhan 2018). Since Persian orthography represents the historical sounds of the language, these words are written with ‘n’ despite the pronunciation pattern in contemporary language. Hence, the word written in Persian as شنبه [literally: *šanbe*] is actually pronounced /šambe/. Other examples include /jombeš/ ‘movement’, /pambe/ ‘cotton’, /javāmmard/ (/javummard/ in spoken Persian) ‘chivalrous’, among others. Heritage students typically write these words with the letter ‘m’ as they hear them, as in شنبه /šambe/ ‘Saturday’, پنبه /pambe/ ‘cotton’, دنبال /dombāl/ ‘after, following’, تمبل /tambal/ ‘lazy’ and زمبور /zambur/ ‘bee’ (Megerdoomian 2010; Sedighi 2018). These ‘errors’ in writing by heritage speakers are highly consistent and suggest that the phonological pattern of bilabial assimilation has been acquired in Persian heritage language.

It should be emphasized that, despite claims in the literature (cf. Sedighi 2010), this pattern of assimilation is not a characteristic of Low (conversational) versus High (literary or educated) language, since a newscaster will not pronounce the word for ‘movement’ as /jonbeš/ despite the orthography but will pronounce it as /jombeš/. Thus, this is an established property of modern Persian regardless of register or prestige.

#### 4.4.2.2 Devoicing

The voiced consonant /G/ appears in words such as قند /Gand/ ‘sugar cube’, باغ /bāG/ ‘garden’ and اقیانوس /oGyānus/ ‘ocean’. This consonant has a voiced uvular fricative variant in intervocalic position as in آقا /ʔāqā/ ‘sir, Mr.’ and فقیر /faqir/ ‘poor’. The consonant has a voiceless velar fricative allophone in the context of voiceless consonants in words such as باغچه /bāxče/ ‘small garden’ and وقت /vaxt/ ‘time’ (Modarresi Ghavami 2018). This pattern of devoicing can also be seen in the writing of Persian heritage speakers as shown in (4), suggesting an acquired phonological rule (Megerdoomian 2009). This pattern has also been reported in the writings of L2 speakers (Eslani, Estaji and Elyasi 2014).

(4) Standard orthography	Heritage orthography
a وقتی که [vaGti ke]	وختی که /vaxti ke/
b نقشه [naGše]	نخشه /naxše/
c اقتصاد [eGtesād]	اختصاد /extesād/
d سقف [saGf]	سحف /saxf/

In Persian, obstruents also become voiceless in word-final position and before or after a voiceless consonant (Bijankhan 2018). Examples include ربط (written *rabi*) /rapt/ ‘relation’, سبک (written *sabk*) /sapk/ ‘style’, لفظ (written *lafz*) /lafz/ ‘pronunciation’. Although less

frequent, this devoicing rule is sometimes reflected in heritage speakers' writings who transcribe the words as they hear them (e.g., اسپ /asp/ 'horse' instead of the standard written form of اسب, written *asb*).

#### 4.4.2.3 Deaspiration

In Persian, voiceless stops lose their aspiration after voiceless fricatives or before obstruents (Bijankhan 2018). In such instances, if the unaspirated voiceless stop is followed by a vowel, it is sometimes perceived as voiced, and this phonological alternation can be seen in heritage speakers' writing samples as shown in (5) (Megerdoomian 2009).

(5) Standard orthography			Heritage orthography
a	مشکل	/moʃkel/	'difficult' مشکل /moʃgel/
b	مشکی	/meʃki/	'black' مشگی /meʃgi/
c	رفتم	/raftam/	'I went' رفدم /raftam/
d	بستم	/bastam/	'I closed' بستدم /basdam/

#### 4.4.2.4 Glottal stop deletion

The glottal consonant is often deleted syllable-finally in spoken Persian, which results in the lengthening of the preceding vowel. This can be seen in words such as بعد /ba:d/ 'after, then', شعر /ʃe:r/ 'poem', معنی /ma:ni/ 'meaning' and صبح /so:b/ 'morning' (Bijankhan 2018). To detect the compensatory lengthening rule in heritage speech would require an empirical acoustic study. However, the deletion of the glottal stop in the coda can be seen in heritage speakers' writing errors as exemplified in (6) (Megerdoomian 2009).

(6) Standard orthography			Heritage orthography
a	بعد	[baʔd]	'after, then' بد /ba:d/
b	شعر	[ʃeʔr]	'poem' شر /ʃe:r/
c	صبح	[sobh]	'morning' سب /so:b/

#### 4.4.2.5 Deletion of stops

Another common orthographic error found in the writing samples of heritage speakers is the deletion of word-final stops (Megerdoomian 2009).

(7) Standard orthography			Heritage orthography
a	رفتند	/raftand/	'(they) left' رفتن /raftan/
b	دوست داشتم	/dust dāštam/	'(I) liked' دوس داشتم /dus dāštam/
c	گرفت	/gereft/	'(he) caught' گرف /geref/

These errors represent the phonological rule in Persian where post-fricative and post-nasal anterior stops are deleted at the end of a word in colloquial speech (Bijankhan 2018).

#### 4.4.2.6 Degemination

Bijankhan (2018) states that word-final geminates in Persian standard speech are reduced to singletons when in isolated form and before consonants. This phonological alternation is more



difficult to observe in writing samples. However, Rafat, Mohaghegh and Stevenson (2017) have demonstrated in a task-based study that this phonological process is active in Persian heritage language (see Section 4.3.2).

#### 4.4.3 Morphophonological patterns of stress

Word level stress in Persian is marked on the last syllable of the word. While derivational suffixes receive the word-final stress, inflectional affixes are not part of the domain of word stress in Persian (Kahnemuyipour 2003). Hence, morphemes such as the *ezafe* marker,<sup>8</sup> the (specific) direct object marker /rā/ (/ro/ or /o/ in conversational Persian), the indefinite marker, and person inflection on verbs do not receive word-final stress, as exemplified in (8) (cf. Kahnemuyipour 2018).

(8) a	Indefinite:	مسافری	/mosāfēr-i/	‘a traveler’
b	Object marker:	ماشینو	/māšín-o/	‘the book-ACC’
c	Ezafe:	میز قهوه‌ای	/míz-e Gahveyi/	‘the brown table’
d	Person inflection:	رفتیم	/ráft-im/	‘we went’

In Persian, the plural marker and the comparative/superlative suffixes behave as derivational affixes attracting word-final stress (Kahnemuyipour 2003). In addition, there are a handful of words that are exceptions to the word-final stress (e.g. /váli/ ‘but’, /xéyli/ ‘very, a lot’, /ágar/ ‘if’, /bále/ ‘yes’, /váxti/ ‘when’).<sup>9</sup> The stress pattern differs in the verbal domain where the main stress falls on the leftmost element in the verb phrase (Kahnemuyipour 2009). Thus, with all verbal forms that involve the durative marker /mi/ or the subjunctive marker /be/, the stress falls on these prefixes, as in /mí-xor-im/ (DUR-eat-1pl) ‘we are eating’, if no other element is in the verb phrase. In the presence of the negation prefix on the verb, negation receives the main stress, as in /né-mi-xor-im/ (NEG-DUR-eat-1pl) ‘we are not eating’. Although these word-level stress patterns are distinct from stress marking in English, Persian heritage speakers in the United States tend to produce them correctly in the HL (Megerdooomian 2009). An empirical study, however, has not yet been carried out on measuring stress and intonation in heritage language.

Sedighi (2010, 2018) reports that heritage speakers fail to distinguish the simple past tense form (e.g., خوردم /xordam/ ‘I ate’) and the indicative present perfect (pluperfect) tense form (e.g., خورده‌ام /xordeam/ ‘I have eaten’). The past tense consists of the past stem of the verb ‘to eat’ followed by the person agreement: /xord-am/. The present perfect is formed by the past participle of the verb followed by the enclitics denoting the verb ‘to be’: /xord-e=am/. In the literary language, the two tenses are written differently, but when transcribing conversational language and in the writing of heritage speakers, with the exception of the third person singular form, both tenses are written the same way (e.g., خوردم /xordam/ ‘I ate’ or ‘I have eaten’) (cf. Moore and Sadegholvad 2013). However, standard speech makes a clear distinction between these two tenses by modifying the stress position: the simple past tense is pronounced /xórdam/ while the present perfect form is pronounced as /xordám/ with a clear difference in the stress pattern<sup>10,11</sup> Based on classroom observations, Megerdooomian (2009) states that heritage speakers have already internalized this stress pattern and do in fact make the distinction between the two tenses in their speech. Given the contradictory findings on this topic, it would be beneficial to conduct an experimental study to determine the competence of heritage speakers with respect to such inflectional stress patterns in Persian, controlling for the proficiency level of the speaker.

#### 4.4.4 Summary

This section discussed a number of phonetic features and phonological rules that seem to be fully acquired in the heritage language. These features have been detected through orthographic errors in Persian heritage speakers' writing samples and a small number of experimental studies. It is essential to conduct systematic studies to verify that the evidence reported from writing samples is statistically significant.

The phonological knowledge of heritage speakers undoubtedly places them in an advantageous position over L2 learners. However, research shows that high-proficient L2 learners perform at the level of heritage speakers in perception tasks; more data is still needed in phoneme production and in examining awareness of phonological rules in Persian.

### 4.5 Morphology and morphosyntax

Research on heritage linguistics has focused in large part on the domain of morphology and morphosyntax. The findings show that heritage speakers typically have knowledge of morphological paradigms in the language, especially if they are frequent and salient in the input. Irregular morphological forms that do not appear frequently in the spoken language have been found to be difficult for heritage speakers, while irregular forms that are frequent in the input have been acquired. As an example, English heritage speakers use the irregular past tense *went* but not the infrequent forms *shone* or *sought* (Polinsky 2010). In contrast, morphemes used to encode dependency relations between distinct constituents (e.g., agreement and case morphology) tend to be difficult for heritage speakers. The level of difficulty varies, however, based on the speaker's proficiency level, the specific language features involved and the distance between the two constituents within the sentence structure (O'Grady et al. 2011; Montrul 2016).

Research on Persian heritage language confirms these findings. Heritage speakers show an overall advantage over L2 speakers, particularly low proficient learners, when it comes to morphological features and verbal paradigms that are frequent in the conversational language, demonstrating native-like linguistic awareness. Yet morphological features that are infrequent in the input are not acquired in the heritage language. In particular, any elements that are considered to be characteristics of the High variant or formal language (e.g., Arabic root and pattern morphology used in Persian language) are unfamiliar to heritage speakers. L2 speakers tend to outperform heritage speakers on these items.

Experimental research has shown that both heritage and L2 speakers of Persian fall significantly behind native speakers in their knowledge of derivational morphology, such as plural formation,<sup>12</sup> agentive and deverbal noun formation, and lexical negation. Derivational affix choices are often dependent on semantic notions such as animacy and selectional restrictions that do not seem to be fully acquired in the heritage language. Persian heritage speakers demonstrate awareness of argument structure with a preference for analytic rather than synthetic constructions, but they also tend to overgeneralize certain features that are more salient and extend their context of use beyond how they are used by native speakers.

#### 4.5.1 Verbal paradigms

Due to the diglossic nature of Persian, there is a large discrepancy between verbal morphology in the formal, written variant of the language and the conversational variant. One such feature is the verb form. Hence, in spoken language, one would say /*mardom migan*/ 'people say'

Table 4.3 Non-past verbal stems

Formal		Conversational		Translation
Non-past stem	1st sing. form	Non-past stem	1st sing. form	Verb
/āvar/	/miāvaram/	/ār/	/miyāram/ <sup>13</sup>	‘bring’
/ā(y)/	/miāyam/	/ā/	/miyām/	‘come’
/tavān/	/mitavānam/	/tun/	/mitunam/	‘be able’
/dah/	/midaham/	/d/	/midam/	‘give’
/rav/	/miravam/	/r/	/miram/	‘go’
/šav/	/mišavam/	/š/	/mišam/	‘become’
/gozār/	/migozāram/	/zār/	/mizāram/	‘put, allow’
/gu(y)/	/miguyam/	/g/	/migam/	‘say’

Source: Moore and Sadegholvad 2013

but would write /mardom miguyand/, where both the agreement endings on the verb (*-an* vs. *-and*) and the basic non-past root form (*g-* vs. *guy-*) are different. Similarly, the spoken form /mixān beran/ ‘(they) want to go’ would be written as /mixāhand beravand/. Here again, there are differences in the verbal agreement suffixes (*-n* and *-an* in spoken form vs. *-and* in writing) and in the verb stems (*xā* and *r* vs. *xāh* and *rav*, respectively). Table 4.3 provides a number of common verbs with their corresponding non-past stem forms. These verbs display distinct non-past forms in the formal and conversational variants of the language. Heritage speakers familiar with the conversational language demonstrate robust knowledge of the conversational forms of the verb, which provides them with an advantage over L2 learners. Yet, they often cannot understand the high-level or formal verbal forms and are unable to relate them to the conversational forms of the verbs that they already know (Megerdoomian 2009).

## 4.5.2 Derivational morphology

Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian (2012) conduct several tests to measure the awareness of heritage speakers in the domain of derivational morphology. The results suggest that there is no heritage advantage in awareness of appropriate derivational morphemes such as lexical negation, choice of agentive suffix on nouns, and plural formation. These experiments are described in the following.

### 4.5.2.1 Lexical negation

This grammaticality judgment test explores the knowledge of heritage and L2 speakers of appropriate affixes used to build negative nouns and adjectives. A secondary goal of the test is to determine whether the heritage speaker has acquired morpholexical selectional restrictions on the type of negation prefix that can be used on nouns and adjectives to create negative lexemes. These prefixes are similar to the English *un-* prefix (e.g., *unharméd*, *unkind*) or the *in-* prefix and its variants (e.g., *indecent*, *impolite*, *illogical*). Table 4.4 provides examples of nominal and adjectival lexemes derived with negation prefixes in Persian.

The /nā/ affix attaches to adjectives to derive the negated adjectival form, while the /bi/ prefix attaches to nouns to form denominal adjectives. /bedun/, /zed/ and /Geyr/ are actually prepositions rather than prefixes; they associate with the nominal (for /bedun/ and /zed/) or the adjectival (for /Geyr/) through the Ezafe linker construction, forming new adjectives. The

Table 4.4 Negative lexeme examples used in grammaticality judgment test

Negative morpheme	Test items		
/nā/	/nā-rāhat/ NEG-comfortable 'uncomfortable'	/nā-binā/ NEG-seeing 'blind'	/nā-mehrabān/ NEG-kind 'unkind'
/bi/	/bi-maze/ NEG-taste 'tasteless'	/bi-kār/ NEG-work 'unemployed'	/bi-arzeš/ NEG-worth 'worthless'
/zed/	/zedd-e-zarbe/ NEG-EZ-impact 'anti-shock, anti-impact'	/zedd-e-dowlāt/ NEG-EZ-government 'anti-governmental'	/zedd-e-āb/ NEG-EZ-water 'waterproof'
/Geyr/	/Geyr-e-Gānuni/ NEG-EZ-legal 'illegal'	/Geyr-e-mostaGim/ NEG-EZ-direct 'indirect'	/Geyr-e-Gābel-e-Gabul/ NEG-EZ-able- EZ-acceptance 'unacceptable'
/bedun/	/bedun-e-ša:r/ NEG-EZ-explanation 'unexplained, without explanation'	/bedun-e-tavajjoh/ NEG-EZ-attention 'inattentive'	/bedun-e-hadaf/ NEG-EZ-goal 'aimless'
/na/	/na-tars/ NEG-fear 'fearless'	/na-fahm/ NEG-understanding 'stupid'	/haG na-šnās/ rights NEG-know 'uncouth, thankless'

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian 2012

derived adjectives, however, are lexicalized and behave as a single word unit – this can be seen by the fact that word stress falls on the last syllable, suggesting that the derived form as a whole acts as the domain of word stress. Finally, the /na/ morpheme attaches to verbal stems such as /tars/ 'fear', the stem of /tarsidan/ 'to fear'.

In addition to the examples shown in Table 4.4, the test includes ungrammatical forms using inappropriate prefixes, such as \*/bi-mehrabun/ 'bi.NEG-kind' (meaning *unkind*), \*/nā-tarbiyat/ 'nā.NEG-civility' (meaning *uncivilized, impolite*), \*/Geyr-e-dorost/ 'Geyr.NEG-correct' (meaning *incorrect*) or \*/na-šoluG/ 'na.NEG-crowded' (meaning *uncrowded*). Participants are thus given a word with one of the negative prefixes, and the subject has to determine if the prompt given is an acceptable Persian word. The decision on whether these forms are acceptable or not are straightforward for a native speaker, but both heritage speakers and L2 learners judge only 60–70% of the items correctly. This is illustrated in Figure 4.4.

#### 4.5.2.2 Agentive nouns

To measure the awareness of heritage and L2 speakers of the derivational formation of agentive nouns, a Lexical decision test was designed where participants are provided audio recordings of grammatical and ungrammatical Persian agentive nouns and subjects have to determine the acceptability of the lexical term. The prompts include Persian words formed with the suffixes /či/, /kār/ and /gar/, as in the examples /po:sči/ (originally: /postči/) 'mail-či.AGENT' (*mailman*), /jenāyatkār/ 'crime-kār.AGENT' (*criminal*), and /kārgar/ 'work-gar.AGENT' (*worker*). Unacceptable word forms include \*/ketābči/ 'book-či.AGENT' (meaning *bookseller*), \*/čubkār/ 'wood-kār.AGENT' (meaning *carpenter*), and \*/sabadgar/ 'basket-gar.AGENT' (meaning *basket-maker*). As shown in Figure 4.5, there is some variation here for heritage speakers, with those

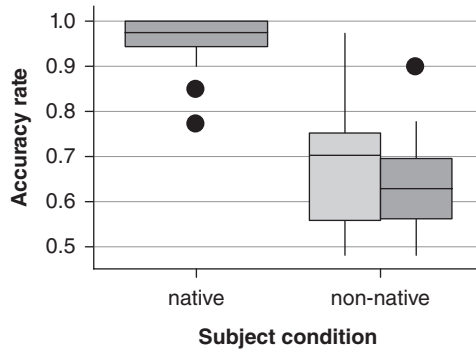


Figure 4.4 Grammaticality judgment task to study awareness of derivational formation of negative lexemes.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

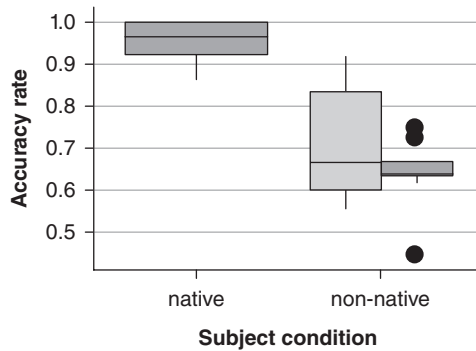


Figure 4.5 Lexical decision task to explore awareness of derivational formation of agentive nouns in Persian.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

at higher proficiency obtaining over 80% accuracy, but on the average, heritage speakers and L2 learners both lag behind native speakers on this task, making accurate choices only about 65% of the time.

One of the reasons for the poor performance of L2 and low-proficient heritage speakers on this task may be due to the fact that this derivation typically forms lexical items that are infrequent in everyday conversational language and are considered to be part of the High language, as in terms like /estebdādgār/ ‘despot, dictator’ or /mohāfezekār/ ‘conservative’.

#### 4.5.2.3 Plural formation

The basic and most productive method to form plural nouns in Persian is to add the suffix /hā/ (/ā/ after consonants) to the singular noun. Additionally, Persian nouns fall into distinct classes with respect to plural forms they can take. Thus, animate nouns may also become plural by adding the suffix /ān/ (with variants /yān/ and /gān/) as in /kudakān/ ‘children’. Nouns of Arabic origin can take the suffixes /āt/ (e.g., /kalamāt/ ‘words’), /in/ (e.g., /mottexasesin/ ‘experts’)

or ‘un’ /enGelābiyun/ ‘revolutionaries’. The suffix /jāt/ is used to form the plural on kind nouns ending in the phoneme /e/ (e.g., /mivejāt/ ‘fruits, produce’). Finally, words of Arabic origin may form the plural using Arabic root and pattern morphology (e.g., /elm/ ‘science, knowledge’ → /olum/ ‘sciences’, /armani/ ‘Armenian’ → /arāmane/ ‘Armenians’).

The plural formation grammaticality judgment test was devised to determine whether morphological selectional restrictions on the type of plural formation have been acquired by heritage speakers and L2 learners. The test battery does not include any plural forms with /hā/ as that suffix can appear on all nouns and is not subject to selectional restrictions. Participants are provided two prompts: the singular noun followed by its corresponding plural form. The plural form can be a valid Persian word or an illicit form. Examples of illicit forms are Arabic morphology on a Persian word (e.g., \*/panājer/ ‘windows’), animate plural form on inanimate nouns or animates that do not take the /ān/ morpheme (e.g., \*/anjomanān/ ‘associations’) or the wrong Arabic plural form (e.g., /towzih/ ‘explanation’ → \*/towzihin/ ‘explanations’). Subjects are asked to determine whether the plural form is valid or not. In this test, only native speakers perform at above a 95% accuracy rate, and heritage speakers lag behind L2 learners as shown in Figure 4.6. Also see results of task-based experiments conducted in Bemani Naeini (2016) that finds the use of plural markers to be very problematic for L2 learners of Persian.

#### 4.5.3 Arabic root and pattern morphology

Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooimian (2007) develop a more in-depth experiment targeting the awareness of heritage speakers of Arabic derivational morphology. It has been argued that the derivational pattern itself is not a productive mechanism in the Persian language, but the various related Arabic words have been borrowed and lexicalized (Natel-Khanlari 1999). In this method, a number of words can be formed based on the same root; these words share certain orthographic features, and in most cases, they also have certain common meanings. For example, the root /šeʔr/ ‘poem’ also forms the words /šāʔer/ ‘poet’ and /mošāʔere/ ‘poetical contest’. Native speakers can generally distinguish related words derived from the same Arabic root, which allows for more advanced vocabulary knowledge and better spelling. This multiple-choice test was designed to determine whether heritage and L2 speakers would also be able to discern words related to the same root form.

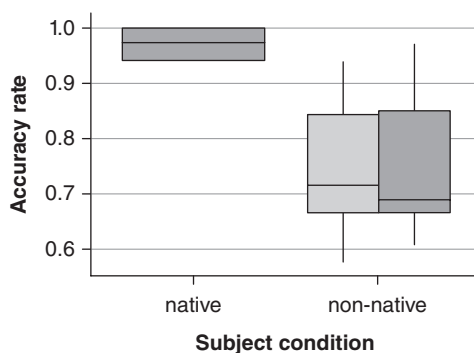


Figure 4.6 Grammaticality judgment task to measure awareness of derivational formation of plural nouns in Persian.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooimian 2012

Table 4.5 Sample items for the Arabic root and pattern morphology test

Root form	Prompt 1	Prompt 2	Distracter	Outsider
شعر š-ʔ-r	شاعر šāʔer 'poet'	مشاعره mošāʔere 'poetry reading'	شعور šoʔur 'intelligence'	معاشرت moʔāšerat 'associating (with s.o.)'
سكن s-k-n	مسكن maskan 'domicile'	اسكان eskān 'residence'	مسكن mosakken 'pill'	نسكافه neskāfe 'Nescafé'
خرج x-r-j	اخراج exrāj 'excise, expulsion'	خروج xoruj 'exit'	مخرج maxraj 'denominator, outlet'	خجالت xejālat 'shame, embarrassment'
نظم n-z-m	ناظم nāzem 'super-intendent'	منظم monazzam 'organized'	منظومه manzume 'system'	ضمانت zemānat 'guarantee'

Subjects are presented with three words associated with the same Arabic root form, two of which are common and one is low-frequency, as well as one phonetically similar but semantically distinct outsider, and must identify the unrelated form. An example of an unrelated word is as follows: The Arabic root for 'exit' is the sequence [x-r-j], which derives the three words /exrāj/ 'expulsion', /xoruj/ 'exit', and /maxraj/ 'denominator, outlet'. The unrelated word given for this sequence is /xejālat/ 'shame, embarrassment' which does not contain the three-vowel sequence of the previous three tokens. There is a total of seventeen items presented to the subject with four words in each item. This task is also a test of lexical knowledge as it is almost impossible to handle without a fairly advanced level of vocabulary.

As shown in Figure 4.7, L2 speakers significantly outperform heritage speakers on this test, with heritage speakers performing at less than chance. These results are not surprising since these Arabic derivational forms are not frequent in the heritage speakers' input. Since most heritage speakers have not received instruction in reading and writing of Persian, they have not been intimately exposed to the language spoken in newscasts or the literary writing in books and publications. L2 speakers, on the other hand, are exposed to these forms in the classroom as they are often taught, especially at more proficient levels. These results also suggest that L2 speakers have learned the morphemic relationship between lexical items that are unfamiliar to heritage speakers.

Another factor that may have allowed L2 learners to perform better than heritage speakers in this task was the fact that several had received instruction in Arabic prior to participating in the test battery. As Figure 4.8 illustrates, native speakers perform at the 90% accuracy rate whether they have had any prior training in Arabic or not. The group that benefits most from having studied Arabic is the L2 population, where those with prior Arabic training perform as well as Persian native speakers on this task.

#### 4.5.4 Classifiers

In Persian, specific classifiers are used depending on the noun's semantic class. For instance, to refer to countable things, the classifier /tā/ is used, but to refer to a person, the classifier /nafar/ needs to be used. Other classifiers include /jeld/ 'cover' for books, /ra:s/ 'head' for sheep and cattle, /dast/ 'hand' for clothing or dresses, /barg/ 'leaf' to count pieces of paper, /farvand/ for ships, etc.

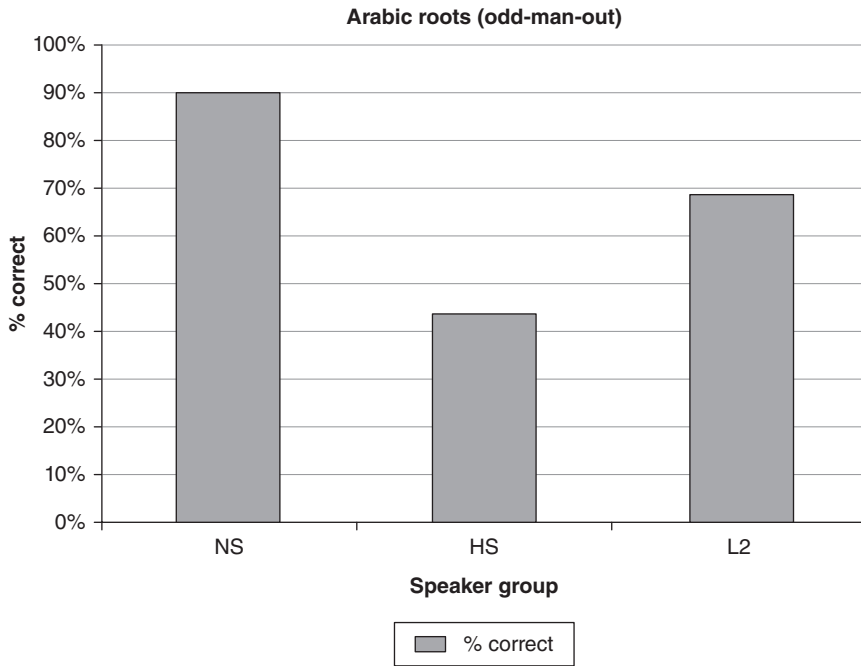


Figure 4.7 Arabic roots multiple-choice test results.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2007

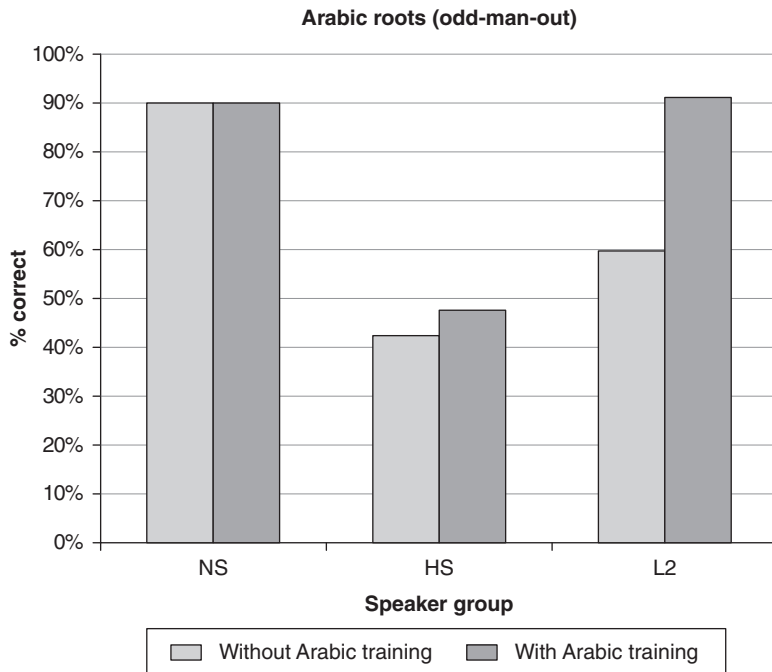


Figure 4.8 Arabic roots results: effect of Arabic training.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2007



Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian (2012) design a test to investigate heritage speakers' awareness of the classifier selection when counting nouns. The test was designed as an Elicited Imitation task where the subject hears a sentence containing a classifier used with its appropriate noun class and is expected to repeat it. Item (9) is an example of a prompt received by the participant, where the subject is asked to repeat the classifier used with the noun:

- (9) ممکنه لطفاً یه نخ سیگار به من قرض بدی؟  
 momken-e lotfan **ye nax sigār** be man Garz bedi?  
 possible-is please **one CL cigarette** to me lend give.2sg?  
 'Could you please lend me one cigarette?' (i.e., a loosie)

In this test, heritage speakers perform much better than L2 learners, who averaged at 20% accuracy (Figure 4.9). This result suggests that the choice of classifiers that associate with particular noun classes are acquired to some degree by heritage speakers. However, since classifiers are not as frequent in English and choice of Persian classifiers is rarely taught in the context of the language classroom, L2 learners may not have acquired this feature of the language.

In a study of classifiers in Mandarin, Benmamoun, Montrul and Polinsky (2013) found that heritage speakers are not sensitive to classifier-noun mismatches. Heritage speakers of Mandarin have been reported to either omit classifiers completely or to use the wrong classifiers. This seems to contradict the results reported in this section. However, the current elicited imitation task does not measure the production of classifier-noun pairs by the heritage speaker, which might be able to shed more light on the acquisition of classifiers and the selectional restrictions of the noun class in Persian HL.

#### 4.5.5 Causative verbs

Causation in Persian can be expressed either morphologically using a causative morpheme on the present stem of the verb or by using a causative light verb. The strategy used depends on the verb type and is strongly constrained. For instance, the verb /tarsidan/ 'to fear' can become a causative by adding the morpheme /-ān/ (variant /-un/) shown in bold in /tars**ā**ndan/ (conversational /tars**u**ndan/) 'to scare, to frighten'. But for the verb 'to open', the choice of the light verb determines if the verb is intransitive or transitive/causative: The light verb /šodan/ 'become'

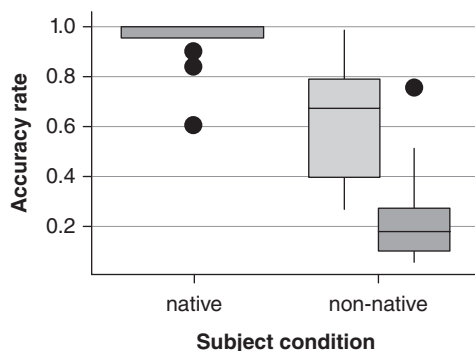


Figure 4.9 Elicited imitation task to test awareness of classifier choice.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

gives rise to the intransitive (unaccusative) form, while the light verb /kardan/ ‘make’ forms the causative as shown in the following examples.

- (10) /dar            bāz        **miše/**  
 door            open       becomes  
 ‘The door is opening.’
- (11) /dar-o        bāz        **mikone/**  
 door-ACC      open       makes  
 ‘(He/she) is opening the door.’

The recognition of causation is reported to be difficult for heritage speakers often skipping the causative morpheme in causative (transitive) constructions or by selecting an erroneous light verb (Megerdoomian 2009). Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian (2007) conduct a grammaticality judgment test where subjects hear sentences with causative and non-causative verb forms and need to determine whether the sentence is grammatical or not. Half of the sentences are constructed using simple verbs (which may take a causative morpheme), and the others are formed using light verbs. The same verb is used in the following conditions:

- (i) causative and acceptable
- (ii) causative and not acceptable (e.g., used in intransitive sentence)
- (iii) non-causative and acceptable
- (iv) non-causative and not acceptable (e.g., used in transitive sentence)

In addition, five items with causative interpretation in simple verbs and without an overt causative morpheme are being piloted. They are: /suxtan/ ‘burn’, /pušidan/ ‘wear, cover’, and /pičidan/ ‘wrap’. These unaccusative verbs can take the causative morpheme, but due to language change, they also seem to convey both a causative and a non-causative meaning without having to add the causative affix.

The test item types are listed in the following, and sample items appear in Table 4.6.

1	causative simple verb	n=20
2	non-causative simple verb	n=20
3	causative light verb construction	n=20
4	non-causative light verb construction	n=20
5	test of (newly developing) causation on non-causative verb	n=5

The results of this test are shown in Figure 4.10 and Figure 4.11, where heritage speakers lag behind native speakers but outperform L2 speakers.

Figure 4.12 shows a breakdown of correct grammaticality judgments for each subject group based on the test condition. Both heritage and L2 speakers have higher accuracy rates on non-causative light verb constructions but tend to have difficulty in judging the grammaticality of non-causative simple verbs. This may suggest that the morphological causative formation has not been acquired by heritage speakers, while they have better awareness of compound causative formation using the light verb.

This generalization is very much in line with the patterns seen in heritage linguistics in general, where heritage speakers show a preference for analytical structures that provide a one-to-one mapping between form and meaning (cf. O’Grady et al. 2011). If this conclusion is on the right track, we would expect Persian HL to have a strong preference for light verb

Table 4.6 Sample items for the causation subtest of argument structure

Persian prompt	English gloss	Condition	Grammatical?
صدای عصبانی بابابزرگ بچه ها رو از ترس لرزوند	The sound of grandpa's angry voice made the children tremble with fear.	causative simple verb	Yes
دیدم که شونه هاش می لرزوند*	* I saw that his shoulders were making tremble.	causative simple verb	No
پیرزن تو برف مونده بود و از سرما داش می لرزید	The old woman was stuck in the snow and was trembling from the cold.	non-causative simple verb	Yes
زلزله های اخیر تموم استان مرکزی رو لرزیدن*	* The latest earthquakes shook all of the central province.	non-causative simple verb	No
خیلی تاریک بود. من رفتم چراغ روشن کردم	It was very dark. I went and turned the light on.	causative light verb construction	Yes
چراغای خیابونا سر ساعت هشت روشن می کنن*	* The streetlights turn on at exactly 8 o'clock.	causative light verb construction	No
هر چی می کردم، سیگارم روشن نمی شد	Whatever I did, my cigarette wouldn't light up.	non-causative light verb construction	Yes
عصر که رسیدیم خونه، تلوزیون رو روشن شدیم*	* When we arrived home in the evening, we turned on the TV.	non-causative light verb construction	No
صدای هواپیما همیشه مریمو می ترسونه	The sound of a plane always frightens Maryam.	causative simple verb	Yes
پسرتون از این جور فیلما می ترسونه؟*	* Does your son frighten of such movies?	causative simple verb	No
بچه ها از این معلم می ترسن	The children are afraid of this teacher.	non-causative simple verb	Yes
فیلمای الفرد هیچکاک منو می ترسن*	* Alfred Hitchcock's movies are afraid me.	non-causative simple verb	No
این چند خط شعر منو به گریه انداخت	These few lines of poetry made me cry.	causative light verb construction	Yes
شادی همین که فیلم رو دید، به گریه انداخت*	* As soon as she saw this movie, Shadi made cry.	causative light verb construction	No
وقتی که شاگردا نمره هاشونو دیدن، به گریه افتادن	When the students saw their grades, they started to cry.	non-causative light verb construction	Yes
پسرت خواهرشو دوباره به گریه افتاد*	* Your son started to cry her sister again.	non-causative light verb construction	No

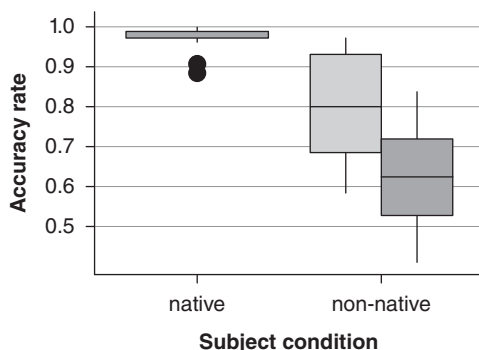


Figure 4.10 Grammatical judgment test for causative constructions.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooimian 2007

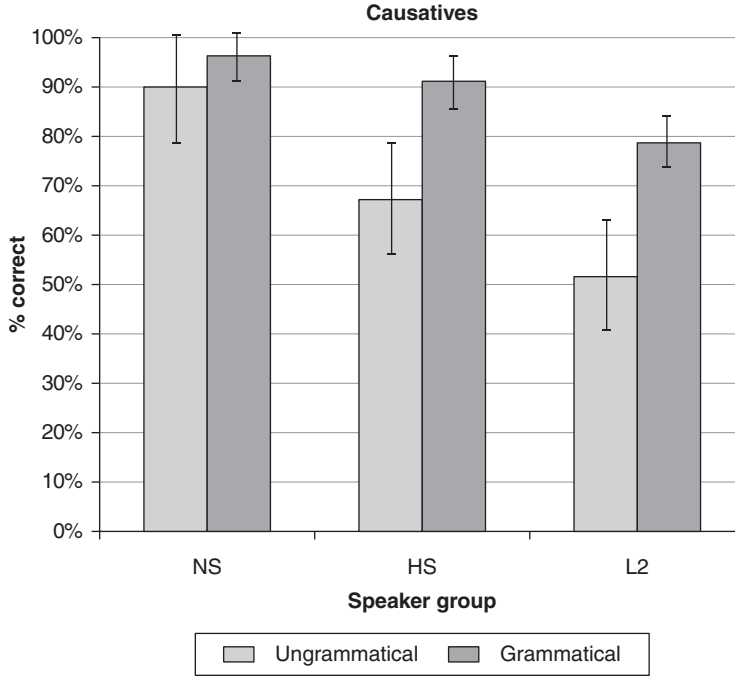


Figure 4.11 Causatives results per speaker group, breakdown of grammaticality judgment.  
 Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian 2007

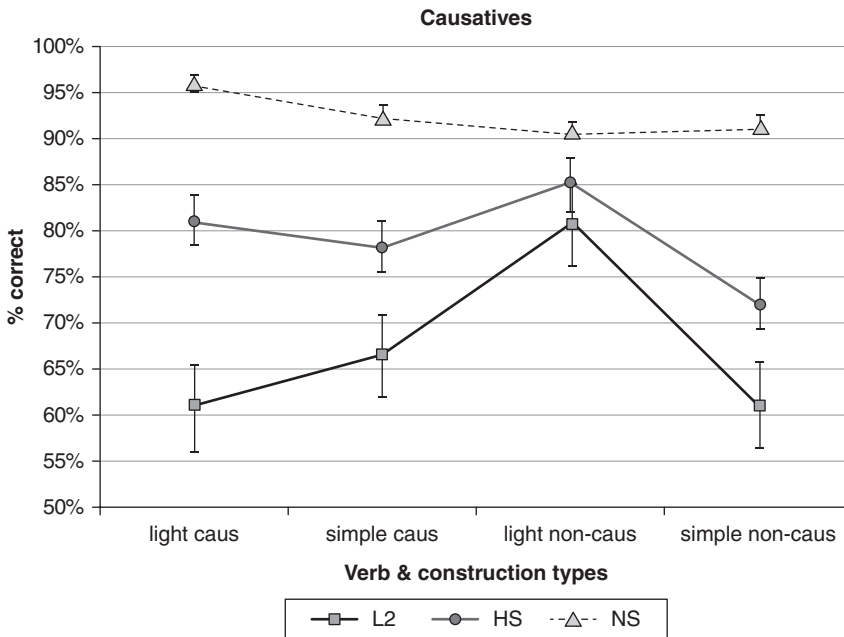


Figure 4.12 Grammaticality judgment based on condition types.  
 Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian 2007

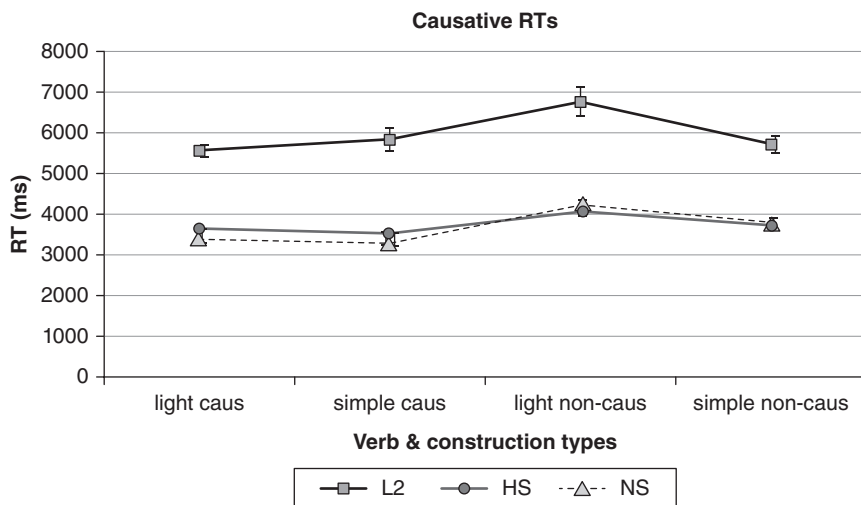


Figure 4.13 Causative test response times.

Source: Cagri, Jackson, and Megerdooimian 2007

constructions over simple verbs or morphologically derived argument structure alternations. For a discussion on the acquisition and processing of light verb constructions in Persian second language, read Chapter 6 in this volume.

Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooimian (2007) claim that overall, the response time of heritage speakers is faster than that of L2 speakers. This is illustrated in Figure 4.13, where heritage speakers perform as fast as native speakers, while L2 learners are slower in response to all test questions.

#### 4.5.6 Light verb constructions

Persian makes use of a small set of simple verbs; most verbal constructions are formed by combining a nonverbal element with a light verb. These constructions are at the interface of lexicon, morphology and syntax. Although researchers may disagree on the specific properties of each light verb, it is agreed upon that the choice of the light verb is typically not random and is dependent on various semantic, aspectual and syntactic properties of the light verb construction as a whole.

The causative construction with light verbs was examined in the previous section, but the various forms of these compound verbs raise difficulties for heritage speakers who sometimes overuse the light verb /kardan/ ‘do, make’, creating forms such as /nejāt kardan/ (rescue do) instead of the standard form /nejāt dādan/ (rescue give) ‘to rescue’ (Megerdooimian 2009). Other examples include /jašn kardan/ (celebration do) instead of the standard /jašn gereftan/ (celebration get) ‘to celebrate’ and /duš kardan/ (shower do) substitutes the standard /duš gereftan/ (shower get) ‘to shower’ (Moore and Sadegholvad 2013). Shabani-Jadidi (2018) also reports difficulties by heritage speakers in selecting the appropriate light verb or preverbal element in forming these compound constructions. She notes, however, that the overgeneralization of /kardan/ is not observed with highly proficient speakers. In general, what these errors



Interference effects from the dominant language may also influence the choice of the light verb construction, as exemplified in the following sentences (Megerdooian 2009):

- (15) این خواننده برنامه رو باز کرد  
 /in xanande barnāma-ro **bāz kard/**  
 this singer program-ACC open made(3SG)  
 ‘This singer opened the show.’
- (16) تازه یاد گرفتم که کتی ایرانیه  
 /tāze **yād gereft-am** ke kati iruni-ye/  
 new memory got-1SG that Cathy Iranian-be.3SG  
 ‘I just learned that Cathy is Iranian.’

The sentence in (15) is uttered by a heritage speaker on a Persian language TV program in Los Angeles, where she used the incorrect verb /bāz kardan/ ‘to open’ instead of the grammatical /eftetāh kardan/; in Persian, only the latter is used in the context of ‘opening a show’. In (16), the heritage speaker used the light verb construction meaning ‘to learn’ as in the English sentence ‘I just learned that Cathy is Iranian.’ In Persian, the appropriate verb would be /fahmidan/ ‘to understand’.

#### 4.5.7 Agreement

The literature on heritage linguistics has found that heritage speakers tend to lag behind native speakers in the acquisition of verbal agreement, with a high number of errors in production of subject-verb agreement. The following grammaticality judgment task examines Persian heritage speakers’ awareness of subject-verb agreement in the context of animacy.

In Persian, inanimate plurals may optionally appear with singular subject agreement on the verb, but animate plurals can only have plural subject agreement. Example (17) shows a sentence with an inanimate plural (‘papers’) lacking overt plural agreement on the verb, and (18) illustrates a sentence where the subject is an animate plural (‘rabbits’) with missing plural agreement on the verb, giving rise to ungrammaticality.

- (17) کاغذای هر سه امتحان روی زمین خیس ریخت  
 Papers-of each three exam on floor wet fell.3SG  
 ‘The papers of all three exams fell on the wet floor.’
- (18) \*خرگوش‌ها از سوراخ توی دیوار دراومد\*  
 Rabbits from hole in wall came out.3SG  
 ‘\*The rabbits came out of the hole in the wall.’

This test focuses on this specific agreement phenomenon by providing participants with sentences that include a plural subject (animate or inanimate) split between those carrying overt plural agreement and those displaying singular agreement on the verb. The object is to determine whether the sentence is acceptable. Since long-distance dependencies have been shown to be significant in testing for agreement, all sentences are controlled for length (six or seven words long) and do not include subordinate clauses. The test conditions are:

- Eighteen acceptable sentences:
  - six inanimate with plural agreement

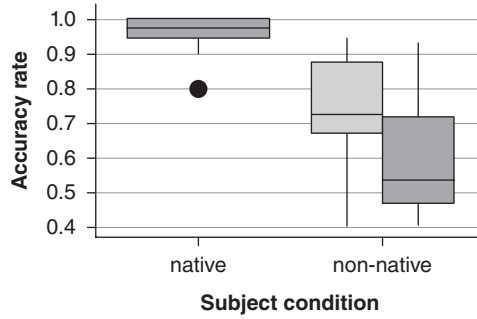


Figure 4.14 Grammaticality judgment test on subject-verb agreement.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

- six inanimate with singular agreement
- six animate with plural agreement
- Six unacceptable sentences:
  - six animate subjects with singular agreement
- Each category has two high frequency, two mid frequency, and two low frequency words.

The results show that Persian heritage speakers obtain lower accuracy scores than do native speakers on this subject-verb agreement task but perform better than L2 learners who have an average accuracy rate close to chance (Figure 4.14).

This finding is only a first step towards exploring the awareness of agreement in Persian. More work is needed to investigate issues relating agreement to different person and number values, and to study the effect of long-distance dependencies in Persian HL.

#### 4.5.8 Summary

This section reviewed the literature on morphological awareness of heritage speakers as compared to L2 learners. It was shown that heritage speakers have successfully acquired morphosyntactic forms that are frequent in the input language, namely, conversational Persian spoken by first-generation immigrants. They show a solid knowledge of the verbal inflectional paradigm and tend to outperform L2 learners on most inflectional morphology tasks, including subject-verb agreement, but still lag behind native speakers. L2 speakers with high proficiency scores, however, perform similarly to heritage speakers on these tasks.

On the other hand, heritage speakers show a pattern of morphological deficiency across tasks testing awareness of derivational morphology. This is the case especially when the morphological forms or lexical items are not frequent in conversational language or integral to its grammar and are considered to be a property of the high language. L2 speakers were shown to outperform heritage speakers on these tasks, in particular if the feature being tested was part of the instructional curriculum in the classroom. The study of light verb constructions confirms findings in the general field of heritage linguistics whereby it is argued that perceptual salience in the input is a significant determining factor for heritage speakers' competence. The



generalized use of the light verb /kardan/ among less proficient heritage speakers, in particular, suggests that a form that is more visible, frequent and phonetically salient tends to get generalized and extended beyond its original use in the input language.

Overall, the heritage speakers' competence in morphology seems to lag behind their awareness of phonetics and phonological patterns in the language. The characteristics of Persian heritage language – tendency to simplify structures that depend on complex aspectual and semantic information, overgeneralization of salient patterns and items, preference for analytic constructions that show a one-to-one mapping between form and meaning, and difficulty with elements that are low on perceptual salience – are parallel to a number of findings in the heritage research literature (cf. Polinsky 2010). Areas that seem to be most susceptible to interference from the dominant language, however, are constrained to the choice of lexical items rather than structural influence.

## 4.6 Syntax

The results of studies on syntax show that Persian heritage speakers have acquired a number of syntactic features nearing native-like competence. These include awareness of the use of negative polarity items and knowledge of sequence of tenses including the use of the subjunctive. They are however outperformed in other domains by L2 speakers, with the most significant results from preposition subcategorization and conjunction choice in complex sentences, both of which seem to be affected by interference effects.

### 4.6.1 Negative polarity items

Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian (2012) perform a grammaticality judgment task to measure speakers' knowledge of Negative Polarity Items (NPI) in Persian. NPIs can appear in main or subordinate clauses in Persian and require a negation morpheme on the verb. In interrogative sentences, negation morphology is not required on the verb; the NPI is licensed in the question environment. The test has the following conditions:

- Acceptable conditions
  - single clause, negation on matrix verb (n=16)
  - subordinate construction, negation on matrix verb (n=17)
  - single clause, interrogative sentence, no negation on matrix verb (n=17)
  - subordinate construction, negation on matrix verb and subordinate verb (n=17)
- Unacceptable conditions
  - NPI in main clause, no negation on matrix verb (n=18); matches English construction

Acceptable sentences are illustrated in (19) and (20), with the NPI in a simple clause and complex clause, respectively. An unacceptable sentence is provided in (21), where the verb lacks negation, similar to the construction in English.

- (19) /hičči be to na-gošte budam/  
nothing to you neg-tell.part be-past.1sg  
'I had not told you anything.' (lit: 'I had not told you nothing.')

- (20) /hiški na-tunest-e dar-e in xuna-ro bāz kone/  
 nobody NEG-able.PERF.3SG door-EZ this house-ACC open make.SUBJ.3SG  
 ‘No one has been able to open the door to this house.’  
 (lit: ‘No one has not been able to open the door of this house.’)
- (21) \*/hiškas dar-e in xuna-ro bāz karde/  
 nobody door-EZ this house-ACC open made-PERF.3SG  
 ‘Nobody has opened the door of this house.’

Results of the test are shown in Figure 4.15. Heritage speakers perform well on this task, with average accuracy scores matching those of native speakers, while L2 learners lag behind. This suggests that heritage speakers have successfully acquired the knowledge of negative polarity item constructions in Persian and there does not seem to be any interference effects from English, which lacks NPI constructions.

Chapter 5 in this volume examines the acquisition of the functional category of negation in Persian progressive tenses in monolingual, second language learners and heritage speakers of Persian within the generative grammar and demonstrates the variability in the production of this morphosyntactic structure by these three groups.

#### 4.6.2 Relative clause

Research on the acquisition of relative clauses by heritage speakers has given mixed results. In general, however, the results show that the level of difficulty observed seems to follow Keenan and Comrie’s (1977) accessibility hierarchy, which provides a ranking of relative clause gap structures in terms of ease of relativization:

- (22) Subject > Direct object > Indirect object > Oblique > Genitive > Object of comparison

Keenan and Comrie posit that if a particular position in this hierarchy can be relativized, all positions to its left have to be available for relativization in the language. Studies on relativization in heritage language have also found that the acquisition of relative clauses follows the Keenan and Comrie hierarchy: subject relative clauses are easier to acquire and relative clauses with a gap in the object position are more difficult for heritage speakers.

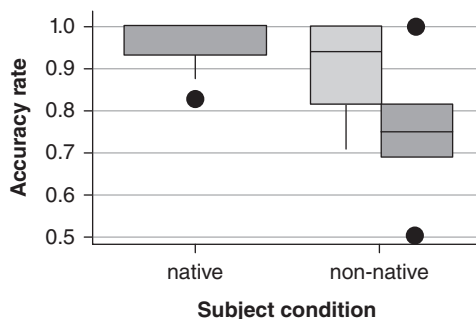


Figure 4.15 Grammaticality judgment on Negative Polarity Items in Persian.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

Table 4.7 Relative clause test items

Persian test item	Transcription	English translation	Condition
معلمی که شاگردو نگاه میکنه	moalemi ke šāgerdo negā mikone	The teacher who is looking at the student	Subject gap
اسبی که سگو گاز میگیره	asbi ke sago gāz mīgire	The horse who is biting the dog	Subject gap
دزدی که داره پلیس رو میزنه	dozdi ke dāre polis ro mizane	The thief who is hitting the policeman	Subject gap
دختری و که پسره بغلش میکنه	doxtario ke pesare baqaleš mikone	The girl that the boy is hugging	Object gap; resumptive pronoun
سگی که اسب گازش میگیره	sagi ke asb gazeš mīgire	The dog that the horse is biting	Object gap; resumptive pronoun
پلیسی و که دزد داره میزندش	polisio ke dozd dāre mizanadeš	The policeman that the thief is hitting	Object gap; resumptive pronoun
صندلی ای که مرده روش جعبه رو میذاره	sandali-i ke marde ruš ja'be ro mizāre	The chair that the man is putting the box on	Gap=object of prep; resumptive pronoun
پاسبونی که آشپز ازش سیگارارو میگیره	pāsebuni ke āšpaz azaš sigārā ro mīgire	The policeman that the chef is getting the cigarettes from	Gap=object of prep; resumptive pronoun
دختری که پسره ازش پول می‌دزده	doxtari ke pesare azaš pul midozde	The girl that the boy is stealing money from	Gap=object of prep; resumptive pronoun
زنی که مرده براش گل می‌خره	zani ke marde barāš gol mixare	The woman that a man is buying flowers for	Indirect object gap; resumptive pronoun
پرستاری که دکتر بهش دارویی رو نشون می‌ده	parastāri ke doktor beheš dārūyi ro nešun mide	The nurse that the doctor is showing the medication to	Indirect object gap; resumptive pronoun

To examine awareness of relative clause constructions and the use of resumptive pronouns in Persian, Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian (2012) conduct a picture selection task where participants are shown several pictures and hear a prompt of a relative clause (but not a full sentence). The subject is expected to select the illustration that best represents the prompt. All pictures represented reversible actions. The conditions for this test consist of relative clauses with subject gaps ( $n=5$ ), relative clauses with object gaps ( $n=5$ ), relative clauses with gaps as object of preposition ( $n=5$ ) and relative clauses with gaps in indirect object position ( $n=5$ ).<sup>14</sup> As a secondary goal, this test also explores the speakers' awareness of resumptive pronouns in the relative clause. The test items are in conversational language and are exemplified in Table 4.7.

Results of this test show that heritage speakers have successfully acquired the knowledge of relative clause formation with various gap structures and use of resumptive pronouns, whereas L2 learners have difficulty with these constructions (Figure 4.16). It should be noted that the clauses in this test are from the conversational variant that differs from the literary variant typically taught in the classroom. One of the main differences is word order, but more importantly, the resumptive clitics in the conversational variant substitute the formal forms of the pronouns. Therefore, the register used in this test may prove to be more advantageous for heritage speakers. Overall, a more detailed analysis of the test results, based on the specific conditions, can help investigate whether there were differences in the task response with respect to subject, object and indirect object gaps.

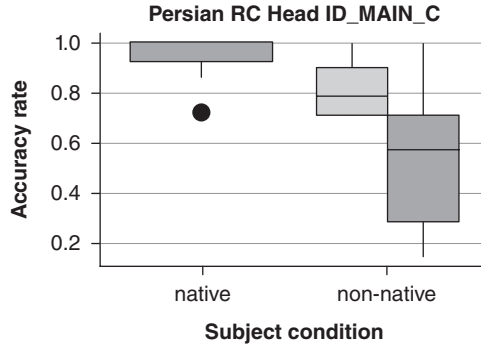


Figure 4.16 Grammaticality judgment on relative clauses in Persian.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

In contrast, Sedighi (2010) claims that Persian heritage students tend to avoid complex relative clauses or relative clauses with resumptive pronouns (23a) and instead opt for shorter utterances (23b).

- (23) (a) mard-i ke tu television-e hafte-ye piš injā bud  
 man-non-specific that in TV-is week-EZ before here was  
 ‘The man who is on TV was here last week.’
- (b) un mard-e hafte-ye piš injā bud  
 that man-specific week-EZ before here was  
 ‘That man was here last week.’

Tarallo and Myhill (1983) set out to study the impact of L1 transfer on English-speaking second language learners’ ability to recognize grammaticality in relative clauses in several target languages which included Persian. The Persian learners who participated in the study were five students in Persian foreign language classes at the University of Pennsylvania. The authors state, “Structures tested for Persian include leaving a resumptive pronoun (correct except in subject position), stranding a preposition (always incorrect), deleting a preposition (always incorrect), and moving the preposition in front of the relativizer (also always incorrect)”. The researchers found a large number of acceptances of ungrammatical sentences involving resumptive pronouns by L2 speakers and concluded that these results cannot be attributed to interference from L1, as English does not normally allow resumptive pronouns in relative clauses. Interestingly, the literature on heritage linguistics has found similar results where heritage speakers tend to overuse the resumptive pronoun where native speakers would prefer a gap. In addition, several studies have found that heritage speakers are more accepting of resumption in relative clauses, even in places that are rejected by baseline speakers (see Polinsky 2010, 252 and references therein).

### 4.6.3 Preposition selection

Many verbs select for a preposition. The verb *answer* in English selects for a direct object, whereas its synonym *respond* selects for a prepositional phrase ‘to someone/something’. Interference effects in Persian HL from English have previously been observed in the choice of prepositions that follow a verb. Megerdooian (2009) states that heritage speakers often say

or write انگلیسی بنویسید /dar englisi benevisid/, which glosses as ‘in English write.2PL’. This is a direct translation of the English construction ‘write it in English’; the Persian sentence should use the preposition به ‘to’ in this case. Heritage speakers often say من روی تلفنم /man ruye telefonam/ (I on phone-am) or روی ساعت رسیدیم /ruye sāat residim/ (on time arrived. 1pl) instead of using the correct prepositions من پا تلفنم /man pā telefonam/ ‘I’m on the phone’ and سر ساعت رسیدیم /sare sāæt residim/ ‘we arrived on time’, respectively. Moore and Sadegholvad (2013) also report a similar interference effect from English in the use of the preposition /barāye/ ‘for’ instead of the appropriate /dar/ ‘in’ in the following sentence:

- (24) man čāhār sâle pish barāye dānešgāh sabte nām šodam  
 I four year before for university register name became  
 ‘I registered for the university four years ago.’

Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooomian (2007) design a fill-in-the-beep task to test preposition selection in Persian HL. Subjects hear a sentence with a sound (a beep, for example) denoting the position of a missing preposition and they must supply the missing preposition. Twenty-one distinct verbs are selected where ten subcategorize for a preposition that is the same in English and eleven subcategorize for a different preposition in Persian; two items are designed for each of these verbs, resulting in a total of forty-two items. Examples of the prompts are shown in Table 4.8.

Figure 4.17 demonstrates that heritage speakers and L2 learners perform equally poorly on this preposition subcategorization task, with an average accuracy score around 20%.

Table 4.8 Sample items for the preposition subcategorization subtest of argument structure

Persian prompt	English gloss	Persian preposition	Condition to English
dustāye afGānemun če xub [BEEP] mā pazirāyi kardan	How well our Afghan friends hosted [x] us!	from/of	Diff
enšātuno [BEEP] ingilisi benevisin	Write your essay [in] English.	to	Diff
to dāri [BEEP] mohabate man suʔestefāde mikoni	You are taking advantage [of] my affection.	from/of	Same
kešvarhāye orupāyi am [BEEP] in namāyešgā šerkat mikonan	The European nations will also be participating [in] this exhibition.	in	Same

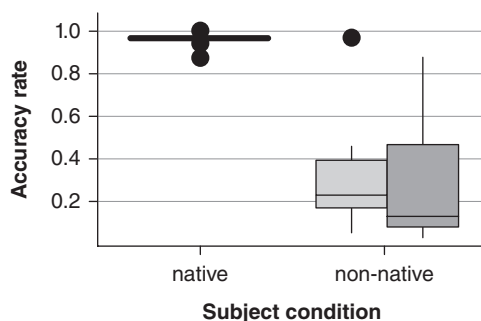


Figure 4.17 Fill-in-the-beep test for preposition subcategorization task.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooomian 2007

This suggests that interference effects play a highly significant role in the choice of prepositions used.

#### 4.6.4 Conjunction choice

Another area where interference effects have been observed is in the use of conjunctions in complex sentences. Megerdoomian (2009) states that heritage speakers of Persian have difficulty in the choice of the conjunction in embedded questions as shown in (25). Heritage Persian speakers almost always use *اگه* /age/ ‘if’, which is a direct translation of the English construction, whereas standard Persian typically leaves it blank. This use of *اگه* /age/ ‘if’ in embedded questions is so engrained in heritage Persian that speakers are often shocked to hear that it is a non-standard usage.

- (25) میخوام بدونم *اگه* میتونی بیای  
 mixām bedunam **age** mituni biyāy  
 want.1SG know.1SG **if** can.2SG come.2SG  
 ‘I want to know if you can come.’

To test this feature, Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian (2012) designed a multiple-choice test where the prompt is a written English sentence that includes an underlined conjunction. Subjects are expected to choose the correct translation into Persian from a set of four choices provided. Examples of the prompts are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Sample items for the conjunction choice test

English prompt	Correct response	Distractor 1	Distractor 2	Distractor 3	Condition to English
<b>When</b> I wanted to come down, my foot slipped.	وقتی که /vaxti ke/ ‘when’	به این دلیل /be in dalil/ ‘hence’	در صورتی که /dar suratike/ ‘whereas’	هر چند /har čand/ ‘even though’	Similar
I was out walking <b>when</b> I saw a black cat under the olive tree.	که /ke/ ‘that’	به محض این که /be mahze inke/ ‘as soon as’	بعد از /ba:d az/ ‘after’	سرانجام /sar anjām/ ‘finally’	Different
I won’t buy you the bicycle I promised <b>unless</b> you get better grades.	مگر این که /magar inke/ ‘unless’	به محض این که /be mahze inke/ ‘as soon as’	بلکه /balke/ ‘but, rather’	شاید که /šāyad ke/ ‘maybe’	Similar
I was so tired <b>that</b> I just passed out.	که /ke/ ‘that’	تا /tā/ ‘until’	اما /ammā/ ‘but’	آیا /āyā/ ‘why’	Similar
I want to know <b>if</b> you’ve read this book.	آیا /āyā/ ‘if’	اگر /agar/ ‘if’	پس /pas/ ‘so’	چرا /čerā/ ‘why’	Different
<b>As long as</b> you’re in love with this man, you won’t consider anyone else.	تا /tā/ ‘until’	چون که /čon ke/ ‘because’	وقتی که /vaxti ke/ ‘when’	آیا /āyā/ ‘why’	Different

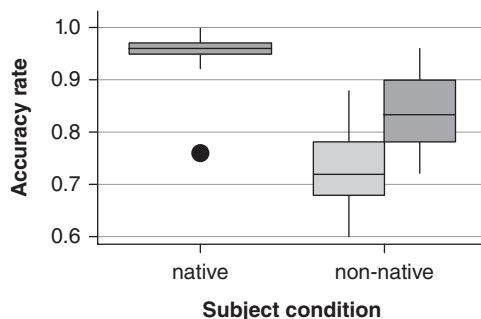


Figure 4.18 Multiple-choice test for choice of conjunction task.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian 2012

In this test, L2 speakers outperform heritage speakers, as shown in Figure 4.18. This suggests that interference effects from the dominant language are more significant in the case of HL acquisition than L2 learning.

#### 4.6.5 Sequence of tenses

Knowledge of a language must include the ability to parse complex sentences that require a subordinating verb. These structures are not only longer in length but also create syntactic complexity by forcing tense requirements on the embedded verb, which may not be similar across languages. An example is provided in the following where the subordinate verb in Persian is in the past imperfective tense, while English employs a past conditional.

(26) آگه جواب سؤالو میدونستم بهت می‌گفتم  
 age javāb-e soāl-o midunestam behet migoftam  
 If answer-of question-ACC knew-PAST.IMP.1SG to-you say-PAST.IMP.1SG  
 ‘If I knew the answer to the question, I would have told you.’

In this test, Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian (2007) assess the subject’s knowledge of tense dependencies in multi-clausal environments using a grammaticality judgment task. The test includes 125 items representing four distinct conditions:

- (i) Tense sequences that are grammatical and parallel to English structures
- (ii) Tense sequences that are ungrammatical and parallel to English structures
- (iii) Tense sequences that are grammatical and unlike English structures
- (iv) Tense sequences that are ungrammatical and unlike English structures

Several samples are shown in Table 4.10, where the sentences that are ungrammatical in Persian have been marked with \*.

Heritage speakers have accuracy scores close to those of native speakers on this task, while L2 learners lag behind, as shown in Figure 4.19 and Figure 4.20. These results suggest that Persian heritage speakers tend to have acquired an awareness of sequence of tenses in complex sentences.

Table 4.10 Sample items for sequence of tenses subtest

Persian sentence	Condition	English gloss
می‌گه زندگیش سخت می‌گذره.	1	S/he says her life is hard.
اگه می‌ری، اینم بده به رضا!	1	If you are going, give this to Reza.
گزارش دادن خرسی که دیروز به مزرعه اومده بود، رفته.	1	They reported that the bear that had come to the farm yesterday has left.
*وقتی به دانشگاه بریم، لباس رسمی پوشیدیم.	2	*When we go to the university, we wore formal (official) dress.
*تو رستوران منتظر شدیم تا مامان می‌رسید.	2	*We waited in the restaurant until mom was arriving.
هر وقت علی رو دیدین، به ما بگین!	3	Whenever you saw Ali, tell us.
*تا غذاتو تموم نمی‌کنی، از سر میز بلند نشو!	4	*Until/while you are not done with your food, don't get up from the table.

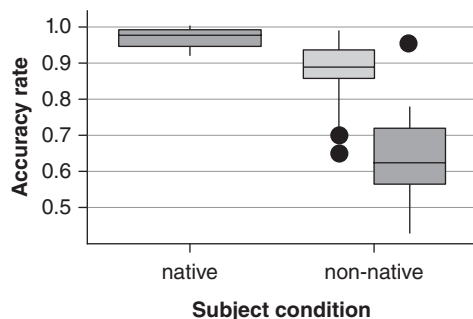


Figure 4.19 Grammaticality judgment task for sequence of tenses.

Source: Cagri, Jackson and Megerdoomian 2012

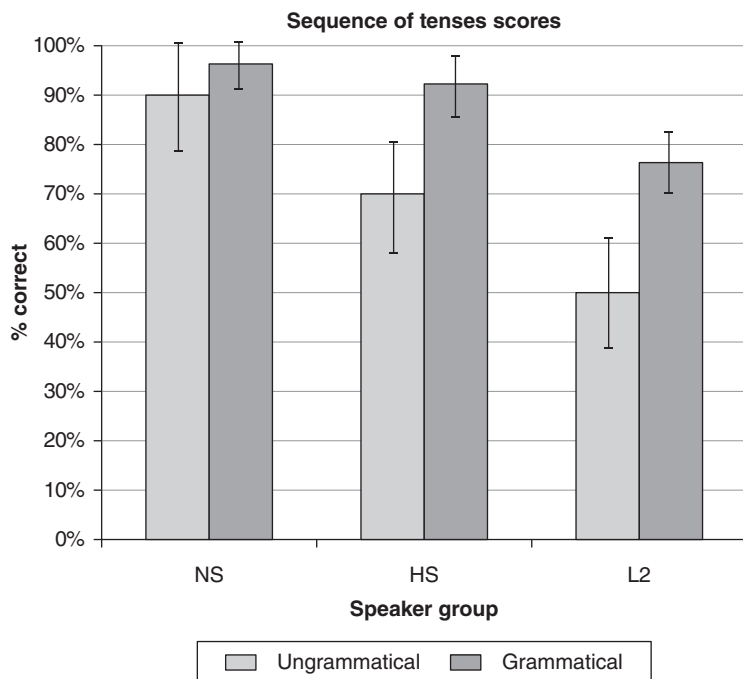


Figure 4.20 Sequence of tenses scores.



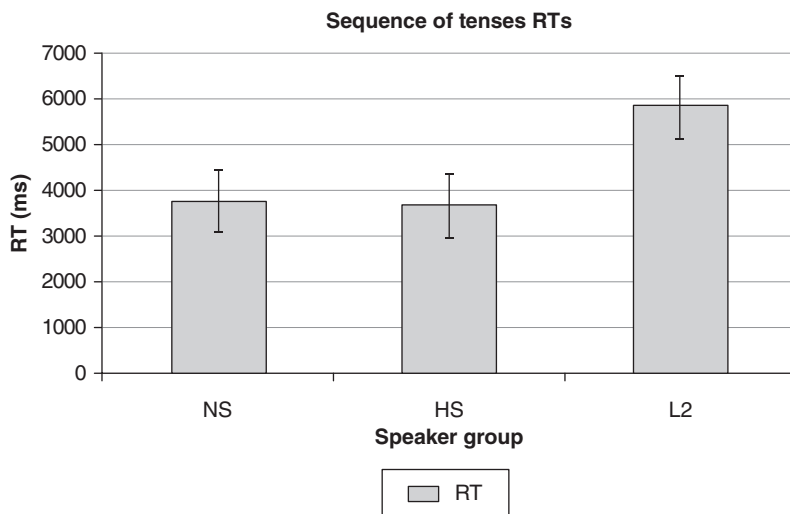


Figure 4.21 Sequence of tenses response time.

Figure 4.21 shows, once again, that heritage speakers' response time matches that of native speakers, whereas L2 learners are slower in responding to test items.

#### 4.6.6 Other features

Persian is a null subject language that allows the subject of the sentence not to be expressed overtly. Heritage speakers naturally utter sentences without the pronominal subject, whereas English speakers need to learn this property of Persian. Nevertheless, no systematic study has been conducted on the frequency of use of null subjects in Persian heritage versus native speech, especially in the light of findings in the general literature on heritage language that has observed an increased use of overt subjects in pro-drop languages when the dominant language does not allow for null subjects.

In English, the bare plural is used to express an unspecified quantity in object position as in 'I read books every day.' In Persian, however, a bare singular noun should be used as in (27). While English learners of Persian tend to add a plural affix in these contexts (i.e., کتابها / ketābhā/ 'books'), Megerdooian (2009) reports that most heritage speakers of Persian have no difficulty using the bare noun.

- (27) من هر روز کتاب میخونم  
 man har ruz ketāb mixunam  
 I every day book read.PRES.1SG  
 'I read books every day.'

In addition, heritage speakers have a clear intuition about the use of the object marker /rā/ in Persian and almost always use it correctly in sentences that require a specific object. However, since they have only heard this marker in the conversational language, they are familiar with its colloquial forms /ro/ or /o/ as exemplified in (28) and (29), respectively, and have difficulty linking it to the formal variant /rā/.

(28) کتابی رو که بهم دادی گم کردم  
ketābi-ro ke behem dādi gom kardam  
book-ACC that to-me gave.2SG lost made.1SG  
‘I lost the book that you gave me.’

(29) مشق‌امو تموم کردم  
mašG-ā-m-o tamum kardam  
homework-PL-my-ACC finished made.1SG  
‘I finished my homework.’

Besides marking specific direct objects, the /rā/ (/ro/ or /o/) morpheme can also be used to mark topicalized phrases. No studies have yet been conducted to test the acquisition of /rā/ in topicalization in Persian heritage language.

The Ezafe morpheme /e/ (variant /ye/ after vowels, due to glide insertion in intervocalic position) is used to link the head of the noun phrase to its post-nominal modifiers and possessor as shown in (30).

(30) ketāb-e jāleb-e qermez-e amu-ye zan-am  
book-EZ interesting-EZ red-EZ uncle-EZ wife-1SG  
‘The interesting red book of my uncle’s wife’

The Ezafe morpheme is an unstressed vowel (i.e., phonetically not salient) but seems to have been acquired by heritage speakers reported in Megerdooian (2009). The evidence can be found in errors in writing by heritage students in the classroom. The Ezafe morpheme is not written in Persian script, except after vowels. Heritage speakers, however, commonly write the /e/ sound in their writings, as shown in (31), where the Ezafe morpheme is shown in bold in the transcriptions. These orthographic errors demonstrate that heritage speakers are fully aware of the use of the Ezafe construction in forming noun phrases and certain preposition phrases (cf. 30e).

(31) (a)	گچه معلم شکست	/gač- <b>e</b> moallem šekast/	‘the teacher’s chalk broke.’
(b)	داستانه مارمولک	/dāstān- <b>e</b> mārmulak/	‘the story of the lizard’
(c)	یک چیزه دیگه	/yek čiz- <b>e</b> dige/	‘another thing’
(d)	زندگیه آنها	/zendegi- <b>e</b> ānhā/	‘their life’
(e)	رویه صندلی	/ruy- <b>e</b> sandali/	‘on top of the chair’
(f)	کتاب فرشته	/ketāb- <b>e</b> ferešteh/	‘Fereshteh’s book’
(g)	مفهومه این فیلم	/mafhum- <b>e</b> in film/	‘the meaning of this movie’

These are in contrast with findings on L2 learners of Persian that show omission of the Ezafe marker (/čērā \*mādar in doxtar asabāni šod?/ ‘Why did this daughter mother get angry?’), as well as instances of hypercorrection (/in xune \*nafar-e panj zendegi mikonan/ ‘this house five of people live’) (Bemani Naeini 2016).

Additionally, Persian heritage speakers seem to have internalized a number of syntactic constructions that occur often in conversational language, such as the use of the subjunctive verb form as shown in example (32). In contrast, learning the correct use of the subjunctive, which occurs after verbs and modals such as /bāyad/ ‘must’, /šāyad/ ‘may’ and /xāstan/ ‘to want’, is usually challenging for L2 learners since it is not used in modern American English.

- (32) ما فردا باید بریم دانشگاه  
 mā fardā            bāyad        berim            dānešgā  
 we tomorrow        must            go.SUBJ.1PL    university  
 ‘Tomorrow we have to go to the University’

The use of the subjunctive in hypothesis constructions, however, such as *اگه وقت داشته باشم / age vaxt dāšte bāšhem/* ‘if I have time’, which uses the past subjunctive, proves difficult for Persian heritage speakers (Megerdooimian 2009). In addition, heritage speakers do not demonstrate a strong command of the passive voice (Fani 2013; Sedighi 2010; Shabani-Jadidi 2018).

The literature on heritage language has found that word order tends to become more restricted in the HL, while morphological features on nouns tend to become simpler (O’Grady et al. 2011). There has been no systematic study of word order in heritage Persian. However, Moore and Sadegholvad (2013) provide the example in (33), which shows evidence of transfer where the SVO order of English is superimposed. In the standard word order in Persian, the copula */ast/* should be sentence-final.

- (33) rešte-ye    tahsili-am        *ast*    zistšenāsi  
 field-of    education-my    is        biology  
 ‘My major is biology.’

A common characteristic of heritage speakers is inexperience with stylistic variation and high registers, despite their native-like fluency in informal registers (which L2 students tend to learn after studying the written or formal discourse). Since heritage speakers have only been exposed to the familial context, they are unable to change registers and may use the language in socially inappropriate ways according to a native speaker. For instance, heritage speakers oftentimes refer to everyone in the familial form of address */to/* ‘you’ and generally have to be taught to use the polite form when appropriate, i.e., */šomā/* used for an interlocutor and */išān/* ‘they’ used when speaking of a third person. Heritage speakers are also unfamiliar with the honorific language used in Persian such as */tašrif biyārin/* (lit. ‘bring your honorable presence’) instead of */biāyin/* ‘come’, or */in xedmatetun bāše/* (lit. ‘may it be in your servitude’) instead of */in-o nega: dārin/* ‘hold this’. The choice of the inappropriate forms in contexts where the honorific language is appropriate can have very negative social consequences if the interlocutors are unaware of the heritage speaker’s limitations.

#### 4.6.7 Summary

This section presented several studies conducted in the domain of syntax to assess the linguistic competence of heritage speakers and L2 learners. There is much more variation in this domain than in the results obtained in phonology and morphology. Persian heritage speakers display strong awareness of agreement and dependencies, as seen by the near-native performance in the negative polarity item and relative clause tasks with resumptive pronouns. Heritage speakers also outperform L2 learners and show target-like accuracy in determining the appropriate sequence of tenses in complex clauses. In contrast, heritage speakers perform weakly on tasks such as conjunction choice and preposition subcategorization, which seem to be most susceptible to interference effects from the dominant language.

Given the variability in the results, it would be beneficial to study these features in more detail by controlling for the test conditions, task types and subject profiles with the goal of isolating the competence of heritage speakers on particular morphosyntactic features.

## 4.7 Sources of heritage language divergence

The literature has argued that the heritage advantage is most obvious in phonetics but the heritage speaker's output diverges strongly from the baseline in the domains of morphology, syntax and lexical knowledge. Results on morphosyntactic knowledge, in particular, are more mixed and depend on the linguistic feature being tested, the type of task used, and the proficiency level of the heritage speaker (Benmamoun, Montrul and Polinsky 2010). This generalization correlates with the findings for Persian heritage language reviewed in this chapter.

Research suggests that Persian heritage speakers have a native-like competence in phonology and show strong acquisition of morphological paradigms. In contrast, morphological elements that are derivational or features that are not salient in the input have not been fully acquired in heritage language; L2 learners tend to do better than heritage speakers in these domains. In the syntactic domain, the competence of heritage speakers is subject to increased variation – overall, these speakers do not perform as well as native speakers on recognition and production of syntactic patterns but tend to do better than L2 learners. Persian heritage speakers show strong awareness of agreement relations, argument structure and tense dependencies, but struggle with selection of certain functional elements, which seem to be subject to interference effects from the dominant language. In this section, I will explore how these findings fit within the claims made in the field of heritage linguistics. This discussion can guide future design and analysis of experimental results on Persian heritage language.

### 4.7.1 Frequency

The role of frequency of forms in the input language is well documented (De Houwer 2007). Repeated exposure by the learner to particular features strengthens the association between form and meaning expressed and facilitates complete acquisition of the features. Thus, more common forms of lexical elements, phonemes, morphemes and syntactic patterns are acquired first by the heritage speaker. Indeed, the investigation by Payesteh (2015) of the language skills of 2–5-year-old bilingual Persian speakers in the United States confirms that parental input is directly related to the development of the child's Persian language skills.

As already discussed in the previous sections, a number of linguistic features that are not frequent in Persian conversational language, such as Arabic root and pattern morphology, are typically not acquired in heritage language. Although Persian heritage speakers show solid awareness of the verbal paradigm, they are often unfamiliar with the future tense construction formed with the verb /xāstan/ 'want' as in /xāhand kard/ (want.3PL do.PAST) '(they) will do'. This form has almost entirely been substituted by the present tense form construction in conversational Persian, and the future meaning is generally conveyed using temporal adverbials in the sentence, as in /fardā mirim/ (tomorrow IMP.go.2PL) '(we) will go tomorrow' (Sedighi 2010).

### 4.7.2 Perceptual salience

Polinsky (2010) defines *perceptual salience* as forms that are visible in the input language. For instance, if a morpheme is not overtly pronounced in certain contexts and it assimilates phonetically to the next morpheme, it tends not to be acquired as uniformly in HL. This is the case of the Spanish *a* accusative morpheme that marks animate objects, which sometimes assimilates to the following word if the latter begins with the phoneme /a/. It has been reported

that heritage speakers of Spanish tend to omit this morpheme in their speech (Montrul and Sánchez-Walker 2013). Thus, the phonetic salience of a phoneme or morpheme plays a role in its successful acquisition in HL.

Perceptual salience may also occur functionally or structurally. Tense is an example of a feature that is structurally salient (i.e., high in the syntactic structure), in contrast with Aspect. Heritage speakers show stability in their acquisition of tense morphology across languages but have less control of aspectual and temporal marking.

The low tolerance for what Polinsky (2010) refers to as “silent elements” is a related phenomenon. Typically, heritage speakers show a preference for overtly expressing syntactic elements. This manifests itself in the low number of null pronominals in heritage languages and in the increased use of resumptive pronouns or fully repeated antecedents instead of silent categories in the gap position.

### 4.7.3 *Leveling*

One of the interesting findings in the field of heritage linguistics has been the fact that heritage speakers show a tendency towards *leveling*, where complex paradigms (e.g., case) are eliminated or simplified. Leveling is a tendency of the heritage speaker to lose the distinction in linguistic features between the HL and the dominant language (cf. Godson 2003 for phonetic leveling in Western Armenian). Leveling causes language features of the HL to “become more similar, opting for a compromise in the representation of a particular segment” (Polinsky 2010).

### 4.7.4 *Differentiation*

In contrast to leveling, heritage speakers have also been known to differentiate the properties of the HL that set it apart from the dominant language, especially in phonetics.

### 4.7.5 *Regularization*

The claim has often been made in the literature that heritage language displays a ‘simplification’ of the language patterns. One instance of simplification is the tendency for heritage speakers to regularize one form over others. According to Polinsky (2010), it is not only the frequency of linguistic features that determines which feature is regularized in HL, but rather salience. Thus, if several allophones or allomorphs compete in the language, heritage speakers will acquire and regularize the more salient variant – i.e., the one that is most heavy phonetically or structurally.

A potential case of regularization in Persian may be the /hā/ plural suffix. As seen in Section 4.5.2.3, Persian has a number of plural suffixes that select for distinct nominal classes. The /hā/ plural, however, is the most common form and can attach to any noun regardless of semantic category. Heritage Persian speakers do not demonstrate any familiarity with the different plural formation patterns; instead, they use the /hā/ suffix throughout to form plurals.

### 4.7.6 *Overregularization*

Overregularization refers to the use of regular grammatical patterns in a new context. A well-documented example of this phenomenon is the overregularization of the past tense in English L1 acquisition where children create forms such as *comed*, *builded* and *catched*.

An instance of overregularization in Persian HL is the extension of the light verb /kardan/ ‘do, make’ to form light verb constructions in contexts where a different light verb would have been employed in the baseline. This pattern of selecting the most common light verbs ‘do/make’ and ‘become’ for the formation of transitive and intransitive compound verbs, respectively, has been noticed in several heritage languages. These light verbs may be the most frequent ones in the language but more importantly, they are the least specified in terms of eventive, aspectual and semantic value. While other light verbs provide certain aspectual (e.g., durative, semelfactive) information or select for nonverbal elements with specific characteristics (e.g., eventive nouns or instruments), the light verb /kardan/ can appear on a large number of constructions – especially in its non-causative use of ‘do’. This light verb is most commonly used to form intransitives with an agentive subject (e.g., /kār kardan/ (work do) ‘to work’, /bāzi kardan/ (play do) ‘to play’) or to form causatives (e.g., /xošk kardan/ (dry make) ‘to dry’, /asabāni kardan/ (angry make) ‘to anger, make angry’). Thus, the use of /kardan/ in a causative construction to form the illicit /\*nejāt kardan/ (rescue make) ‘to rescue’ is a case of overregularization of the causative event contributed to the verbal construction by /kardan/.

#### **4.7.7 Compositionality**

There is a partiality in heritage language for linguistic patterns and features that are compositional, providing a more direct form-meaning mapping. The significance of this mapping has been documented in O’Grady et al. (2011, 225):

The key point here will be that the types of phenomena that have proven most susceptible to partial acquisition or attrition are those for which the form-meaning mapping is likely to be problematic to the processor, either because the form’s phonetic profile is acoustically compromised or because its precise semantic function is difficult to discern. . . . [S]uch mappings are acquired only with the help of high-frequency instantiations in the input – a condition that is often not met in the case of heritage language learning.

The prominence of compositionality in heritage language can explain the results of experiments on causatives in Section 4.5.5, where we saw that Persian heritage speakers perform better on causatives formed with the analytical light verb construction rather than the simple verb forms. In a light verb construction, the light verb clearly maps to a causative meaning, thus providing a direct form-meaning mapping for the heritage speaker. The compositional pattern formation can also be seen in code-switching examples in heritage language discussed in Section 4.6.6.

Furthermore, the vulnerability of Persian heritage language in judgment tasks using the Arabic root and pattern morphology is another instance of the robust nature of compositionality in HL. To begin with, the template morphology patterns do not provide a clear form to meaning mapping. In addition, the Arabic morphology formation rules are not productive in modern Persian; these plural forms are therefore considered high level lexical items. Thus, the lack of compositionality in these constructions and their infrequent and non-salient nature in the input language contribute to their unsuccessful acquisition in Persian heritage language.

Persian heritage speakers have been reported to perform poorly on tasks testing their knowledge of idioms, collocations and proverbs, which are non-compositional lexicalized forms. Cagri, Jackson and Megerdooian (2012) conduct a phrase completion task where the participants are asked to provide the missing one word at the end of the idiom or collocation prompt



## Notes

- 1) This distinction has changed since the advent of social media where the conversational variant is often used in writing blogs, tweets and other social media posts.
- 2) It should be noted that almost all the studies have focused on heritage language characteristics in the Tehran dialect of Iran. The author is not aware of any research on dialects of Persian spoken outside of Iran, such as Afghan Persian (Dari) and Tajiki Persian.
- 3) Any test items where native speakers did not perform at above 70% accuracy have been deleted from the final calculations (Cagri, Jackson, and Megerdooonian 2007).
- 4) The voiced allophone /G/ is a fricative but in prevocalic initial position tends to be a voiced stop, often followed by a fricative release (Windfuhr 1979).
- 5) Test items with obstruents in coda position may need to be revised for phoneme monitoring tasks since stops often undergo devoicing as in /ešx/ ‘love’ (root form /ešG/) or place assimilation in the case of /jan/ ‘war’ (root form /jang/) (Bijankhan 2018). These items may disadvantage heritage speakers who are not as familiar with the written form, which does not reflect the actual pronunciation of the word.
- 6) It should be noted that the patterns of orthographic transcription of spoken speech encountered in heritage Persian writing can also be found in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), such as social media and social networking sites, where Persian native speakers often represent conversational language on CMC. In these instances, these forms are not “errors” but deliberate bending of traditional rules of orthography to represent the spoken language online.
- 7) Persian has three distinct letters to transcribe the sound /s/. In this example, the heritage speaker uses the *sin* letter instead of the correct *sat* character.
- 8) The *ezafe* is used to link the noun to other elements in the noun phrase, such as the modifying adjectives or the possessive nouns: *ketāb-e Germez-e pedar-am* (book-EZ red-EZ father-my) ‘my father’s red book’.
- 9) See Kahnemuyipour (2018) for a comprehensive list of terms that fall in this category.
- 10) Note that the distinction in the third person singular is maintained in heritage writing since the words are pronounced /xord/ for simple past vs. /xorde/ for present perfect.
- 11) There is also a vowel lengthening on the present perfect form as /xordá:m/.
- 12) Plural affixes in Persian behave like derivational morphemes (cf. Kahnemuyipour 2009).
- 13) In Persian, a glide is inserted intervocally at morpheme boundaries.
- 14) Relative clauses with gaps as object of preposition and relative clauses with gaps in indirect object position have parallel constructions in Persian.

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# 5

## NEGATIVE FORMS OF PERSIAN PROGRESSIVE TENSES

### Evidence from monolingual, second language learners and heritage speakers of Persian

*Azita H. Taleghani*

#### 5.1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The generative approach of language acquisition mainly focuses on grammatical representations in children acquiring language and compares these to the adult representations. It is also assumed that a theory of the acquisition and grammar of heritage speakers should not be different from a theory of a monolingual and second language speaker (Montrul 2016, 150). The same modules and mechanisms that are crucial in monolingual acquisition such as innateness, input and socialization are essential in heritage language acquisition too. Heritage speakers, like monolingual learners, start acquisition of the language very young and similar to second language learners bring the knowledge of another language. It is also believed that monolingual and second language learners show differences in their production of inflectional morphology associated with functional categories such as tense, aspect, complementizers, determiners, inflection and negation. Such distinctions in monolingual acquisition have been shown to be structurally determined. It is not the case that children do not know the relevant morphology. Rather, their use or nonuse of inflection co-occurs with other syntactic properties such as type of subjects, negation etc., suggesting that distinctions reveal certain structural characteristics of the child's grammar. Although there are disagreements about what the relevant structural properties are, almost all generative theories of monolingual acquisition share this notion that the child has *full competence* with respect to functional categories. The question that arises here is whether second language variability reflects the same characteristics with respect to the production of inflectional morphology associated with functional categories. Some researchers argue that second language learners know the abstract features of functional categories: the syntactic consequences of functional categories can be observed in their grammars (Epstein, Flynn, and Martohardjono 1996, 19, 677–714; Lardiere 1998, 14, 1–26, Schwartz 1998, 35–59). However, the learner has had insufficient time to experience enough samples of the second language's data to establish the relevant categories. Thus, what is lacking is full knowledge of the specific realization of that functional category.

The discussion of this chapter focuses on the acquisition of the functional category of negation in Persian progressive tenses in monolingual, second language learners and heritage

speakers of Persian and the variability in the production of this morpho-syntactic structure by these three groups. The theoretical approaches in this research are formal linguistics, generative grammar in both morpho-syntactic analysis and acquisition of negation.

The chapter is organized as follows: The first section is devoted to an overview of semantic properties of the progressive structures. The second section focuses on the structural description of Persian progressive tenses, followed by the morpho-syntactic analysis of these tenses in Section 3. Section 4 is devoted to an overview of Persian negation. In Section 5, the main approaches in generative grammar with respect to monolingual speakers, second language learners and heritage speakers' acquisition will be presented. Section 6 is dedicated to the theoretical approach of the research followed by the background research on negation's acquisition in generative grammar in Section 7. Section 8 is concentrated on the empirical study, acquisition of Persian negative progressive tenses in monolingual, second language learners and heritage speakers of Persian. The analysis of the results and the discussion of this empirical study will be presented in Section 9. Finally, the chapter concludes with the final remarks and suggestions for further research.

## 5.2 Progressive: semantic properties

If we look at the progressive construction in many languages, we will notice that the original function of the progressive is to give the location of the subject in the middle of an activity. Thus, it would be reasonable that progressive constructions are used with verbs that have overt location. In other words, the progressive co-occurs with dynamic verbs rather than state verbs.

Bybee, Revere Perkins and Pagliuca (1994, 136) suggest that in the progressive we can find the following elements implicitly or explicitly.

- a) an agent
- b) is located spatially
- c) in the midst of
- d) an activity
- e) at reference time

The locative notion may be expressed either in verbal auxiliary like 'sit', 'be', 'stay', 'live' and 'reside' or in pre/post positions referring to the location such as 'at', 'in' or 'on'. For example, as illustrated in (1), in Spanish the present participle with the auxiliary *estar* originated from the Latin *stare*, meaning 'to stand', produces the progressive tense (Bybee 1994, 130).

- 1) Elena está jugando volibol este año.  
'Elena is playing volleyball this year.'

In Urdu, the verb *rah* 'stay' uses as an auxiliary and makes the progressive tense. This is shown in (2).<sup>2</sup>

- 2) naadyaa kat lik<sup>h</sup> rah-ii hai  
N.F=Nom letter.M-ACC write stay.F.SG be-PRES.3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
'Nadya is writing a letter.' (Butt 1995, 102, e.g. 23)

Comrie defines progressive as a continuousness combined with nonstative meaning (Comrie 1976, 33–35). But it is worth it to note that the continuous is more general than the progressive because it can be used in progressive situations and stative predicates. He suggests figure (1) for aspectual oppositions.

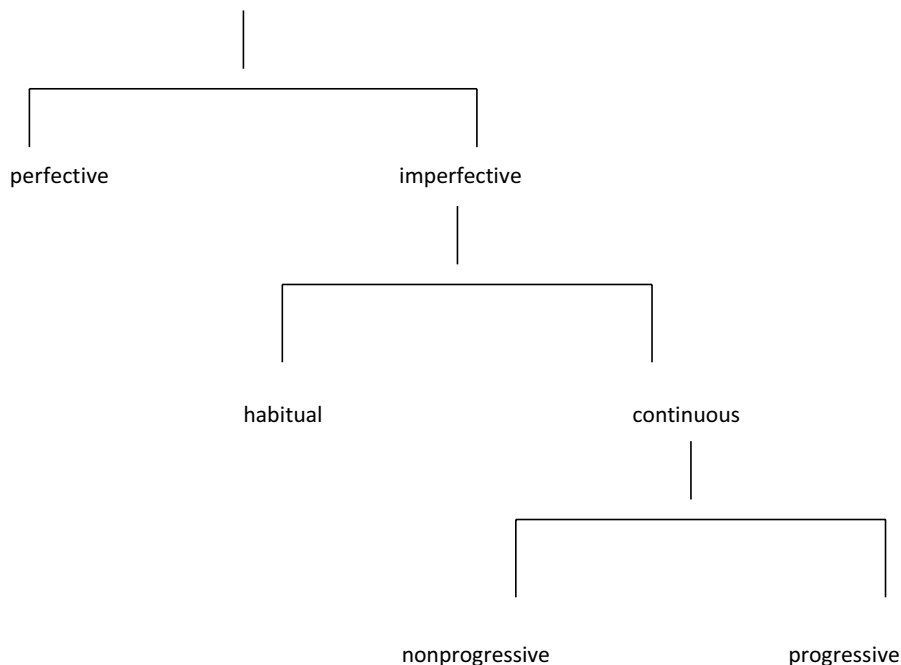


Figure 5.1 Aspectual oppositions.

Comrie suggests that the progressive is an imperfective without habituality. Semantically, continuity and habituality are the most common sub-senses of the imperfective, and continuity is the starting point for the imperfective (Comrie 1976, 25).

After this overview of semantic properties of the progressive, in the next section, we will see how these semantic features characterize morpho-syntactically in Persian progressives.

### 5.3 Persian progressive tenses: structural description

Every language has the specific structure to show progressive tense. For example, English uses periphrastic form: *be* + verb-*ing* as shown in (3).

- 3) (a) She is reading a newspaper.  
 (b) We were watching a movie.

In languages without an explicit progressive grammar, the same device, which is usually used for habitual actions, on-going states, and all other present occurrences is used (Bybee 1994, 133). In Persian, present progressives may be expressed by simple present tense, as illustrated in (4).

- 4) (a) *alān Sārā chi kār mi-kon-eh?*  
 now, S. what work IMP-do-PRES.Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 ‘What is Sārā doing now?’  
 (b) *televizyon tamāshā mi-kon-eh*  
 TV. watch IMP-do-PRES.Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 ‘She is watching TV.’

But Persian has the specific periphrastic progressive forms in present and past tense. Persian present progressive tense is formed by the present stem of the verb *dāshstan* ‘to have’, *dār*, and the simple present form (imperfective) of the main verb. This is illustrated in (5).

- 5) *dār-am dars mi-khun-am.*  
 have.1<sup>st</sup>SG. lesson IMP-read.PRES.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 ‘I am studying.’

The same process as the present progressive tense forms the past progressive tense. The distinction is that the present stem of the verb *dāshstan*, ‘to have,’ is replaced by the past stem *dāsh*, and, instead of the simple present tense of the main verb we have the past imperfective form of the main verb. This is shown in (6).

- 6) *dāsh-am dars mi-khund-am.*  
 had.1<sup>st</sup>SG. lesson IMP-read.PST.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 ‘I was studying.’

As (5) and (6) show, in present and past progressive tenses, both the simple present imperfective tense and past imperfect are used. The simple present and past imperfect tense include the notion of duration and habit. The main common element in these two tenses is *mi-*. Semantically, one of the cases that present tense can appear is habitual situation. Persian present tense also refers to an action, which is happening habitually now. Similarly, the past imperfect refers to the past habit. Thus, we can conclude that the morpho-syntactic marker that shows the habituality in these two tenses is *mi*. The verb *dāshstan* ‘to have’ is also used as a main verb in possessive constructions and refers to the possession in Persian. Semantically, the verb *dāshstan* ‘to have’ is a stative verb. Stative verbs are atelic or unbounded since the event does not have an inherent terminal endpoint. One of the sources of progressive is the stative sources (Bybee 1994, 128). Thus, *dāshstan* ‘to have’ as a stative verb is a proper verb in the structure of progressive tenses in Persian.

The interesting feature of Persian present and past progressive tenses is that both auxiliary verb *dār/dāsh* ‘has/had’ and the main verb receive agreement marking. This is not seen in any tense in Persian.

Since *dāshstan* ‘to have’ takes agreement in progressives, these constructions function like bi-clausal constructions. A question of interest is: are Persian progressive tenses bi-clausal constructions? We will address this question in the next section, which focuses on the structural analysis of Persian progressive tenses.

## 5.4 Morpho-syntactic analysis of Persian progressives

### 5.4.1 Bi-clausal or Serial Verb Construction (SVC)?

As (5) and (6) repeated in (7) and (8) show, the structure of the progressive tenses is  $\underline{V}_1$   $\underline{NP}$   $\underline{V}_2$ . Both  $\underline{V}_1$  and  $\underline{V}_2$  take the subject agreement and they share a single object.

- 7) *dār-am dars mi-khun-am.*  
 have.1<sup>st</sup>SG. lesson IMP-read.PRES.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 ‘I am studying.’
- 8) *dāsh-am dars mi-khund-am.*  
 had.1<sup>st</sup>SG. lesson IMP-read.PST.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 ‘I was studying.’

The structure looks like a bi-clausal construction, but neither a complementizer nor a conjunction separates the two verbs, and the construction refers to a single conceptual event. Schultze-Berndt defines ‘conceptual event’ as follows:

A single event is viewed as conceptual representation as linguistically encoded which can be assigned boundaries, as/ or a ‘location’, in time.

(Schultze-Berndt 2000, 36)

There is another morpho-syntactic construction, which is similar to bi-clausal called Serial Verb Constructions (henceforth SVCs).

Butt (1995, 222) describes the SVC as follows: “Serial verbs are verbal constructions which can stack several events in a single clause.” She suggests that each member of an SVC may display agreement features as illustrated in (9).<sup>3</sup>

- 9) iire rehe-sooni vakilii rehe-haa  
1PL.Incl 1PL.Incl-distant.throw canoe 1PL.Incl-distant.go  
‘We will go, putting (throwing) our canoe to sea.’ (Butt 1995, 224, e.g. 44b)

Butt (1995, 224) presents the following general characteristics for SVCs:

- A single SVC complex describes a single conceptual event.
- SVCs share at least one and possibly more arguments.
- One verb is not embedded within a complement of the other.
- Intonational properties of a clause with serialization are those of a mono-verbal clause.
- The complex takes only one subject or external argument.
- The serial complex has shared tense, aspect, modality, and polarity: this is often reflected in a single morphological realization or in obligatory concord across the verbs.
- There is a diachronic tendency to lexicalization and grammaticalization of the meaning of the serial complex. This can involve treating the whole serial complex as a single lexicalized item, or ‘demotion’ of the meaning and grammatical status of one of the verbs to that of a modifier or case marker.

Butt (1995, 225) claims that in SVCs, one predicate is not subcategorized by the other predicate. Rather, the verbs are gathered into a complex predicate under certain circumstances.

Sebba (1987, 2) suggests that SVCs refer to a surface string of verbs within a single clause. He suggests that the entire serial string behaves like a constituent for the purposes of taking tense/aspect markers, and topicalization.

Chrastaller (1964, 63–75) distinguished two types of combinations in SVC: 1) essential combinations, in which one verb is the principal verb and the other is an auxiliary verb, and 2) accidental combinations, in which two or more predicates express different successive actions or states simultaneously.

Seuren (1990, 39, 18–23) suggests that SVCs are semantically bare. They do not have their own tense or aspect, nor do they have a negation of their own, and they usually serve to signal an aktionsart of the main verb.

Aikhenvald and Dixon (2006, 1–56) suggest that in many languages clausal boundaries are indicated by an intonation break, and no such intonation break or pause markers can occur between the components of an SVC. They categorize SVCs into two main groups: 1) Asymmetrical and 2) Symmetrical.

Asymmetrical SVCs consist of a minor verb from a closed class and a major verb (the head of SVC) from an open class, which determines the transitivity of the whole construction. The minor verbs tend to grammaticalize into markers of direction, aspect, and valency changing. A grammaticalized minor verb can retain full lexical status in the language outside the constructions in which it has been grammaticalized. Asymmetrical serial verbs may be used to impart the semantics of progressive, continuation or habitual meanings. Aspectual meaning expressed with SVCs may correlate with tense.

Symmetrical SVCs consist of components chosen from major lexical classes. They do not have a head and tend to give rise to lexical idioms.

Negation is likely to be marked once per SVC, even if other categories receive concordant marking.<sup>4</sup> There is a similar construction in Urdu. This is illustrated in the following sentence.

10) naadyaa kat lik<sup>h</sup> rah-ii hai

N.F=Nom letter.M-ACC write stay.F.SG be-PRES-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.

‘Nadya is writing a letter.’ (Butt 1995, 102, e.g. 23)

Butt explains that in this sentence *rah* ‘stay’ makes no semantic contribution other than aspectual notion, and its only function is the expression of stativity. She notes that these constructions do not have any negative forms and the aspectual verb is always inflected. She calls these constructions Aspectual Complex Predicate. Based on the given characteristics, a question of interest is, is the Persian progressive tense an instance of SVCs? For answering this question, we have to see what the grammatical function of the verb *dāshtan* ‘to have’ is in Persian progressive tenses.

#### 5.4.2 Function of the verb *dāshtan* “to have” in Persian progressives

The verb *dāshtan* ‘to have’ in Persian progressives receives subject agreement, but it does not determine the agentivity of the event; the main verb is responsible for determining the case of the subject. Furthermore, the verb *dāshtan* ‘to have’ makes no semantic contribution other than aspectual notion to the progressive tense. Butt suggests that in a specific form of SVCs, called “Aspectual Complex Predicate”, the main verb always appears in the stem form (Butt 1995, 102, ft.7). Since *dāshtan* ‘to have’ has no semantic contribution other than aspect, Taleghani (2008, 122) suggests that Persian progressives behave like Aspectual Complex Predicate. However, she mentions that in Persian present and past progressive tenses, the main verb also takes agreement and it is not in stem form.

Since *dāshtan* ‘to have’ in Persian progressives does not affect the argument structure of a clause, it does not make semantic contribution other than aspect. Thus, it is an auxiliary verb. In this respect, Persian progressives are more similar to Asymmetrical SVC in the sense of Aikhenvald and Dixon than Aspectual Complex Predicates. As Seuren (1994, 18–23) suggests, SVCs do not have a negation of their own. In the next section, by giving an overview of Persian negation we elaborate the negative forms in Persian progressive tenses.

### 5.5 Negation in Persian

Persian negation is represented by the prefix *na-* at the beginning of the verbal stem in simple verbs and at the beginning of light verbs in complex predicates. This is illustrated in (11).

11) (a) *na-khord-am*

not-eat-PST-Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.

‘I did not eat.’



- (b) *zamin na-khord-am*  
 ground not-eat-PST-Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 Intended meaning: ‘I did not fall down.’

*ne-*, as an allomorphy of *na-*, substitutes *na-* before the aspect marker *mi-* at the beginning of some Persian tenses. This is illustrated in following examples.

- 12) (a) *ne-mi-r-eh* (Simple present tense)  
 not-IMP-go-PRES.Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 (b) *ne-mi-raft* (Past imperfect tense)  
 not-IMP-go-PST.Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.

In Persian present perfect tense, we have the complex predicate composed of an adjective, which is a past participle and the light verb (henceforth LV), which is the auxiliary *budan* ‘to be’ in the present tense (i.e., *-ast* ‘is’). In colloquial present perfect, the light verb is omitted.

- 13) *Sārā in film rā na-did-eh ast.* (Present perfect tense)  
 S. this movie-ACC not eat-Prt-3<sup>rd</sup>SG. be-PRES-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 ‘Sārā has not seen the movie.’

The structure of Persian past perfect in negative forms is similar to negative present perfect tense with the difference that the LV is filled with *bud* ‘be-Pst’. This is illustrated in (14).

- 14) *Sārā davāsh ro na-khord-eh bud.* (Past perfect tense)  
 S. medicine-ACC not take-Prt. be-PST-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 ‘Sārā hadn’t taken her medicine.’

It is worth noting that the spontaneous production of Persian negative tenses by Persian first language learners (L1) shows that at the early stage of developing negative forms of past perfect tense, children put negative marker *na-* before the auxiliary *bud* ‘be-3<sup>rd</sup>pst’. instead of adding it at the beginning of the past participle. Consider sentences (15a&b) taken from the two three-year old Persian children’s speech.

- 15) (a) *emruz asr khābid-eh na-bud-am.*  
 today afternoon sleep-Prt. not-be-PST-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 ‘I did not sleep (take a nap) this afternoon.’  
 (b) *vaghti raft-im pārk, mariz bud-am bastani khord-eh na-bud-am.*  
 when go-PST-3<sup>rd</sup>PL. park sick be-PST-1<sup>st</sup>SG. Ice cream eat-Prt not-be-PST-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 ‘When we went to the park, I was sick. I had not eaten the ice cream.’

This evidence supports this proposal that Persian past perfect tense is structurally similar to a complex predicate because as it is mentioned earlier the negative marker *na-* appears at the beginning of light verbs in complex predicates. This is illustrated in (16).

- 16) *Sārā emruz otāghash rā tamiz na-kard.*  
 S. today room-ACC clean not-do-PST-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 ‘Sārā did not clean her room today.’  
**tamiz kard=complex predicate, tamiz=adjective, kard=LV**

Persian present and past progressive tenses do not have direct negative forms. If they had the direct negative, they would have negative marker *na-* at the beginning of either auxiliary *dāshtan* ‘to have’ or the main verb as illustrated in sentences 17 and 18. Instead, the negative forms of the simple present tense and past imperfect are usually used. This is shown in 19a&b below.

- 17) (a) \*<sup>5</sup> man na-dār-am ketāb mi-khun-am.  
I not-have-1<sup>st</sup>SG. book IMP-read.PRES.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
‘I am not reading a book.’  
(b) \*man na-dāsh-t-am ketāb mi-khund-am.  
I not-had-1<sup>st</sup>SG. book IMP-read.PST.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
‘I was not reading a book.’
- 18) (a) \*man dār-am ketāb ne-mi-khun-am.  
I have-1<sup>st</sup>SG. book not- IMP-read.PRES.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
‘I am not reading a book.’  
(b) \*man dāsh-t-am ketāb ne-mi-khund-am.  
I had-1<sup>st</sup>SG. book not- IMP-read.PST.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
‘I was not reading a book.’
- 19) (a) man ketāb ne-mi-khun-am.  
I book not-IMP-read.PRES.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
‘I am not reading a book.’  
(b) man ketāb ne-mi-khund-am.  
I book not-IMP-read.PST.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
‘I was not reading a book.’

Negation is also a controversial issue in SVCs. Some linguists suggest that in SVC there can only be one negator (see Seuren 1990). It can either have the whole construction as its scope or part of the constructions.

After the earlier overview of the morpho-syntactic and semantics of Persian progressive tenses and negation in the formal linguistics theory, we present a brief discussion of the main approaches of the acquisition in generative grammar followed by the background research on negation’s acquisition in the next two sections.

## 5.6 Generative grammar and language acquisition

### 5.6.1 Universal grammar and monolingual acquisition

The theory of universal grammar (UG) is a theory of the human biological endowment for language. UG is like a Language Acquisition Device (LAD), a mental construct that mediates between the primary linguistic data or input and actual linguistic behaviors. According to UG, children are born with abstract grammatical knowledge that is initiated by exposure to input. The generative approach of language acquisition mainly focuses on grammatical representations in children acquiring language and compares these to the adult representations. Although child and adult grammar do not look alike in many respects, the generative approach has tried to show that child and adult linguistic representation do not differ essentially.

### 5.6.2 Universal grammar and second language acquisition

In the 1990s, three kinds of theory appeared which assume that the logical problem can be addressed by hypothesizing a UG of principles and parameters, which limits the nature of

second language grammar building. These theories differ in their assumptions about the developmental problem, and in particular about what is called the *initial state* in second language acquisition: the point from which learners start to build grammars. We look into each theory in Sections 5.6.3 to 5.6.5.

### **5.6.3 Minimal Trees (Vainikka and Young-Scholten 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1998)**

The *Minimal Trees* theory of second language syntactic development makes a critical use of the distinction between lexical and functional categories. This theory suggests that only lexical categories are present at the earliest stage of second language acquisition, and functional categories appear during the acquisition. In this theory, there will also be initial transfer from the properties of lexical categories of L1 and with exposure to enough samples of the second language; these transferred lexical properties will be eliminated in favor of the second language pattern. While the *Minimal Trees* theory allows L1 influence only in lexical projections, there are some findings to show the obvious influence in the functional projection TP (IP in Hawkins) (see Hawkins 2001, 69). If functional categories were not transferred from the L1 we would expect parallel development across the second language learners. It is difficult to explain this effect under the *Minimal Trees* theory.

### **5.6.4 Valueless Features theory (Eubank 1993/94, 1994, 1996)**

Eubank also makes essential use of the lexical/functional category distinction in his theory. In his early work (1993/94, 1994), Eubank suggests that all the categories instantiated in L1 are initially transferred into mental grammar for the second language, but that particular specifications chosen for the functional categories by L1 are neutralized. This means that in the initial second language grammar, any functional categories present in L1 will also be present, but they will simply mark structural positions, without any particular specifications: lexical and functional projections transfer from L1. In his latest work in 1996, Eubank allows for the possibility that learners' grammars might initially have representations only for the lexical categories (as in *Minimal Tree* theory), the transfer of functional categories from the L1 with valueless features still occurs, but only if there is positive evidence from the second language for projecting that functional category. The latest research shows that Eubank's *Valueless Features* theory is not able to explain some of the syntactic developments in second language learners of languages like Spanish and Japanese (see Hawkins 2001, 70, 71).

### **5.6.5 Full Access theories (Schwartz and Sprouse 1994, 1996; Epstein, Flynn and Martohardjono 1996; Grondin and White 1996)**

Schwartz and Sprouse (1994, 1996) suggest that second language learners hypothetically have full access from their first encounter with a second language to all lexical and functional categories relevant to the construction of a mental grammar for that language. The only limitation on such access is if the learner has had inadequate time to experience enough samples of second language data to establish the relevant categories. In the absence of relevant experience of the second language, the learner relies on the syntax of L1 to construct sentences (Hawkins 2001, 71). Schwartz and Sprouse (1994, 1996) propose that all the syntactic properties of the L1 are initially transferred into the second language grammar. Full access contends that learners restructure this initial state grammar based on the second language input they hear or read.

In the case of the aspects of the second language's input, which cannot be generated by the initial state grammar, the learners build a new syntactic representation because the properties do not exist in the L1. Schwartz and Sprouse (1996, 41) state that the idea that second language learners have full access to the language faculty that makes monolingual and second language learners alike. However, they differ in development because of their different starting points.

### **5.6.6 Universal grammar and heritage speakers**

A number of researchers suggest that a theory of the acquisition of heritage languages should not look different from a theory of monolinguals or second language speakers of a language (Montrul 2016, 149). Montrul suggests that the differences between heritage speakers, monolinguals and second language learners do not require that the theory of grammar and its acquisition for heritage speakers should be fundamentally different or have additional assumptions than a theory of grammar for a monolingual speaker. This means that heritage speakers like monolinguals and second language learners have the access to innate properties of language and cognition, like monolingual learners they start acquisition of the language very young, and like second language learners they also have knowledge of another language (p. 150).

Formal linguistic approaches in heritage speakers focus on linguistic knowledge and representations elicited from production and comprehension data. These approaches address the facts about variability in different linguistic domains as a function of reduced input, with particular emphasis on universal tendencies found in many heritage languages. These approaches also emphasize the relationship between heritage language grammars and stages of development in child language, the implicitness of the heritage language acquisition process and the role of dominant language transfer (Montrul 2016, 158).

## **5.7 Theoretical approach of the research**

The theoretical approach in this research is generative grammar of language acquisition. It is worth noting that none of the approaches of acquisition in generative grammar is entirely consistent with the observations in second language and heritage speaker acquisition, which have been made so far. However, *Minimal Tree* and *Full Access* theories, especially *Full Access* theory, are more reliable and consistent for explaining the acquisition of functional categories like tense, aspect and negation. Thus, in this research our main theoretical framework is *Full Access* theory proposed by Schwartz and Sprouse 1994, 1996; Epstein, Flynn, and Martohardjono 1996; Grondin and White 1996. For further discussion on theories of second language acquisition, read Chapter 8 in this volume.

After an overview of theoretical approaches in acquisition, we look at some studies of the negation's acquisition in other languages in the next section.

## **5.8 Background research on negation's acquisition in generative grammar**

In generative grammar, negation is investigated to get a better understanding of potential different types of language acquisition as regards accessibility to Universal Grammar (UG) in L1 and L2 acquisition, and in childhood and adulthood. For several years, there was the theoretical discussion about the L1 and L2 acquisition in UG. Meisel (1997) reviewed and appraised these debates and added an original contribution to it with his comparison of L1 and L2 acquisition of French and German. Meisel argued that different underlying mechanisms govern L1

and L2 acquisition. In L2 acquisition, adult learners apply sequencing strategies on the linear arrangement of constituents in surface strings, unlike children, who construct their language by way of structure-dependent operations within the range of options permitted by UG.

In the last 20 years, there has been much research focused on the acquisition of negation in monolingual children and adults, second language learners and heritage speakers, especially in generative linguistics. In this section, we present a brief summary of some of these studies.

It has been known that second language learners of English acquire sentential negation systematically. Stauble (1984) worked on cross-sectional data of the L2 English of six Spanish speakers and six Japanese speakers at three proficiency levels: low intermediate, intermediate and advanced. Stauble's data have shown that at the low intermediate level the Spanish speakers use *no* in copula constructions, considerable use of *no* + thematic verb, with some use of unanalyzed *don't*. Surprisingly, the Japanese speakers use *no* as a sentential negator as much as the Spanish speakers, both with thematic verbs and in copula *be* contexts. It is unlikely that this is the effect of L1 influence, because negation in Japanese is very different from both English and Spanish. Japanese is a verb-final language in which the verb follows its complement and the sentential negator is a form, which follows and attaches to the verb.

Hawkins (2001, 83–103) presented an analysis of the L2 development of sentential negation in the framework of generative linguistics and in a composite working theory of second language syntactic development, which he calls *modulated structure building*. In *modulated structure building*, learners' initial L2 grammars consist of lexical projections like VP, NP, PP, AP, and these have the structural properties of their L1 grammars, which is the first part of *Minimal Tree* theory. He states that initial L2 grammars consist of lexical projections and their structural properties determined by the L1, because of restructuring towards the nature of transferred property in question, so that it may be difficult to detect initial transfer empirically. This is an idea contained in the *Full Access* theory (Hawkins 2001, 73). Following Stauble's (1984) study, Hawkins suggests that there is an early lexical stage without TP (IP in his work) for both Spanish and Japanese speakers. He also investigates Spanish and French speakers learning English with English speakers learning French. He found that whereas L2 learners of English establish a lexical projection for sentential negation, initially English-speaking learners of French appear to establish I in their mental grammars for French sentential negation almost immediately.

In an empirical study of second language acquisition of Chinese negation by French-German and English-speaking learners, Yuan (2004, 169–297) challenges all three theories of generative grammar on second language acquisition. His research on negation in generative linguistics is based on Pollock's (1989) paper on V movement in which a separate NegP is proposed for French and English. Yuan (2004, 178) mentions that Chinese negation has a tendency to negate the item closest to it in its c-command domain, and it negates the head of the XP that it is attached to. In his study, there were 48 French speakers, 41 German speakers and 67 English speakers. They were undergraduate students in Chinese studies at Paris VII University in France, the University of Tübingen in Germany, and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in U.K. In all these universities, Chinese is taught from scratch. Two tasks, an oral-production task and a judgement task, were administered to all subjects, native and nonnative alike. The oral production task was administered before the judgement task in order to minimize the subject's awareness of the focus of the experiment. In the oral-production task, each subject produced 16 sentences, of which six involve negation, and in ten they use frequency adverbs in Chinese to describe what activities some people do not do in their daily life on the basis of information provided in a table in Chinese. The judgement task consisted of 18 pairs of sentences. Of them, six had the negation in different positions in the pair of sentences (i.e., S-Neg-V-XP versus \*S-V-Neg-XP), six differed in the position of the

adverb and six were distracters. As expected, the sentences that the native speakers produced in their oral-production task all have the word order of S-Neg-V-XP. In the judgement task, they judged the S-Neg-V-XP sentences as correct also at a rate of 100%. Interestingly, nonnative groups are very similar to the native group in doing the two tasks; the 11 nonnative groups, whether French-, German- or English-speaking, all gave native-like performance in both the oral-production task and the judgement task. This is the case across all groups at different proficiency levels. The results of the study also show that neither the V2 word order nor the head-final setting of VP is found in German subjects' oral production of Chinese sentences with the negator *bu* or frequency adverbs (Yuan 2004, 178–183). Thus, Yuan proposes that L1 transfer is a relative rather than an absolute phenomenon in second language acquisition. His findings also suggest that L2 grammars can have specified features of functional categories fully and appropriately from the initial stage of L2 acquisition even though these features may have different values in learners' L1s (Yuan 2004, 194).

Now, the questions of interest are how Persian monolingual children, second language learners and heritage speakers acquire negation in the progressive tenses. Does generative grammar's approaches in acquisition explain the acquisition of Persian negative forms of progressive tenses? We address these questions through two pilot projects: The first one is a qualitative, longitudinal study of two Persian monolingual children, and the second one is a qualitative study on three second language learners and three heritage speakers of Persian.

## 5.9 Acquisition of Persian negative progressive tenses

Acquisition of negation in Persian progressive tenses is investigated through two qualitative pilot projects. We present the details of the methodology, data collection and results of each project in Sections 5.9.1–5.9.3. Before presenting the methodology and result of each projects, we give the target negative structure and three forms of errors, which can appear in Persian negative progressive structures. These errors are called structure A, structure B and structure C in this chapter.

### Target Negative Present/Past Progressive Tenses

#### Neg-main verb (present tense)/Past imperfect

##### Structure A

#### Neg-Main verb+ Neg-Auxiliary verb

e.g. \*Sārā na-dārad mive ne-mi-khor-ad

S. not-has fruit not-IMP-eat-PRES.Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.

Literal meaning: 'Sārā is not eating the fruit.'

##### Structure B

#### Auxiliary verb + Neg-Main verb

e.g. \*Sārā dāsht mive ne-mi-khord

S. had fruit not-IMP-eat-PST.Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.

Literal meaning: 'Sārā was not eating the fruit.'

### Structure C

#### Neg-Auxiliary + Main verb

e.g. \*Sārā na-dārad mive mi-khor-ad

S. not-has fruit IMP-eat-PRES-Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.

Literal meaning: ‘Sārā is not eating the fruit.’

#### 5.9.1 Monolinguals: methodology and results

The first project is a longitudinal study on two monolingual Persian children: a 4.5-year-old Persian boy and a 5.5-year-old Persian girl. Data collection consisted of naturalistic observations, and it started three months earlier (i.e., when the children were 4.2 and 5.2 years old). Parts of the data were gathered through recorded spontaneous speech of the children’s daily conversation with their moms during these three months. Although Persian speakers use progressive tenses in daily conversation frequently, we asked moms to use more of these tenses in their conversations, especially in negative context. The conversation was recorded or the moms took notes on the children’s speech. Then, the recordings were transcribed later and the developmental stages were analyzed.

The second part of monolingual data was collected through the task of ‘scene-setting descriptions’. The data of this part were elicited through describing the picture and questions/answers in the form of the target linguistics structure (i.e., negative progressive tenses). Since this task is also part of a longitudinal study, the developmental stages are very critical. Thus, we prepared five different scene-setting descriptions. The sceneries were prepared according to different animations and cartoons that are popular among Persian children at this age. Subjects have seen each scenery three times during these three months (once in each month), and we asked the subject to describe the scene and answer the questions about the scenes in the form of negative present/past progressive tenses and record their answers and descriptions. The reason for repeating each scene is to observe the developmental stages of producing negative progressive tenses. Then, we analyzed the recorded scene-setting descriptions and the answers of the questions of each scene. We also compared the results of each scene in three months to find out the differences and the developmental stages.

What is interesting about the monolingual task’s results is that children use progressive tenses more frequently in spontaneous production than in describing the scene-setting description. The frequency of using progressive tenses in spontaneous production is 82%, while in scene-setting description it is 68%.

In spontaneous production of the negative progressive tenses, the result shows that at the beginning of the study, the first child who was 4.2 years old used structure B in almost all sentences and did not use structure A and C. This is illustrated in (20).

- 20) Mom: Sāsān, dāshti tu otāgh-et māshin bāzi mi-kard-i?  
 S. had-2<sup>nd</sup>SG. in room-Poss.2<sup>nd</sup>SG. car play IMP-do-PST.Stm-2<sup>nd</sup>SG.  
 Literal meaning: “Sāsān, were you playing with your car?”  
 Child: Na māmān. **dāsht-am māshin bāzi ne-mi-kard-am.**  
 No Mom. had-2<sup>nd</sup>sg. car play not-IMP-do-PST.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
**naghghāshi mi-kard-am.**  
 painting IMP-do-PST-Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 Literal meaning: “No mom. I was not playing with my car. I painted.”

By analyzing data during three months, we found out that child 1 used structure B more frequently in the middle and even final stage of our study. He did not use the target negative structure even at the age of 4.5. He did not use structure C either.

Spontaneous production of the second monolingual subject shows that at the beginning of the study when the child was 5.2 years old, she used structure B in almost 90% of the sentences and she used the target negative structure in nearly 10% of sentences. Child 2 used neither structure A nor structure C.

Analyzing data during the three months of the study shows that the second monolingual subject started to use the target negative structure in more than 90% of sentences when she was at the age of 5.4. This is illustrated in (21).

- 21) Mom: Samin, bāzam dār-i arusak-ā-t ro mi-shur-i?  
 S. again have-2<sup>nd</sup>SG. doll-PL.Poss.2<sup>nd</sup>SG.-<sub>ACC</sub> IMP-wash-PRES.Stm-2<sup>nd</sup>SG.  
 “Samín, are you washing your dolls again?”
- Child: Na māmān. **arusak-ā-m ro ne-mi-shur-am.**  
 No mom. doll-PL-Poss.1<sup>st</sup>SG.<sub>ACC</sub> not-IMP-wash-PRES.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.  
 “No mom. I do not wash my dolls.”
- dast-ām ro mi-shur-am.**  
 hand-Poss.1<sup>st</sup>SG.-<sub>ACC</sub> IMP-wash-PRES.Stm-1<sup>st</sup>SG.

This means that in the *spontaneous speech* task, only the second monolingual child could produce the negative present tense for present progressive and the negative past imperfect for negative past progressive tense in the final stage of the study.

The result of scene-setting descriptions of negative progressive tenses shows that at the beginning of the study, the first child, who was a 4.2-year old boy, used structure B in more than 85% of sentences as shown in (22). He never used structure A and C in scene-setting description.

Child 1: age: 4 years and 2 month (4.2)

- 22) Mom: tu in aks, Dārā dār-eh sib mi-khor-eh  
 In this picture, D. have-Prt-3<sup>rd</sup>sg. apple IMP-eat-PRES.Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 “In this picture, Dārā is eating an apple.”
- Child: Na. un **dāreh sib ne-mi-khor-eh,** dār-eh porteghāl  
 No he has apple not-IMP-eat-Prt-3<sup>rd</sup>SG. have-Prt-3<sup>rd</sup>SG. orange  
 mi-khor-eh.  
 IMP-eat-PRES.Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 “No. He is not eating an apple. He is eating an orange.”

Towards the end of the three months, which is the final stage of the project, the child used the structure B more frequently (<98%). He never used the target negative structure in scene-setting descriptions even at the age of 4.5 (final stage of the study).

In the case of the second monolingual subject, when she was 5.2 years she used structure B more frequently in the negative progressive sentences (<78%). The result shows that at the age of 5.4, she used the target negative structure for present and past progressive tenses in most of the sentences, as illustrated in (23). However, we noticed that the subject used structure B in less than 10% (>10%) of sentences at this stage. Towards the end of the three months, the child used the target negative structure in more than 98% of sentences.



Child 2: Age: 5 years and 5 months (5.5)

- 23) Mom: tu in aks, Dārā dār-eh sib mi-khor-eh  
 In this picture, D. have-Prt-3<sup>rd</sup>SG. apple IMP-eat-PRES-Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 “In this picture, Dārā is eating an apple.”
- Child: Na. un sib **ne-mi-khor-eh** dār-eh porteghāl  
 No he apple not-IMP-eat-Prt-3<sup>rd</sup>SG. have-Prt-3<sup>rd</sup>SG. orange  
 mi-khor-eh.  
 IMP-eat-PRES-Stm-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 “No. He is not eating an apple. He is eating an orange.”

### 5.9.2 Heritage speakers: methodology and result

In this study, there are three heritage speakers. The information of these subjects has been shown in Table 5.1. All of the subjects are girls who are in the second generation of Persian immigrants in Canada, and they were at the intermediate high level of Persian language classes in the University of Toronto. When their families moved to Canada, two of them were three years old and one of them was less than one year old.

The heritage speaker study contains two different tasks:

**Task 1:** This is a combination of *acceptability/grammaticality* judgement and production (Error Correction). Subjects have to judge the accessibility/grammaticality of ten Persian sentences containing negative verbs. In the sentences in which the negative forms are incorrect, the subjects are supposed to write the correct form of the negative verbs.

**Task 2:** This is a different production task (Sentence Manipulation task), which includes a short Persian conversation. The conversation contains all Persian tenses. The subjects are supposed to change the verbs of the sentences into the negative form.

Table 5.1 Information about the heritage speakers

Name	Age	Years of formal study of Persian	Age at which formal study began	Age at the time of immigration	Persian proficiency level	Information about social context	Other language(s) spoken
1 Mina	20	1	19	3	Intermediate high	Uses Persian with family members and sometimes with friends	English
2 Maryam	21	2	20	3	Intermediate high	Uses Persian with family members, sometimes with friends	English
3 Parisa	21	3	19	Under 1	Intermediate high	Understands Persian but she mainly responds in English	English, French

Each of the three subjects did the tasks three times during eight weeks: week 1, week 4 and finally week 8 after being taught the progressive tenses and their negative forms.

The first task's result in week 1 of the three heritage students shows that in the *acceptability/grammaticality* judgement, the subjects found sentences with structure B 100% acceptable and grammatical in the initial, middle and final stages. One of the sentences with structure B has been shown in (24). It is worth noting that none of the subjects found structure A and C acceptable/grammatical.

- 24) \*Sārā dār-eh tu oṭāgh-esh dars **ne-mi-khun-eh**.  
 S. have-3<sup>rd</sup>SG. in room-Poss-3<sup>rd</sup>SG. lesson not-IMP.read-PRES-3<sup>rd</sup>SG.  
 "Sārā is not studying in her room."

What is interesting about the judgement of these sentences is that the length of the sentences had a critical impact on the subject's misjudgement about *acceptability/grammaticality* of the sentence with negative progressive tenses.

Within task 1, there was also a *production* task (*Error Correction*). In this task, the subjects were supposed to write the correct form of the negative sentences, which are incorrect.

What is interesting about the result of this *production task* (*Error Correction*) is that all three subjects produced structure B in 100% of sentences in week 1. This rate decreased to 58% in week 4 for subject 1 and 48% for subject 2, but the third subject produced structure B at the same rate of the initial stage. In addition, subject 1 produced the target negative structure at the rate of 42%, while subject 2 produced the target negative structure in 52% of sentences. Interestingly, in the final stage (week 8), subject 1 produced the target negative structure in 76% of sentences and subject 2 produced in 82% of sentences, while the third subject produced structure B at the same rate of the initial stage.

The result of the second task of three heritage students is compatible with the result of the *production* (*Sentence Manipulation*). In week 1, in almost 100% of sentences with progressive tenses all three subjects used structure B, especially when the sentences were long and the main and auxiliary verbs were separated from each other by several elements in the sentences. In week 4, two of the subjects produced structure B in most of the sentences. Depending on the subject, the rate changed between 58% in subject 1 to 48% in subject 2. They also started to use the target negative structure, subject 1 in 42% of sentences and subject 2 in 52% of sentences. In week 8, subject 1 used the target negative structure in 75% of the progressive tenses in the text, and in 25% of the negative progressive tenses, he used structure B. Subject 2 used the target negative structure in 80% of sentences, and in 20% of sentences she produced structure B. In weeks 4 and 8, the third subject produced structure B in all the negative progressive tenses in the text.

### 5.9.3 Second language learners: methodology and results

The data of second language learners were collected from three second language learners. The proficiency level of two of them was intermediate high and one of them was at advanced level. They were students of Persian language classes in the University of Toronto. The tasks of the second language study are the same tasks of heritage speakers. The information of the subjects has been shown in Table 5.2.

Qualitatively and quantitatively, the result of both tasks of the second language learners in different developmental stages (week 1, week 4 and week 8 after teaching the linguistics topic) shows some differences from the results of these tasks in heritage speakers. It should be

Table 5.2 Information about the second language learners

Name	Age	Years of formal study of Persian	Age at which formal study began	Persian proficiency level	Motivation	Other language(s) spoken
Mohammad	25	2	23	Intermediate high	Uses Persian for his education and research	English, Urdu
Ali	21	2	20	Intermediate high	Uses Persian for his education and research	English, Arabic
Daragh	20	1	19	Advanced	Uses Persian for the education and research	English, Russian, French

mentioned that in none of the stages of development of the study (week 1, 4, 8), the second language learners found the sentences with structure C acceptable or grammatical.

In week 1, in the *acceptability/grammaticality* judgement of sentences, two intermediate high subjects found 15% of negative sentences with structure B and 85% with structure A acceptable and grammatical. Meanwhile, the advanced subject found 75% of sentences with structure B, and 25% of sentences with structure A acceptable/grammatical. In week 4, the rates were enormously different. The acceptability rate for subject 1 with intermediate high proficiency changed to 45% for structure A and 55% for structure B. The acceptability rate for subject 2 with intermediate high proficiency was 40% structure A and 60% structure B. In week 4, for the advanced subject, the rate was 58% structure B, 42% for structure A. In week 8, the rate of acceptability for intermediate high subject 1 was 78% for structure B, and 22% for structure A. The rate of the acceptability for intermediate high subject 2 in week 8 was 14% for structure A, 86% for structure B. The rate of the acceptability for the advanced subject in week 8 was 5% for structure B, especially in the long sentences, and 95% for the target negative structure. In addition, the length of the sentences had a direct influence on the second language learner's misjudgement about *acceptability/grammaticality* of the sentence with negative progressive tenses.

Interestingly, the result of the *production (Error Correction)* within the first task shows that the rate of the suggested structures (i.e., structure A, structure B and the target negative structure) were quite distinct from the suggested structures of the heritage speakers. In week 1, two intermediate high subjects used structure A in 100% of sentences, while advanced subjects used structure A in 23% and structure B in 77% of sentences. In week 4, the rate of using structure A by subject 1 decreased to 58% and the subject produced structure B in 42% of sentences. Subject 2 in week 4 used structure A in 45% and produced structure B in 55% of sentences. In week 4, the advanced subject produced structure B in 48% of the sentences and the target negative structure in 52% of sentences. In week 8, the result of two intermediate high-level subjects shows decrease in producing the structure A: 15% in subject 1 and 10% in subject 2. The rate of producing structure B was 55% for subject 1 and 50% for subject 2. Subject 1 produced the target negative structure in 30% of sentences, while subject 2 produced the target negative structure in 40% of sentences. The result of the advanced subject in week 8 shows that he produced the target negative structure in almost 78% of sentences. He used structure B in only 22% of sentences.

Qualitatively, it is expected that the results of task 2, which is the *production (Sentence Manipulation)* task, to be similar to the *production (Error Correction)* task in task 1. Although the qualitative results are very similar, we noticed quantitative differences in the result of the *production (Sentence Manipulation)* task of task 2. In week 1, in almost 100% sentences with progressive tenses, subjects 1 and 2 with high intermediate proficiency used structure A, especially when the sentences were long and the main verb and auxiliary were separated by several elements in the sentences. Meanwhile, the advanced subject used structure A in 35% of sentences and structure B in 65% of sentences. In week 4, the result shows more improvement. Subject 1 and subject 2 used structure A at 62 and 53% rates respectively. Intermediate high subject 1 used structure B in 18% of sentences and subject 2 used structure B in 23% of sentences. Subjects 1 and 2 started to use the target negative structure at the rate of 20 and 24% respectively. In week 4, the advanced subject used 10% of structure A, 32% of structure B and the target negative structure in 58% sentences. In week 8, intermediate high subject 1 used 38% of structure A, 32% of structure B and 30% of the target negative structures. Subject 2 used 16% of structure A, 47% of structure B and 37% of the target negative structure. In week 8, the advanced subject used the target negative structure in 76% of the produced sentences. He only used the structure B in 24% of the sentences.

## 5.10 Discussion

Before analyzing and discussing the findings of our empirical study, following Montrul (2016) we suggest that if adult heritage speakers make errors, which are similar to developmental errors produced by monolingual children during the course of acquisition, then it is possible to conclude that the patterns in heritage speakers resemble an earlier stage of language development. In other words, comparing monolingual learners and adult heritage speakers allows us to assess Polinsky's (2011) hypothesis that heritage speakers are fossilized<sup>6</sup> monolingual learners (p. 226). On the other hand, heritage speakers and second language learners are two types of bilingual individuals and may share knowledge and use of the same two languages. Because heritage speakers acquired the heritage language and the majority language at birth (simultaneous bilinguals) or later in childhood as an L2 (sequential bilinguals) and before puberty, they are called *early bilinguals*. Like some heritage speakers, adult second language learners are also sequential bilinguals, because they learn the second language after puberty, they are called *late bilinguals*. Due to different age of acquisition (early in heritage speakers, late in second language learners), their learning experience with the weaker language is very different. For the second language learners, the weaker language is the L2, but for the heritage speakers it is the L1 (p. 250).

The findings in our empirical study of monolinguals suggest that the developmental stage of the target negative progressive tense starts at the age of 5.2 and later, and it will be completed before the age of 5.5. This means that at age 5.5, the child does not have any problem in using negative progressive tenses.

In the case of the heritage speakers, the findings in different tasks of the study show the qualitative consistency in the initial stage of the development of Persian negative progressive tenses. At the initial stage of *acceptability/grammaticality* of task 1, structure B is highly acceptable. From the middle stage (week 4), the rate of acceptability starts to decrease. With respect to the *production (Error Correction)* task in task 1, the findings are consistent in the initial stage for all three subjects. In the middle stage (week 4), two subjects show progress, and by the final stage they produce the target negative structure, while the third subject's result does not show any progress and development.

In task 2, the *production (Sentence manipulation)* task, the findings are qualitatively and quantitatively consistent at the initial stage. In the middle stage the qualitative results are the

same, i.e., all subjects produced structure B, but quantitatively the rate of the production in three subjects shows minor distinctions. In the final stage (week 8), the results of two subjects are very similar. These subjects succeeded in producing the target negative structure at the final stage, while the third subject produced structure B at a high rate. The differences of the third subject's results in various tasks and in developmental stages are accountable through the rate of the exposure to the heritage language in early ages, parental input and the degree of proficiency of the subject. This subject was less than one year old when the family immigrated to Canada. She went to day care at early age, and her parents did not speak the heritage language (Persian) at home regularly.

As the findings of two *production* (*Error Correction* and *Sentence Manipulation*) tasks show, the developmental stage of the target structure are qualitatively and quantitatively consistent.

By comparing the findings of the heritage speakers and monolinguals, we found some similarities in the developmental stage of the target structure in these two groups. The developmental stage of the negative structure for two heritage speakers is very similar to the developmental stage of this structure in child 2 (the 5.5-year-old girl), especially in the middle and final stages. The findings of *production* tasks show that similar to child 2, the three subjects of heritage speakers never used structure A and C in all stages of the study, even in the initial stage. However, the starting point of using the target structure is different for child 2 and the two heritage speakers. Child 2 started to use the target structure from the initial stage of the study (at the age of 5.2), while heritage speakers began to use the target structure in the middle stage of the study (week 4). There are also qualitative similarities in the result and the developmental stage between child 1 and the third heritage speaker. None of these subjects (i.e., third heritage speakers and child 1) could produce the target negative structure even at the final stage of the study. According to the background and the proficiency level of the third heritage speakers, we suggest that this is the supporting evidence that heritage speakers with low proficiency in the heritage language display grammatical patterns that are consistent with incomplete acquisition, with L1 attrition and with changes in the input provided by the parental generation. For similar discussions, read Chapter 4 in this volume.

The contrastive analysis of monolinguals and heritage speakers' findings also highlighted that some of the grammatical patterns indicated in the grammar of the adult heritage speakers share similarities with the developmental stages in monolingual acquisition.

In the case of second language learners, the findings of error analysis in the judgement task show the developmental stage of the structure A to structure B from the initial stage towards the final stage. At the initial stage, there is a big difference in the rate of the production tasks of the intermediate high subjects and advanced subject. The results of the production tasks in task 1 and task 2 show qualitative and quantitative consistency at the initial stage for the intermediate high and advanced subjects. The rate's distinction between the intermediate high subjects starts in the middle stage (week 4); however, in producing the target negative structure the rate's distinctions in the middle and final stages of the study is low (4–10%).

By comparing the results of second language learners and monolinguals, we noticed that the result of the *production* task, especially the *Error Correction* task in week 1, is close to the results of child 2 in the *scene-setting description* task at the initial stage of the study (at the age of 5.2). In week 1, the advanced subject produced structure B in 77% of sentences and child 2 produced structure B in <78% of sentences at the age of 5.2. The results of the middle and final stages of the study in two groups are very different. While child 2 is capable of using the target negative structure in 98% of sentences at the final stage (at age 5.5), the advanced subject of second language learners was able to produce the target negative structure approximately

in 78% of sentences. On the other hand, the result shows that heritage speakers with a high degree of proficiency can produce the target negative structure in nearly 82% of sentences.

Heritage speakers never found structure A and C acceptable. However, with respect to structure B, the error analysis of the *acceptability/grammaticality* task in second language learners and heritage students shows that the error rate of the advanced second language learner in the final stage of the study (week 8) is close to the error rate of heritage speakers in all three stages. Both groups found structure B acceptable, but with a different error rate. The error rate for structure B of the advanced second language learner was 95%, and 5% for structure A, while the error rate of heritage speakers for structure B was 100%. The result of error analysis also highlights the distinctions of developmental stages of second language learners and heritage speakers.

By the contrastive analysis of second language learners and heritage speakers' results in *production* tasks, we found similar patterns in the middle and final stages (weeks 4 and 8) of the study between the heritage speaker with high proficiency (subject 2) and the advanced second language learner. Qualitatively, both subjects produced structure B at the rate of 48% in week 4. Both started to use the target negative structure in week 4 in the close rate, 52% for the heritage speaker and 58% for the advanced second language learners. It means that the rate's difference between these two subjects is only 6%. In the final stage (week 8), the rate of producing the target negative structure is even closer between two subjects, 80–82% for subject 2 of heritage speakers and 76–78% for the advanced second language learners (rate's distinction 4%).

Now, the question is how much our empirical studies support the *Full Access* theories of L2 acquisition. In fact, the close result of error rate in our *production* tasks between the initial stage of child 2 and the final stage of the advanced second language learners can be supporting evidence for the *Full Access* theory. According to this theory, second language learners hypothetically have full access from their first encounter with a second language to all lexical and functional categories relevant to the construction of a mental grammar for that language. The only limitation on such access is the learner has had inadequate time to experience enough samples of second language data to establish the relevant categories. When the learner receives sufficient input then he starts to restructure the mental grammar of L2. This is what we observed in the contrastive analysis of the error rate of *production* tasks in L1 initial stage and L2 final stage in our study.

On the other hand, Montrul (2016) states that heritage speakers are bilingual native speakers of their heritage language, except that the degree of final achievement in the heritage language is variable. Although heritage speakers start as monolingual native speakers, they grow up in a bilingual environment and ultimately experience language change. By the end of the language learning period, the heritage language has become secondary; it feels to the heritage speakers like an L2 and displays many of the same properties of interlanguage systems of L2 learners (p. 249). In addition, if we believe that compared to L1, L2 is usually the weaker language, then following Montrul (2016), we can consider heritage speakers as a type of second language learner whose weaker language is their heritage language. Having this in our mind, we evaluated the results of heritage speakers to find out if *Full Access* theory is compatible with these results. Our assessment shows that in fact in the *production* tasks, the distinctions of developmental stages in child 2 and two heritage speakers may be supporting evidence for *Full Access* theory. The results of our study show that the starting point of using the target structure is different for child 2 and two heritage speakers. Child 2 started to use the target structure from the initial stage of the study (at the age of 5.2) while heritage speakers began to use the target structure in the middle stage of the study (week 4). Based on *Full Access* theory, we may explain, the reason that the developmental stages of the target negative structure are different in these two groups is that the heritage speakers need to receive enough inputs to restructure the mental grammar of their heritage language for producing the target negative structure.

## 5.11 Conclusion

In this empirical study, we examined the acquisition of the functional category of negation in Persian progressive tenses in monolingual speakers, second language learners and heritage speakers of Persian within the generative grammar and showed the variability in the production of this morpho-syntactic structure by these three groups. Our findings in this study reflected that the inherent variability observed in heritage speakers with respect to monolinguals is due to different factors such as quantity and quality of input, degree of proficiency, incomplete acquisition, L1 attrition and changes in parental input. The discussion of this chapter also highlighted that some of the grammatical patterns such as negation, tense and aspect shown in the grammar of adult heritage speakers share similarities with the developmental stages indicated in monolingual acquisition. Our findings in this study also indicated that it is possible that heritage speakers acquired properties of their heritage language like tense, aspect, negation etc., but they did not reach the level of mastery of these structures like monolinguals, and this incomplete acquisition is related to the quantity of input and use. In addition, our study supported this proposal that the grammatical representation of adult second language learners has similarity with monolingual children's grammatical representation. However, there are some distinctions in developmental stages of grammatical patterns like negation between monolingual children and adult second language learners.

There are certain shortcomings of this study that need to be discussed in future research in order to determine whether our findings can generalize beyond the data examined here. Firstly, the findings of this study should be investigated in a large group of second language learners, heritage speakers and monolingual children. Secondly, it would be highly advisable to examine the acquisition of other functional categories like Persian tense and aspect in these three groups and compare the outcomes.

## Notes

- 1) The data in this chapter represent the Tehrani dialect, the standard dialect of Modern Persian spoken in Iran. I would like to thank Persian monolingual children and their parents, Persian heritage speakers and second language learners who participated in this study, for their generous help and support during the project. I am also grateful for the reviewers whose valuable feedbacks and remarks enormously changed the form and content of the chapter. All errors are, of course, my own.
- 2) Abbreviations: ACC=Accusative, Ez=ezāfe, F.=feminine, IMP=imperfect, Incl=Inclusive, N= name, M.= masculine, Nom=nominative, PST= Past., PL=plural, PRES=present, Poss.= Possessive, Prt.= Past Participle, SG.=singular, Stm=Stem.
- 3) Butt refers to these SVCs as complex predicate constructions, but they are not the same as true Persian complex predicates.
- 4) Concordant marking means that each component of SVC takes the marker. For example, in the case of personal endings, each component of SVCs takes the personal ending.
- 5) '\*' shows the ungrammatical/unacceptable sentence.
- 6) Fossilization is a term commonly used in second language acquisition to refer to the arrested development of grammatical features, which characterizes interlanguage grammars, the linguistics systems of second language.

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# 6

## SECOND LANGUAGE MORPHOLOGY

### Case of idiomatic expressions

*Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi*

#### 6.1 Introduction

Idiomatic expressions, also referred to as formulaic language, are derived from the ‘particular cultural and contextual priorities and assumptions . . . dually rooted in the human brain and human society’ (Wray 2013, 317). In this chapter, we will examine the dual roots of idiomatic expressions, that is, the human brain and human society, with special reference to the Persian language.

All languages in the world have idiomatic expressions, but some languages have more than others. The reason may be the rich system of morphology of those languages, the speakers of which make extensive use of morphologically complex words, compounds, and other multi-morphemic idiomatic expressions. In addition, they can easily construct novel morphologically complex words, compounds, and expressions. An abundance of idiomatic expressions can also be attributed to the rich literary culture of a language. Even in English, which is not a very morphologically rich language, the number of idiomatic expressions in the native speaker’s mental lexicon is said to be roughly similar to that of single words (Jackendoff 1997).

Whereas some countries have a long tradition of visual arts, through which history, beliefs, customs, values, popular culture, traditions, stories, etc. are depicted, some other countries have an especially rich tradition in verbal arts. The latter is true of Iran, probably due to religious restrictions on visual arts during the Islamic period. Persian poetry, in particular, has been the vessel through which history, beliefs, customs, values, popular culture, traditions, stories, etc. have been expressed. The Persian language abounds with idiomatic expressions derived from Persian poetry. In the following, some of these expressions used in everyday Persian language, yet originating from Persian poetry of different centuries, are illustrated:

در نومیدی بسی امید است  
پایان شب سیه سپید است

There is much hope in despair  
There is light at the end of the darkest night  
(Nizāmī Ganjavī’s *Leylī u Majnūn* in his *Khamsah*, 12th century)

یوسف گم گشته باز آید به کنعان غم مخور  
کلبه احزان شود روزی گلستان غم مخور

Lost Joseph will return to Canaan, worry not  
The abode of sadness will one day become a rose garden, worry not  
(Hāfiz's *Ghazaliyāt*, 14th century)

مهربانی هست سبب هست ایمان هست  
آری تا شقایق هست زندگی باید کرد

There is kindness; there are apples; there is faith  
Yes, as long as there are poppies we shall live on  
(Sohrāb Sepehrī's *Eight Books*, 20th century)

Persian idiomatic expressions are not limited to those derived from Persian poetry; rather, they are rooted in the fabric of the language. One can daringly say that more than half of Persian discourse is composed of idiomatic expressions. In the following, there are some examples extracted from Persian prose in literature and media to illustrate the widespread use of idioms in this language:

مهرداد از آن پسرهای چشم و گوش بسته بود که در ایران میان خانواده‌اش ضرب المثل شده بود و هنوز هم اسم زن را که می‌شنید از پیشانی تا لاله‌های گوشش سرخ می‌شد.

Mehrdad was one of those naive (**eye and ear closed**) boys who had become a legend (**'proverb'**) among his relatives in Iran, and even now, whenever he hears the word 'woman', he turns red from ear to ear (**from forehead to earlobe**).

(Šādiq Hidāyat's *The Doll Behind the Curtain* in *Chiaroscuro* collection of short stories, 20th century)

سیاستمدار اگر دشمن را ببخشد پیروانش بر او خرده می‌گیرند.

If the politician forgives his enemies, his followers will criticize him/get a piece of him (**to get a bit**).

(Sentence extracted from the media)

آنها با انتخاب شورایی متفاوت، روح تازه ای در کالبد این شهر تاریخی دمیدند.

With the election of a different council, they blew fresh life (**blew a fresh soul into the body**) into this historic city.

(Sentence extracted from the media)

Looking at these examples, one can get a sense of the prevalence of idiomatic expressions in the Persian language. Before we investigate how these expressions are stored in and accessed from the mental lexicon, let us review what is meant by the mental lexicon.

Various definitions have been given for the mental lexicon, ranging from very simple to very complex ones. The simple definition for mental lexicon is that it is the dictionary represented in the mind, which is used by individuals to comprehend and produce a given language. A more technical definition of the mental lexicon is given by Jarema and Libben (2007), who consider the mental lexicon to be the cognitive system constituting the capacity for conscious and unconscious lexical activity. It is the latter definition that we will be dealing with throughout this chapter.

Since we are interested in exploring the processing, comprehension, and acquisition of idiomatic expressions in second language speakers of Persian, we have to first consider whether first language (L1) and second language (L2) mental lexicons are the same or not.

## **6.2 L1 and L2 mental lexicons**

Most studies in the literature support the theory of the integration of the L1 and L2 mental lexicons or what Cook (1992) calls ‘holistic multicompetence’. For example, some studies have argued that frequency of cognate words in one language affects their processing rate in another language (Caramazza and Brones 1980). Some other studies have observed that translation performance is improved when there are morphemic similarities between L1 and L2 (Cristoffanini, Kirsner, and Milech 1986). Still other studies have illustrated that homographs activate their corresponding meanings in both languages, regardless of the stimulus language (Beauvillain and Grainger 1987).

Contrary to the theories in favor of the integration of the L1 and L2 mental lexicons, there is some evidence indicating that the L1 and L2 mental lexicons are separate. One kind of evidence comes from studies on codeswitching, which purports to show that bilinguals use one language at a time, hence implying L1 and L2 mental lexicon separation (Grosjean 1982). Another source of evidence comes from studies on aphasic patients, demonstrating that brain damaged patients recover known languages one at a time, and in some cases, only one language is recovered (Pearce 2005).

Studies of brain physiology are relevant to the understanding of L1 and L2 mental lexicons, as well. Previous studies have established that L1 speakers possess two different brain memory systems that work simultaneously and in parallel. These studies were testing the Declarative/Procedural Model (DPM) (Ullman 2004; Ullman and Lovelett 2018) of mental processing. According to this model, the lexicon is stored in the declarative memory (explicit or conscious knowledge), which is rooted in temporal lobe structures. The temporal lobe is in charge of language comprehension, including idioms. However, the rules of grammar are stored in the procedural memory (implicit or non-conscious and automatic knowledge) and rooted in frontal brain structures. The frontal lobe is in charge of speech production and syntax. As for L2 speakers, previous studies show that L2 learners depend mostly on the declarative memory, as proposed in the Shallow Structure Hypothesis (Clahsen and Felser 2006). According to the Shallow Structure Hypothesis, L2 grammar is shallower and less detailed than L1 grammar.

To build on the models discussed previously, we would like to see where in the brain idiomatic expressions are stored. Previous studies in the literature have shown that, as proposed in the Graded Salience Hypothesis (Giora 2003), more salient and more frequent idiomatic expressions are stored in the right hemisphere, while less salient and less frequent idiomatic expressions are stored in the left hemisphere. The Graded Salience Hypothesis (Giora 2003) is further supported by neuropsychological L1 figurative processing studies that have shown that the left hemisphere activates only a small set of semantic fields closely related to the dominant meaning of a stimulus word. However, the right hemisphere engages in coarse coding, that is, activation of large and diffuse semantic fields related only peripherally to the word being processed. This Fine-Coarse Coding Theory (Beeman 1998; Titone 1998) is supported by studies of aphasia. For example, Papagno and Cacciari (2010) studied an Italian patient with selective atrophy of left hemisphere regions and observed that he was better in figurative language than literal language.

Now that we have found the loci of idiomatic expressions’ storage in the brain, we would like to investigate how these expressions are processed and whether there is a difference between L1 and L2 processing of idiomatic expressions.

### 6.3 L1 and L2 idiomatic expression processing

There are two main approaches to idiomatic expression processing in L1. The first one includes Idiom Non-Composition Models, also called Direct Look-up Models (Glucksberg 1993). According to these models, idioms are processed as a whole rather than through their constituent parts. One hypothesis generated from this model is the Idiom List Hypothesis (Bobrow and Bell 1973), according to which the literal meaning of an idiom needs to be rejected as inappropriate before its figurative meaning can be retrieved. The second hypothesis following the non-compositional approach is the Lexical Representation Hypothesis (Swinney and Cutler 1979), which proposes that the two meanings of an idiom (literal and figurative) are processed simultaneously. A third hypothesis is the Direct Access Hypothesis (Gibbs 1980, 1985, 1993, 2002), which argues that the literal analysis of idiom constituents is unnecessary and not undertaken, because figurative meanings can be accessed directly.

In opposition to the non-compositional model of idiomatic expression processing is the Idiom Decomposition Model, which provides various arguments based on idiom types. For the non-decomposable idioms (that is, idioms whose constituents do not contribute to the meaning of the whole idiom, e.g. ‘kick the bucket’), there are inconclusive findings. While some studies have shown slower processing time (Caillies and Butcher 2007), other studies have observed no difference in processing time (Cutting and Bock 1997; Libben and Titone 2008). On the other hand, decomposable idioms (in which the meaning of the whole idiom can be guessed from its constituents, e.g. ‘spill the beans’) have been shown to have faster processing times in comparison to non-decomposable idioms (Titone and Connine 1994, 1999).

Studies on idiomatic expression processing in L2 have investigated the issue physiologically and cross-linguistically. Some studies have argued for a cerebral hemisphere asymmetry and observed that the right hemisphere processes L1 and L2 non-decomposable idioms faster than decomposable ones, whereas the left hemisphere processes L1 decomposable idioms faster (Cieślicka 2013). Some other studies have focused on the cross-language similarity, stating that similar idioms (e.g. ‘give your heart to someone’; *del-dādan* ‘heart-give’ ‘fall in love’) show a slower processing time due to L1 equivalents competing. For the same reason, dissimilar idioms (e.g. ‘pull someone’s leg’; *sar-be-sar-gozāshstan* ‘head-to-head-put’ ‘tease’) show a faster processing time, as there is no competition during processing (Cieślicka and Heredia 2013). In the following, we will test these models using evidence from the Persian language.

### 6.4 Evidence from studies of Persian

While there are many varieties of idiomatic expressions in Persian, the particular idiomatic expressions investigated in this chapter are Noun-Verb compound verbs, also called complex predicates. For further discussion on complex predicates and heritage and second language learning of Persian, read Chapter 4 in this volume.

This section will review two studies on compound verb processing in Persian through two masked priming experiments (Shabani-Jadidi 2014, 2016). Persian compound verbs are composed of two or more constituent parts constituting a single united meaning. In the following, different kinds of Persian compound verbs are illustrated:

- PP + Verb (*az-bar-kardan* ‘from-on-to do’ ‘to memorize’)
- Adv + Verb (*pish-bordan* ‘further-to take’ ‘to succeed’)
- Adj + Verb (*dāgh-kardan* ‘hot-to do’ ‘to get mad’)

- NP + Verb (*gush-tā-gush-boridan* ‘ear-to-ear-to cut’ ‘to cut thoroughly’)
- N + Verb (*zamin-khordan* ‘ground-to eat/hit’ ‘to fall’)

The particular compound verb investigated in this chapter is the last one, that is, Noun-Verb. In experimental studies in language processing, the effect of one constituent on the whole word or vice versa (that is, the effect of the whole word on its constituents) is tested. In such studies, often the type of relatedness between the compound and its constituents is reported to have, or not to have, an impact on the processing of the compound and its constituents. The types of relatedness investigated in such experimental studies in language processing are:

- 1) morphological relatedness
  - a) Transparent (teacher – TEACH)
  - b) Opaque (corner – CORN)
- 2) Orthographic or phonological relatedness (brothel – BROTH)
- 3) Semantic relatedness (doctor – NURSE)
- 4) Syntactic relatedness (easily – SURELY)

Shabani-Jadidi (2014, 2016) investigated the processing of Noun-Verb idiomatic and non-idiomatic compound verbs in L1 and L2 Persian speakers. The technique used in these studies was masked-priming, which taps into the subconscious mind. The research questions were as follows:

- (1) Do constituents of Persian compound verbs show significant priming in a masked-priming paradigm?
- (2) Are priming effects constrained by semantic transparency?

Table 6.1 below is a summary of the results of these two studies. In other words, idiomatic or opaque compound verbs (e.g. *zamin-khordan* ‘ground-to eat/hit’ ‘to fall’) showed faster processing time for the verbal constituent (in comparison to their transparent counterparts). However, non-idiomatic or transparent compound verbs (e.g. *ghazā-khordan* ‘food-to eat’ ‘to eat’) showed a slower processing time for the verbal constituent. This slower processing time can be attributed to the increased processing load due to the activation of competing alternatives that exist in the lexicon (e.g., ‘food-to take’; ‘food-to bring’; ‘food-to buy’; ‘food-to give’; etc.).

Table 6.1 L1 and L2 idiomatic expression processing

Language	Decomposition	Priming effect	Possible explanation
L1 idiomatic expression processing (Shabani-Jadidi 2014)	Decomposed to its constituents	Transparent verbal constituents slower	Competing alternatives of the verbal constituents
L2 idiomatic expression processing (Shabani-Jadidi 2016)	Decomposed to its constituents	Opaque verbal constituents slower	L1 transfer & non-automaticity and non-lexicity of the opaque expressions in L2

The evidence from these studies suggests that some widespread assumptions regarding L1 and L2 idiomatic expression processing are not true, at least for Persian:

- 1 Idiomatic expressions have been assumed to take longer to process across languages. In the studies discussed previously, both idiomatic and non-idiomatic compound verbs took the same amount of time (ranging between 507–515 milliseconds) to be processed regardless of their idiomaticity.
- 2 Idiomatic expressions have been assumed to be stored and accessed as a whole, whereas non-idiomatic expressions are assumed to be decomposed. In these studies, both idiomatic and non-idiomatic compound verbs were decomposed to their constituents at early stages of processing, as indicated by the results of the masked experiments.
- 3 L1 and L2 have been assumed to have two separate systems of processing. In this study, however, the processing route taken by both L1 and L2 speakers was shown to be identical and similarly accurate.

(For more detailed discussion of these studies, see Shabani-Jadidi (2014, 2016).)

A subsequent study investigated two additional questions in the field of L1 and L2 idiomatic expressions:

- 1 Whether language proficiency affects idiomatic expression acquisition strategies;
- 2 Whether consciousness-raising regarding the meaning of idiom constituents helps their ultimate acquisition.

### 6.5 L2 Idiomatic expression comprehension

In order to investigate these questions, we devised a table of Persian-English idiomatic expressions ranging from dissimilar to semi-similar to similar.

We used tables similar to Table 6.2 in order to investigate the comprehension, acquisition, and production of idiomatic expressions in L2 Persian learners. Two experiments were carried out.

Table 6.2 L1 and L2 idiomatic expression ranges

<i>Similarity</i>	<i>L1 idiomatic expression</i>	<i>L2 meaning</i>
dissimilar	<i>Hand-hand-to do</i>	To hesitate
dissimilar	<i>Heart-to-sea-to hit</i>	To take a risk
dissimilar	<i>Head-to-head-to put</i>	To tease
dissimilar	<i>From-face-to take</i>	To convince by persistence
dissimilar	<i>Wound-tongue-to hit</i>	To say something sarcastically
<b>semi-similar</b>	<b><i>Fist-someone-to open</i></b>	<b>To expose someone</b>
<b>semi-similar</b>	<b><i>Ear-rubbing-to give</i></b>	<b>To punish physically</b>
<b>semi-similar</b>	<b><i>Finger-to-mouth-to stay</i></b>	<b>To be surprised</b>
<b>semi-similar</b>	<b><i>Head-to-mountain-to put</i></b>	<b>To disappear</b>
<b>semi-similar</b>	<b><i>Foot-in-middle-to do</i></b>	<b>To mediate</b>
similar	<i>To-wood-to hit</i>	To knock on wood
similar	<i>Eye-to hit</i>	To cast an evil eye
similar	<i>Mouse-dying-to take off</i>	To play possum
similar	<i>Ice-someone-to melt</i>	To break the ice
similar	<i>With-one-arrow-two-target-to hit</i>	To kill two birds with one stone

Experiment 1 included a pre-task where participants were given 20 idiomatic expressions with only their holistic meanings. The task was divided into: 1) an acquisition phase where participants had to answer 10 definition questions, and 2) a production phase where participants had to write a paragraph including five of these idiomatic expressions selected by the researcher.

Experiment 2, on the other hand, included a pre-task where 20 idiomatic expressions with both their holistic meanings and their constituent meanings were given to the participants. Again, the task was divided into two phases: 1) acquisition, where participants had to provide answers to 10 definition questions, and 2) production, where participants were asked to write a paragraph including five of the idiomatic expressions selected by the researcher.

Before the start of the experiments, the participants were divided into three proficiency groups based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Scale, which has four main levels (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior) with the first three levels subdivided into three sublevels (Low, Mid, and High). For further discussion on ACTFL and its tenets, read Chapter 15 in this volume.

In the present study, the Novice group were 20 in number, the Low Intermediate group were 12, and the Mid Intermediate group were 8. The age range was 20–25. At the pre-task stage, the participants were given a list of L2 idiomatic expressions, such as the one shown in Table 6.2, and they were asked to provide the meanings of the idiomatic expressions in English (their L1) in the second column. They were also asked to write down what strategy/ies they used in order to guess the meanings of the L2 idiomatic expressions.

Table 6.3 following shows the result of this pre-task, that is, L2 idiomatic expression comprehension based on L2 language proficiency. It also shows the most common strategies used by participants in each proficiency level.

As illustrated in Table 6.3, the higher the proficiency level is, the more likely that the L2 learners resort to the constituent meanings in order to figure out the idiomatic expression meaning. This result is in line with the results of the experimental studies on idiomatic expression processing in Persian, explained briefly earlier, and more elaborately in Shabani-Jadidi (2014, 2016, 2018), where both L1 and near-native L2 speakers seem to decompose the string of words in the formulaic language in order to process it.

The decompositional approach to compound words has been attested for other Indo-European languages as well (e.g. Longtin, Segui, and Hallé 2003, for French; Fiorentino 2007, for English; Smolka, Preller, and Eulitz 2014, for German; among others). However, some L2 studies suggest that L2 learners interpret the figurative language by decomposing it to its constituents, whereas L1 speakers tend to interpret the idiomatic expressions holistically (Wray, Bell, and Jones 2016). This second claim is not necessarily refuting the decompositional

Table 6.3 Language proficiency and idiomatic expression comprehension

<i>Proficiency level</i>	<i>Average percentage of correct guesses</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
Novice	15	-First and only, resort to L1 -Try to find L1 idiom equivalents
Low Intermediate	25	-Use of L2 cultural cues -Resort to L1 and other L2s
Mid Intermediate	37.5	-Mostly use constituent meanings -Last, resort to L1

Table 6.4 Language proficiency and idiomatic expression acquisition and production

<i>Proficiency level</i>	<i>Experiment 1: Average percentage of writing grade with a pre-task of holistic idiomatic meanings</i>	<i>Experiment 2: Average percentage of writing grade with a pre-task of holistic idiomatic meanings as well as constituent meanings</i>
Low Intermediate	79	67
Mid Intermediate	75	73

approach to formulaic language processing, as it taps into the conscious mind rather than the subconscious mind involved in real-time processing.

After this pre-task, the two experiments were carried out with the two levels of Mid Intermediate and High Intermediate. The reason why the Novice level was not used was that the idiomatic expressions were too difficult for their proficiency level. Table 6.4 illustrates the acquisition and production of idiomatic expressions in Experiment 1 where only the holistic meanings were taught to the L2 learners and Experiment 2 where both the holistic and the constituents meanings were taught in the pre-task stage.

The results of the two experiments illustrated in Tables 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4 provide answers to the two questions we posed about L1 and L2 idiomatic expressions:

- 1 The evidence given in the tables previously seems to validate the first hypothesis. In other words, language proficiency does seem to affect idiomatic expression acquisition and the kind of strategies used.
- 2 We did not find that consciousness-raising regarding the meaning of idiom constituents helps their ultimate acquisition, as illustrated by the similar writing grades of two proficiency groups depicted in Table 6.4.

## 6.6 Learning and teaching L2 idiomatic expressions

In addition to acquiring linguistic competence, L2 learners need to acquire figurative competence, which encompasses idioms, compound words, collocations, phrasal verbs, and other multiword expressions (Cieślicka 2015). The two most relevant questions in teaching L2 idiomatic expression are 1) ‘how can multiword strings be most effectively taught to learners,’ and 2) ‘which multiword strings should be prioritized in teaching.’ (Wray 2013, 317).

Different kinds of idiomatic expressions require different kinds of teaching techniques. In fact, learnability of idiomatic expressions is said to be regulated by their semantic transparency and frequency of use (Nippold 2006). In addition, context, analogy, precedence, and pragmatics are said to be influencing the interpretation of an unfamiliar idiomatic expression (Wray, Bell, and Jones 2016).

An important factor in the interpretation of L2 idiomatic expressions is their having a corresponding L1 equivalent and how similar or dissimilar they are. As illustrated in Table 6.2 in the previous section, idiomatic expressions can vary from dissimilar to semi-similar to similar. A study on Arabic learners of English idioms has shown that identical idioms are the easiest to learn, followed by similar ones. The most difficult ones to learn are the different ones (Banjar 2014). There are some discussions on effective ways of teaching vocabularies in second language learning of Persian in Chapter 9 in this volume that may be of interest to the reader.



In addition, contextual cues can be very useful in helping L2 learners guess the meaning of the L2 idiomatic expressions correctly. For example, consider the case of metonymy; for example, ‘We drank a nice Bordeaux last night’, or ‘Ask seat 19 whether he wants to swap.’ (Slabakova 2016). In the first example, ‘Bordeaux’ is used to refer to a wine from the Bordeaux region of France, and in the second, ‘seat 19’ is used to refer to the passenger sitting in seat 19. However, in the absence of the context, these two expressions will not have the same meanings.

Therefore, it seems more efficient to divide idiomatic expressions based on their learnability and contextual cues. The more similar to L1 and the more contextual cues are provided, the easier it is to learn the L2 idiomatic expressions.

There are certain techniques that can be used to facilitate L2 idiomatic expression acquisition. One such technique is to group the idioms all around one topic. Experimental studies on language processing discussed at the beginning of this chapter supported the hypothesis that once a word is accessed, all the words in its immediate and peripheral semantic fields are accessed simultaneously (e.g., Giora 2003; Beeman 1998; Titone 1998; among others).

Another factor that can make a difference in the teaching of L2 idiomatic expressions is the choice of mode of instruction. There are two main modes of instruction. The first one is implicit or incidental, which has been proven to be effective but slow (Nation and Meara 2002); yet it is said to be best for figurative idioms, as it pushes L2 learners to make their own interpretative strategies (Grant and Nation 2006). The second one is explicit or direct, which is more focused and a necessary supplement to implicit instruction for adult L2 learners (White 1991; Schmitt 2000). Readers are invited to see Chapters 9–14 in this volume, which focus on language skills and the most effective ways to help second language learners of Persian to improve them.

Implicit and explicit instruction each tap into a different part of the brain, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Explicit instruction leads to the new information being stored in the declarative memory as conscious knowledge, while implicit instruction leads to the new information being stored in the procedural memory as non-conscious knowledge (Ullman 2018). Whereas the initial learning of a new lexical item will be based on the declarative knowledge, the subsequent uses of that lexical item might be based on the procedural knowledge, as it is used more frequently and eventually automatically.

Another factor that has proven useful not only in the teaching of L2 idiomatic expressions but rather in any L2 instruction is the instructor’s knowledge of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories, as she or he can choose teaching techniques and methods based on a solid theoretical foundation (Slabakova 2016). For example, according to the parasitic hypothesis of vocabulary development (Hall 2002) and the competing model of L2 acquisition (MacWhinney 1992, 1997, 2002, 2005, 2008), when L2 learners encounter a new lexicon or an idiomatic expression they have not heard before, they rely heavily on their L1. The findings of the present study illustrated in Table 6.3 provide evidence for this model and theory of L2 acquisition, as the lower the proficiency level, the more reliance on L1 in figuring out the meaning of an unfamiliar idiomatic expression. In addition, the results of the present study also support the hierarchical bilingual memory models (e.g. Kroll and Stewart 1994; Heredia and Cieślicka 2014), according to which L2 learners rely on the mediation of L1 translation equivalents at the initial stages of L2 learning, and as they become more proficient, they are replaced with direct connections between the L2 lexicon and the mental concept. Table 6.3 depicts this point clearly as more proficient L2 learners refer to their L1 only as the last resort; instead, like L1 speakers, they try to use strategies like referring to the constituent meanings to guess the meaning of the idiomatic expressions. This is also in line with Cieślicka’s (2006) Literal Salience Model, which proposes that L2 learners, due to receiving the instruction in classroom,

are more familiar with the literal meaning of idiomatic expressions, hence the salience of their constituents. However, salience and familiarity can be more complex than this, as L2 learners' individual differences in the acquisition of the L2 idiomatic expression can determine what is salient and what is not. This is also argued by Kecskes (2006), who states that salience is a function of familiarity and experience with a given meaning, and experience is different from one individual to another. Individual differences and various learning styles and beliefs in second language learners of Persian are further discussed in Chapter 28 in this volume.

Another important factor for the instructor to help L2 learners learn L2 idiomatic expressions is to know what particular L1-L2 pairs exist in the class so that the L1s of the class can be used in order to decide the order of the material presented, based on SLA theories, as well as refraining from focusing the time of the class on certain aspects shared by both L1 and L2.

## 6.7 Conclusion

This chapter examined L2 processing, comprehension, and acquisition of idiomatic expressions. The chapter started by presenting the reasons why studying idiomatic expressions is significant. After all, as stated by Wray (2013), in order to study L2 formulaic language processing, one needs to know why this kind of expressions is so common in the language as well as the linguistic structure of the idiomatic expressions. For this reason, we started the chapter by discussing how commonly idiomatic expressions are used in the language under investigation, that is, Persian.

We then reviewed different linguistic theories of the L1 and L2 mental lexicon and how they are taken to be integrated or separate by different theories. For that, we discussed the physiological differences between the loci of lexicon storage, in general, and the loci of storage of idiomatic expressions, in particular. After that, we discussed different theories of L1 and L2 idiomatic expression processing for different kinds of idiomatic expressions. Then we argued how evidence from Persian helps contribute to the discussion of these theories. The last topic we delved into was the comprehension and acquisition of idiomatic expressions by presenting a small sample test investigating these issues with L2 learners of Persian.

The present study has some limitations, such as the small sample size of the final study and the lack of more sophisticated statistical analysis. However, the aim of this chapter was to give a bird's-eye view of the theories and studies in L1 versus L2 idiomatic expression processing and acquisition, while providing new evidence from a less-studied language, Persian. Further studies need to investigate the L2 idiomatic expression processing and acquisition in Persian and in other languages alike, as this is an understudied topic of research. We hope that the present study will inspire researchers in the field to do more elaborate and extensive studies in the realm of L2 idiomatic expression processing and acquisition.

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# 7

## SOME UNIQUE SEMANTIC PROPERTIES OF PERSIAN

*Masoud Jasbi*

### 7.1 Introduction

Language acquisition can be characterized as the process of discovering forms of the target language, discovering the concepts that are communicated in that language, and mapping those forms to the correct concepts (Clark 2009). Each step of acquisition has its own challenges to overcome. In this chapter, I discuss issues that are closely related to the last step: when learning a new language, how do learners discover the right mapping of forms and meanings? How do they converge on the correct characterization of a word's meaning among many plausible candidate meanings? Are some words or elements of a language more difficult to learn because of what they mean? How can we facilitate learning in cases where the semantics of words make their learning challenging? For further discussion on the acquisition of semantic features in Persian, read Chapter 8 in this volume.

Words in almost any language divide into two basic categories: content words and function words. Content words are the ones that are most word-like to native speakers! They are the flagbearers of the lexicon. They constitute nouns like *cat*, verbs like *run*, and adjectives like *red*, words that if you ask someone to name a word, they will most likely name those. Function words on the other hand are hardly recognized. They are small elements like *the*, *and*, *or*, and *every*, which are unlikely to be mentioned if someone is asked to name a word. Despite this lack of recognition, the role of function words in language is truly remarkable. They are the nuts and bolts that put content words together and create the sentences of a language. In short, function words form the backbone of a language structure and language cannot function without them.

Function words are small in number and they rarely add a new member. This is why they are also referred to as a “closed class”. Content words on the other hand are much more numerous and easily add new members; hence the name “open class”. Function words are present everywhere. If we compute the frequency of words in a document like this one, the most frequent words are going to be function words. Given their small number and high frequency, one might think that function words are easy to learn. However, this is the opposite of what we find in language acquisition. Children master function words of their first language much later than content words. But why are function words hard to learn?

Despite their frequency and ubiquitous presence, function words have meanings that are extremely abstract and hard to pin down. In introductory classes, I often ask students to provide their intuitions on the meaning of some content words and some function words. Students are often quick in responding to content words. The meanings seem very clear to them. However, with function words, they often do not really know what the meaning is, even though they know how to correctly use them in a sentence. Research in formal semantics and pragmatics has shown that the meanings of function words are indeed extremely subtle. We often need specific and precise mathematical tools to be able to capture their semantics. Therefore, it is not surprising that despite their high frequency in language, function words are learned later in the process of acquisition. To find the correct form-meaning mapping for function words, learners may need more data and time. More importantly, to distinguish subtle differences in meaning, learners may need to rely on crucial data points that differentiate semantic hypotheses from each other. But is it possible to facilitate the process of learning function words? It is, in principle, if we provide the crucial data that learners need to converge on the right semantic hypotheses for words and expressions. For learners of a second language, it is also possible to provide generalizations that accurately capture the semantic contribution of functional elements.

Research in theoretical and formal semantics and pragmatics can help with both of these tasks. The goal of the present chapter is to provide recent findings on the semantics of some functional elements in Persian and provide examples that in my view count as “crucial examples” for learning, because they bring out the important semantic distinctions that those functional elements encode. The chapter also aims at demonstrating how theoretical research on semantics of function words can contribute to the literature and practices in second language acquisition.

I first start with a discussion of diglossia in Persian in Section 7.2. I argue that the informal and formal varieties of Persian differ significantly in their phonology, their syntax, (and most relevant to the discussion here) their semantics. Rules and generalizations that apply to one do not necessarily carry to the other. Therefore, in research and teaching of Persian, it is important to keep the two systems apart and systematically highlight the similarities and differences. For further discussion on diglossia in Persian, see Chapter 4 in this volume. Section 7.3 discusses subtleties in the interpretation of bare nominals in Persian. Section 7.4 explains the semantic contribution of some functional markers that appear on singular nominals while Section 7.5 focuses on plural marking. Finally, Section 7.6 discusses the object marker *rā*, which is infamous for creating major difficulties for speakers of Persian as a second language. In each case, I present the type of data that I consider crucial for bringing out the core semantic contribution of each marker and hence helpful in the process of language acquisition.

## **7.2 Diglossia**

One of the most challenging aspects of learning Persian is that what is spoken, namely Colloquial or Informal Persian, is considerably different from what is taught and written, i.e. Formal Persian. The formal and informal varieties of Persian are closely and systematically related but obey different rules and must be considered two separate systems. While Informal Persian has been subject to rapid linguistic change, Formal Persian has remained relatively closer to Literary Persian, which was spoken hundreds of years ago. Examples (1–3) show similar sentences in Literary Persian (1), Formal Persian (2), and Informal Persian (3). The Literary

example in (1), which dates back to 700 years ago, is quite similar to the Formal example in (2). However, the Informal example in (3) is very different from the other two.

- (1) *čon u be xāne raft*  
 (when) 3.SG to house PST.go.3.SG  
 “When s/he went home.”  
 (Ubayd Zākāni, 1300–1371 CE, Resāle-ye Delgoshā: Ārmān Dozdi)
- (2) *u be xāne raft*  
 3.SG to house PST.go.3.SG  
 “Reza/he went home.”
- (3) (*Rezā*) *raft-esh xune*  
 Reza PST.go.3.SG-3.SG house  
 “Reza went home.”

First, in Informal Persian it is more natural to use the SVO word order for the sentence “Reza went home” as in (3). However, in Formal Persian it is more acceptable to use the SOV word order as in (2). Second, the phonological form of “home” changes from /xune/ to /xane/ when we switch to Formal Persian. Third, “home” can appear as an NP without a preposition, next to the verb *raft* “go” in Informal Persian. This is ungrammatical in the formal variety. We need “home” to be preceded by the preposition *be* as in (2). Fourth, it is possible in Informal Persian to use the third person singular clitic *-esh* on the verb to show agreement with the subject of the sentence as (3) shows. This is totally ungrammatical in Formal Persian. Instead the verb should only bear the third person subject-agreement suffix, which is zero-marking.

Most speakers of “Persian” grow up learning an informal variety such as Tehrāni or Shirāzi Persian and only learn Formal Persian through primary education and schooling where they learn to read and write. While Formal Persian is useful in understanding the language of the news, literary texts, or formal communications, it is not as useful as Informal Persian in day-to-day conversations. Many students of Persian as a second language learn it because they would like to communicate with Persian-speaking friends and family. This includes a growing number of heritage speakers who have had limited exposure to Persian at home and would like to improve their conversational skills. However, most programs teaching Persian as a second language focus on teaching Formal Persian. In fact, many students are not aware of the relatively large gap between Formal and Informal Persian, and are often surprised to find out that what they learned in class does not apply to day-to-day conversation. In the following sections, we see that the differences between Formal and Informal Persian extend to semantics as well. Therefore, it is important to teach these differences and make students aware that Persian has two interconnected varieties.

### 7.3 Bare nominals

Nominals often appear bare in Persian, which means they do not receive any morphological marking. A bare nominal can be interpreted in multiple ways. Consider examples (4–7). The bare nominal *māšin* “car” can be interpreted as definite (4), generic (5), indefinite (6), or a “numberless” nominal (7). I call examples like (7) numberless, because they are equally felicitous describing a singular or plural state of affairs. For example, (7) can be used to warn someone about an incoming car in the street or several cars that are approaching. My own intuition is that numberlessness is something that is widely available in Persian but not as much in English. A similar example may be gender in the pronominal systems of Persian and English. Persian does not make gender distinctions in its pronominal system, but English does

for the third person. As a result, it is hard to translate the pronominal clitic in (6) into English. Since there is no exact lexical item available for translation, we have to resort to a disjunction such as “him or her”.

- (4) *māšīn*     *xarāb-e*  
 car            broken-be.NPST.3.SG  
 “The car is broken.”
- (5) *māšīn*     *gerun-e*  
 car            expensive-be.NPST.3.SG  
 “Cars are expensive.”
- (6) *māšīn*     *b-esh*        *zad*  
 car            to-3.SG        hit.PST.3.SG  
 “A car hit him/her.”
- (7) *māšīn*     *mi-ā-d*  
 car            IPFV-NPST.come-3.SG  
 “Car(s) is/are coming.”

The fact that bare nominals can be interpreted in multiple ways makes them particularly hard to learn for speakers of languages like English that often require nominals to be marked by determiners. Therefore it might be helpful for learners to focus on bare nominals and discuss examples like (4–7) that illustrate the wide range of interpretations bare nominals receive. Such examples can also be contrasted with examples from the learners’ first language. The comparison helps them see how distinctions made by functional elements in their first language collapse in Informal Persian.

#### 7.4 Singular marking

In this section I discuss three functional markers: the indefinite determiner *ye(k)*, the indefinite clitic *-i*, and the nominal suffix *-e*. I focus on their semantics in Formal and Informal Persian. For a more detailed semantic analysis of these elements please refer to Jasbi (2016) and Jasbi (to appear b). Let us start with the indefinite determiner *ye(k)*. The split between Formal and Informal Persian shows itself immediately. The indefinite determiner in Formal Persian is *yek* while in Informal Persian it is *ye*. In Informal Persian, the semantic behavior of *ye* is very close to the English indefinite determiner *a(n)*. The main difference is that *ye* is much more resilient against being interpreted under negation than *a(n)*. For example in (8), the indefinite determiner *ye* interacts with the universal quantifier *hame* “all” in a way that both wide and narrow scope readings are available: everyone watched the same movie (wide), everyone watched a different movie (narrow). This is very similar to the English translation of the sentence. However, when *ye* is forced under negation in (9), the utterance becomes infelicitous (# is used to mark the infelicity). This is not the case for the English equivalent. The sentence “Nobody watched a movie” is a felicitous utterance conveying that no movie was watched (narrow scope).

- (8) *hame*        *ye*        *film*        *tamāšā*     *kard-an*  
 all            ID        film        watch        do-3.PL  
 “Everyone watched a movie.”
- (9) #*hiš-ki*     *ye*        *film*        *tamāšā*     *na-kard*  
 nil-person    ID        film        watch        NEG-do.3.SG  
 “Nobody watched a movie.”



This behavior of *ye* might be due to its division of labor with the indefinite clitic *-i* in Informal Persian. The semantic behavior of the clitic *-i* most resembles the determiner *any* in English. The clitic *-i* is unacceptable in simple positive episodic environments without modification as (10) shows. Now compare (10) to (11), which is the formal version of the same sentence using the formal form of the verb *āmad* “come”. The indefinite clitic can be used to convey an indefinite meaning on its own in Formal Persian but not Informal Persian. I should add that it is easy to find the indefinite clitic as the main marker of indefiniteness in older texts of Persian. This suggests that the difference between Formal and Informal uses of this clitic may be due to historical shift in its meaning.

- (10) \**zan-i*            *umad*  
 woman-IC        come.PST.3.SG  
 “A woman came.”
- (11) *zan-i*            *āmad*  
 woman-IC        come.PST.3.SG  
 “A woman came.”

Similar to *any* in English, the indefinite clitic becomes acceptable in positive episodic environments if it is further modified, known as “subtrigging” in the linguistics literature (LeGrand 1975). The example in (12) is identical to the one in (10) except that it is modified by the relative clause *ke goft-i* “that you talked about”. To most native speakers, (12) sounds a lot better than (10) in informal Persian. You may have noticed that the addition of the relative clause made something curious happen: the interpretation of the nominal “woman” is now definite rather than indefinite. This phenomenon has puzzled Iranian linguists for decades. Data like (12) make it hard to classify *-i* as a simple indefinite marker. Therefore, some Iranian linguists such as Moin (1958, 235) and Natel-Khanlari (1972, 255) proposed that the indefinite clitic is polysemous. In Jasbi (2016), I argued that the definite interpretation in examples like (5) is not due to the clitic *-i* but rather the result of the compositional structure of the sentence. In this analysis, *-i* conveys that the nominal *zan* “woman” is non-unique. If the nominal stays unmodified, then the sentence is most compatible with an indefinite reading given that it conveys the non-uniqueness of “woman”. However, when the *i*-marked nominal is further modified by a restrictive relative clause such as *ke goft-i* “that you talked about”, then the whole NP “woman that you talked about” can pick out a unique woman. Therefore, the most likely interpretation in such cases is a definite one. Jasbi (2016) provides a more detailed and formal account of this analysis.

- (12) *zan-i*            *ke*            *goft-i*            *umad*  
 woman-IC        that        say.PST-2.SG        come.PST.3.SG  
 “The woman that you mentioned came.”

Again similar to *any* in English, the indefinite clitic in Persian (especially Informal Persian) is licensed in “downward entailing” or “non-veridical” environments (Ladusaw 1980; Gianakidou 1998). (13–16) show examples of such environments (negative sentences, questions, and conditionals) for the English word *any*. While *any* is not acceptable in positive episodic sentences (13), it sounds very natural in downward entailing or non-veridical environments (14–16).

- (13) # *He sold any book.*  
 (14) *He didn't sell any book.*

- (15) *Did he sell any book?*  
 (16) *Tell us if he sold any book!*

We see a parallel situation with the indefinite clitic *-i* in Persian. Examples in (17–20) show this clearly. It is important to note that all the examples including (17) are acceptable in Formal Persian (for example by changing the verb to its formal variant *foruxt-e-ast*). Therefore, in Formal Persian the clitic *-i* does not conform to the pattern of *any* in English. Students of Persian that are mainly taught the Formal variety, therefore, may sound formal or even poetic, because of using structures like (17) in their colloquial speech. An important part of fluency in speaking Persian is to learn the separate syntactic or semantic rules that govern Formal and Informal Persian, and be able to apply them depending on the context.

- (17) *\*ketāb-i furuxt-e*  
 book-IC sell.PST-PERF.3.SG  
 “S/he has sold a book.”
- (18) *ketāb-i na-fruxt-e*  
 book-IC NEG-sell.PST-PERF.3.SG  
 “S/he hasn’t sold any book.”
- (19) *ketāb-i furuxt-e?*  
 book-IC sell.PST-PERF.3.SG  
 “Has s/he sold any book?”
- (20) *age ketāb-i furuxt-e be-gu*  
 if book-IC sell.PST-PERF.3.SG IMP-say.NPST  
 “If s/he has sold any book, tell (us).”

The third marker that I discuss here is the nominal suffix *-e*. This suffix is an innovation of Informal Persian and does not seem to be used in the Formal variety at all. I bring examples (21–22) to illustrate this point. Notice the informal and formal forms of the verb “come” in (21) and (22) respectively.

- (21) *zan-e umad*  
 woman-UM come.PST.3.SG  
 “The woman came.”
- (22) *#zan-e āmad*  
 woman-UM come.PST.3.SG  
 “The woman came.”

This suffix is often described as the informal definiteness marker. Again, the story is not as simple as that. Examples like (23) show that the same suffix can appear with the indefinite determiner *ye* and convey an indefinite interpretation. So what does *-e* really do in informal Persian?

- (23) *ye zan-e umad*  
 ID woman-UM come.PST.3.SG  
 “A (certain) woman came.”

The clue is the word *certain* in the translation of (23). In short, the suffix *-e* acts similar to the adjective *certain* in English (see Jasbi (to appear b) for a more detailed semantic

analysis). In other words, it adds determinedness to the referent or value of a nominal such as *zan* “woman”. Therefore, a noun modified by *-e* such as *ketāb-e* communicates that its referent is fixed. Now, this fixedness may be because the referent is known to the conversational participants, in which case no indefinite marker accompanies it and a definite reading is derived. Or alternatively, the referent might not be known to the conversational participants, yet the speaker may want to convey that despite being unknown, the referent of the nominal is fixed.

This “determinedness” or “fixedness” of the nominals marked with *-e* results in interesting semantic patterns. For example, in (24) following, the sentence without the nominal suffix is ambiguous between two readings: 1) everyone said “hello” to a different professor, and 2) everyone said “hello” to the same professor. Once *-e* appears on the nominal *ostād* “professor” in (25), the referent of “professor” becomes fixed and cannot vary with different individuals who said hello. Therefore, in (25) the only available reading is the one where everyone said hello to the same professor.

- (24) *emruz hame be ye ostād salām kard-im*  
 today everyone to ID professor hello do.PST-1.PL  
 “Today, we all said hello to a (different/same) professor.”
- (25) *emruz hame be ye ostād-e salām kard-im*  
 today everyone to ID professor-UM hello do.PST-1.PL  
 “Today, we all said hello to the same professor.”

Examples in the following show that this phenomenon is systematic and not isolated to universal quantification with *hame*. In (27) the nominal suffix can disambiguate that Sara always gets into fights with the same boy and not different ones. In (29), it helps us know that the girl Amir is going to marry is determined and Amir is not just looking for some girl or other to marry. In the next section, I explore the role of functional elements in creating plural nominals in Persian, focusing more on Informal Persian.

- (26) *Sārā hamiše bā ye pesar davā-š mi-š-e*  
 Sara always with ID boy quarrel-3.SG IPFV-become-3.SG  
 “Sara always gets into a fight with (a different/ the same) boy.”
- (27) *Sārā hamiše bā ye pesar-e davā-š mi-š-e*  
 Sara always with ID boy-UM quarrel-3.SG IPFV-become-3.SG  
 “Sara always gets into a fight with the same boy.”
- (28) *Amir mi-xā-d bā ye doxtar ezdevāj kon-e*  
 Amir IPFV-want.NPST-3.SG with ID girl marriage do.NPST-3.SG  
 “Amir wants to marry (a certain/any) girl.”
- (29) *Amir mi-xā-d bā ye doxtar-e ezdevāj kon-e*  
 Amir IPFV-want.NPST-3.SG with ID girl-UM marriage do.NPST-3.SG  
 “There is a certain girl Amir wants to marry.”

## 7.5 Plural marking

Plurals in Persian are formed using two different mechanisms. The first mechanism is the plural morpheme (*hā*) as in (30). The second mechanism is the combination of a plural numeral such as *do* “two” or *čand* “many” as in (31). These two mechanisms cannot be used at the

same time. As sentence (32) shows, the plural marker (*h*)*ā* and the plural numeral *čand* cannot appear together. I should add that if a sentence that contains *čand* is given a rising question intonation, then *čand* acts like a question word such as “how many”.

- (30) *zabān-šenās-ā*                      *injā*    *nešast-an*  
 language-know-PL                      here    sit.PST-3.PL  
 “The linguists are sitting here.”
- (31) *čand*                      *tā*                      *zabān-šenās*                      *injā*                      *nešast-an*  
 some/many                      CL                      language-know                      here                      sit.PST-3.PL  
 “Some linguists are sitting here.”
- (32) \**čand*                      *tā*                      *zabān-šenās-hā*                      *injā*                      *nešast-an*  
 some/many                      CL                      language-know-PL                      here                      sit.PST-3.PL  
 ‘Some linguists are sitting here.’

These two mechanisms interact with definiteness. In (31) where “linguist” bears the plural suffix (*h*)*ā*, the sentence receives a definite interpretation: “the linguists”. In (31) where “linguist” is only modified by the numeral modifier *čand*, the sentence receives an indefinite interpretation: something like “some linguists” or “several linguists”. (32) shows that numeral modifiers and the plural marker (*h*)*ā* cannot appear together to mark plurality. Based on such examples, many linguists such as Ghomeshi (2003) and Gebhardt (2009), have suggested that an NP marked by (*h*)*ā* is both plural and definite. While this is to some extent correct, there are interesting exceptions like the ones following where the plural marker appears with indefinite determiners and clitics on the same nominal.

- (33) *ye*                      *harf-ā-i*                      *goft-an*                      *na-dār-e*  
 ID                      speech-PL-IC                      say.PST-INF                      NEG-have.NPST-3.SG  
 “Some things should not be said.”
- (34) *bazi*                      *zabān-šenās-hā*                      *irāni-an*  
 some                      language-know-PL                      Iranian-be.NPST.3.PL  
 “Some linguists are Iranian.”

It is also tempting to conclude that an NP with a numeral and a classifier such as *čand tā* is a plural indefinite. However, the data in (35–36) show that such constructions can receive a definite interpretation.

- (35) *in*                      *čand*                      *tā*                      *aks-o*                      *pāk kon*  
 this/these                      some/many                      CL                      picture-OM                      clean do.NPST  
 “Delete these pictures.”
- (36) *in*                      *aks-ā-ro*                      *pāk*                      *kon*  
 this/these                      picture-PL-OM                      clean                      do.NPST  
 “Delete these pictures.”

In (35), *čand* is modifying *aks* meaning “picture”, but the interpretation of the NP is definite (“these pictures”) due to the presence of the demonstrative in meaning “this/these”. Item (36) shows that the same meaning can be expressed by the plural definite suffix (*h*)*ā*. The main difference between (35) and (36) is that the former has a partitive meaning; it is implied that

there are more pictures, and only some of them (the ones the speaker is referring to) should be deleted. We see the same pattern in singular nouns with *ye* meaning “one”.

- (37) *ye aks-o pāk kon*  
 ID picture-OM clean do.NPST  
 “Delete a picture.”
- (38) *in ye aks-o pāk kon*  
 this/these ID picture-OM clean do.NPST  
 “Delete this one picture.”

In (37) where we have no demonstrative pronoun, the NP “one picture” is interpreted as indefinite. However, in (38) the same NP is interpreted as definite due to the presence of the demonstrative *in* “this”. This suggests that numerals such as *ye(k)* “one” or *čand* “many” in Persian can act both as an indefinite determiner or a simple cardinality marker. One possible account is that numerals in Persian only provide number information and (in)definiteness is provided via covert semantic operations.

## 7.6 Object marking

The Persian object marker, formally known as *rā*, is pronounced in colloquial Persian as *ro* or simply *o*. The form *ro* is used in the phonological environment where the preceding phoneme is a vowel and *o* is used if the preceding phoneme is a consonant. The distribution of the object marker in Persian is determined by the interaction of syntactic and semantic factors. Syntax provides the environment where its appearance is possible, and semantics determines the conditions which make the occurrence of this marker necessary. I first explain where *rā* is allowed syntactically and then describe where the semantics of the nominal determines the occurrence of *rā*.

The object marker *rā* appears only on nominals. It is unacceptable on subjects (39) and PP arguments of the verb (40). Notice that (39) is interpretable, but what is marked by *rā* is interpreted as the object of the sentence and not the intended subject. The object marker is grammatical on direct objects (41) and certain nominal adverbials (42). It can also participate in constructions such as (43) which are called Clitic-Binder Constructions by Karimi (1990).

- (39) *Maryam-(#o) keik xord*  
 Maryam-OM cake eat.PST.3.SG  
 “(Intended: Maryam ate cake.) Cake ate Maryam.”
- (40) *Maryam be barādar-esh-(#o) cake dād*  
 Maryam to brother-3.SG-OM cake give.PST.3.SG  
 “Maryam gave cake to her brother.”
- (41) *Maryam keik-o xord*  
 Maryam cake-OM eat.PST.3SG  
 “Maryam ate the cake.”
- (42) *fardā-(ro) Maryam keik mi-xor-e*  
 tomorrow-OM Maryam cake IPFV-eat.NPST-3.SG  
 “Tomorrow, Maryam eats cake.”
- (43) *Maryam-o keik-esh-o xord-i?*  
 Maryam-OM cake-3.SG-OM eat.PST-2.SG  
 “Considering Maryam, did you eat her cake?”

As mentioned, semantics and pragmatics determine where the object marker is necessary. The occurrence of *rā* is obligatory on pronominal elements in Persian: personal and demonstrative pronouns (44), reflexive pronouns (45), reciprocal pronouns (46), and demonstrative nouns (47). It is also required on superlatives (48), question-words *kodum* “which” (49) and *ki* “who” (54), strong quantifiers such as *hame* “all” (50), *bištar* “most” (51), *har-do* “both” (52), and plurals with the plural marker (*h*)*ā* (53). I should add that *rā* also seems to be obligatory on *kas* which means “person” (55–56).

- (44) *Amir*            *un-\*(o)*            *mi-šnās-e*  
 Amir            that-OM            IPFV-know-3.SG  
 “Amir knows him.”
- (45) *Amir*            *xod-eš-\*(o)*            *mi-šnās-e*  
 Amir            self-3.SG-OM            IPFV-know-3.SG  
 “Amir knows himself.”
- (46) *dānešju-hā*            *hamdige-\*(ro)*            *mi-šnās-an*  
 student-PL            eachother-OM            IPFV-know-3.PL  
 “The students know each other.”
- (47) *Amir*            *un*            *keik-\*(o)*            *xord*  
 Amir            that            cake-OM            eat.PST.3.SG  
 “Amir ate that cake.”
- (48) *Amir*            *behtarin*            *keik-\*(o)*            *xord*  
 Amir            best            cake-OM            eat.PST.3.SG  
 “Amir ate the best cake.”
- (49) *Amir*            *kodum*            *keik-\*(o)*            *xord?*  
 Amir            which            cake-OM            eat.PST.3.SG  
 “Which cake did Amir eat?”
- (50) *Amir*            *hame-ye*            *keik-\*(o)*            *xord*  
 Amir            all-EZ            cake-OM            eat.PST.3.SG  
 “Amir ate all of the cake.”
- (51) *Amir*            *bištar-e*            *keik-\*(o)*            *xord*  
 Amir            most-EZ            cake-OM            eat.PST.3.SG  
 “Amir ate most of the cake.”
- (52) *Amir*            *har*            *do-ta*            *keik-\*(o)*            *xord*  
 Amir            each            two-CL            cake-OM            eat.PST.3.SG  
 “Amir ate both cakes.”
- (53) *Amir*            *keik-hā-\*(ro)*            *xord*  
 Amir            cake-PL-OM            eat.PST.3.SG  
 “Amir ate the cakes.”
- (54) *Amir*            *ki-\*(ro)*            *did?*  
 Amir            who-OM            see.PST.3.SG  
 “Who did Amir see?”
- (55) *Amir*            *ye*            *kas-i-(ro)*            *dust*            *dār-e*  
 Amir            ID            person-IC-OM            friend            have.NPST-3.SG  
 “Amir likes someone.”
- (56) *Amir*            *hič-kas-i-ro*            *dust*            *na-dār-e*  
 Amir            no-person-IC-OM            friend            NEG-have.NPST-3.SG  
 “Amir doesn’t like anyone.”

*Rā* can also occur obligatorily or optionally on generics as the following examples show. In (57) from Dabir-Moghaddam (1992), *rā* is obligatory, while in (58) it is optional. These sentences have a non-generic reading as well. To my knowledge, examples such as (57) where *rā* is obligatory with a generic reading are rather rare. It is often the case that when the object NP has a generic reading, *rā* is optional.

- (57) *serke*      *šir-\*(o)*      *mi-bor-e*  
vinegar      milk-OM      IMPFV-cut-3.SG  
“Vinegar curdles milk.”
- (58) *oqāb*      *muš-(o)*      *šekār*      *mi-kon-e*  
eagle      mouse-OM      hunt      IPFV-do-3.SG  
“Eagles hunt mice.”

Those familiar with the literature on the object marker *rā* may have noticed that when I listed the environments where *rā* seems obligatory, I left out proper names. After all, examples like (59) suggest that *rā* is obligatory on proper names too.

- (59) *Amir*      *Bārāk*      *Obāmā-\*(ro)*      *mi-šnās-e*  
Amir      Barack      Obama-OM      IPFV-know.NPST-3.SG  
“Amir knows Barack Obama.”

However, while *rā* is obligatory on proper names in most contexts, there are contexts in which it does not appear on proper names. Such contexts shed light on the semantic contribution of the object marker and count as crucial data for learning its meaning. Consider the examples in (60) and (61). In (60), the speaker does not presuppose that there is anyone with the name “Ali Saburi” when he asks the question. In other words, the question does not entail that there is anyone with that name in the discourse context. An example context would be if someone emails you and claims they are “Ali Saburi” and know a friend of yours. You may ask your friend using (60) to see if such a person exists.

However, the opposite is true in (61). The speaker knows for sure that there is someone called “Ali Saburi” and he does not consider that fact up for negotiation. In other words, he presupposes the existence of someone named “Ali Saburi” and simply asks if the addressee knows that person or not. Notice that the only difference in the form of the sentences in (60) and (61) is the presence or absence of the object marker *rā*. Therefore, it is likely that *rā* is the culprit here in introducing the presupposition of existence into the discourse.

- (60) *Ali*      *(e)*      *Saburi*      *mi-šnās-i?*  
Ali      EZ      Saburi      IPFV-know.NPST-2.SG  
“Do you know someone named Ali Saburi?”
- (61) *Ali*      *(e)*      *Saburi-ro*      *mi-šnās-i?*  
Ali      EZ      Saburi-OM      IPFV-know.NPST-2.SG  
“Do you know Ali Saburi?”

Note that a parallel distinction can be made in English using the indefinite determiner as (62–63) show (I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for this suggestion). In English, proper names such as “Robert Moore” presuppose a unique reference by default. However, the addition of the indefinite determiner in (62) coerces the proper name to drop its presuppositional status and instead, makes the existence of such an individual the at-issue content of the question.

Therefore, English takes the presuppositional status of proper names as default and only marks them if this is not the case. On the other hand, at least in the object position in Persian, proper names are not presuppositional by default and are only made so using the object marker.

(62) *Do you know a Robert Moore?*

(63) *Do you know Robert Moore?*

We can test this presupposition of existence by explicitly denying it in a follow-up sentence and see if we derive a contradiction. Consider the examples in (64–65). In (64), the first statement denies that there is any “work” to be done in the context of the utterance. The following statement (after *va* “and”) explains that no work was done, which is consistent with not having any work to do! In example (65) all we have done is adding *rā* to the nominal *kār* in the follow-up statement. This results in a contradiction. The first statement of (65) denies that there is any work, but it somehow seems like the second statement does insist that there was work to do, but the speaker did not do any of them. This is what we expected if *rā* contributed a presupposition of existence.

(64) *emruz kār-i na-dāšt-am va kār-i anjām na-dād-am*  
 today work-IC NEG-have.PST-1.SG and work-IC finish NEG-give.PST-1.SG  
 “I didn’t have any work (to do) today, and I didn’t do any work.”

(65) *#emruz kār-i na-dāšt-am va kār-i-ro anjām na-dād-am*  
 today work-IC NEG-have.PST-1.SG and work-IC-OM finish NEG-give-1.SG  
 “I didn’t have any work (to do) today, and I didn’t do any of them.”

Another prediction is that if we change the first clause to assert that there is work to do, then using the object marker should not result in any contradiction. This is what (66) shows. (64–66) together provide evidence that *rā* implies that the nominal it modifies is instantiated (exists) in the utterance context.

(66) *emruz xeili kār dāšt-am va kār-i-ro anjām na-dād-am*  
 today very work have.PST-1.SG and work-IC-OM finish NEG-give-1.SG  
 “I had a lot of work to do and did not do any of them.”

To provide further evidence for the semantic contribution of *rā* as an existential presupposition, consider the examples in (67–68) following. In (67) the quantificational nominal *hič-čiz-i* “nothing” appears without the object marker, while in (68) it appears with it. The sentences do not convey the same meaning and have a subtle difference. The one in (67) does not comment on whether there were things to buy for Ali or not. However, the one in (68) conveys that there were things to buy. One way to translate this intuition into English is to use the partitive: “Ali bought none of them.” I should add that partitives do not do justice to what *rā* contributes here. The meaning is a lot subtler and harder to translate. In Jasbi (to appear a), I provide a more formal and compositional account of *rā* in Informal Persian.

(67) *Ali hič čiz-i na-xarid*  
 Ali nil thing-IC NEG-buy.PST.3.SG  
 “Ali bought nothing.”

(68) *Ali hič čiz-i-ro na-xarid*  
 Ali nil think-IC-OM NEG-buy.PST.3.SG  
 “Ali bought none of them.”



## 7.7 Conclusion

I discussed several functional elements in Persian and provided examples that shed light on their abstract and subtle meanings. Research on the meaning of function words in Persian has only scratched the surface so far. There are numerous functional elements whose meanings are poorly understood yet play a pivotal role in day-to-day conversations. Advances in theoretical and formal semantics can discover the meanings of function words and provide the crucial examples that illustrate their main functions in Persian. These discoveries can in turn inform research and practice in language acquisition. Providing the crucial data for learning as well as communicating accurate generalizations on the meaning of functional elements can substantially boost and facilitate learning for learners of Persian as a second language.

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# 8

## SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF THE SEMANTICS OF FOCUS- SENSITIVE OPERATORS IN PERSIAN

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### 8.1 Introduction

The present chapter aims to explore the second language acquisition (SLA) of a specific semantic property that is associated with the English particle *even*. Specifically, the goal is to test to what extent L1 English second language learners (L2 learners) of Persian succeed in the acquisition of the system that the target language has for the expression of the additive presupposition associated with their L1 *even*. In what follows, first I will sketch out the semantic theory that will be adopted for *even*. Next, I will put forth a semantic analysis of the system Persian has for the expression of the semantic features associated with *even* through the use of the lexical items *hattā* and *ham*. After a comparison of the representations in both languages, I will proceed to an elaboration of the SLA theories that are relevant for the current study. This will set the baseline for the experimental study that will be presented subsequently. Analysis, results, and conclusions will follow. For further discussion on the acquisition of semantic properties of Persian by L2 learners, please refer to Chapter 7 in this volume, where the semantic properties and acquisition of several functional elements are discussed.

### 8.2 English: *Even*

*Even* is a focus-sensitive scalar item that makes salient a set of propositional alternatives, whose content depends on the position of focus<sup>1</sup> in the clause.<sup>2</sup> The semantic contribution of *even* is that it requires the alternatives to be ordered in a particular way with respect to each other, a salient ordering based on likelihood, expectedness, or noteworthiness. More precisely, *even* contributes (i) the scalar presupposition that its propositional argument, its so-called prejacent, is the least likely alternative among the other alternatives in the set, and (ii) the additive presupposition that at least one<sup>3</sup> of the alternatives in the alternative set other than the prejacent must be true. Thus, a sentence like (1) would have the presuppositions in (2a) and (2b).

- (1) Mary *even* called BILL.  
(2) a) Bill was the least likely person for Mary to call. (Scalar presupposition)  
b) Mary called someone other than Bill. (Additive presupposition)

The status of the additive component of the semantics of *even* is controversial. Although the particle *even* always carries an additive presupposition, it has been noted that this presupposition is not always present in the semantics of *even* (von Stechow 1991; Krifka 1991, among others). Specifically, the additive component seems to be absent if the invoked set of alternatives involves mutually exclusive propositions. Rullmann (1997) discusses the problem that scales with mutually exclusive alternatives create for the existence of an additive component in the meaning of *even*. In (3), the additive presupposition, namely that at least one other proposition in the alternative set must be true, would give rise to the contradictory implication that ‘Claire can have more than one academic rank at the same time.’

- (3) A: Is Claire an ASSISTANT professor?  
B: No, she’s *even* an ASSOCIATE professor.  
C= {Claire is an assistant professor, Claire is an associate professor, Claire is a full professor}

The following example (with slight modification from Crnič 2011) also makes the same point.

- (4) A: Did Mary win bronze?  
B: No, she *even* won the SILVER medal.  
C= {she won the silver medal, she won the gold medal, she won the bronze medal}

The additive presupposition, again, would be incompatible with our knowledge – the assumption that one can only win a single medal in a single race.

In summary, it is observed that there are clearly cases where *even* is non-additive; *even* cannot have the additive presupposition when the pertinent scales involve mutually inconsistent alternatives. To account for this observation, a number of researchers have put forth proposals. Rullmann (1997) and Crnič (2011), for instance, present a pragmatic-semantic account. Wagner (2013, 2015), however, presents an account that considers the syntactic position of *even* relevant to its semantic content. Due to space considerations, I leave the discussion of the pragmatic-semantic account of Rullmann (1997) and Crnič (2011) aside here and invite readers to consult Mortazavinia (2018) for a thorough discussion of why their theories run into problems. In the present research, I adopt Wagner’s theory (2013, 2015), which I assume to best capture the English data. This theory will be discussed in the following section.

### 8.2.1 Wagner (2013, 2015): a syntactic account of the semantics of *even*

Wagner (2013) believes that whether or not *even* carries an additive presupposition depends on its syntactic position in the clause, hence, a syntax-semantics interface property. Consider the following paradigm from Wagner (2013):

- (5) A: Is it really true that someone from North America won the Marathon?  
 B: a) #*Even* a CANADIAN (won it)!  
 b) A CANADIAN *even* won it!  
 c) A CANADIAN won it *even*!  
 d) ?A CANADIAN *even*!

In his view, when *even* precedes its associate subject argument, an additive presupposition is necessarily present in its meaning (5a). In other words, when *even* prenominally attaches to an NP constituent (NP-*even*), presence of an additive presupposition is ensured. When *even* is in VP position, however, and backwards-associates<sup>4</sup> with a preceding subject (postnominal *even*; 5b and d), or is sentence-final (5c), the additive presupposition is absent.<sup>5</sup> In general, when *even* attaches to the VP (VP-*even*: whether it backwards-associates with the subject-postnominal *even*- or associates with the VP or an internal VP argument) or the sentence (sentence-final *even*), the additive presupposition is not present in the meaning of *even*. Of course, there is nothing that blocks VP-*even* or sentence-final *even* from appearing in an additive context. *Even* in these positions just does not have an additive component encoded in its meaning, but its use is very well compatible with additive contexts. Wagner's syntactic generalization about *even* accounts for a wide array of empirical data in English, as shown in the following paradigms.

- (6) *Superlatives*  
 # *Even* MY 5-YEAR OLD lifted the heaviest rock.<sup>6</sup>  
 MY 5-YEAR OLD *even* lifted the heaviest rock.  
 MY 5-YEAR OLD lifted the heaviest rock, *even*.
- (7) *Uniqueness-implying predicates*  
 # Oh, yes. *Even* A CANADIAN won it.  
 Oh, yes. A CANADIAN *even* won it.  
 Oh, yes. A CANADIAN won it, *even*.

The odd sentences in (6–7) involve prenominal *even*, which introduces an additive presupposition. The additive presupposition is in conflict with the uniqueness presupposition of the superlatives in (6), or the exclusivity of the predicate 'win a gold medal (in a specific tournament)' in (7). The observed weirdness goes away when *even* is not additive; in other words, in the case of postnominal or sentence-final *even*.

### 8.2.2 Summary

To sum up this section, I adopt the following assumptions about the semantics of *even* in English based on Wagner's syntactic generalization.

- i) *Even* in English always triggers a scalar presupposition: the proposition it takes is the least likely alternative in the pertinent alternative set. I refer to this semantic component of *even* as SCAL and use the following feature specification in this study to represent the scalarity of *even*: [SCAL]
- ii) *Even* in English may have an additive presupposition in its semantics depending on its syntactic distribution.
- iii) If *even* associates with a following NP (NP-*even*), it always carries the additive presupposition that at least one other alternative in the pertinent alternative set is true. Therefore,

prenominal *even* encodes both a scalar and an additive component in its meaning. The feature specification I assume for prenominal *even* is [SCAL,ADD]. I will follow Crnič's (2011) decompositional view where he assumes two components in the lexical entry for *even*. I assume SCAL for the scalar component and ADD for the additive. As such, prenominal *even* spells out the following two components both [SCAL] and [ADD].

- iv) If *even* attaches to a VP (postnominal,<sup>7</sup> adverbial,<sup>8</sup> or sentence-final *even*), it only spells out the scalar component. I assume the following characterization to represent the denotation of non-prenominal *even*: [SCAL].

The semantics assumed here would in principle not block non-additive *even* from appearing in additive contexts since its use is not incompatible with an additive context. Plausibly, Wagner argues, that in contexts where additivity is fulfilled, the principle of Maximize Presupposition<sup>9</sup> (Heim 1992) forces an additive interpretation of *even* as one would have to maximize the strength of the presuppositions encoded in an utterance. So, *even* in example (8) from Wagner (2013) can very well have an additive interpretation if this presupposition is satisfied in the context.

- (8) Mary *even* invited JOHN to the party.

### 8.3 Persian: *hattā*, *ham*, *hattā* -*ham*

In this section, I will provide an analysis for the operators in Persian that I assume to trigger the scalar and additive presuppositions associated with *even* in English. I will present an analysis of how the scalar and additive presuppositions of *even* are realized in Persian. I will use the features [SCAL] and [ADD] and build on the decompositional analysis of the meaning of *even* (Crnič 2011).

*Even* has always been translated into *hattā* in Persian. Likewise, learners of Persian learn that *hattā* is an equivalent of *even*. I propose, based on data presented in this section, that *even* and *hattā* are actually not exact semantic equivalents.

First, I argue that Persian *hattā* does not spell out the same semantic features that *even* does in prenominal position. Recall that in this position, English *even* is [SCAL,ADD]. I will show that *hattā* only has the scalar component in its meaning; it is not specified for additivity, regardless of its syntactic position. As such, I assume the following feature set for prenominal and postnominal *hattā* in Persian:

- (11) *hattā*: [SCAL]

This representation, as shown before, is what I assume for English *even* in postnominal position.

Second, I propose that *ham* is an additive operator in Persian that does not carry a scalar meaning. The following feature representation will be assumed for *ham*.

- (12) *ham*: [ADD]

Furthermore, I will show that when these items form a string with an NP (*hattā* -NP-*ham*), both a scalar and an additive presupposition are triggered: scalarity is contributed by *hattā* and additivity by *ham*; in scalar additive contexts, Persian speakers use *ham* in addition to *hattā* in the following basic word order:<sup>10</sup>

(13) *hattā* -NP-*ham*: [SCAL,ADD]

In other words, when additivity is satisfied in context, a separate lexical item *ham* that triggers additivity is used in addition to *hattā* in Persian. This combination, *hattā* -NP-*ham*, gives rise to both a scalar (contributed by *hattā*) and an additive (contributed by *ham*) presuppositions, which in English is triggered by *even* in prenominal position. This representation is the same feature specification as prenominal *even* in English.

The next section will present arguments in favor of the assumptions outlined previously for *hattā*, *ham*, and *hattā* -*ham*.

### 8.3.1 Scalar and additive operators in Persian

#### 8.3.1.1 *Hattā* is a scalar operator

In this section, I propose that *hattā* is a scalar operator in Persian, which does not lexically encode additivity. I will provide separate arguments for the presence of a scalar component and absence of an additive component in the meaning of this item. I will first show that it is [SCAL] and then that it is not specified for additivity.

##### 8.3.1.1.1 HATTĀ IS [SCAL]

A scalar item triggers a scalar presupposition; the proposition it takes as prejacent is the least likely alternative in the alternative set. To show that *hattā* is [SCAL], consider the following context.

(14) Context: Lionel Messi is inarguably the best soccer player in the world. He's a forward player who scores most goals for his team. In yesterday's game, Phil James, who was trying out for the team, was given a chance to play, although no one expected him to score. But it turned out to be a rather easy game and many people scored for the team.

A: *hattā* jeimz gol zad.  
 SCAL James goal hit  
 'Even James scored a goal.'

A': #*hattā* mesi gol zad.  
 SCAL Messi goal hit  
 #'Even Messi scored a goal.'

This context makes the proposition that 'James scored a goal' an unlikely one since James was only trying out for his team and was not likely to score a goal. Therefore, the sentence in A is felicitous as *hattā* is taking a proposition that presumably is the least likely/most unexpected. In addition, the context ensures that the prejacent of *hattā* in A', the proposition that 'Messi scored a goal', is very likely; it is very likely for Messi to score a goal in any game. This context, therefore, does not satisfy scalarity, the scalar presupposition that would require the prejacent of *hattā* to be the least likely. I argue that the use of *hattā* in this context yields infelicity because *hattā* has a scalar component in its meaning that requires the prejacent to be the least likely. This is in conflict with the given non-scalar context (the prejacent not being the least likely proposition), hence infelicity.

Similarly, consider the following examples in (15).

- (15) Context: Chopsticks were first and mostly used by the Chinese. They were just very recently introduced in Iran. Today, using chopsticks has become very popular all around the world.

A: *hattā* irāni-hā bā choob qazā mixoran.  
 SCAL Iranian-PL with chopstick food eat  
 ‘Even Iranians eat with chopsticks.’  
 A’: #*hattā* chini-hā bā choob qazā mixoran.  
 SCAL Chinese-PL with chopstick food eat  
 ‘Even the Chinese eat with chopsticks.’

Here, Iranians are not expected to widely use chopsticks, since they were just introduced to them. The context makes the Chinese the most likely population to use chopsticks, however. The use of *hattā* in the first case is, therefore, felicitous since the preadjacent satisfies scalarity and feels odd in the second case because it triggers a scalar presupposition that clashes with the non-scalarity of the context.

In summary, *hattā* has a scalar component in its meaning that prevents it from being used in contexts that do not satisfy the scalar presupposition, non-scalar contexts. I have not yet shown here that *hattā* is not specified for the additive component. This is discussed in the following.

8.3.1.1.2 *HATTĀ* IS NOT SPECIFIED FOR ADDITIVITY

If *hattā* had an additive component coded in its meaning, its use in non-additive environments would lead to infelicity; the additive presupposition would clash with the non-additivity of the context and therefore one would predict infelicity for the examples following. Consider the following examples where the use of *hattā* is licensed due to the scalarity of the contexts, but the contexts do not satisfy additivity.

- (16) Context: Claire is not a highly educated person and also never wanted to marry a highly educated person. But to everyone’s surprise, she married someone who teaches at university.

A: Did Claire marry an assistant professor?  
 B: *hattā* bā ye ostadyār ezdevāj kard.  
 SCAL with a associate professor marriage did  
 ‘She married *even* an associate professor.’<sup>11</sup>

This example is perfectly natural in Persian and does not imply that Claire has married another person besides an associate professor. The conclusion I draw, then, is that *hattā* does not encode an additive presupposition and therefore should not be specified for additivity. It must be noted that in principle, there is nothing that would block *hattā* from appearing in additive contexts, like postnominal *even* in English; its use is perfectly compatible with additive contexts.<sup>12</sup> Note that the example given previously would be odd if a lexical item with an additive component is used:

- (17) B’: #bā ye ostadyār ham ezdevāj kard.  
 with a associate professor too marriage did  
 ‘She married an associate professor, too.’

Likewise, consider the following example.

(18) Context: Each person gets only one grade for a given exam. Students were given a very difficult test where it was almost impossible to get a 20 (getting a 20, the maximum grade, is far less likely than getting a 19, 18, etc.), but Kian did a great job.

A: How did Kian do on the exam? Did he get a reasonable grade?

B: *hattā* bist gereft.

SCAL twenty got.

'He got *even* a 20.'

Since there is only one exam for which there can only be one grade, one should not be able to felicitously use a lexical item with an additive component in its meaning. An additive operator would make the previous response odd since the additive meaning would imply that Kian got another grade as well, which is incompatible with the context, as shown in (19).

(19) B': #bist *ham* gereft.

twenty too got.

'He got a 20, too.'

Additionally, consider the example following.

(20) Context: I think that the older kids in our school are taller than the younger ones; the older, the taller! But I just realized that, in the school basketball team, where there are many tall students:

A: *hattā* ye pesare koochooloo qad-boland-tarin-e  
 SCAL a boy-EZ little height-tall-superlative-is  
 'Even a young boy is the tallest (player).'

The context makes a little boy being the tallest very unlikely. In addition, the semantics of the superlative ensures uniqueness of the predicate, which would mean that there is only one person who is the tallest of all. The context is not additive here and the use of *hattā* is still felicitous. This, I argue, is because this particle is not specified for additivity. Otherwise, if *hattā* had an additive component, the utterance in A should have been odd, just like in English. Once again, this example would indeed be infelicitous in Persian if an additive operator is used:

(21) A': #ye pesare koochooloo *ham* qad-boland-tarin-e  
 a boy-EZ little too height-tall-superlative-is  
 'A young boy, too, is the tallest (player).'

Based on the data here, I argue that *hattā* is a scalar operator in Persian; it triggers a scalar presupposition that makes reference to the unlikelihood, unexpectedness, or surprisingness of its prejacent. Furthermore, *hattā* does not semantically encode additivity.

It should further be pointed out that *hattā* can either precede or follow an NP in Persian. However, this does not affect the felicity of the sentences in (16), (18), and (19) in the given contexts. These examples are felicitous with *hattā* being in postnominal position (see 16', 18', and 19' following) as well, which suggests that *hattā* is not specified for additivity regardless of its syntactic position, unlike English *even*, which encodes an additive presupposition in prenominal syntactic position.



- (16') *bā* *ye* *ostadyār* *hattā* *ezdevāj* *kard*.  
 with a associate professor SCAL marriage did  
 'She married *even* an associate professor.'
- (18') *bist* *hattā* *gereft*.  
 twenty SCAL got  
 'He got *even* a 20.'
- (19') *ye* *pesare* *koochooloo* *hattā* *qad-boland-tarin-e*.  
 a boy-EZ little SCAL height-tall-superlative-is  
 'Even a young boy is the tallest (player).'

### 8.3.1.2 *Ham* is an additive operator

The goal of this section is to show that *ham* is an additive operator in Persian (section 8.3.1.2.1) and that it does not trigger a scalar presupposition (section 8.3.1.2.2), similar to *too* and *also* in English.

#### 8.3.1.2.1 *HAM* IS [ADD]

Intuitively, Persian *ham* triggers the presupposition that some other alternative to its prejacent is true. The use of this operator is felicitous in contexts that satisfy this requirement, like the response in B following.

- (22) Context: There was a swimming competition at school and medals were given to the students who reached the end of the pool before others. Kian and Kaveh were the first to reach the end at the same time. They both won the first title and were given two gold medals.  
 A: Tell me about the competition yesterday!  
 B: *Kiān talā gereft. in dafe, Kāve ham talā gereft.*  
*Kian gold got. this time, Kaveh too gold got.*  
 'Kian won a gold. This time, Kaveh *too* won a gold.'
- Note that the absence of this particle in the same context is not felicitous:  
 (23) B': #*Kiān talā gereft. in dafe, Kāve talā gereft.*  
*Kian gold got, this time, Kaveh gold got.*  
 'Kian won a gold. This time, Kaveh won a gold.'

The response in B' feels weird because it violates the principle of Maximize Presupposition (Heim 1992). According to this principle, if a presupposition is satisfied in a given context, the version of the proposition with the presupposition trigger wins over the version without and is successfully chosen by speakers. Given that the context here satisfies additivity, the response in B is preferred over the one in B' since it involves the presupposition trigger *ham*, which encodes the additive presupposition.

Furthermore, if *ham* is an additive operator in Persian, one would expect a sentence with *ham* to be infelicitous in non-additive contexts. Consider the following example, where the context implies non-additivity:

- (24) Context: There was a swimming competition at school yesterday where three medals (gold, silver, and bronze) were given to the first three students who reached the end of the pool.

- A: Who won the gold medal?  
 B: # Kiān *ham* talā bord.  
 Kian *too* gold won.  
 ‘Kian, *too*, won the gold medal.’

The presence of *ham* would only be allowed if there have been multiple winners of gold, like in the previous context. The sentence here is odd because it presupposes that there have been some other person(s) who has won the gold, which is not the case.

In summary, I argue that *ham* is an additive operator in Persian. First, there is a strong intuition that *ham* has to be used where additivity is satisfied in context. This I take to be in accord with the principle of Maximize Presupposition. Second, a sentence with *ham* cannot be used in non-additive contexts. This is due to the clash between the additive presupposition triggered by *ham* and the non-additivity of the context.

So far in this section, I have shown that *ham* is [ADD]. But this does not rule out the possibility of it having a scalar component in its meaning. In the following, I will show that *ham* does not have a scalar component in its lexical meaning.

#### 8.3.1.2.2 HAM IS NOT SPECIFIED FOR SCALARITY

If *ham* had a scalar component, its use should be incompatible with a context where scalarity is not satisfied; i.e. where the prejacent is not the least likely proposition. Consider the following examples:

- (25) Context: A number of linguists including Rosa, our only syntactician, met in the seminar room to discuss some issues in linguistics. Rosa is a renowned syntactician and presumably would know the answer to all of the syntax questions raised. There was a syntax question of which multiple linguists in the room knew the answer. Ash knew the answer, Dan knew the answer, . . .
- |      |            |            |              |            |
|------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| rozā | <i>ham</i> | javāb-e    | soāl-o       | midoonest. |
| Rosa | <i>too</i> | answer-GEN | question-ACC | knew       |
- ‘Rosa, *too*, knew the answer.’

Here, Rosa is assumed to be the most likely person to know the answer to the syntax question. If *ham* had a scalar component, The Persian sentence here should have felt as odd as the English one with *even*. Felicity of the use of *ham* in this example shows that this operator does not have a presupposition inconsistent with the non-scalar context. In other words, *ham* does not have a scalar meaning.

Likewise in the following, given the non-scalar context in (26) which suggests that Iran is one of the biggest producers of oil, the use of *ham* does not yield infelicity. This I believe shows that this item is not specified for scalarity.

- (26) Context: Middle-eastern countries, particularly the ones around the Persian Gulf, produce the majority of the world’s oil. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq export oil. . . .
- |      |            |      |        |         |
|------|------------|------|--------|---------|
| Irān | <i>ham</i> | naft | sāder  | mikone. |
| Iran | <i>too</i> | oil  | export | does    |
- ‘Iran, *too*, exports oil.’

Note that in an NP-*ham* string, the presence of a particular prosody invokes a scalar interpretation. This prosodic effect, where the main prominence falls on the NP associate and *ham* is de-accented, invokes a scalar meaning where the associate is placed low on a likelihood scale. In examples such as (25) and (26), for instance, this prosodic effect leads to implication of funny/sarcastic assumptions about the focus associate by placing them low on a likelihood scale, which is contrary to reality.

To sum up, I argued in this section that *ham* is an additive operator in Persian. It triggers the presupposition that at least one other alternative to the prejacent has to be true. In addition, I showed that *ham* is not specified for scalarity. If it had a scalar component, the examples given previously should have been odd in Persian, just like in English where the scalarity of *even* yields infelicity.

### 8.3.1.3 Hattā -NP-*ham* encodes scalarity and additivity; [SCAL,ADD]

In section 8.3.1.1, I showed that *hattā* is a scalar focus-sensitive item in Persian. In 8.3.1.2, I argued that *ham* is an additive particle. In this section, I will show that when these two particles associate with an NP, in a string of *hattā* -NP-*ham* or NP-*ham*-*hattā*, they compose semantically, and as a result, the combination of *hattā* and *ham*, in either word order,<sup>13</sup> makes the semantic contribution that pronominal *even* does in English.

In the following, I will show that when used together, *hattā* and *ham* can only appear in scalar additive contexts (27). If either presupposition or both is not satisfied, in other words, if the context is either scalar non-additive (28) or non-scalar additive (29), or non-scalar non-additive (30), the use of *hattā* -NP-*ham* yields infelicity.

#### (27) Scalar additive context

Context: Amir is not a good friend and hasn't been talking to us for many years. No one expected him to show up at last night's party.

A: Last night's party was very busy.

- |    |                       |            |            |        |       |
|----|-----------------------|------------|------------|--------|-------|
| a: | <i>hattā</i>          | amir       | <i>ham</i> | oomade | bood. |
|    | even                  | Amir       | too        | come   | was   |
|    | 'Even Amir had come.' |            |            |        |       |
| b: | # <i>hattā</i>        | amir       | oomade     | bood.  |       |
|    | even                  | Amir       | come       | was    |       |
| c: | #amir                 | <i>ham</i> | oomade     | bood.  |       |
|    | Amir                  | <i>too</i> | come       | was    |       |
| d: | # amir                | oomade     | bood.      |        |       |
|    | Amir                  | come       | was        |        |       |

This given context makes Amir having come to the party the most unexpected among the other propositions. In addition, the context satisfies additivity in that multiple people have gone to the party. Maximize Presupposition would predict that the presence of the two operators, *hattā* and *ham*, as shown in (a), should win over their absence in this context, as shown in (b–d). Since the use of *hattā* -NP-*ham* is felicitous in scalar and additive contexts like here, I argue that in this string *hattā* and *ham* separately contribute their specifications for scalarity and additivity, respectively. *Hattā* contributes [SCAL] and *ham* contributes [ADD], and these components compose semantically.

The use of this combination is expected to yield infelicity in contexts that fail to satisfy either of the components:

(28) Scalar non-additive context

Context: Claire is not a highly educated person and also never wanted to marry a highly educated person. But to everyone's surprise, she married someone who teaches at university.

# *hattā*    *bā*    *ye*    *ostādyār*                      *ham*    *ezdevāj kard*.  
 even    with    an    associate professor    too    marriage did  
 'She married even an associate professor.'

The context here satisfies scalarity; for Claire, it is very unlikely to have married an academic person. In addition, this context implies uniqueness – marrying only one person. Hence, the presence of an additive operator would trigger an additive presupposition that is in conflict with the uniqueness presupposition and yields infelicity.

Now, assume that the context does not satisfy scalarity but does imply additivity.

(29) Non-scalar additive context

Context: A number of linguists including Rosa, our only syntactician, met in the seminar room to discuss some issues in linguistics. Rosa is a renowned syntactician and presumably would know the answer to all of the syntax questions raised. There was a syntax question of which multiple linguists in the room knew the answer. Ash knew the answer, Dan knew the answer, . . .

# *hattā*    *rozā*    *ham*    *javāb-e*                      *soāl-o*                      *midoonest*.  
 Even        Rosa    too    answer-GEN    question-ACC    knew  
 'Even Rosa knew the answer.'

Here, multiple people have had the answer; therefore, the context satisfies additivity. The presence of the scalar operator *hattā*, however, is in conflict with the assumption that Rosa is indeed the most likely person to have known the answer, indicating non-scalarity of the context. Therefore, the presence of *hattā* renders the sentence odd.

(30) Non-scalar non-additive context

Context: Only Alex scored a goal in the game. The speaker doesn't know anything about soccer players.

# *hattā*    *aleks*    *ham*    *gol*    *zad*.  
 even        Alex    too    goal    hit  
 'Even Alex scored a goal.'

The context here ensures that one goal has been scored; therefore, the presence of the additive operator *ham* is infelicitous. In addition, the context is non-scalar: it is not the case that Alex is the least likely person to have score given the absence of a salient scale, the speaker does not know about players. Therefore, the use of the scalar item *hattā* is not licensed by the context, as well. The whole assertion is, therefore, odd because neither presupposition is satisfied in the context.

The goal of this section was to present an analysis of how the scalar and additive presuppositions of *even* are triggered in Persian using the features [SCAL] and [ADD] as inspired by Crnič's decompositional theory of *even* in English. I showed that in Persian:

- i) *Hattā* is specified for scalarity but does not encode additivity. Therefore, I will assume that *hattā* has the following feature representation: [SCAL]

- ii) *Ham* is an additive operator in Persian. It is not specified for scalarity and encodes an additive presupposition only: [ADD]
- iii) *Hattā* -NP-*ham* is a string in which *hattā* and *ham* contribute their specifications for scalarity and additivity, respectively: [SCAL,ADD]. *Hattā* contributes [SCAL] and *ham* contributes [ADD] in this string. The combination is only felicitous if both presuppositions are satisfied in the given context.

### 8.3.2 Summary

In this section, I described the theoretical background I am assuming in the present research for an investigation of the second language acquisition of scalar and additive focus-sensitive presupposition triggers in Persian. The problem space of the current study is restricted to English *even* in two syntactic positions for which the following feature representations are adapted:

- 1 Prenominal *even* [SCAL,ADD]
- 2 Postnominal *even* [SCAL]

Second, this research concerns the second language acquisition of the Persian lexical items responsible for the realization of the previous presuppositions:

- 1 *hattā* -*ham* [SCAL,ADD]
- 2 *hattā* [SCAL]

The next section will present a review of the second language acquisition theory tested in this study, the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis of Lardiere (2005, 2008, 2009, and subsequent work), and in particular in relation to the acquisition of semantic features.

## 8.4 Theories of second language acquisition

The current study was designed as an investigation of the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis (FRH) (Lardiere 2005, 2008, 2009, and subsequent work). The FRH assumes two stages in L2 acquisition: first, the *mapping* stage, which involves a one-to-one mapping of L1 feature sets onto those of the L2, and second, the *reassembly* stage, during which L2 learners reconfigure/reassemble their L1 feature matrices based on those of the L2. The reassembly stage is predicted to be hard for L2 learners, if the L2 differs from the L1 in the corresponding feature specifications. The focus of the present research is on investigating what is involved in the stages of feature mapping and reassembly and the learner tasks in each stage in acquisition and what the sources of complication and difficulty in L2 acquisition could in principle be. This study will build up on the implementation of the FRH as per the proposals of Slabakova (2009) and Cho and Slabakova (2014, 2015), where the FRH has been characterized in a more detailed way.

### 8.4.1 The Feature Reassembly Hypothesis

Research in second language acquisition has shown that some of the systematic errors that second language learners make can be attributed to the influence of their native language (L1 transfer). Lardiere's (2005, 2007b, 2008, 2009) Feature Reassembly Hypothesis suggests, following in the steps of the Full Transfer Full Access Hypothesis (White 1985), that second

language learners bring to the acquisition task a system of formal features that are already assembled into their L1 lexical items. The task of acquisition, under her view, consists of two main mechanisms or stages: ‘mapping’ and ‘reassembly’ of formal features. Second language learners start off by an initial mapping between the feature sets from their L1 onto feature matrices of the L2, followed by reassembly of features where differences exist between the L1 and the configurations in the L2. According to this theory, feature reassembly is predicted to be particularly difficult in cases where the target features exist in the L1 but are configured differently from the L2. The two stages of ‘mapping’ and ‘reassembly’ that are intended to explain the learning tasks of the second language learner, according to the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis, are described in the following.

#### *8.4.1.1 Feature mapping*

Initially, L2 learners, who bring to the SLA process a system of formal feature bundles already assembled into their L1 lexical items, establish a direct mapping between L1 and L2 forms. Second language learners “look for morpho-lexical correspondences in the L2 to those in their L1, presumably on the basis of semantic meaning or grammatical function (the phonetic matrices will obviously differ)” (Lardiere 2009, 191). In other words, as stated by Cho and Slabakova (2015, 13), “the first step in L2 acquisition is mapping based on similarities between the functional meanings of the target morphemes and those of the L1 morphemes”.

#### *8.4.1.2 Feature reassembly*

When feature mapping fails, that is, if the feature specifications in the target language do not coincide with those of the L1, second language learners will need to reassemble the configurations that they transfer from their L1. The task of the second language acquirer is to monitor the L2 input and accordingly modify and revise the L1 feature representations by deleting or adding features; hence, feature reassembly. Feature reassembly can be conceptualized as a process of assembling L2 feature sets based on L1 feature bundles and their formal contrasts with the L2 input.

Lardiere’s theory posits that ultimately all features, regardless of interpretability, are in principle acquirable. However, the process of feature reassembly “may be slow to occur or may not occur at all if the relevant evidence for the formal or semantic feature is rare or contradictory in the linguistic input” (Cho and Slabakova 2014).

In addition to the challenging process of dissociating and/or adding certain features, Lardiere (2009) argues that the mechanism of feature reassembly involves figuring out “the contexts in which [a particular form] can or cannot or must appear and restrictions on its use must all be painstakingly acquired and are part of the learner’s developing morphological competence” (Lardiere 2008, 236). The L2 learner in the process of feature reassembly, therefore, confronts the taxing task of not only reconfiguring their L1 feature representations into those of the L2 but also figuring out under which language-specific contexts and conditions those features are lexicalized in the L2. These could in principle pose tremendous challenges to the second language acquirer and, in principle, hinder the process of second language acquisition.

### **8.4.2 SLA development within the FRH**

White (2009) raises a question about the predictive power of the FRH, in particular, whether the FRH can predict in advance which features or feature combinations are in principle more

difficult for L2 learners based on the kind of feature reassembly involved. While this is a legitimate question, as noted by Lardiere (2009, 420), to investigate within the FRH proposal, not much work in the literature has been devoted to this domain. Slabakova (2009), Cho and Slabakova (2014), and Cho and Slabakova (2015), however, have offered significant development in this domain. The current study wishes to pursue the same goal of providing further development as to how the predictions of the FRH can be implemented in SLA.

Cho and Slabakova (2015) investigate the acquisition of specificity in L2 Russian by L1 Korean and English speakers. Russian *kakoj-to*, English *some*, and Korean *otteon* share the same feature specifications with respect to the semantics of specificity: [-definite, -referential, +specific]. Therefore, the acquisition task is predicted to be easy for both learner groups since presumably no reassembly is required. The corresponding lexical items to the earlier-given feature matrix should be easily detectable in the L2 input and learned with not much or even no difficulty quite early on. In addition to *kakoj-to*, Russian lexicalizes the feature set [-definite, -referential, -specific] into *kakoj-nibud*. This feature set is not morphologically realized in the two L1s in this study, Korean and English. The learning task, therefore, for the Korean and English L2 learners of Russian would have to involve feature reassembly of their most similar L1 configurations to the target feature set, i.e., the representation corresponding to the Russian *kakoj-to* ([-definite, -referential, +specific]), into the target feature set for *kakoj-nibud*: [-definite, -referential, -specific]. As such, the L2 acquisition of *kakoj-nibud* would be predicted to be more challenging and difficult to the learners than *kakoj-to*.

The authors compared the acquisition of *kakoj-to*, which would involve only the mapping stage, with that of *kakoj-nibud*, which would involve reconfiguration from the L1 feature sets for the closest representations (of *otteon* and *some*) onto the target L2 feature set. Their results suggest that although overall the acquisition of Russian indefinite determiners was not difficult, *kakoj-to* was “the more easily mapped determiner”; both learner groups successfully accepted this determiner in specific contexts. In non-specific contexts, however, the authors noted a delay in acquisition, which they attribute to the reassembly of the feature configurations involved in the acquisition of this determiner. The authors conclude that whether or not feature reassembly is required in second language acquisition is a significant factor to consider.

Cho and Slabakova (2014) present a substantial development to Lardiere’s FRH by identifying factors that should be considered in the investigation of the learning tasks of L2 learners in the process of feature reassembly. They provide a classification of features and, more importantly for our goals in this study, of feature encoding options that are available to learners cross-linguistically. This classification helps us to better understand what idiosyncratic strategies various languages use to express universal semantic concepts. Further, one could empirically describe the L2 learners’ acquisition tasks by considering the encoding systems used for semantic concepts in their L1 and L2.

Cho and Slabakova suggest, following Ramchand and Svenonius (2008) and building up on Slabakova (2009), that feature expressions are either ‘overt’ or ‘covert’; a feature is ‘overtly’ expressed if it is encoded by dedicated morphology in a language. An example would be the realization of [past] in English through the overt morpheme ‘-ed’. On the other hand, some features are expressed ‘covertly’; a feature is ‘covert’ if its value needs to be supplied by context (e.g. past tense in Chinese, which is signalled by the use of adverbs such as *yesterday*, *last week*) or if syntactic movements and word order changes (e.g. word order changes to encode information structure) are required to signal them. Furthermore, features can be expressed ‘directly’ or ‘indirectly’. If a feature provides the primary meaning of a morpheme (e.g. *a* for indefinite and *the* for definite interpretations in English), it is realized ‘directly’; it directly maps a semantic feature to a morphological expression. On the other hand, some other features

are encoded in expressions in addition to some primary meaning, hence ‘indirect’ mapping of a feature to an expression (e.g. demonstratives like *this* which indirectly signal definiteness).

Cho and Slabakova (2014) investigate the second language acquisition of expressions of definiteness in L2 Russian by two L2 groups: Korean and English speakers. The focus of the study is on two means that Russian<sup>14</sup> uses for the expression of definiteness. One is through its possessor system and the other one is through word order: Russian uses possessor modifiers (adjectival for indefinite and nominal for definite interpretations) and word order to encode definiteness. In other words, definiteness is marked either overtly and directly by possessor modifiers or covertly and indirectly through word order changes. English has overt and direct morphology for the semantic property in question (*a* for indefinite and *the* for definite). Korean, on the other hand, like Russian, does not mark definiteness morphologically by the use of articles. Korean partially shares the possessor system of definiteness expression with Russian. Possessor modifiers are all nominal and the difference in interpretation with respect to definiteness is signalled by case-marking (nominative vs. genitive) as well as word order.

The two L2 groups, Korean and English L2 learners of Russian, participated in an offline felicity judgment task. The authors first focus on the acquisition of the first means of definiteness expression in Russian; through the possessor system. Results from this study indicate that the Korean group was more accurate in acquiring definiteness marked through the possessor system than the English group since both Korean and Russian use the indirect expression of definiteness in possessors. The authors, therefore, conclude that the learning task must be more difficult when the property in question is expressed directly in the L1 (English) and indirectly in the L2 (Russian). In other words, the authors claim that it must be more challenging to acquire a feature when it is expressed overtly in the L1 but covertly in the L2 than when a feature is expressed indirectly in both L1 and L2 (Korean and Russian).

They further test the acquisition of definiteness expressed through word order changes. Although both Korean and Russian use word order to signal the different interpretations related to definiteness (indirect and covert expression), results of this study show that the English group is more successful in acquiring the word order effects in Russian than is the Korean group. Korean learners, even the advanced group, did not perform target-like. The authors attribute the Korean group’s low success rate in the acquisition of word order effects in Russian to the fact that the learning of the *conditions* licensing word order changes, conditions necessitating reassembly, must have been more difficult for them, hence more complicated and taxing. They conclude from this finding that the biggest challenge in the acquisition task is to reconfigure an indirectly and covertly encoded feature in both the L1 and L2 when it necessitates reassembly.

In summary, Cho and Slabakova (2014) develop the learning model introduced by Lardiere’s FRH further by introducing significant factors involved in L2 acquisition. These factors represent useful distinctions in terms of ‘overt’ versus ‘covert’ and ‘direct’ versus ‘indirect’ mapping of semantic features onto morphological expressions, distinctions that help illustrate the sources of difficulty in L2 acquisition, a question addressed in the present research. In the following is a summary of the main points that can be concluded from their research on the ‘reassembly’ stage of Lardiere’s FRH.

First, whether or not reassembly is required is an important question to address in second language acquisition research. Phenomena that involve reassembly of L1 feature sets into those of the L2 are more taxing on learners than are situations that involve simple mapping of L1 to L2 morphemes. Second, overt versus covert encoding of features plays an important role in the complication of the acquisition situation; it is more challenging to acquire a feature that is encoded overtly in the L1 (English system for definiteness) but covertly in the L2 (Russian



possessor system) than when a feature is expressed indirectly in both L1 and L2 (Korean and Russian use of possessors). Third, second language acquisition is most arduous if a feature is expressed indirectly and covertly in both L1 and L2 but reassembly is required, as evidenced by the case of the acquisition of word order effects on definiteness by Korean learners of Russian.

### 8.4.3 Application of the FRH in the present research

The present chapter seeks to establish if and how the two stages in L2 acquisition, ‘mapping’ and ‘feature reassembly’, as proposed within the FRH, can explain the acquisition of semantic representations of the additive presupposition of English *even* in L2 Persian. In other words, the research goal of the study is to identify the sources of the predicted difficulty in the L2 acquisition of the semantics of *hattā*, *ham*, and *hattā-ham* within the framework of the FRH. As discussed in this section, the process of L2 acquisition is hindered when L2 learners have to figure out feature representation dissimilarities between the L1 and the L2 configurations. Additionally, feature reassembly is predicted to be successful if L2 learners have been exposed to sufficient positive input. In principle, therefore, advanced L2 learners should be able to overcome such difficulty and successfully reassemble into L2 configurations. If feature reassembly is not successful, however, even in highly proficient L2 learners, then the question is what is it at the heart of the reassembly process that makes the acquisition task so arduous? Is it the nature of the feature that makes the acquisition task hard? Is it the means of the feature expression that is hard to integrate into the acquisition task? Is it the L1 lingering effects that (continue to) obstruct feature reassembly? The experimental study reported here will address these questions. Specifically, the study will set out to explore the L2 acquisition of overt and direct features by addressing the following question: are English L2 learners of Persian able to acquire the L2 direct and overt expression of ADD by overcoming their L1 covert and indirect expression of this feature?

To investigate these questions within the FRH, I will assume the following featural assumptions about the means of feature expression as proposed by Cho and Slabakova (2014, 2015):

- i) [SCAL] in English is expressed through dedicated morphology, overtly. I will also assume that this feature is directly expressed by the lexical item *even* because expression of unlikelihood (surprise or unexpectedness) is the primary function of this particle.
- ii) [ADD] in English is constrained by word order. When in prenominal position, [ADD] is morphologically encoded in *even*. Therefore, the expression of this feature is covert. In addition, since the primary function of *even* is not the expression of additivity, I assume that [ADD] is indirectly encoded in *even*.
- iii) [SCAL] in Persian is expressed overtly and directly by the lexical item *hattā*.
- iv) [ADD] in Persian is expressed overtly and directly by the lexical item *ham*.

The table following summarizes these assumptions.

Table 8.1 Expression of [SCAL] and [ADD] in scalar additive contexts in English and Persian

	<i>English</i>	<i>Persian</i>
[SCAL]	overtly, directly	overtly, directly
[ADD]	covertly, indirectly	overtly, directly

The experimental study, results, analysis, and conclusions will be presented in the next section.

## 8.5 The study

### 8.5.1 Participants

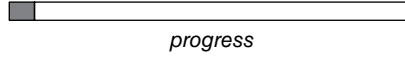
Forty-two native speakers of Persian were tested as the Persian control group (N=42). These participants resided in Iran and with the exception of one person who was a bilingual speaker of Persian and Kurdish, all had Persian as their only L1. A group of 40 NSs of English were also hired for the English NS control group (N=40). These participants were from Canada, the U.K., and the U.S. Ten out of these 40 participants were L2 learners of Persian. This group was tested as the experimental L2 group (N=10). Their only first language was English. All participants received remuneration for their participation. The L2 learners of Persian completed an online proficiency test of Persian, adapted from the McGill Islamic Institute Persian Placement Test.<sup>15</sup> Based on the scores obtained, participants were then divided into two proficiency groups, intermediate (N=4) and advanced (N=6).

### 8.5.2 Methodology

The Persian NSs did three experiments on Persian. The English native speakers who were not L2 learners of Persian only did the two L1 English experiments. The L2 learners (N=10) completed five experiments: three on English and two on Persian. These online experiments were scheduled at different sessions that were a minimum of 24 hours distant from one another. Each experiment was expected to take from 20 to 30 minutes on average.

### 8.5.3 Tasks

The study consisted of felicity judgment tasks. The test items were randomized and presented to the participants in both written and audio forms. Each test item comprised a short context that the participants were asked to read first. After reading the story, the participants had to press a button to play the recording of that short story followed by an ‘additional remark’ that appeared on the screen. The rationale behind creating audio stimuli was to control for any prosodic effects that could potentially result in a difference in interpretation given that a variation in prosody can sometimes trigger a specific presupposition in both languages of interest. The goal of this study was to investigate the acquisition of *lexical* presupposition triggers regardless of effects of prosody. The additional remark was a sentence fragment or a full sentence (non-fragment)<sup>16</sup> that appeared on the screen in written form as the speaker in the audio reached the end of the context and appeared simultaneously with the recording of it. This was to ensure a natural flow from the end of the context to the additional remark. Once the audio-visual presentation of the test item was finished, a Likert scale appeared on the screen that asked the participants to rate the naturalness of the additional remark given the story that preceded it. The scale was from 1 to 7, where 1 was to indicate a *completely unnatural* additional remark and 7 indicated *completely natural*. They were also given the option of choosing *I don't know* if they did not have any intuition about the naturalness of the additional remark. Once they hit a button on the scale, they were directed to the next item and were not able to go back to a previous item or change their response. A screen shot of a test item from the study is shown in the figure following.



Read the passage below carefully:

I took one course last semester. The final exam for that course was extremely difficult. I was really worried I would fail. But I actually got a good grade on the final.

Click here when you're ready to listen to the story with the additional remark

Even an A+.

Please rate how natural the final remark was given the preceding story

completely unnatural  1  2  3  4  5  6  7 completely natural

I don't know

Figure 8.1 Test item from the English experiment. Condition *non-additive context, prenominal even, NoToo*.

Participants could not skip test items without providing an answer (which could be *I don't know* if they decided they had no intuition).

### 8.5.4 Design

The factors manipulated in the design of the experiments reported in the present chapter are the following.

- (1) L1: Persian or English
- (2) group: intermediate or advanced
- (3) context: additive or non-additive
- (4) presenceToo: Too or NoToo
- (5) syntax: prenominal or postnominal or VP (only for the English non-fragment experiment)

First was *L1*; participants in this study were either native speakers of *Persian* or *English*. Second, the variable *group* was included with two levels based on proficiency level in the corresponding L2: *intermediate* and *advanced*. This allowed an analysis of the two stages of acquisition: mapping, which occurs at earlier stages, and reassembly, which occurs at more advanced stages in L2 acquisition.

In designing the context stories, nine different themes (for example, *exam grade*) were considered, and two stories were written for each theme (thus 18 contexts in total, see Appendix B for test items): one that was compatible with an additive presupposition in the target sentence and one that was incompatible with an additive presupposition. For instance, for the '*exam grade*' theme of the story in figure (stimulus shown in Figure 8.1, which implied a non-additive context). There was also an additive version, as follows: "I took many courses

last semester. The final exams were extremely difficult. I was really worried I would fail the semester. But I actually got some good grades.” Notice that for the Persian L1 and L2 experiments, the same test items were presented to the participant in Persian. The stories were the same across all experiments and were translated from English to Persian with very slight modifications, where necessary. The contexts ensured that the presence of the scalar presupposition (scalarity [SCAL]) was kept constant across all test items; all contexts were constructed with the assumption that the prejacent of the presupposition trigger is the least likely/most unexpected proposition in the set of pertinent alternative propositions. This guaranteed that the use of *hattā* and *even* was licensed throughout the study. In the examples mentioned previously, for instance, the fact that the final exam was extremely difficult implies that an A+ is a very unlikely grade to get, perhaps the least likely one. Additionally, as discussed previously, the contexts were constructed in such a way that the additive presupposition was either satisfied or not; hence the two levels *additive* (where truth of an alternative presupposition is fine) and *non-additive* (where truth of an alternative presupposition would create a presupposition clash). The context given earlier, for instance, ensures that only one grade could have been obtained, given the speaker took only one course (and that the grade was obtained in the final exam), hence uniqueness – an additive presupposition should lead to infelicity. After reading the context and making sure they were familiar with it, the participants had to click on the audio button to listen to the recorded version of the story, which was then followed by an additional remark.

The next variable was based on the lexical manipulations of interest in the additional remarks: First, presence or absence of the additive operators *too* and *ham* in English and Persian (*presenceToo*). Two levels were associated with this factor: *Too* and *NoToo*. The *Too* condition was associated with strings where an additive operator was used in combination with *even* or *hattā*. For instance, the additional remark for the example in figure (8.1) was “Even an A+, too” or “I got even an A+, too” in the non-fragment version. The *NoToo* condition included only *even* or *hattā*; e.g. “Even an A+” or “I got even an A+”.

Lastly, the *syntax* of focus association was a factor of interest that had two levels: *prenominal* placement and *postnominal* placement.

In summary, each of the two Persian and English experiments included eight experimental conditions: *context*, *presenceToo*, *syntax*. There were, therefore, 72 items in each experiment (2\*2\*2 conditions \* 9 stories).

### 8.5.5 Results

In this section, results of the felicity judgment tasks will be presented in the following way: First, I will present the English NS results as the baseline to compare their performance in the L2. Second, the Persian NS results will be analyzed. Subsequently, results from how the L1 English L2 learners of Persian perform on the tasks will be reported. Results of the experiments in this study were analyzed using mixed-effects linear regression models, fitted using the *lmer* function from the *lme4* package (Douglas, Martin, Ben and Steve 2015) in R. The participants’ responses were modelled as a function of a number of fixed variables. The fixed effects are *context*, *syntax*, *presenceToo*, and proficiency *group*. Two- (and three)-way interactions between the fixed effects related to my research questions were also added, which will be introduced and discussed in the relevant results sections. The models also included *by-item* and *by-participant* random intercepts for the fixed effects to account for variability in the participants and items beyond the effects of the variables included in the models.

To remind the readers, the presuppositional contribution of the focus-sensitive presupposition triggers in this study are operationalized in terms of the semantic features [SCAL] and [ADD]. In addition, the research questions of this study concern expression of [ADD] in the L2, i.e. how and whether L2 learners are able to acquire the expression/encoding of these features in their L2. In FRH terms, the question will be whether L2 learners are able to reassemble/reconfigure their L1 feature representations into those of the L2. Note again that in the experiments here, [SCAL] is always satisfied in the given contexts and as such all experimental items include *even* and *hattā*.

### 8.5.5.1 Native speakers of English

Figure 8.2 illustrates the results of the felicity judgment tasks for the English NSs. The data is faceted by *syntax* (*prenominal even* on the left and *postnominal even* on the right), *context* (the contexts where additivity is satisfied are shown to the left of the *non-additive* contexts), and *presenceToo* (the presence vs. absence of *too*, the English additive operator; top row of the plot illustrates the *NoToo* condition where *even* used alone and the bottom row plots the data where *even-too* combinations were used).

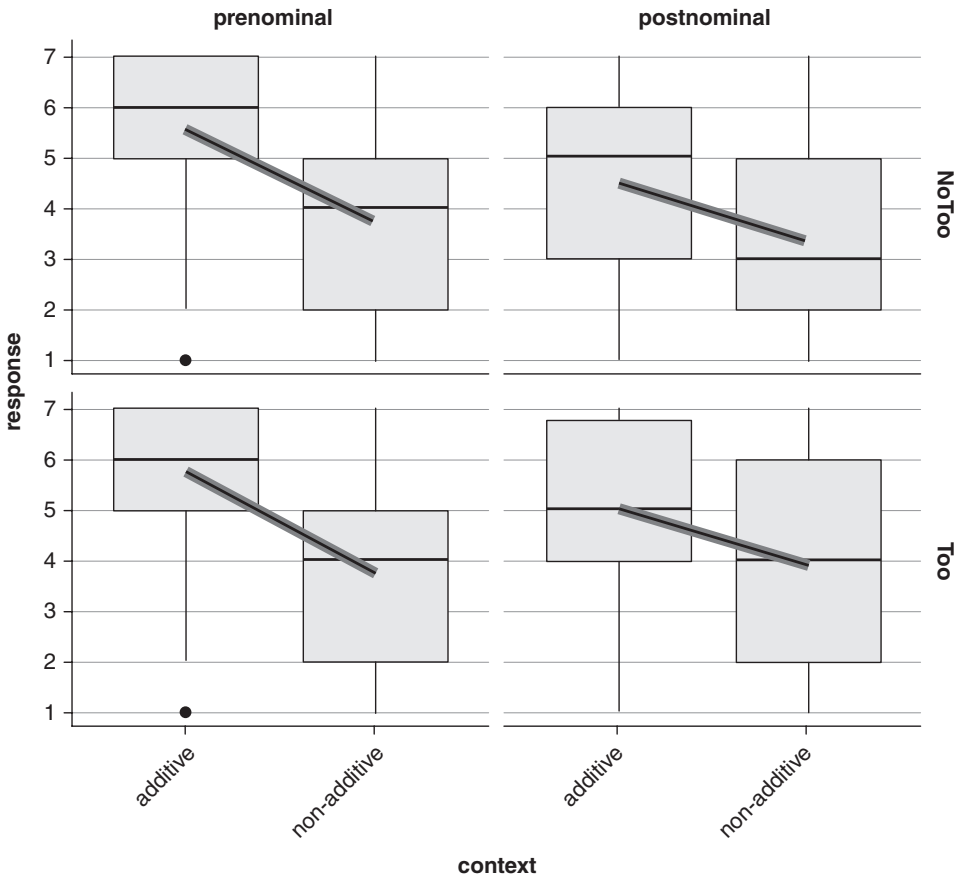


Figure 8.2 Felicity rating for the NSs of English by *syntax*, *context*, *presenceToo*.

Table 8.2 Summary of effects of *syntax*, *context*, *presenceToo*, and their interactions data: felicity rating from English NSs

	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Pr(&gt; t )</i>
<i>syntax</i>	0.70318	0.06662	4894.00000	10.556	< 2e-16 ***
<i>context</i>	-1.66279	0.05181	4886.00000	-32.093	< 2e-16 ***
<i>presenceToo</i>	0.21363	0.05213	4899.00000	4.098	4.24e-05 ***
<b><i>syntax:context</i></b>	-1.07255	0.13167	4886.00000	-8.146	4.44e-16 ***
<b><i>context:presenceToo</i></b>	-0.14092	0.10364	4886.00000	-1.360	0.1740
<i>syntax:presenceToo</i>	-0.56641	0.13187	4888.00000	-4.295	1.78e-05 ***
<i>syntax:context:presenceToo</i>	-0.45040	0.26335	4886.00000	-1.710	0.0873

Table 8.2 summarizes the results of the mixed-effects linear regression model fitted with fixed effects for *syntax*, *context*, *presenceToo*, and their interactions used to analyze the data from the English NSs.

As the plot illustrates, there is a main effect of *syntax* suggesting that overall, NSs prefer the use of *even* in *prenominal* position rather than *postnominal*. This is not surprising since *even* does in most uses appear prenominally. In addition, the results indicate a main effect of *context* suggesting that NSs prefer the presence of *even* in *additive* contexts rather than *non-additive* contexts which are admittedly much less frequent in general. The results also show a main effect for *presenceToo*, indicating an overall higher rating for preference of *too* in combination with *even* that is not in line with overall reported NS intuition. However, the two-way interaction between *presenceToo* and *context* is not significant. This result is surprising because one would plausibly expect that the additivity effect (which, I assume to be signalled by a significant difference between the ratings for the *additive* and *non-additive* contexts) would be significantly larger if an additive operator is present in the structure. Put differently, the presence of the additive operator should in principle be highly accepted in *additive* contexts and largely dispreferred in *non-additive* contexts yielding a large additivity effect. The NS data here, however, suggests that the additivity effect is perceived independently of the presence of *too* in English. The question now is what strategy English uses to signal the additivity effect; what do NSs of English do to encode [ADD] in scalar additive contexts?

To address this question, let us review the predictions for English based on Wagner (2013, 2015). The syntactic analysis would predict that if *even*, in either syntactic position, encodes an additive meaning in its semantics, it should then be incompatible with a non-additive context; in a context where the additive presupposition is not satisfied. In other words, if there is a syntactic position where the use of *even* is acceptable in additive contexts but not felicitous in non-additive contexts, that would mean that *even* has a semantic component which is in contradiction to the non-additivity established in the context, i.e. the additive component [ADD]. Although, as indicated by the direction of the slopes in all of the plots in Figure 8.2, *even* seems to be preferred with an *additive* reading in both *prenominal* and *postnominal* positions (main effect of *context*), the statistical results as reported in Table 8.2 show that the additivity effect is significantly larger in the *prenominal* syntactic position, hence, the significant two-way interaction between *syntax* and *context*. This would mean that *prenominal even* encodes a component in its semantics ([ADD]), which makes its use highly compatible with *additive* and largely incompatible with *non-additive* contexts, leading to a larger additivity effect than the case of *postnominal even*, which is used in both *additive* and *non-additive* contexts.

Note, furthermore, that another prediction based on Wagner (2013, 2015) would be that in *non-additive* contexts, *postnominal even* would be preferred over *prenominal* since it does not have the [ADD] in its semantics. In other words, one would expect *prenominal even* to be highly rejected in *non-additive* contexts, as opposed to *postnominal*, because *prenominal even* presumably encodes [ADD] in its meaning, which should block it from appearing in *non-additive* contexts, while *postnominal* is predicted to not encode [ADD] at all and therefore in principle be compatible with both *additive* and *non-additive* contexts. To test this, the *non-additive* subset of the data was analyzed separately. This subset is plotted in Figure 8.3, where the data is faceted by *syntax* and *presenceToo*. This plot shows that the previously given prediction is borne out: *postnominal even* is the preferred choice in *non-additive* contexts.

To statistically investigate this observation, a statistical model for the *non-additive* condition was fitted with the fixed effect for *syntax*. Table 8.3 summarizes the results. The main effect of *syntax* here shows that *postnominal* is rated significantly higher than *prenominal*,

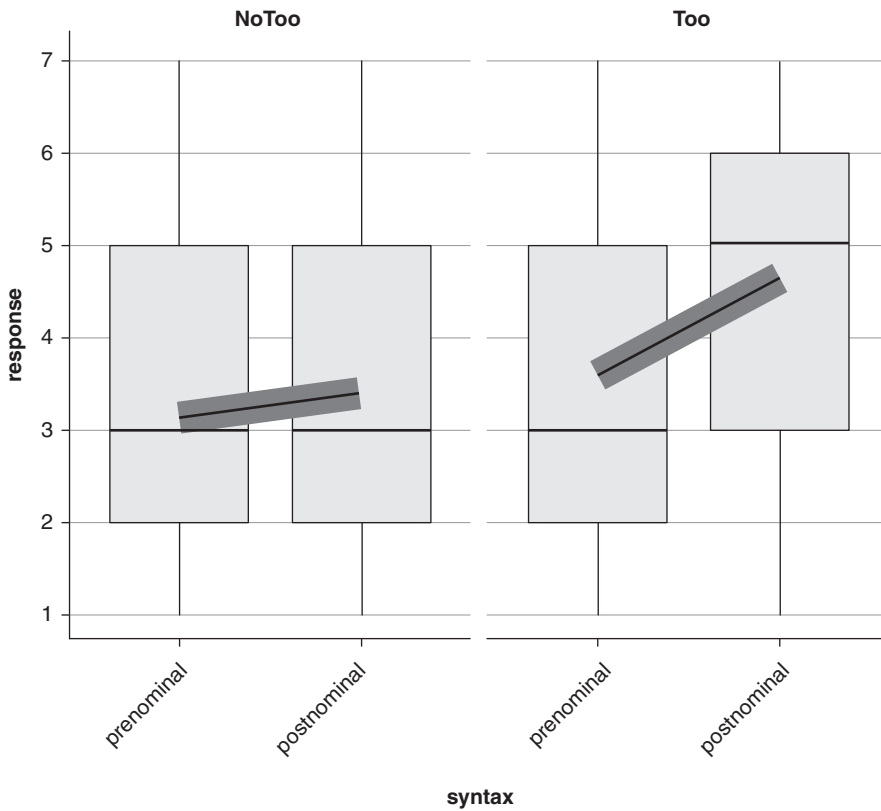


Figure 8.3 English NSs. Felicity rating for the *non-additive* subset of the data by *syntax* and *presenceToo*.

Table 8.3 Summary of effects of *syntax*

data: English NSs. non-additive subset					
	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	Pr(> t )
<b>syntax</b>	-0.9751	0.1328	1201.4000	-7.344	3.80e-13 ***

which confirms the earlier finding that *prenominal even* encodes [ADD], which is not compatible with *non-additive* contexts.

To summarize the results from NSs of English, statistical findings indicate that the additivity effect in English is independent of the presence or absence of the additive operator *too*. In other words, it could be concluded that *too* in combination with *even* does not contribute the semantic feature [ADD]. English must, therefore, use another tool to express [ADD] in contexts that satisfy additivity in order to respect maximize presupposition. This strategy was found to be in line with the prediction made by Wagner's (2013, 2015) syntactic constraint on *even* suggesting that the additivity effect interacts with the syntactic position of *even*. The additivity effect is found to be significantly stronger when *even* is used in *prenominal* position. It could be concluded, consistent with Wagner, that *prenominal even* encodes a semantic component, [ADD], which makes it compatible with *additive* contexts and significantly dispreferred in *non-additive* contexts. Furthermore, it was shown that *postnominal even* is the preferred particle in *non-additive* contexts. *Prenominal even* is dispreferred in such contexts due to the clash between its semantic content [ADD] and the non-additivity of the context.

#### 8.5.5.1.1 ENGLISH NSS: DISCUSSION

The data from the NSs of English shows a significant interaction between the *syntax* of *even* and *context*. In other words, whether or not [ADD] is encoded in scalar *additive* contexts in English is constrained by the syntactic position of this particle: when used in *prenominal* position, [ADD] is encoded in the meaning of *even*. Following the terminology of Cho and Slabakova (2014, 2015), I propose that [ADD] in the meaning of *even* is a covert and indirect feature in English. [ADD] is expressed covertly because its representation is constrained by syntax. Further, it is expressed indirectly because, I assume, it is a secondary semantic function of *even* (the primary being the expression of [SCAL]). Finally, presence of the additive operator is not perceived by NSs of English as signalling [ADD] in their language.

The next section will present the results from the NSs of Persian revealing the patterns in Persian.

#### 8.5.5.2 Native speakers of Persian

The results from the NSs of Persian are plotted in Figure 8.4. The data is divided by *syntax* (*prenominal* vs. *postnominal* position of *hattā* in Persian), *context* (*additive* vs. *non-additive*), as well as *presenceToo* (the presence vs. absence of *ham*, the Persian additive operator in combination with *hattā*: the *Too* condition involves Persian sentences with *ham* vs. the *NoToo* involving sentences lacking *ham*).

Results from the mixed-effects linear regression model fitted with fixed effects for *type*, *syntax*, *context*, *presenceToo*, and their interactions are summarized in Table 8.4.

Overall, the results indicate a main effect for *syntax*, suggesting that *prenominal* position for *hattā* is the preferred syntactic position for this particle. *Non-additive* contexts are overall dispreferred when *hattā* is used, main effect of *context*. This is not surprising assuming that in most uses, *hattā* appears in contexts that satisfy both a scalar presupposition (encoded in *hattā*) and an additive presupposition (encoded in the additive operator *ham*, as will be shown later). Let us now turn to the investigation of the research question about how [ADD] is expressed in Persian.

As the distribution of the data in Figure 8.4 shows, there is a main effect of *presenceToo*. The ratings for the *Too* condition where *ham* has been used in combination with *hattā* is



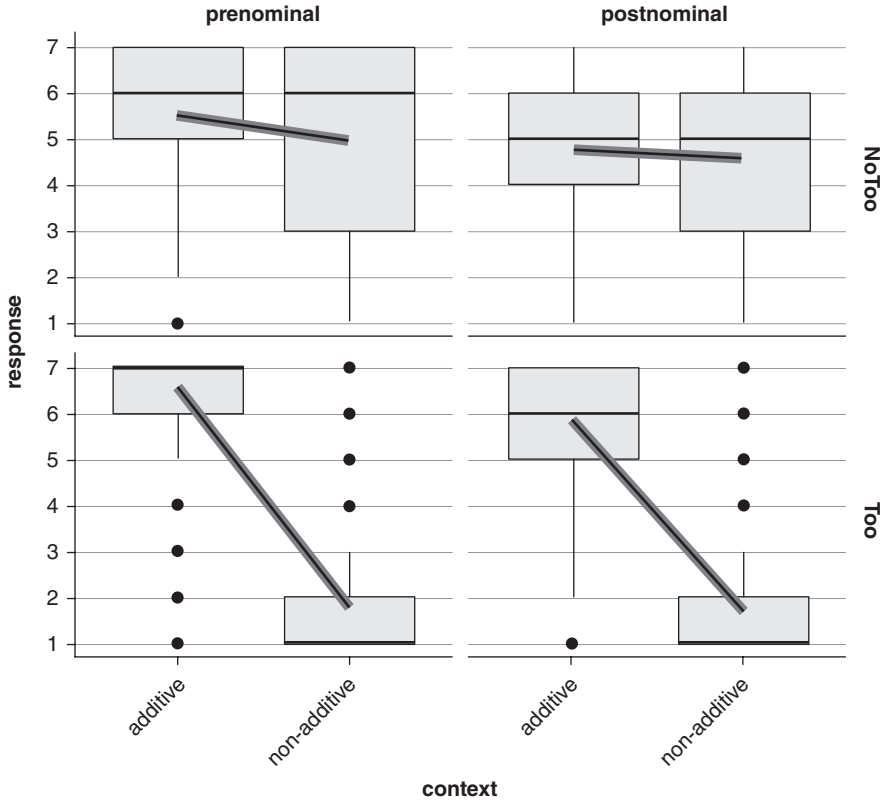


Figure 8.4 Felicity rating for the NSs of Persian by *syntax*, *context*, and *presenceToo*.

Table 8.4 Summary of effects of *syntax*, *context*, *presenceToo*, and their interactions data: felicity rating from Persian NSs

	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Pr(&gt; t )</i>
<b>syntax</b>	0.67119	0.05511	6361.00000	12.179	< 2e-16 ***
<b>context</b>	-2.49164	0.04285	6362.00000	-58.153	< 2e-16 ***
<b>presenceToo</b>	-1.00185	0.04284	6361.00000	-23.383	< 2e-16 ***
<b>syntax:context</b>	0.26350	0.21924	6355.00000	1.202	0.2294
<b>context:presenceToo</b>	-4.06565	0.08568	6361.00000	-47.449	< 2e-16 ***
syntax:presenceToo	-0.18495	0.11021	6361.00000	-1.678	0.0934
syntax:context:presenceToo	-0.42290	0.22042	6361.00000	-1.919	0.0551

overall significantly lower than the *NoToo* condition where *hattā* has been used alone which seems, as seen in Table 8.4, to be due to the occurrence of this particle in non-additive contexts. Crucial to the analysis of the Persian data is that there is a significant interaction between *presenceToo* and *context*. This suggests that the additivity effect (signalled by a significant difference between the ratings for the *additive* and *non-additive* contexts) is significantly greater in the *Too* condition where the additive operator *ham* has been used. In other words, *hattā-ham*

combinations clearly signal the additivity effect to a greater extent than *hattā* when used alone. This would mean that presence of the additive operator in the structure increases the rejection rate for *hattā-ham* combinations in contexts that do not satisfy the additive presupposition, the *non-additive* conditions. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that *ham* encodes a semantic component, namely [ADD], which otherwise is not encoded in *hattā*, and that is why *hattā-ham* ratings are extremely low in *non-additive* contexts while these contexts are highly accepted (not statistically differently from the *additive* contexts, as will be shown later) in the *hattā* conditions.

Another finding is that the two-way interaction between *syntax* and *context* is not statistically significant. The prediction for the NSs of Persian was that *prenominal* and *postnominal* positions of *hattā* would not be different with respect to the additivity effect. Therefore, the *syntax-context* interaction was not expected to come out significant. This prediction is borne out and therefore it could be concluded that the syntax of *hattā* in Persian does not interact with the additivity effect. Since both *prenominal hattā* and *postnominal hattā* are highly accepted in both *additive* and *non-additive* contexts, one conclusion is that *hattā* does not encode [ADD] in its semantic representation in either syntactic position. If it did encode [ADD], one would have expected a high rejection rate in the *non-additive* contexts due to the inconsistency of the presuppositional contribution of [ADD] and the non-additivity of the context.

In summary, the Persian NS results show that in Persian the syntactic position of *hattā* does not interact with the encoding of [ADD]. In other words, Persian NSs happily accept *hattā* in both syntactic positions in *additive* as well as *non-additive* contexts. The strategy used by NSs of Persian for expressing the [ADD] is to use the additive operator *ham* in combination with *hattā* in scalar additive contexts. Since these combinations are rejected in *non-additive* contexts as opposed to *hattā* alone, which is highly accepted in both contexts, one can safely conclude that *ham* contributes an additive component which is in conflict with *non-additive* contexts.

#### 8.5.5.2.1 PERSIAN NSs: DISCUSSION

The Persian NS results confirm the prediction that in this language, [ADD] is expressed by dedicated morphology. This semantic feature is encoded in the lexical meaning of the additive operator *ham*, an overt feature encoding. Further, since the expression of [ADD] is the primary semantic function of *ham*, I propose that this feature is directly encoded by *ham*. In addition, the prediction was borne out that *hattā* does not encode [ADD] because, as the results confirm, its use is felicitous in *non-additive* contexts which are strongly rejected in the case of *hattā-ham* where [ADD] is clearly encoded. Finally, it was expected that the syntactic position of *hattā* does not interact with any significant additivity effect; the results reported here confirm that *hattā* does not encode [ADD] in either *prenominal* or *postnominal* position.

The next section will present results from L1 English L2 learners of Persian.

### 8.5.5.3 L2 Learners of Persian

#### 8.5.5.3.1 L2 LEARNERS OF PERSIAN: RESULTS

Let us now turn to the analysis of the results from the L1 English L2 learners of Persian. Their felicity ratings are plotted in Figure 8.5 following and the statistical results from the model fitted with fixed effects for *syntax*, *context*, *presenceToo*, and *group* (proficiency level; *intermediate* vs. *advanced*), and their interactions are summarized in Table 8.5.

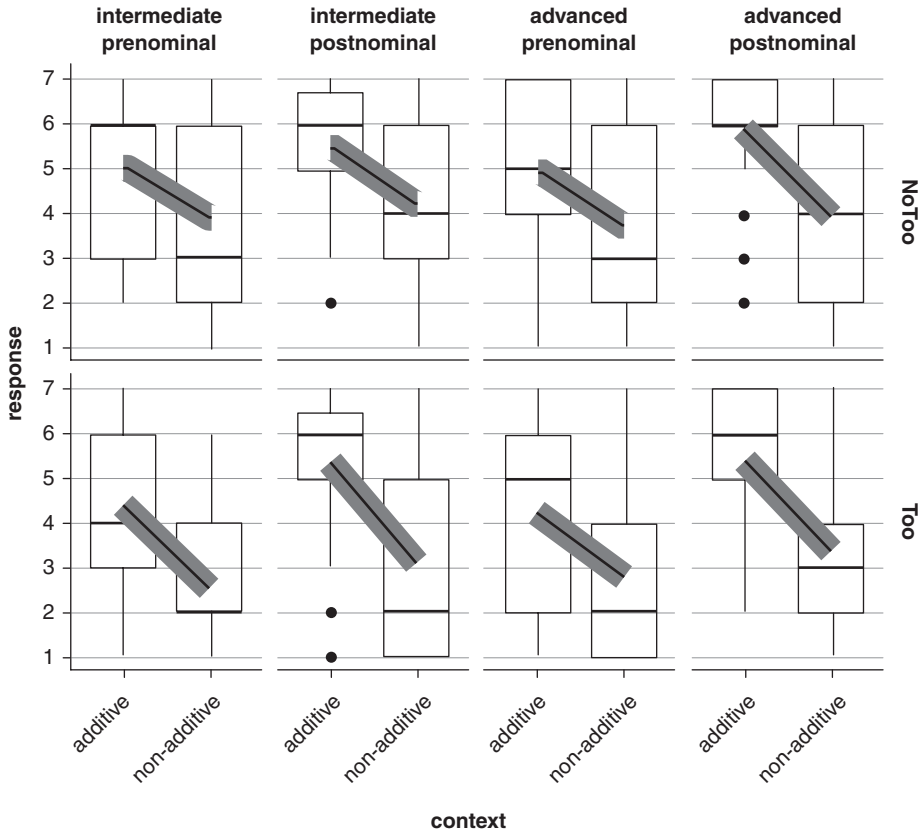


Figure 8.5 Felicity rating for the L2 learners of Persian by group, syntax, context, presenceToo.

Table 8.5 Summary of effects of syntax, context, presenceToo, proficiency group, and their interaction. Data: felicity rating from L2 learners of English.

	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t value	Pr(> t )
syntax	-8.412e-01	1.511e-01	1.339e+03	-5.567	3.13e-08 ***
context	-1.586e+00	1.153e-01	1.334e+03	-13.756	< 2e-16 ***
group	-1.899e-02	6.755e-01	8.100e+00	-0.028	0.97826
presenceToo	-8.396e-01	1.135e-01	1.336e+03	-7.399	2.42e-13 ***
syntax:context	4.975e-01	3.019e-01	1.334e+03	1.648	0.09961.
syntax:group	2.738e-01	3.878e-01	1.332e+03	0.706	0.48022
context:group	-4.739e-02	2.968e-01	1.332e+03	-0.160	0.87316
context:presenceToo	-7.007e-01	2.269e-01	1.334e+03	-3.088	0.00205 **
group:presenceToo	-1.763e-01	2.799e-01	1.332e+03	-0.630	0.52891
syntax:presenceToo	-3.960e-01	2.515e-01	1.339e+03	-1.575	0.11561
<b>syntax:context:group</b>	-8.768e-01	7.755e-01	1.331e+03	-1.131	0.25841
<b>context:group:presenceToo</b>	-1.045e+00	5.598e-01	1.332e+03	-1.866	0.06224.
<b>syntax:context:presenceToo</b>	-6.737e-03	5.026e-01	1.334e+03	-0.013	0.98931

The statistical model with the fixed effects of *syntax*, *context*, *presenceToo*, *group*, and their interactions are summarized in Table 8.5.

The statistical results from the L1 English L2 learners of Persian show main effects of *syntax* and *context*. The acceptance rate for L2 learners of Persian is significantly higher in the *prenominal* syntactic position of *hattā*. There is a main effect of *context* suggesting that *hattā* is preferred in *additive* contexts over *non-additive* contexts. In terms of the expression of [ADD] in Persian, the results show that the interaction between *context*, *presenceToo*, and *group* is not significant, suggesting that the L2 learners do not attribute the additivity effect to the presence of the additive operator *ham* in either proficiency level in Persian. Furthermore, the three-way interaction between *syntax*, *context*, and *group* does not come out significant either, suggesting that these L2 learners do not have a preference for either syntactic position of *hattā* in the L2 for the expression of [ADD]. In other words, the L2 learners in this study do not attribute the expression of [ADD] to either the presence of the additive operator *ham* or to any specific syntactic positioning of *hattā*. Further, the three-way interaction between *syntax*, *context*, and *presenceToo* is not significant. Assuming the overall preference for *additive* contexts in all conditions, I interpret this finding as showing that these L2 learners assume that *hattā* encodes [ADD] in its semantics in all conditions; in other words, they treat this particle as additive across the board. Looking at the plots in Figure 8.5, it is clear that their judgments barely differ across different conditions. While the additivity effect is clearly strong in all the experimental conditions plotted, the L1 English L2 learners of Persian do not attribute this to either the presence of *ham* or to syntactic position. Since the use of *hattā* is accepted in *additive* contexts and disfavored in *non-additive* contexts across all conditions, I conclude that for these L2 learners, *hattā* must lexically encode [ADD], besides [SCAL], which renders its use incompatible with *non-additive* contexts. Note also that there is a main effect of *presenceToo*, indicating that the ratings for the *Too* condition is overall lower than the *NoToo* condition. Assuming the finding that *hattā* is always *additive* to these speakers, one can conclude that they find the use of the additive operator *ham* redundant and rate its presence in combination with *hattā* (encoding ADD) lower.

One research question in this L2 acquisition study is whether L2 learners of Persian improve in the acquisition of target-like properties as proficiency level increases. In other words, the question here is whether the higher level proficiency L2 learners perform any better than lower level ones in terms of the acquisition or non-acquisition of the L2 strategy of encoding [ADD] which is by overtly and directly expressing it through the insertion of the additive operator *ham*.

The statistical results do not reveal any significant difference between the two L2 groups with respect to the interactions of interest: First, the *presenceToo-context-group* interaction is not statistically significant. This suggests that even at higher levels of proficiency, L2 learners are not able to acquire the overt and direct way of expressing [ADD] in Persian; they fail to notice that [ADD] is encoded in the semantic representation of *ham* and is realized by this morpheme overtly to express it. One can conclude here that the L2 acquisition of the direct and overt expression of [ADD] is a difficult task for the L2 learners.

Second, the *syntax-context-group* interaction is not significant, either. This suggests that even the intermediate L2 learners have successfully learned that, unlike their L1, the L2 does not use the covert and indirect strategy for expressing [ADD]. In other words, the L2 learners are able, even at lower levels of proficiency, to acquire the fact that in Persian, the semantic content of *hattā* does not interact with its syntactic position and therefore *hattā* has the same semantic representation in both *prenominal* and *postnominal*. This suggests that noticing that the L1 covert and indirect expression of [ADD] does not hold in the L2 does not present L2

Table 8.6 Summary of effects of *syntax*, *context*, *presenceToo*, and *L1* and their interactions.

	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Pr(&gt; t )</i>
syntax	0.12069	0.05555	7718.00000	2.173	0.0298 *
context	-2.17177	0.04284	7713.00000	-50.695	< 2e-16 ***
L1	-0.36454	0.17914	56.00000	-2.035	0.0466 *
presenceToo	-0.89586	0.04012	7717.00000	-22.332	< 2e-16 ***
<b>syntax:context</b>	-0.19205	0.11109	7713.00000	-1.729	0.0839.
syntax:L1	-1.50549	0.12672	7719.00000	-11.880	< 2e-16 ***
context:L1	0.87482	0.09743	7714.00000	8.979	< 2e-16 ***
<b>context:presenceToo</b>	-2.77417	0.08022	7712.00000	-34.582	< 2e-16 ***
L1:presenceToo	0.21791	0.09150	7719.00000	2.381	0.0173 *
syntax:context:L1	1.31450	0.25341	7715.00000	5.187	2.19e-07 ***
context:L1:presenceToo	3.36409	0.18297	7714.00000	18.386	< 2e-16 ***

Source: Persian data by L1 (Persian or English)

learners with great difficulty. Further, as shown in the plot, since *hattā* is highly accepted in *additive* contexts and *rejected* in *non-additive* contexts in all conditions, it could be concluded that the L2 learners assume an additive interpretation for *hattā* across the board. Therefore, for these L2 learners [ADD] is expressed overtly but indirectly in the semantic representation of *hattā*.

Finally, to statistically compare the performance of the NSs and L2ers of Persian, a statistical model was fitted with three-way interactions between *syntax*, *context*, and *L1* as well as *context*, *presenceToo*, and *L1*. As the results in the table following confirm, the two groups are significantly different in terms of using the interactions of interest to encode [ADD]: they are significantly different with respect to the *syntax-context* interaction, which is the English strategy to encode [ADD], as well as the *presenceToo-context* interaction, which is the target (Persian) strategy.

#### 8.5.5.3.2 L2 LEARNERS OF PERSIAN: DISCUSSION

The L2 learners of Persian seem to fail to acquire the strategy used by NSs of Persian to encode [ADD] in scalar additive contexts, which is by overtly and directly expressing it through the use of the additive operator *ham*. Furthermore, they do not use their L1 (English) means of encoding this semantic component, either, which is through the covert and indirect expression of it in *prenominal* syntactic position (*syntax-context* interaction), which suggests that they have successfully acquired the absence of a *syntax-context* interaction in the L2. Instead, the L2 learners assume the same semantic content in terms of [ADD] for *hattā* in both syntactic positions: they assume that the L2 *hattā* has the same semantic representation as their L1 *prenominal even*; that is, the L2 *hattā* encodes [ADD] (besides [SCAL] of course) across the board. Therefore, the expression of [ADD] for the L1 English L2 learners of Persian is overt but indirect through the use of a lexical item *hattā*. [ADD] for the L2 learners is an overt semantic feature because had it been covert, it should have been constrained by syntax, as per their L1. It is also an indirect feature because it is encoded as a secondary function of *hattā* besides [SCAL]. It seems that having noticed the absence of a *syntax-context* interaction in Persian, the L2ers attribute the stronger meaning of their L1 *even* to all instances of L2 *hattā*.

In addition, having learned the semantics of the additive operator *ham* independently, they disprefer its use in combination with *hattā*.

## 8.6 Discussion and conclusions

In this section, the L2 learner results will be discussed in light of the FRH architecture of L2 acquisition and the predictions I made based on the learning tasks in the two stages of ‘feature mapping’ and ‘feature reassembly’.

### 8.6.1 Feature mapping

**Prediction (1):** At the mapping stage of the L2 acquisition of the overt and direct expression of [ADD] in Persian, the L2 learners would presumably transfer the representation of their L1 *even*, given that they have been taught that these two particles are equivalent. As such, the first prediction was that they would map the feature specification for L1 *even* onto *hattā*. This would mean that the L2 learners were expected to show properties related to their L1 covert and indirect expression of [ADD]. Specifically, they were predicted to accept prenominal *hattā* in additive contexts and reject it in non-additive contexts. They were also expected to accept postnominal *hattā* more than prenominal in non-additive contexts.

Before presenting the results for prediction (1), another prediction for the mapping stage will be discussed next. Results of the experiments for both predictions (1) and (2) will be discussed after.

**Prediction (2):** At the mapping stage, the L2 learners should be able to notice the presence of *ham* in combination with *hattā* in scalar additive contexts. *Ham* is predicted to be easily acquirable at this stage given that it has the same feature specification as their L1 additive operator *too*. However, given that at this stage the L2 learners presumably have mapped their L1 representation of *even* onto *hattā* in Persian, namely by assuming that *hattā* is additive in prenominal position in Persian as well, one would expect that the L2 learners should wonder why they would need to express [ADD] on *ham* additionally when prenominal *hattā* have this component encoded already. This representation (*hattā-ham* combinations) should strike them as redundant, especially in cases where *hattā* appears in prenominal position. Therefore, the prediction at this stage is that the L2 learners fail to associate *ham* with the expression of [ADD] in the context of *hattā*, although the semantics of *ham* should have easily been established independently since it matches the one of their L1 additive operator. The intermediate learners, therefore, are predicted to fail at learning the L2 strategy of expressing [ADD] in scalar additive contexts.

Results for prediction (1): The results of the study reported do not support the first prediction. The L2 learners in this study do not show the L1 properties related to the syntax-semantics interaction of *even*, even at the mapping stage. They show no interaction between the syntax of *hattā* and its semantic content. It could be concluded, therefore, that noticing that the L2 does not use their L1 strategy to express [ADD] covertly seems to be an easy task. This, I believe, could be explained as a result of the abundant and obvious use of the additive operator in the Persian input to encode [ADD] in combination with *hattā* in scalar additive contexts. Having learned *ham* independently, the L2 learners would plausibly wonder why *ham* would be used in addition to *hattā* (specially prenominal *hattā*), had *hattā* indeed encoded the additive component lexically in Persian. This would trigger reassembly at very early stages and trigger the unlearning of the L1 covert expression of [ADD]. This is not a difficult task for the L2 learners because even the intermediate learners succeed at dissociating the expression of [ADD] with the syntactic position of *hattā*.

Results for prediction (2): Results from the study reveal that this prediction is borne out. Although the L2 learners at this stage have successfully unlearned their L1 strategy (covertly expressing [ADD]) by not showing a syntax-context interaction in the L2 (as discussed in the results of prediction 1), they do not seem to have picked up the L2 strategy, either. They do not note the interaction between the presence of the additive operator *ham* and the expression of [ADD]. In summary, although the L2 learners successfully dissociate from the L1 a covert and indirect expression of [ADD], they fail to acquire the L2 strategy of overtly and directly expressing it on the additive operator *ham*. According to the results, what the L2 learners do at this stage is they assume *hattā* is always additive, regardless of its syntactic position and regardless of the presence of the additive operator. Put differently, the L2 learners do not use the L1 covert and indirect strategy, but they do not use the L2 overt and direct strategy, either. They do express [ADD] by assuming that *hattā* always overtly but indirectly expresses [ADD]. I propose that the expression of [ADD] for the L2 learners at this stage is overt because they use a morphological item that has [ADD] encoded in its semantic representation. Further, this is an indirect expression of [ADD] because the primary function of *hattā* is [SCAL] and [ADD] is encoded as a secondary function of this particle. This seems to be an in-between representation they resort to at this stage. It must be pointed out that the learners, even at the mapping stage, show that the use of *ham* in combination with *hattā* is dispreferred overall compared to the use of *hattā* alone. This I take as an indication that they have learned the semantic feature specification of *ham* (which matches their L1 *too*); what these L2ers fail at is integration of this knowledge to the expression of ADD in scalar additive contexts where NSs would normally use *ham*.

### 8.6.2 Feature reassembly

**Prediction (3):** At later stages in acquisition, the L2 learners are expected to notice the L2 consistently uses *hattā-ham* combinations in scalar additive contexts, with *hattā* in both prenominal and postnominal positions. Further, in non-additive contexts, *hattā* alone is used. The L2 learners should in principle note at this stage that had *hattā* encoded an additive component, it should have been inconsistent with contexts that do not satisfy the additive presupposition, especially in prenominal position. But, unlike their L1, the L2 does allow both prenominal and postnominal occurrences of *hattā* alone in non-additive contexts. This inconsistency should trigger the process of feature reassembly. I believe that the L2 learners at this stage do realize that the L1 syntax-context interaction does not hold in Persian. Having been exposed to sufficient positive input, they should be able to conclude that since the L2 prevalently uses *hattā-ham* combinations in additive contexts (in prenominal position, too) and does not use them in non-additive contexts; the string should have been redundant, had *hattā* encoded [ADD]. In summary, the advanced L2 learners were predicted to be able to notice the absence of their L1 covert and indirect expression of [ADD] in the L2.

Results for prediction (3): This prediction was indeed borne out. As discussed in the results of prediction (1), even intermediate L2 learners succeeded in noticing the absence of the L1 covert and indirect strategy of expressing [ADD] in the L2 and do not show properties of the L1 strategy in the L2. Therefore, the conclusion is that the unlearning of the covert and indirect feature [ADD] does not pose great difficulty to the L2 learners. This result suggests that once a learner is sensitive to a syntax-semantic constraint in their L1, it is easy for them to detect whether or not the same constraint exists in the L2. If the L2 fails to show L1 properties with respect to that constraint, dissociating from it does not pose great challenges in the L2 acquisition task.

**Prediction (4):** Having unlearned the L1 covert and indirect expression of [ADD] through the syntactic constraint on *hattā*, besides having learned the L2 additive operator, the prediction for the advanced L2 learners is that should be able to reassign the expression of [ADD] onto the target-like means of expressing it. Once the L2 learners have noticed that the L2 does not use their L1 strategy, the acquisition of the L2 expression of [ADD] through overtly and directly encoding it on *ham* should not present the L2 learners with great difficulty. Feature reassembly should be successful. The advanced L2 learners are predicted to accept *hattā-ham* configurations in additive contexts, reject them in non-additive contexts, and accept *hattā* alone in contexts that do not satisfy the additive presupposition.

Results for prediction (4): This prediction is not borne out in the results. Even the advanced L2 learners of Persian fail to reassign the expression of [ADD] onto the lexical item *ham*. While the L2 learners have succeeded in dissociating from their L1 strategy for expressing [ADD], they fail to acquire the overt and direct means of expressing the same feature in the L2 even at advanced levels, hence unsuccessful reassembly.

### 8.6.3 Conclusions

To conclude, the aim of the present research was to contribute new empirical evidence to the understanding of L2 acquisition tasks and potential challenges L2 learners face in acquisition as understood in terms of the FRH. Results of the present study have implications that facilitate the understanding of what is at the heart of the acquisition task that can make it difficult for L2 learners to acquire L2 representations. In particular, the findings of the present study from the L2 learner group strongly highlight the role of L1 lingering effects (at different stages of proficiency) and identify the nature of the features being reconfigured (overt vs. covert, direct vs. indirect) as well as the process of integrating L2 strategies in expressing certain features as sources of difficulty in L2 acquisition. In particular, the learning task for the L1 English L2 learners of Persian was to reconfigure from their L1 feature configuration for [ADD] into that of L2 Persian. They had to dissociate from the covert and indirect specification for [ADD] in English and reassemble into the overt and direct expression of this semantic component in Persian.

The L2 learners of Persian demonstrated interesting behavior. First, they learned at fairly low proficiency levels that the covert L1 specification for [ADD] is absent in the L2; they learned that there is no contrast between prenominal and postnominal *hattā* in terms of their semantic import. This is interesting because it suggests that once the L1 has a covert strategy to encode some feature, detecting that the L2 fails to correspond to the L1 representation is not a difficult task. Second, upon learners' realizing that the L1 and L2 representations do not match, reassembly occurs and they need to find a strategy to express [ADD]. I suggest that the L2 learners at this stage face two strategies to choose from, one of which is the L2 overt and direct expression of [ADD] through the use of the additive operator *ham*. Another possible strategy, which is the one the L2 learners opt for in this study, is to transfer a meaning of L1 *even* for *hattā*, which is semantically stronger, the additive meaning (the reading of *even* with the additive presupposition is stronger than when it does not have the additive presupposition as it is more informative, noteworthy, and/or relevant). They treat *hattā* as additive in all conditions, including different syntactic positions. I believe that in order to adhere to Maximize Presupposition, the L2 learners favor encoding [ADD] indirectly on *hattā*, over directly expressing it on a different lexical item, because the former strategy is already available to them in their L1 where prenominal use of *even* indirectly signals [ADD].

These learners did not succeed at acquiring the L2 strategy that is lexically expressing [ADD] on *ham*; they failed to recognize that in scalar additive contexts that license the use



of prenominal *even* in their L1, Persian uses an overt and direct realization of both semantic components: [SCAL] is lexicalized on *hattā* and [ADD] on *ham*. The L2 learners of Persian assumed that [ADD] is lexicalized overtly and indirectly on *hattā* in Persian; overtly because it is lexicalized and indirectly because it is the secondary meaning of *hattā* besides [SCAL], which is its primary semantic function. As a result, the L2 learners disfavor the use of *ham* in addition to *hattā*, as the use of an additive operator besides a lexical item that already signals [ADD] strikes them as redundant.

I suggest that the challenge in L2 acquisition for them is not the acquisition of the additive operator *ham*. In fact, this particle has the same feature specification of their L1 additive operator *too* and is very easily acquirable at the mapping stage. What these L2 learners fail at is integration of the knowledge that [ADD] can be realized directly on a different morpheme in scalar additive contexts when their L1 makes available to them a more familiar strategy, an indirect way.

In conclusion, results of the present study indicate that once the L1 uses a covert and indirect means of expressing a feature, here [ADD], it is easy to dissociate from the covert strategy and learn that the L1 syntactic constraint is not present in the L2. It is difficult, however, for L2 learners to learn an overt and direct feature specification of it in the target language when their L1 has an indirect way of expressing it.

## Notes

- 1) Focus position is marked by capitalization.
- 2) See Rooth (1985), for a standard approach to the computation of alternative sets.
- 3) The additive presupposition has been analyzed both as an existential (e.g. in Karttunen and Peters 1979) and a universal (Crnič 2011). The quantificational force of this component is orthogonal to the purpose of this study.
- 4) See Erlewine (2014) for discussion of backwards association.
- 5) The present research concerns only the prenominal vs. postnominal syntactic positions.
- 6) Note again that the assumption here is that there is only one lifting per person.
- 7) This study primarily investigates prenominal versus postnominal uses of *even*. Therefore non-additive *even* in this research would make reference to postnominal *even*.
- 8) Let's assume that what is meant by VP/adverbial *even* is association either with the VP or a VP internal argument. Backwards association of *even* in VP position is referred to as postnominal *even*.
- 9) This principle forces the speakers to opt for an expression with stronger semantic presuppositions if these presuppositions are satisfied by the context.
- 10) Note that in this string, *hattā* can follow the associated NP as well: NP-*ham-hatta* in more colloquial speech.
- 11) In English, there seems to be a dispreference for attaching *even* to a VP-internal noun phrases. Therefore, sentences like this are in general dispreferred compared to ones with adverbial *even*. My English consultants report that this sentence feels odd because it implies additivity, namely that Claire has married more than one person.
- 12) As the experimental results show later on, speakers do in general prefer to use *hattā* in additive contexts. This is also true of *even* in English.
- 13) I will only use the first word order, *hattā* -NP-*ham*, which is used in spoken Persian, throughout the chapter but make explicit that the two word orders give rise to the same semantic construct.
- 14) Their study focuses on two ways out of the many ways definiteness is signalled in Russian (Cho and Slabakova 2014).
- 15) I would like to express my gratitude to the McGill Islamic Institute for allowing me to access the McGill Islamic Institute Persian Placement Test.
- 16) Due to space limits, in the results reported in the present work, I have excluded the analysis of the type of the additional remark: fragment vs. non-fragment. This decision is made because this manipulation did not result in any relevant significant difference in the analysis of the data. For a thorough analysis and discussion of the results of this manipulation, please refer to Mortazavinia (2018).

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## PART II

# Language skills in second language acquisition of Persian



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# 9

## SECOND LANGUAGE VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

### Persian resources and teaching and learning strategies

*Michael Craig Hillmann*

#### 9.1 Introduction

My first trip overseas was Pan Am Flight Number 1 from New York City to Tehran following on the heels of an intensive beginning Persian course, 250 contact hours at six hours each week day for nine weeks at the University of Texas. The course syllabus was Mohammad Ali Jazayeri's audio-lingual *Elementary Lessons in Persian: Experimental Edition* (1965).<sup>1</sup> That meant Persian-only class sessions, no textbook materials for students, no reading and writing instruction, lots of pattern practice and drills (e.g., completion, question-answer, substitution, and transformation), step-by-step introductions of phrase and sentence patterns, memorization of dialogues, and a late afternoon hour or more in a language laboratory listening to and repeating Persian.

Once on the ground in Tehran, a bus took us 40-some, new-minted American Peace Corps Volunteers from Mehrābād Airport to our hotel. I happened to sit in the first row to the right of the driver, whom I peppered with questions en route to see if the 250 hours had done their job. They had, although I restricted myself to questions to which I already knew answers in case I didn't understand exactly what the driver would say in reply and to yes-no questions, at least the first part of answers to which I'd get (e.g., "Is Tehran's population more than 2,000,000 people?" and "Was it hot in Tehran today?").

Two days later, in a first-class compartment on the 4 pm to 8 am train to Mashhad, which made a prayer stop at Dāmghān, I successfully ordered likely the best *chelo morgh* [rice and chicken] dinner in the world that day. And, if I slept well that night, it was probably because I had accomplished my first oral-aural Persian tasks and because the Jazayeri book had convinced me that I had won a sort of foreign language lottery in signing up for a two-year English teaching stint at the University of Mashhad – I was entering the world of what promised to be the easiest foreign language imaginable, even for famously doltish American language learners. After all, as Jazayeri's lessons had it, the Fārsi Persian language (1) presents native speakers of general American English with no serious pronunciation problems (e.g., easily resolvable, initial issues with /kh/, /r/, /q/, front 'l' in syllable-medial and -final position, and /h/ in syllable-medial and -final position); (2) exhibits no definite article or indefinite article per se; (3) features no irregular verbs; (4) has no grammatical gender except in the use of some Arabic loanwords and phrases; (5) calls for no change in word order in any sort of

interrogative statements; (6) requires no change in word order or convolution of elements in subordinate clauses that normally exhibit subject-object-verb patterns; (7) features no declension of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, or relative pronouns; (8) involves no necessary pluralization of nouns used with cardinal numbers; (9) involves no irregularities in cardinal and ordinal numbers; (10) features a single verb conjugation and only twelve discrete tenses; (11) allows for flexibility in the word order of subject, object, and verb parts of statements; and (12) makes use of a Perso-Arabic writing system that is phonetic (albeit with a significant shortcoming problematic in the short term; e.g., “هتل” /hotel/ being spelled /htl/).

So, once settled in my basement room at the Mashhad University Club and, having scouted the surprisingly laid back, *doroshkeh*-filled, bicycle-friendly, rose-watered-flavored, and lamb-fat-scented Persian-only world beyond my basement room, and once acclimated to classroom life and tongue-burning tea drinking in the Faculty Lounge, I hired Hamid Āsudeh, the teen-aged son of the doorman at the Club, to bring me breakfast most mornings: a ceramic bowl of yoghurt with yoghurt skin on the top, a glob of drippy, pectin-less jam on wax paper, a hunk of *bolghār* cheese also wrapped in wax paper, and a slab of *tāftun* bread. Hamid would bring all that and tea from a samovar upstairs and stand behind me while I ate and read aloud the Persian text of the day, correct my pronunciation, and define unfamiliar words in the text. I recall noting at the time that these sessions were as energizing and satisfying as my deliciously un-American breakfasts because they made for conversation practice not for its own sake but for the sake of accomplishing a task relevant to my interests as an undergraduate and graduate literature major, now mesmerized by a new right-to-left world that, among other things, has had me expanding my notion of lyric poetry ever since. I also remember noting that learning Persian through Persian was easier and quicker than my school-learned French through English.

As for texts, I started with the Michigan *Modern Persian Readers* series (1962), Khayyāmic quatrains in Sādeq Hedāyat's edition called *Tarāneh 'hā-ye 'Omar Khayyām*, Ferdowsi's *Story of Sohrāb* in Parviz Nātel Khānlari's *Shāhkār-hā-ye Adabiyāt-e Fārsi* [Masterpieces of Persian Literature] series for university students, A.J. Arberry's *Fifty Ghazals of Hāfez*, and several Hedāyat short stories and his novella called *Buḡ-e Kur* [*The Blind Owl*]. On the side, I read L.P. Elwell-Sutton's *Elementary Persian Grammar* (1963) and Ann K.S. Lambton's *Persian Grammar* (1963).<sup>2</sup> And always at my side was a copy of Solayman Haīm's *Farhang-e Yekjeldi-ye Fārsi-Engelisi* [The New One-Volume Persian-English Dictionary] (1961).<sup>3</sup> I made check marks next to headwords I looked up in Haīm and wondered as time went on what was going on when I looked up a word that already had two or more check marks next to it!

Six months later, a decent amount of Persian, those Iranian breakfasts, *kālbās* [baloney] sandwiches for lunch, and *chelokabāb* and *isānboli polow* dinners under my belt, I started wondering why I was still unable to regale either my students and colleagues with a life story as fascinating by Rousseauian definition as Rousseau's own *Confessions* or my hosts and fellow guests at parties with my then New Critical views on the nature of lyric poetry. The simple answer: a lack of vocabulary had me hemming and hawing and circumlocuting. Of course, I had faced the same issue with my native language but had handled it stress-free, they tell me, by lying mostly on my back for a spell, then sitting up and crawling, then standing, and then walking and running, all the while absorbing all the words I'd be needing for a while. Then I went to elementary school and learned to read the words I already knew and then other words that opened up worlds beyond my time and place. I had six or so years to do all this but naturally didn't now have that much time to acquire an Iranian first-grader's command of Persian vocabulary. I had to find shortcuts to achieve near-native skills in Persian listening and reading in a year or so, assuming that Persian speaking would take care of itself within whatever time frame my mouth, tongue, glottis, and parietal lobes needed.

This chapter offers a sampling of such shortcuts in 13 “mini-lessons” within the framework of a review of Persian vocabulary acquisition and maintenance as treated in Persian instructional and reference materials for speakers of English published in the first two decades of the 21st century. I hasten to add that my involvement in Persian studies unfortunately has not included any training in linguistics or lexicography or foreign language education – *caveant lectores* – which means that my chapter draws on anecdotal experience and presents no more than impressions of representative recent Persian textbooks and dictionaries and illustrations of methods and strategies in teaching and writing about Persian that relate to vocabulary acquisition and maintenance.<sup>4</sup>

Specifically, this chapter discusses (1) theme-based Persian glossaries, phrasebooks, and learner’s dictionaries; (2) representative Persian dictionaries of various sorts and their utility in vocabulary acquisition and maintenance; (3) attention paid to vocabulary issues in 21st-century Persian instructional materials designed for adult English-speaking learners; (4) a word-method approach to reading Persian that focuses on vocabulary acquisition; and (5) contextualization as an overall strategy in teaching/learning Persian vocabulary, the five sections interspersed with the cited 13 mini-lessons.

\* \* \* \* \*

Upwards of 20 **theme-based Persian glossaries, phrase books, and learner’s dictionaries** for speakers of English have appeared in the first two decades of the 21st century.

- Conceptually, the most important among Persian glossaries is *A Frequency Dictionary of Persian* by Corey Miller and Karineh Aghajanian-Stewart (2017), which provides a corpus-based list of 5,000 frequently used words in the language in order of decreasing frequency, along with “thematic vocabulary lists” on (1) animals, (2) body, (3) clothing, (4) colors, (5) countries, (6) electronics, (7) emotions, (8) family, (9) female names, (10) food, (11) health, (12) last names, (13) light verb constructions, (14) male names, (15) materials, (16) nationalities, (17) nature, (18) politics, (19) professions, (20) religions, (21) simple verbs, (22) sports, (23) time, (24) days, (25) Persian months, (26) Dari months, (27) Islamic months, (28) French months, (29) transport, and (30) war. Entries for numbered headwords include authentic examples from the corpus, perhaps a signal that vocabulary work in Persian instructional materials should focus on authentic texts. But, in a frequency dictionary that focus, appropriate and particularly useful for instructors, instructional materials developers, and advanced students of Persian, is problematic for elementary-intermediate students of Persian both because of the possible unfamiliarity of such readers with much in the authentic examples except for the frequently used word in question and because authentic examples altogether may not reflect the variety in the most common Persian phrase and sentence patterns and structures. And, when the authors observe that “4,000–5,000 most frequent words account for up to 95% of a written text,” there’s ultimately not much comfort in that fact, as these three examples suggest. First, although the infinitive phrase “از + جا + در + رفتن” /az + jā + dar + raftan/ consists of four of the most common words in Persian, how does a reader get from recognizing those four words to discerning the verb’s denotation (i.e., “to get angry”)? Second, how can an intermediate student of Persian confront the word “تحمل” in a text, a word that does not appear in a reading threshold vocabulary list and that he/she has not seen before, yet automatically know how to pronounce it as well as surmise its denotation in context?<sup>5</sup> Third, ditto for “ملی گرای” with its four pieces of information?<sup>6</sup>



- Focusing on vocabulary in one thematic area is *Media Persian* by Dominic Parviz Brookshaw (2011, 2014), which presents media vocabulary “grouped . . . within each chapter . . . in smaller, untitled sub-sections by topic. . . [S]trict alphabetical ordering has been avoided on the whole” because, according to the author, “this is counter-productive to learning vocabulary lists . . . [:] general, politics and government, elections, conflict and security, law and order, human rights, economics trade and industry, science and technology, energy, environment, aid and development culture and sport.” *Media Persian* does not use diacritical marks or English transcription as a guide to pronunciation of Persian terms but offers a link to online audio files to help check pronunciation. *Media Persian* does not cite any Persian dictionaries.
- Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi’s *What the Persian Media Says: A Coursebook* (2015) is a Persian-only reader for upper-intermediate and advanced students, each of its 30 lessons featuring an authentic newspaper text, available on the textbook’s website, text subjects including: national news, international news, politics, opinion, entertainment, arts, economics, provincial news, crimes and disasters, social issues, literature, theatre, health, and books. The lessons present comprehension, headlines, idiomatic expressions, and vocabulary exercises that focus on the pluralization of 500+ nouns, especially Arabic loanwords.

## 9.2 Mini-lesson #1

Classroom and self-study introduction and practice of media vocabulary can begin early on in an elementary Persian course. Here follows such a lesson, in working with which students should have access to a recent Persian-English dictionary or a Persian-English glossary of newspaper terms, as well as an audio file recording of the lesson’s text. The mini-lesson highlights what some learners see as the daunting task of Persian vocabulary acquisition and the utility of learning groups of vocabulary items in context.<sup>7</sup>

### §1.1 Look over this vocabulary list.

to answer	جواب دادن (ده)	newspaper	روزنامه
to face, to confront	روبرو شدن (شو)	news	اِطِّلاعات
to seek, to search	جُستَن (جو)	name	اِسْم
plot, conspiracy	تُوطِيَه	page	صَفْحَه
resorting/turning to for help	تَوَسُّل	publication; publishing	اِنْتِشاَر
question	سؤال ج. سوالات	issue; number	شُمَارَه
text	مَتْن ج. مَتون	single issue	تَك شُمَارَه
separation, space	فاصله	date; history	تَارِيخ
number quantity)	تَعْداد	title	عُنْوَان
nearness, proximity	نَزْدِيكِي	headline	عُنْوَان سَر صَفْحَه
distance, remoteness	دُورِي	price, cost	قِيَمَت
means of doing sth	وَسِيْلَه ي كَار	word	كَلْمَه
under consideration	مُورِد نَظَر	phrase	عِبَارَت
what person	چَه كَسِي	sentence	جُمْلَه
best	بِهَتَرِيْن	paragraph	پاراگراف
for ( <i>prep</i> )	بَرَاي	article	مَقَالَه
about, concerning ( <i>prep</i> )	دَرْبَارَه ي	meaning	مَعْنِي

§1.2 Read these two sentences, and then listen to a reading or recording of them while reading along. Look up still unfamiliar words on the foregoing list. Then follow the directions in the second sentence, looking up still unfamiliar words in the text.

متن درس یک اطلاعاتی است درباره ی شماره ای از یک روزنامه و عنوان سرصفحه ی اول آن. متن را بخوانید و به سوالات زیر متن جواب بدهید.

روزنامه ابرار

پنجشنبه ۲۱ دی ۱۳۷۴ - ۱۹ شعبان ۱۴۱۶ - ۱۱ ژانویه ۱۹۹۶

شماره ۲۰۸۴

۱۲ صفحه

تک شماره ۲۰۰ ریال

رئیس جمهور: توسل به قرآن کریم بهترین ابزار  
برای رویارویی با توطئه هاست (مقاله در صفحه ۲)

- ۱ اسم روزنامه؟
  - ۲ تاریخ انتشار روزنامه ی مورد نظر؟
  - ۳ شماره ی روزنامه ی مورد نظر؟
  - ۴ تعداد صفحه های روزنامه؟
  - ۵ قیمت تک شماره ی روزنامه؟
  - ۶ مقاله ی مورد نظر روزنامه در صفحه ی چند روزنامه است؟
  - ۷ مقاله ی مورد نظر درباره ی چه کسی است؟
  - ۸ بهترین وسیله ی کار برای روبرو شدن با توطئه ها چیست؟
  - ۹ کلمه ی "توسل" چه معنی می دهد (X)؟
- نزدیکی جستن  دوری جستن  فاصله جستن

- As for a comprehensive theme-based guide to Persian vocabulary, there is *A Thematic Dictionary of Modern Persian* (2004, 2010) by Colin Turner, which offers vocabulary lists with English transcriptions of Persian headwords of these "Themed Sections": Air Travel, Animals, Art and Architecture, Astronomy, Biology, Birds and Insects, The Calendar, Cars and Driving, Chemistry, Clothes, Colors, Computing, Countries of the World, The Countryside, Crime and Punishment, Economics Trade and Finance, Education, The Environment, The Family, Farming, Feelings and Relationships, Festivals and Commemorations, Fish, Flowers and Plants, Food and Drink, Free Time, Fruit, Geographical Features, Geology, Grammar, Greetings and Interjections, Health and Disease, Herbs and Vegetables, At the Hotel, The House, Household Furniture, The Human Body, Industry and Development, Information and Services, International Relations, Islam, In the Kitchen, Language and Linguistics, Literature, Materials, Mathematics, The Media, Military Affairs, Music, Numbers (Cardinal), Numbers (Ordinal), Office and School Equipment, Personal Characteristics, Personal Effects, Philosophy, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religions of the World, At the Seaside, Shops and Shopping, Sociology, Sounds, Sport, Stage and Screen, Time, Tools, In the Town, Train Travel, Transport, Trees, Weather and Meteorology, Work and Professions. It includes an "Index of English Words." A comparison of Turner's "Literature" list with a dictionary of literary terms by a literature expert, which cites frequency of usage of Persian equivalents for English terms, suggests that Turner may not have referred to technical dictionaries or literary critical writing in deciding on specific Persian equivalents for English terms.

In the classroom use of theme-based guides to Persian vocabulary, role model exercises focusing on specifics of the lives of adult American learners of Persian reveal that the following are among many situations and subjects that come up repeatedly in conversation: talking about family, making plans, talking about feeling unwell, asking personal questions, negotiating classroom life and activities, negotiating a language textbook, describing one's daily routine, telling one's life story, describing one's job, talking about Persian poems, talking about movies, talking about Iranian politics, talking about Islam in Iran, talking about Iranian culture, and talking about computers and the online world.

### 9.3 Mini-lesson #2

Here follows part of an elementary-level lesson on daily activities.<sup>8</sup> The lesson might begin with review of a list of verbs that relate to predictable daily activities, for example, these random verb infinitives. An asterisk appears after specifically colloquial/spoken [مُحاوره ای/گفتاری] forms.<sup>9</sup>

to chat with colleagues	گپ زدن با همکاران
to check e-mail	ای میل چک کردن
to eat lunch	ناهار خوردن
to leave the office	اداره را ترک کردن
to go to the gym	باشگاه ورزشی رفتن
to watch television	تلویزیون نگاه کردن
to drop by a bar	ستر زدن به بار
to read a book	کتاب خواندن* (خون*)
to go home	خونه* رفتن (ر*)

The lesson might proceed with a monologue or dialogue (and translation) for listening and reading. The lesson might then introduce typical, relevant questions and answers.

§2.1 Read the following pairs of questions and answers, using the translations to resolve questions about meaning.

What time do you get up in the morning?	۱. شما صُبا ساعت چِن بُلن میشین؟
I usually get up at 7 o'clock.	معمولاً ساعت هفت پا میشم.
When do you go to the office?	۲. کی میرین اداره؟
I leave the house at 7:45	ساعت یک ربع به هشت از خونه میام بیرون
and get to the office by 8:30.	و ساعت هشت و نیم میرسم اداره.
How many hours a day do you work?	۳. چن ساعت در روز کار می کنین؟
I work eight hours.	هشت ساعت کار می کنم.
When do you usually eat lunch?	۴. نهارو معمولاً کی میخورین؟
I'm really busy these days	این روزها سرم و حشنتاک شلوغه،
so I don't get to lunch until 1 o'clock or 1:30	واسه همین تا ساعت یک، یک و نیم نمیرسم به نهار.
I can't work when I'm hungry.	من با گرسنگی نمی تونم کار کنم
There's nothing I can do about it sometimes.	بعضی وقتا چاره ای نیست.
Until what time do you-2 work	۵. شما عصرها تا چه ساعتی کار می کنید؟
in the late afternoons?	
I usually work until 5 o'clock or 5:30.	معمولاً تا ساعت پنج، پنج و نیم کار میکنم.
Where do you go after that?	۶. بعیش کجا میرین؟
I go straight home	یه راست میرم خونه
because I eat dinner early.	چون معمولاً زود شام میخورم.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| What do you-2 do after dinner?              | ۷. بعد از شام چیکار میکنین؟             |
| I watch television or read a book.          | تلویزیون نگاه می کنم یا کتاب میخونم.    |
| When do you-2 go to bed at nights?          | ۸. شبای کی میخوابین؟                    |
| During the week at 11 o'clock.              | در طول هفته ساعت یازده.                 |
| Only on Friday and Saturday nights          | فقط شب شنبه و شب یک شنبه                |
| do I go to bed a little later.              | یک کم دیرتر میخوابم.                    |
| What do you do on those nights?             | ۹. اون شبای چیکار می کنی؟               |
| Usually we're at a party or we have guests. | معمولاً یا مهمونی هستیم یا مهمون داریم. |

§2.2 Now read each question with a partner who reads the answer. Read the text again reversing roles.

§2.3 Review the questions and think of factual answers reflecting your own situation. Look up any needed Persian words in your English-Persian dictionary.

§2.4 Again with a partner, practice the questions and answers with information reflecting your actual daily activities.

\* \* \* \* \*

- Phrasebooks are another situational or theme-based vocabulary resource, Lonely Planet's *Farsi (Persian) Phrasebook and Dictionary* (2014) by Davar Dehghani likely the most readily available. Designed for (European?) travelers to Iran, it features these sections: meeting people, getting around, accommodation, around town, going out, family, interests, social issues, shopping, food, in the country, health, specific needs, times, dates, and festivals, numbers and amounts, and emergencies, followed by English-Persian and Persian "dictionaries of 2,700+ and 920+ entries," respectively.
- *Easy Persian Phrasebook: Essential Expressions for Communicating in Persian* (2014) by Reza Nazari treats the colloquial/spoken register and presents Perso-Arabic and English transcriptions. Subject/situation categories include quick reference for the basics, greetings, introductions, jobs, invitations, praise and gratitude, requests, feeling and blessings, weather, time and dates, numbers, sports, colors, animals, insects, flowers, body, countries, nationalities, and languages; traveling, booking tips, flight registration, on the plane, train, bus, boat, taxi, bus, subway, car rental, driving, parking, at the service station, out of order; communication means: post office, telephone, internet; eating: fruits/vegetables, spices, seafood, meat, grocery, drinks, at the restaurant; shopping – finance: clothing, accessories, electronics, jewelry, books, in the office; sightseeing: tourist information, entertainment, movies, theater, at the museum, camping, at the beach, countryside; health and beauty care: drugstore, pain, seeing a doctor, dentists, hair salon; emergencies: accidents, police.

Except for grouping vocabulary according to situations, subjects, and themes, theme-based Persian glossaries, phrasebooks, and learner's dictionaries may not directly "teach" vocabulary, but Persian instructors can easily develop reading, listening, and speaking lessons around sections and situations in such guides.

- Jane Adelson-Goldstein and Norma Shapiro's *English/Farsi Oxford Picture Dictionary: Second Edition* (2009) is a useful ancillary resource with its everyday topics sections and illustrations of 4,000+ words and expressions.

### 9.4 Mini-lesson #3

Here is a sample, elementary- (beginning) level, audio motor unit, a sort of activity designed to help develop listening skills that can concomitantly serve vocabulary acquisition and reinforcement aims.

§3.1 After listening to and watching your instructor identify the following classroom objects, execute his/her commands to point to specific objects. Then ask classmates to execute the commands.

با دست اشاره کنید به دیوار . . . در . . . پنجره . . . سقف . . . کف اتاق . . . تخته سیاه . . .  
 blackboard . . . classroom floor . . . ceiling . . . window . . . door . . . wall  
 صندلی معلم . . . میز معلم . . . چراغ . . . کلید برق . . . پریز برق . . .  
 electric socket . . . light switch . . . lamp/light . . . teacher's table . . . teacher's chair  
 پنکه . . . نقشه . . . کامپیوتر . . . پرده (پروژکتور) . . . هواکش . . . سطل آشغال . . .  
 trash can . . . air vent . . . projection screen . . . computer . . . map . . . fan  
 پرده . . . پرده کرکره . . . سیم برق . . . کتاب درسیتون . . .  
 your textbook . . . electric cord . . . blinds . . . curtain

§3.2 After listening to and watching your instructor perform the following actions, execute his/her commands by performing those actions. Then ask classmates to execute the commands.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Say "hello."                                  | ۱. بگین سلام.                             |
| Stand/get up.                                 | ۲. پا شین/بُئِن شین.                      |
| Go to the blackboard.                         | ۳. برین جلوی تخته سیاه.                   |
| Write your name on the blackboard.            | ۴. اسمتونو روی تخته سیا بنویسین.          |
| Go to the window.                             | ۵. برین به طرف پنجره.                     |
| Open the window.                              | ۶. پنجره رو باز کنین.                     |
| Shut/close the blinds.                        | ۷. (پرده) کرکره رو ببندین.                |
| Turn off the lights.                          | ۸. چراغارو خاموش کنین.                    |
| Turn the lights on again.                     | ۹. چراغارو دوباره روشن کنین.              |
| Go to the window.                             | ۱۰. برین به طرف پنجره.                    |
| Go back to your seat/place.                   | ۱۱. برگردین جاتون.                        |
| Go to the door.                               | ۱۲. برین طرف در.                          |
| Leave the room and come back in. /biyāyn tu/. | ۱۳. از اتاق برین بیرون و دوباره بیاین تو. |
| Say "good-bye."                               | ۱۴. بگین خداحافظ.                         |

\* \* \* \* \*

General Persian dictionaries, as well, do not teach vocabulary, but they often offer authentic Persian texts in their illustrations of uses of headwords. And facility in their use seems indispensable in developing reading competence and in maintaining and expanding command of passive vocabulary. It so happens that, since the mid-1970s, **Persian lexicography in Iran** has expanded dramatically and expertly. Reliable dictionaries now exist in many specialized and technical fields and domains, among them agriculture, animal husbandry, Arabic loanwords, archaeology, architecture, art, astronomy, banking, biology, business, oriental carpets (Persian), chemical engineering, chemistry, cinema, civil engineering, computer science, dialects, earth sciences, economics, electricity, electronics, engineering, environment, European loanwords, geography, geology and mines, geophysics, health and hygiene, industrial engineering, journalism, law, linguistics, literature, management, materials, mathematics, mechanical

engineering, medicine, metallurgy, meteorology, military affairs, mining engineering, mountain climbing, music, names (male and female), nursing, nutrition, painting, philosophy, phonetics, photography, physical education/sports, physics, political science, politics, proverbs, psychology, psychiatry, pure Persian, railroad, religion, science and technology, slang, sociology, statistics, and veterinary medicine.

Now, most specialized/technical Persian dictionaries published in Iran are primarily English to Persian, designed to familiarize their Iranian readers with English vocabulary in technical fields. But, because most of these dictionaries usually contain at least a Persian-English vocabulary list or glossary and because some specialized/technical dictionaries are Persian-English or have parallel Persian-English and English-Persian sections, specialized/technical Persian dictionaries also meet the needs of English-speaking, general learners and readers of Persian and instructional materials developers designing lessons focusing on vocabulary. Moreover, because of the outdatedness and other inadequacies of most hardcopy, general Persian-English dictionaries, English-speaking Persian experts and learners can supplement coverage in their Persian-English dictionaries through access to specialized/technical Persian dictionaries in subjects of interest.

Of course, the most useful dictionaries for elementary and intermediate, English-speaking students of Persian are Persian-English and English-Persian dictionaries of bookish/written [کتابی/نوشتاری] Persian, which learners can use even for colloquial/spoken [مُحاوره ای/گفتاری] Persian forms heard or seen once they learn the basic differences between the two registers of Persian.<sup>10</sup> For advanced students of Persian, abridged and unabridged Persian-Persian dictionaries are particularly important. And Persian-Persian and Persian-English dictionaries of colloquial/spoken and slang registers of Persian have their place on the shelves of students of Persian and Persianists. Parenthetically, memorization of the Persian alphabet in alphabetical order and perhaps also in reverse order is not child's play, but rather essential for efficient dictionary use, not primarily in locating the letter with which a word begins but rather in locating letters within words.

\* \* \* \* \*

At every stage or level of Persian study and Persian use by English-speaking learners, those learners think of something they want to say or write but do not know the relevant equivalent Persian word or expression. Here follow brief descriptions of four **English-Persian dictionaries** likely on or near the desks of most Persianists.

- The most popular English-Persian dictionary over the years has arguably been Haïm's *The One-Volume English-Persian Dictionary* (1993, 2002 [1st paperback edition], 700 p.). 40,000 entries. Outdated, but still useful when supplemented with lists or glossaries of newer (post-1970s) words; one also needs a Persian-Persian or Persian-English dictionary for pronunciation of Persian words.
- The most readily available English-Persian dictionary in the English-speaking world is likely the first half of *The Combined New Persian-English and English-Persian Dictionary* by Abbas and Manoochehr Aryanpur Kashani (1986). Outdated and not error-free but still useful, especially if supplemented with word lists or glossaries of post-early 1970s) words.
- Among 21st-century one-volume English-Persian dictionaries, at least three stand out. First is *Farhang Moaser One-Volume English-Persian Millennium Dictionary* by Ali Mohammad Haghshenas et al. (2005). A second is *Pooya English-Persian Dictionary*,

*Two Volumes in One* (2008) by Mohammad Reza Bateni and assistants. Then there is, among other “Aryanpur” dictionaries, *The Aryanpur Progressive English-Persian Dictionary: One Volume, Concise* (2005/6, 29th printing) by Manuchehr Aryanpur Kashani with Bahram Delgoshaei.

- Manuchehr Aryanpur Kashani, *The Aryanpur Progressive English-Persian Dictionary: Four Volumes, Comprehensive* (2004) is the most readily available comprehensive English-Persian dictionary.

### 9.5 Mini-lesson #4

Here is an exercise based on entries in the *One-Volume Millennium English-Persian Dictionary* and *Pooya English-Persian Dictionary: Two Volumes in One*.

§4.1 Match the following English words and phrases with sample Persian equivalents and definitions following.

1	advertise	9	mass communication media
2	advertisement	10	medium
3	advertiser	11	technical
4	advertising	12	technicality
5	communicate	13	technically
6	communication	14	technician
7	communications network	15	technique
8	communicator	16	technology

آدم روشن بیان، آدم فصیح، شارح تردست	_____
آگهی دهنده، اعلان کننده	_____
آگهی، اعلان، تبلیغ	_____
اصطلاح فنی، نکته ی فنی، جزئیات بی اهمیت	_____
اطلاع دادن، آگاهانیدن از، اظهار کردن	_____
انتقال، رساندن، ارتباط، تماس، راه ارتباط	_____
به لحاظ فنی، از نظر فنی، در چارچوب قوانین	_____
تبلیغ کردن، آگهی کردن، اعلان کردن	_____
تبلیغات، صنعت تبلیغات، کار تبلیغات	_____
شبکه ی ارتباطات	_____
شیوه، روش، راهکار، تکنیک، فن	_____
فن شناسی، تکنولوژی، فناوری	_____
فنی، صنعتی، تخصصی	_____
مُتَخَصِّص، فناور، تکنیسین	_____
وسایل ارتباطات جمعی، رسانه های گروهی	_____
وسیله، ابزار، طریق، واسطه، رسانه	_____

\* \* \* \* \*

- The most popular among **Persian-English dictionaries** over the years has arguably been Solyman Haïm’s *The One-Volume Persian-English Dictionary*, its 1963 incarnation a book that never left my side in Mashhad. It contains 22,500 entries and is outdated but still useful if supplemented with lists or glossaries of (post-1960s) words.
- The most readily available Persian-English dictionary in the English-speaking world is likely the second half of *The Combined New Persian-English and English-Persian*

*Dictionary* by Abbas and Manoochehr Aryanpur Kashani (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1986). Outdated and not error-free but still useful, especially if supplemented with word lists or glossaries lists of post-early 1970s words, e.g., “... گرآ”/... gerā/ and “... گرایبی”/... gerāyi/ words for “... ists” and “... isms.”

- Among more recent one-volume Persian-English dictionaries, two seem to have somewhat wide circulation. First is *Kimia Persian-English Dictionary* (2006) by Karim Emami, which includes some colloquial/spoken [مُحاوره ای/گفتاری] and slang [عامیانه] words and expressions, marked as such, among its 20,000+ headwords. Second is *The Aryanpur Progressive Persian-English Dictionary: One Volume, Concise* (2007, 7th printing) by Manoochehr Aryanpur Kashani with Seyyed Mostafa Assi.

## 9.6 Mini-lesson #5

Here is a mini-lesson that introduces terms useful in talking about and reading Persian dictionaries and presents a text illustrating dictionary vocabulary.

§5.1 Study the following list of words and phrases on the subject of dictionaries. Then check your Persian-English dictionary to gauge any coverage limitations.

dictionary	فَرهَنگِ اُغَات
monolingual dictionary	فَرهَنگِ یَک زَبَانَه
two-directional dictionary, e.g., E-P, P-E	فَرهَنگِ دُوسُوِیَه
bilingual dictionary	فَرهَنگِ دُور زَبَانَه
specialized dictionary	فَرهَنگِ اِخْتِصَاصِی
reverse sort dictionary	فَرهَنگِ زَانَسُو
lexicography	فَرهَنگِ نُوِیْسِی، فَرهَنگِ نِگَارِی
headword	سَر مَدخَل
denotation	مَعْنِی، مَعْنِی صَرِیح
entry	مَدخَل
connotation	مَعْنِی ضِمْنِی
spelling	اِمْلَاء
association – association of ideas	تَدَاعِی تَدَاعِی مَعْنِی
pronunciation	تَلْفُظ
explanatory symbol <i>alāmát-e towzihi</i>	عَلَامَتِ نُوضِیْحِی
part of speech	قِسْمِ کَلِمَه، نُوعِ کَلِمَه، مَقُولَه ی نَحْوِی
abbreviation symbol . . . <i>ekhtesāri</i>	عَلَامَتِ اِخْتِصَاصِی
word root – source/origin ‘ <i>mabdá</i> ’, <i>manshá</i>	رِیْشَه ی کَلِمَه – مَبْدَأ، مَنشَأ
proper name	اِسْمِ خَاص
approximate equivalent	مُعَادِلِ تَقْرِیْبِی
definition	تَعْرِیْف
semantic arena/environment <i>howzéh</i>	حُوزَه ی مَعْنِایِی
synonym – antonym	مُتَرَادِف – مُتَضَاد
stress/accent mark(er) <i>ta(e)kyé</i>	عَلَامَتِ تَكْیَه
example, illustration	نِمْوَنَه، مِثَال
background information	اِطْلَاعَاتِ زَمِیْنَه ای

§5.2 The generic subordinating conjunction “که” can introduce relative clauses, as in these two examples. Note that an unstressed /i/ sound, written “ی”, appears at the end of the word about which the relative clause gives information.



۱. اسم کتابی که دیروز میخواندید چه بود؟ *esm-e ketābi keh*

What was the name of the book you were reading yesterday?

۲. به کتابی که واژه های يك زبان را همراه با معنی آنها نقل می کند “فرهنگ” می گویند. *be ketābi keh*

They call a book that reports on the words of a language together with their meanings a “dictionary.”

§5.3 Look over the following partial dictionary entry for the word “فرهنگ”, which denotes both “dictionary” and “culture.” Using the previously list, underscore dictionary terms in the text that appear on the list.

(اسم). (۱) کتابی که واژه های يك زبان را همراه با معنی آنها به همان *farhāng* فرهنگ زبان، یا واژه های يك زبان را به زبانی دیگر، معمولاً به ترتیب الفبایی نقل می کند و معمولاً آگاهی هایی درباره ی تلفظ، هویت دستوری، ریشه ی کلمه، و جز آنها به خواننده می دهد. لغت نامه، قاموس: فرهنگ بزرگ سخن، فرهنگ معین معین. (۲) کتابی که در آن واژه های مربوط به رشته ای از دانش یا موضوع خاصی شرح داده شده است.”

§5.4 Using data from the foregoing text, answer these questions.

۱. چه نوع اطلاعاتی را در مورد يك کلمه می توان در فرهنگ لغات (1) پیدا کرد؟

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_

What sorts of information about a given word can one find in a dictionary?

۲. در تعریف دوم (2) “فرهنگ”، چه چیزی اهمیت دارد؟

In the second definition of “dictionary,” what has particular importance?

۳. عبارت “a branch/field of knowledge” به فارسی چه می شود؟

What’s the Persian equivalent for the English phrase “a field/branch of knowledge”?

۴. دو کلمه ی مترادف با کلمه ی “فرهنگ” در متن بالا پیدا کنید.

Find two synonyms for the word /farhang/ in the foregoing text.

۵. يك نوع فرهنگ لغات اختصاصی زبان فارسی را نام ببرید.

Name one sort of specialized Persian dictionary.

§5.5 Use this translation to resolve questions about meaning in the foregoing text.

Dictionary. (1) A book which recounts the words of one language together with their meanings in the same language or the words of one language in another language, usually in alphabetical order, and which usually gives readers information about pronunciation, grammatical identity, word origin, and the like. *loghatnāmeḥ, qāmus: Sokhan Unabridged Dictionary, Mo'in's Persian Dictionary*. (2) A book in which words pertaining to a field of knowledge of a special(ized) subject have been explained: *Dictionary of Economics*.

\* \* \* \* \*

Theme-based Persian learner’s dictionaries, glossaries, phrase books, and frequency lists highlight the utility of threshold reading, listening, and speaking word lists in the design of instructional materials and ancillary materials in elementary Persian courses. In that regard, **specialized non-technical Persian dictionaries**, that is, dictionaries treating specific areas of Persian or Persian from a specific perspective, can also serve as valuable resources in teaching/learning vocabulary; for example, thesauri, reverse-sort dictionaries, dictionaries of Arabic loanwords in Persian, pronunciation dictionaries of proper names, dictionaries of onomatopoeic lexical items and phrases in Persian, dictionaries of “pure” Persian words, and dictionaries of neologisms. Among such resources, a reverse-sort dictionary and

a dictionary of Arabic loanwords would appear the most useful for vocabulary acquisition and expansion.

- Khosrow Keshani's *Dictionnaire inverse de la langue persane/Farhang-e Fārsi-ye Zānsu* [Reverse Order/Sort Persian Dictionary] (1993) offers readers examples of the sorts of word-ending elements to allow them to reach working generalizations about suffixes, verb stems, and other verb parts, and words that combine with pre-final elements. Mini-lesson #11 reviews uses of the letter *yeh* “ی” in word-final position, perhaps the most important word-ending element that a reverse-sort dictionary would highlight.
- Sayyed Mohammad Nahvi's *Farhang-e Risheh 'i-ye Vām'vāzheh-hā-ye 'Arabi yā Loghāt-e 'Arabi-ye Mosta'mal dar Fārsi* [Dictionary of the Roots of Arabic Loanwords or Arabic Words Used in Persian] (1989) is an easy-to-use guide in an Arabic dictionary style (i.e., entries appear in alphabetical order according to trilateral root systems presented at head-words) that can help learners get passive control of family groups of vocabulary items, rather than dealing with related words one at a time.

\* \* \* \* \*

The most important dictionary resources for students of Persian and potentially the richest source for vocabulary acquisition, maintenance, and expansion are **general Persian-Persian dictionaries** that define and illustrate headwords within the context of Persian itself. The unabridged *Loghat'nāmeḥ-ye Dehkhodā* and the slightly abridged *Farhang-e Mo'in* remain the best-known Persian-Persian dictionaries and standard resources for texts predating the 1970s. As for Persian-Persian dictionary coverage into the 21st century, *Farhang-e Bozorg-Sokhan* [Sokhan Comprehensive Dictionary] and Farhang Moaser's *Farhang'nāmeḥ-ye Fārsi: Vāzhgān va A'lām* [Persian Encyclopedical Dictionary: Lexicon and Proper Names] provide reliable coverage.

- *Sokhan Comprehensive Dictionary* includes headwords from “everyday conversation.” According to Chief Editor Anvari: The examples and citations are quoted from the works of 800 authors and poets, resulting in over 80,000 main entries, 40,000 sub-entries, and 170,000 examples and citations. These include the Persian word sources as well as examples and citations covering a period of twelve centuries.<sup>11</sup>
- *Farhang'nāmeḥ-ye Fārsi: Vāzhgān va A'lām* [Persian Encyclopedical Dictionary: Lexicon and Proper Names], 3 volumes (2009/10, 3,021 p.) by Gholāmhosayn Sadri Afshār, Nasrin Hakami, and Nastaran Hakami, features verb past stems and verb participles as headwords, but no present stem headwords. It concludes with a Bibliography that lists upwards of 200 dictionaries on the subject of, or otherwise relevant to, the study of Persian vocabulary.
- The just cited two dictionaries are indispensable for Persianists, while for everyday carry-with use, *Farhang-e Mo'āser-e Fārsi* [Contemporary Persian Dictionary], 4th edition (2004) by Gholāmhosayn Sadri Afshār, Nasrin Hakami, and Nastaran Hakami includes among its headwords a comprehensive list of prefixes, infixes, and suffixes, words and phrases from popular culture and entertainment media, and the colloquial/spoken register of Persian. But, it does not list verb present or past stems unless constituting lexical items in their own right or unless they serve as word-final components of multi-part words.

## 9.7 Mini-lesson #6

Thinking of already familiar Persian words and looking them up in *Sokhan Comprehensive Dictionary* or *Persian Encyclopedical Dictionary: Lexicon and Proper Names* makes for a useful vocabulary building and reinforcement exercise. The activity, repeated regularly, exposes learners to Persian definitions of familiar words, synonyms of those words, and authentic illustrations of them. Scanning headwords preceding and following a word in question often introduces words and phrases related to that word.

§6.1 Look up the verb infinitive “توانستن” [to be able] in *Sokhan Comprehensive Dictionary* and read the entry. Use your Persian-English dictionary to check the meanings of a few of the unfamiliar words in the entry. Reread the entry. Scan the headwords above and below the word in question.

§6.2 Look up the word “خُدا” [god, God] in *Persian Encyclopedical Dictionary* and read the entry. Use your Persian-English dictionary to check the meanings of a few of the unfamiliar words in the entry. Reread the entry. Then scan the (50+) headwords beneath “خُدا” to appreciate how prefixes, suffixes, verb stems and other parts, and other words combine with it.

§6.3 To facilitate use of Persian-Persian dictionaries, find and regularly look at a Persian-English list of Persian grammar terms.<sup>12</sup>

- Cited Persian-Persian dictionaries treat literary [ادبی] and bookish/written [کتابی/نوشتاری] registers of the language, leaving the colloquial/spoken [مُحاوره ای/گفتاری] and slang [عامیانه] registers untouched. Abolhasan Najafi’s comprehensive *Farhang-e Fārsi-ye ‘Āmiyāneh* [Colloquial/Slang Persian Dictionary] (1999/2000) presents thousands of authentic examples of headwords and headword phrases taken from 110+ prose works written between 1921 and the 1990s by writers born in Tehran.
- Among dictionary resources for oral, as opposed to written, colloquial/slang Persian, Mehdi Samā’i’s *Farhang-e Loghāt-e Zabān-e Makhfi* [A Persian Dictionary of Argot (lit: secret language)] (2003), which treats the slang of young people in Tehran, is a modest sample among a score of guides to Persian slang of various sorts.<sup>13</sup> As useful as such guides may prove as occasional resources, they may not figure significantly in high-frequency vocabulary acquisition.

## 9.8 Mini-lesson #7

As an illustration of the use of dictionary entries in Persian reading activities, here follows a sample reading unit called “A Dictionary Definition of Culture,” adapted from Gholāmrezā Ensāfpur’s *Kāmel Farhang-e Fārsi* [Comprehensive Persian Dictionary] (1994), which reminds readers that familiarity with Iranian culture plays an important role in reading competence at the intermediate/advanced level of Persian study.

§7.1 Read this list of Persian verb infinitives. Then scan the Persian text below for finite verb forms or noun/adjective words derived from the verb infinitives. Infinitives appear on the list in the order in which their related forms appear in the text.

to know <i>sth</i> – knowledge	دانیستن (دان) – دانش
to build – urban development, city planning – tool making	ساختن (ساز) – شهرسازی – ابزارسازی
to learn; to teach – teaching, instruction; education	آموختن (آموز) – آموزش
to raise, to nourish – nurturing, rearing; training, development	پروردن (پرور) – پرورش
to go – method	رفتن (رو) – روش
to wear; to put on clothes – clothing	پوشیدن (پوش) – پوشاک

to eat; to drink – food	خوردن (خور) – خوراک
to see – point of view, viewpoint	دیدن (بین) – دیدگاه
to know sb; to recognize – anthropology	شناختن (شناس) – انسان‌شناسی
to create – created; creature	آفریدن (آفرین) – آفریده
to live – nonliving	زیستن (زی) – غیر زیستی
to transfer	منتقل کردن
to pay; to undertake – theoreticians	پرداختن (پرداز) – نظریه پردازان
to designate; to appoint; to determine – decisive	تعیین کردن – تعیین کننده

§7.2 Now scan the text below for the Persian equivalents of these English words and phrases. The words and phrases appear on the list in the order in which they appear in the text.

1	architectural style(s)	.....
2	urban development, city planning	.....
3	education	.....
4	anthropological viewpoint	.....
5	theoreticians	.....
6	tool making	.....
7	distinction, distinctiveness	.....
8	mammals	.....

§7.2.1 Find any Persian terms on this answer list that you could not find in the text.

سبک‌معماری، شهرسازی، آموزش و پرورش، دیدگاه انسان‌شناسی، نظریه پردازان، ابزارسازی، تمایز، پستانداران

§7.3 Now scan the text to find the missing singular or plural form in these pairs of nouns.

Plural	Singular
.....	اثر
اخلاق	.....
.....	آداب
.....	آدبی
.....	پسینی
تمایزات	.....
آدیان	.....
.....	رسم
.....	صفت
.....	صنعت
.....	عقیده
.....	قاعده
مستحصات	.....
.....	مأثر
.....	معرفة
.....	مظهر
.....	موضوع
.....	میراث
نظریات	.....
انواع	.....
.....	واژه
.....	ویژگی

§7.4 Read these questions and then read this unit's text for answers.

۱. چهار نمونه از مجموعه معارف و آثار و مآثر ویژه مواریت تاریخی را نام ببرید.
۲. فرهنگ از دید انسان شناسی آفریده چیست؟
۳. فرهنگ چگونه بین افراد منتقل میشود؟
۴. مشترک ترین مشخصات انسان چیست؟
۵. اکثر نظریه پردازان چه چیزهایی را تعیین کننده تمایز بین انسان و دیگر پستانداران می دانند؟

§7.5 Read the text while listening to its recording. For remaining issues with meaning in the text, first consult a Persian dictionary and then refer to the translation beneath the text.

فرهنگ: مجموعه معارف و آثار و مآثر ویژه مواریت تاریخی هر ملت شامل: دانشها، واژگان زبان، ادبیات، دین و عقاید، صنایع، سبک معماری و شهرسازی، فولکلور، آیینها و آداب و رسوم و طرز معاشرت، شیوه آموزش و پرورش و روش زندگی، طرز آهنگهای موسیقی و موضوعات نقاشی و دیگر هنرها و همچنین ویژگیهای خلق و خوی و نوع پوشاک و خوراک و تمامی دیگر مظاهر زندگی ایشان. فرهنگ از دیدگاه انسانشناسی آفریده انسان است و او آن را از طریق غیر زیستی به پستانداران خود منتقل میکند. فرهنگ، مشترکترین مشخصه انسان است. احتمالاً اکثر نظریه پردازان، زبان و ابزارسازی و تنظیم قواعد جنسی را صفات مهم تعیین کننده تمایز انسان از دیگر پستانداران عالی می دانند. نقل قول از: کامل فرهنگ فارسی. بقلم غلامرضا انصاف پور. تهران: انتشارات زوار، ۱۳۷۳، ص ۷۸۳

§7.5.1 Text translation. Culture: The aggregate of knowledge/learning and historical monuments/works/traces and legacies left behind and characteristics of the historical legacy/heritage of every nation/people, consisting of: knowledge/learning, language vocabulary, literature, religion and beliefs, crafts/techniques/industries, style(s) of architecture and city planning, folklore, customs and manner of social intercourse, style/method of education and city planning, and, likewise, characteristics of behavior and disposition, and kinds of clothing and food and all of the manifestations of a people's life. From the viewpoint of anthropology, culture is a human creation and humanity transfers it in a nonliving way to its descendants. Culture is the most mutual/shared characteristic of human beings. The majority of theoreticians presumably consider language, tool making, and regulation of sexual rules as the important determining qualities of the superiority of human beings over other higher mammals.

\* \* \* \* \*

Upwards of 60 **Persian textbooks, manuals, and grammars** for classroom use by English-speaking learners have appeared since the mid-1990s.<sup>14</sup> This figure arguably exceeds the number of Persian programs at universities in the English-speaking world. The Routledge imprint, for example, publisher of *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy of Persian* (2020) appears on a dozen or more Persian titles published since 2000. A conclusion one might draw here is simply that university Persian instructors more often than not choose to design and teach their own instructional materials rather than adopt and adapt existing materials, while government organizations often commission or produce in-house instructional materials for their Persian courses and programs. As for the rationale behind teachers' preferences in these regards, four factors stand out. First, teachers in any given Persian program may not share language teaching and/or learning goals with teachers in other programs. Second, some textbook writers develop artificial reading and listening texts

and dialogues of their own, while others seem comfortable only with prompted and authentic texts. Third, differences exist in the views of Persian textbook writers concerning specific Persian features and phenomena and the Persian language register with which to describe and illustrate those phenomena. Fourth, Persian textbook writers may not share views teaching/learning methods and approaches and may privilege specific methods and approaches.

At the same time, in almost all cases, authors both describe prior field-testing of materials reflected in their books and acknowledge input by expert colleagues, editors, and students. This and impressions from reading such instructional materials can lead to the supposition that authors likely get good results when using their own textbooks, manuals, and grammars with their own methods. In addition, authors of Persian textbooks, manuals, and grammars offer specific rationales for their books on subjects already treated in other such books, but not usually with specific references to those other books. In fact, rarely do footnotes appear in Persian textbooks citing the work of other authors or of secondary and tertiary sources.

Readers also come across observations and generalizations such as these about Persian language phenomena in 21st-century Persian textbooks for speakers of English: (1) “The vowel system in Persian consists of six vowel sounds, all represented by the letter ‘ا’, called *alef*”; (2) The Persian alphabet has 32 letters – All of these, with the exception of the first letter *alef* ‘ا’ are consonants”; (3) “Seven letters of the alphabet never change their shape . . .”; (4) “I can think of only one word that begins with the long vowel *u* . . .”; (5) “[T]here is only one common word that ends with the sound ‘a’, and that is the informal word for ‘no’”; (6) “The letter *ye* is the first of two letters that function as both a consonant and a vowel”; (7) “The sound . . . /r/ . . . is the sound American English speakers make saying *gotta* as in *gotta go*”; (8) “When the letter *he-ye do cheshm* comes at the end of the word and is immediately preceded by a consonant, it makes an /e/ sound”; (9) “[W]e never write two of the same consonants in a row”; (10) “[T]he Persian sound *gh* [ق، غ] [is] like *r* in French”; (11) “[A]ll English questions sentences start off with the question words”; (12) “Direct objects of transitive verbs are always followed by / *rā*”; (13) “If the verb is intransitive then you will never use / . . . *rā*”; (14) “Whereas temporal clauses [in Persian] precede the main clause, purpose clauses always follow the main clause”; (15) “Although . . . *man, to, u*, et cetera have other uses, these are basically subject pronouns”; (16) “The passive is used in Persian only when the personal agent is not expressed. . . Persian hates the passive and uses ingenious methods to avoid it”; (17) “Not so many Arabic plurals are now in common use. . . The student’s only recourse is the dictionary” and “[T]he broken plurals of Arabic words are . . . hardly ever used in colloquial Persian”; (18) “[T]he subjunctive mood is used in sentences where the action is not definitely going to happen”; (19) “The subjunctive mood in Persian . . . always depends in some way upon or follows a primary verb in the indicative mood”; (20) “There is no sequence of tense in Persian”; (21) “The stress in Persian words generally falls on the last syllable of a word, with few exceptions. . . [T]he exceptions are mainly verbs”; (22) “Singular nouns always follow numbers in Persian” and “Nouns always remains singular after numbers”; (23) “[T]he subject is the person or thing doing the action”; (24) “All substantives (adjectives and nouns) are abstracted by suffixing *-i*. For substantives ending in *-e*, the abstraction is *-g*”; (25) “The plural suffix [-*ān*] . . . is used in formal and written Persian; never in colloquial Persian”; (26) “والدين” *vāledeyn* [parents] illustrates a so-called Arabic loanword ‘broken plural’ form”; (27) “When asking a question in Persian . . . just raise the intonation towards the end of the sentence”; (28) “Because all Persian verbs show the person and number of their subject in a suffix attached to the verb, subject pronouns can be omitted from a sentence”; (29) “عامیانه” *‘āmiyāneh* is the equivalent of ‘colloquial’”; (30) “In Persian, a quantified noun, i.e., a noun accompanied by a number, *never* takes the plural”; (31) “[A]djectives in Persian always follow the noun they qualify or describe”; and (32) mixed

bookish/written [کتابی/نوشتاری] and colloquial/spoken [محاوره ای/گفتاری] examples and texts are presented and discussed as if parts of a single standard register.

Counter-evidence in the form of authentic examples would appear to exist for all of the foregoing 32 statements. For example, Mini-lesson #8 issues the frequency of so-called broken plural forms of Arabic loanwords in Persian (Item #17), while the following mini-lesson addresses the issue of frequency of passive voice verb constructions (Item #16).

### 9.9 Mini-lesson #8

Passive voice verb forms and words making use of passive verb stems and parts are ubiquitous in Persian and a significant vocabulary acquisition focus.

§8.1 Here follow examples of the active and passive voice infinitives of four transitive verbs, (i.e., verbs that govern a direct object).

passive voice verb		active voice verb	
to be wanted/desired	خواستہ شدن	to want/to desire	خواستن
to be(come) disgraced	رُسا شدن	to disgrace	رُسا کردن
to wake up	بیدار شدن	to wake (sb) up	بیدار کردن
to get caught up/trapped	گرفتار شدن	to capture/trap (sb/sth)	گرفتار کردن

§8.2 The following chart presents affirmative active and passive voice forms in a bookish/written register for the transitive verb “دادن” (to give) in the various tenses and indicative, imperative, and subjunctive moods. Note that the passive voice of “دادن” consists of its past participle “داده” followed by conjugated forms of the verb “شدن” (to become) in all moods and tenses.

tense/mood	passive voice conjugated forms	active voice conjugated forms
<b>general indicative present</b>	<i>dādeh mishavad</i>	داده می شود <sup>13</sup> <i>mīdahad</i>
<b>present subjunctive/imperative</b>	<i>dādeh (be)shavad</i>	داده بشود، داده شود <sup>14</sup> <i>bēdahad</i>
<b>present continuous</b>	<i>dārad dādeh mishavad</i>	دارد داده می شود <sup>15</sup> <i>dārad mīdahad</i>
<b>future</b>	<i>dādeh khāhad shod</i>	داده خواهد شد <sup>16</sup> <i>khāhad dād</i>
<b>simple past</b>	<i>dādeh shod</i>	داده شد <sup>17</sup> <i>dād</i>
<b>past repetitive</b>	<i>dādeh mishod</i>	داده می شد <sup>18</sup> <i>mīdād</i>
<b>past continuous</b>	<i>dāshd dādeh mishod</i>	داشت داده می شد <sup>19</sup> <i>dāshd mīdād</i>
<b>present perfect</b>	<i>dādeh shodēh 'ast</i>	داده شده است <sup>20</sup> <i>dādeh 'ast</i>
<b>perfect subjunctive</b>	<i>dādeh shodēh bāshad</i>	داده شده باشد <sup>21</sup> <i>dādeh bāshad</i>
<b>perfect repeated/continuous</b>	<i>dādeh mishodēh 'ast</i>	داده می شده است <sup>22</sup> <i>mīdādeh 'ast</i>
<b>past perfect</b>	<i>dādeh shodēh bud</i>	داده شده بود <sup>23</sup> <i>dādeh bud</i>
<b>perfective past perfect</b>	<i>dādeh shodēh budeh 'ast</i>	داده شده بوده است <sup>24</sup> <i>dādeh budeh 'ast</i>
		است <sup>12</sup>

§8.2.1 Here follow translations of the foregoing verb forms, numbered according to the numbers accompanying the forms.

He/she gives (sth, e.g., every day). <sup>2</sup>He'd/she'd like to give (sth – subjunctive). He/she should give (sth – imperative). <sup>3</sup>He's/she's giving (sth now). <sup>4</sup>He'll/she'll give (sth tomorrow). <sup>5</sup>He/she gave (sth yesterday). <sup>6</sup>He/she used to give (sth a lot). <sup>7</sup>He/she was in the middle of giving (sth, e.g., when I saw him/her). <sup>8</sup>He's/she's given (sth, e.g., a number of times). <sup>9</sup>It's possible that he's/she's given (sth, but I can't remember). <sup>10</sup>When he/she lived in New York, he/she used to give (things). <sup>11</sup>By the time I got to the store, he/she had already given (sth). <sup>12</sup>The shop which I went to regularly last year he/she had given (things to before then).

<sup>13</sup>It is given (e.g., every day). <sup>14</sup>I'd like for it to be given/not to be given (subjunctive). It should be given (imperative). <sup>15</sup>It's being given (there right now). <sup>16</sup>It'll be given (there tomorrow). <sup>17</sup>It was given (yesterday). <sup>18</sup>It used to be given (out regularly). <sup>19</sup>It was being given (away when I saw him/her). <sup>20</sup>It has been given (a number of times). <sup>21</sup>It's possible that it has (already) been given (but I don't know for sure). <sup>22</sup>Years back, such a discount was (routinely) given to customers. <sup>23</sup>It had been given (to her before you got to Texas). <sup>24</sup>(Before I started working at the university, a lot of money) had been given to it for Persian Studies.

§8.3 Here follows a list of the active and passive voice infinitives for pairs of verbs. Note that the passive voice of most verbs consists of its past participle followed by conjugated forms of the verb “شدن” (to become) in all moods and tenses. However, the verb “کردن” (to make, to do), when transitive, forms its passive by substituting forms of the verb “شدن” (to become) in all moods and tenses, including its infinitive “کردن”, which becomes “شدن” (to become). An asterisk (\*) follows specifically colloquial/spoken forms.

to become	❑ شدن (شَو، ش*)	to make, to do	❑ کردن (کُن)
to be(come) implemented/ performed	❑ اجراء شدن	to implement, to execute, to perform	❑ اجراء کردن
to be(come) distributed/ broadcast	❑ پخش شدن	to distribute, to dis- seminate, to broadcast	❑ پخش کردن
to be(come) eliminated	❑ حذف شدن	to eliminate, to omit	❑ حذف کردن
to be(come) used, to be made use of	❑ استفاده شدن	to use, to make use of <i>vi</i>	❑ استفاده کردن (آز)
to be(come) named	❑ نامیده شدن	to name, to call	❑ نامیدن (نام)
to be(come) read/sung	❑ خوانده شدن	to read; to study; to sing	❑ خواندن، خواندخوان، خون*
to be(come) built/made/ constructed	❑ ساخته شدن	to build	❑ ساختن (ساز)
to be(come) undertaken	❑ پرداخته شدن	to pay; to proceed (to begin/do)	❑ پرداختن (پرداز)
to be(come) known	❑ شناخته شدن	to know <i>sb</i>	❑ شناختن (شناس)
to be(come) given	❑ داده شدن	to give	❑ دادن (ده)
to be(come) seen	❑ دیده شدن	to see	❑ دیدن (بین)



to be(come) composed/ sung	<input type="checkbox"/> سروده شدن	to compose/write poetry	<input type="checkbox"/> سرودن (سرا)
to be(come) obtained	<input type="checkbox"/> گرفته شدن	to get, to obtain, to receive	<input type="checkbox"/> گرفتن (گیر)
to be(come) said	<input type="checkbox"/> گفته شدن	to say, to tell	<input type="checkbox"/> گفتن (گو، گ،* )
to be(come) kept	<input type="checkbox"/> نگاه داشته شدن	to keep, to preserve, to withhold	<input type="checkbox"/> نگاه داشتن (دار)
to be performed	<input type="checkbox"/> به اجراء گذاشته شدن	to perform	<input type="checkbox"/> به اجراء گذاشتن (گذار، دار*)

§8.4 Study the following list of verb forms of “شدن” [to become] and of noun/adjective words that incorporate its verb parts or stems.

verb infinitive	to become	1. شدن
verb past stem; 3rd person singular, simple past tense verb	he/she/it became; it happened	2. شد . . .
past participle	having become, having taken place	3. شده . . .
verb present stem: bookish/ written – colloquial/spoken		4. شو – ش – *ش . . .
impersonal construction	one can . . . , it is possible	5. می شود . . . – همیشه* . . .
future tense	it will become/take place/happen	6. خواهد شد . . .
simple past tense	it became/it took place (once)	7. شد . . .
<i>mi</i> -past tense: repeated/continuous past action/verbal state	it used to happen	8. میشد . . .
present perfect tense	it has happened/it has become	9. شده است . . .
past perfect tense	it had become . . . /it had taken place	10. شده بود . . .
infinitive + /i/ adjective form	doable – forgettable	11. شدنی – فراموش شدنی
negative infinitive + /i/ adjective form	undoable – unforgettable	12. نشدنی – فراموش نشدنی
past participle preceded by noun/adj	lost (person) pl: lost persons	13. گم شده ج. گم شدگان
	person raised in . . . <i>pl</i> : people raised in	14. بزرگ شده ج. بزرگ . . . شدگان
suffixed present stem	collapsible, foldaway	15. شو : تاشو . . .
suffixed present participle in . . . <i>andéh</i>		16. شونده – پاک شونده – دور شونده – مُنْفَجِر شونده . . .
past verb stem	becoming – becoming clean – become far(ther) away – explosive traffic	17. آمد و شد

§8.5 Read these sentences illustrating the foregoing verb tense and mood forms of the verb “شدن”. Note that subjunctive and imperative forms can appear without a /be/ prefix in the case of multi-word verbs in which “شدن” is the verbal element. Circle the number of any item that reflects passive meanings.

۱. هوا سرد شد.  
The weather got cold.
  ۲. کتابم که گم شده بود پیدا شد.  
My book that had gotten lost turned up/was found.
  ۳. یا شوم یا پیشینم؟/یا شتم یا پیشینم؟\*  
Shall I stand up or sit?
  ۴. خفه شوید!/خفه شین!\*
  ۵. تَشُد بَریم.\*  
Shut up.
  ۶. امیدوارم در امتحان مُوقِّف شده باشند.  
We couldn't go (e.g., sth came up).
  ۷. آگه کارم زودتر تموم بشه، باهات میام.\*  
I hope they did well in/on the test/examination.
  ۸. دو و سه میشه پنج.\*  
If my work finishes more quickly/earlier, I'll come/I'm coming with you.
  ۹. می شُود امیدوار بود که زیاد شوند.  
Two plus three makes five.
  ۱۰. در چنین مواقعی من همیشه وسوسه می شُده ام که آخر چرا با سی و هشت بار نشود؟  
One can be hopeful that they'll increase (in number).
  ۱۱. فرار شد مُرَتَّب باشم.  
At such moments I was always tempted to say: Why mightn't it work after thirty-eight times?
  ۱۲. در این خَبَر از چه کسی نقل قول شُده است؟  
I was supposed to be organized/well behaved.
  ۱۳. همین باعث می شود که از رفتن به هر جا که قصد داشته اید مُنصَرَف بشوید، یا فلان دلخوری را بَهانه کنید.  
In this news item what person has been quoted?
- This very thing causes you to change your mind about going wherever you planned to go and to use such-and-such irritation, annoyance as an excuse.

Looked at in the aggregate, 21st-century Persian textbooks for speakers of English<sup>15</sup> highlight a handful of issues only tentatively or temporarily resolved in individual cases and desirable emphases are addressed. First is the possibly problematic issue of convening a communicative classroom environment using a textbook that privileges the bookish/written register of Tehran Persian. In other words, what would the language of classroom instruction and discussion be for learners using such textbooks? Second is the apparent reticence on the part of textbook authors to teach reading and writing making use of colloquial/spoken Persian forms in Perso-Arabic script. Third, although existing Persian textbooks and teaching grammars pay attention to vocabulary, primarily in the form of lists and glossaries, that attention does not often involve exercises and activities that draw attention to shortcuts in learning word patterns and forms.

Despite recent lexicographical attention to colloquial/slang [*mohāvereh* 'i/'*āmiyāneh*] registers of the contemporary Fārsi Persian language, much Persian textbook writing continues to privilege the *ketābi/neveshtāri* [bookish/written] register of the language. The rationale for this focus presumably relates to the fact that most published Persian writing and much media broadcasting appear in bookish/written Persian. In addition, for learners of Persian whose interest in the language relates to written texts, for example, Persian literature, a focus on bookish/written Persian makes sense. Moreover, even for Persian learners whose main aim is

proficiency/competence in speaking Persian, the most efficient way of expanding vocabulary is arguably through reading.

As for the argument for privileging colloquial/spoken Persian, the fact that native speakers of Persian themselves learn colloquial first and then bookish and that English-speaking learners might do the same with shortcuts may suggest their learning colloquial/spoken first. Moreover, initial exposure to colloquial/spoken Persian makes possible a communicative classroom environment from the outset, which is why some Persian instructors devote the first semester of university Persian courses to colloquial/spoken listening, speaking, reading, and writing and then introduce differences between colloquial/spoken and bookish/written registers, thereafter treating the two registers in tandem with a focus on authentic listening, speaking, and reading texts.

Also, it may make no difference in terms of development of Persian reading skills to which register learners are first exposed. A more salient issue here might have to do with the fact that most Persian textbooks appear not to base their treatment of Persian reading from alphabet instruction to intermediate/advanced texts on identifiable reading methods, including strategies for scanning, skimming, gisting, inferring, and the like, or on methodologically grounded attention to vocabulary acquisition. For example, the function of Persian-English and English-Persian translation exercises accompanying reading texts in many textbooks seems unclear. If such exercises intend to test learner comprehension of Persian sentences, might not the exercise of reading sentences aloud sometimes accomplish the same purpose insofar as all but the simplest Persian sentences are problematic to read aloud if the reader does not know how their parts relate to one another and to the whole?

\* \* \* \* \*

If **beginning** students of Persian are introduced to **Persian reading** letter-by-letter with letters illustrated in unfamiliar words chosen to illustrate a letter in question, that process seems not to parallel the ordinary business of elementary reading, which is to recognize already known words by discerning their written representation. Now, it so happens that beginning students of Persian already know the meaning of several thousand Persian words, loanwords from French and English. Mohammad Mo'in's *Persian Dictionary* has entries for 5,000 such words divisible into two groups: words that contain only written vowel sounds and words that contain short, unwritten vowel sounds. Words in the former group are pronounced as written, while readers have to know beforehand or to guess the short vowel sounds in many words in the latter group.

Taking advantage of the existence of thousands of French and English loanwords in Persian, beginning Persian reading instruction/learning can take place with a word-method approach, according to which alphabet letters are introduced in the context of words whose meanings learners already know. The following descriptions and exercises illustrate one process or method of teaching/learning the Persian alphabet in the context of useful, already familiar words and the development of reading skills in the context of groups of words and words that contain unwritten short vowels.

## 9.10 Mini-lesson #9

The following descriptions and exercises illustrate a method of teaching/learning the Persian alphabet in the context of useful, already familiar words and the development of elementary reading skills such as scanning in the context of groups of words and words that contain unwritten short vowels.<sup>16</sup>

§9.1 All of the letters in the Persian alphabet are conventionally considered to represent consonant sounds. However, the three letters *aléf*, *vāv*, and *yeh*, when not the first letter of a word, may represent, respectively, the vowel sounds /ā/, /u/, and /i/. And the letter “هـ”, usually called *héh-ye do cheshm* [two-eyed *heh*] often represents the sound /é/ when it is the last letter of a word (written “هـ” or “ه”).

Except in the case of Arabic loanwords beginning with the letter ‘*eyn*’ (described in a later unit), if a word begins with the vowel sounds /ā/, /u/, or /i/, it is written as follows.

Asia	<i>āsiyā</i>	آسيا	free	<i>āzād</i>	آزاد	آ = ا + ا	<i>ā</i>
August	<i>ut</i>	اوت	he/she, him/her	<i>u</i>	او	او = و + ا	<i>u</i>
Italy	<i>itāliyā</i>	ایتالیا	this	<i>in</i>	این	ای = ی + ا	<i>i</i>

When the letter *aléf* begins a word, it is considered a consonant, representing a soundless pause called a glottal stop. Thus, the word “آسیا”, pronounced /’āsiyā/, begins with two *aléfs*, one written vertically and the other over it horizontally, representing /’/ followed by /ā/.

When the letter *ye* begins a word, it represents a /y/ sound.

یونان	یاس	یاد	یا
Greece	jasmine	memory	or

The letter *ye* in the middle or at the end of a word can represent /i/, /y/, or /ay/ (as in the words “day” and “hey”). For example:

chemistry	<i>shimí</i>	شیمی	.	chic	<i>shik</i>	شیک	/i/
truck	<i>kāmyún</i>	کامیون	.	Asian	<i>āsiyāyi</i>	آسیایی	/y/
when?	<i>kay</i>	کی	.	cake	<i>kayk</i>	کیک	/ay/

When medial *aléf* precedes *ye* in the same syllable, the *ye* represents /y/ and combines with *aléf* to produce the sound /āy/ (as in the English word “sigh”). For example, the Persian word for “tea” is “چای”, pronounced /chāy/.

When the letter *vāv* begins a written word, it represents a /v/ sound.

ویزیت	وانیل	ویلا	ویزا	ویسکی	ویتامین
visit (to a doctor)	vanilla	villa	visa	whiskey	vitamin

The letter *vāv* in the middle or at the end of a word can represent /u/, /v/, /o/ [as in the word “tote”], and /ow/ [as in the words “mow,” “row,” and “tow”]. For example:

hair	<i>mu</i>	مو	.	museum	<i>muzéh</i>	موزه	/u/
demon, devil	<i>div</i>	دیو	.	kiwi (fruit)	<i>kiví</i>	کیوی	/v/
two	<i>do</i>	دو	.	hot dog	<i>sosís</i>	سوسیس	/o/
wave	<i>mowj</i>	موج	.	soda water, soda	<i>sowdā</i>	سودا	/ow/

Read this list of European loanwords aloud. Each word features a “و” letter pronounced /o/ (as in the words “so” or “go”). Then listen to a reading or audio recording of the list.

- تانگو • دیالوگ • سودا • سوسیالیست • سوسیالیستی • سوسیالیسم • سوسیس • سونا • سونات • کامیون • کیوسک • گارسون • جوك • ماندولین • میلیون • یوگا • یویو • تونیک

English equivalents. Line 1 (from right to left): tango, dialogue, soda (water), socialist, socialistic. Line 2: socialism, hot dog, sauna, sonata, kiosk, waiter /gārson/, joke. Line 3: mandolin, million /miliyūn/, yoga, yo-yo, tonic/tonic.

§9.2 Scanning European loanwords that exhibit only written vowels in Perso-Arabic script. In each of the following groups of words, match the Persian term to the right with the appropriate English description or synonym to the left.

modern art style ____	کپیتالیست	6 racist political policy ____	1 آپراتاید
investor in business ____	صوفی	7 wound application ____	2 آر. پی. جی
vehicle type ____	جیب	8 meal set out on a table ahead of time ____	3 بانداز
Muslim mystic ____	مزوخیست	9 military weapon ____	4 بورژوا
person with mental disorder ____	کوبیسم	10 middle-class person ____	5 بوفه

§9.3 Select the English vocabulary subject or category from the list following that best identifies each of the rows of Persian vocabulary items beneath it. A sample answer is given.

1	Animals	2	Art	3	Athletics/Sports
4	Clothing	5	Food	6	Geography
7	Health (Mental)	8	Music	9	Nationalities
10	Politics	11	Science	12	Technology
13	Transportation	14	War	15	Weather/Climate

..... animals.....	۱. لاما – پاندا – کوالا – راکون – گوریل
.....	۲. پاستا – ماکارونی – دونات – سالاد
.....	۳. کاندید/کاندیدا – پارتیزان – کاست – میتینگ
.....	۴. پارانویا – سادیسم – مالیخولیا – مزوخیسم
.....	۵. لاکروس – ژیمناستیک – بیس بال – راگبی
.....	۶. ریکشا – موتور – ماشین – جیب – کامیون
.....	۷. دیکتافون – فاکس – فیوز – سونار – فیلم
.....	۸. چین – آلاسکا – کانادا – روسیه – لیبی – پاریس
.....	۹. فیزیک – شیمی – بیولوژی – ادیولوژی
.....	۱۰. جاز – راک – سالسا – سامبا – دیسکو – سونات

§9.4 The following matching exercises (#1–6 and #7–12) show that guessing the meaning of many words with unwritten short vowels need not prove daunting when words appear in context (e.g., in a text or on a list of words or phrases with English equivalents).

____ kind of political system	جغرافیایی	7	____ Middle Eastern city	1 ترومن
____ military rank	دموکراسی	8	____ American president	2 تزار
____ much-liked flavor	ژنرال	9	____ Russian leader	3 تکنولوژی
____ European country	سمبل	10	____ type of mass media	4 تل آویو
____ having to do with space/place	شکلات	11	____ modern applied science	5 تلویزیون
____ sign for something else	صرب	12	____ Asian country	6 ژاپن

Answer key. (1) Truman /terumān/, (2) czar /tezār/, (3) technology /teknolozhí/, (4) Tel Aviv /telāvív/, (5) television /televiziýón/, (6) Japan /zhāpón/, (7) geographic(al) /joghrafīyāyí/, (8) democracy /demokrāsí, (9) general /zhenerāl/, (10) symbol /samból/, (11) chocolate/shokolāt/, and (12) Serbia /serb/.

### 9.11 Mini-lesson #10

Using European loanwords to illustrate the “کسره ی اضافه” *kasrêh-ye ezâfeh* construction.

§10.1 English adjectives usually precede the nouns they qualify, as in the phrases “the **big** book” and “a **red** house.” The same holds true for possessives used with the things possessed, as in the phrases “**my** book” and “**your** car.” But in Persian phrases the noun usually comes first and the adjective, possessive pronoun, or other modifier follows. In addition, an unstressed /e/ sound (pronounced as the “e” in the word “fed”) appears between the noun and following modifier. The phrase *kasrêh-ye ezâfeh* [short /e/ sound added] is the Persian term for this pattern. Here follow examples of the unstressed /e/ sound pronounced between nouns and following modifiers.

تیم فوتبال	•	کلاس فارسی	•	ماشین کادیلاک
/tim-e futbâl/		/kelâs-e fârsi/		/mâshin-e kâdilâk/
فیلم ایرانی		توپ تنیس		مبل شیک نو
/film-e irâni/		/tup-e tenis/		/mobl-e shik/

§10.2 In phrases such as these, use of the *kasrêh-ye ezâfeh* between a noun and its modifier(s) is essential for the relationship between the two to be understood. In other words, failure to pronounce the sound /e/ between the modified word and its modifier(s) can confuse a listener.

In the following two exercises (#1–8 and #9–16), match modified words in the left columns with modifying words in the right column. Then read the resulting phrases aloud, making certain to pronounce an unstressed /e/ sound between the two words in each pair. Verify your choices and pronunciation by listening to the relevant audio file.

سوسیس	_____	فستيوال	9	تَلْفَن	_____	کُد	1
ديجيتال	_____	رستوران	10	لوکس	_____	تَلْفَن	2
شیرازی	_____	ساندويچ	11	تِرانزِستوری	_____	کارت	3
اسکی	_____	بُمب	12	موبایل	_____	سويچ	4
شیک	_____	پُمپ	13	فیلم	_____	سانسور	5
اَتَمی	_____	تِلویزیون	14	پَسْتی	_____	پروژکتور	6
فیلم	_____	پیست	15	اسلاید	_____	ماشین	7
بنزین	_____	سالاد	16	ماشین	_____	رادیو	8

§10.3 When the first or qualified word in a phrase, such as those presented earlier, ends in a consonant sound, the *kasreh-ye ezâfeh* is an unstressed sound /é/ and is not written. When the qualified or modified word ends in a vowel sound, the *kasreh-ye ezâfeh* is pronounced /ye/ and must sometimes be represented in writing. For example, when the first or qualified word in a phrase ends in the sound /i/, the *kasreh-ye ezâfeh* is pronounced /ye/, and nothing is written. But when the qualified word ends in /â/ or /u/, the *kasreh-ye ezâfeh* is pronounced /ye/ and represented by the letter “ی”. When the qualified word ends in the vowel sound /é/, represented by the letter *heh-ye do chéshm* (“. . .”), *kasreh-ye ezâfeh* is pronounced /ye/ and need not be represented in writing, but it can appear in writing either as an independent “ی” or as a *hamzê*-like character “ء” sometimes called *sâr-e ye* (the top of *ye*). Here follow examples of the cited possibilities.

مایوی دو تکه	تاکسی آژانس	قالی ایرانی
<i>mâyó-ye do tekké</i>	<i>tâksi-ye âzhâns</i>	<i>qâli-ye irâni</i>
two-piece bathing suit	telephone taxi service	Persian carpet
الغبای فارسی	ویزای توریستی	آمریکای لاتین

<i>alefbā-ye fārsi</i> هو اېفبای چت	<i>vizā-ye turisti</i> آقای اسمیت	<i>āmrikā-ye lātin</i> دانشجوی کانادایی
<i>havāpaymā-ye jet</i> jet airplane اداره تلفن	<i>āqā-ye esmīt</i> Mr. Smith اداره ی گمرک	<i>dāneshju-ye kānādā'i</i> Canadian college student اداره پلیس
<i>edārēh-ye telefōn</i> telephone company	<i>edārēh-ye gomrōk</i> customs office	<i>edārēh-ye polīs</i> police department (lit: office)

§10.4 In the following two exercises (#1–8 and #9–13), match the modified words in the right columns with modifying words to the left. Then read the resulting phrases aloud, making certain to pronounce an unstressed /ye/ sound between the two words in each pair. Verify your choices and pronunciation by listening to a reading or the accompanying audio file. Note that Items 9–13 feature prepositions that take *kasre-ye ezāfē*.

دبپلماتیک _____	آمریکای 1
آژانس _____	آسیای 2
لاتین _____	تاکسی 3
پریتانیا _____	سینمای 4
ایرانیزه _____	ویزای 5
آوان گارد _____	موزه ی 6
مرکزی _____	آمریکایی 7
لیبرال _____	ایرانی 8
برای _____	پارک 9
روی _____	میز 10
درباره ی _____	شما 11
توی _____	فلسفه 12
روبروی _____	خانه 13

\* \* \* \* \*

Even at an advanced level of Persian study, English-speaking learners exhibit occasional uncertainty about the pronunciation of certain letters and combinations of letters and about the transcription of certain sounds. Here is a partial list of potentially problematic pronunciation and transcription issues: (1) pronouncing unfamiliar words which contain unwritten vowel sounds, (2) placing word stress or accent either on a word's last syllable or on another syllable, (3) confronting multiple letters representing the same sounds in the cases of /t/, /h/, /s/, /z/, and /ʔ/, (4) pronunciation of the letter *vāv* “و” in written texts, (5) pronunciation of the letter *ye* “ی” in written texts, (6) pronunciation of the letter *alef* “ا” in written texts, (7) shifting back and forth from bookish/written [کتابی/نوشتاری] or literary [ادبی] Persian to colloquial/spoken Persian, and (8) using *kasrēh-ye ezāfēh* in noun phrases (*kasrēh* = *zir*).

Resolving doubts about what a specific written feature in Persian means and/or how to pronounce and/or use it can often be a simple matter of reviewing a sufficient number of representative examples of that feature or phenomenon to reach a tentative inductive conclusion about it. A suggested plan of attack with respect to some of the issues cited previously might involve writing down and continually cataloging examples of a feature or form and then

reviewing one's list to see if a common denominator or a descriptive rule for it becomes apparent. Some of the cited issues relate directly to vocabulary acquisition.

### 9.12 Mini-lesson #11

A review of uses of the letter *ye* “ی” in word-final position, where it is pronounced /i/ with a word stress or accent, /i/ without a word stress, /y/ with a preceding a or following /e/ sound, or /ā/.

§11.1 The letter *ye* (ی) routinely appears in word-final position pronounced /i/ with the word stress or accent falling on the word's last syllable in the case of nouns and adjectives that end in “... ی”.

ship	کشتی	game/play(ing)	بازی
empty	خالی	kettle	کتری
nature – natural	طبیعت – طبیعی	meaning	معنی

In the case of words that end in “... ی” pronounced /... i/, replacing the noun ending /... át/ with “... ی” produces an adjective. The pairs of words in Group 4 are loanwords from Arabic in which such adjective-producing forms are common. The addition of a stressed “... ی” /... i/ suffix to nouns and adjectives in Persian is the most common way to produce nouns from adjectives and adjectives from nouns. The following groups of words illustrate possibilities.

America, American	آمریکا – آمریکایی، آمریکائی	bad... evil	بد – بدی
putting on airs - haughty... expressing;	إفاده – إفاده ای	witty joke	... شوخ – شوخی
house, domestic	خانه – خانگی	earth-dusty, down-to-earth, dirt,	خاک – خاکی
France – French (person)	فرانسه – فرانسوی	wood – wooden, made of wood	چوب – چوبی
photographer – photography	عکاس – عکاسی	paper (n. – adj.)	کاغذ – کاغذی
painter – painting	نقاش – نقاشی	American automobile	ماشین آمریکائی
psychologist – psychology	روانشناس – روانشناسی	French food <i>ghazā-ye farānsavi</i>	غذای فرانسوی
temporary wife (in Shi'ite societies) <i>sique'i</i>	زن صیغه ای	homemade wine	شراب خانگی
		worth seeing	دینگی

Word-final “... ی” also appears with an unstressed /... i/ pronunciation, as in the second-person singular (you-1 or “تو”) verb forms. Note that the pronunciation of the you-1 ending “... ی” changes from /i/ to /y/ if the last letter of the present stem that precedes it is *alef* (ا), pronounced ā, in accordance with the rule that two letters both representing vowels do not appear next to one another. A letter “و” or “ی” next to a medial “ا” is pronounced /v/ or /y/, respectively.

A second sort of unstressed word-final /... i/ suffix appears at the end of the word “چیزی” *chizi* [something, anything] as a sign of indefiniteness. Here follow other examples.



by the hour	<i>sā'āti</i>	ساعتی book – a book	<i>ketābi</i>	کتاب – کتابی
per day	<i>rūzi</i>	روزی (some) books	<i>ketābhāyi</i>	کتابهایی – کتابهایی
each week	<i>hafté 'i</i>	هفته ای country – a country	<i>keshvári</i>	کشور – کشوری
per-month	<i>māhi</i>	ماهی (some) countries	<i>keshvarhāyi</i>	کشورهای – کشورهایی
		thing – a/some thing	<i>chízi</i>	چیز – چیزی
		(some) things	<i>chizhā 'I</i>	چیزهایی – چیزهایی
		person – a person	<i>kási</i>	کس – کسی
		some people.		کسانی
		person – a person	<i>shákhsi</i>	شخص – شخصی
		some persons	<i>ashkhási</i>	اشخاص – اشخاصی
		program – a program	<i>barnāmé 'i</i>	برنامه – برنامه ای
		some programs	<i>barnāme 'hā 'i</i>	برنامه هایی
		an old man	<i>mard-e mosénni</i>	مرد مُسنی
		several moments		لَحظاتی چَند
		tiring days		روزهایی مَلاَل آنگیز
		irrelevant statements		خَرف های چَرتی
		incurable illnesses		بیماری هایی لاعلاج
		awful/useless people		آدمهای مُزخَرفی
		outstanding writers		نویسنَدگانی بَرجست
		annually – How much per year		سالی – سالی چَند؟
		What person?		چه شَخصی؟
		What a beautiful day. . .		چه روز قَشنگی!
		What book		چه کتابی؟
What an awful movie		چه فیلم مُزخَرفی!		در چه سالی؟
What a mistake		چه اِشْتباهی کردم!		چه رابطه ای؟
I made				
What a trick he/she		چه خُفّه ای زد!		چه نُوع حُکومتی؟
pulled! ( <i>hoqqé 'i</i> )		What sort of government? ( <i>now', no</i> )		

§11.2 An unstressed / . . . i/ sound represented by “ . . . ی ” also appears at the end of words that function as antecedents for relative and other subordinate clauses introduced by “که”, as the following phrases and examples illustrate.

the person who	<i>kási ke</i>	کسی که
when, at the time which	<i>váqti ke</i>	وَقتی که . . .
the people who		کسانی که . . .
while		در حالی که . . .
the words which		كَلِماتی که . . .
in the event that		در صورتی که . . .
the programs which		برنامه هایی ك . . .
as long as, until		تا زمانی که . . .
despite the fact that		با وجودی که . . .
the chair which		صندلی ای که . . .

§11.3 In the so-called *ezāfēh* construction گسره ی اضافه “ی” pronounced /y/ appears at the end of words ending in “ . . . ا ” / . . . ā/ or “ . . . و ” / . . . u/ followed by a modifier. In the case of words ending in “ . . . ه ” / . . . é/, some writers use the letter “ی”. The following examples illustrate the possibilities.

good book	<i>ketāb-e khúb</i>	1. کتابِ خوب
easy chair	<i>sandali-ye rāhati</i>	2. صندلی راحتی
Latin America	<i>āmrikā-ye lātin</i>	3. آمریکای لاتین
superior college student	<i>dāneshjū-ye momtāz</i>	4. دانشجوی ممتاز
on the subject of/about war	<i>dar bārē-ye jang</i>	5. درباره ی جنگ
	<i>dar bārē-ye jang</i>	درباره جنگ
	<i>dar bārē-ye jang</i>	درباره جنگ

\* \* \* \* \*

### 9.13 Mini-lesson #12

It used to be that university students serious about the study of the Persian language got directed to Arabic language courses that would presumably help them deal efficiently with the Arabic element in Persian. However, one can argue that only Persian students interested in reading texts such as medieval Persian prose and verse need to learn Arabic. Otherwise, Persian instructional materials developers could design syllabi that introduce the Arabic element in Persian as part of the Persian language and arrange that element to identify descriptive Persian categories and rules for it.<sup>17</sup> This mini-lesson illustrates that approach.

§12.1 Read the following list of Arabic loanwords exhibiting a *h+k+m* “حکم” root system. Triliteral consonantal root systems of families of related words are a core feature of Arabic loanwords in Persian.

order, decree; sentence	حُکْم ج. أَحْکَام
philosophy, wisdom, knowledge	حُکْمَت ج. حُکْم
sage, wise man, philosopher	حُکْمِی ج. حُکْمَا
governor; magistrate; judge; dominant, ruling	حَاکِم ج. حُکَّام
ruling, dominant	حَاکِمَه
rulership, ruling, authority, sovereignty	حَاکِمِیَّت
condemned, sentenced, convicted – sentence	مَحْکُوم – مَحْکُومیَّت
law court	مَحْکَمَه م. مَحْکَم
arbitration, mediation, judgment	حُکْمِیَّت
strengthening, fortifying	تَحْکِیْم
trial, hearing, tribunal	مُحَاکِمَه ج. مُحَاکِمَات
strengthening – firm, strong, secure(ly)- firmness	اِحْکَام – مُحْکَم – مُحْکَمِی
bossiness, domineering behavior	تَحْکُّم
solidness, firmness, strength, fortification- fortifications	اِسْتِحْکَام – اِسْتِحْکَامَات
fortified, firm	مُسْتَحْکَم

§12.2 Knowing the basic meaning of a root system and the sorts of meanings that derived patterns give to the root idea can make possible educated guesses about the meaning of most Arabic loanwords in context as well as about their pronunciation. For example, the following Arabic loanword forms, described with the number “1” for the first of three root letters, “2” for the second root letter, and “3” for the third root letter of triliteral root systems, communicate the modes presented within parentheses. Identify a word from the foregoing list that exhibits each of the following forms.

1a23, 1e23, 1o23 (base level verbal noun)	_____
lā2é3 (active noun-adjective)	_____
ma12ú3 (passive noun-adjective)	_____
ma12e3é (noun of place)	_____
ta12í3 (derived active/intensive verbal noun)	_____
mo1ā2e3é (derived reciprocal verbal noun)	_____
e12ā3 (derived active/intensive verbal noun)	_____
ta1a22ó3 (derived verbal noun)	_____
este12ā3 (derived verbal noun)	_____

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§12.3 Knowing that the presence of one or more of these 10 letters, ح - ذ - ص - ض - ط - ظ - ع - غ - ق - ث, almost always indicates a word's Arabic origin Pay particular attention to words with one or more of these letters, as well as any other words with three letters that remind you of other words with the same three letters in the same order, for example: سلام (hello), سالم (healthy, whole), تسلیم (surrender), اسلام (Islam), and مسلم (Muslim).

§12.4 Among the most common are Arabic-loanword verbal nouns, of which there are nine chief verbal noun patterns or forms in Persian, along with parallel active and passive noun/adjective patterns. The simplest words are in the first or base pattern and are three-letter words such as "شکل" (shape), "عمر" (life(time)), and "وجه" (aspect). In patterns for the second through ninth levels, words consisting of a root system of three consonants exhibit usually unvarying forms. Variants of such forms obtain for root systems that contain the letters *aléf*, *vāv*, and/or *ye*.<sup>19</sup>

§12.5 The following chart, to be read from right to left, presents sample Persian words for nine levels of Arabic loanword verbal nouns and parallel active and passive noun/adjectives.

passive noun/adjective pattern	active noun/adjective pattern	verbal noun pattern		
reasonable	عقل...عاقِل wise	فعل فعل، فعل وغيره	reason, brain	عقل ١
well-arranged	مُفَعِّل...مُحَصِّل student	تفعيل	conversation	تحصيل ٢
person addressed	مُفَاعِل...مُخَاطِب speaker	مُفَاعِلِه/مُفَاعِلَت	travel	مُخَاطِبِه ٣
doubled, two-fold	مُسَافِر...مُفَعِّل traveler			مُسَافِرَت
firm, strong	مُفَعِّل...مُمَكِن possible	إفعال	possibility	إمكان ٤
conceivable	مُتَّفَعِّل...مُتَّوَجِّه aware	تفعيل	attention	توجه ٥
customary	مُتَعَرِّف well-proportioned		proportion	تناسب ٦
	مُنْعَكِس...مُنْعَكَس reflected	إفعال	reflection	انعكاس ٧
respectable	مُتَّقِد...مُعْتَقِد believing in	إتفعال	belief	اعتقاد ٨
the future	مُسْتَعِل...مُسْتَعَلَم welcoming	مُسْتَعِل	welcoming, greeting	مُسْتَعِل ٩

§12.5.1 Each of the cited derived (#2–#9) patterns of Arabic loanword verbal nouns communicates a specific verbal mode or aspect, e.g., intensity (#2, #4), reciprocity (#3, #5), causality (#2, #4), reflexivity (#3, #5), and passivity (#7). For example, the "انفعال" *enfe'āl* pattern (#7) communicates passive meanings, which accounts for why it does not exhibit a passive noun-adjective form.

§12.6 Find words in the foregoing chart that illustrate the following patterns (in which “1” = the first root letter, “2” = the second root letter, and “3” = the third root letter, while the English transcription reflects the Persian letters and/or sounds added to root letters to produce words derived from base-level or level #1 words).

e12ā3 = _____	mo1a22e3 = _____
este12ā3 = _____	ta1a22o3 = _____
lā2e3 = _____	e1te2ā3 = _____
ta1ā2o3 = _____	ma12u3 = _____
mo1ā2e3 = _____	en1e2ā3 = _____ <sup>20</sup>

### 9.14 Mini-lesson #13

This self-contained lesson focuses on vocabulary acquisition and maintenance in reading a ghazal poem by premier Persian lyric poet Hāfez (c.1320–c.1390).

§13.1 Read the following questions and, without looking at the text of Hāfez’s ghazal or its translation following, listen to a reading or recording of it for answers to the questions. If this exercise takes place in class, the questions are posed and answered in Persian.

1. What sort of end rhyme scheme does the poem have?
2. How many people say things in the poem?
3. Is the setting (time/place/circumstances) of the poem initially about the past, the present, or the future?
4. What words in the poem verify that it is a love poem?

§13.2 Listen to a second reading of the poem to verify answers to the foregoing questions.

§13.3 In the text, find Arabic loanwords in the given patterns related by consonantal root system to the following words (1 = first root letter, 2 = second root letter, and 3 = third root letter, those root letters represented in Perso-Arabic script by [from right to left] ل + ع + ف). Check the chart of Arabic loanword patterns to visualize the paradigmatic context of the word forms in this exercise.

lover	_____	1ā2ē3	فَاعِل love	عَشِق ١
infidel	_____	1ā2ē3	فَاعِل apostasy	كُف ٢
ascetic	_____	1ā2ē3	فَاعِل asceticism	رُهِد ٣
preserver, one who knows the Koran by heart, minstrel	_____	1ā2ē3	فَاعِل protecting, preservation	حَفِظ ٤
sad	_____	1a2i3	فَعِيل sadness	حُزِن ٥
wine	_____	1a23	فَعَل wine headache	حُمَار ٦
gift	_____	1o23	فَعَله gifts	تُحَف ٧
repentance	_____	[1o23e]	فَعَله penitent	تَاب ٨

Because Arabic loanwords in Persian exhibit consonantal root systems, unlike native Persian vocabulary that exhibits prefixes, suffixes, stems, and compounding, a specific Arabic word may remind readers of other words related by consonantal root system and other words exhibiting the

same pattern. For example, if the words “عاشق” and “عارف” appear in the same short text, readers might hear a sort of pattern rhyme in them and also sense the presence of the related words “عشق” and “معرفت”. Parenthetically, Item #8 illustrate sorts of Arabic loanword root systems not discussed in this mini-lesson, root systems that feature the letters *aléf*, *vāv*, and/or *ye*.

§13.4 Find pre-modern forms in Hāfez’s ghazal for these modern forms:

_____	don’t criticize	خُرده نَگیر	۱
_____	last night	دیشب	۲
_____	he/she sat down	نشست	۳
_____	he/she/it is	می باشد	۴
_____	it broke	شکست	۵

§13.5 Find words in Hāfez’s poem consisting of a noun combined with a verb present stem with the following meanings:

1. “ghazal-singing” : .....
2. “drinkers to the bottom of the glass” : ..... (+ /ān/ = plural sign)
3. “alas-saying” : ..... (+ ān = verb sign)
4. “nocturnal”; صبح زود : .....
5. “wine-worshipping” : .....
6. “twisted,” “knotted” : .....

§13.6 Find words in the text referring to alcoholic beverages (مشروبات الکلی) with these meanings:

1. two words for “wine”: \_\_\_\_\_
2. “heavenly wine” (i.e., inspiring wine that may not have alcoholic content): \_\_\_\_\_
3. “intoxicating wine” (i.e., wine that human beings make): \_\_\_\_\_
4. three words for “wine cup”: \_\_\_\_\_
5. “glass wine pitcher”: \_\_\_\_\_

§13.7 Read Hāfez’s ghazal several times while listening to its recording.

زُلفِ آشُفته و خوی کرده و خندان لب و مست / zólfī āshofté-vo . . . /  
پیرهن چاک و غزلخوان و صراحی در دست

1. Tresses in disarray, perspiring, smiling, and intoxicated, shirt torn, singing a ghazal, and a wine-pitcher in hand, /arbadé-júy-o . . . / نَرگِش عَرَبِدَه جوی و لبش آفسوس کُنان  
نیم شب دوش به بالین من آمد پیشست
2. Narcissus eyes bellicose and lips mouthing “alas,” midnight last night he came to my bedside and sat down. /āvard-o . . . / سر فراگوثرین آورد و به آواز خزین  
گفت کای عاشقِ دیرینه ی من خوابت هست (کای = که ای) /kay/
3. He brought his head to my ear and in a sad voice said: “O, my old lover, are you asleep?

عاشقی را که چُنین ساغر شَبگیر دهند  
کافر عشق بُود گر نَبُود باده پَرست

4. A lover given such a nocturnal cup is an infidel to love if he is not a wine-worshipper.

بَرُو ای زاهد و بر دُرکشان خُرده مَگیر  
که ندادند جُز این تُحفه به ما روز اَلست

5. Be gone, o ascetic, and do not scorn drinkers of the dregs; for no gift but that was given us at the day of the covenant between God and humankind.

آنچه او ریخت به پیمانهِ ی ما نوشیدیم

اگر از خَمر بهشت است و گر از باده ی مست / */khamr-e behésh-t-ast-o gár . . . /*

6. What He poured into our cup we drank, be it heaven's wine or intoxicating wine.

خنده ی جامِ می و زُلفِ گِره گیر نِگار */má-y-o/*  
ای بسا نُوبه که چون توبه ی حافظ بِشکست

7. The wine cup's smile and the beloved's curled tresses, O how many repentances such as Hāfez's have they broken!

§13.8 Refer to the foregoing text to find answers to these questions about Hāfez's ghazal.

۱. بقول گوینده ی شعر، او دیشب کجا بوده است؟
۲. چند صفت در وصف "مهمان" گوینده در مصراع اول غزل ذکر شده؟
۳. ترتیب دادن صفات در سه مصراع اول در خواننده ممکن است چه تأثیر ی. . . . .  
گذارد؟
۴. بنظر شما دیدار مُورد و وصف در غزل واقعاً اِتِّفاق افتاده یا اینکه گوینده دیدار را در تَخیُّلات و یا در خواب دیده است؟
۵. در غزل چهار واژه با مفهومهای مذهبی پیدا کنید. ۱ . . . . . ۲ . . . . . ۳ . . . . . ۴ . . . . .
۶. با توجه به اینکه عبارت "روز اَلست" اشاره به روز آفرینش آدم می باشد، بنابراین در مصراع "آنچه او ریخت به پیمانهِ ی ما" منظور گوینده از کلمه ی "او" احتمالاً کیست؟

§13.9 Hāfezian ghazals appeal to Iranians today because of, among other reasons, their lyricism or musical qualities and because of their sometimes complicated and philosophical suggestiveness. The following questions highlight aspects of that suggestiveness.

1. What kind of love do you think this Hāfezian ghazal depicts? Physical, romantic love? Spiritual love? Love of God?
2. Suppose one assumes that a connection exists between the visitor carrying the wine pitcher in Couplet 1 and the pouring of wine in Couplet 8?
3. What implications might the word "دیرینه" in Couplet 3 have in the context of the allusion in Couplet 5 to the Day of the Covenant between God and humankind?

## 9.15 Conclusion

In the light of the variety of Persian instructional materials and dictionary and other resources in print and online as of 2020, one might conclude that contextualization in their use, rather than designing new instructional materials, may be key to dealing with issues of Persian vocabulary acquisition and maintenance. In other words, organizing vocabulary into groups according to subject or theme or forms and presenting individual items in the context of charts that give overall pictures of a vocabulary sort in question might best facilitate learning and retention.

Examples would include: (1) a list of the most common one-word Persian verbs together with illustrations of verb stems and parts that figure in non-verb vocabulary; (2) a chart of Persian verb tenses, moods, and voices with an illustration of each distinct form; a list of specific prefixed, infix, and suffixed elements with illustrations; (3) lists of Persian lexical items in discrete families of Arabic loanwords and a chart of common Arabic loanword noun and adjective patterns and forms; (4) a list of examples of each of the 150 or so discrete Persian sentence patterns; and (5) a list of Persian words, phrases, and statements subsumed under the term *ta'ārof* ((pr)offering, polite/respectful/deferential verbiage).<sup>21</sup>

(6) Role model exercises identifying specific settings in which, for example, American learners can use Persian at the moment or plan to use Persian in their future can result in relevant vocabulary lists on specific subjects, among them: (6.1) classroom objects, (6.2) classroom life and activities, (6.3) using a Persian textbook, (6.4) describing one's daily routine, (6.5) describing one's life story, (6.6) talking about a movie, (6.7) talking about the Persian language, (6.8) talking about a Persian poem, (6.9) talking about life in America, (6.10) talking about the Online Persian world, and (6.11) talking about Iranian culture.<sup>22</sup>

(7) Most Persian textbooks for speakers of English, including teaching grammars, do not reference Persian dictionaries or practice their use. Of course, textbook authors can easily supplement their textbooks by preparing exercises on Persian-English and English-Persian dictionaries or assigning (parts of) a hardcopy Persian-Persian dictionary as required reading in their courses. Persian-Persian dictionary entries being authentic texts with a relatively long shelf life (in comparison, say, with news reports and much op-ed writing), reading them both develops reading skills and reinforces and expands vocabulary through exposure to definitions and, perhaps more importantly, to synonyms that appear in entries for given headwords, and through scanning entries immediately before and after entries in question.

In short, the conclusion to "Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition: Persian Resources and Teaching and Learning Strategies" may simply be this suggestion of augmenting Persian language course syllabi with supplemental materials and activities that specifically address vocabulary acquisition as an issue sometimes not addressed as systematically in textbooks as Persian listening, reading, speaking, and writing are.

## Notes

- 1) Mohammad Ali Jazayery, *Elementary Lessons in Persian: Experimental Edition* (Austin, TX: 1965). Heir to Jazayery's audio lingual manual is Donald Stilo, Kamran Talattof, and Jerome Clinton's, *Modern Persian: Spoken and Written*, 2 Vols. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005, which exhibits the careful step-by-step and signature progression familiar from earlier Stilo materials. *Modern Persian* asserts that it takes "students from beginning to intermediate levels with a mastery of modern Persian . . . and with an understanding of colloquial Persian."
- 2) L.P. Elwell-Sutton, *Elementary Persian Grammar*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1963; and Ann K.S. Lambton, *Persian Grammar*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1953 [reprinted with corrections in 1957], and later printings. Wheeler M. Thackston's *An Introduction to Persian*. Bethesda, MD: Ibex Books, 2009 (first published in 1993) is heir to earlier grammar-translation manuals and focuses exclusively on the bookish/written [کتابی/نوشتاری] register of Tehran Persian.
- 3) Bibliographical citations for all titles mentioned henceforth in this chapter appear in the "References" section at the end of the chapter.
- 4) Although one of two assumptions behind this chapter, that vocabulary acquisition is a chief chore for English-speaking learners of the Fārsi Persian language, derives mostly from personal experience as a student and teacher of Persian, the other assumption, that mastery of vocabulary is a core element in development of foreign language competence, has behind it the views presented in *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition: A Rationale for Pedagogy*, ed. James Coady and Thomas N. Huckin.

- New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. x, illustrated edition, online edition 2012, quoted and echoed by Hillmann in “Preface,” in *Persian Vocabulary Acquisition – A Guide to Word Forms and The Arabic Element in Persian*, 2nd ed. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2003, i–xiii, a textbook and reader that discusses and illustrates the rationale for an emphasis on vocabulary acquisition in Persian instructional materials.
- 5) Four-letter words in Persian that begin with “ت” /t/ and then feature three consonant letters that identify the word as an Arabic loanword exhibit the form ta+1+ a + 22+ o3 /tafa“ól/, a verbal noun often communicating a reflexive idea vis-à-vis its related base-level word in a variant of a 123 pattern, in this case “حَمَل” /haml/ [carrying, transporting], which becomes “تَحَمُّل” /tahammól/ [forbearance, enduring].
  - 6) The noun “ملت” /mellát/ [nation, nationality, citizenry] minus its grammatical feminine ending / . . . at/ plus the adjective-making suffix “. . . ی” / . . . i/ becomes the adjective “مَلّی” /melli/ [national], which combines with “گرا” /gerá/ (present stem of “گرایین” /gerāyidán/ [to incline/tend to, to join] to form “مَلّی گرا”/melligerá/ [nationalist], the addition of the noun-making suffix “. . . ی” / . . . i/ to which produces “مَلّی کراییی” /melligerayi/ [nationalism].
  - 7) Mini-lesson #1 is adapted from the first of 47 lessons (accompanied by a comprehensive glossary, text translations, and audio files) for intermediate/advanced Persian students in *Persian Newspaper Reader*; 2nd ed. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2000, 234, 77 p, 3–4, by Michael Craig Hillmann with Ramin Sarraf, who note: “The approach to Persian newspaper reading which *Persian Newspaper Reader* has presented in lessons revolving around its texts . . . suggests that readers spend more time trying to learn vocabulary in context than looking up words in . . . [its] glossary or in dictionaries“ (p. 231). Sample PNR units are available online at [www.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann).
  - 8) Mini-lesson #2 is adapted from “Classroom Listening: Audio Motor Units” in Michael Craig Hillmann’s *Persian Listening*. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2008, 33–36, which offers vocabulary lists on (1) listening, (2) jokes, (3) listening and speaking, (4) telephone calls, (5) radio broadcasts, (6) music, (7) poetry, and (8) movies accompany, respectively, 100+ texts in eight chapters called (1) Hearing Persian, (2) Persian Jokes, (3) Persian Monologues, (4) Persian Telephone Calls, (4) Persian Radio Broadcasts, (6) Persian Songs, (7) Persian Poems, and (8) Persian Films. “Chapter 1: Persian Listening” and sample lessons from other chapters in *Persian Listening* appear online at [www.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann).
  - 9) Michael Carig Hillmann, “Colloquial/Spoken and Bookish/Written Registers of Tehran Persian,” *Persian Grammar and Verbs*. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2012, 61–74, compares, contrasts, and illustrates the two chief registers of Tehran Persian.
  - 10) Michael Craig Hillmann, “Colloquial/Spoken and Bookish/Written Registers of Tehran Persian,” in *Persian Grammar and Verbs*. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2012, 61–74, reviews the subject. *Persian Grammar and Verbs* is available online at [www.academia.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.academia.edu/MichaelHillmann).
  - 11) A mini-lesson on the *Sokhan Comprehensive Dictionary* entry for “توانستن” [to be able] appears in Hillmann, *Persian Grammar and Verbs*, 268.
  - 12) E.g., Hillmann, “Persian Grammar Terms and Concepts,” in *Persian Grammar and Verbs*, 17–20.
  - 13) On the subject of slang dictionaries in general, Ramin Sarraf, “Designing a Persian Slang Dictionary,” (Ph.D. dissertation at The University of Texas at Austin, 2008). [www.learningace.com/doc/2236406/eb2c56a2bb9fe3c8391199d7c99fc570/sarrafr59881](http://www.learningace.com/doc/2236406/eb2c56a2bb9fe3c8391199d7c99fc570/sarrafr59881)) is a good review and the first step in Sarraf’s in-progress *Dictionary of Persian Slang*.
  - 14) For a preliminary, unedited, and partially annotated list of Persian textbooks, manuals, and grammars published before 2015, see “Fārsi Persian Instructional Materials for Adult Speakers of English: A Select and Partially Annotated Bibliography,” [www.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann).
  - 15) For a list of 21st-century Persian textbooks for speakers of English, see “Persian Vocabulary Acquisition Resources”, [www.academia.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.academia.edu/MichaelHillmann).
  - 16) A word-method approach to beginning Persian reading is illustrated in Hillmann, “Chapter 1: The Persian Writing System,” in *Persian Reading and Writing*. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2012, 1–62. “The Persian Writing System” is available at [www.academia.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.academia.edu/MichaelHillmann).
  - 17) Arabic loanwords in Persian are the subject of Chapters 45–58 in Hillmann, *Persian Grammar and Verbs* (pp. 331–412). [www.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.Academia.edu/MichaelHillmann).
  - 18) A list of 30+ words in the /hokm/“حُكْم” “family” of Arabic loanwords in Persian appears in Sayyed Mohammad Nahvi, *Farhang-e Rishesh 'i-ye Vām'vāzeh-hā-ye 'Arabi yā Loghāt-e 'Arabi-ye Mosta'mal dar Fārsi* [Dictionary of the Roots of Arabic Loanwords or Arabic Words Used in Persian]. Tehran: Enteshārāt-e Eslāmi-ye Irān, 1989, 109–110.



- 19) For a discussion of Arabic loanword root systems in Persian featuring *aléf*, *vāv*, and/or *ye*, see Hillmann, *Persian Vocabulary Acquisition*, Second Edition. 144ff.
- 20) For a description of common Arabic loanword forms and patterns in Persian, see Hillmann, “Arabic Loanwords in Persian,” in *Persian Grammar and Verbs*, 331–412.
- 21) For examples of such lists, see Michael Craig Hillmann, “Notes on Persian Vocabulary Acquisition,” [www.Academic.edu/MichaelHillmann](http://www.Academic.edu/MichaelHillmann).
- 22) Hillmann, “Notes on Persian Vocabulary Acquisition.”

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# 10

## SECOND LANGUAGE GRAMMAR

### Challenges in grammar for English-speaking learners

*Behrooz Mahmoodi-Bakhtiari*

#### 10.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is cataloguing the primary issues facing the Persian language instructor working with English-speaking students. I consider most people consulting this chapter to be Persian language instructors, who may need such issues as systematically as they have been presented here. It is hoped that this list of grammatical features in Persian becomes of special consideration to the instructors, as it provides a summary of the most challenging points of Persian grammar for English speakers. Needless to say, the specific strategies to deal with such challenging points require a separate (and highly needed) research, which will surely elevate the level of discourse in this field from observational to analytical.

Grammar knowledge is defined as “what learners know about language rules and structures, and the acquisition of grammar is the acquisition of those rules and structures and the ability to use them in a communicative context” (Nassaji 2017, 205). However, I consider the term “grammar” to have two quite distinct general and specific senses. The specific sense, which is more traditional in nature, refers to the description of the morphological and syntactic structure of a language, to show how linguistic units such as words and phrases are built, and how they get combined to produce sentences in a language. This sense does away with phonology and semantics, which form the general sense of grammar, together with morphology and syntax, proposed by Chomsky (Crystal 1987, 88).

In this chapter, I make use of the term “grammar” in its specific sense; dealing with some major issues of interest in its morphology and syntax, for pedagogic purposes, following Lardiere (2012, 106), who correctly states that the acquisition of the morphology and syntax of a second language lies at the heart of the study of second language acquisition. The ability of learners to correctly produce grammatical morphemes (such as markers for case, tense/aspect, plurality, definiteness, negation, agreement, etc.) is the standard for inferring that a learner has acquired the representation of morphosyntactic categories. Also, the researchers would like to know if the learners have recognized what issues are not possible in the L2, such as the restrictions of syntactic movements (see *ibid.* 114–115).

So, I consider myself a teacher in favor of having grammar instructions in my classes. Although Krashen (1982) argues that formal instruction in grammar does not contribute to the

development of the knowledge needed for participate in authentic communication (referred to as ‘acquired’ knowledge), and Prabhu (1987) argues that learners can acquire an L2 grammar by participating in meaning-focused tasks, I find myself in agreement with scholars like Ellis (1990), who hold that grammar teaching aids L2 acquisition, although not necessarily in the way it is generally practiced. In line with Ellis (2002) and the two approaches she introduces – ‘practice’ and ‘consciousness-raising’ – I believe the latter seems to be achieved via grammar instruction, as it develops an explicit knowledge of grammar in the learners. Otherwise, we will face the acquisition of implicit knowledge, which involves three processes: ‘noticing’, ‘comparing’, and ‘integrating’, for which the learners of Persian, for example, do not have either enough time or facilities.

Considering this, in this chapter, I will try to highlight some selective noteworthy phenomena that may rise in a contrastive study of English and Persian: issues such as the inflectional paradigm for present, past, transitive, or intransitive constructions, as well as methods of expressing the definite and indefinite noun phrases, or showing the specific objects and non-specific ones, together with the several clitics used in Persian language, and different types of agreement (object-verb), and so on.

This chapter is by no means a sketch of Persian grammar and simply touches some specific cases that have turned out to be challenging in teaching the language. The interested reader may refer to several grammar books available, some of which date back to the late 17th century. Of course it should sadly be stated that there has not been a comprehensive Persian grammar that contains both the historical developments of the language, as well as a thorough description of its present status so far. But Lazard’s (1957, and later on, 1989) *Grammaire du persan contemporain* is perhaps the standard grammar up to the present, and the most precise and methodological. Although it deals with modern standard Persian, as well as the colloquial and classical registers of the language, it is far more useful than some rich works such as Phillott (1919) and Windfuhr (1979). Also, Thackston (1993) and, recently, Yousef (2018) are very useful and detailed grammars of Persian, which may be added to this list.

In this chapter, I will deal with issues of the morphology and syntax of Persian, with reference to the ones are not necessarily comparable with English. These are naturally the issues to address more precisely when we would like to write a pedagogical grammar book of Persian or think of developing standard exams.

For a discussion on second language morphology in Persian, read Chapter 6 in this volume, and read Chapter 5 in this volume for further discussion on second language syntax in Persian. In addition, Chapter 4 in this volume compares the acquisition of morphology and syntax in Persian heritage learners and that in second language learners of Persian.

## 10.2 Persian morphology

As an Indo-European language, Persian acts like so many other languages of this family in terms of inflection in morphology. Persian nouns share many of the characteristics that nouns generally have in all languages, i.e., they primarily function as a referring expression; they belong to an open class, can take determiners, and can occur as subjects, objects and complement. However, some specific issues about the Persian verb show that they can occur as the first element in a compound verb, can take the post-position *rā* anclitic =*e*, and can be modified by adjectives in a N + *ezāfe* + adjective construction (but preceded by a superlative adjective). They canonically occur before the verb and do not inflect for tense, aspect, mood. Persian nouns have systems for distinguishing number and definiteness (although the simple nouns remain neutral in both of them) but do not make a distinction

in animacy or gender. Also, cases are not shown by inflection. Chapters 26 and 27 in this volume present a detailed list of contrasting morphological properties in English speaking learners of Persian.

### 10.2.1 Issues on nominal morphology of Persian

In this part, I briefly introduce some challenging issues in Persian nominal morphology for the foreign learners. In this part, grammatical issues such as number, derivative suffixes (diminutives and Definite markers), case relations and markings, the postposition *rā*, pronouns and reflexive cases will be considered.

#### 10.2.1.1 Number

Simple Persian nouns may be realized as generic nouns, such as the word *ketāb* ‘book’ in the sentence *injā ketāb arzān ast* ‘books are cheap here’, or as plural nominal predicates in *mā hame mo’allem hastim* ‘we are all teachers’. In order to pluralize the nouns, the stressed suffix *-hā* is added to the noun like *qalam-hā* ‘pens’, *sag-hā* ‘dogs’ and *dozd-hā* ‘thieves’. However, the stressed *-ān* is also used in more formal contexts and for animate human nouns such as *sarbāz-ān* ‘soldiers’, *kudak-ān* ‘children’ and *nābinā-yān* ‘the blind’, as well as for a small number of non-human animates, such as *giyāh-ān* ‘plants’, *jānevar-ān* ‘animals’, *deraxt-ān* ‘trees’, and *pestān-dār-ān* ‘mammals’. It is noteworthy that in modern standard Persian, *-hā* has almost totally replaced *-ān*, and it is quite all right to say, for example, *dānesh-ju-hā* rather than *dānesh-ju-yān* ‘students’. The only exceptions are those words whose plural forms are lexicalized and idiomatic, such as *āqā-yān* ‘gentlemen’ (\**āqā-hā*), *bozorg-ān* ‘the senior (people), leaders’, *digar-ān* ‘the others’, and *sar-ān* ‘leaders’ (as opposed to *sar-hā* ‘heads’). The same rule holds true for marking the (western) loanwords as plurals, such as *kāmpiyoter-hā* ‘computers’, and *tākxi-hā* ‘taxis’.

The Arabic plural suffixes *-un*, *-āt* and *-in* in the loan words *enqelābi-yun* ‘revolutionaries’, *estehkām-āt* ‘fortifications’ and *qātel-in* ‘murderers’ are also witnessed, together with the ‘broken’ Arabic plurals such as *dalāyel* (sg. *dalil*) ‘reasons’, *amāken* (sg. *makān*) ‘places’ and *nosax* (sg. *nosxe*) ‘manuscripts’; all of which are likely to appear with *-hā* as well.

Plural nouns impose a concord of number on the Persian verbs when they refer to animate beings. For example, in the sentence *gorh-hā be galle hamle kardand* ‘the wolves attacked the cattle’, the noun *gorh-hā* ‘wolves’ requires the verb *hamle kardan* ‘to attack’ to be conjugated for the 3Pl *hamle-kard-and* (attack-did-3pl). In case the subject is inanimate, the verb may remain singular, such as *sāxtemān-hā xarāb shod* ‘the buildings damaged’ and *jādde-hā band āmad* ‘the roads were blocked’. Also, when used with cardinal numbers, the Persian nouns remain singular: *yek medād* ‘one pencil’, *dah medād* ‘ten pencils’. Noun classifiers that are inserted between numbers and nouns do not change the singularity of the nouns as well. The most common classifier with the most general application is *-tā* ‘-fold’, as in *do(-tā) doxtar* (two-CL girl) ‘two girls’. Some other common classifiers are *-tan* ‘body (for people)’, *-jeld* ‘volume (for books)’, *-dāne* ‘seed’, *-ra š* ‘head’ (for domestic animals), *halqe* (for tires), *farvand* (for ship, airplanes and tanks); as in *se-halqe lāstik* (three-ring tire) ‘three tires’, and *do-farvand havāpeymā* (two-head airplane) ‘two airplanes’.

A clear difference between the English and Persian plural system is that Persian plurals can be used with mass nouns or with infinitives, to indicate the large sum of something or the repeated nature of something; like *in nān-hā* (lit. this bread-pl.) ‘this amount of bread’, *mashrub xordan-hā-ye u* ‘his (excessive) drinking’.

### 10.2.1.2 Derivative suffixes

#### 10.2.1.2.1 DIMINUTIVES

Diminutive suffixes *-ak* (usually for animate nouns) and *-che* (for the inanimates) are the common tools to denote the smaller size of a noun, or to denote denigration or endearment; as in *pesar-ak* ‘kid’ (from *pesar* ‘boy’), *teft-ak* ‘brat’ (from *teft* ‘baby’), or *qāli-che* ‘rug’ (from *qāli* ‘carpet’) and *daryā-che* ‘lake’ (from *daryā* ‘sea’). Worthy of note is that there are some lexicalized words with such diminutives as well, which have got their own separate meanings, such as *arusak* ‘doll’ (*arus* ‘bride’) or *simāche* ‘mask’ (*simā* ‘face’) and *mixche* ‘toe corn’ (*mix* ‘nail’).

#### 10.2.1.2.2 DEFINITENESS

Definiteness, as a property of the noun that indicates reference to a unique entity that can be identified by both speaker and hearer, does not have clear morphological means in Persian. Nouns in subject or indirect object position, when unmodified, are definite:<sup>1</sup>

*gorbe ru=ye sandali ast*  
 cat on=EZ chair be.PRES.3SG  
 ‘The cat is on the chair’.  
*ketāb rā be ostād dād-am*  
 book rā to professor give.PAST.1SG  
 ‘I gave the book to the professor’.

An issue that may be taken into consideration is the difference Persian and English show in their definite markings. As opposed to English, demonstrative pronouns, personal pronouns, and proper names as well as demonstrative adjectives, superlatives and ordinals are all inherently definite in Persian, like *medād-hā* ‘the pencils’, *avvalin nafar* (first-person) ‘the first person’, and *behtarin shā’er* (best-poet) ‘the best poet’.

However, indefiniteness and oneness is identified by an unstressed *=i*, as in *mard=i* ‘a man, one man, some man, any man’.<sup>2</sup> This clitic may also follow plural nouns, such as *kudak-ān=i* ‘some children’.

### 10.2.1.3 Case relations and markings

Typologically, Persian is a nominative-accusative language, but its nouns are not inflected for cases. As a matter of fact, Persian cases are indicated by adpositions (prepositions and one post position *rā*), verb agreement, and word order (see following). The subject of both transitive and intransitive verbs is not marked with an adposition. It basically appears at the beginning of the sentence and agrees with the verb in terms of number and person, as in *rezā va ali raft-and* ‘Reza and Ali went’, *mā xābid-im* ‘We slept’.<sup>3</sup>

Seven primary prepositions in Persian mark different cases. For example, *be* ‘to’(dative) in *ketāb rā be u dādam* ‘I gave him/her the book’, *dar* ‘in(to)’ as *dar otāq* ‘in the room’, *dar chenin sharāyeti* ‘in such circumstances’; *az* ‘from’, denoting the source of something, as

*xāne-ye mā az injā xeyli dur ast*  
 ‘our house is so far from here’,  
 or

*in beyt az hāfez ast*

‘This verse is by Hāfez’

*Bā* ‘with’ also has several functions. i.e. in comitative:

*bā dustam dars xāndam*

‘I studied together with my friend’,

instrumental, as:

*bā chāqu be u hamle kard*

‘S/he attacked him/her with a knife’

and concessive, as:

*bā kamāl-e meyl in rā mi-pazir-am*

‘I accept this with all pleasure’.

*Tā* is the other preposition with several meanings: ‘to, until’ as

*bāyad tā shab montazer bemānim*

‘We have to wait until night’,

*az tehrān tā Tabriz cheqadr rāh ast?*

‘How far is it from Tehran to Tabriz?’,

and also (*be*)*joz* ‘except’ as

*hame madrak gereftand, bejuz man*

‘Everybody got his or her certificate except me’

and *barā(-ye)* ‘for’ as

*in gol rā barāye to xaride-am*

‘I have bought this flower for you’ (see Mahmoodi-Bakhtiari 2018).

These were the predominant “simple” prepositions. Other types of prepositions are those with *ezāfe* (see later) such as *darbāre=ye* (about) and *barā=ye* (for the sake of).

#### 10.2.1.4 The postposition *rā*

The highly disputed postposition *rā* is generally regarded as a marker of the definite direct object. However, there is not a consensus about this definition (see Mahootian 1997, 198–201). The traditional view, supported by Phillot (1919), Sādeqi (1970), Lazard (1989) and Rafiee (2001) identifies *rā* as the marker of definite direct objects, but more recent studies such as Browne (1970), Karimi (1989), Windfuhr (1987) and Dabir-Moghaddam (1992) mainly deal with it as a definite marker, indicator of specificity, or topicalization marker. I personally believe that it is not accurate to regard *rā* simply as a definite marker, as there are examples of its use with indefinite direct objects too, such as *ānhā mard=i rā koshtand* ‘They killed a man’, or *mā namāyande=i rā be ānjā fereshtādīm* ‘we sent a representative there’.

*Rā* as a direct object marker can follow proper names, such as:

*parviz rā mishenāsīd?*

‘Do you know Parviz?’

or after personal, demonstrative, reflexive, or reciprocal pronouns:

*shomā rā be yād dāram*

‘I remember you’.

*in rā barā=ye shomā xaridam*

‘I bought this for you’.

*xod-ash rā az hame behtar midānad*

‘He regards himself better than all others’.

*hamdigar rā didand*  
'They met each other'.

and

*ānhā asrār=e ham rā midānand*  
'They know each other's secrets'.

Abstract nouns can also accept *-rā* when used as direct objects:

*haqiqat rā nemishavad penhān kard*  
'reality cannot be hidden'

(for other examples, see Mahootian 1997, 202–203).

### 10.2.1.5 Pronouns

As to the demonstrative pronouns *in* and *ān*, Persian shows flexibility in adding the plural suffix to them (*in-hā* 'these', *ān-hā* 'those') as well as adding the object marker *rā* to them:

*in rā bebar*  
'Take this away'.

*ān-hā rā shost-im*  
'We washed them'.

These pronouns can also act as the third person pronouns as well:

*che kasi in-hā rā da'vat karde ast?*  
'Who has invited them (lit. these [people])?'

By adding the morpheme *jā* 'place' to the demonstrative pronouns, we will have Persian locative demonstratives *injā* 'here' and *ānjā* 'there':

*ānhā be ānjā raftand*  
'They went there'.

*inhā rā az injā bardār*  
'Take these from here'.

The numeral *yek* 'one' with the indefinite clitic *=i* forms the indefinite pronoun *yeki* in Persian:

*yeki az pesar-ān=ash dar āmrikā zendegi mikonad*  
'One of his sons lives in America'.

*lotfan yeki ham barā=ye man biyāvarid*  
'Please bring one for me, too'.

*yeki yeki az otāq birun raftand*  
'They went out of the room one by one'.

As to the negative indefinite pronouns in Persian, they are three: *hich-kas* 'no one', *hich-chiz* 'nothing', and *hich-jā* 'nowhere', which make the verb of their clause negative, as opposed to what we have in English:

*hame qazā=yeshān rā khordand.* > *hich kas qazā=yash rā nakhord*  
'Everybody ate their food. > Nobody ate his/her food' (lit. nobody didn't eat his/her food).

*injā hame chiz hast.* > *injā hich chiz nist.*

'Everything is here. > Nothing is here' (lit. here nothing is not).

*in ketāb hame jā peydā mishavad.* > *in ketāb hich jā peydā nemishavad*

'This book is available everywhere. > This book is not available anywhere' (lit. This book is not found nowhere).



There are nine interrogative pronouns in Persian, some used with slight phonological differences in the colloquial form of the language: *ke/ki* ‘who’, *che/chi* ‘what’, *key* ‘when’, *kojā* ‘where’, *cherā* ‘why’, *chetor; chegune* ‘how’, *kodām* ‘which’, *cheqadr* ‘how much’. Among all these, *ki* ‘who/whom’ and *chi* occur alone in both subject and object position:

*ki shomā rā rāh dāde ast?*  
‘Who has let you in?’  
*minā bā ki bargasht?*  
‘Whom Mina came back with?’  
*chi oftād?*  
‘What fell down?’  
*ostād chi goft?*  
‘What did the professor say?’

Also, Persian does not have independent relative pronouns. The general complementizer *ke* ‘that’ functions as a relative pronoun and introduces the relative clauses:

*zan=i ke tez=am rā tāyp kard*  
‘the woman who typed my thesis’  
*jā=yi ke dars xāndam*  
‘the place where I studied’.

As it is seen, *ke* here restricts the antecedent and makes it specific, by adding the determiner *=i* to it. This marker is also attached to the modifiers of the noun:

*medād=e qermez=i ke mixāstid*  
‘the red pencil you wanted’  
*ketāb-hāy=i ke sefāresh dāde budim*  
‘the books we had ordered’.

Needless to say, if the antecedent is already specific, *=i* is not needed: *‘amu=yam ke . . .* ‘my uncle who . . .’, *az tehrān ke pāytaxt=e irān ast . . .* ‘from Tehran, which is the capital of Iran . . .’. In some cases, the combination of *har* ‘each/every’ to some words yields relative words, such as *har-kas* (lit. every-person) ‘whoever’, *har-jā* (lit. every-place) ‘wherever’, *har-chiz* (lit. every-thing) ‘whatever’, and *har-vaqt* (lit. every-time) ‘whenever’.

Persian does not have independent possessive pronouns, and possession is shown either by *ezāfe* construction with the personal pronoun, or by the use of pronominal clitics, or by *māl=e* ‘property of’ construction in copular sentences: *in ketāb māl=e man ast* ‘This book is mine’.

Table 10.1 Pronominal clitics in Persian

Pronominal clitics		
Person	Singular	Plural
First	= <i>am</i>	= <i>emān</i>
Second	= <i>at</i>	= <i>etān</i>
Third	= <i>ash/=sh</i>	= <i>eshān</i>

Pronominal clitics act as either direct objects, as in *mishenāsam=ash* ‘I know him’,<sup>4</sup> or as possessives, as in *mādar=at* ‘your mother’. Pronominal clitics expressing possession may also appear in noun phrases, as in *kār-hā=yat* ‘your works’, *barādar yā xāhar=at* ‘your brother or sister’, and *cheshm=e chap=am* ‘my left eye’. This table provides the list of the pronominal clitics in Persian:

#### 10.2.1.6 Reflexive cases

Reflexive pronouns express the reflexive case relations in Persian. They are formed by adding the enclitic personal pronouns to the reflexive morpheme *xod*, as in *xod=am*, *xod=at*, *xod=ash*, *xod=emān*, *xod=etān*, *xod=eshān* ‘myself’ up to ‘themselves’. It is noteworthy that here *xod* may not be regarded equivalent with ‘self’ in English, as it may appear alone (in formal texts), and according to the subject of the sentence, differ in meaning: *u xod rā kosht* ‘he killed himself’, *man xod rā dust dāram* ‘I like myself’, *lotfan xod rā be zahmat nayandāzid* ‘please do not put yourself in trouble’. Reflexive pronouns also act as emphatic elements in sentences like *cherā az u miporsi? az xodam bepors* ‘Why do you ask him/her? Ask me’, and *xodam bā cheshm-hāye xodam didam ke raft* ‘I personally saw with my own eyes that s/he went’.

### 10.2.2 Verbal morphology

An important issue about the Persian verb is its totally distinguished finite and non-finite forms. Finite verbs get inflected in terms of tense and subject agreement, as well as taking imperfective, subjunctive and negative affixes. On the other hand, non-finite verbs do not act as previously.

In terms of structure, Persian verbs are based on three stems: present, aorist and perfect (participle). The aorist can usually be taken from the infinitive, after deleting the infinitive marker *-an*. The perfective is also regularly derived from the aorist stem by *-e*: *raftan* ‘to go’, *raft* ‘went’, *raft-e* ‘gone’. The present stem, however, is not as classified as it is in the earlier example, and although in many cases it looks regularly derived such as *busidan* (pres. *bus*) ‘to kiss’, *paridan* (pres. *par*) ‘to fly’, *raqsidan* (pres. *raqs*) ‘to dance’, there are quite a number of present stems that should be memorized, such as *didan* (pres. *bin*) ‘to see’, *neveshtan* (pres. *nevis*) ‘to write’, *goftan* (pres. *gu*) ‘to say’.

Imperfective and subjunctive prefixes are *mi-* and *be-* respectively, which occur with all the previously mentioned stems: *mi-bin-am* ‘(I) see’, *be-xān-ad* ‘(that s/he) reads’. The exceptions are the stative copula verb *budan* ‘to be’ (with the subjunctive stem *bāsh* without *be-*, and with no past perfect), and *dāshtan* ‘to have’ (with no *mi-* or *be-* prefixes, and a periphrastic perfective subjunctive *dāsht-e bāshi* ‘that you have’). It should be noted that *budan* may appear as a short or a long copula, as in *xub-am* or *xub hast-am* ‘I am fine’. Short copula does not exist for the past tense, and *budan* is used in its past like the rest of the verbs, together with the subject agreement endings: *bud-am* ‘I was’, *bud-and* ‘They were’. The morphological future tense is also built with the verb *xāstan* ‘to want’ (and the appropriate personal endings), together with the truncated infinitive: *xāham goft* ‘I will say’.

Worthy of note is that in standard written Persian, habitual and progressive meanings are expressed by the present and simple past verbs (i.e. *mixoram* may both mean ‘I eat’ and ‘I am eating’, and *mixordam* serves to mean ‘I used to eat’, ‘I would eat’ and ‘I was eating’, as a durative-iterative imperfect. Of course the present and past progressives are also expressed by a periphrastic construction too, made up of the conjugation of the auxiliary *dāshtan* ‘to have’ and the verb: *dārām mixānam* ‘I am reading’, *dāshtand miraqsidand* ‘They were dancing’.

This construction, mostly used in spoken Persian, is confined to positive statements and does not have a negative form, and no future form either.

### 10.2.2.1 Modal verbs

Seven Persian verbs are normally used as modal verbs: *xāstan* ‘to want’, *tavānestan* ‘to be able’, *gozāshstan* ‘to let’, *behtar budan* ‘to be better’, *momken budan* ‘to be possible’, together with frozen modals *bāyad* ‘must’ and *shāyad* ‘may’. The first three verbs are independent verbs, too, but all of them can express the notion of modality by occurring with a complement subjunctive verb (see Thackston 1993, 112): *behtar ast be-ravim* ‘It is better that we go’, *bāyad be-ravand* ‘(They) must go’, *begozārid be-mānim* ‘Let us stay’.

### 10.2.2.2 Compound verbs

A vast majority of Persian verbs are compound verbs, consisting of a non-verbal element and a light verb (see ‘Complex predicates’ in the syntax part of this chapter). Several non-verbal elements may be used in forming the compound verbs, such as the noun *qosse* in the compound *qosse-xordan* (lit. grief-eat) ‘to grieve’, an adjective like *penhān* in *penhān-kardan* (lit. hidden-do) ‘to hide’, and an adverb like *pas-dādan* (lit. back-give) ‘to return’. These verbs are negated by adding the negative prefix to the verbal element: *u rā peydā-na-kardim* ‘We did not find him’, *u az shirāz bar-na=gasht* ‘He did not return from Shiraz’.

As a result of the process of incorporation, generic objects form compounds with the verb, without being marked with the object marker: *qazā xord-am* ‘I ate some food’, *ketāb nevesht-im* ‘We wrote books’. Object agreement markers, however, get attached to the non-verbal element of the compound verb, such as *komak=am kon* ‘help me’, *xāmush=ash kard-and* ‘they extinguished it’.

Impersonal constructions are formed either by the modal *bāyad* ‘must’, or the verbs *mishavad* ‘it is probable’ (lit. it becomes), and *mitavān* ‘it is possible’ (lit. non conjugated ‘can’) followed by truncated infinitives:

*chāre=i nist, bāyad raft*

‘There is no other choice, we should go’ (lit. one should go)

*mishavad hame rā rāzi negahdāsht?*

‘Is it possible to keep everybody satisfied?’

*mitavān neshast va montazer mānd*

‘It is possible to sit and wait’.

Among the compound verbs, a challenge exists about some constructions with certain verbs such as *āmadan* ‘to come’, *gereftan* ‘to get’, *bordan* ‘to take’, and *oftādan* ‘to fall’, as well as constructions with *budan* ‘to be’ and *shodan* ‘to become’, in which the verb is not conjugated, and the form of the sentence is like that of the impersonals, while it is not exactly so, and the personal ending gets attached to the nominal part of the verb, rather than the verbal. Examples are *bist sāl=am ast* (lit. twenty year=my is) ‘I am twenty years old’, *ketāb gir=am na-yāmad* (lit. book hold=my didn’t come) ‘I couldn’t get hold of the book’, *sard=eshān ast* (lit. cold=there is) ‘They feel cold’, *xāb=am bord* (lit. sleep=my took) ‘I fell asleep’ and the like. These forms, known by Yousef (2018) as “Quasi-impersonal idioms”, are reminiscent of the German phrases *Mir ist kalt* ‘I feel cold’, and *Mir reicht’s* ‘It is enough for me’.

For a more detailed discussion on Persian compound verbs, read Chapters 4 and 6 in this volume.

### 10.3 Issues in Persian Syntax: word order and NPs

Persian is a pro-drop language that permits scrambling. In terms of word order, Persian is basically an SOV language, in which the subject precedes the predicate, and the direct object is usually adjacent to the verb, as in *dārā ketāb rā xarid* ‘Dara bought the book’. Precedence of subject with respect to the verb is also at work when the verb is a copula: *dārā tarsu ast* ‘Dara is coward’.

When the verb is ditransitive, the direct object precedes the indirect object like

*dārā qazā ra be sārā dād*  
‘Dara gave the food to Sara’.

Or:

*dārā ketāb-i rā be sārā dād*  
‘Dara gave a book to Sara’.

But in case of noun incorporation, this order changes:

*dārā be sārā qazā dād*  
‘Dara fed Sara’ (lit. Dara food-gave Sara).

Typologically, the basic word order of Persian turns out to be misleading to many linguists, as it does not normally follow the universals proposed by Greenberg for the SOV languages. According to word order universals for SOV languages, it is a NP/ADJ-COPULA language: *dānā mo’allem ast* (Dānā-teacher-is) ‘Dana is a teacher’ and *Sārā zibā ast* (Sara-beautiful-is) ‘Sara is beautiful’. However, many of its word order characteristics are much alike English, as an SVO language: (Preposition-Noun, as in *dar kelās* ‘in the class’; AUX-V, as in *Xāhad raft* ‘s/he will go’; N-REL, as in *mard=i ke raft* ‘the man who went’, and Sentence initial WH word, as in *kojā rafti?* ‘Where did you go?’).

The modifier of a Persian noun phrase (noun or adjective) always follows the head, together with an unstressed enclitic =*e* (=ye after the names ending in vowels), named *ezāfe*, which serves to link a noun syntactically with a following modifying element. For example, *ketāb=e rezā* ‘Reza’s book’ (N-N), or *keyk=e xoshmāze* ‘delicious cake’ (N-Adj). It is possible to have several *ezāfe* constructions in one noun phrase, such as *keyk=e xoshmāze=ye dāxel=e yaxchāl* ‘delicious cake in the refrigerator’. First and family names (except those names ending with –*u* or –*ā*) also follow the same pattern. So the famous Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami’s name is pronounced *abbās=e kiyārostami*. Foreign names do not follow this pattern, but if Noam Chomsky were Iranian, his name would be pronounced as *noām=e chāmski*.

Generally, we may identify three *ezāfe* constructions: **attributive**, as *sā’at=e panj* ‘five o’clock’, *ketāb=e dastur* ‘grammar book’, *ketāb=e siyāh* ‘black book’; **genitive**, as *ketāb=e mehdi* ‘Mehdi’s book’ or *pāye=ye miz* ‘leg of the table’; and **appositive**, like *āqā=ye akbari* ‘Mr. Akbari’,<sup>5</sup> *xalij=e fārs* ‘Persian Gulf’, *forudgāh=e mehrābād* ‘Mehrabad Airport’ or *xiyābān=e jordan* ‘Jordan Street’.<sup>6</sup>

The only exceptions in such modifying are seen in demonstrative and quantifying adjectives: *se doxtar* ‘three girls’, *chahāromin nafar* ‘the fourth person’, and in superlative constructions: *bāhush-tarin dāneshju* ‘The most intelligent student’ (lit. intelligent-SUP student).

### 10.3.1 Syntax of complex predicates

Most of the predicates in the Persian are complex predicates, having two parts: a nonverbal element and a light verb. The most-used light verbs and their strong meanings are *kardan* ‘to do’, *dādan* ‘to give’, *zadan* ‘to hit’, *gozāshstan* ‘to place’, *gereftan* ‘to take’, *keshidan* ‘to pull’, *raftan* ‘to go’, *āvardan* ‘to bring’, *bordan* ‘to take’, *dāshtan* ‘to have’, *shodan* ‘to become’, *xordan* ‘to eat’, *andāxtan* ‘to throw’, and *āmadan* ‘to come’. The formation of complex predicates is productive and expanding, and in many cases, the choice of the light verb determines if the complex predicate selects an external argument or not.

The nonverbal element in the Persian complex predicate can either be a noun, an adjective, an adverb or a prepositional phrase. Examples are:

#### 10.3.1.1 Noun+verb

*ātash-gereftan* (fire-take) ‘catch fire’, *pust-andāxtan* (skin-throw) ‘shed skin’, *qarz-gereftan* (borrow-take) ‘borrow’, *farā-gereftan* (beyond-take) ‘acquire, to prevail’, *panāh bordan* (refuge-take) ‘take refuge’, *ehterām-gozāshstan* (respect-place) ‘respect’, *harf-zadan* (speech-hit) ‘speak’, *sabr-kardan* (patience-do) ‘wait’, *da’vat-kardan* (invite-do) ‘invite’, *ranj- bordan* (suffer-take) ‘suffer’, *chāne zadan* (chin-hit) ‘bargain’.

#### 10.3.1.2 Adjective+verb

*garm-gereftan* (warm-take) ‘warm up to’, *bāz-kardan* (open-do) ‘open’, *boland-kardan* (high-do) ‘lift’, *bozorg-kardan* (big-do) ‘raise (a child)’, *paxsh-kardan* (spread-do) ‘spread out’, *hamāhang-kardan* (coordinate-do) ‘coordinate’, *vel-kardan* (loose-do) ‘release, let go’, *derāz-keshidan* (stretch-draw) ‘lie down’.

#### 10.3.1.3 Adverb

*pas dādan* (back-give) ‘return’, *tah-keshidan* (bottom-pull) ‘be used up’, *pas-oftādan* (back-fall) ‘pass out’.

#### 10.3.1.4 Particle+ verb

*bar-gashtan* (over-turn) ‘return’, *bar-dāshtan* (over-have) ‘take’, *dar-māndan* (in-stay) ‘be inert’, *dar-raftan* (out-go) ‘escape, get dislocated’, *dar-oftādan* (in-fall) ‘start a challenge/ fight’, *bar-angixtan* (over-stimulate) ‘enrage’.

#### 10.3.1.5 Prepositional phrase+ verb

*be-kār bordan* (to-work-get) ‘to use’, *az-dast-dādan* (from-hand-give) ‘to lose’, *be-xāk-sepordan* (to-soil-entrust) ‘to bury’, *be-donyā-āmadan* (to-world-come) ‘to be born’, *az-yād-bordan* (from-memory-take) ‘forget’, *be- be-dard-xordan* (to-pain-eat) ‘be useful’, *be-dast-āvardan* (to-hand-bring) ‘attain’, *az-hāl-raftan* (from-mood-go) ‘pass out, faint’.

These constructions show interesting syntactic properties. For example, the passive form of those with nouns, adjectives and adverbs is not lexical and is formed by making another

complex predicate, while the passive for those with particles or prepositions is like the simple passive verbs:

*maryam ali rā farib dād > ali farib xord*

‘Maryam tricked Ali > Ali was tricked’.

*otāq rā tamiz kardīm > otāq tamiz shod*

‘We cleaned the room > the room was cleaned’.

*ānhā in mozu’ rā be xāter sepordand > in mozu’ be xāter seporde shod*

‘They memorized this issue > This issue was memorized’.

Many a time it happens that these constructions undergo ellipsis, such as

*man otāqam rā tamiz kardam, vali mehrdād na-kard*

‘I cleaned up my room but Mehrdad didn’t’.

*man az hāl raftam, vali mehrdād naraft*

‘I fainted, but Mehrdad didn’t’.

Also, the few available cases of Persian resultative constructions are mostly formed with complex predicates:

*sebil=ash rā hitleri eslāh mi-kon-ad*

‘He shaves his moustache in toothbrush form’.

*sofre rā tamiz pāk kon*

‘Wipe the tablecloth clean’.

*shāgerd=am rā herfe’i tarbiat-kard-am*

‘I trained my student to be a professional’.

*bachche-ash rā lus bār-āvord*

‘S/he brought up his/her child spoiled’.

### 10.3.2 Syntax of complex clauses

In complex sentences, the order of the main clause and subordinate clause varies with the logical or temporal precedence of the actions. If the action in the subordinate clause, due to a cause, time or condition, logically precede the other actions, then the subordinate clause precedes the main clause. On the other hand, it follows the main clause if its action follows the others, due to an explanation, time of potential completion, or a sudden interruption. The markers *chon* ‘since, as’, *vaqti* ‘when’, *tā* ‘as soon as’ and *agar* ‘if’ mark the preceding subordinate clauses, while *zirā* ‘because’, *ke* ‘when/suddenly’, *tā* ‘until’ and *magar inke* ‘unless’ act the other way round:

*chon bā u qahram, be didan=ash nemiravam*

‘Since I am not on speaking terms with him, I don’t go to see him’.

*dāshtam kār mikardam ke āmad*

‘I was working when he came’.

But it can generally be said that complement clauses are marked by *ke*, as in:

*āmadam ke to rā bebinam*

‘I came to see you’.

In the study of the syntax of the Persian complex clauses, three types of subordinate clauses are considered: temporal, conditional and relative clauses.

Different temporal clauses, i.e. **anterior** (having taken place before the verb of the main clause), **concomitant** (taking place simultaneously) and **future** (taking place after the main clause), have different forms in Persian. In the anterior temporal clause, we always have the present subjunctive, regardless of the tense of the main clause:

*qabl az inke u beravad, man residam*

‘Before he went, I arrived’.

*qabl az inke u beravad, man mirezam*

‘Before he goes, I arrive’.

*qabl az inke u beravad, man xāham resid*

‘Before he goes, I will arrive’.

The concomitant temporal clauses, usually introduced by *vaqti ke* ‘when’, make use of identical tenses:

*vaqti be ānjā residam, dar baste bud*

‘When I got there, the door was closed’.

And (interestingly) the future temporal clause makes use of the past verb:

*ba’ d az inke raftam, fahmidam ke eshtebāh karde’am*

‘After I went, I realized that I made a mistake’,

*ba’ d az inke rafti, mifahmi ke eshtebāh karde’i.*

‘After you go, you (will) realize that you made a mistake’.

The conditional clauses are distinct in terms of possibility and impossibility. Possible conditionals employ the present subjunctive in their protasis and present/future in the apodosis:

*agar puldār beshavam, xāne mixaram*

‘If I become rich, I (will) buy a house’.

Sometimes the simple past is used in the protasis to emphasize the immediate realization of the apodosis when the condition is fulfilled:

*agar puldār shodam, xāne mixaram*

‘If I become (lit. became) rich, I will (surely) buy a house’.

Impossible conditionals usually make use of the imperfect in both protasis and apodosis:

*agar be moqe’ mi-residi, u rā mi-didi*

‘If you arrived on time, you would see him’.

*agar be moqe’ reside budi, u rā mi-didi*

‘If you had arrived on time, you would have seen him’.

Persian relative clauses are postnominal, marked again by the subordinator *ke*, and the head of the relative clause becomes definite by the use of the particle – *i*:

*mard=i ke xāne=ash rā foruxt*

‘the man who sold his house’.

This happens with the heads of relative clauses in other cases, too, such as:

*mard=i ke az u xāne xaridam*  
'the man from whom I bought the house',  
*mard=i ke bā u sohbat mikardi*  
'the man with whom you were talking',  
*mardi ke ketāb=ash gom shode*  
'the man whose book is lost'.

### 10.3.2.1 Che beresad be 'let alone' constructions

Among the coordinating means in Persian, *che beresad be* (lit. what reaches to) has a specific function. Given the specific part of the sentence on which the speaker is emphasizing, the item after *che beresad be* differs. In case the emphasis is on a noun, the following item is a noun:

*u man rā bābā sedā nemikonad, che beresad be qorbān*  
'He does not call me "dad", let alone "Sir" '.

This also holds true of the nouns acting as objects of prepositions:

*man az gorbe mitarsam, che beresad be 'aqrab*  
'I am afraid of cats, let alone scorpions'.

However, after the emphasized sentences, a complementary clause follows it:

*u javāb=e salām=e man rā nemidahad, che beresad be inke dastam rā bebusad.*  
'He does not reply to my greetings, let alone kiss my hands'.

Here, the information structure is at work, and the behavior of the construction reveals a connection between the syntax and pragmatics of Persian.

## 10.4. Conclusion

Error analysis may be a good method to pave the way for the production of useful grammar books and exercises. My rather long experience of teaching Persian has given me the sense that some specific areas of Persian grammar look more different and difficult to the foreigners (especially the English speakers). In this chapter, these areas of Persian grammar were introduced, which are supposedly making challenges while teaching the language. Issues such as definiteness for nouns, *rā* and its several grammatical and discourse functions, *ezāfe* construction and its minute meanings, different prepositions and their uses, quasi-impersonal constructions that are not found in many other languages, and finally, ellipsis and complex predicates are among those phenomena that act differently in comparison to a language such as English and should naturally be kept in mind in preparing syllabi and course books. The several examples provided in the chapter show the diversity of the issues to be covered and the exercises useful for the students. My personal suggestion is emphasizing on such issues in the workbooks but making the learners face them for the first time in their textbooks.

### Notes

- 1) In colloquial Persian, the enclitic =*e* gets attached to singular proper or common nouns (in subject or object position) to indicate definiteness, such as *mard=e bā man harfzad* 'The man talked to me', or *film=e ro didam* 'I watched the film'.



- 2) Traditional Persian grammar refers to this =i as *yā-ye vahdat* ‘=i of unity’ and *yā-ye nakare* ‘=i of indefiniteness’. These two items were used to be known as separate suffixes, but now we know them as one entity and as a clitic (see Lazard 1989).
- 3) This fact results in being Persian as a “Pro-drop” language; in which nominative pronouns may be dropped: *nahār=am rā xordam* ‘(I) ate my lunch’, *irāni ast* ‘(s/he) is Iranian’. This is another clear difference between English and Persian.
- 4) In spoken Persian, clitics also follow the prepositions and act as indirect objects too: *az=ash gereftam* ‘I took from him’, *be-hesh-goftam* ‘I told to him’.
- 5) Job titles, however, do not receive an *ezāfe* marker: *doctor karami* ‘Dr. Karami’, *ostād haqshenas* ‘Professor Haghshenas’.
- 6) *Ezāfe* may also appear after some prepositions such as *kenār=e* ‘beside’, *zir=e* ‘under’, *ru=ye* ‘over’, *posht=e* ‘behind’, *jelo=ye* ‘in front of’, *ruberu=ye* ‘opposite of’.

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# 11

## SECOND LANGUAGE LISTENING IN PERSIAN

*Yass Alizadeh*

### 11.1 Introduction

The key idea of this chapter is to introduce various audio models that can help teachers of Persian ease students into simultaneous decoding of authentic Persian utterances through the instructor's voice, audio stories, songs, movies, speeches, interviews and conversations in class or at home via the internet and other media outlets. The questions this chapter will ask are manifold: How can listening proficiency be achieved while engaging students in a lively and vibrant interaction in and outside of the classroom? How can the development of listening aptitude be part of a hands-on interactive syllabus that leaps beyond drills and exercises? How can the instructor interact with students as intellectual and creative partners in learning rather than mere recipients of the language? How can Persian listening skill pedagogy be forwarded into the 21st century realm of a multitasking, multifaceted and global community of learners who not only expect their learning to be in the form of tasks but also expect for the tasks to be authentic, interactive, interpersonal, collective and creative? Considering the geopolitical specificity of Persian as a less commonly taught critical language, which, unlike many other world languages, is hardly targeted for the immediate purpose of travel and tourism, what are the effective strategies to best model authentic oral give and take without sacrificing the fluidity and flexibility of Persian as a living language? Finally, as Persian is a heritage language selected by second and third generation immigrants, on the one hand, and valued as a political and cultural medium by students of socio-political and cultural sciences, what are the best cultural samples that may help introduce such a diverse group of learners to the Persian language without sacrificing the multiplicity of Persian culture? Read Chapters 3 and 4 for elaborate discussion on heritage learners of Persian.

The immediate answer to the five questions here is a class community with an intercultural, project-based learning setting that holds true to a communicative approach to language teaching while engaging students in a creative, design-oriented participatory learning environment where knowledge is a trading of ideas between all members of the class community, and not a one-way direction where the teacher actively gives and the students passively receive. Using authentic material, expecting students to use critical thinking, teaching them to follow instructions, problem-solve, think, build, create, negotiate meanings, and allowing them to have an input in the design of their curriculum will lead to a learner-based language community

that builds upon the students' knowledge and experience, and involves other subjects such as math, economics and political science. By focusing on functional objectives, learning Persian can successfully adhere to ACTFL's "World Readiness Standards of Learning a Foreign Language" in order to achieve the goals of "Five Cs" of language learning: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities. ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) categorizes communication, the basic goal of learning a language, to be "interpersonal," and "presentational" and "interpretive." Interpersonal skills are communicative skills that involve both parties engaged in the give and take of written or oral knowledge. Presentational skills focus on speeches, lectures and oratory needs, and interpretive skills are analytical reading and listening skills. Needless to say, competency in any of these communicative modes is possible only through an ongoing understanding of the culture of communication and the nuances that give life to written or spoken words (ACTFL 2019).

Making connections in the target language builds a community of learners to whom language is hardly a target but a tool for building, creating and problem solving. In this community, authentic content that is relevant to the students' needs and enhances their understanding of the target culture is the main component of the curriculum. Moreover, in order to follow this authentic curriculum, the students need appropriate learning tools appropriate for critical engagement in an interactive classroom. Listening skills, as skills that target interpretive modes of communication, must engage the same level of content authenticity as one's first language. The news, the weather, songs, stories, lectures, requests etc. are great examples of authentic content for a task-based classroom, but in addition to the authenticity of the content, the form, as well, should follow the speed, the tone and the voice as it is uttered for native speakers.

In his discussion of the intricacies and complexities of listening aptitude for second language learners, Richard Cauldwell (2013) categorizes the process of listening mode to three consecutive parts of "preparation, perception and understanding." Preparing one's mind for receiving audio information is the first step to successful comprehension of meaningful utterances. Just as one will be lost if he or she shows up in the middle of a lecture, a conversation or a reading in one's native language if they do not know the context in which the exchange of information is taking place, a second language learner will be lost (even more so if the vocabulary is new) if they are not given a proper introduction to the topic. Therefore, students will tremendously benefit from an introductory context to what they are to hear. Perception, as Cauldwell (2013) explains, is "decoding the sound substance and identifying the words that are said." Repetition is hence recommended and many times necessary for students to master the decoding process. The last step in listening comprehension is "understanding" the meaning of the utterance (*Phonology for Listening* 16). Spontaneous speech, as Cauldwell (2013) argues, is never "accent-free" (PFL 159). This point is especially notable with regards to the many dialects and accents of Persian and its teachers. The three major dialects of Persian, Dari, Farsi and Tajik in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, as well as the numerous accents in the Persianate world, may not only confuse the learner but also deter instructors from claiming an identity for their phonological method of articulating the language and using certain vocabulary and syntax. Read Chapters 23 and 24 in this volume for a detailed discussion on different varieties and dialects of Persian.

While teachers should not worry about their accents, they should be cognizant of the multiplicity of Persian dialects and accents, and should communicate with their students that no matter what part of the Persianate world they are from, they are accented. One might decide to change one's accent, of course, as we, consciously or subconsciously, do change our tone and accent in various social situations depending on a variety of factors including the social,

political and cultural characteristics of the addressee. Not only do we use different vocabulary and mold our language output based on variables including but not limited to age, social status and our relationships with the recipient, but we also change our tone and voice based on the social role that we as speakers play in various situations. Our students too should be aware of this continuous shift, and while the teachers do not need to be knowledgeable about all the accents in the Persian world, it is important to help students appreciate that there is not a single authentic accent or dialect of Persian, and Persian is a fluid language that changes with time, and in various socio-cultural and geo-political spaces. In addition, students need to be specifically cognizant of public versus private Persian and be aware that the shift in speech identity does not limit to socio-economic, socio-political or regional accents. Finally, they need to learn that Persian has differentiated formal and vernacular categories whose written/formal sentences frequently change their form in oral/colloquial utterances and are not limited to one formal or vernacular model:

آن دختر، خواهر من است.: Written/Formal  
اون دختر خانم خواهرم هستن.: Oral/Formal  
آن دختر خانم خواهر من هستند  
اون دختره خواهر منه.: Oral/Informal

Or:

اگر میتونی، همان آهنگ همیشگی رو بخوان  
اگه میتونین، همون آهنگ همیشگی رو بخونین  
اگر میتوانید، همان آهنگ همیشگی رو بخوانید  
اگه میتونی، همون آهنگ همیشگی رو بخون

Acknowledging the multiplicity of Persian accents, tones and dialects in different villages, towns, cities and regions of the Persian speaking world puts the students at ease with their own Persian accents, helps their confidence when encountering less familiar styles of Persian utterances outside of the class community, and gives the instructor the assuredness to communicate with the learners in an authentic, personal, accented dialect that he or she is comfortable with.

Listening skills are arguably the most challenging of the four L2 skills as listeners have little control over the speed and the complexity of the utterance that they receive. Persian listening skills are hence the most difficult to master, and compared to other interpretive skills, they are the slowest to achieve even among the advanced level learners of the language. Persian listening proficiency is frequently a delayed skill attained on a much smaller scale than the other three L2 skills. Nevertheless, the ability to comprehend and interpret spoken language is one of the most important skills that an L2 learner should master, and modeling the natural learning process of native speakers' listening aptitude, L2 speakers should master listening earlier than speaking, reading and writing. If we apply the native speakers' language acquisition process for teaching a second language, and with regards to students in lower performance levels, the ability to comprehend spoken Persian must be stressed more – if not given priority – over reading and writing during the contact hours in the classroom. Whereas students may, to a degree, practice reading and writing independently and outside of the classroom environment via internet and other media resources, the instructor is usually one of the few Persian-speaking individuals who can introduce the intricacies of spontaneous Persian and guide the students thought the spiral route of interpretation and proficiency of Persian listening skills. In addition, allocating adequate class time to listening exercises leads to a positive sense of community and

cooperation that is of utmost importance for goal-driven classrooms of today. Listening to the voice of the teacher and the classmates, hearing a lecture or a debate, following an oral story, listening to a song, watching a TV show, a debate or a movie clip, are exercises that enable students to achieve listening proficiency while advancing in other aspects of learning. Alluding to Bloom's Taxonomy (vanderbuilt.edu 2019), which continues to present the baseline for a successful learning environment, providing the students with the opportunity to work together as members of a learning community who endeavor to achieve meaningful results enhances their learning experience and instills a sense of purpose to the language classroom. In effect, listening skills are the torch bearers of the communicative approach to learning, and mastering them can successfully lead to students' "analysis" and "creativity".

In order for the group work to be effective, however, the goals must be clearly defined by the instructor, and the level of expectations, while stimulating, must not outweigh the abilities of the students. In other words, not only must the objectives of the task be reasonable and at reach, but also the roles of each member of the group must be clearly defined by the instructor; otherwise, the time spent on the task may not lead to learning and may leave the students insecure about their linguistic abilities and assuming linguistic barriers. One way to ensure the students' classwork is effective is to follow the Backward Design method, the idea of starting any lesson plan with a clear learning outcome in mind as introduced by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTiche (2005). Following this rule, the students know what they are expected to produce at the end of each lesson, and they will achieve a better learning outcome. More importantly, the evidence of learning, they argue, will be different in a classroom that follows a Backward Learning curriculum as assessment is no longer an examination of what students may or may not know, but what they can evidently do with the language (Wiggins and McTiche 2005, 14–16). In a curriculum that follows evidence-based assessment, instructors present a concrete end result or learning outcome to the students, and provide enough guidance and directions for the students to achieve the set goals. Students' progress is hence measured by their position on the "road to mastery rather than tests or grades" (Wiggins 2013). In addition, an evidence-based and goal-specific learning community substitutes purposeless exercises and passive drills with hands-on activities that demand the students' full presence and involvement in classroom activities. As Wiggins (2013) illustrates, with regards to listening and speaking exercises, the "evidence" is in communication and creativity, and dialogic exercises that focus on give-and-take of information:

A teacher should ask himself, what will count as evidence of learning? A teacher who originally was thinking on doing public speaking as a more traditional assessment, but when he asks the question, "What will count as evidence of learning?" then he might change his mind and consider Socratic Seminars because they definitely produce a lot of evidence of how much the students have learned simply by tracking their questions and the answers.

(Edutopia, November 9, 2013)

Applying Wiggins and McTighe's methodology to a task-based classroom with listening skills as the focus of the unit, the students will pay more attention, will be more confident in their learning and will control their own learning progress more effectively. In a goal-oriented Persian classroom, time spent on listening tasks looks beyond mere practicing of drill-like listening comprehension exercises, word-for-word translating of audio texts, or following instructions that are irrelevant to the students' communicative expectations. On the contrary, collaboration on real-world, authentic projects using Persian interpretive skills can manifest as

what Michael Byram, Conlon Perugini, and Wagner (2019) calls the language for “interpreting and relating” and “discovery and interaction” with the goal of “Intercultural Citizenship” (Eric, August 10, 2019). In fact, approaching listening skills with an Intercultural Citizenship Competence goal can help students become active participants in their listening proficiency as they will view the skill as a critical component in their education about self and others. Applying Michael Byram’s intercultural approach to a Persian classroom, L2 learners of Persian will gain a critical understanding and application of the language if they are introduced to listening skills as an active interpretive skill that develops critical cultural awareness in their language proficiency, and L2 teachers of Persian must be encouraged to prioritize the teaching of auditory proficiency and allocate a major section of class time to students’ mastering listening interpretation. The old debate of *phonos* versus *logos* and orality versus literacy, and the continuous deliberation in the academia on the weight of written language over spoken language (Ong 2002, 163–164), continues to impact L2 teachers with the dilemma to choose between allocating enough time to listening/speaking aptitude versus reading/writing proficiency. Nevertheless, the goal of learning a second language is first and foremost the ability to communicate and then to work alongside others to find or create solutions. Listening aptitude helps the students with understanding problems faster, more naturally, and directly; hence it makes solving problems and creating social justice closer and at reach.

As the new guidelines of ACTFL introduce listening as primarily an interpretive skill that should be measured by the amount of information listeners comprehend, the inferences they make, and the knowledge they can produce or the tasks they can perform via the retrieved message, unlike many other L2 languages, Persian as a Less-Commonly-Taught Critical Language puts instructors and students in a challenging situation (ACTFL 2012). Persian is different from many other less commonly taught languages in the location of learning as learning the language is rarely possible through immersion classrooms, real-time conversing with native speakers or traveling to a Persian speaking country such as Iran or Afghanistan, hence Richard Cauldwell’s (2013) “Jungle” of voices and real-life utterances has been for the past many years lost in the front and center “Greenhouse” and “Garden” voices of Iran and Afghanistan that are introduced through media and digital venues (Cauldwell 2018, 12–13). In order to help students with overcoming such linguistic barriers, Persian language teachers need to be extra creative in introducing a combination of these three speech domains in their syllabi. Controlled, semi-controlled and spontaneous utterances exist in real life and are part of one’s daily communication patterns. We do spend our days in producing and receiving a combination of premeditated speeches, isolated words, as well as mashed up utterances. A successful teaching method helps students recognize the importance of understanding slow, well-organized words as much as accepting a mishmash of unfinished sentences and inaudible sounds. Most importantly, L2 learners should be given assurance about the near-impossibility of decoding all that is being uttered in either domain. Just as it is impossible to hear all that is being articulated in any L1 chain of sounds, it is nearly impossible to hear and comprehend every sound combination in L2. Accepting the fact that what skips an L2 listener’s ears may not be due to lack of his or her listening proficiency but a natural occurrence that comes with any listening activity no matter what the language will lead to a more successful Persian listening curriculum and learning outcome. When the fear of listening is removed, the teacher can focus on creating a listening syllabus that combines various types of speech sounds and shares them with the students in various stages of language proficiency. Although the level of the students’ understanding of Persian speeches is generally a direct reflection of the amount of time they have been exposed to the language, introducing a combination of utterance types or speech models from the beginning of their L2 education will lead to higher proficiency in less time.

Listening is a communicative skill, and according to ACTFL categories, listening is an interpretive skill that encompasses an analytical understanding of heard speeches. Interpretation is not mere comprehension or translation of what we hear. Interpretive skills are “reading between the lines” of speech sounds that fall on the learner’s ears. As Sandy Cutshall (2012, 38) argues, in this approach to listening skills, listeners are hardly expected to engage in translating the audio, and are instead fully engaged in communicating about what will happen next in a narrative, finding the meaning of words through understanding the general meaning of a sentence, and making inferences based on available evidence.

The goal of listening skills as such is not translational but analyzing synthesized data in order to interpret the meanings that have been transpired. This interpretive mode differs from what has classically been considered a translational goal of texts. As an alternative, it focuses on a negotiation of meanings toward a cooperative common goal of creating solutions and building mutually beneficial human connections. In effect, if the goal of learning a less commonly known language such as Persian is negotiation of meaning, cultural understanding and creating common human goals, listening skills must advance beyond a traditionally passive reception of data to goal-oriented task-based activities. Task-based activities shift the role of language learners from passive recipients of the foreign language to active participants with authentic and real-life responsibilities that benefit the learners’ community, the target community and the global village we all belong to in mutual respect, and with no knowledge necessarily superseding another. For example, when students listen to the Iranian diaspora singer Marjan Farsad’s songs, not only will they gain a critical perspective on memory, nostalgia and displacement (a collective human experience), but also their acquired knowledge may lead to a more profound humanitarian stance on less commonly discussed problems that immigrants and refugees struggle with (loneliness and homesickness experienced by a minority group, i.e. immigrants). They learn about the artistic, cultural and professional benefits of having an open-door immigration policy (the privilege of hosting individuals like Farsad in one’s country) and striving to change local and global policies that cause human displacements and becoming actively involved in local and global xenophobia and racism. While a traditional approach to improving listening skills through songs dealt with a translational approach to the song without making a connection beyond the form and content of the lyrics, a modern response to listening skills engages the whole student in a holistic learning process. In addition, in a task-based Persian class, students are encouraged to enter with their academic knowledge from other disciplines and with daily experiences from life outside of the classroom, putting their knowledge and strategies to use – as well as to test – in their groups. In addition, their activities in the Persian classroom becomes a critical part of their repertoire of knowledge when negotiating meanings outside of the classroom in other academic, professional and social communities. In effect, not only the linguistic abilities but also the cultural knowledge that they take from their Persian lessons becomes an integral component of their educational journey. For further discussion on task-based language teaching and learning, read Chapters 16 and 17 in this volume.

As indicated earlier, listening activities in a task-based Persian classroom are expected to be goal-oriented, meaningful and authentic, hence the instructor’s diligence in shifting away from drills and fill-in-the-blank-exercises to open-ended questions, inference exercises and creative queries that demand students’ critical understanding of the listening activity and promote their using problem-solving skills. In this Persian pedagogy, interactive and group work substitutes exercises that are traditionally solitary and predictable, and open-ended questions invite vibrant peer collaboration and active participation by all students. One example of the difference between this method of listening activity and the traditional linear approach is how

students are expected to listen to a Persian folktale or children's story with the direct objective of practicing their listening skills rather than translating the story. Whereas understanding the literal meaning of sentences and phrases – if not the words – was the focus of most listening comprehension exercises in the past, the 21st century student expects to activate the knowledge he or she gains in a lesson. Instead of dead-end questions about the meaning of words or “where” the character goes or “what” he or she does, the instructor can engage the learner in a wholesome response to the story with inference and analysis. In this active listening exercise, why and how questions take precedence over what, where and who questions, and group work in interpreting the story replace traditional fill-in-the-blanks, yes/no questions and multiple-choice drills. Nevertheless, such participatory listening exercises will only be successful with prior notification and warmup by the instructor. As Richard Cauldwell (2013) expertly argues, the students need preparation for what they hear, and unless the listeners are equipped with (some) background knowledge about what to expect, what they receive can only be an “acoustic blur.” As the listener picks out words and their meaning or “lexical segmentation,” the teacher's role is to build a connection between the *sound substance* and the learner's prior knowledge of the language (Cauldwell 2013, 16).

Auditory skills of Persian can be taught using a variety of teaching tools. The instructor's voice is undoubtedly the students' primary means to simultaneous and authentic voice of a Persian speaker. Hand and facial gestures, tone and manner of speech, choice of words and formalities and decorum are best learned within the enclosed space of the classroom and with direct interaction with the instructor. Nevertheless, because there are limits to students' real-time communication in class, instructors need to find ways to help the students hear more Persian and listen to a wide variety of Persian utterances after the contact hours. Songs, speeches, interviews, fiction and poetry podcasts, movies and TV effectively contribute to the students' listening skills and familiarity with various ranges of Persian utterances.

## 11.2 Teaching listening skills through songs

Popular songs are a great tool for introducing students to descriptive language, vocabulary in context, imagery, intonations, metaphors, symbols and, most importantly, cultural communication norms. In addition, Persian pop songs are an effective means for students to achieve Intercultural Competence or “a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts (Bennet 2015, xxiii). Startalk's proficiency model (Startalk, 1), as well, leads us to the conclusion that successful lesson plans:

- Are learner focused
- Use Persian for meaningful communication
- Integrate analysis and synthesis of perspectives and viewpoints
- Focus on authentic material
- Apply performance-based assessment

Popular Persian pop songs play an important yet cheerful role in Iranian people's personal and political lives. As a socio-cultural means for reflection, criticism and change, popular songs have been in the center of personal, social and political shifts during Iran's modern history. Just as Persian poetry has for centuries played a major part in communicating Iranian's collective feelings about personal, social and cultural issues, and as metaphor continues to claim a solid



space for negotiating ideas, lyrics and melodies of Iran have not found an auspicious place in Iranians' emotion and psyche. Not only do most Persian songs apply everyday language to express emotions, but they also negotiate a deeper understanding of Iranians' shared values for communication. In order to take advantage of the vast array of popular songs in Persian, the language instructor needs to introduce the many facets of Iranian musical productions, explain that the native tongue of most Iranians is not Persian hence Persian, for many, is a public rather than a private language – which in turn makes Persian lyrics and melodies a collective mode of communication – and that the Persian language is part of the national identity of Iranians through which people of different ethnicities, languages and dialects share collective joys and sorrows, communal victories and losses, and public celebrations and lamentations. In effect, approaching Persian pop songs as expressions of Iranians' multifaceted culture extends the objective of the listening exercise beyond translational boundaries and aims at an intercultural understanding between the learners and Persian speakers. Persian pop songs make an excellent tool for listening skill proficiency as they add various cultural, vocabulary and intonation layers to the learning experience. Choosing music videos with pleasant rhythms, rhymes and repetitive phrases and utterances is the key to a successful usage of music for novice and intermediate students. Marjan Farsad is one of the popular musicians whose work brings a listening session to life. An Iranian-Canadian with catchy tunes, authentic melody and emotional lyrics that are choreographed with artistic graphic, Farsad appeals to students who may not, in round one, understand her lyrics, but will most likely enjoy the visuals that accompany her songs. The combination of successful audio-visual presentations, cultural themes and ideas makes Farsad's songs a great tool for teaching audio skills. Farsad's music brings Persian language and culture to the classroom and helps create empathy between the foreign learner and the Iranian singer who is herself a first-generation immigrant raised and educated in Iran. Introducing Farsad's songs to the classroom help ease listening comprehension by the added melody, rhythm and rhyme as well as a ballad-like slow pace of her songs. In addition, Farsad's lyrics have a fresh, positive and global theme that negotiate a common identity with students who might otherwise feel intimidated by the complexity of other Persian songs. Lured by the beauty of the illustrations and the soft melody, students soon recognize the repetition of the phrase “خونه ما” and “دور دوره” and familiar words and utterances. The familiarity of the universal theme of displacement, migration and loneliness embedded in colorful cartoons, and the combination of soft Persian and Western melodies, bring an ease to the lesson plan, stimulate empathy and raise curiosity among the listeners about the song leading to a human connection between us (second language learners) and them (Persian native speakers). Learning to overcome the assumed cultural gap not only by enjoying the song but also by thinking critically about the political and ethical questions that the song raises invites the students to learn more about the causes and effects of displacement, many faces of immigration and the shared experience of memory and nostalgia.

مرجان فرساد “خونه ما”

خونه ما دوره دوره  
پشت کوه‌های صبوره  
پشت دشتای طلایی  
پشت صحراهای خالی  
خونه ماست اونور آب  
اونور موجای بی‌تاب  
پشت جنگای سرره  
توی رویاست، توی یه خواب

پشت اقیانوس آبی  
پشت باغای گلآبی  
اونور باغای انگور  
پشت کندوهای زنبور  
خونۀ ما، پشت ابراست  
اونور دلتنگی ماست  
ته جاده‌های خیسه  
پشت بارون، پشت دریاست  
خونۀ ما، قصه داره  
آلبالو و پسته داره  
پشت خنده‌های گرمش  
آدمای خسته داره  
خونۀ ما شادی داره  
توی حوضاش ماهی داره  
کوچه‌هاش توپبازی داره  
گربه‌های نازی داره  
Marjan Farsad (2019)

Marjan Farsad “Khuneh-ye Ma”

Our home is far far away  
behind enduring mountains  
behind golden plains  
behind empty deserts  
Our home is on the other side the water  
the other side of impatient waves  
behind forests of cypress  
it's in a fantasy, in a dream  
Behind the blue ocean  
behind orchards of pears  
the other side of vineyards  
behind beehives  
Our home is behind the clouds  
the other side of our broken hearts  
at the end of wet roads  
behind the rain, behind the sea  
Our home has stories  
has Sour cherries and pistachio  
behind its warm laughters  
it has weary humans  
Out home has joy  
has fish in its (small) pools  
has playing ball in its alleys  
has cute cats

The instructor initiates communication for the intended listening activity by providing what Stephen Krashen (1982, 20) coins as “comprehensible input.” By introducing the singer and her song, and what is expected of the students to focus on while listening to the song, the

instructor engages them in acquisition with language that is slightly above their level: challenging yet reachable. Although surprising the students with beautiful sounds and visuals is an exciting idea specially for Persian classrooms where the students' prior knowledge of Persian language and culture is mostly limited to news and politics, it is more beneficial to prepare the class for the lesson by planning a comprehensive introduction to the video/audio as well as stating the goal in choosing the specific lesson. Following a backward design philosophy (Wiggins and McTiche 2005), the instructor gives the students a set of open-ended questions, tasks and creative exercises prior to playing the audio that ease the students acquisition process by knowing what they are expected to produce.

As part of the preparatory steps for the lesson, students are responsible for gathering information on the singer and research her work prior to class. This prior knowledge could be acquired in English, Persian or both, but the students are required to present their research to class in Persian. While the intermediate and advanced students can be expected to present in complex Persian structures, novice learners can present in bullet points and short sentence structures so that the flow of information is not inhibited by their developing ability in the target language.

- 1 Pre-listening activity: The students have been instructed to research the musician and find as much information on the singer, the lyricist and the composer as they can. They are expected to share their findings with the class; each student will add information to what a previous student might have missed.
- 2 Listening activity: The instructor introduces the singer in Persian. Because the students have already researched the singer and know what to expect, they will try to connect the knowledge that they teacher is giving them to their prior knowledge about the singer and the song, and this active participation in creating new knowledge paves the way for the rest of their class activities. As the instructor briefly explains why this singer has been chosen and why this song matters as a culturally significant song, she can direct the students' attention to revisiting political and social constructs and giving the concept of memory and nostalgia a socio-political framework. The instructor shares the important words from the song (the words of the chorus, the unfamiliar words, the key words, etc.) with the students by using the words in different sentences where the words function similarly and have the same connotation. Although vocabulary out of context is not a useful teaching tool; the teacher models the usage of the vocabulary in context by making simple sentences using the song's words. The teacher mimics the songs' lyrical syntactic form to familiarize the students with the various contexts/situations the same sentence structure may occur. The students then watch the music video.
- 3 Post-listening activity: The instructor uses subtitles to help with the students' audio recognition, may engage in a meta-linguistic discussion of the syntax by adjusting her expectations to the students' general facial and bodily response to the song (hesitance, anxiety, curiosity and pleasure), may replay the song and pause every few lines to direct the students' attention to the more complex utterances, and finally directs the students to various group and class activities following the song. As part of the effectiveness of songs as mediums of listening aptitude is the lyrical repetition that makes songs easy to model and remember. By using the lyrics as indirect grammar drills, the teacher integrates grammatical patterns in teaching listening skills. These activities include a rewriting of the song in their own words, answering listening comprehension questions about the signer's home (Where is her home? Is it far or is it close? What color is the ocean? What fruit trees does

she mention, etc.), what is the singer's tone, what words are repeated in the song and why, what are her memories of her childhood, what are the universal themes of the poem, what makes the poem a nostalgia for Iran? What makes it universal? How the graphics help an appreciation for the melody? What are the onomatopoeic words in the song? What are their synonyms in English? Do they like the song? Why? What do they learn about the singer by listening to this song?

- 4 Assessment and follow-up: The students work in smaller groups with the goal of a better understanding of the song, and the teacher moves from group to group and joins in the conversations, observations and analysis of the song, repeating verses and encouraging students to find synonyms for the vocabulary. For upper level classes, writing a summary and a short response to the song is the final step of the project, whereas lower level classes can listen to a recording of the following questions and answer them in writing or in audio form. A final assessment project following the context and format of the poem can include an audio recording of students responding to the singer by speaking about their childhood home.

- خونه شما کجاست؟
  - لطفاً آدرس بده: پشت چی؟ اونور چی؟ توی چی؟
  - خونه یاس کجاست؟ خونه شاعر کجاست؟
  - خونه شما دوره؟ ایران دوره؟
  - رو دیوار اتاق عکس داری؟ عکس کی؟
  - تو خونه ات حوض داری؟ استخر چی؟
  - تو حیاط خونه شما درخت هست؟ درخت چی؟
- Where do you live?
  - Give me the address please: Behind what? On the other side of what? In what?
  - Where is Yass's home? Where is the poet's home?
  - Is your home far from here? Is Iran far?
  - Do you have any pictures on your walls? Whose pictures?
  - Do you have a *hoze*\* in your house? How about a pool?
  - Are there trees in your backyard? What kind of tree?

### 11.3 Teaching listening skills through stories

Oral tales and folktales are a valuable component of any listening skill curricula regardless of class level as they provide a great teaching tool for instructors to enhance students' listening skills concurrently negotiating about universal commonalities and intercultural competencies. Moreover, folktales have the advantage of bringing people together; not only do they bring people of the same language together, but they also build a common ground for people of various cultures, ethnicities and languages to exchange values and negotiate ideas. One such Persian example is the popular folktale "Uninvited Guests," the story of the old granny who lives in a house as small as a shoe box, shelters animals on a stormy night, and gives them refuge only to give them a permanent home by sharing her tiny house with them. Like most popular folktales, "Uninvited Guests" is a children's story hence semantically and syntactically easy to comprehend. The simple thematic connect formatted with repetitions, onomatopoeias and mnemonic devices that distinguish oral tales from other literary genres makes this story a great listening exercise for all levels of Persian language learners.

### مهمانهای ناخوانده

در یک ده کوچک پیرزنی زندگی میکرد. این پیرزن یک حیاط داشت قد یک قریبیل که یک درخت داشت قد یک چوب کبریت. پیرزن خوش قلب و مهربان بود و بچه ها خیلی دوستش داشتند. یک روز غروب وقتی آفتاب از روی ده پرید و خانه ها تاریک شد، پیرزن چراغ را روشن کرد و گذاشت روی طاقچه. چادرش را انداخت سرش و رفت در خانه که هوایی بخورد، آشنایی ببیند و دلش باز بشود. همینطور که داشت با بچه ها صحبت میکرد، نم نم باران شروع شد. . . .  
(Farideh Farjam 1, 1966)

### Uninvited guests

Once there was an old woman who lived in a small village. This old woman had a yard as tiny as a sifter in which there was a tree as tiny as a match stick. The old woman was kind and warmhearted, and the children loved her very much. One evening at sunset, when the sun jumped off the village and the houses turned dark, the old woman lit up the lantern and placed in on the mantle. She covered herself in her *chadore*\* and went outside to take some fresh air, see a few familiar faces, and have a good time. While she was chatting with the children, rain drops started to fall. . . .

- 1 Pre-listening activity: The students are instructed to research the author and the story and share the information with the class. The students share their research with their peers. The instructor pinpoints what the students are expected to focus on while listening. She summarizes the story, explains the cultural nuances of the tale including the generosity, hospitality and warmth of the old nanny, her modesty and modest life as well as her loneliness. The idea of giving a shelter to animals not only reflects the love and respect for animals but is also a reference to the humanitarian actions of the woman, who gives “refuge” to “homeless” animals knocking on her door at a time of “disaster” and beyond. In other words, a simple oral tale and a pleasant listening activity can concurrently be a class project that targets “the whole” student, and not just his or her listening aptitude.
- 2 Listening activity: Depending on the class level, the students are told to focus on various elements in the story. For novice levels, the time of the day, the weather, the size of the woman’s house, the sequence of events, the animals and the sounds they make, their individual reasons for staying and how they introduce their value to the woman, etc. can be the focus of the story. For more advanced levels, the immediate group project can be more complex and encompassing including a discussion of the ethical theme of the story and the relevance of the tale to current refugee problems in the U.S. or Europe. As the instructor reads the story or plays the audio version, and like most oral tales that are read aloud, the pace is slow and the vocabulary is simple. Taking on the role of an oral story teller, the instructor can stop, add information (in Persian) and repeat sentences while the students take notes.
- 3 Post-listening activity: The students join their groups to review the tale, summarize it, make questions about it or answer the instructors’ pre-made questionnaire.
- 4 Assessment and follow-up: In addition to the instructor’s immediate engagement with the class about the many components of the folktale, and engaging the students in responding to pre-made questions as they contemplate on the various components of the story, he or she can ask the students to introduce new dialogues and new animals by following the same pattern as the book. These assessment tools target their listening aptitude while engaging their creativity and encouraging their writing proficiency as well. A final

assessment project following the context and format of the story can include an audio recording by the students telling their own version of the tale.

- 1 نویسنده داستان کیست؟ از او چه میدانید؟
- 2 نقاش این قصه کیست؟ از او چه میدانید؟
- 3 داستان در چه سالی نوشته شده است؟
- 4 چند تا حیوان در این داستان هست؟ چه حیواناتی؟
- 5 فکر میکنید داستان در چه فصلی اتفاق می افتد؟
- 6 حیوانات از خاله پیرزن چه میخواهند؟
- 7 در آخر داستان چه اتفاقی می افتد؟
- 8 آیا این داستان جهانی است؟ آیا به روز است؟
- 9 آیا این داستان کودکانه و زیباست؟
- 10 آیا داستانی شبیه به این را تا به حال خوانده بودید؟

- Who is the author of the story? What do you know about her?
- Who is the artist of this story? What do you know about her?
- When was the story written?
- How many animals show up in this story? Which animals?
- What do you think is the season of the story?
- What do the animals ask the old woman?
- How does the story end?
- Is this a universal tale? Is it relevant today?
- Is this a beautiful children's story?
- Have you ever read a story like this one?

Another wonderful children's story is Jabbar Baqcheh-ban's (1970) "Papa Snow." As the inventor of Persian sign language and the first Iranian to found a school for the Deaf and the Mute in Iran, "Baba Barfi" or "Papa Snow" is a great medium for enhancing listening skills in a task-based classroom. Despite the simplicity of the vocabulary and the ease of sentence structures, this tale gives the learner an authentically Persian source for language acquisition as well as a forum for a critical discussion about one of the early modern samples of Persian short stories targeted for children. While the cultural motifs make this tale a great example of Persian children's stories, ideological, political and ethical themes make the tale a great topic for advanced level students to research and analyze.

### بابا برفی

آن سال زمستان، زمستان سختی بود . . . نه گل مانده بود، نه سبزه، نه ریحان، نه مرزه.  
آب هم از رفتن خسته شده بود، یخ زده بود.  
همه جا سفید بود، همه جا: کوه و دشت و صحرا.  
آسمان شده بود آسیاب، اما به جای آرد، برف می ریخت همه جا.  
یک روز تعطیل، نزدیکیهای ظهر، کاظم و کاوه، مریم و منیژه، حمید و حامد، سارا و سوسن، به خانه پدر بزرگ رفتند تا هم پدر بزرگ را ببینند و هم در حیاط بزرگ مدرسه که خانه پدر بزرگ آنجا بود، بازی کنند.

### Papa Snow

The winter of that year was a tough winter. . . There were no more flowers, no grass, no more basil, no more summer-savory. Even water was tired of running; it froze. Everywhere was white; everywhere: the mountains, the fields, the deserts. One holiday, close to noon,

Kazem and Kaveh, Mariam and Manijeh, Hamid and Hamed, Sara and Soussan, went to Grandfather's house to both visit Grandfather and play in the big school-yard where Grandfather lived.

- 1 Pre-listening activity: The students research the author and share five informative points about him either on the class website or in the classroom the next day. After the students share their findings in bullet points and phrases (novice learners) or sentences (intermediate and advanced learners), the instructor shares information about the story in Persian and gives a summary of the story without giving up the ending of the tale. The students are encouraged to take notes while listening.
- 2 Listening activity: The students listen to the audio story online "atalmataltootooleh" or on other web-links provided by the instructor (<https://atalmataltootooleh.com/184/>). The instructor pauses the audio after every page and goes over the text engaging the students in a dialogue about the text.
- 3 Post-listening activity: The students answer the questions prepared by the instructor in groups. The instructor can modify the questions from open-ended to yes/no, and from one-word answers to full paragraphs depending on the students' proficiency level.
- 4 Assessment and follow-up: In order to further measure the students' interpretive aptitude, and in addition to the instructor's immediate engagement with the class about the many components of the folktale, and negotiation with the students as they contemplate on the various components of the story, he or she can instruct them to listen to the audio of the story at home and write a one-page critical response to the tale. This assessment targets their interpretive aptitude while engaging their creativity and encouraging their writing proficiency as well. Another fun post-class activity is recording themselves reading assigned parts of the story and having their friends listen to their audio. The students' final post-class activity can be writing five questions about the story to share with class. The questions will be shared out loud in class and will become listening tools for the students to copy as they practice how to follow formal questions about literary texts. A final assessment project following the context and format of the story can include an audio recording by the students telling their own version of the tale.

- 1 نویسنده داستان کیست؟ از او چه میدانید؟
- 2 نقاش این قصه کیست؟ از او چه میدانید؟
- 3 آهنگ ساز اجرای صوتی این داستان چه کسی است؟
- 4 داستان در چه سالی نوشته شده است؟
- 5 چند دختر و چند پسر در این داستان هستند و نامهای آنها چه میباشد؟
- 6 چه رنگهایی در این نقاشیها هست؟
- 7 پدر بزرگ کجا زندگی میکند؟
- 8 داستان در چه فصلی اتفاق می افتد؟
- 9 بچه ها از بابا برفی چه میخواهند؟
- 10 بچه ها چه خوابی می بینند؟
- 11 آیا در آخر داستان اتفاق بدی می افتد؟ چه اتفاقی؟
- 12 آیا این داستان زمینه عقیدتی دارد؟
- 13 آیا این داستان کودکانه و ریاست؟
- 14 آیا داستانی شبیه به "بابا برفی" را تا به حال خوانده بودید؟
- 15 آیا بین متن چاپ شده و نمونه صوتی داستان تفاوتی وجود دارد؟ نام ببرید.
- 16 به نظر شما این تغییرات دلایلی دارد؟

- 1 Who is the author of the story? What do you know about him?
- 2 Who is the illustrator of the story? What do you know about him?
- 3 Who is the composer of the audio version of this story?
- 4 When was the story written?
- 5 How many boys and girls are in this story and what are their names?
- 6 What colors do you see in the illustrations?
- 7 Where does the grandfather live?
- 8 In which season does the story happen?
- 9 What do the children want Papa Snow?
- 10 What do the children dream about?
- 11 Does something bad happen at the end of the story? What?
- 12 Is this an ideological tale?
- 13 Is this a beautiful children's story?
- 14 Have you ever read a story like "Papa Snow"?
- 15 Are there differences between the written text and the audio version of the tale? What are they?
- 16 What do you think is the reason for these differences?

#### **11.4 Teaching listening skills through recipes**

One effective and fun exercise for developing listening skills in Persian is through following food recipes. Recipes not only bring a sense of community and collaboration to the classroom but also invite the students to an integral component of Persian culture that can be pleasantly surprising or surprisingly familiar. Practicing listening through recipes is also a hands-on, project-based and communal class activity that brings a sense of group work to the classroom through collaboration in pairs or groups. By adding time constraints and a sense of competition to the activity, the students will enjoy their learning even more.

There are various ways to use recipes as a means of advancing interpretive skills, but the methods all follow the simple rule of preparing the students for the lesson of the day by including the words "Dastur-e Ashpazi" or "Recipe" on the syllabus. Preparing the students for what to expect is an important step in advancing listening skills. Although students sometimes enjoy an element of surprise in their daily lesson plans, listening without prior knowledge about the topic of the discussion, speech or story delays an understanding and appreciation, and is a waste of valuable class time. In addition to the instructor's including the word "recipe" on the syllabus, the students need to know what the result looks like; this "backward learning" helps the student visualize the end product and strive to achieve a similar result through their class activity. In effect, when the goal is clear, and when the students have been provided with necessary tools and skills to reach their goal, a combination of their general and specific prior knowledge about the topic and their creativity and critical thinking will lead them to reach their goal.

An example of teaching listening through recipes is a "yogurt and cucumber" class competition. The students have been given a list of ingredients they are supposed to bring to class with them. The list can include pictures of the items for novice learners or be in Persian only for intermediate and advanced students. The instructor divides the class into groups and pairs and plays an audio of the appetizer recipe. The students follow the recipe and make their food. The class will decide whose food turns out the best and enjoys the food. There will be a lot of missteps and laughter, but the project engages the students in



working together to achieve a goal that benefits their community while using their listening skills.

Another class activity following recipes is the students' writing the items that they hear in a recipe, exchanging the information they have received and then engaging in making the food in the classroom. This activity substitutes simultaneous listening/kinetic engagement with a more critical and creative analysis of an audio and may be used with more sophisticated recipes for high intermediate and advanced learners. "Salad Olivich", a popular cold salad among Iranians, is an example of a recipe that is more complex in its variety of ingredients and measurements, and requires much more focus on behalf of the student with following audio instructions.

- 1 Pre-listening activity: The students are given a list of ingredients for the salad that they will make in class the following day. They will divide the list among their group so that each group member will bring a few items from the list. The instructor too will bring items to be shared by all groups. The students are encouraged to google the salad and/or watch Persian videos about its preparation on YouTube.
- 2 Listening activity: After the students set up their work stations, the instructor says the names of the ingredient in Persian. The instructor either plays an audio recipe instruction or reads the recipe aloud for the students to follow. In this exercise, the students learn to follow command verbs, where the ordinal number shows up, how transitional words are used, how to follow an instruction in Persian. Most importantly, a combination of listening and kinetic activities makes this project a 21st century sample of project-based learning where the student is not a passive recipient of language engaging in learning "about" the language; instead, he or she is an active participant in creating an outcome, finding solutions and cooperating with his or her community in a fun fruitful way. The mistakes that the students make in preparing their salads, for example adding too much salt or not enough mayonnaise, or bypassing a step, introduce an extra platform for learning through trial and error.
- 3 Post-listening activity: The students actively engage in tasting the results of their listening activity and grade each salad.
- 4 Assessment and follow-up: Assessment for project-based listening aptitude does not have to follow the traditional assessment rubrics of grading based on memorization and translation; instead, assessment captures what the student can do with the language. Approaching a language class like other project-based learning environments means performing tasks takes precedence over traditional tools of testing. When following a recipe is the task at hand, listening skills are measured by the accuracy of the process and the outcome of the group projects.

### ماست و خیار

مواد لازم:

ماست یونانی نیم پوند

خیار یک عدد بزرگ یا چهار عدد کوچک

آب نصف لیوان

نمک کمی

فلفل کمی

شوید خشک یا تازه (خورد شده) یک قاشق غذا خوری

نعناع خشک یا تازه (خورد شده) یک قاشق غذا خوری

## Yogurt and Cucumber

### List of Ingredients:

Greek style yogurt: Half a pound  
Cucumber: One large or four small ones  
Water: Half a cup  
Salt as needed  
Pepper as needed  
Chopped fresh or dried dill: One tablespoon  
Chopped fresh or dried mint: One tablespoon

### طرز تهیه:

ماست را در یک کاسه بریزید. آب را به آن اضافه کنید و مخلوط نمایید. مخلوط را با قاشق خوب هم بزنید. بعد کمی نمک و فلفل اضافه کنید. سپس سبزی خشک را اضافه کنید. اگر سبزی شما تازه است باید آن را خرد کنید و بعد اضافه کنید. پیش غذای شما آماده است.

### Directions:

Empty the yogurt in a medium bowl. Add water and mix. Stir the mixture with a spoon. Add salt and pepper and the dried herbs. If you use fresh herbs, you must chop them up first. The appetizer is ready to be served.

## سالاد الیویه بدون مرغ

مواد لازم:

سیب زمینی پخته چهار عدد  
تخم مرغ آب پز دو عدد  
نخود فرنگی پخته دو قاشق غذا خوری  
خیار شور متوسط دو عدد  
مایونز یک قاشق غذا خوری  
لیو ترش یک عدد  
نمک به اندازه کافی  
فلفل به اندازه کافی

## Meatless Olivier Salad

Ingredients:  
Boiled potatoes: Four  
Boiled eggs: Two  
Cooked green peas: Two tablespoons  
Pickled cucumbers: Two medium-sized  
Mayonnaise: One tablespoon  
Lemon: One whole  
Salt as needed  
Pepper as needed

### طرز تهیه:

سیب زمینی را پوست می کنیم. آن را با چاقو ریز می کنیم یا با ته قاشق له می کنیم. تخم مرغ را پوست می کنیم. آن را با چاقو ریز می کنیم و به سیب زمینی اضافه می کنیم. نخود فرنگی را داخل مخلوط می ریزیم. خیار شور را ریز می کنیم و به سالاد اضافه می کنیم. سس مایونز را اضافه می کنیم. آب لیمو را نمک و فلفل را می ریزیم و تمام مواد را خوب مخلوط می کنیم. سالاد ما آماده است.

### Directions

We peel the potatoes. We cut them up into small pieces or mash it with the back of a spoon. We peel the eggs. We cut them up into small pieces; add them to the potatoes. We add the green peas into the mixture. We cut up the pickles and add them to the salad. We add the mayonnaise. We pour salt, pepper and lemon juice, and mix the ingredients well. Our salad is ready.

1. برای درست کردن ماست و خیار چه موادی لازم داریم؟
2. آیا در ماست و خیار نمک میریزیم؟
3. به نظر شما چه چیز دیگری میتوان به این غذا اضافه کرد؟
4. آیا شما ماست و خیار دوست دارید؟
5. ماست و خیار شبیه چه یک پیش غذای یونانی است. میدانید کدام؟
6. به نظر شما ماست و خیار را در کنار چه غذاهایی میتوان میل کرد؟
7. در این دستور غذایی چند ماده خشک وجود دارد؟
8. مهمترین مواد ماست و خیار کدامها هستند؟
9. آیا شما یک روز این پیش غذای ایرانی را برای خودتان درست خواهید کرد؟

1. What ingredients do we need to make mast-o-khiar?
2. Do we add salt to mast-o-khiar?
3. What other ingredient do you suggest we can add?
4. Do you like mast-o-khiar?
5. Mast-o-khiar is similar to a Greek appetizer. Can you guess which one?
6. What main dishes do you think can be served with mast-o-khiar?
7. How many dry ingredients are included in this food?
8. What are mast-o-khiar's main ingredients?
9. Will you make this Persian appetizer for yourself?

Watching a cooking video and jotting down the list of ingredients or the gist of the what the hear is another fun and fruitful listening exercise. The writing can include the list of ingredients, numbers, nouns, verbs, full sentences, bullet points or phrases. After watching the video, the students sit in groups and exchange information about the recipe. They compare their interpretations, provide a final list of ingredients, and present their inferences to the class. After a second viewing of the video, with intervals filled by the instructor's input, the students make the food at home. A cooking task that starts as a group project in class, followed by an independent activity at home, is a creative way to incorporate authentic, real-world experiences into the students' learning process, a goal-oriented learning activity that not only benefits the students' communicative proficiency but also teaches them a new skill – cooking – that enriches their life experiences beyond classroom. In this regard, the skills learned within the Persian language classroom are fluid, surpassing linguistic proficiency goals by introducing practical ideas that enrich learners' social and personal lives.

### 11.5 Teaching listening skills through news and media

Another multifaceted listening activity to enrich the learners' critical understanding of audio Persian is listening to presentational language on podcasts, TV or radio. The oratory tone of performances, speeches and interviews, and the formal syntax and polished word choices of hosts speaking with political figures, celebrities and authors are effective components of developing listening aptitude in second language learners. In effect, one of the linguistic struggles of Persian heritage learners is their lack of training in formal or public decorum, hence introducing them to formal interactions such as interviews and speeches can enhance their understanding of private versus public language within Persian culture. The following example from BBC Persian about a popular children's program of 1980s Iran, "Zir-e Gonbad-e Kabud" (BBC Persian 2018), familiarizes the students with a decorous conversation in a formal setting. As the students watch the commentators converse with each other and address the viewers in a friendly yet formal tone, they train their ears for hearing and interpreting formal speech, and, in time, using a similar tone and vocabulary in appropriate settings. Of course, this exercise opens the door to a wider and more in-depth discussion of children's programs in Iran, Persian classical folktales and children's stories, as well as Iran's popular TV shows and personalities.

- 1 Pre-listening activity: The students are instructed to research the children's programs produced in the first decade on the state TV of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and make a bullet point of the key events of the era. They are instructed to watch a nostalgic video of the remaking of the popular soundtrack by Sam Vafayi (Soundcloud 2014), who grew up with Mr. Hekayati's program.
- 2 Listening activity: The students watch the BBC video without pause. They take notes while watching. They watch the video again as the instructor occasionally pauses the video, repeats the sentences, and explains more complex audios.
- 3 Post-listening class activity: The students sit in groups and discuss their understanding of the video. They make a summary of what has been said. In more advanced classes, the students are expected to do simultaneous translation, and in their groups exchange ideas on what they understood of the speeches.
- 4 Assessment and follow-up: Lower level students will be given a sheet of "yes, no" questions and/or a checklist while listening to the video at home, whereas the higher level students will be expected to write a short report and research Bahram Mohammad Lu, Marzieh Borumand and Iraj Tahmasb. With single-word answers to phrases and paragraphs, the students are encouraged to find similarities and differences between the Persian show and similar productions in English such as "Mr. Roger's Neighborhood".

دهه شصتی‌ها و دهه هفتادی‌ها در ایران، مجموعه "زیر گنبد کیود" خوب یادشونه. در این مجموعه، شخصیتی بود دوست داشتنی، به نام "آقای حکایتی"، با بازی "بهرام شاه محمد لو" که برای مخاطب کودک، قصه می‌خواند. ایرج طهماسب و راضیه برومند، در دو فصل، نویسندگان این مجموعه تلویزیونی مخصوص کودکان بودند. موسیقی ماندگار این مجموعه هم ساخته بهرام دهقانپار است. اخیرا انتشار گسترده ویدیویی از حضور آقای شاه محمد لو در جشنواره قصه گویی در شبکه‌های اجتماعی، یاد آقای حکایتی را زنده کرده است.

Iran's '60s and '70s generations remember the TV series "Zir-e Gonbad-e Kabud" quite well. In this series, there was a lovely persona named Agha-ye Hekayati, played by Bahram Shah-Mohammad Lu, who told stories to the young audience. Iraj Tahmasb and Razieh Borumand

were the writers for the two seasons of this children's TV series. The memorable theme song of the series, too, was composed by Bahram Dehqanyar. Recently, a vastly viewed video of Mr. Shah-Mohammad Lu's attending the Story Telling Festival has commemorated Aqa-ye Hekayati.

1. این گفتگو راجع به چیست؟
  2. آقای حکایتی کیست؟
  3. خانم گوینده راجع به آقای حکایتی چه میگوید؟
  4. آیا خانم گوینده دوران کودکی را در ایران سپری کرده است؟
  5. بهرام شاه محمد لو چه جوابی به خانم گوینده میدهد؟
  6. عاطفه و خاطره و قلب، یعنی چی؟
  7. عاشقانه و صادقانه، یعنی چی؟
  8. دهه شصتی های ایران الان چند سال دارند؟
  9. زیر گنبد کبود، یعنی چی؟
  10. مترادف انگلیسی واژه "نکوداشت" چیست؟
  11. لطفاً موسیقی این سریال را گوش کنید و سعی کنید آن را به خاطر بسپارید.
- 1 What is this interview about?
  - 2 Who is Mr. Hekayati?
  - 3 What does the anchorwoman say about Mr. Hekayati?
  - 4 Has she spent her childhood in Iran?
  - 5 How does Bahram Shah-Mohammad Lu respond to the anchorwoman?
  - 6 What do "sentiment and memory and heart" mean in this context?
  - 7 What do "lovingly and honestly" mean?
  - 8 How old are Iran's '60s generation?
  - 9 What does "Under the Purple Dome" mean?
  - 10 What in English is the word "nekudasht"?

### زیر گنبد کبود

یکی بود، یکی نبود  
زیر گنبد کبود  
روبروی بچه ها  
قصه گو نشسته بود  
قصه گو قصه میگفت  
از کتاب قصه ها  
قصه های بانشاط  
قصه های آشنا  
قصه باغ بزرگ  
قصه گل فشنگ  
قصه شیر و پلنگ  
قصه موش زرنگ

...

(Shah Mohammad Lu, 209)

### Under the Purple Dome

One was and one wasn't there  
under the Purple Dome

facing the children  
sat the story teller.  
The story teller told stories  
from the book of stories  
cheerful stories  
familiar stories.  
The story of the big garden  
the story of the beautiful flower  
the story of the lion and the panther  
the story of the smart mouse.  
...

## 11.6 Conclusion

Persian listening skills targeting today's learners' needs to encompass more than listening comprehension practices, audio drills or translation exercises. In order for Persian listening methodology to meet the needs of today's enthusiasts, it should include authentic content, effective format, and intercultural understanding. Moreover, the millennial students of Persian language expect to be involved in the direction of their training and anticipate a curriculum that is meaningful, multifaceted and transcultural. Persian listening syllabi as such needs to include content that benefits a trajectory of learning outcomes. Moreover, a listening curriculum that is goal-oriented and experiential engages learners as creative partners who are active in the path and direction of their learning. With meaningful songs, memorable stories, delicious recipes and real-life projects, based in an intercultural communicative setting, a successful listening curriculum inspires the learners to expect more and do more with what they learn. As Kubota, Austin and Saito-Abbot's (2003) expound:

Teachers – as intellectuals and not mere technicians of learner-centeredness – have a responsibility to bring broader perspectives on critical issues to their students, rather than replicating past blindness to issues of difference and inequality . . . (they) must shift their attention beyond apolitical appreciation and celebration of foreign culture, to critically explore issues of diversity and sociopolitical aspects of human communication, and to make foreign language education instrumental in creating greater equality.  
(Kubota, Austin and Saito-Abbot 2003, 22)

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# 12

## SECOND LANGUAGE<sup>1</sup> SPEAKING IN PERSIAN

*Musa Nushi*

### 12.1 Introduction

The first question people are most likely to ask when they learn you know another language is “Do you speak it?” The question points to the fact that speaking is the quintessential reflection of ability in a second language (L2) and the main criterion by which success at language learning is assessed (Bygate 1987; Nunan 2015; Richards 2008). Developing proficiency in an L2, and speaking proficiency for that matter, is an arduous task for many L2 learners, however, one that requires total cognitive, physiological and emotional commitment (Burns 2017), and a whole new way of thinking (Cadierno 2012; Slobin 1996). Teaching the skill is also a challenge and many L2 teachers feel their classroom speaking activities are not sufficiently preparing learners for real world communication (Goh and Burns 2012). Richards (2008, 19) adds that there are currently plenty of pedagogical techniques and strategies available to L2 teachers to teach the skill, yet “how best to approach the teaching of oral skills has long been the focus of methodological debate.” Sometimes even when the methodology and materials are in place, learners are reluctant to use L2 in speaking classes, regardless of setting (Ali 2007; Donald 2010; Ur 2012). This chapter aims to provide an overview of teaching and assessing speaking, with an eye to Persian as the target language. The chapter opens with a review of the nature of the spoken discourse, particularly the differences between the spoken and written language. Care will be taken to introduce some features of the spoken Persian that may make acquiring the skill a challenge for non-Persian speakers. Next, the importance and functions of speaking for L2 learners will be discussed. In discussing the functions of speaking and how to teach them, I draw on Richards’ (2008) three-partitive model of functions of speaking. The chapter proceeds to discuss some issues regarding teaching speaking. It concludes with the assessment criteria and procedures to evaluate performance on speaking activities.

### 12.2 Characteristics of the spoken discourse

Although speaking and writing are both productive skills, there exist important differences between them, and recognition of those differences has implications for teaching and learning of either of those skills. One obvious difference between the two is that many languages are not spoken the way they are written. This is evident to all those who are familiar with the English language, where there are a lot of discrepancies between the spoken and written forms.



This is true about Persian too, where خواهر /khāhar/ (sister), for instance, is not pronounced /khavāhar/ (see Safar Moghadam 2013, 2014 for some of the differences between written and spoken Persian). Therefore, “speech is not spoken writing” (Bygate 1987, 10). Besides this obvious difference, there are other differences too if we look closely. Speaking is often spontaneous; we do not plan our speaking beforehand (unless it is an interview, announcement or public speech of course). Instead, speakers plan *online* as they construct their utterances, a fact evident by frequent pauses and hesitations, fillers, false starts and repeats in their speech. Bygate (1987, 11) confirms that observation by saying that the spoken “message is not so economically organized as it might be in print”. In fact, too much planning on the part of the speakers when they are engaged in real-life conversations may make them appear slow, hesitant or boring. Speech is also fluid and transient and learners may not get the chance to revise what they have said. Nunan (2015, 49) says as speakers, we may sometimes get the chance to

do a “second draft” by saying *What I meant to say was . . .* and then cleaning up our first draft, but all too often the conversation has moved on, and we have to live with our original utterance [*italics* not in the original].

Another characteristic of the spoken discourse is its faster delivery. Although speech rates vary considerably depending on the number of pauses, the topic and purpose of communication, formality of the situation, the relationship between speakers as well as the personal and physical attributes of the speaker, speakers in a normal conversation may exchange up to 220 words per minute (Richards 2008). Research has shown that L2 learners speak with a slower rate in the L2 (Hincks 2010). To sound natural, L2 learners have to make the necessary adjustments in their speech rate. This can be especially true for many language learners who are learning the target language in a context where it is considered a foreign language and their primary contact is via their textbooks.

Richards (2008) further points out that speaking has a linear structure, that is, the unit of organization of spoken discourse is the clause rather than the sentence, which is the case with the written discourse; we speak in clauses and join them to create longer utterances. Consequently, “spoken sentences cannot be as long or as complex as in writing, because the writer has more time to plan,” Bygate (1987, 11). Furthermore, compared with the written language, spoken language often contains informal, colloquial vocabulary and many fixed expressions and is often context-dependent, meaning interlocutors rely on each other’s common background knowledge to convey and interpret much of what is said. We should also remember that written words may be pronounced differently when spoken. This situation gets even tackier when we are dealing with languages like Persian, which has been described as *diglossic* (Mahmoodi-Bakhtiari 2018). In diglossic contexts, two distinct varieties of a language are spoken within the same speech community; one is the variety that is prestigious and used for formal and literacy purposes and is called the high variety (H-variety). This contrasts with the low variety (L-variety), which is used for informal, mostly spoken purposes. To give an example, in Persian we can say چیزی میل دارین؟ [/chizi meyl dārin?/, *Would you like something to eat?*] or چیزی میخوری؟ [/chizi mikhori?/, *Like to eat something?*]. In this example, the verb میل دارین (/meyl dārin/, would like to eat, [H-variety]) has been replaced with میخوری (mikhori, eat, [L-variety]). Although these differences can manifest themselves at the levels of morphology, syntax and semantics of the two varieties, they are mostly evident at the level of phonology. Examples include changing the word ending /ān/ to /un/: تهران /Tehrān/ (H-variety), تهران /Tehrūn/ (L-variety), or direct object marker را /rā/ is pronounced /row/ after a vowel, and /o/ after a consonant in the colloquial language [برگه را /bargēh rā/ (H-variety), برگه رو /

barghe row/ (L-variety)]. It behooves us to remember that sometimes changing the pronunciation of words creates a secondary meaning. To illustrate that point, if we pronounce the address term شاهزاده /shāhzādeh/ as شازده /shāzdeh/, we would be changing the meaning of the term from one which refers to ‘the offspring of a king or a holy person’ to ‘a young man, especially one who has a cheap and showy character’. Another example would be گُرسنه /gorosneh/ versus گُشنه /goshneh/. The two variants have the same meaning (i.e. hungry), yet گُشنه /goshneh/ has the additional meaning ‘greedy’ and is most often used in spoken Persian.

For further discussion on the acquisition of the writing skill in second language learners of Persian, read Chapter 14 in this volume.

### 12.3 Importance of the speaking skills for L2 learners

Speaking is a vitally important ability in an L2; mastering the ability provides L2 learners with a number of distinct advantages. Goh and Burns (2012, 15) mention two such advantages: (i) speaking can facilitate L2 learning; (ii) it can contribute to L2 learners’ academic and professional development. Regarding the first, there is extensive theoretical and empirical research showing that learners’ linguistic output can further their language acquisition (e.g. Hatch 1978; Long 1985, 2018; Mackey and Silver 2005). In fact, Swain (1985) proposed his comprehensible output hypothesis based on the idea that output allows learners, under certain conditions, to notice the gaps in their L2 linguistic knowledge, and this observation pushes them to acquire the specific linguistic feature(s) required for successful communication. This belief is reflected in a later joint article with Lapkin (Swain and Lapkin 1995), where they state that “sometimes, under some conditions, output facilitates second language learning in ways that are different form, or enhance, those of input” (p. 371). Another influential proposal in the field of second language acquisition (SLA), namely the interaction hypothesis (Long 1985, 1996), also ascribes an important role to speaking in L2 development. Long (1996) states that when nonnative speakers of a language engage in conversations with native speakers of that language, they often have to make adjustments in their utterances and are likely to receive feedback from their interlocutors on their language use. The conversational adjustments and the feedback, especially the negative evidence, can help learners master new language forms.

The second advantage bestowed upon learners is that good speaking can pave the way for (more) academic and professional success. This has been shown to be true about the English language, which serves as the world’s current lingua franca (i.e. common language) in many fields including science and commerce (Jenkins 2007; Seidlhofer 2011). Many of the top universities in the world are in English-speaking countries, and an acceptable level of proficiency in English is one of the prerequisites to enter those universities. That proficiency is verified mainly by the internationally recognized tests such as TOFEL and IELTS, which have speaking as one of their main components. A good score on the speaking section of these tests may determine if an applicant can be admitted to the university of their choice or not. Persian is certainly not the lingua franca of the world, but non-Persian speakers wishing to work in Persian-speaking countries or pursue their studies at universities in those countries are required to take an official IELTS-like proficiency test called SĀMFĀ<sup>2</sup> (Standard Persian Language Proficiency Test). A certain degree of speaking proficiency on the test is a prerequisite for the applicants to function in countries where Persian is used as a language of education or communication. For a detailed discussion on SĀMFĀ, read Chapter 21 in this volume.

Additionally, much information in academic settings is conveyed through spoken language (Wolvin and Coakley 1996) and possessing good speaking (and listening) abilities in the language of the instruction will no doubt facilitate students’ participation and learning of

the subject matter (Cummins 2000; Goh and Burns 2012). To be able to carry out many of their academic functions, learners need to be equipped with strategies “to initiate and maintain conversations, to sustain group discussions, describe feelings, and give reasons in an acceptable manner and ask for more information and assistance” (Goh and Burns 2012, 21).

Finally, speaking proficiency provides a competitive edge in career choices. As companies and workplaces become more globally minded, the demand for speakers who can converse well in an L2 is increasing, and the individuals who are fluent in two or more languages will always stand out above the rest in job interviews. These are just a few of the benefits of having good speaking ability in L2. Research has further shown that learners with high proficiency in speaking are popular among their peers, seek and gain more input for their language development, have higher self-confidence and are more motivated to learn about the culture of the target language.

## 12.4 Functions of speaking

Richards (2008) draws upon Brown and Yule’s (1983) distinction between *interactional* and *transactional* functions of speaking, that is, speaking to build and maintain social relationships versus speaking to communicate a specific message, and expands it into a three-part framework, namely, *talk as interaction*, *talk as transaction* and *talk as performance*. He believes each of these views is quite distinct in terms of form and function and requires different teaching approaches.

### 12.4.1 Talk as interaction

Richards equates talk as interaction to what is normally known as *conversation* and says this function is primarily concerned with building and keeping social relations. Richards (2008, 23) then gives examples of these kinds of talk:

- Chatting to an adjacent passenger during a plane flight (*polite conversation that does not seek to develop the basis for future social contact*)
- Chatting to a school friend over coffee (*casual conversation that serves to mark an ongoing friendship*)
- A student chatting to his or her professor while waiting for an elevator (*polite conversation that reflects unequal power between the two participants*)
- Telling a friend about an amusing weekend experience and hearing him or her recount a similar experience he or she once had (*sharing personal recounts*) [*italics in the original*]

He says the focus of such talk is on the participants and how they wish to interact socially with one another. Richards (2008, 22) summarizes the main features of talk as interaction as follows:

- Has a primarily social function
- Reflects role relationships
- Reflects speaker’s identity
- May be formal or casual
- Uses conversational conventions
- Reflects degrees of politeness
- Employs many generic words
- Uses conversational register
- Is jointly constructed

We can see some of these features in the following conversational exchange (from Mirdehghan et al. 2018, 64, with some minor modifications). Two friends are talking about a recent natural disaster in a province in Iran and the concern one of them has for someone in that province:

آیدا: دیدی چی شده؟ دوباره گلستان سیل اومده.

AYDA: Did you hear the news? There has been yet another flood in Golestan [province].

شیدا: ای وای! یک ماه پیش هم که سیل اومده بود! حالا تلفات و خسارتی هم داشت؟

SHAYDA: Oh, no! The previous flood was only a month ago! Were there any casualties or damage?

آیدا: خیلی از خونه‌ها آسیب دیدن. دلم خیلی شور میزنه.

AYDA: Many homes have been damaged. I am so worried/anxious.

شیدا: آخه چرا؟ نکنه کسی رو اونجا داری؟

SHAYDA: Why so? Do you have someone (i.e. a relative or friend) there?

آیدا: آره. یکی از دوستانم اونجا زندگی میکنه. از صبح هر چی زنگ میزنم جواب نمیده.

AYDA: Yeah, one of my friends lives there. I have been calling him/her since morning but there's no answer.

شیدا: میفهمم . . . ولی . . . ولی بد به دلت راه نده. احتمالا خطها مشکل پیدا کرده. ایشالا چیزی نشده.

SHAYDA: Don't you worry. The telephone lines may have been damaged or [destroyed]?

آیدا: امیدوارم . . .

AYDA: I hope so. . . .

The participants in this exchange cooperate with one another to construct the conversation; they give each other feedback such as ای وای! (/ey vāy/, oh no!) and آخه چرا! (/ākhe cherā/, why so!) to indicate to the other party that they are listening or encourage them to go on with their talk; we can also see instances of colloquial words and expressions بد به دلت راه نده (/bad beh delet rāh nadeh/, Don't you worry) and دلم خیلی شور میزنه (/delam kheyli shor mizaneh/, I am so worried/anxious) and pronunciation خونه‌ها (/khoneh-hā/, houses, homes) instead of خانه‌ها (/khāneh-hā/, houses, homes) or ایشالا (/ishālā/, God willing) instead of انشالله (/enshā' lāh/, God willing)". Richards (2008, 22) then specifies some of the skills speakers need in order to carry out this kind of talk:

- Opening and closing conversations
- Choosing topics
- Making small-talk
- Joking
- Recounting personal incidents and experiences
- Turn-taking
- Using adjacency pairs
- Interrupting
- Reacting to others
- Using an appropriate style of speaking (Richards 2008, 23)

Richards states that this kind of talk may appear easy on the surface and may not be high on the learner's agenda, yet learners "sometimes feel awkward and at a loss for words when they find themselves in situations that require talk for interaction" (Richards 2008, 24). In multiple second language conferences, the writer of this chapter has observed that non-native Persian scholars were perfectly capable of talking about the academic content of their presentations

yet had a hard time greeting their audience or expressing a particular desire at the lunch table. One personal observation was when a Japanese professor wishing to say that she did not like to eat Persian Kebab (skewered minced lamb) said.<sup>3</sup> “من کباب گاز نمی زنم” (/man kabāb gāz nemizanam/, I do not bite or chew Kebab), which is rather weird. Therefore, L2 teachers need to create varied and rich situations where talk as interaction is practiced.

### 12.4.2 Talk as transaction

Talk as transaction, on the other hand, refers to situations where the focus is on the message rather than the speakers. Richards (2008, 26) mentions the following as main features of talk as transaction:

- It has a primarily information focus.
- The main focus is on the message and not the participants.
- Participants employ communication strategies to make themselves understood.
- There may be frequent questions, repetitions, and comprehension checks. . . .
- There may be negotiation and digression.
- Linguistic accuracy is not always important.

In the following example between a mechanic and a man whose car does not run well, the participants ask for and give each other information about the car and its problem:

- مشتری (خطاب به میکائیک که مشغول کار رو په ماشین دیگه ای هست): آقا سلام . . . میشه یه لحظه به این ماشین نگاهی بندازین ببینین این صدای موتور چیه؟
- CLIENT (TO THE MECHANIC WHO IS WORKING ON ANOTHER CAR): Hello sir. . . . Can you please take a look at my car for a second to see what this funny noise coming from the engine is?
- میکائیک: سلام. بله. کاپوت رو بزنی بالا. یه دقیقه دیگه میام میبینم . . . (بعد چند دقیقه و چک کردن صدای موتور میکائیک می پرسه: ماشین چنتا کار کرده؟)
- MECHANIC: Hi, sure, open up the hood and I'll be there in a minute. . . . (after a few minutes and having examined the engine, the mechanic asks) How many [kilometers] do you have on your car?
- مشتری: تقریباً ۵۸ هزار تا فکر کنم!
- CLIENT: Around 85 Thousand (kilometers) I think!
- میکائیک: صدا از تسمه تایمه . . . باید عوض شه . . . موقعشه که عوض شه چون ممکنه پاره شه یهو.
- MECHANIC: It is the timing belt. It needs replacing. . . . It is high time you have it replaced or it might snap.
- مشتری: ببخشید زیاد از ماشین سر در نمیارم! . . . تسمه چی فرمودین؟ پاره شه چی میشه؟
- CLIENT: I don't know much about cars! What belt did you just say? What happens if it snaps?
- میکائیک: تسمه تایمه عرض کردم. اگه پاره شه سوپاپها ممکنه کج شن یا پیستونها آرد شن و موتور قفل کنه . . . اونوقت کلی هزینه رو دستت میزاره
- MECHANIC: Timing belt I said. If it breaks, the valves might get all bent up or the pistons might break and the engine shuts down. . . . If that happens, it is going to cost you a lot [to have it repaired].
- مشتری: هووم . . . هزینه تعویضش چقدر میشه؟
- CLIENT: Mmm . . . how much does it cost to have it replaced?

میکانیکی: تسمه قیمتش 120 هزاره . . . ۱۰۰ هزار هم دستمزدِ تعویض تسمه . . . پس همیشه چیزی حول و حوش ۲۵۰ [هزار] تومن.

MECHANIC: The timing belt costs around 120 thousand Tomans,<sup>4</sup> and 100 thousand for the replacement fee . . . so it is going to be around 250 thousand.

مشتری: عهههه . . . چقدر زیاد! همیشه . . . همیشه حالا با ما کمتر حساب کنی؟

CLIENT: Uh-oh. . . That's too much! Can you . . . can you please lower that amount (or can you give ME a discount)?

میکانیکی: راسش جنس رو که خودت میخری و من که سودی نمیگیرم . . . اما دستمزد رو بابت راه میام

MECHANIC: You buy the belt yourself so there is nothing in it for me. . . . As for the replacement fee, I will give some discount.

مشتری: کارش چقدر طول میکشه . . . من خیلی به ماشین نیاز دارم! تو تهران لعنتی هم بدون ماشین کارت لنگ میمونه . . .

CLIENT: How long is it (the repair) going to take? I need the car badly! In damn Tehran you cannot do much if you don't have a car. . . .

Examples of talk as transaction, according to Richards (2008, 25), are:

- Classroom group discussions and problem-solving activities
- A class activity during which students design a poster
- Discussing needed computer repairs with a technician
- Discussing sightseeing plans with a hotel clerk or tour guide
- Making a telephone call to obtain flight information
- Asking someone for directions on the street
- Buying something in a shop
- Ordering food from a menu in a restaurant

To conduct talk for transactions, the following skills can prove beneficial:

- Explaining a need or intention
- Describing something
- Asking questions
- Asking for clarification
- Confirming information
- Justifying an opinion
- Making suggestions
- Clarifying understanding
- Making comparisons
- Agreeing and disagreeing (Richards 2008, 26)

### 12.4.3 Talk as performance

The third type of talk, talk as performance, refers to public speech that transmits information to a usually live audience for purposes such as persuasion or entertainment. This type of talk is often formal, monologic and structured, thus having a lot of features associated with the written language. Richards says that although meaning is important in this type of talk, there will be more emphasis on form and accuracy, adding that talk as performance “is often evaluated according to

its effectiveness or impact on the listener” (p. 27). In the following is an excerpt from President Hassan Rouhani’s speech before the UN General Assembly in New York on September 25, 2018.

امروز در شرایطی گرد هم آمده‌ایم که جهان، از خودسری و بی‌توجهی برخی از دولت‌ها به ارزش‌ها و نهاد‌های بین‌المللی در رنج است. پیام حضور ما در اینجا، آن است که ایجاد منافع و امنیت جهان با کمترین هزینه، در سایه هماهنگی و همکاری کشورها امکان‌پذیر است. اما متأسفانه در جهان امروز شاهد حاکمانی هستیم که فکر می‌کنند با تقویت ناسیونالیسم افراطی، نژادپرستی و بیگانه‌سنجی که یادآور تفکر نازی هاست و بازیرپا گذاشتن مقررات جهانی و تضعیف سازمان‌های بین‌المللی بهتر می‌توانند به منافع خود دست یابند و یا حداقل برای کوتاه مدت، می‌توانند بر احساسات عمومی و جذب آرای مردم، تأثیر بگذارند و برای این منظور، به نمایش‌های مضحکی حتی در قالب تشکیل جلسه غیرمعمول شورای امنیت، دست می‌زنند.

**Translation:**<sup>5</sup> We have assembled here today as the world is suffering from the recklessness and disregard of some states for international values and institutions. The message of our presence here is that the preservation of interests and security in the world in the least costly manner is solely possible through the cooperation of, and coordination among, countries. However, it is unfortunate that we are witnessing rulers in the world who think they can secure their interests better – or at least in the short-term ride public sentiments and gain popular support – through the fomenting of extremist nationalism and racism, and though xenophobic tendencies resembling a Nazi disposition, as well as through the trampling of global rules and undermining international institutions; even through preposterous and abnormal acts such as convening a high-level meeting of the Security Council.

Notice how the president uses formal words and expressions such as *گرد هم آمده‌ایم* (have assembled), *تقویت ناسیونالیسم افراطی، نژادپرستی و بیگانه‌سنجی* (fomenting of extremist nationalism and racism). There is little to no pausing; the sentences, mostly statements, vary in length and are grammatically complex (compared those used in everyday conversations). The purpose of the talk seems to be informing or persuading the addressees of a particular fact or viewpoint. Examples of this type of talk are:

- Giving a class report about a school trip
- Conducting a class debate
- Giving a speech of welcome
- Making a sales presentation
- Giving a lecture (Richards 2008, 27)

To carry out talk as performance, Richards (2008, 28) says the following skills are required:

- Using an appropriate format
- Presenting information in an appropriate sequence
- Maintaining audience engagement
- Using correct pronunciation and grammar
- Creating an effect on the audience
- Using appropriate vocabulary
- Using an appropriate opening and closing

Recognizing the various functions that speaking performs in our daily life and determining the different purposes for which L2 learners need speaking skills are crucial and have implications for designing speaking activities or instructional materials. For instance, to teach talk as interaction, Richards (2008, 29) suggests the best technique would be providing learners with authentic conversation discourse “that model features such as opening and closing

conversations, making small talk, recounting personal incidents and experiences, and reacting to what others say.” In the following conversation on a bus, the old man who is upset at not being offered a seat by several younger people opens the conversation with his fellow passenger by talking about his personal experiences.

پیرمرد: جوان هم جوانای قدیم . . . ما چقدر برا بزرگترامون احترام قابل بودیم! اینا رو باش . . . یکیشون بلند نشد!  
OLD MAN: Those were the youth. . . How respectful we were of our elders! Look at these (youth) now. . . None of them offered their seat [to me]!

مسافر: جوانای امروز فرق دارن حاج آقا . . . اینا پدر و مادرشون هم عاصی کردن . . .  
FELLOW PASSENGER: Youths of today are different Haj Aqa.<sup>6</sup> . . . Even their parents are fed up with them. . .

The teacher can also point out that the old man opens his conversation by a statement that most likely draws an agreement from the fellow passenger. Richards (2008) states that good topics to initiate talk as interaction are those that everyone has an opinion about, topics such as traffic, weather, etc. Another important feature of talk as interaction that is not given the attention it deserves are the conversational “routines”, that is, fixed phrases and expressions that not only perform specific functions (e.g., showing interest in what the other person is say) in a conversation but also give it the quality of sounding natural. In the following are some examples from the Persian language:

- هیچ چیزی بی حکمت نیست (Everything happens for a reason.)
- داشتم عرض می کردم . . . (As I was saying. . .)
- سرت رو درد نیارم . . . (To cut a long story short. . .)
- چه حرفا (What nonsense!)
- خدا رحم کرد (It was only God’s mercy!)
- طفلکی، حیونکی! (Poor him/her!)
- حیف! حیف شد! (What a pity!)
- جالبه (Interesting!)
- نه بابا! (You don’t say!)
- دمش گرم (Good job or more power to his/her elbow.)

Teachers can introduce these routines and discuss with the learners where these expressions might occur or what their functions might be within specific situations. Alternatively, learners can be given dialogs from which these routines have been omitted and asked to give or select the appropriate response:

- الف: شنیدی سهیل رتبه اول کنکور شده؟  
A: Have you heard Soheil ranked first on the university entrance exam?  
ب: ----- . اصلا بچه درسخونی به نظر نمی رسید!  
B: :----- . He did not seem a studious to me!  
الف: آره ولی میگن یه سالی نشت و بکوب برای کنکور خوند.  
A: Right, but they say he studied a full year for the test.  
ب: ----- . حالا چه رشته ای میخاد بخونه؟  
B: :----- . Now, what does he intend to major in [at university]?  
الف: پدرش که می گه به پزشکی خیلی علاقه داره.  
A: His dad says he [Soheil] is very much interested in medicine.<sup>7</sup>



Other activities that lend themselves well to talk as interaction include memorizing simple dialogs (extremely useful for developing oral fluency in elementary level learners), giving learners situations and tasks that encourage small talk (e.g. meeting their favorite actor or actress and what they would say to them when such a chance presents itself), asking learners to look for instances (or features) of such talk in Persian movies or TV or radio shows, etc. It is essential to note that learners' proficiency levels be taken into account when designing these activities.

When the purpose is teaching talk as transaction, teachers have a wide variety of activities at their disposal; games, group and pair work discussion, information gap activities, role plays, and problem-solving tasks are just some of them.

Richards (2008) cautions that although designing activities to teach transactional use of language is relatively easier, teachers might feel that such activities do not enable learners, especially those at elementary levels, to achieve the desired level of linguistic accuracy because "low-level students, when carrying out communication tasks, often rely on a lexicalized system of communication that depends heavily on vocabulary and memorized chunks of language, as well as both verbal and nonverbal communication strategies, to get meaning across", (p. 32). Several accuracy-based classroom activities can be used to address the issue. Sometimes short, simple and snappy drills can do the job. In the following activity, the teacher who wants to make sure students use the correct structure to express someone's likes and dislikes gives students a model and then asks them to apply the model to describe the likes and dislikes of someone they know very well:

افسانه خیلی قهوه دوست داره ولی اصلا از چای خوشش نمیداد.

Afsaneh *likes* coffee *very much* but (she) *does not like* tea *at all*.

Teachers can also pre-teach some of the vocabulary to lower the cognitive load of the task and allow students to focus more on the structure in question. Interestingly, this activity can be adjusted for learners of more advanced proficiency levels too. Take a look at the following pair work in which learners engage in a two-minute conversation where they take different identities of various foods, animals, objects, etc. and exchange information using the . . . بدم، . . . اگه من به . . . (If I were a . . . I would do this or that) structural pattern.

اگه من به پرندۀ بدم، هر روز بجای مدرسه رفتن، می رقتم به باغ جدید و با پرندۀهای دیگه دوست می شدم و کلی باهم بازی می کردیم، به هرجا که دلم می خواست پرواز می کردم و از طبیعت لذت می بردم . . .

Translation: *If I were* a bird, instead of going to school every day, *I would go* to a new garden and *would make* friends with other birds and *we would play* together, *I would fly* wherever I wished and *[I would] enjoy* nature. . . .

To make the activity even more challenging, students can be given a structured-based discussion task that requires them to talk about a particular issue that can include a certain structure. For instance, students can work in pairs or groups to say what they would do regarding some of their city's problems if they were the mayor.

Finally, if the purpose is teaching talk as performance, we are probably, though not necessarily, dealing with advanced students who need to learn how to present longer stretches of speech. Richards (2008) says this type of talk needs a different instructional approach since "it often follows a recognizable format (e.g., a speech of welcome), and is closer to written language than conversational language," (p. 27). Therefore, students need to learn that much like writing

an essay, their talk needs to have an introduction (telling the audience what the talk is about), the main body (which is divided into several clear sections), and an ending that summarizes or concludes the talk. A very good instructional strategy, according to Richards (2008, 35), would be providing learners with plenty of instances authentic speeches, oral presentations of various lengths, etc., which are then “deconstructed” to reveal the linguistic and organizational features of such texts. He proposes these questions to guide this analytical process:

- What is the speaker’s purpose?
- Who is the audience?
- What kind of information does the audience expect?
- How does the talk begin, develop and end?
- What moves or stages are involved?
- Is any special language used?

Lazaraton (2013) says teachers can also provide learners with the structure of speech (e.g. description, argumentation, narration) while students provide the content. This would not only help learners become familiar with different rhetorical genres and their grammatical features but also make the task meaningful to them. Moreover, as listening to speeches can at times be boring, she suggests teachers involve those listening by giving them a set of criteria to evaluate their classmate’s speech. The criteria can include the presenter’s body language, pacing, preparation and engagement of the audience, organization of the different speech sections, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, communicative force, observation of the time limits. . . . Another very practical activity Lazaraton proposes is for students to audio- or video-record their speech and have their teacher or classmates on their presentation later on. She maintains audio or videotaping of speeches allows students to have a more in-depth evaluation of their speech, adding that students are often surprised to hear or see how they sound on the tape and can learn a lot from the feedback they receive; they can even come up with their own ideas as how to improve their speech (see also Ur 2012 for suggestions on how to design talk as performance activities).

## 12.5 Issues to be considered during teaching speaking

Before discussing the issues related to the teaching of speaking, I would like to review the five criteria that Ur (2012) proposes to evaluate a language-learning and teaching task. The first criterion is *validity*, meaning that the task should engage learners in the language skill(s) it is supposed to teach. Paired or small group discussions rather than whole-class discussion may prove more effective if the intention of the teacher is to increase learners’ speaking fluency. The second criterion is *quantity*, which refers to the fact that learners need plenty of meaningful activities and exposure to a target language form in order to acquire it. *Success-orientation* is the third criterion; Ur (2012, 44) says it is

important to select, design and administer tasks in such a way that students are likely to succeed in doing them most of the time: they should not be too difficult, require mostly known language and involve simple and easily explained processes.

The fourth, *heterogeneity* (of demand and level) of a task, means the task is designed in a way that engages learners of different language proficiency levels. To illustrate the point, look at

the following speaking task where students are asked to read the sentence out loud using the correct auxiliary verb.

سینا پسر بچه‌ی ۴ ساله‌ای است. او (میتونه/ نمیتونه) از سوپر مارکت خرید کنه.

Sina is four years old. He (*can/cannot*) shop at a supermarket.

The lower level students who do not know the words *can*, *cannot*, *shop* or *supermarket* may not be able to do the task and those more advanced students may feel that they can make far more complex sentences and that this activity does not suit their level. However, if we change the activity to

سینا پسر بچه‌ی ۴ ساله‌ای است. او میتونه راه بره ولی نمیتونه بند کفشاش رو ببندد. سینا چه کارهای دیگه رو میتونه یا نمیتونه انجام بده؟

Sina is four years old. He *can* walk but he *cannot* do his shoe laces. What else can or cannot Sina do?

. . . then the activity suits students of a wider range of abilities; the sample sentences can help weaker students to comprehend the message and produce sentences of their own and those students with higher proficiency levels have the opportunity to create more complex sentences.

*Interest* is the final criterion on her list; in order to keep students motivated in language learning, especially in the early stages where too much repetition might bore them, it is essential to choose tasks that students find interesting, tasks with attractive topics or formats (e.g. games). The five criteria may or may not be all present in a task, yet they can serve as a useful set of criteria to determine the effectiveness of a language-learning and teaching task. Having considered these general criteria, we can now turn our attention specifically to issues related to teaching speaking in the next paragraphs (readers interested in learning about more practical ways to teach speaking can consult Richards 2008 and Thornbury 2005).

Nunan (2015) draws a distinction between “reproductive” speaking and “creative” speaking activities. He maintains that traditional classroom speaking activities were often reproductive, meaning language learners were required to reproduce language forms provided by the teacher or some other aural model. These activities were highly structured, mainly in the form of the teacher asking a question and the learner giving a rather predictable answer. The purpose of these activities was for the students to showcase their linguistic knowledge; the method that best embodies this approach was the audiolingual method, which was in vogue during the 1960s and early 1970s. Creative speaking activities, on the other hand, do not ask the learners to “regurgitate the meanings of others, but create their own meanings” (Nunan 2015, 49) and to construct and communicate a meaningful message. The latter set of activities represents a more communicative approach to L2 learning and teaching. Nunan hastens to add, however, that the distinction does not indicate the superiority of one set of activities over another and that a healthy dosage of both reproductive and creative language use are necessary in developing speaking. Nunan (2015, 54–56) further proposes some principles that teachers need to observe when teaching speaking. The principles are as follows:

- 1 *Be aware of the difference between second language and foreign language learning contexts:* An L2 can be learned in a second language context where the language is the main language of the society (Persian in Iran or English in the U.S.) or in a foreign language context where the language is not used widely outside of classroom (Persian in Vietnam or English in Saudi Arabia). Although technology has lessened the gap between these two

contexts, the quantity and quality of the exposure to the L2 is quite different and teachers in the foreign language context need to create as many opportunities for students to hear and interact with the L2 as possible.

- 2 *Give students practice with both fluency and accuracy:* speaking is assessed both in terms of accuracy (i.e. the degree to which the learner's language is structurally and phonologically well formed and uses appropriate vocabulary) and fluency (e.g., the extent to which the learner can speak in a well-paced smooth manner without too many pauses). Nunan also mentions *complexity* as a third dimension, which has been defined by Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005, 139) as "the extent to which learners produce elaborated language". The pedagogical implication of this principle is that L2 teachers design a variety of activities in the classroom that cater to all the three aspects of speaking.
- 3 *Provide opportunities for students to talk by using group work or pair work, and limiting teacher talk:* it is the observation and complaint of many L2 learners that they do not get enough speaking time in the language classroom. Nunan suggests pair and group work as the most effective way of maximizing learners' talking time.
- 4 *Plan speaking tasks that involve negotiation of meaning:* as mentioned in the "Importance of the speaking skills for L2 learners" section of this chapter, when learners interact with other learners and go through the process of trying to reach a clear understanding of each other, they are likely to receive feedback on their language use, which can in turn further their language development.
- 5 *Design classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking:* this principle relates to the first and second of the three functions of speaking as specified by Richards (2008) and elaborated earlier in this chapter: talk as interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance. Nunan contends that transactional and interactional functions permeate our everyday conversational exchanges and therefore should be built into our teaching.

Ur (2012), likewise, offers a set of practical suggestions for designing speaking tasks. She recommends using pair or group work not only to increase learners' talking time but also to encourage the shy learners or those unwilling speakers to join in. She also believes that the learners need to be linguistically prepared for participation in speaking activities so that difficult or unfamiliar vocabulary and grammar do not hinder them from taking part. The third suggestion concerns the topic and task which, she says, need to be carefully chosen so that learners are motivated to participate in the speaking activities. The final tip is for a pedagogical task to have a clear purpose and the conditions for its achievement are explained to the learners. This last principle requires teachers not to presuppose too much and make sure that the learners understand what they are doing and for what purposes.

Hughes (2011, 7) makes a distinction between "teaching the spoken form of a language" and "teaching a language through speaking". She argues the distinction is important since "spoken forms of language have been under-researched whether at the level of grammar or in broader genre-based studies . . . in part [due] to attitudes to language data in linguistic theory." She claims that a great deal of speaking activities occurs in language classrooms but these activities may not build efficient speakers out of the learners simply because they do not view speaking as a holistic skill. She cites the separation of form (grammar and vocabulary) and delivery (pronunciation and fluency) to support her argument. On this point, she says:

This [the separation] has had the effect of dislocating the fundamental fabric of spoken mode – fluent intelligibility over a sophisticated range of styles and discourses – from

other linguistic features. These are too often taught in isolation from the speaking skills needed to deliver them.

(Hughes 2011, 7)

She draws our attention to the teaching of idioms and notes that to teach the idioms, “timing, accurate and fluent delivery, and cultural knowledge of how to place them in a conversation, are all key requirements” (pp. 7–8). Learners, however, are often taught these instances of informal conversational language in isolation from the speaking skills needed to deliver them, that is, learners are taught the idioms when they have a level of productive speech that is too low for them ever to achieve delivery without causing confusion.

The other issue that Hughes raises is the fact that teaching speaking is not easily separated from other objectives. She writes:

When the spoken language is the focus of classroom activity there are often other aims which the teacher might have. For instance, a task may be carried out to help the student gain awareness of, or to practice, some aspect of linguistic knowledge (whether a grammatical rule, or application of a phonemic regularity to which they have been introduced), or to develop productive skills (for example rhythm, intonation or vowel-to-vowel linking), or to raise awareness of some socio-linguistic or pragmatic point (for instance how to interrupt politely, respond to a compliment appropriately, or show that one has understood).

To tackle this problem, language teachers may be helped if they ask themselves the two guiding questions suggested by Richards (2008) when they plan speaking activities (be it talk as interaction, talk as transaction or talk as performance):

- 1 What kinds of speaking skills will the class focus on? To determine the focus, he suggests teachers can use tools such as observation (of their learners when they are engaged in different kinds of communicative tasks), questionnaires, interviews etc.
- 2 Which pedagogical strategies should be employed to teach each kind of talk? The main question here is which instructional options best enable learners to acquire a particular feature of the target language.

A related issue involved in planning speaking activities is determining the expected level of performance on a speaking task and the criteria that will be used to assess student performance. Richards (2008, 39) reminds teachers that:

For any activity we use in class, whether it be one that seeks to develop proficiency in using talk as interaction, transaction, or performance, we need to consider what successful completion of the activity involves. Is accuracy of pronunciation and grammar important? Is each participant expected to speak for about the same amount of time? Is it acceptable if a speaker uses many long pauses and repetitions? If a speaker’s contribution to a discussion is off topic, does it matter?

As these questions illustrate, the types of criteria we use to plan or evaluate a speaker’s oral performance during a classroom activity will depend on which kind of talk we aim to teach and the kind of classroom activity we are using.

## 12.6 Assessing speaking

It is widely known that effective oral communication depends on the interlocutors' mastery of speaking and its subskills such as pronunciation, fluency, grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, not only has speaking been emphasized as an essential part of curriculum designed in language teaching, but it has also been stressed as an integral component of assessing language abilities. However, one of the challenges faced by the scholars is the lack of a unanimous, agreed-upon definition of speaking and its component parts (Kang and Yan 2018). For example, it is traditionally believed that native speakers should be considered as ideal models for accurate pronunciation, a belief that is reflected in internationally known high-stake proficiency tests such as IELTS and TOEFL. However, such an assumption has been challenged by some scholars in the field of ELT (Derwing and Munro 2005; Isaacs 2008; Kennedy and Trofimovich 2008; Levis 2005). While maintaining that the eradication of errors should not be the target for pronunciation teaching, they argued for intelligibility and comprehensibility as the two goals. Similarly, there is an area of controversy among researchers regarding the importance of teaching grammar to help learners develop their speaking skill. Krashen (1981), for instance, argued that the learners' explicit knowledge of grammar could cause learners to *monitor* their production, which in turn could hinder fluency at the expense of accuracy. Nevertheless, this view has been questioned by such SLA scholars such as McLaughlin (1978, 1987), Sharwood Smith (1981) and Gregg (1984). Furthermore, there have been similar conflicting views on the contribution of vocabulary. Some researchers (e.g. Laufer and Paribakht 1998) have maintained that the knowledge of vocabulary could be categorized into passive (receptive) vocabulary, which refers to the knowledge of lexical items that are not used in language production, and active (productive) vocabulary, which includes the lexical items that are utilized in speech and writing. However, the controversy lies in whether the two types of knowledge are convertible to each other, and if so under what condition. Also, there is little agreement on what comprises fluency, and what dosage of fluency and accuracy should be considered when teaching and assessing language skills. Another challenge facing those who design assessment procedures is to develop elicitation techniques that get the examinees to produce the desired language output without the learners' using avoidance or paraphrasing strategies to circumvent the criteria. If the tasks enjoy more authenticity, the learners are provided with more options to select among their linguistic resources and their repertoire of strategies, which could present a challenge to those who rate and score the performances.

Luoma (2004) has explained four "scenarios" that could illustrate different procedures testers employ to assess speaking: in the first scenario the examinees are given pictures and are asked to develop oral stories. The first examinee spoke with a strong accent but spoke fluently, while the second one did not speak as much but spoke quite accurately. After the examination, the examinees were scored the same. In the second scenario, the test candidates were taking their test in a language laboratory; all of them were talking at the same time with some sporadic silences. The test takers were given booklets for note-taking and were using their headphones to listen to test instructions while their responses were being recorded with the exam supervisor administering the test. The third type of scenario consisted of four students, two of whom were explaining in English how some product is produced in a factory while the other two students were listening, and asking questions about the production. The teacher's role was to observe and monitor the students' activities without intervention. Afterwards, all the students went to the school workshop to explain the production. They were then given some self-assessment and peer-assessment papers and were allowed time to spend on their own performance and that of a peer as well as the assessment papers. In the fourth and the last

scenario, the examiner has an interview with the examinee in which she asks about everyday topics, such as the examinees job. The interviewer then asks about the test taker's last job and asks him to compare the tasks in both jobs, and what he planned to do in the future. After fifteen minutes, the examiner brings the interview to an end and bids the candidate farewell before filling out the assessment paper in which she has to make decisions on the examinees' performance on the oral activity. As can be witnessed from these assessment procedures, the techniques required to assess speaking could vary depending on the theoretical definition of speaking, and assessment as well as the practical considerations, according to which the assessment could be deemed useful.

Brown (2005) categorized speaking assessment into four task types: the first type, *imitative*, focuses on the ability to merely copy a word or a string of words. The criterion is basically to determine the test taker's pronunciation ability, although other criteria such as grammar or vocabulary could be of interest as well. The second type, which is called *intensive*, focuses on a very limited aspect of demonstrating oral ability on the part of the speaker with little or no interaction with the interlocutor. Examples of such tasks include reading aloud tasks, picture description tasks in which the examiner has to produce a single sentence, and oral sentence/discourse completion tasks. The third type of tasks comprises those that require the examinees to produce oral responses to the stimulus provided by the examiner. Because of having the examinees produce responses, these tasks are called *responsive*, and the responses are most frequently as short as small talks and brief dialogs with or without a few follow-up questions. The fourth category, called *interactive*, gets the test takers to produce responses, but unlike responsive tasks, the responses have to be longer and communicatively more complicated in the presence or absence of active participation of a number of other test takers. The last type of assessment tasks, labelled *extensive or monologue*, includes those in which the test-taking participant needs to produce a lengthy stretch of discourse with little if any reciprocal participation of the other interlocutor(s). Some examples of such tasks are lectures, narration tasks and process explanation tasks in which, for instance, the examinee needs to describe the steps needed to replace a flat tire. Also, the skills to be assessed were divided into two general categories: *microskills*, which are employed to enable the speaker to produce small units of language (e.g. phonemes, words and phrases) and *macroskills*, in which the production of larger stretches of discourse is of interest (e.g. fluency, choice of communication strategy, and non-verbal communication).

To conclude the chapter, it would be useful to know the considerations that the teachers ought to bear in mind when they assess the learners' speech. Goh and Burns (2012) maintained that learners should, first and foremost, know that they are indeed being assessed when the assessment procedures are in progress. Moreover, the examinees need to know about the exact procedures to elicit and assess their spoken language in addition to the benchmark or criteria to be considered to evaluate their performances. Finally, learners should be provided information on the scores, grades or marks associated with the criteria. The two authors then proceed to mention the characteristics of a good assessment, according to which the assessment criteria should first be associated with the learning target of a given course. In other words, the tasks should not target the abilities not learned by the learners yet. Also, assessment should be reliable in terms of rating or scoring (i.e. it should produce similar scores in different administrations.). A good assessment must enjoy both intra-rater and inter-rater reliability, with the former referring to the consistency of measurement within the assessor and the latter between several individuals who carry out rating or scoring. Furthermore, assessment must be valid. To put it more simply, the assessment procedures should assess what they are supposed to. Finally, any assessment must be in line with a clear, shared assessment descriptor

so that other teachers can comprehend the criteria and use the assessment techniques to their advantage (Goh and Burns 2012, 262–263). It should be added that one of the most essential characteristics of a good assessment is *authenticity*, which refers to the extent to which the assessment task is a simulation of real-life tasks (Bachman and Palmer 1996). This importance of this feature seems more significant if the educators wish to promote the learners' communicative competence using the communicative approach to language teaching since the proponents of *Communicative Language Testing*, which is a byproduct of the Communicative Language Teaching, have maintained that the more the pedagogical and assessment tasks reflect the learners' prospective performances in the non-assessment domain, the more the results of the assessment could be generalized to the learners' future performance in real life. The second reason for which this quality has gained importance is the examinees' perceived link between the assessment features and real-life features, which can, in turn, ensure their favorable attitudes to the assessment procedures (Bachman and Palmer 1996, 23–24). What, then, is a definition of *task-based assessment*? Ellis (2003, 285) has defined the concept as “assessment that utilizes holistic tasks involving either real-world behavior (or as close as it is possible to get to this) or the kinds of language processing found in real-life activities”. Nevertheless, the question that arises is: Is it achievable, or even desirable, to design direct assessment tasks that should be reliable, valid and, at the same time, authentic, or should we consider, as stated by Davies (1978), that the search for authenticity is chimerical? Perhaps a reasonable context-dependent dosages of the previously given characteristics could be considered when adopting or adapting language assessments. For further discussion on second language assessment in Persian, read Chapters 21 and 22 in this volume.

## 12.7 Conclusion

As stated by Pawlak and Waniek-Klimczak (2015, vii), development of speaking ability is a major challenge that L2 learners and teachers face and this justifies the need for more publications that focus on the issues involved in teaching, learning and testing of the skill. They add that that speaking is a highly complex interactive skill whose mastery demands not only sufficient linguistic knowledge (i.e. grammar, vocabulary and phonology) but also “awareness of pragmatic conventions, familiarity with culture-specific rules of discourse, the capacity for managing the conversation, or the ability to tackle problems which may arise in interaction through the use of various communication strategies, to name but a few”. To add to this complexity is the fact that learners often need to deploy such knowledge extremely fast in real-time communication. It is no wonder then that speaking can cause anxiety in many L2 learners (Woodrow 2006). Given what was said, teachers need a systematic approach to speaking instruction that helps learners not only develop an optimal balance between accuracy, fluency and complexity but also acquire appropriate communications strategies that can help them function in communicative contexts, even in the unpredictable ones.

This chapter tried to show how applying Richards' (2008) framework of functions of speaking can be utilized to teach speaking in Persian as a second or foreign language; the framework can help teachers move beyond repetition-based methodologies of teaching speaking towards the ones that are informed by the latest research findings from discourse analysis, conversational analysis and corpus analysis. It has been the author's belief that many of the programs and materials designed to teach speaking in Persian still do not incorporate research findings from these domains (probably due to lack of available spoken corpus and the tools to systematically analyze such corpus). A fruitful direction for future research, therefore, would be to examine if and how the textbooks that are currently being used to teach speaking in



Persian reflect naturalistic features and patterns of speech as discovered by discourse analysis or conversational analysis.

Another venue to explore regarding teaching and testing speaking is the affordances made available through advances in technologies. It needs no arguing that technology has been changing the landscape of education in general, and L2 education is no exception. Web-based tools (e.g. chatrooms, video chat, online forums, weblogs, Skype and email) offer great potential for the teaching and enhancing of the learners' spoken language. Teachers' acceptance and adoption of Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL) or Mobile-assisted Language Learning (MALL) for speaking pedagogy become even more critical when we consider the findings of an increasing number of studies that indicate the positive attitudes today's youth hold towards this form of learning and teaching. It should also be mentioned the recent improvements in computer technology have enabled educators to carry out assessment faster, more effectively and more precisely. For the English language, for instance, the design and development of PhonePass Set-10, which was formerly labelled as simply PhonePass, has made it possible to test the learners' speaking ability through the technology called Natural Language Processing (NLP). In this assessment method, the examinees are first provided with some instructions in printed form before contacting the computer by phone to receive more instructions. Then the test candidates present their speech on the phone, which is scored by the computer (see Chapelle and Douglas 2006 for more information).

### Notes

- 1) Second language in this chapter refers to any language(s) an individual learns after their native or first language (Stern 1983). This definition might be challenged on a number of fronts, but those nuances need not concern us. However, distinction will be made throughout the chapter between second language and foreign language contexts. In the former context, learners are exposed to the target language both inside and outside the classroom. In the latter context, however, the primary source of input for learning the target language is the classroom.
- 2) Like IELTS, SĀMFĀ is of two types: Academic and General Training. The test has four sections: listening (30 questions, 60 minutes), reading (30 questions, 60 minutes), writing (2 tasks, 60 minutes) and speaking (2 tasks, 15 minutes). Candidates get a score between 0 and 60 for each section and the total score is 240 points. The total length of the test is 195 minutes.
- 3) The correct version of this sentence is "من کباب نمی‌خورم" (/man kabāb nemikhoram/, I do not eat Kebab).
- 4) The superunit of the official currency of Iran, the Rial. Each Toman equals 10 Rials.
- 5) The translation has been retrieved on May 2nd from <https://theiranproject.com/blog/2018/09/25/full-text-of-irans-president-rouhani-speech-at-unga-73/>.
- 6) A polite term used to refer to an older man, usually someone you do not know well.
- 7) Possible answers in descending order: نه بابا! (You don't say!); دمش گرم (Good job or more power to his/her elbow).

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# 13

## SECOND LANGUAGE READING IN PERSIAN

*Nahal Akbari and Ali Reza Abasi*

### 13.1 Introduction

The vast literature on reading in second language speaks to the importance of this skill across many educational contexts and curricula. For obvious reasons this literature is decidedly biased toward English and, to a lesser degree, Western European languages (see Brustad 2006). While many world languages including Persian have been only marginally investigated, what is particularly striking with respect to Persian is the paucity of research involving literate adult learners of Persian from various language backgrounds. As such, writing a chapter on L2 reading in Persian poses a difficult rhetorical problem. In this chapter, our solution to the challenge is to delimit the discussion to Persian second language reading in higher education settings and identify a number of issues regarding L2 reading in Persian that we believe to be most relevant to Persian learners across most L2 contexts. In this respect we align with Grabe (2002), who points out that “any instructional setting and any group of curriculum developers must determine priorities based on student needs, institutional expectations, and resource constraints” (p. 46).

A review of the reading research literature points to the importance of a number of recurrent topics in any discussion of L2 reading, namely, the nature of L2 reading, cross-linguistic effects of orthography, text selection and accessibility, vocabulary knowledge, frequency of reading, and reading literature. As the predominant goal of many Persian L2 reading curricula in foreign language contexts is arguably the development of the ability to read for general understanding, we believe these topic areas cover the key aspects of L2 reading that a balanced curriculum should address. There is certainly much more to reading than these. L2 readers need to be able to read the world before reading the word, for instance (Freire 1985). However, such high order abilities presuppose a solid mastery of lower-level reading abilities. There are numerous studies (Adams 1990; Everson 2011; Gholamain and Geva 1999; Hansen 2010; Koda 1997, 2007; Nation 2008; Schmitt 2008) in support of the recommendation that in order for L2 students to read fluently they need to have developed “a very large recognition vocabulary, automaticity of word recognition for most of the words in the text, a reasonably rapid overall reading speed for text-information integration, and the ability to build overall text comprehension under some time pressure” (Grabe 2002, 50). For further discussion on second language vocabulary acquisition in Persian, read Chapter 9 in this volume.

Given that college-level L2 learners are cognitively mature, already literate in their L1, and typically possess well-developed content schemata (Carrell 1987), we take the position that L2 reading challenges of this particular cohort of learners would more likely have to do with their still-developing knowledge of Persian rather than their general reading ability including their L1 reading strategies, metalinguistic knowledge, task successes, and word learning skills (Alderson 2000; Carrell 1991; Hudson 1998). Language study at college level typically involves two to three years of non-intensive instruction, and this is often less than what is required to enable many learners to reach the L2 threshold proficiency level (Clarke 1980; Sarig 1987; Wurr 2003) that is widely believed to be a prerequisite for the transfer of L1 reading ability. Accordingly, such L2 readers may become so bogged down in the texts they are attempting to understand that they are precluded from performing higher order skills such as inferring and critical analysis. While the precise level of language proficiency threshold is difficult to determine due to its variability depending on the specific reading task demands (Alderson 2000; Hudson 1998), L2 reading programs can best move toward it by devising curricula that aim to provide students with a reasonably large vocabulary repertoire as well as sufficient command of most frequent language structures and discourse marking devices along with frequent and manageable reading experiences. When a robust knowledge of the language is in place and students can recognize with ease and efficiency most of the words as well as syntactical structures they encounter in texts, they will be able to move out of and beyond the texts and bring their schemata to bear on the texts and tap into the full range of their L1 reading skills in support of their L2 reading.

On these grounds, our discussion in this chapter focuses on the linguistic dimensions of reading and draws on relevant research in second language acquisition (SLA) literature. It is, however, important to once again acknowledge that reading comprehension obviously entails much more than language knowledge. However, reading at its core remains a linguistic process. One would only need to attempt to read in a language one does not know to verify this proposition first-hand. The point here is that college-level L2 reading programs in foreign language contexts should have a strong language learning component in order to provide the necessary linguistic resources that support fluent reading. This means that curricula should also pay due attention to highly relevant second language acquisitional issues such as noticing and attention, automaticity and skill-development, quantity and frequency of input, learner motivation, needs analysis, task demands and design, and so forth. It is worth noting at the outset that on some issues there clearly exists some dissonance between L2 reading research literature and that of second language acquisition (see later for an example). For a detailed discussion on language learners' strategies and beliefs about learning the language in Persian language classes in the U.S., read Chapter 28 in this volume.

### **13.2 The L2 reading construct: top-down and bottom-up processes**

The history of reading research over the past 50 years has revolved around whether reading is a bottom-up or top-down process. In purely bottom-up processing models, readers start from the visual graphic features on the page and serially work their way up to the higher levels involving letters, words, phrases, sentences, local cohesion, paragraph structuring, topic of discourse, inferencing and world knowledge in order to comprehend the text (Grabe 1988, 2009). In strictly top-down models, in contrast, readers primarily use their schemata (both content and formal) to make predictions about the text and selectively sample textual data to confirm or disconfirm those predictions (Goodman 1967). The essence of this psycholinguistic view of reading is best summarized by the claim that what “the brain tells the eye is more

important than what the eye tells the brain” (Smith 1971, cited in Alderson 2000, 14). Both of these dichotomous views have now been found to be incomplete in light of numerous research findings that show reading is at once a bottom-up and top-down process. For instance, it has been shown that readers are not selective at all in attending to linguistic cues during reading and do in fact focus visually on about 80% of the content words and about 50% of the small function words (Adams 1990; Perfetti 1999; Pressley 2006; Stanovich 2000). It has also been shown that contrary to linear bottom-up models where there is no feedback on the lower processing levels from higher levels, information from all processing levels is parallelly available during text comprehension (Grabe 2009; Samuels and Kamil 1984; Stanovich 1980). In light of such findings, reading is now widely believed to be interactive in the sense that it is by necessity “*always* both bottom-up and top-down” (Grabe 2009, 55, italics added). Skilled readers therefore simultaneously rely on a combination of linguistic input, schema knowledge, and a range of inferential strategies to construct text meaning. A crucial premise in this dominant interactive model of reading is that insufficiency in one knowledge source (i.e., bottom-up or top-down) can trigger compensatory reliance on the other knowledge sources (Birch 2007). For instance, insufficient vocabulary or syntactic knowledge may prompt readers to fall back on their existing or pedagogically activated world knowledge in order to identify words or guess the meaning of words from context. Likewise, unfamiliar topic of the reading task may force the reader to overly attend to text to make up for insufficient topic knowledge in order to achieve text comprehension. As another example, during word recognition when information from phonological recoding alone is not sufficient to help with word recognition (for example, دفتر meaning ‘office’ or ‘notebook’), the recognitional process relies on information from higher levels of clause or sentence to access the correct lexical meaning.

There are some important implications from this interactive model of the reading process for L2 reading instruction in Persian. One is that instruction should always tap both processes and provide opportunities for learners to become equally proficient in using both in any act of reading, moderated of course by the learners’ language proficiency. Second, L2 reading instruction should not confuse teaching reading with testing. As noted in the literature, (Bernhardt 2000; Nuttall 2005), very often reading instruction misguidedly focuses on the end product of reading (i.e, comprehension) such as when students are asked to answer post-reading comprehension questions rather than teach them the many bottom-up and top-down subskills involved to get to the end product. Teaching L2 reading, as Nation (2008) notes, should be geared to making students better readers of future texts and should thus provide the students with opportunities to become skillful in performing all the micro-skills common to all acts of reading. Weak performance of these processes would render L2 readers excessively text-bound and take up most of the cognitive resources necessary for thoroughly comprehending what they are reading (Segalowitz 2000). It is worth noting that while it is true that in the case of college-level L2 learners of Persian some of the lower-level bottom-up skills might already be taken for granted, instruction should still aim for increased automaticity and efficiency of those subskills in the language. It is nevertheless crucial to be vigilant that these skills do not develop on their own – or in case they do, they may not so develop for all students without some sort of intervention. Teaching reading should therefore involve explicit focus on the linguistic dimension of reading comprehension (Eskey 1988; Hinkel 2006). At the same time, it is equally important to note that explicit intervention should not contravene what is already known about the process of second language acquisition (DeKeyser 2001; Hudson 1998; Long 2009). In other words, explicit focus should not degenerate into the traditional *explication de texte* associated with the grammar-translation approach of the past.

Before moving onto the next topic, it is worth noting that with respect to bottom-up processes we currently know very little about the challenges that Persian might be posing to L2 readers across various L1 language backgrounds, or to learners from specific L1 backgrounds. As an example, it would be very helpful for L2 instructors to know whether L2 readers from languages with an SVO (subject-verb-object) syntactic structure process texts in Persian (a SOV language) in the same way or not. For a second example, a review of research on reading comprehension strategies suggests that it is not still clear whether these top-down strategies are universal or language-specific (Erler and Finkbeiner 2007). It will be quite valuable to explore this topic in the context of L2 readers of Persian from various L1 backgrounds. Answers to such questions would not only be relevant for Persian L2 reading pedagogy but they can also contribute to the broader L2 reading research literature (see Urquhart and Weir 1998 for a similar argument). For a theoretical discussion on the acquisition of syntax in second language learners of Persian, read Chapters 4 and 5 in this volume.

### 13.3 Persian orthography and L2 readers

Perhaps one of the initial considerations in approaching L2 reading has to do with the Persian-specific orthographic demands placed upon novice L2 readers in learning to read in the language. L2 learners may come to Persian from various L1 typological backgrounds in terms of writing systems, orthographies, and scripts (Perfetti, Van Dyke, and Hart 2001; Snider 2013). Learners thus need to adjust to the alphabetic system of Persian, its unique orthographic patterns, as well as its script. Depending upon their L1 backgrounds at the levels of writing system, orthography, and script, novice L2 learners may begin learning to read in Persian with advantages or disadvantages. On this account, for instance, three hypothetical L2 learners of Persian from Arabic, English, and Chinese L1 backgrounds can be located on a cline in terms of the number of Persian-specific adjustments each has to make in learning to read in Persian.

Persian, like other world languages, has its own unique peculiarities that are implicated in the reading process. One major peculiarity of Persian has to do with its orthographic depth (Katz and Frost 1992). Generally speaking, alphabetic orthographies like Persian have been characterized as either transparent or opaque<sup>1</sup> in terms of the degree to which graphemes consistently represent phonemes. English orthography, for instance, is said to be notoriously opaque while Persian could be either highly transparent or quite opaque, depending upon whether short vowels are graphically represented (Baluch 1993; Everson 1998). Orthographic opacity associated with the graphic absence of short vowels gives a consonantal appearance to many words in Persian (e.g., CCC<sup>2</sup> as in دست ، درد or CCCC as in چشمت; درخت) which can slow down word recognition for novice L2 readers of the language.

In addition to orthographic opacity arising from the visually absent short vowels, Persian orthography and script represent other unique features that may pose additional challenges to beginning L2 readers. The most prominent features with the potential to negatively impact fluent reading are the followings:

- Direction of writing being from right to left,
- The joining/non-joining of graphemes, making the deciphering of word boundaries difficult at times,
- Different forms of the same graphemes depending on their locations in words,
- Polygraphy where some phonemes can be represented by different graphemes (e.g., صد/سَد),
- Perceptual similarities of graphemes differentiated only by dots (e.g., ر ز ز ؛ ح خ چ ج)

- Orthographic mismatch between Persian and Arabic loan words that adhere to different morphological systems (e.g., وکیل/ه/ وکیلان vs. وکلا),
- Morphological ambiguity (e.g., the morphograph ی in such words دوستی can mean ‘a friend’ or ‘friendship’),
- Opacity of the *ezafe* morpheme that can slow down phrasal identification and make sentence parsing difficult for learners.

With all of these orthographic peculiarities in view, one initial question is whether we should expose L2 learners to fully vowelized or unvowelized print (i.e., اعراب گذاری) including visually represented *ezafe* morpheme (both of its morphographs as in دوست. من and as in خانه ی من). While there is no research on this issue with respect to adult L2 learners of Persian, existing research conducted on Persian, Arabic, and Hebrew involving L1 children suggests that vowelization does in fact facilitate visual word recognition, thereby contributing to better reading (Abu-Rabia 2001; Baluch and Shahidi 1991; Brosh 2015; Everson 2011; Hansen 2010). Given that effortless and efficient recognition of words is widely considered to be a necessary component in proficient reading (Adams 1990; Koda 2005; Perfetti, Landi, and Oakhill 2005), it will make perfect sense to expose novice L2 readers of Persian to phonologically transparent print. As learners become more efficient and develop a larger repertoire of vocabulary and are better able to rely on contextual clues in accurately recognizing words and phrasal units (Stanovich and West 1981), they should be able to handle opaque print. With students having become more comfortable with this type of print, vowelization can then be limited to unfamiliar words as is commonly done in L1 situation.

As with many other aspects of L2 reading in Persian, the specific challenges that Persian orthography might pose to adult learners of the language call for empirical scrutiny. For instance, it remains to be shown if the perceptual features of Persian orthography listed earlier do indeed impact L2 readers’ recognition of Persian print and thereby their processing of text meaning. As a second example, it is widely believed that visual word recognition is achieved through phonological recoding (Everson 2011). That is, the reader is posited to arrive at the meaning of the word initially through the process of recoding graphemes into their phonemic counterparts in order to access its meaning. It remains to be verified whether this is in fact the recognitional route in Persian or whether lexical meaning is accessed directly without recoding. If recoding is indeed the route, is it the preferred recognitional route for all learners or it is moderated by the learner’s proficiency levels (for more information, see Alderson 2000)? Answers to questions such as these will be greatly beneficial to Persian L2 reading pedagogy.

### 13.4 L2 Reading texts: authenticity and comprehensibility

Selection of reading texts is another key concern that needs to be addressed in any Persian L2 reading curricula. This issue is directly linked to the debate over the use of authentic materials – a topic on which there is not much consensus (e.g., O’Donnell 2009; Widdowson 1992). Lack of consensus in part derives from the difficulty over what constitutes ‘authenticity’. In his review of the debate, Gilmore (2007) recounts eight definitions of the notion and suggests that authenticity has accumulated so many meanings that it has become nearly meaningless and at the risk of becoming irrelevant to L2 educators. To salvage the concept, however, he advocates a more limited and workable understanding of the term where an authentic text is regarded as “a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort” (Gilmore 2007, 98). However, Long (1996) differentiates between genuineness and authenticity, arguing that a text could be



genuine in terms of its source (e.g., news report culled from a Persian newspaper or website) but inauthentic with respect to its uses in L2 classrooms (e.g. answering true/false questions that readers in the real world do not typically perform when reading a news report). More importantly, he draws attention to the importance of taking into account the highly relevant psycholinguistic considerations such as developmental sequences, learnability, noticing, and the like in discussions of authenticity.

The literature points to three pedagogical options that Persian L2 curricula could adopt in deciding what kind of texts are appropriate. One option is to use contrived and/or simplified texts such as graded readers. This route, however, has many downsides. Apart from the fact that it runs counter to many research findings with respect to second language acquisition (Ellis 2015; Skehan 1998), such texts expose students to impoverished textual input that can impair their language development. In one study in an ESL context, for instance, it was shown that contrived texts underrepresented modal verbs in comparison to genuine texts, failing to show their diverse uses and contexts to the learners (Holmes 1988). Moreover, studies have shown that simplified texts may encourage learners to develop reading strategies that are inappropriate when they later attempt to read genuine texts (Honeyfield 1977). Relatedly, it has been shown that simplification removes all unfamiliar lexis or structures from texts, and in doing this it misleads L2 readers into thinking that “every word in a text is significant” (Young 1999). Additionally, some studies have in fact shown that simplification does not promote text comprehensibility (Floyd and Carrell 1987; Ulijn and Strother 1990). Moreover, text simplification may compromise the “generic integrity” (Bhatia 1993) of texts in terms of their macrostructures, further misleading L2 readers about the forms of L2 genres. On a more practical level, it is also generally a challenge to create simplified texts that are lively and do justice to the linguistic and cultural richness of authentic texts that have been produced for real-life communicative purposes in Gilmore’s (2007) sense noted previously.

The second option is to use ‘genuine’ texts produced by L1 users for L1 audiences without L2 learners in mind. Proponents of this option argue that all that needs to be done is to select texts that are appropriate to the proficiency levels of specific L2 readers, making sure that the texts are just above the current proficiency levels of students so that they do challenge but not frustrate the students. While the use of genuine texts does expose L2 readers to the richness of genuine texts (McCarthy 1991; McCarthy and Carter 1994), it fails to provide that necessary pedagogical support for novice L2 readers, leaving them with potentially dense and incomprehensible texts. Moreover, L2 readers do not necessarily notice many of the linguistic details in texts that are crucial for both language development and successful comprehension of texts (Schmidt 1993). The use of genuine texts was quite popular in the early days of communicative language teaching where focus on meaning and comprehensibility of texts alone were over-emphasized but has since been shown to be necessary but insufficient for language learning.

A third option is to use genuine but *elaborated* texts that can address the shortcomings of the previous two options (Yano, Long, and Ross 1994). Existing research in other languages has shown the superiority of this approach in terms of text readability, complexity, and length (Brown 1987; Kim 2006; Ross, Long, and Yano 1991). Elaborated genuine texts have been found to especially facilitate inferential comprehension since “elaboration of key terms and concepts in the original text provides the reader with a ‘second look’ at those terms and concepts and consequently increases the chance that inferencing about them can be stimulated in the reading process” (Ross Long and Yano 1991, 24–25). Interestingly, elaborated texts have been shown to be cognitively simpler even though elaboration increases the general processing burden for the reader compared with unmodified texts (Ross Long, and Yano 1991). Numerous studies over the past 20 years have emphasized the importance of in-built measures

in texts for promoting language development as well as reading comprehension (Carver 1994; Nation and Meara 2002). Elaboration of this type exposes students to texts that are enriched, have formal integrity, and are significantly much more comprehensible.

While there are numerous studies in support of elaborating L2 texts to increase text comprehension in other languages, there are virtually no studies with respect to Persian. It would be highly relevant to know how Persian L2 readers respond to such texts, how this pedagogical intervention can best be implemented in Persian texts, or what kind of challenges there might be with Persian. Comparative studies of effectiveness using different types of modifications would also be highly informative.

### 13.5 Knowledge of vocabulary: an essential component

It is now a given that vocabulary knowledge is at the heart of fluent reading abilities (Bernhardt 2003; Devine 1987; Perfetti 2007). The irony, however, is that many L2 reading curricula do not emphasize this aspect of reading enough. The crucial role of rapid word recognition comes to the fore when we consider that the average skilled reader can recognize four to five words per second and actually takes time to look at these words each and every second of reading. In most cases, this recognition happens automatically, relieving readers from fixating too long on each individual word. In fact, this process is so rapid that skilled readers recognize words in “as little as a twentieth of a second” (Grabe 2002, 52). Having a strong vocabulary knowledge has also been shown to be a predictor of reading success in both L1 and L2 contexts (Anderson and Freebody 1981; Laufer 1991) for the simple reason that no “text comprehension is possible, either in one’s native language or in a foreign language, without understanding the text’s vocabulary” (Laufer 1997, 20). Anderson and Freebody (1981) similarly echo the same position that vocabulary knowledge is a major *prerequisite* and *causal* factor in comprehension because the reader has to know the actual words in the text to be able to comprehend it. The importance to L2 readers of a sizable passive vocabulary knowledge was demonstrated in another study where vocabulary knowledge predicted reading comprehension after accounting for age, nonverbal IQ, decoding, and phonological skills (Nation and Snowling 2004). What is particularly interesting about vocabulary acquisition and reading is that they stand in a reciprocal and mutually supportive relationship in the sense that on the one hand vocabulary is one essential element for successful reading comprehension and on the other hand reading serves as the main driver of L2 readers’ vocabulary acquisition and growth (Stoller and Grabe 1993). The upshot here with respect to L2 reading curricula is that the best way to boost learners’ vocabulary knowledge is to get them to read more frequently. For further discussion on the role of vocabulary in second language acquisition of Persian, read Chapter 9 in this volume.

One major issue with regard to vocabulary knowledge and L2 reading that is especially relevant in L2 reading in Persian is the number of words in a given text that a learner needs to know in order to comprehend it. The issue has been the subject of several studies over the past several decades. Some have suggested that a learner needs to know around 95% of the words in a text for successful comprehension, which translates into one unknown word in every 20 running words in a text (Laufer 1989), while others have argued for an even higher lexical coverage at 98% (Hu and Nation 2000). This high lexical coverage, it is argued, makes it easier for the reader to better understand the text because it helps with guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words. Others, however, have raised doubts about setting any definite lexical coverage percentage, noting instead that progressively larger percentages are clearly associated with progressively better comprehension (Schmitt, Jiang, and Grabe 2011). Despite these variations, it appears that a lexical coverage upwards of 95% (which is a significant vocabulary

size) is key for meaningful reading comprehension. With these questions in the background, it would be greatly useful to Persian L2 educators to know if these lexical coverage percentage levels do hold true for Persian L2 learners in relation to various reading tasks that may demand different lexical coverage levels.

A related additional question with respect to vocabulary and reading is the total number of words that Persian L2 readers need to know in order to reach 95%–98% lexical coverage in a given text. Previous vocabulary breadth studies conducted in ESL contexts suggest that learners in general need to know a large enough number of word families (i.e., groups of words with the same root and semantic relation such as دیدار، دیدنی، دیداری) in order to be able to independently read genuine texts. Vocabulary size estimates for L2 readers that can support independent reading of authentic texts in English vary from as low as 3000 to 9000 word families (Laufer 1989; Nation and Meara 2002; Nation 2006). A fruitful line of research that can greatly benefit L2 reading curricula in Persian is to explore the necessary vocabulary size for student readers. One complicating aspect of Persian vocabulary for L2 learners of Persian is the loan words from Arabic that do not follow Persian morphology. While it has been claimed that these lexical items constitute only a small percentage of words in the Persian lexicon (Baluch 2006), their impact relative to L2 readers remains to be empirically investigated. The importance of these loan words becomes especially evident when we realize that in some genres of Persian, the distribution of Arabic loan words is significantly much higher.

Another issue related to vocabulary and reading comprehension has to do with the question of the quality of knowing a word (Anderson and Freebody 1981; Perfetti 2007). Clearly knowing a word well entails knowledge of its pronunciation, register, morphosyntactic properties, orthographic knowledge, semantic features, pragmatic features, and collocation (Nagy and Scott 2000; Read 2000). The more these aspects about a vocabulary item are known to the learner, the higher the quality of their vocabulary knowledge in terms of its depth. However, given that not all vocabulary items are learned with the same depth (even in L1), one important question is the relative importance of vocabulary breadth versus depth in reading comprehension.

Read Chapter 6 in this volume for a discussion on acquiring morphology in second language learners of Persian through an experimental study on the processing and acquisition of idiomatic expressions.

With respect to Persian, the question is whether L2 Persian reading curricula should prioritize breadth of vocabulary knowledge or depth. Put differently, should curricula encourage students to learn more words (i.e., form-meaning) with less depth or instead limit the inventory of words that students need to learn and put the instructional focus on teaching and learning the various dimensions of word knowledge? Clearly the answer to this question has to reckon with the authenticity debate noted earlier in relation to text selection. It is relevant to note here that existing research suggests that the issues of breadth and depth are particularly relevant for learners with lower language proficiency and much less so for those at advanced levels (Quin 2002; Vermeer 2001). Given that at the moment “the extent to which breadth and depth of vocabulary contribute to reading comprehension is far from clear” (Li and Kirby 2015), research on this topic in relation to L2 reading in Persian will be very valuable to L2 reading material developers and instructors.

### 13.6 Types of Persian L2 reading: intensive, extensive, or narrow?

It is common to make a distinction between two types of reading when it comes to reading materials and programs, namely, extensive versus intensive (Nation 2001). In the former type, students are encouraged to read widely for pleasure and focus on general understanding of

texts, while in the latter students carefully read short texts and explicitly focus on vocabulary and syntax (Urquhart and Weir 1998). Extensive reading is believed to implicitly expose L2 learners to the vocabulary and syntactical structures in multiple contexts and for this reason is thought to be helpful for enhancing vocabulary depth along such dimensions as spelling (Day and Bamford 1998), meaning and grammatical characteristics (Pigada and Schmitt 2006), as well as orthography and collocations (Webb 2007). The potential for repeated encounters with linguistic forms in diverse contexts of use is said to be the most valuable feature of extensive reading. For instance, with respect to vocabulary acquisition via reading, it has been estimated that students need to see a lexical item between 8 to 10 times in order to acquire it. Extensive reading has also been found to expand students' receptive vocabulary knowledge, which is essential in optimal reading comprehension (Grabe 2009; Waring and Takaki 2003) and which is found to correlate with higher motivation for reading among learners (Day and Bamford 1998; Iwahori 2008). On these grounds, extensive reading is one – if not *the* – primary means through which “that L2 students can learn on their own beyond the classroom” (Carrell and Grabe 2002, 233). Despite these positive attributes, however, it is important to note that implementing extensive reading in L2 programs can be a challenge (Williams and Moran 1989). As Grabe (2002) remarks, the proper mechanism for the development of many subskills involved in reading has long been recognized to be wide and frequent reading. This ‘simple and obvious’ solution, however, is easier said than done in most L2 programs for a host of reasons, chief among them being time constraints.

Clearly any L2 reading programs in Persian need to incorporate both intensive and extensive reading as each one serves different purposes and mobilizes different skills, strategies, and processes (Schmitt and Carter 2000; Urquhart and Weir 1998). It is important to note here that there seems to be a divergence between reading research literature and that of second language acquisition when it comes to implementing extensive reading (e.g., Nation 2001; Long 1996). L2 reading scholars uniformly advocate the use of graded readers, which have been variously defined as “a simplified version of an original work or a ‘simple original’ ” in the language (Hill and Reid-Thomas 1988, 44) or “books written with a controlled vocabulary and a limited range of grammatical structures and typically graded into a number of levels” (Pellicer-Sánchez 2013, 5). The rationale beyond graded readers is to create “repetition, recycling, opportunities for consolidation, ease of topics, amount of input, words frequency” (Pellicer-Sánchez 2013, 5). However, graded readers as simplified texts run counter to second language acquisition research findings, as discussed earlier. Given this dissonance as well as the challenging nature of creating graded readers, Persian L2 reading programs can opt for a middle ground by adopting a version of “narrow reading” approach (Schmitt and Carter 2000), incorporating many of the positive aspects of extensive reading, combining the positive attributes of extensive reading and elaborated genuine texts. It may be quite profitable to use thematically organized reading modules where students can pick and choose from among several authentic but carefully elaborated texts on the same topic. This compromise not only avoids simplification but should be less labor intensive. After all, it is easier to elaborate than simplify texts. The main point worth reemphasizing is that frequency of reading has been shown to strongly correlate with positive attitudes toward reading.

### 13.7 Literature and Persian L2 reading

Reading literary texts is one other important issue of particular relevance to L2 Persian reading. Linked to the broader debate over the role of literature in second language learning, the significance of this debate derives in part from the value that has traditionally been attributed

to works of literature in many college-level L2 Persian programs. Often in such programs students programmatically begin to read literary texts after just two or three years of language study. In some cases, upper-level L2 reading courses are basically literature reading where students wade through such formally complex masterpieces of Persian fiction as *The Blind Owl*. One reason for this state of affairs is perhaps due to the particular academic backgrounds of the faculty who seem to subscribe to some form of the beliefs that the study of literature is a “supremely civilizing pursuit” that trains students “in a way no other discipline can” (Leavis 1943, 34) and that the newsworthiness of such texts, unlike other written texts, is not timebound (Pound 1951). Grand claims about the uniqueness of literature in its civilizing and intellectual effects, however, have had their critics, who have pointed out that these same abilities can be equally developed by any other academic subject (Widdowson 1975) and that the study of literature may not always be such an innocent civilizing pursuit after all (Said 1994). These claims and counterclaims aside, if we accept the description of the process of literary reading put forward by some of the influential reader-response theorists wherein the reader needs to predict what is to happen in the text, retain information across the discourse in order to confirm or disconfirm predictions, continually reassess what has gone before in the text, adjust viewpoints in light of new information, and synthesize all of this information in order to make sense of the work at hand (Fish 1980; Iser 1978), then this highly sophisticated cognitive process that is put in motion when reading literary texts would be a very strong reason in favor of using literature in any L2 reading curriculum.

Apart from the reasons just touched upon, in general in the field of second language teaching, many other plausible reasons have been put forward for inclusion of literature in L2 reading curricula. Literary texts, it has been argued, are a unique source of authentic written language very rich in terms of creative use of language and cultural references (see Kramsch 1993). Works of fiction, for instance, have been argued to be especially superior to other authentic samples of language use in that authors need to build into the text a context for the way characters talk and act and, for this reason, can be easier to comprehend (Widdowson 1975). Literary texts, others have argued, tend to deal with universal themes and fundamental human issues that cut across all cultures and therefore have the power and potential to be engaging for L2 readers. This quality can motivate students to read more and as a result develop positive attitudes toward reading in general (Collie and Slater 1987; Lazar 1993). This line of reasoning can be particularly true with respect to Persian since for a good number of L2 learners the ability to access the Persian literature constitutes a primary goal. It would be only natural to include Persian literary texts in L2 reading curricula and make the reading tasks more relevant to them.

Some arguments for the inclusion of literature in L2 reading have invoked SLA research. Literary texts, it is argued, push L2 readers to pay careful attention to the stylistic aspects of texts (e.g., denotational as well as connotational meanings, unusual juxtaposition of words, metaphors, etc.) in the process of interpreting or responding to the work. The need for close reading and heightened awareness of linguistic cues prime L2 readers to ‘notice’ linguistic forms, thereby optimizing their language acquisition and development (Picken 2007; Zwaan 1993). This SLA-informed reasoning is augmented by the increasing recognition of the fact that skills are rarely discrete. That is, very often reading is integrated with other skills (particularly speaking and writing) in the real world. Given that literary works are open to multiple interpretations and that the reader plays an active role in assigning meaning, they can naturally give rise to readymade and genuine opinion gaps among students and organically motivate them to exchange their perceptions and opinions of the texts. The ensuing oral interaction in consequence is highly meaning-focused, and this interaction by its nature can spur general language development (Duff and Maley 1990; Gass and Mackey 2007).

While these arguments in support of literature point to the importance of using literature in L2 reading curricula, it can be argued that some of them in an ironic way can work against fluent reading and therefore be similarly invoked against using literature in L2 reading curricula (see Edmondson 1997). To begin with, language-wise, literary texts very often are marked by deviation from norms. This deviation from what is expected and familiar is in fact a major mechanism used to create certain effects (Picken 2007; Widdowson 1983). One key concern in connection with L2 readers here is that they would need to have a strong knowledge of the linguistic norms in the first place before they can detect and appreciate deviations. Otherwise, not only would they not be able to appreciate the intended effects but also the deviations can hinder their language development by misleading them into what is grammatical (i.e. what is allowable). One remedy here may be the careful selection of texts that are appropriate to the levels of L2 learners. In fact, it has been noted that works of literature can be selected according to how 'literary' they are (Carter and Long 1991). For instance, short stories typically involve 'unmarked' forms, whereas poetry is much more likely to contain 'marked' forms. Accordingly, the former may be more appropriate for L2 readers at lower proficiency levels while the latter more appropriate for their advanced counterparts. A second concern has to do with indeterminacy of meaning of literary works and the question of how 'comprehension' is to be defined. One possible answer to this issue is that a distinction needs to be made with respect to 'comprehension' as constructing the "referential" meaning of the work and comprehension as forming a "representational" meaning for it (Rosenblatt 1994; Kramsch 1993). While referential meaning is less controversial to establish, representational meaning (i.e., multiplicity of interpretations) poses an assessment challenge. Given that a *laissez faire* instructional approach where any vague and unsupported interpretation is regarded as equally acceptable would not be appropriate, one possible course of pedagogical action would be to encourage only "precision of reference" in support of a particular interpretation" without insisting on "precision of interpretation itself" (Widdowson 1992). Such an instructional response can promote critical thinking skills where L2 readers will have to hone their textually supported reasoning skills.

With respect to research on the use of literature in L2 reading, there are generally few empirical studies. Research in this area in relation to Persian can prove to be very useful for curriculum planners. For instance, it would be very illuminating to know learners' perceptions of and attitudes toward using literature in reading courses, how instructors actually go about teaching literature, the particular problems that students might have in dealing with literary texts, or the views of faculty on the topic, and the like. Many assumptions regarding the use of literature tend to be speculations with little empirical supports and may turn out to be unfounded. As a case in point, advocates of using literary texts highlight L2 cultural references in such texts as one reason for their inclusion in L2 curricula; however, it is unclear how L2 readers' unfamiliarity with cultural references in Persian texts might actually impact L2 readers' reading of such texts. Some existing research involving other languages, for instance, has shown that readers with different cultural schemas may construct meanings that are "incomplete, lopsided, and, perhaps crassly stated, inaccurate" (Bernhardt 1990, 196). Read Chapter 19 in this volume for an elaborate discussion on developing the reading skill of second language learners of Persian through literature.

### **13.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter we briefly identified several aspects of L2 reading widely discussed in the literature that we believe to be very germane to L2 reading in Persian which a balanced L2 reading curriculum cannot afford to ignore. Based on our reading of the extant literature on

L2 reading, we have admittedly made a number of speculations with respect to L2 reading in Persian which call for empirical verification. These empirical investigations would advance our understanding not just about L2 reading in Persian, but they would also have wider implications for L2 reading in general. As noted at the beginning of the chapter, existing research has an English bias and it does not necessarily reflect all the needs of Persian instructors and learners. This is particularly acute in the case of Persian orthography and its impact on L2 reading process in Persian.

### Notes

- 1) Another commonly used dichotomy for orthographic depth is shallow vs. deep.
- 2) C stands for consonant; V for Vowel.

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# 14

## SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING IN PERSIAN

*Ali Reza Abasi*

### 14.1 Introduction

Like most educational phenomena, writing in a second language is complex and multilayered. One dimension of the complexity has to do with the issue of second language proficiency that needs to be disentangled from expertise in writing, both in the learner's first and second language (Cumming 1989; Raimes 1987). A second aspect of complexity is represented in the semantic ambiguity of 'writing' which at once can refer to writing both as a socio-cognitive act and a completed linguistic product – an ambiguity that is of course lexically avoided in Persian by نگارش versus نوشته – both of which need to be accounted for in a holistic understanding of L2 writing. One further facet of complexity stems from the diversity of contexts of writing. It is now axiomatic to say that all acts of writing are socially situated (Horowitz 1986; Johns 2011; Tardy 2013). That is, the forms that writing takes and the purposes that it serves in different contexts vary, and therefore competence in writing may vary across contexts. It is perhaps due to this unwieldiness that there is no single exhaustive theory that could account for all facets of writing in a second language (Cumming 2013; Leki, Cumming, and Silva 2008).

In view of the diversity of writing contexts and the centrality of context in conceptualizing L2 writing, it would be appropriate in this chapter to delimit the treatment of Persian L2 writing to higher education settings in the United States context where the author is positioned and most familiar with. In addition to regular needs analysis reasons, there are other imperatives as to why any discussion of Persian L2 writing should start from an understanding of one's unique context. Given the limited research on Persian L2 writing to date to guide curricular decision-making and pedagogy, Persian L2 writing practitioners need to rely on research conducted on writing in other languages. However, as Leki, Cumming, and Silva (2008) have pointed out, the bulk of this body of literature has been carried out in relation to English language learners across the world (either in ESL or EFL contexts) who represent different learner profiles, needs, and goals. Much of the research findings therefore may not be readily relevant to Persian language learning contexts (for a similar argument regarding other world languages see Reichelt et al. 2012). An understanding of the specific context of Persian in terms of learner profiles, needs, and goals would therefore need to be an initial step in making informed decisions about what aspects of the literature would be most pertinent to one's specific context. Addedly, what renders knowing one's context even more crucial is that it helps

Persian practitioners to better navigate a confusing research terrain that presents conflicting findings on almost any aspect of interest regarding learning to write in a second language (for various cases see Leki, Cumming, and Silva 2008).

## **14.2 Writing in Persian language programs in the U.S.**

In the United States, higher education is the primary context where students take up Persian language study in earnest (American Councils for International Education 2017), disregarding the special case of heritage learners who might acquire literacy skills in Persian Saturday schools. Chapters 3 and 4 in this volume discuss the acquisition of syntax, semantics, and phonology in heritage learners of Persian.

Apart from a handful of institutions that offer a four-year undergraduate degree program in Persian, most institutions offer only lower division language courses at 100- or 200- and occasionally 300-levels. In most cases, beyond these years there are either no disciplinary courses offered in the language for students to take, or students do not meet the prerequisite language proficiency to enroll in such courses. It is therefore uncommon for the Persian learners to engage in the kinds of writing tasks such as extended term papers and essays and the like that are geared toward learning disciplinary content and socialization into disciplines. Throughout their language study years, most students therefore tend to perform writing tasks that involve very little writing in the sense of creative composing as discussed and assumed in the literature (e.g., Abasi and Akbari 2008; Spivey 1997). As is the case in most other foreign language instruction in the U.S. (Lefkowitz 2011; Reichelt 1999), the ultimate goal of writing in lower division language classes is in fact improving students' general language proficiency rather than learning disciplinary content. While it remains an open empirical question, it appears that a similar situation holds for most Persian language programs across the world. Against this backdrop, the following are arguably some issues that are most relevant to Persian L2 writing.

## **14.3 Three orientations to L2 writing: text, process, and social practice**

It has been observed that “if we write and teach writing, we have a theory of writing by definition” (Zebroski 1986, 57). Accordingly, since all (L2) writing research and instruction is guided by a theory – albeit implicit – it would be useful to briefly outline major conceptions of second writing dominant since the mid-20th century that have underpinned approaches to L2 writing research and instruction. These approaches have all first appeared in teaching composition to native users of English (L1) and then appropriated and expanded upon in the field of L2 writing (Matsuda and Silva 2001). A brief overview of these orientations could help (1) to map one's implicit L2 writing theories in reference to these approaches and (2) to make informed decision about selecting the approach that would be most contextually relevant to teaching writing to learners of Persian.

Generally speaking, L2 writing instruction and research practices could prioritize the product of the act of writing in the form of text, the process of writing, or the constellation of social expectations, purposes, linguistic forms, values, and identities associated with the act of writing in specific contexts (for a recent overview see Hirvela, Hyland, and Manchón 2016). While conceptions of writing as text, process, or social context have appeared in chronological sequence over the past 50 years or so depending upon whether linguistics, cognitive psychology, sociology, or anthropology has had the most influence in the field at the time either individually or in combination, none of the three orientations has in fact left the scene, and they

all continue to inform L2 writing research and practice (Matsuda and Silva 2001; Silva 1993). This is for the simple reason that writing is indeed at once text, process, and social action (Ferris 2013; Raimes 1991). Without delving much into the theoretical discussions undergirding each approach, let us briefly consider the orientations to teaching L2 writing.

### **14.3.1 Writing as product**

Prior to the 1970s, the dominant approach to second language writing instruction was what later came to be characterized as form-focused. Heavily influenced by structural linguistics and behavioral psychology, the distinguishing features of this orientation were a preoccupation with preemption and correction of errors in student writings, and little attention was paid to writing as genuine communication (Ferris and Hedgcock 2014; Pincas 1962; Silva 2016). Learning to write in a second language was believed to be a matter of learning vocabulary, syntactic patterns, and cohesive devices that comprise the essential building blocks of texts. Instruction revolved around the finished product and its formal accuracy. Errors were viewed negatively and had to be prevented by various instructional strategies and, in case of their occurrence, had to be always corrected. In support of this orientation, L2 writing research in turn focused on contrasting students' first language with the target language to identify areas of difference that could negatively transfer from learners' L1 and lead to errors in their writing (Fisiak 1981; Kaplan 1966). For further discussion on L1 transfer in L2 learning, read Chapters 2–8 in this volume.

While there have been various instructional strategies to implement this approach (see Raimes 1983), almost all of them required students to manipulate formal features of given texts in order to gain accurate mastery of grammar and vocabulary. Two well-known strategies were controlled writing and guided writing (Paulston 1972; Reid 1993; Silva 1990). In both of these techniques, students are provided with the material (as opposed to generating it themselves) and asked to perform on it some kind of formal manipulation such as changing tenses, completing sentences, writing a paragraph from an outline, or putting paragraphs in correct order in a very controlled fashion. The main concern in both strategies was to reduce the likelihood of students making errors and flouting 'prose decorum' (Leki 1991). The fear was that should students venture out on their own beyond their language means, they would likely make mistakes perceived harmful to learning. While as techniques they might still be used in writing instruction, the theoretical basis of this product-based approach has long been discredited (for reasons see Tarone 2006).

### **14.3.2 Writing as process**

In contrast, a writing pedagogy can focus on the process through which a piece of writing comes to take its final form by focusing on the stages of planning, formulating, and revising, and formative feedback during cycles of revisions (Kobayashi and Rinnert 2018; Zamel 1976). Characteristically, a process-based pedagogy takes the view that writing is a form of complex thinking (Flower and Hayes 1981a) that occurs over a series of non-linear reiterative stages. The instruction should therefore enable the student writer to develop the skills with which s/he can creatively "work out their own solutions to the [rhetorical] problems they set themselves, with which they shape their raw material into a coherent message, and with which they work towards an acceptable and appropriate form for expressing it" (White and Arndt 1991). This approach, while shifting the focus from the final product on the writer, views writing as a (a) problem-solving activity, (b) multi-draft process, and (c) communicative event between a writer and a reader (Barnett 1989). From the perspective of this orientation, instruction should

target the way students write in order to become effective writers. In support of this approach, L2 writing research aimed to understand the nature of L2 composing itself and identify effective and ineffective composing strategies used by more and less skilled L2 writers in order to enhance the process pedagogy (for a brief review see Krapels 1990).

Instructional strategies that incorporate this view downplay the importance of errors in favor of creation of content and ideas – especially during the initial stages of idea generation, planning, and formulating. In terms of providing feedback, they involve comment on content ('response') as well as language ('feedback') – often provided during individualized teacher-student conferences and peer-to-peer response episodes. In a process-based L2 writing class, instruction tend to mirror the exploratory and generative process of writing itself, typically taking some form of the following sequence of reiterative events:

**Stage 1:** Topic selection by students or instructor

**Stage 2:** Prewriting: idea generation through brainstorming, note-taking, collecting data, etc.

**Stage 3:** Composing the first draft

**Stage 4:** Peer and/or instructor responding to first draft regarding ideas and organization

**Stage 5:** Revising the draft

**Stage 6:** Peer and/or instructor responding to revisions

**Stage 7:** Self-evaluating, editing, proof-reading, and finishing the final draft

**Stage 8:** Instructor responding to final draft

It is worth noting that the process approach puts an emphasis on frequency rather than quality of writing. The premise here is that frequent writing helps students develop the ability to reflect on the strategies they use to plan, generate, and revise their texts while receiving appropriate coaching on the margin from their teachers. This way they increasingly gain more control over the entire process and come to be competent at writing.

While the major strength of this approach lies in its foregrounding of the cognitive dimension of writing, this has ironically been its Achilles heel as well. The approach has been criticized for its failure to emphasize the social nature of writing and distorting the reality of writing by mispresenting it as an individualistic internal process powered by self-discovery and self-expression (Kent 1999). Moreover, the approach, by not making explicit the rules that make writing effective right from start, works to disadvantage those students who may not be privy to the rules owing to their social or cultural positioning (Delpit 1988; Hyland 2004). A further drawback of process pedagogy that is particularly relevant to Persian L2 writing is that it may not be as productive with students at lower levels of language proficiency. As Krashen and Lee (2004, 11) note in this respect, the approach is

most valuable when writing involves complex issues and difficult problems. There is less need for planning, rereading, and revision when writing simple descriptions and summaries, and more need for these strategies when writing requires the integration of a great deal of diverse information, when a complex analysis is called for, or when data can be interpreted in different ways.

### ***14.3.3 Writing as social context***

The third orientation to writing pedagogy of wide currency nowadays foregrounds the contexts, social purposes, and associated textual forms and structures of writing. Known as genre pedagogy, the approach commonly used in L2 writing starts with an identification of the kinds

of writing that students need to write in target situations and teach the rhetorical and linguistic forms needed to produce those texts (Hyland 2007). While there are different strands within this orientation (Hyon 1996), learning to write from the perspective of this approach essentially means learning to create socially recognizable and valued texts. For instance, as a result of their repeated encounters with recipes, court notices, research articles, and the like, readers have developed an abstract knowledge of what each text type looks like formally, which they would then expect to see in each type of writing they might encounter. Instruction should therefore enable the students to construct a text that the writer assumes the reader will readily recognize and expect. One major premise in this approach is that since “modes of communication within communities are often generic, learning to engage in these genres receptively and productively can be essential to success as a group member” (Tardy 2013, 1). L2 writing should thus make these generic rules and conventions explicit in order to help students to develop “genre knowledge” (Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995) and become competent members of their target communities. In contrast to the product-based pedagogy where the focus on form and accuracy is disembodied from such contextual expectations and constraints, instruction of forms in genre pedagogy is systematically linked to context.

In terms of its instructional strategies, there is both diversity and controversy regarding the nature of genres and their variability, stability, unpredictability, and teachability. Broadly speaking, genre-informed strategies are either geared toward helping students to actually *produce* text types or *gain awareness* about them (Johns 2008). Perhaps the most unified and coherent instructional strategy that attempts to enable learners to produce text types is that of the Australian genre pedagogy that is primarily used in L1 contexts (Hyland 2004; Martin 2000). The technique involves three stages. In the first stage, known as *genre deconstruction*, the instructor using a model text type (say, the genre of procedure) draws learners’ attention to the way the text is structurally laid out to achieve the generic purpose in question (i.e., to tell someone how something is done) as well as the relevant lexicogrammatical features used. In the second stage, referred to as *joint construction stage*, the instructor and students collaboratively write a text in the target genre. At this stage, the students contribute their ideas, and the instructor demonstrates ways in which these ideas might be shaped into a well-structured text using the language features from the model text. The final stage is that of independent construction where students independently construct a text similar to the model text using the same generic features. Despite its well-articulated model, the Australian genre pedagogy has been criticized for its limited focus on ‘key academic genres’ only (Recount, Procedure, Narrative, Description, Report, Explanation, Exposition). As Bhatia (2004) has rightly pointed out, genres are primarily socio-cognitive abstractions rather than text-types, and knowing how to write narratives, descriptions, and so on can at best provide the writer with some rhetorical means rather than the ability to create, say, a named genre such as a legal brief. There would therefore be no guarantee that students would be able to write socially effective texts even if they know how to produce these isolated basic text types.

The other strand of genre pedagogy widely used in L2 writing known as Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) has not produced a unified pedagogical model (Belcher 2004). Given the within genre variability (Bhatia 2000; Devitt 2004; Dudley-Evans 2002), it appears that a genre approach would be most valuable as a consciousness-raising framework rather than as a basis for teaching L2 students how to produce text-types. Indeed, using genres a basis for teaching how to produce text types can potentially drive instruction into, what Freadman (1994) calls, “a recipe theory of genre” – that is, treating genres mechanically as fixed forms. Moreover, as Johns (2008) has noted, the LSP genre tradition is mostly suitable for highly proficient L2 writers en route to joining academic or professional communities rather than for early L2 writers.



#### 14.4 Writing as a unique site for general language learning

In recent years, a new orientation in the field of second language writing has emerged that investigates the possibilities that writing as a language modality provides for second language acquisition and development in classroom settings. Traditionally the language dimension in *second language writing* has been de-emphasized (Harklau 2002; Polio and Williams 2009). And yet it goes without saying that “learners need to acquire and generate the L2 in order to write it” (Polio and Williams 2009, 487). In fact, as Leki, (2009, xv) has observed, “using writing to develop language proficiency may be a central aim of L2 writing in [foreign language] settings”. Indeed, very often L2 writers’ main difficulty is with the fundamentals of language at the levels of lexis and syntax. There are numerous reports in the literature that point to the crucial importance of general language proficiency in writing in a second language. For instance, in a recent study by Coxhead (2012), vocabulary knowledge was found to be a major obstacle confronting L2 writers in New Zealand. Likewise, Qu (2017) in discussing the central mission of L2 writing courses characterize language proficiency as the “biggest problem for L2 writers” and warns that these courses “should never change [their] irreplaceable role of cultivating fundamental linguistic skill” (p. 93). In the absence of any reports to the contrary regarding Persian, it is reasonable to speculate that a similar situation remains true for novice L2 Persian writers.

From a second language acquisition perspective, writing as a modality presents unique properties that render it as a relatively more effective vehicle for general language proficiency development (Manchón 2011). The potentials of writing for language learning can be understood in reference to two key second language acquisition (SLA) constructs known as ‘noticing’ and ‘focus-on-form’ (see Doughty and Williams 1998; Robinson et al. 2015). During writing, as in speaking, writers in producing language may come to notice that they do not possess the necessary language form(s) to convey precisely an intended meaning to the reader. This awareness has been shown to make it likely for novice writers to attend to and notice the language forms in which they subsequently read or hear to acquire those missing forms (Laufer 2013; Swain 1998). When used in genuine communication, writing can thus indirectly promote second language development.

Writing, however, stands out in its potential to promote learner noticing and focus on form compared with other language skills (Cumming 1990; Roca de Larios 2013). The following description of writing points out all the features that make it such a potent modality for language learning:

Writing takes time. The word ‘discoloration’, for example, takes the average person approximately five seconds to write but only one second to say. The physical pace of writing . . . allows for ongoing thought and planning during the writing process. As we write a sentence, we can think of each word before we write it and then we can always go back, correct it or alter it, until we’re satisfied. Before we can write anything, even a shopping list, we need to think. We can write very little of any length or sense without giving it some thought beforehand.

(Cornbleet and Carter 2001, 10–11)

As this description suggests, writing in most cases (except perhaps in synchronous situations like text-messaging) does not occur real-time, thereby giving the writer ample time to plan what to compose and how to linguistically encode it. Writing is such a slow-paced process that “in some cases 70% of composing time is actually pause time” (Flower and Hayes 1981b, 229).

This flexibility has shown to be conducive to language learning as it allows the learners to experiment with or rehearse newly acquired language forms and as a consequence increase their control over the use of those forms as well as the likelihood of using more complex language that they might otherwise avoid in oral production (Ellis and Yuan 2004; Williams 2008, 2012). The slow pace of writing also allows the writers to deploy the two hypothesized sources of L2 knowledge (implicit and explicit) to monitor their written production, resulting in increased automaticity in language production as well as more formally accurate texts and ultimately development in their L2 knowledge (for a fuller treatment of this topic, see Williams 2012). For further discussion on automaticity and second language acquisition, read Chapter 6 in this volume.

Writing is further unique for language development due to its reified and permanent nature. The written text, as it were, stands out there detached from the writer and can become the object of reflection and explicit formal analysis. These cognitive processes are believed to be crucial requisites for the language acquisitional processes of knowledge internalization, restructuring, and consolidation to occur (Adams et al. 2015). Moreover, the writer's mindfulness that the text remains to be scrutinized by the reader reflexively prompts the writer to attend more to the formal aspects of the composing process (Schoonen et al. 2009). The permanence of writing also impacts the quality with which the writers might process the corrective feedback they receive on the writing. Unlike in oral production where both the output and feedback are immediate and fleeting, in written production writers have much more time to compare their own production against the feedback received. This visible juxtaposition and has shown to heighten comparative analysis, triggering a change in their linguistic knowledge (Adams 2003; Qi and Lapkin 2001; Tocalli-Beller and Swain 2005). Further, the very fact that writing tends to be neither real-time nor face-to-face is likely to be less anxiety inducing for the learner can create an optimal affective condition for learning (Harklau 2002; Lam 2000).

### 14.5 Writing proficiency versus language proficiency

A very relevant consideration in teaching Persian L2 writing is the distinction between writing proficiency and L2 proficiency (Cumming 1989; Krapels 1990). This is crucial in deciding whether problems of writing are due to lack of proficiency in composing involving thinking, composing strategies and behavior that together constitute 'expertise' in writing (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1987; Stein 1986) or are simply due to the learner's still-developing second language proficiency. Previous research has shown that composing proficiency and L2 proficiency are two psychologically distinct but interacting traits. They interact in the sense that, in order for the learner to be able to sustain the self-regulated behavior that L2 writing requires, she needs to be at a certain level of second language proficiency (Cumming 1989; Cummins 1979; Hornberger 2013). Further, it is now widely accepted that L1 and L2 composing processes are generally similar, and that *experienced* and *proficient* L2 writers compose like their L1 counterparts (Grabe 2001; Sasaki 2000; Williams 2005). Learners' difficulties with L2 writing could therefore be due to shortcomings in either composing expertise or L2 proficiency.

In the context of college-level learners of Persian who are already literate in their L1 and presumably know how to compose, it is tempting to attribute learners' problems with writing to their still-developing language proficiency. In light of the fact that L1 composing proficiency is widely believed to be transferrable to L2 writing only after a certain threshold in L2 proficiency has been achieved, determining which one is the true source of the problems is dependent on whether learners have reached the necessary threshold in Persian. However,

what this threshold proficiency level actually is for learners of Persian remains an open empirical question. Relatedly, if one accepts this line of reasoning, it would make sense for Persian L2 writing curricula to put heavy emphasis on promoting general language proficiency rather than teaching learners how to compose.

## 14.6 Issues currently of most relevance to Persian L2 writing

### 14.6.1 Response to student writing

One of the most debated issues regarding L2 writing is that of feedback (Ferris 2011). Feedback can be either on content of writing and geared toward substantive and rhetorical revisions or on the linguistic features of the writing oriented toward editing writing for formal accuracy, communicative effectiveness, and hopefully learners' L2 development. The provision of feedback on content seems to be a given universally, with debates revolving around such issues as the timing of giving such feedback during the writing process (e.g., throughout the writing process or on the final draft); providing feedback on form and content concurrently or separately (Ashwell 2000); who should provide feedback (Liu 2013; Wigglesworth and Storch 2012); or cross-cultural considerations in providing feedback (Nelson and Carson 2006).

Feedback on form, in contrast, continues to be a highly controversial issue. Various referred to as 'written corrective feedback', 'written error correction', or 'grammar correction', there are essentially two fundamentally opposing views. One view marshalling serious theoretical arguments from the field of second language acquisition research literature as well as practical issues having to do with difficulties with recognition of errors and inconsistency in giving feedback regards such error correction as ineffective and harmful for learners. It therefore calls for abandoning altogether the practice in favor of attending to other aspects of writing such as idea generation or rhetorical revision (Truscott 1996, 2004, 2007). A second view emphasizing the inconclusive existing research findings on the matter (Bitchener 2012; Bitchener and Ferris 2012; Ferris 2011) and the importance of availability of 'negative evidence' (Long 1996) – that is, supplying the learner with information about what is not grammatical in the L2 – for language development, considers the call as premature and harmful for both learners' language development and their communicative accuracy and effectiveness. Proponents of this view, however, emphasize providing *effective* written corrective feedback (CF) in ways that could facilitate learning. As only three examples, they point out that error correction should be selective, consistent, and clear. In this connection, Ferris (2010, 182) observes that "students would utilize written CF more effectively for long-term language acquisition and writing development when there are fewer, clearer error types on which to focus attention". Second, they advocate for an indirect instead of direct type of corrective feedback, reasoning that the former promotes greater cognitive engagement, reflection, and problem-solving on the part of the learners (Ferris and Hedgcock 2014; Swain and Lapkin 1995). As for a third example, effective feedback is one that promotes uptake of feedback through such measures as using multi-draft writing tasks (Hanaoka and Izumi 2012). The jury on error correction is still out; however, it appears that a middle-of-the-road position that balances content and form feedback and treats errors judiciously is advisable. This compromise approach needs to factor in the imperatives of the instructional context such as students' expectations and their needs for accuracy. Indeed, error correction is an area most suitable for instructors of Persian L2 writing to conduct their own action research (Crookes and Chandler 2001) in order to explore the effectiveness, or otherwise, of error correction in their particular contexts and make situationally valid instructional decisions.

### 14.6.2 Integration of writing with other skills

It is now widely recognized that writing is best taught and assessed in integration with other skills, especially reading (Carson and Leki 1993; Plakans 2009a, 2009b; Plakans and Gebril 2012). Nowadays, for example, all major international tests of English language proficiency such as the TOEFL or IELTS tests assess writing ability through integrated writing tasks. The integration of writing with other skills rests on several good reasons. In the majority of cases, acts of writing tend to be in response to what the writer has read or heard. In fact, in some settings such as academia, acts of writing are almost always reading-based (Carson and Leki 1993). If writing instruction is to prepare learners for real-life communicative situations, then its instruction needs to reflect the reality of such communication, where writing is naturally integrated with other skills. Integration would therefore not only create more authentic rhetorical situations but could also promote transfer of learning across writing contexts (James 2010).

Apart from the natural reciprocity among skills in real-life communication, integration is further underpinned by research findings that point to the synergistic relation between writing and other skills (Eisterhold 1990; Grabe and Zhang 2016; Harste 2013). While writing can be pedagogically integrated with listening, speaking, and reading in multiple ways toward different pedagogical ends (Grabe 2001; Hirvela and Belcher 2016), its integration with reading is believed to be most crucial for the second language writing development. The bidirectional relation between these two skills can be summarized as *Good writers write like readers* and *Good readers read like writers* (Smith 1983; Williams 2005). The mutual relation between the two skills derives from that fact that both reading and writing involve active construction of meaning through the application of complex cognitive and linguistic abilities, and instruction in one can enhance the other. Further, reading as written input provides learners with a significant amount of tacit knowledge of the conventional features of written texts including grammar, vocabulary, generic organizational patterns, metadiscoursal devices, and so forth that partially comprise the requisite genre knowledge for writing socially effective texts. Integration can additionally be used as a pedagogical strategy to mobilize different cognitive processes or manipulate task complexity in order to impact learners' written performance (see Robinson 2011). For instance, requiring students to summarize a text would direct them to deploy different composing strategies and reasoning processes than, say, getting them to paraphrase it or summarize across multiple texts rather than one (Plakans 2009a, 2009b; Spivey 1997). For further discussion on developing the reading skill in second language learners of Persian, read Chapter 13 in this volume.

### 14.6.3 Describing second language writing performance

Sometimes it is necessary to explore the impact of certain pedagogical interventions on the learners' written performance, track their development in writing overtime, identify differences of writing performance across groups, assess learners' overall written performance, and the like. In such cases, learners' written performance is described with respect to three distinct but interacting constructs of *complexity*, *accuracy*, and *fluency*, known as CAF for short (Bui and Skehan 2018; Polio 1997). These notions essentially derive from three core assumptions. As L2 writers become more proficient, they (a) generate more text in the same amount of time, (b) write with fewer errors, and (c) generate more complex texts (Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim 1998). At any given point in time along the way, these three components of language performance in writing, however, might have developed unevenly owing to different learning conditions or be in competition with each other under different conditions of writing

performance (Casanave 1994). It is important to note here that while these broad dimensions of performance have been widely used since the late 1970s, their operationalizations continue to evolve (Housen and Kuiken 2009; Norris and Ortega 2009).

Traditionally, fluency includes various metrics that aim to measure the speed and ease with which written communication is produced (see Latif 2012 and Reynolds 2005 for alternative definitions), while accuracy metrics target the extent to which such writing is free from error – or is normatively acceptable or appropriate (Housen, Kuiken and Vedder 2012). Complexity metrics in turn attempt to give a measure of the range and diversity of structures and vocabulary that are used in writing (for a comprehensive list of various metrics for each dimension, see Polio 1997 and Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, and Kim 1998). These dimensions of written language performance have been most frequently used in reference to various levels of the language (e.g., syntax, lexis, etc.), but they can arguably be applied to virtually any other aspect of writing performance including organizational or discoursal features such as generic moves (Swales 1990) or topical structure (Schneider and Connor 1990). For example, the writers' move performance can be assessed in terms of their normative appropriateness vis-à-vis genre conventions (i.e., their accuracy) or the sophistication with which they are realized (i.e., their complexity). Crucially, the simultaneous use of these broad measures of performance can provide a better picture of learners' overall written performance.

An important contribution of CAF measure to second language writing in Persian is that they can be utilized to create a much needed “developmental yardstick” (Larsen-Freeman 1978) for tracking learners' writing development in Persian. An objective external measure of this kind would be useful for a variety of research and pedagogical purposes such as setting writing progress benchmarks, placing learners within programs, and assessing learners' texts across proficiency levels, in addition to tracking students' development overtime. Moreover, the measure would be especially useful for validating and teasing out the broad and general descriptors of writing performance in influential language proficiency guidelines such as those of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL 2012). For instance, various descriptors of writing proficiency in this document such as “simple”, “loosely connected texts”, “closely resembles oral discourse”, and “evidence of control of basic sentence structure and verb forms” can be empirically verified and unpacked for their components. As an example, the descriptor “simple” can be broken down along the dimension of syntactic and lexical complexity in reference to the Persian language in a way that is also developmentally valid for learners of the language.

## 14.7 Conclusion

Second language writing in Persian as a domain remains an uncharted territory, leaving many questions in need of answers. To begin with, there is a need for more clarity regarding the status of L2 writing in Persian language programs and curricula. As a few illustrative issues, it is not clear to what extent writing is perceived as a relevant skill by both teachers and learners across language programs; to what extent teachers possess professional training regarding L2 writing; what conceptions of L2 writing are prevalent among teachers at the levels of theory, approach, and technique; how teachers actually go about teaching writing in classrooms vis-à-vis their professed beliefs; or what are teachers' beliefs and practices regarding response to writing – just to name a few. There is clearly a need for situated studies on this front using various research methodologies.

With the increasing influence of genre approach to L2 writing research and instruction as well as the move away from teaching writing as a set of acontextual autonomous skills (Street

1984), there is a need for descriptive studies of various genres and genre systems in Persian that could inform Persian L2 writing pedagogy. If all writing is in effect generic, and the goal of teaching writing is to impart generic competence to learners in order for them to become effective writers in Persian, then there is an acute need for thick descriptions of various genres and genre systems – especially those identified by needs analyses as being most relevant to typical learners of Persian. Such reports need to include analyses of both linguistic forms and organizational patterns as well as the requisite “knowledge of the culture, circumstances, purposes, and motives that prevail in particular settings” (Paltridge 2001, 25). Empirical studies of this kind can be highly relevant and useful in designing sound instructional materials for learners at all levels, especially at advanced proficiency levels.

Relatedly, descriptions of genres of writing in Persian can also be illuminating regarding the unresolved question of existence (or otherwise) of preferred rhetorical patterns for discourse development in Persian (for an overview see Abasi 2012). As noted in the literature (Silva 1993), L2 writers’ texts are inherently distinct from texts produced by L1 writers, and this distinction – at least at the initial stages of writing development – can in part be attributed to the cross-linguistic influences of L2 writers’ first language rhetorical patterns (Atkinson 2016). Given that teaching writing is increasingly understood as teaching *particular kinds* of writing that are valued and expected in particular contexts (Hyland 2013), studies investigating rhetorical development patterns in particular kinds of writing in Persian would greatly enhance Persian writing pedagogy. The findings of these studies can be compared with findings regarding other world languages, depending on the L1 backgrounds of the learners of Persian, in order to make instruction more targeted and effective (for a review see Connor and Rozycki 2013).

And lastly, learners’ L2 texts is another area for study that remains largely unexplored. While there exists a handful of product-focused studies to date (Motevalian-Naini and Malekian 2014; Pahlavan-Nedjad and Ali-Nejad 2012; Pahlavan-Nedjad and Khaleqi-Zade 2014), these studies are limited by their focus on learners from a single L1 background or an exclusive focus on learners’ errors. As noted earlier, one path of research that could be highly beneficial to Persian writing pedagogy would be product-based studies that could help delineate formal correlates of Persian writing proficiency at different proficiency levels that are developmentally valid. For this purpose, longitudinal or cross-sectional studies involving learners from various L1 backgrounds and different teaching and learning conditions would be most welcome.

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## PART III

# Classroom research in second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian



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# 15

## TEACHING PERSIAN FOR PROFICIENCY IN AMERICAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

*Mehdi Marashi*

### 15.1 Introduction

During the past four decades, proficiency-based instruction has received increased attention in the teaching of foreign languages. The joint efforts of major professional organizations, including the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR), have resulted in the development of guidelines for proficiency-oriented programs. The guidelines thus developed are modeled on the *Functional Trisection*, often referred to as the corner stone of the proficiency guidelines.<sup>1</sup> More recently, the National Middle East Language Resource Center (NMELRC) and National Flagship Language Initiative (NFLI) have been active in the establishment of national proficiency goals for languages of the Middle East.

Meanwhile, the development of proficiency-oriented guidelines and adequate instructional materials in less commonly taught languages, such as Persian and Turkish, are becoming available through funding from the government and private organizations.

The focus of this chapter is on the step-by-step development of proficiency teaching of Persian in American colleges and universities. It should be noted that this chapter is by no means exhaustive; the issues discussed are representative of the general state of the affairs in Persian programs. Hopefully the current state of the art provides an incentive for more research in teaching Persian for proficiency at the advanced level as well.

Before turning to a description of proficiency-based instruction in Persian, I would like to present a very brief overview of other approaches used in American university programs.

### 15.2 Grammar-translation method

In historical perspective, many of the issues this chapter treats are new. A century ago, the teaching of Persian was not as complicated as it is today. The objective of Persian instruction was mainly reading and translation. Most often, one instructor would teach one or two students, and the method of instruction was the traditional grammar-translation.<sup>2</sup> At the initial state of the training, the instructor would “cover” the grammar of Persian (Herbert and Jazayeri 1961),<sup>3</sup> then in the following stages he/she would switch to reading and translation, which would continue until the student could read and translate the text.

With regard to the students, in the past a typical student of Persian was usually mature, highly motivated, and determined to make a career in the field of Iranian studies.<sup>4</sup> It was not uncommon for students of Persian to study Arabic simultaneously with Persian, a linguistic experience that would enhance their achievement in Persian considerably. For a similar discussion, read Chapter 9 in this volume. The students' contact with the native speakers of Persian would most likely take place after a long period of Persian training in the West.

Today our present generation of university students does not fit the traditional profile. Students are far more diverse in age, objectives, major field of study, interest and linguistic background.

The new group of special interest is the foreign-born Iranians (heritage students) who desire to learn the tongue and culture of their ancestral country. These students are mixed learners. Some have a certain level of spoken proficiency in Persian because they were raised in a home outside Iran where Persian was spoken. Others can understand the language; however, they are not able to communicate in Persian. These students have little or no knowledge of or training in reading and writing Persian. The third group can neither understand nor speak Persian. In general, heritage students have a weak connection with Persian culture because they live abroad. Their familiarity is limited to some aspects of Persian culture such as food and celebrations, etc.

At the same time, so-called Iranian heritage students would presumably progress more quickly in their study of Persian vis-à-vis their non-Iranian heritage, fellow American students. Readers might have interest in available syllabi and materials used in Persian courses for heritage students and in issues arising when those students and non-heritage students participate in the same class.<sup>5</sup> Read Chapters 3 and 4 in this volume for an elaborate discussion on Persian heritage learners.

### ***15.2.1 The audio-lingual approach***

In reaction to the grammar-translation method, which did not emphasize communication competence of the learners, new methods were developed. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to describe the features of the methods adopted in teaching commonly taught languages. In Persian, the audio-lingual approach was adopted in a few Persian textbooks for a short period of time.<sup>6</sup> According to this approach, language learning is a mechanical process and the best techniques are repetition and memorizations of spoken patterns of the foreign language.

In the 1960s, some linguists claimed that the "structural linguistics", which is behind the audio-lingual approach, is weak. With the introduction of Chomsky's transformational grammar, the audio-lingual approach in teaching and learning Persian was abandoned. Read Chapter 16 for further discussion on teaching approaches and methodologies in Persian second language courses.

### ***15.2.2 The communicative competence in peace corps language training programs***

With the arrival of Peace Corps volunteers on the scene, our profession had to seek a new direction in teaching Persian as a second language.

At the outset, Peace Corps/Iran appeared to rely on Foreign Service Institute and Defense Language Institute for Persian Language instructional materials of a practical sort exhibiting colloquial or spoken Persian forms and situations rather than Oriental academic Persian materials in use at universities in the early 1960s.

Pre-service Peace Corps/Iran Persian training made use of existing audio-lingual methodology; e.g. Jazayery, Zangi, Stilo, Hillmann, and other Persian materials written for or adopted/adapted by state-side Peace Corps Persian trainings from 1962 to 1978 remain available in libraries. This approach was replaced by teaching and learning Persian for proficiency.<sup>7</sup>

The new model adopted in Peace Corps language training had to focus on the ability to use language skills correctly in a variety of basic social situations. Peace Corps/Iran used role model exercises and identified interaction situations as part of their Persian instructional materials development projects, especially for their in-country training, which became the norm as of 1968.

The Peace Corps language training program opened the door to new methodologies and concepts in teaching Persian as a second language. To meet the needs of the volunteers, a non-traditional curriculum had to be designed by Persian linguists. The curriculum had to integrate basic language skills, communication strategies and cultural understanding. Technology resources such as videos and CDs for self-instruction were integrated into the program. The Persian instructors were required to attend seminars and workshops to learn new techniques in teaching for communication in the immersion programs.

The American Peace Corps operated in Iran from 1962 to 1976. By the end of the program, 1,748 volunteers had arrived in Iran on educational, agricultural, teaching English as a foreign language, environmental and urban planning projects. The returned volunteers still maintain their ties with Iran. They organized the Peace Corps Iran Association (PCIA) in 2011 and have sponsored conferences every two or three years at different universities.

All in all, the experiences of PCIA volunteers and their Iranian counterparts promoted a new spirit of dialogue and understanding between the two nations. This interaction between Americans and Iranians was free from financial, military and political complications and emphasized person-to-person contacts. In looking at the Peace Corps experience in Iran, Americans could gain valuable insight into Iranian culture.

Upon completion of their assignment in Iran, a number of Peace Corps volunteers returned to the U.S. and did their graduate work before going on or proceeding to assume high-ranking positions in the U.S. government and/or at universities. Volunteers who have made significant contributions in the field of Persian studies include Michael Hillman (University of Texas at Austin), John Lorentz (Shawnee State University), Dick Eaton (Arizona State University) and the late Jerome Clinton (Princeton University).<sup>8</sup> For a personal account on the journey of learning Persian as an American, read Chapter 9 in this volume.

### **15.3 Teaching for proficiency, familiarization workshops for Persian instructors**

Since 1982, the training of foreign language instructors in commonly taught languages and, recently, in less commonly taught languages, has taken place in workshops across the country. The development of proficiency-oriented guidelines and adequate instructional materials in less commonly taught languages, such as Persian, has lagged behind. For the languages of the Middle East, workshops and development of guidelines started with Arabic and Hebrew, then for Persian and Turkish.

A few proficiency workshops for Persian instructors were organized by the Western and Eastern consortia, mostly in conjunction with the summer intensive programs, starting in 1989. The purpose of shorter workshops was to familiarize the language instructors with the principles of proficiency-based instruction while the longer provided them training as certified testers.



The first workshop for Persian that was held at the University of Utah introduced competency-based instruction and proficiency testing. Colleagues from both the East and West consortia were invited to participate. Of interest was the presence of Arabic colleagues from the University of Pennsylvania, Brigham Young University, and the University of Arizona who had already developed guidelines, instructional materials, and proficiency tests for Arabic. They reported to their Persian colleagues the implications of the proficiency principles and its effectiveness in modernizing the Arabic programs.

The second workshop was held at Portland State University for two days, in July 1990. Papers were presented on proficiency testing and proficiency-based instruction. Of special interest to Persian instructors was Professor Gernot Windfuhr's report on "Title VI Directors Meeting" in February 1990, held at the University of Michigan. Three papers were presented at the meeting on efforts to develop proficiency testing and competency-based instruction in Persian programs, and on new developments in the language pedagogy. During the discussion periods, issues in Persian language teaching materials, current textbooks, and proficiency testing were investigated.

In the third summer workshop at UCLA in 1991, the focus of attention was mainly on testing. A preliminary report on a set of guidelines and procedures was distributed at the workshop to be reviewed at the next workshop at the University of Washington in the summer of 1992.

The University of Washington hosted the fourth workshop in conjunction with summer intensive courses in 1992. At this workshop, the emphasis was on practical issues and specific projects, including the necessity of a curriculum for the first two years of instructions, and proficiency testing.

There is no doubt that the participation of Persian instructors proved to be effective in bringing the members of the profession together. The Persian workshops became a part of the summer intensive courses. Moreover, the long-awaited American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP) was established. All these developments provided the Persian instructors a forum to work together, the opportunity that did not exist in the past.

#### **15.4 Proposed proficiency guidelines for Persian**

In late 1950s, following the establishment of centers for Middle Eastern languages and area studies, universities were free in planning and implementing their own program objectives and curricula. Goals and objectives were formulated by the faculty of each program or department.

The proficiency movement that began in 1979 changed the situation. Focus on competency-based instruction and proficiency goals became essential in receiving funding from government agencies and private foundations. Directors of Middle East centers and chairpersons of the departments encouraged Persian faculty to attend the proficiency workshops for the less commonly taught languages and adopt the ACTFL/ETS proficiency guidelines for Persian.

To facilitate applying the less commonly taught language guidelines of ACTFL to Persian, the Persian Board met at the University of Washington in Seattle in the summer of 2004. A draft of Persian guidelines was created to provide a means of measuring the proficiency of Persian, and to describe what a language user can do consistently at one level and cannot do at the next higher level.

The proposed Persian guidelines for first- and second-year Persian are broken up into two proficiency levels, Elementary and Intermediate; additionally, each of the levels is further subdivided into low, mid and high. A brief description for each level of proficiency in spoken Persian is given in Table 15.1.

Table 15.1. Definitions of speaking proficiency levels in Persian

<i>Level</i>	<i>Description</i>
E-Low	Have little or no ability to understand spoken Persian.
E-Mid	Able to understand some memorized words and phrases. Understanding is limited to greetings, leave-taking expressions, and familiar contexts such as objects in the classroom, days of the week, kinship terms, and borrowed words such as 'merci'. Struggle to identify and distinguish individual words and phrases during instructional interactions.
E-High	Able to understand short, memorized phrases and some sentence-length utterances in face-to-face conversations, particularly when supported by gestures and when speech is very clear. Comprehends words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands and courtesy formulae. May require repetition, rephrasing and/or a slower rate of speech for comprehension.
I-Low	Able to understand sentence-length utterances that consist of recombination of learned elements in a limited number of context areas: school, daily routine, inviting a friend for dinner, telling the time; face-to-face conversation as well as some repetition and rewording is still usually necessary for comprehension.
I-Mid	Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about topics beyond basic survival needs such as planning a trip, reading the destination on the geographical map, making reservation in a hotel, planning for a surprise birthday party for a friend, inviting close friends to attend the birthday party.
I-High	Able to comprehend longer stretches of utterances on several topics pertaining to different time and places; however, understanding is inconsistent due to failure to grasp main ideas and/or details. While topics do not differ significantly from those of an advanced-level, comprehension is less in quantity and poorer in quality. Increasing ability to use lexical, grammatical clues to grasp partially understood sentences and greater understanding of abstract words in general.

The Persian instructors from various institutions who participated in the workshops tried to adapt the ACTFL guidelines for less commonly taught languages to Persian and propose acceptable description of low levels (Elementary and Intermediate), which is usually attained by most beginners in the first two years of Persian study during the academic year or in the intensive summer programs.

### 15.5 Students' level of proficiency at the end of first-year Persian study

Having participated in a few proficiency workshops in Iran in the 1960s and having involvement in several Persian language training projects for American Peace Corps volunteers at the University of Texas at Austin in 1970s, I became an enthusiastic proponent of proficiency testing as an objective means of assessing language skills and for its impact on classroom instruction.

Being a certified tester by ACTFL, in 1986, I initiated a study of university-level student proficiency in Persian. Given the absence of any proficiency guidelines in Persian at the time, I confined my study to oral proficiency, using the ACTFL/ETS generic guidelines for oral interviews. Three questions were addressed in the study:

- 1) What level of oral proficiency do students attain in Persian at the end of first year study?
- 2) How does the level of proficiency attained during the summer intensive programs compare to those attained during the regular academic year?

- 3) How do we account for any differences in the level of oral proficiency between these two programs?

The study began in the summer of 1986 when the University of Utah became the host institution, for the third time, of the Western Consortium of University Centers for Middle Eastern Studies. The collection of data that began in the summer intensive program continued during the subsequent academic year. As I informed my colleagues at other institutions of the project and expressed my need to collect more data, I received invitations from the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Michigan, UCLA and Princeton University.

<i>Institutions</i>	<i>No. of questionnaires distributed</i>					<i>Total</i>
	<i>1986</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>1989</i>	<i>1990</i>	
<b>U of Utah</b>	9	13	15	20	18	75
<b>UCLA</b>			28			28
<b>U of Michigan</b>			12			12
<b>Princeton</b>				4		4
<b>U of Texas</b>			11			11
<b>Total</b>						130

After performing the survey and conducting an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) test on 130 students over the five-year span, I came to the following findings: The overall average rating of the students was Intermediate-Mid, which is reasonable for the first year. In a typical Persian program that meets five hours per week, students would receive 80 hours of instruction each semester (160 hours in the first-year). Looking at the distribution of results of the regular course compared to those of the summer intensive course, we can see that ten students were rated Intermediate-Mid in the summer course, compared to six in the regular course, and that five summer students were rated Novice-High, whereas ten students in the regular course were rated Novice-High. Indeed, the distribution is almost opposite in the two programs, with more students rating higher in the summer intensive program.

This experiment showed support for the claims made by other scholars regarding the desirability of intensive language training. The level of oral proficiency attained in the summer intensive course was noticeably superior. Moreover, in the intensive programs, students tended to attain the higher levels of the median spectrum of proficiency. Some of the contributing factors are the following:

- a) In the four-hour daily session in the intensive course, there is ample time for review and new material. In a 50-minute session, in the academic year, the warm-up period uses up a significant portion of class time and leaves less time for the presentation of new material.
- b) During a regular academic year, students are only in the classroom for 50 minutes a day and they must concentrate on other areas of study as well. In comparison, in the summer intensive program they concentrate exclusively on language. I have noticed in my daily observations that, in the intensive program, the first period of instruction does not go much beyond a warm-up session and the subsequent periods seem to be productive. Yet, during the regular program, that one daily contact period is the only opportunity for various activities.
- c) The limited time devoted to daily instruction during the academic year is not continuous. It is usually interrupted by short and long holidays, breaks, exam periods and, finally,

a long summer vacation. For those who decide to continue into second-year Persian, an extensive review of the first-year materials is usually necessary before work on the second-year curriculum begins.

This is not true of those who finish the summer program; and after the break, which is much shorter, they are able to continue with little review.

- d) Students who take Persian in the intensive summer courses are usually more serious and interested in the language. Those who come from other states at their own expense are evidence of this. In contrast, not every student who takes Persian during the academic year is as serious about learning Persian. There are several other reasons why regular session students may be taking Persian, such as departmental requirements, university language requirements, elective hours, personal interest, and curiosity. Moreover, the rate of attrition during the school year is higher.
- e) Since studying Persian is the primary objective of the students who attend the summer intensive courses, they realize from the beginning of the program that regular attendance and participation in class activities are an essential and effective way to make progress, which further motivates them to accomplish their objectives in learning the language.
- f) An informal follow-up study by the investigator reveals that more students who attend the summer institutes continue to second-year Persian during the following academic year. Graduate students often prefer the summer intensive course since they do not have the time in their study programs during the academic year to devote an hour in class and the additional hours required for lab work and other assignments. It is difficult in the less commonly taught languages, Persian in particular, to find candidates for an experiment of this nature. The investigator realizes that, with limited data, empirical results are not easily obtained. However, the participants in this experiment represent what I feel is a typical cross-section of first-year students elsewhere.

### **15.6 A proposed curriculum for elementary and intermediate Persian**

This section focuses on how to build a curriculum that is designed to help students make steady progress in terms of overall proficiency.

To follow up the previous meeting in Seattle, the Persian Board met in the summer of 2004 and submitted a proposal to NMELRC, aimed at designing, developing and delivering a curriculum for elementary and intermediate Persian.

Having received the approval of NMELRC, the Persian Board created a curriculum for the lower level courses. In the proposed curriculum, the focus was to streamline or integrate, as much as possible, the efforts of students, teachers, materials developers, and administrators into a skill-based system of language pedagogy in accord with the proficiency guidelines, as opted for the Persian language. As such, a key concern in developing the curriculum was the professionalization of the pedagogic process. It was expected that this approach would lead to similar skills being taught by different teachers at diverse institutions, even when they offer the language at different places and emphasize different skills. While emphasizing incremental advances in the language-learning process, the curriculum was flexible enough to allow variation to make individual initiative not just possible but a positive addition to the classroom experience. Thus, those teachers who may prefer privileging speaking and comprehension as well as those for grounding the scholarly approach to language learning with emphasis on reading and text-based experiences would be able to use a modified version of the suggested curriculum. In short, the effort in developing the curriculum has been directed

in such a way as to make it possible – and easy – for different Persian programs with diverse needs and aims.

In developing the curriculum, the Persian Board adopted certain principles and models, divisions and classifications, and theories and assumptions. The most notable among these are:

- a) The proposed curriculum is divided into 60 units, each corresponding approximately to one week of instruction or four to five contact hours. Therefore each 15 units correspond to one semester of instruction for universities that operate on a semester basis, ten per quarter for those on a quarterly system. Still, various Persian programs in American universities follow different models for their first and second year and therefore instructors should feel free to adapt the divisions in this curriculum accordingly.
- b) The curriculum allows the full integration of the four language skills and culture. We believe that without that cultural orientation, mastery of the Persian language remains partial and incomplete. Therefore, the topics and the accompanying activities have a cultural content, which is why a checklist of cultural topics in the curriculum has been included. Such a list can serve as a useful index of cultural information, customs, attitudes and values. In the hands of curriculum developers, textbook writers and Persian instructors, this cultural component can be made to constitute one of the liveliest and most significant aspects of the learning experience.
- c) Besides the column on culture, each unit includes three components: Functions, Content, and Structures. “Functions” refers to a set of tasks and activities that language users must be able to perform at a given level of proficiency; they consist of those categories of “action” or “event” that students are expected to master.
- d) In the second category, “Content”, specific suggestions are made to assist instructors with contexts/situations within which appropriate materials could be developed. Thus, the relationship between the Functions column and the Content column is often that of an activity to an appropriate example, a life situation, a locus, or an item that anchors the function at hand and makes it concrete and palpable. For instance, in unit one “loan-words” in the topical domain column signals that a word such as “merci” (from French, meaning “thanks”) can be useful to teach a frequently heard word and to recognize the letters in it when encountering its written form; or to exchange greetings, students need to know the informal and formal forms of address needed in addressing each other or in addressing the professor. All such correspondence will be further amplified in a later stage when we develop the supplementary material that will go with each of the 60 units.
- e) The third category, “Structures”, includes predominantly grammatical structures. In general, this column has developed more based on conjecture than any other column; we have simply noted our best guess about what functions and topics may best fit what Persian phrases, containing a grammatical point or an enriching lexical component. Because of that, this column also invites the greatest amount of creative contribution from the teacher in the classroom. Teachers should feel free to use their own ways of determining the structures that best connect the function and topic at hand.
- f) The close interrelation of functions/content/grammar represents communicative and linguistic aspects of the language. While content involves the “message” of the lesson, whether it is conversation, reading/writing, or cultural topics, grammar represents the linguistic code. The grammatical structures in the curriculum follow a systematic small step progression. In this way, the three components – Functions, Topic, and Structure – are integrated with culture and vocabulary as closely as possible. For that reason, knowing that proficiency guidelines do not include a culture column, we have nevertheless added a

checklist of selected cultural topics simply to assist instructors and material developers in their ultimate task of integrating language and culture. In doing so, covering the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing would be the primary principle to each stated function. A second organizing principle has been to proceed from simpler topics to more difficult. Read Chapter 11 for listening, Chapter 12 for speaking, Chapter 13 for reading and Chapter 14 for writing skill development in second language learners of Persian.

- g) The proposed guidelines and curriculum focus on the meaningful use of spoken and written Persian rather than on the traditional structural orientation. In the creating of the proposed guidelines and curriculum for Persian courses, the main objective has been to respond to the needs of the students and to define what the students should be able to do with Persian. Still, the proposed guidelines and curriculum should be seen only as one of several tools that can help to attain higher levels of proficiency in Persian. They make no statement about textbooks, methodologies, syllabi, lesson plans and classroom activities. It is the responsibility of curriculum developers, textbook writers and classroom instructors to design curricula, materials and appropriate activities, considering the specific needs, purposes and interests of their students.

### **15.7 Proficiency-based testing**

Before any discussion on proficiency testing, it should be made clear that there is an inconsistency in defining proficiency among teachers of Persian. The misconception that exists among lay people concerning proficiency is not surprising. What is surprising is what we hear, for example, from members of our profession or read in the official university bulletins pertaining to language requirements for various degrees.

In 1983, a national survey was conducted through funding from the U.S Department of Education at Western Michigan University on trends in measuring students' level of proficiency in Persian. The questionnaire that was mailed to Persian instructors asked them, among other things, to define proficiency. The instructors' responses were diverse. As for definition of proficiency of 17 responses that were tallied, eight defined proficiency in Persian vaguely as "ability". Three defined it only in terms of specific language skills. One instructor defined proficiency as "active mastery of phonology, syntax, grammar, lexicon and the Persian writing system". Two others considered proficiency to be the same as proficiency with other languages.

Regarding specific skills, the majority tended to include speaking and reading Persian in their responses. Two instructors considered Persian grammar to be one of the major skills for Persian proficiency. One instructor listed cultural literacy along with four language skills. Another instructor mentioned the ability to translate the language as proficiency.

From this, one can see an inconsistency in determining proficiency and, therefore, teaching practices. Let us see what we find in university bulletins. As a typical example, in our bulletin of the University of Utah Graduate School, language proficiency requirements for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees reads as follows: "Department may require Standard or Advanced proficiency in language competence". The two levels of proficiency have been defined as follows:

Standard Proficiency: assumes a reading comprehension level expected of a student who has completed one year of college foreign language instruction. Students may verify standard proficiency by completing a third quarter language course (103) or the equivalent at another institution, with at least a B grade.

There are at least three problems in this and similar statements in other bulletins. First, “proficiency” here is used simply as a measure of academic hours completed. Second, the word “Standard” in this context is misleading. Moreover, reading comprehension expected of a student who has completed one year of college foreign language instruction does not provide enough and valid information on a student’s global proficiency in the language. There is even more unrealistic exaggeration in defining “Advanced proficiency”. Here, again, “Advanced language proficiency” is defined in terms of reading comprehension only and students may verify advanced proficiency by completing the fifth quarter with at least a B grade.

During my tenure as a full-time Persian instructor, I have coached students beyond first year language study (160 contact hours) in both intensive summer courses and during the academic year. In my observation, even students with high language aptitude do not get to advanced level at the end of second year.

Saying this, the “Standard and Advanced proficiency” mentioned in the university bulletin of the university would be “elementary and intermediate achievement” whether such an achievement will meet the needs of graduate students in using Persian for research and/or communications is a dubious question.

Proficiency implies an attained skill rather than a method. Language proficiency is defined as the ability of an individual to use culturally appropriate language to communicate spontaneously in non-rehearsed contexts. Proficiency also refers to the degree of skill with which a person can use a language to understand, speak, read and write in real-life situations.

Theodore V. Higgs describes it as follows:

proficiency orientation in no way implies a particular method of teaching. A proficiency orientation focuses on the product of instruction, not on the process itself. Thus, instructors who teach to a proficiency orientation are free to use the methods and techniques in which they have the most confidence.<sup>9</sup>

The Persian achievement test that instructors give to students in the course of instruction is not to be confused with proficiency tests. Simply stated, the achievement test is used to measure the ability of the language learner in a limited and controlled situation such as a classroom, repeating language elements that have been taught and mastered at some level. The proficiency test, on the other hand, is intended to assess the ability of the language learner in a real-world situation. Each has a role in language learning, but only proficiency testing is relevant to what people use to communicate in the real world. Currently there are two well-established instruments for proficiency evaluation. One is used by government agencies. The other, which is adaptation of the government model, is being used by ACTF in academia. The modifications were made in the government rating scales to fit the university programs. For most students, the average length of language study is no longer than two years. Only in exceptional cases, for example, graduate students who work towards an M.A. or Ph.D., do students take courses beyond a second year.

The ACTFL descriptions for the less commonly taught languages have been adapted by the Persian Board for the elementary and intermediate levels. The ACTFL test of Persian proficiency is a standardized test measuring the person’s performance to the criteria outlined in the proficiency guidelines for the less commonly taught languages. Standard proficiency tests have been developed by ACTFL and other testing organizations for receptive skills, listening, reading and writing skills in written form and/or online. However, the OPI is the preferred method of testing for speaking proficiency.

### 15.7.1 Testing speaking proficiency: the oral interview

The OPI is a conversation between an ACTFL certified tester and a candidate.

The interview begins with a warm-up followed by a level check, where the tester makes an estimate of the speaker's proficiency level. Then the tester would see whether the speaker can do the tasks characteristic of the next higher level; finally, the tester returns to the highest level at which the examinee can communicate comfortably and confidently. The conversation generally lasts for 20–30 minutes, though it is much shorter (8–10 minutes) if the examinee is at Elementary or Intermediate level of proficiency.

How many hours of instruction do students need to reach Intermediate Mid/Intermediate High Proficiency, which is desired and expected from a two-year Persian study in academia?

It is important to understand that different languages are categorized by their degree of difficulty for native English speakers. Factors such as cultural context, appropriate content, the nature of its writing system, grammar and tonality are some of the factors that contribute to the perceived difficulty in learning a language. For speakers of English, Persian is remarkably simple in terms of formal grammar, no gender, no noun inflected, no adjectival agreement, and no irregularities in verbal conjugations.<sup>10</sup>

ACTFL has categorized world languages into four groups, based on the length of time it takes to reach a certain level of Proficiency. In this classification, Persian, Dari, Hindi and Greek are listed under category two. The most difficult languages including Arabic, Chinese, Korean and Japanese are listed under category four.

The following ACTFL OPI represents the length of training for language learners of Persian at the Intermediate level.

<i>Length of training</i>	<i>Minimal aptitude</i>	<i>Average aptitude</i>	<i>Superior aptitude</i>
16 weeks (480 hours)	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid/High	Intermediate High

When using this chart, it is important to keep in mind that different learners develop language proficiency at different rates as the result of a variety of factors.

It must also be clearly stated that the number of hours needed to reach a specific proficiency level in a foreign language varies from student to student. There will be students who fall below and students who surpass the targeted levels. As an example, Persian heritage students can move on faster in oral interviews because of their exposure to Persian at home and/or in the community of Iranians.

Assessing language proficiency is a critical component of program evaluation. An even more important reason to assess language proficiency is to provide students with accurate feedback on their developing abilities in the language. While grades may be based on many non-linguistic factors, such as attendance, mastery of specific grammar points or completion of homework, language proficiency focuses only on what a student is able to do with the language.

Because of the importance of valid information on an individual's command of a foreign language, government agencies, private testing services and institutions of higher learning have developed several valid instruments for assessing language proficiency in both commonly taught languages and less commonly taught languages.



Persian proficiency tests for academia are now available at several institutions. A short list of organizations that can provide technical assistance on Persian proficiency tests include:

- 1 ACTFL Proficiency Assessments:
  - i) OPI. An interview between an ACTFL certified tester and a candidate.
  - ii) Reading assessment is delivered over the web.
  - iii) Listening proficiency tests assess the ability to understand the spoken word in all its forms through an internet-delivered test format.
  - iv) Listening and reading Computer Test (L & R cat) is computer adaptive.
  - v) Writing test is delivered via the internet. The test takes 20–80 minutes, depending on the range of proficiency being assessed. Language Testing International offers (computer-based) ACTFL proficiency tests.
- 2 Computerized Assessment of Proficiency (CAP). Persian CAP is designed to provide a general estimate of students' language proficiency in reading, speaking and writing.
- 3 Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS), University of Oregon. Online assessment for speaking, reading, writing and listening.
- 4 The U.S. Department of Education Title VI.
- 5 The World Language Program provides technical assistance to those interested in making use of proficiency tests.
- 6 ALTA Language proficiency tests online and phone-based language testing for more than 90 other languages.
- 7 American Councils for International Education. The Assessment Department has developed several foreign language proficiency tests based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines. These tests, offered in reading, listening, writing and speaking skills, are currently used for language proficiency assessment in Persian and other less commonly taught languages.

### **15.8 Raising the levels of Persian proficiency in academia**

This section of the chapter merits special attention as it contains the views of experts in government and professional language organizations who shared their experiences in teaching for proficiency with the Persian Board.

Pursuant to the Seattle meeting, efforts were made toward the goal of increasing the number of university graduates with relatively advanced proficiency, as well as other areas of greatest need for NFLC-Persian recommended for the short term.

As for measures recommended for the long term, the Persian profession still has a lot to do to accomplish those tasks in light of emerging areas of need.

Under the auspices of the National Security Education Program (NSEP), the National Flagship Language Center considered extending its National Flagship Language Initiative (NFLI) to Persian, with the goal of increasing considerably the number of university graduates with relatively high proficiency (level 2+) proficiency in listening, speaking and reading, or better in the language.

As the first step in the process, Professor Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak was asked to call a meeting of six or seven leading Persianists in American universities to discuss the feasibility of this idea and possibility the practical steps necessary in implementing the NFLI (here after NFLI-Persian). The meeting was held at the University of Washington on February 22, 2003 with the participation of the Persian Board (Karimi-Hakkak, A., University of Washington,

Khorrami, M., N.Y.U., Marashi, M. University of Utah, Defense Language Institute, Gha-noonparvar, M. University of Texas at Austin, Talattof, K., University of Arizona, Ziaie, H., UCLA, and Lewis, F., Emory University and officials of the NSEP and NFLC). At the end of the meeting, the Persian Board agreed to submit its Capacity Study Report, addressing two main issues: 1) advisability of extending the Flagship initiative to Persian at this time and, 2) if so, a summary plan of action charting the course to be taken to achieve the goal outlined previously. It was also decided unanimously that Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak should coordinate the effort and that the University of Washington, where the NFLI-Arabic is housed, should house the NFLI-Persian as well. Pursuant to the University of Washington meeting, delibera-tions continued among the members of the Board by various means. As this Capacity Study Report indicates, the Persian Board examined the existing capacity of various Persian studies programs around the country and determined that NFLI-Persian was feasible, timely and crucial to the aims of the NSEP and NFLC. It also identified areas that need the greatest amount of attention and affirmative action and identified a series of steps that need to be pursued further, in the short run and in the medium and long run.

### ***15.8.1 Present capacity***

There is no reliable study of the present capacity of U.S. universities and other institutions of higher education to produce graduates proficient at the level of proficiency sufficient to meet the needs identified by NFLC. While approximately 40 American universities list Per-sian among the languages they offer either regularly or occasionally, fewer than 20 of them (mostly the major state and private universities) have full-fledged Persian language programs. To meet the NFLC needs, this capacity must be increased considerably and more universities need to adopt the proficiency approach of language pedagogy in their curriculum. The capacity requirement of NFLC must be met in two distinct ways: Expanding the capacity of the existing programs, and creation of new programs. In addition, providing support for and assistance in development of instructional and self-instructional materials would be crucial to the process. The Persian Board unanimously believed that this capacity could be increased considerably within three to five years as outlined in this report.

### ***15.8.2 NFLC-Persian areas of greatest need and measures recommended for the near term***

- a) Establishment of a consortia organization on the model of the Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) to foster and oversee immersion or immersion-like programs, teacher training opportunities, and study abroad arrangements, as described in the following. Assuming logistical problems can be solved, such a center could oversee two of the most significant aspects of the Persian Flagship Initiative, namely a summer immersion pro-gram in Iran and elsewhere and study abroad arrangements both in Iran and elsewhere. The Persian Board has identified this area of need as its top priority and recommends the following actions:
- b) Adopt CASA's articles of association to Persian and take the steps necessary to estab-lish a similar consortia organization (tentatively called Center for Persian Study Abroad, CPSA), among the institutions the Board represents. Depending on the result so forth related efforts, this organization may be charged with the mission to conduct summer immersion and teacher training programs or, in addition, oversee the Study Abroad arrangement as well.

- c) Seek the participation of other institutions with existing Persian programs, write by-laws for the organization, and explore the possibility of aligning it with the American Institute for Iranian Studies (AIIS), the Association for Iranian Studies (AIS), formerly International Society for Iranian Studies (ISIS), and the American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP), as well as other ways of giving prominence to the new organization in matters related to summer immersion programs, teacher training, and study abroad arrangements.
- d) At the earliest possible opportunity, explore the feasibility of setting up summer intensive programs for advanced students at Middlebury, in the Los Angeles area, or elsewhere in the U.S. The Persian Board believes that this program should focus on advanced levels of language learning or in cultural proficiency and that it should immerse the students for at least eight weeks.
- e) Simultaneously, conduct initial negotiations with select universities in Iran with the aim of laying the groundwork for sending advanced students of Persian to Iran for summer immersion programs and study abroad arrangements, as the situation may permit.

Development of needed teaching and testing materials and procedures commensurate with the proficiency system of language teaching, such as authentic language learning materials, placement tests, ACTFL's OPI tests and the like. The Persian Board believes that teaching and testing materials sufficient to its immediate needs may exist, but they remain either not utilized or underutilized. It recommends the following actions:

- f) Survey the existing materials on teaching and testing that accord with the proficiency-based systems of teaching and compile as comprehensive a list as possible.
- g) Identify and prioritize the needs in this area as specifically as possible and take initial steps to produce them and make them available to member institutions.
- h) In consultation with the NFLC, seek proposals from qualified specialists for developing the needed work.
- i) Development of needed computer-based, self-instructional materials and distance learning tools along the line of NFLC's Lang Net project or various distance learning efforts at universities around the country. Distance learning programs and other self-instructional approaches to language learning must be developed for Persian.
- j) Monitor the development to all computer-based instructional and self-instructional materials and distance learning tools as closely as possible and share the information within the Persian community. Pilot Lang Net's Language Objects (LOs) in Persian classes and seek student response, either through formal questionnaires or less formally through substantial anecdotal responses.
- k) Survey student responses, identify areas of deficiency and report the results to NFLC.

To monitor progress in the areas defined previously and make the necessary adjustments considering accomplished work or changed situations, the Persian Board proposed follow-up meetings of its members to identify and report the necessary modifications.

### ***15.8.3 Measures recommended for the medium and long terms in light of emerging areas of need***

It is hoped that we will know whether study abroad arrangements in Iran are feasible or not if we succeed in putting such arrangements in place, the first group of graduates from various Persian studies programs in US. Universities should be able to begin their study abroad in Iran. If this occurs, the Board will have to devise ways of accommodating and acclimating them to

the culture sufficiently, so these students can have host family arrangements, internships and other components of study abroad year. Other important issues are continuing and enhancing summer intensive and teacher training programs in the U.S. to the extent possible with the aim of approximating the study abroad experience.

The following recommendations are made for enhancing the capacity of the Persian Studies Programs in U.S. universities and increasing the number of proficient speakers of the language in the country in the long run:

- 1 Expansion of the capacity of various Persian studies programs in US Universities. Program expansion is possible only if the necessary resources are added to the existing programs in US universities. This can be done in several stages, as follows:
  - a) Supporting the institute on a third year of instruction in Persian (Advanced Persian) in programs where this does not exist at the present time. Several Persian programs do not offer the full three-year language course needed to move the students from level 2 on the proficiency scale. This means that the graduates of these programs rarely achieve the level of proficiency needed for entry into summer immersion or study abroad arrangements.

Providing support for sequence of courses at the advanced level seems an excellent way of increasing the capacity of the existing programs.
  - b) Assisting the existing program in developing and implementing separate and/or accelerated tracks for heritage learners, either through summer programs or through parallel curricula designed to teach reading and writing to native speakers. Except for UCLA, no academic program has a separate track for heritage learners of Persian. If the Flagship initiative could develop mechanisms and procedures for advancing heritage learners through the beginning reading and writing stages, they could then join the other students at later stages in the language learning process, thus increasing the number of advanced-level students.
  - c) Development of Persian- and Iran-related courses. Certain academic courses likely to identify and/or attract students potentially interested in learning Persian and do so early on in their career. Courses like freshman seminars on Iran or introductory courses on Iranian culture and civilization are bound to increase the initial pool of language students at various universities. If universities could be supported in introducing such courses into their curricula, we would be in a better position to populate our language classes with students who have a genuine interest in the Persian language.
  - d) Addition of a fourth year of language instruction to our current programs. This may include curriculum designs that would be used in all our institutions, but it is well worth considering, especially if arrangements for in-country summer immersion programs and study abroad program do not seem to be forthcoming. The costs associated with such efforts at expanding the capacity of existing academic programs could be kept to a minimum, as hiring adjuncts to teach the additional courses involved seems quite feasible at the local level.
- 2 Providing support for students who wish to make Persian part of their university curriculum. Student support is crucial to the development of academic programs in languages such as Persian. If the NFLC could provide for student scholarships for those who commit to learning Persian, interest is bound to increase, especially among heritage students or others with some background in Persian.

- 3) Need to raise the level of proficiency in Persian within the time frame assigned or the effort. The Persian Board believes that a substantial number of student scholarships for study of Persian at both the graduate and undergraduate levels would be an excellent tool in recruiting students to the study of this language. This is the least labor-intensive and most quickly implementable platform in our proposed program. In order to facilitate advanced study of the language, the Persian Board recommends that students be eligible for such scholarships after successful completion of one year of Persian study. A year-to-year renewable scholarship of about \$5000 per student or more could certainly create a strong incentive for good students to continue through to the advanced level and higher. The Persian Board recommends at least two such scholarships be made available to each of the qualified candidates.

### Notes

- 1) Judith Liskin-Gasparro, *The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines: A Historical Perspective: In for Proficiency: The Organizing Principles*, ed. Theodor V. Higgs and Ray Clifford. National Textbook Company and ACTFL, Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Co., 1984.
- 2) G.L. Windfuhr, *Persian Grammar, History and State of its Study*, Trends in Linguistics, State of the Art Reports, 12. The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1979.
- 3) The manuals used as required course texts in the 1960s include the following: (a) Ann K.S. Lambton, *Persian Grammar*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1960 (b) M.J. Dresden, ed., *A Reader in Modern Persian*, School of Languages, Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of States (American Council of Learned Societies, Program in Oriental Languages, Publication Series A Text 6), New York: American Council for Learned Societies, 1958 (c) Laurence P. Elwell-Sutton, *Elementary Persian Grammar*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1966 and (d) H. Paper Herbert and M.A. Jazayeri, *A Reference Grammar of Modern Persian*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Department of Near Eastern Studies, 1961.
- 4) Zoltan Doryei, *Motivation in Second Language Learning*. Printed in the United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- 5) A. Sedighi, "Teaching Persian to Heritage Persian Students," *International Journal on Iranian Studies*, 43(5) (2010), 681–695.
- 6) Audio-lingual techniques and activities seem at the core of Stilo-Clinton-Talatof textbook.
- 7) Recent proficiency-based textbooks include the following: (a) M. Marashi and L. Hagigi, *Proficiency in Persian*, 3 Vols. Santa Jose, CA: DeHart (b) Peyman Nojumian, 2017, *Persian Learner*, 4 Vols for elementary, intermediate and advanced studies, UCI Jordan Center for Persian Studies, (c) Sedighi 2015, *Persian in use, An Elementary Textbook for Language and Culture*, Iranian Studies Series of Leiden University Press and University of Chicago Press, (d) P. Shabani-Jadidi and D.P. Brookshaw, *Farsi Shirin Ast I: Routledge Introductory Persian Course*. London and New York: Routledge Tylor and ad Francis Group, 2010.
- 8) The list is longer. Those mentioned are Peace Corps Volunteers with whom I have worked.
- 9) Theodor V. Higgs, ed., *Teaching for Proficiency, the Organizing*. Lincolnwood, IL: Principles, published by National Textbook Company, 1984.
- 10) M. Wheeler Thackston, *An Introduction to Persian*, Rev. 4th ed. Bethesda, MD: Ixex Publisher, 1944.

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# 16

## COMMUNICATIVE, TASK-BASED, AND CONTENT-BASED APPROACHES TO PERSIAN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Second language, mixed, and heritage classes at the university level

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### 16.1 Introduction

Research in the fields of second language acquisition (SLA) and foreign-language pedagogy continues to advance into new domains and advocate new strategies for language teaching on the basis of empirical and statistical results. Although these fields consistently make new progress and discoveries, the results are not always transmitted or disseminated effectively to educators, particularly in less commonly taught languages such as Persian. This chapter hopes to redress some of the disconnects between the findings of contemporary SLA research, the advances in foreign-language pedagogy, and the actual methods employed in Persian-language classrooms.

One of the most popular methods<sup>1</sup> of language teaching in recent decades has been the Communicative Approach. Many linguists and researchers have explored this approach in greater depth and detail and with more expertise than can be provided here. Nevertheless, a rough working definition of the Communicative Approach will be laid out here so as to facilitate understanding. This chapter will also discuss the relationship between the Communicative Approach and two other related methods, Content-Based Instruction (CBI) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Then it will address the chapter's primary contributions: an overview of current textbook materials that take a communicative approach, the practical application of communicative methods to Persian language classrooms, and how they might be used to further student gains in proficiency.

The intended scope of this chapter is to deal primarily with first and second year Persian language classes at the university level. It imagines both L2-only classrooms and heritage-only classrooms, in addition to mixed L2 and heritage classrooms. The courses in mind focus not only on Iranian Persian but also involve discussions of Dari and Tajiki when they are of interest to the students. The applications suggested would be most effective in undergraduate or graduate level courses. Not all activities will be applicable, depending upon the availability of a substantial Persian-speaking community in the area.

### **16.1.1 Introduction to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

The Communicative Approach has had a wide variety of interpreters and practitioners in its short history going back to the UK in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In its most basic form, the approach has been described by Bob Adamson as “a view of language learning as best brought about by involving learners actively in communication related to real-life contexts” (Adamson 2008, 609). The method emphasizes active simulations of real-life communication tasks in the target language and the slow build-up of more complex renderings of these scenarios over time (Brumfit and Johnson 1978, 188–9). The field grew out of the works of sociolinguists who first elaborated the notion of communicative competence as being much more than simple mastery of a set list of grammar and vocabulary (Savignon 2017; Richards and Rodgers 2001, 9; Dhongde 1990, 229–34; Munby 1978). Bygate, Skehan, and Swain saw it as “explicitly a post-method approach to language teaching . . . in which the principles underlying the use of different classroom procedures were of paramount importance, rather than a package of teaching materials” (Bygate et al. 2001, 11). Thus rather than being a specific method tied to a certain set of materials, the Communicative Approach functions as an overarching term for a set of common principles, including, as Adamson describes it, a notion of

language as principally serving as an expression of meaning at the discourse level (not just the word or sentence level), where appropriacy is as important as accuracy . . . and view[s] the teacher as a facilitator and motivator, as well as source of knowledge.

(Adamson 2008, 608–9)

Within this umbrella term, the school of proficiency-based instruction eventually arose.

For the purposes of this chapter, the proficiency movement is considered an offshoot of the Communicative Approach, as many of its aims and principles overlap. As the ACTFL guidelines define it, proficiency is “what individuals can do with language in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context” (ACTFL Guidelines 2012). Additionally, communicative language teaching encompasses the 5 C’s as defined in *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*, compiled by the National Standards in Foreign Language Education in 2006, which will be discussed in detail in the following sections. The primary assumptions of CLT are that students learn best through trial and error in interactive, communicative settings where they have to negotiate the expression and construction of meaning in addition to adjusting their production to the appropriateness demanded by the situation.

### **16.1.2 Task-based language teaching**

In addition to the communicative approach, another method that has made great inroads in contemporary foreign language teaching is the task-based approach. The task-based approach dovetails nicely with the philosophies behind CLT, and for this reason, the approaches are considered together in their potential for improving Persian-language teaching. One of the central issues of the task-based method is what truly qualifies as a ‘task’ in this conception of it (Lee 2000). As David Nunan defines it:

The communicative task [is] a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while



their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right.

(Nunan 1989, 10)

Under the banner of TBLT, exercises where students are pre-taught or explicitly given specific language forms to use do not qualify as tasks, because they only prove that students can perform language, not use it to communicate themselves (Edwards et al. 2004, 3–4). To some degree TBLT mirrors certain elements of CLT, which often emphasizes the importance of learning to negotiate and create meaning spontaneously with an interlocutor (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 156). Task-based syllabi see the task in the classroom as a bridge to performing similar functions outside of class (Edwards and Willis 2005). Adamson, looking to the influential cognitive theories of Lee Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner, notes the seeming synergy between communicative principles and TBLT, stating that TBLT “advocates a learner-centered curriculum” and evinces “a strong element of group-work and autonomous activities” (Adamson 2008, 609; Bruner 1990; Vygotsky 1978). A look at Jack Richards’ 10 guiding principles of CLT shows that many of them are central to both TBLT and CLT, including an emphasis students undertaking interactive activities, negotiating meaning, taking part in meaningful interpersonal exchange and engaging in creative use of language (Richards 2006, 22–23). For further discussion on the task-based approach, read Chapters 17 and 18 in this volume.

### ***16.1.3 Content-based instruction***

Another method that has gained a significant amount of traction in Foreign Language (FL) teaching circles is the idea of Content-Based Instruction (CBI). As Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi and Anousha Sedighi note, there are two ends of the spectrum in terms of the application of CBI. “The broad interpretation [of CBI]” they write, “defines [it] as having its main focus on the content not the form.” Meanwhile, the other narrower, more restricted definition “considers CBI as the instruction of a specific academic topic and using the language as a tool to deliver that specific content” (Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi 2018, 403). As of yet, no Persian-specific teaching materials have appeared that focus solely on a content-based approach; however, many current materials naturally feature elements of it. One of the most significant developments in this area for Persian, as of the time of writing, has been the substantial online and summer content course offerings from the University of Texas at Austin with Persian as the language of instruction. Additionally, the University of Maryland’s Flagship program in Persian is known for its use of CBI in the advanced levels of its program. Richards views CBI and TBLT to some degree as extensions of the assumptions underlying CLT. Through its demonstration of the applications of these approaches, the chapter shows the consonance of these three methods and their ability to complement each other in the language classroom. Chapters 17 and 20 in this volume also discuss the content-based approach in teaching Persian as a second language.

### ***16.1.4 Critiques of CLT, CBI, and TBLT***

The authors are well aware of the critiques of both the communicative method and task-based teaching that have appeared from the 1980s onward, and as such they advocate a balanced use of these activities at the teacher’s discretion, as they would with any other method. Task-based teaching has been criticized on the grounds that it is not precisely a method but rather

a description of a process. That is, it instructs us how to set up and run specific activities, instead of giving us principles upon which to hang our curriculum-design decisions (Richards 2006, 30–31, 35). A second issue with TBLT is the difficulty in delineating what a ‘task’ really is – at some point, every activity done by students in the class begins to feel like a task of one sort or another. Of course, proponents of the task-based method would be apt to respond by stating that the tasks should resemble real-life tasks that language-learners would be likely to encounter outside the classroom. Further critiques include the lack of emphasis on accuracy, and the fact that content involved is usually not significant, which would be an issue for those interested in CBI and those whose courses aim to help foreign language-speaking students quickly enter mainstream instruction classes in the target language.

As for the communicative method, some critiques take issue with the fundamental premise of CLT by arguing that it is impossible to teach the ‘normal usage’ CLT emphasizes (Dhongde 1990, 231). However, it is generally possible to delineate ‘normal usage’ within a specified context and a standardized dialect (e.g. standard written Persian of contemporary Iran). Several other critiques posit that the overuse of communicative-style activities, without sufficient emphasis on improving accuracy at the same time, can lead to the fossilization of student errors and the development of communicative work-around strategies that may hold the student back once she tries to express more complicated structures and accomplish more complex communication tasks (Hüllen 1980, 18; Eskey 1983; Richards and Renandya 2002, 155). While the development of these work-around strategies is in itself something teachers should aim for, over-reliance on these strategies may eventually form an impediment to learner progress, and as such it is emphasized here that the communicative approach is not a one-size-fits-all method that can be adopted wholesale to any teaching context (Al-Khafaji 2015). Furthermore, the writers of this chapter wish to underscore that by no means do they advocate that instructors aim for an entirely communicative-based classroom at all times. Rather they view communicative activities as a necessary component of flexible and diverse lesson plans that include more traditional approaches such as direct and indirect grammar instruction, modeling, and drilling. For similar discussion, read Chapter 15 in this volume.

To go further, continued advances in CLT have shown that explicit grammar instruction – long demonized as the core element of the much-maligned grammar-translation approach (Brown 2001, 18) – is not necessarily incompatible with the aims of CLT. While it is true that traditional approaches have tended to greatly over-emphasize grammatical drilling in their curricula, this does not mean elements of that technique should be discarded as utterly useless, particularly for adult learners who can leverage the complex grammatical system they have already mastered in their native language to make inferences about the target language system. As Karin C. Ryding puts it in her *Teaching and Learning Arabic as Foreign Language*:

The communicative approach to teaching that has been prevalent in recent years has emphasized the acquisition of language structures primarily through indirect and intuitive means, rather than through direct presentation and practice of language skills. This has led to the belief among many teachers and teacher trainers that grammatical rules should not be explicitly taught, discussed, or tested. More recent research however, has shown that adult language acquisition can be accelerated and strengthened by systematic, effective explanation and practice of grammatical structures to improve skills and enrich performance. How to implement grammatical awareness and accuracy for learners is a central issue in Arabic pedagogy, especially for those learners aiming for advanced levels of proficiency.

(Ryding 2013, 4)

Given that current sensibilities in the field have come to view grammar instruction as antiquated, it is useful to draw attention to a number of existing resources that have already incorporated elements of CLT in their approach. This overview does not claim to be exhaustive. Indeed there are many strong resources for Persian that are not explicitly mentioned here. However, the chapter particularly focuses on recently published materials (since 2010) with a communicative/proficiency-oriented methodology and those that are relevant to the teaching context of American institutions of higher education. To this end, there are a number of resources published in Iran for learners of Persian as a foreign language that have not been systematically reviewed here. A selection of these are reproduced in the bibliography; however, many of these do not take a specifically communicative approach (Zulfaqāri 2004; Dārābi 1998; Sādeghiān 1998; Shemāsi and Sharifzāde 1995; Nobahār 1993; Purnāmdāriyān 1993; Samareh 1988).

## 16.2 Resources with a communicative outlook

Before jumping into recommendations for how to apply CLT to the Persian-language classroom, it is useful to draw attention to a number of existing resources that have already incorporated elements of CLT in their approach. This overview does not claim to be exhaustive. Indeed there are many strong resources for Persian that are not explicitly mentioned here. However, the chapter particularly focuses on recently published materials (since 2010) with a communicative/proficiency-oriented methodology and those that are relevant to the teaching context of American institutions of higher education. To this end, there are a number of resources published in Iran for learners of Persian as a foreign language that have not been systematically reviewed here. A selection of these are reproduced in the bibliography; however, many of these do not take a specifically communicative approach (Zulfaqāri 2004; Dārābi 1998; Sādeghiān 1998; Shemāsi and Sharifzāde 1995; Nobahār 1993; Purnāmdāriyān 1993; Samareh 1988).

Notable among those sources systematically reviewed are Anousha Shahsavari and Blake Atwood's *Persian of Iran Today (Vols. 1 & 2)* (2013 & 2015), Anousha Sedighi's *Persian in Use* (2015), Peyman Nojournian's *Persian Learner* series (2017), Reza Farokhfal's *Persian Here and Now* (2013) and Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi and Dominic Parviz Brookshaw's *The Routledge Introductory Course to Persian* (2010).<sup>2</sup> Each lesson of Shahsavari and Atwood's volume contains communicative speaking prompts and a number of game suggestions at the end of each unit (Shahsavari and Atwood 2015, 77–78). Meanwhile, Nojournian includes communicative prompts, mainly scenarios, more sporadically (Nojournian 2017a, 91, 110).<sup>3</sup> Farokhfal includes vivid picture dictionaries, which double as prompts for communicative scenarios (Farokhfal 2013, 101). Shabani-Jadidi and Brookshaw's scenarios conclude each lesson with lists of common substitution words that students can use to make the presented dialogues their own and leverage them as models of correct usage while performing real communication acts (Shabani-Jadidi and Brookshaw 2010, 12–13, 24–25, etc).<sup>4</sup> These kinds of activities are instrumental in terms of using sentence stems or sentence starters to develop language chunking. Mar'ashi's *Proficiency in Persian* contains the most robust scenario concepts sampled here. It offers the prompts in English modeled on ACTFL OPI scenarios, including multiple steps to ensure students complete several communicative objectives (Mar'ashi 2014, 63, 135, etc).<sup>5</sup> Read Chapter 15 in this volume for the ACTFL OPI scenarios and guidelines. Finally, Sedighi's *Persian in Use* offers two dialogues at the beginning of each lesson upon which students model their own versions, and it explicitly raises students' awareness of differences in spoken and written language (Sedighi 2015).

## 16.3 Special considerations for using communicative approaches with heritage language learners and mixed classrooms

In addition to being an efficient and motivating way to learn, the Communicative Approach also has the potential to alleviate concerns surrounding one of the most significant issues associated with Persian language teaching in America today – how to maximize heritage learning. With the arrival of a significant community of Iranian immigrants to the U.S. in the wake of the Islamic Revolution and Iran-Iraq War, the presence of substantial numbers of heritage students

in Persian classrooms across American institutions of higher learning gave rise to questions about how best to integrate these students into a curriculum primarily designed for L2 learners (Bozorgmehr 1998). In fact, the question of heritage language maintenance and teaching has prompted the emergence of an entire academic subfield over the last two to three decades dedicated to the heritage language phenomenon across various languages, including Spanish, Russian, Korean, Chinese, Arabic, and many others (Kagan, Carreira, and Hitchins Chik 2017; O'Rourke and Zhou 2016, 1–10; Hamedani 2015; Ibrahim and Allam 2014, 437–46; Loewen 2008, 23–39; Sohn 2007, 407–18). How Persian language instructors deal with the heritage learner population in the academic sphere of higher education is critical for the success and survival of the heritage language within the diaspora community. Anousha Sedighi summarizes the findings of Najafi on the current situation in regards to the passing down of Persian language to first and second generation children. The picture is unfortunately quite grim:

Najafi's research shows that among second generation Iranians 70.3% understand Persian, 55% speak Persian, 27% can read in Persian, and 21.6% can write in Persian. Thus, she argues that the rate of Persian loss as an oral language is 45% and that the rate of language loss as a literate language is almost 75%. . . . Najafi concludes that as an oral language Persian might get transferred to the third generation but, as for most immigrant languages, the literate language will die after the second generation. (Sedighi 2018)

Thus, the stakes for heritage language maintenance are quite high, as they involve no less than the continuance of Persian's small cultural foothold in America's melting pot and the coherence of a community tied together by linguistic, cultural, and identity-based bonds. Furthermore, Najafi's results lead Sedighi to conclude, quite rightly, that the situation for Persian as a written language is even more imperiled than as a spoken one. These data support heritage language teachers' long-held intuition derived from experience that emphasis on the written language is of greater import to most heritage language learners' proficiency in the target language. As such, Sedighi argues that a communicative approach alone is not sufficient to meet heritage language learner (HLL) needs, and they require form-focused instruction, preferably in a context-based environment. For more elaborate discussion on heritage language learners of Persian and the syntactic, semantic, and phonological characteristics of their interlanguage, read Chapters 3 and 4 in this volume.

While many researchers have pointed out the sometimes vast gap between HLLs and L2Ls in terms of oral and aural skills, they have equally noted L2Ls' cumulative advantage in literacy skills (Carreira 2016, 135). And yet, it is crucial that teachers do not generalize too aggressively about the backgrounds of heritage speakers, as these diverge widely and are dependent on many factors, including the age of beginning English-language school, community school attendance, parental involvement, access to a larger community of Persian speakers, opportunities to travel to Iran/Afghanistan/Tajikistan, and of course personal motivation and individual life experiences (Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans 2014, 10). It would be wise to take a look at the different types of heritage speakers that register for university-level courses before considering how best to model the curriculum for them.

By this time, the separation of definitions of heritage learners into two general categories, broad and narrow, is well known in the heritage language teaching field. Under these umbrella categories, the broad definition of a HLL considers the label to apply to anyone with a cultural connection to the language, regardless of their actual, measurable proficiency. Meanwhile, the narrow definition takes its cue from the opposite end of the spectrum, positing that a HLL

is someone who has real proficiency in the target language, but lacks formal education in it. These quite general categories have been further broken down by Olga Kagan and Kathleen Dillon, who suggest that heritage speakers fall along a continuum according to the speakers' distance from the language abilities of the native speakers (Kagan and Dillon 2012, 495). In university Persian language classrooms, at least five different subtypes of heritage speakers have been observed. Some of these terms have been borrowed from linguistics, while others were created to suit the categories of students observed in our programs:

- i) Cultural heritage speakers: those that have familiarity with some traditions and holidays (Nowruz, cultural practices, etc.) but no measurable language proficiency.
- ii) Childhood overhearers: those that did not speak in childhood but had significant aural input in the target language. These students often cannot speak but have some aural comprehension (Kit-Fong Au et al. 2002).
- iii) Childhood speakers: those that spoke in childhood but left off doing so after going to school. These students can often speak at a rudimentary level and communicate to some degree. Their comprehension level is typically much higher than their speaking proficiency.
- iv) Illiterate near-natives: Those with a high degree of listening comprehension and speaking ability, but who are completely or mostly without any functional literacy in the written language.
- v) Semi-natives: Those with some schooling in a Persian-speaking environment (usually Iran, Afghanistan, or Tajikistan) but who left in childhood or adolescence, leaving the full language acquisition process incomplete.

Research in SLA shows that these types of learners have divergent profiles with differing strengths and weaknesses, and various potential for high-level language acquisition (Ibrahim and Allam 2014; Albirini 2018). The wide range of abilities in these categories reveals the need for materials and curricula specifically tailored to HLLs and a differentiated approach to the extent possible.

Based on our experience as Persian instructors in mixed and L2 classrooms, some general tips follow for appropriately meeting a diverse range of HLL needs in the classroom. The heritage students in a mixed class can be very valuable. The non-heritage learners (L2) can also rehearse with heritage students as partners, where typically it is most beneficial if the L2 does more speaking work and the HLL can do more writing work. The instructor can even explicitly point out the utility of both groups to each other, while emphasizing that they are all on the same team trying to reach better proficiency in Persian. The presence of HLLs helps pull L2Ls out of the constructed environment and teaches them function much better in more realistic situations. Meanwhile, L2Ls can show HLLs the value of strong grammatical proficiency and dedicated acquisition of higher-level vocabulary not normally heard in the home environment.

Another point to keep in mind in a mixed class is that, while they can be put in mixed pairs in groups to work together and help each other, sometimes it is important to design different activities for two separate groups according to their level of language and needs. Sometimes in working with L2Ls, the heritage students feel that they are tutoring, and the activity is not as challenging and beneficial for them. Another suggestion would be to separate the class into two groups once a week, give them a name, and do different communicative activities and exercises (e.g. reading a short story appropriate for each group, and then they can rephrase part of the story in their own words using proper Persian synonyms as they are presenting to class and put it in simple prose – or a short poem, or a song – and present it. In order to make it more communicative, the students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments, and tell what they learned). These sorts of activities essentially take the Macro-based approach advocated

by Carreira for teaching HLLs (e.g. engagement with a whole text, video, etc. before moving into grammatical and lexical detail). Although she claims it is possible to simultaneously use Micro-based approaches with L2Ls (e.g., building up slowly from controlled vocabulary and exercises), in practice it is very challenging to integrate these approaches simultaneously in a meaningful way. As such the redistribution of language proficiency groups even within the same class is certainly possible and has been successful in the past at UCLA, where there are a large number of heritage students (including students of Iranian, Afghan, and Tajik backgrounds). Naturally the best solution is probably to do what UCLA has done, where heritage Persian and elementary Persian have become separate courses. This is not always possible at different institutions, but for first year Persian, UCLA was able to do it.

#### **16.4 Role of technology in communicative language teaching**

The use of technology in the language classroom has been hailed as a potential panacea for the ills that ail programs with lagging proficiency results (Al-Mahrooqi and Troudi 2014, 1–2). However, technology should not be included in syllabi as a learning outcome in itself but as a tool to more efficiently attain objectives that have always been on teachers' radars. Thus, the effectiveness of technology in the classroom is entirely dependent on the instructor's intelligent use thereof. Some of the latest research on technology in language teaching is very briefly summarized here, and concrete examples are given of how it can be put to use in service of CLT in the Persian language classroom. This section also addresses the question of how the use of technology in language instruction can particularly benefit heritage learners.

Researchers who study the use of technology in language classrooms refer to both Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) (Heift and Chapelle 2012). While CALL references a very wide range of potential computer-based language learning tools, including systems that offer grammar drills and exercises with immediate feedback, CMC refers to the use of electronic tools to facilitate target-language communication. Because of its potential utility in communicative language teaching, CMC will be the primary object of our consideration here. Studies have shown that CMC can help L2 learners increase the amount of their target-language output and its complexity and may even be able to improve students' oral proficiency more than face-to-face discussions can (Blake 2000; Blake et al. 2008). For an extended discussion of Computer-Assisted Language Learning, see Chapter 18 in this volume.

In this field, communication is divided into two types: synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous communication denotes real-time interaction with other speakers of the target language (Payne and Ross 2005). Examples would include instant messaging and chats, as well as Skype, FaceTime, or other video conferencing applications. Asynchronous communication, meanwhile, refers to modes of communication that allow for time between communication events. These modes seem particularly suited to less confident students who may want more time to organize their discourse before putting something out into the world. Types of asynchronous CMC are seemingly endless, but some examples would be interacting on Facebook, Twitter, or other social media sites; writing and maintaining a blog; curating links, videos, images and articles from around the web; or creating a digital magazine or newspaper (see Henshaw 2016 for some excellent, detailed examples). Many of these would fall under the Presentational mode of communication, some under the Interpersonal, and could be assigned as long-term projects. Such projects would most likely be most appropriate for Intermediate L2 learners and above, or possibly Elementary HLLs who have placed into an accelerated course like that offered at UCLA.

The proficiency benefits to be gained from technology by L2Ls and HLLs are relatively clear. Students can engage with authentic content (which can be curated by the instructor to facilitate the use of strong materials) on a subject of their interest, and communicate with other target-language speakers outside the limitations of the classroom. The subject and level of the content can be adjusted by the students themselves to meet their own level, motivation, and backgrounds. At Columbia University, even second-semester Elementary students have been able to participate in Twitter threads and other social media networks on topics of their choice, albeit with significant scaffolding, dictionary training, and curating by the instructor. HLLs in particular can benefit because of the inherently differentiated nature of these tasks, and because research shows that HLLs tend to be looking to establish greater ties with their language community and their culture (O'Rourke and Zhou 2016; Henshaw 2016, 238; Blaz 2006). Henshaw has noted that HLLs can especially benefit from the text-based nature of online communication, since literacy in the heritage language tends to be a point of weakness for them. At the same time, the drawbacks of such online communicative exercises must be noted. Researchers have expressed concern in regards to the potential nonstandard linguistic registers and orthography that students may encounter online, with some going as far to say that instructors risk compounding “almost exactly the fundamental mistakes that we are trying to help our heritage learners overcome” (Loewen 2008, 33). Other commentators have noted the flipside of this ‘problem’ – that it may be a chance to discuss differences in register, dialect and nonstandard usages, which HLLs especially may have already encountered outside the classroom and need to see addressed.

### 16.5 Examples of communicative and task-based activities for the language classroom

Many of the activities and games presented here are applicable to any foreign language classroom with appropriate adjustments by the teachers (Lee 1979). However, wherever possible, the examples include games and activities that are somehow authentic or native to the Persian context, for example, *Hokm* (Persian ‘Go Fish’) to practice numbers, and *Esm Famil* (Persian ‘Scattergories’) to work on vocabulary. The approach has tended towards collecting tasks and activities that will hopefully inspire students’ interest and break up the tedium. As Stephen Sadow puts it in his *Idea Bank*:

The activities in this book were conceived as a response to language class doldrums. They are intended to change the pace, to break the routine. However, these activities are definitely not time killers. All of them stimulate students to practice communicative skills; emphasis is on skill-using rather than skill-getting. . . . These activities provide students with problems they are interested in solving and create a supportive non-threatening situation in which they are likely to solve them.

(Sadow 1982, 1)

Echoing Sadow, the authors of the clever and highly unique *Purple Cows and Potato Chips* write that

in order to become more fluent in English, students need more quality listening time, more active participation, more self-investment in the language, and less stress. They need to use their second language skills in a coherent context and in interactive settings.

These are fundamental principles both of CLT and of TBLT. Even more critical, in our view, is the emphasis on the activities being fun as much as possible: “Participation in these multi-sensory activities will allow your students to perceive language acquisition as a pleasant and enjoyable experience involving the whole self,” write Christison and Bassano (Christison and Bassano 1987, ix). With these principles in view, the idea-collecting process was undertaken.

This process was guided throughout by the activity framework laid out by Jack C. Richards in his useful *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. He describes the following types of activities: Information-Gap Activities, Jigsaw Activities, Task-Completion Activities, Information-Gathering Activities, Opinion-Sharing Activities, Information-Transfer Activities, Reasoning-Gap Activities, and Role Plays (Richards 2006, 18–19). To these categories Short- and Long-Term Projects, as well as Games, have been added, all of which appear to fit nicely with CLT. Each of these activity types will be defined in its own section later.

The collection process also took its cues from the ACTFL national standards for foreign language learning (Minuchehr and Mills 2011). In these guidelines, ACTFL puts considerable emphasis on the 5 C’s of language competence: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. A concise summary of these tenets are presented by Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi:

Communication emphasizes the communicative aspect of the language and the importance of using the language in real-life situations. Culture is considered crucial in learning world languages, as each of these languages enjoys a particular culture, and awareness of cultural differences between the first and the second language will help learners integrate in the second-language culture more effectively. Connections focus on bridging the gap between language learning and subject matters so that language learning becomes more meaningful, less explicit, and more automatic. Comparisons invite students to do linguistic and cultural comparisons between their first language and culture and those of the second language. Communities emphasizes the application of what is learned in class to the outside world by going on field trips, ordering in restaurants in the second language, and other cultural activities.

(Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi 2018, 399)

These principles have helped guide us in our choices of select sample activities that may be used in the communicative Persian classroom.

A few notes are included here on how best to use these exercises. Any project or activity should be well structured, so students will know the end goal and the time needed, as well as how it will be assessed. Insofar as possible, topics for presentations should be educational and related to the region. Sometimes instructors can give them options to choose between different projects and activities. The more students are put in charge of selecting and presenting the material, and invited to take part in teaching, the more they are able to relate to the material. As a result, they show more interest and are able to learn more efficiently. It increases their self-confidence and is very encouraging. Instructors need to have a lot of confidence in students, since the more they take ideas from the students, the more it will be related to what they want to do. Teachers should keep in mind that at the beginning with some of these activities, especially with oral presentations and unstructured communicative tasks in front an audience, students will express different feelings. Students have different personalities, so some are very shy and hesitant. They need a lot of support and encouragement. Instructors should be willing



to spend extra time with them outside class and practice with them to lower their affective barrier to participation. Chapter 28 in this volume discusses language learners' beliefs and strategies in learning Persian as a second language in the U.S.

Where relevant, each of the activities has been marked as belonging to a Presentational (P), Interpersonal (IP), or Interpretive (INT) mode. Furthermore, it has been indicated whether an activity fits best with CLT, CBI, TBLT, or a combination thereof, and if appropriate, the level for which we envisioned such an activity. Naturally the activities may be adjusted to whatever level the instructor sees fit for his or her language classroom.

#### A) Projects

- a) These were intended as short-term projects of just a few days' duration or as long-term projects that may extend over the term, including creating PowerPoint presentations with pictures and video clips. The presentation should include a question and answer component with fellow students and the instructor.
  - i) Family Interview Project (Heritage–Beg.): Interview a Persian-speaking family member. Interview questions and presentations must be generated beforehand, and corrected and approved by instructor. [P, IP; CLT]
  - ii) Flags of the Middle East Project (Mixed–Interm., can easily be scaled to a higher level): First design your ideal flag,<sup>6</sup> then present on another country's. Give the background, meaning of symbols or crest, colors, and how long has it been the official flag of this nation. [P; CBI]
  - iii) Cities of Iran/Afghanistan/Tajikistan Project (Mixed–Beg.): Design a poster showing the points of interest and cultural information about a city of your choice, and prepare a presentation on it. [P, IP; CBI]
  - iv) Recipe (Mixed–Beg., Interm.): Write the recipe for one of your favorite foods. [P; TBLT]
  - v) Comparing Holidays (Mixed–Interm.): Compare Chaharshanbe Suri to another holiday, like Halloween, whether in a Persian-speaking country or not. [P, IP; CBI]
  - vi) A Significant Place or Tradition in Iran, Afghanistan, or Tajikistan (Mixed–Interm.): Report in detail on a site, monument (e.g. Borj-e Āzādi, Majlis Building in Dushanbe), traditional handicraft (e.g. carpet-making), local product (e.g. rosewater, saffron), or tradition (e.g. *khāstegāri*). [P, IP; CBI]
  - vii) Biography Writing (Mixed–Interm.): Pick a personality from the Persian context who is not a poet or writer (e.g. Googoosh, Ibn Sina). [P, IP; CBI, TBLT]
  - viii) Biography Writing II (Mixed–Interm.): Research and write up a presentation on the life and works of your favorite writer or poet. [P, IP; CBI, TBLT]
  - ix) Create a Video Advertisement (Mixed–Interm., Adv.): In a small group, script and film your own video to advertise or promote something, or create a public service announcement. [P, IP; TBLT]
  - x) Businessperson Interview Project (Heritage–Beg., Mixed–Interm.): Interview a shopkeeper in Persian area or neighborhood. Interview questions must be generated beforehand, and corrected and approved by instructor. [P, IP; CLT]
  - xi) Menu Writing (Mixed–Beg. or Heritage–Beg.): In small groups, pick a holiday and design a full menu for the occasion (e.g. Shab-e Yaldā, Jashn-e nāmzadi, etc.). [P; CBI, TBLT]

B) Information-gap activities

- a) These activities are based on the principle that communication is undertaken to obtain information one does not have, and that more authentic communication will result when students are asked to obtain some kind of information in unrehearsed conversation (Richards 2006, 18).
  - i) What's in your bag/pocket? (Mixed–Beg.): Work alone first, then work with a small group (four to five students). Think of something you have with you in your pocket or purse. Describe that object by writing answers to the following questions. Then, in a group, take turns describing your object and having everyone guess what it is. If nobody guesses the object after two minutes, show the group what it is. Can be a competition between teams as well (Christison and Bassano 1987, 73). [IP; CLT]
  - ii) Describe and Draw (Mixed–Beg.): Give half the class one image of a house cross-section and the other half another. Have students work in pairs to describe their house to a member of the other group such that they can draw it. Images can be changed to suit the vocabulary of the class's unit. [IP; CLT, TBLT]

C) Jigsaw activities

- a) These activities are based on the same principle as the Information-Gap Activities, except that typically a larger group or even the entire class must come together with their pieces of information to come to one whole.

Short Story Reordering (Mixed–Beg.): Each student is given one sentence of a short story, and students must work together to put their short story back in order. [IP, INT; CLT, TBLT]

D) Task-completion activities

- a) The 'Task' has been defined previously. These include "puzzles, games, map-reading, and other kinds of classroom tasks in which the focus is on using one's language resources to complete a task" (Richards 2006, 19). It is envisioned that these tasks will be completed in pairs or small groups.
  - i) Story Writing (Mixed – Beg.): Show a picture or series of pictures depicting some kind of narrative. Students write a story (in class or outside of it) and share it with the class. [P; TBLT]
  - ii) Marketing (Mixed–Beg.): Give a list of products and write an advertisement (Sadow 1982, 62–63). [P; TBLT]
  - iii) Picture Stories (Heritage–Beg., Mixed–Interm.): "Work with a small group (3–5 students). Your teacher will give you some magazines or catalogues. With your group, select and cut out some pictures and glue them onto colored paper. Write a story about the pictures and five questions about the story. Then show the class the pictures and ask the five questions. Write the answers on the board. Tell the class your story (do not read it!) and check the answers on board when you finish to see if they are correct" (Christison and Bassano 1987, 41). [P, IP; CLT, TBLT]
  - iv) College Application (Mixed–Interm.): There is an unusual college applicant (the teacher brings a picture of mythical creature). Students must fill out the application together and persuade the committee to accept him or her. A secretary writes down the group's answers (Sadow 1982, 20–21). [P, IP; CLT, TBLT]

- v) Travel Itinerary (Mixed–Beg.) – Write a travel itinerary for the teacher, use authentic maps/road maps in Persian (1982, 36–37). [P, IP; TBLT, CBI]
- vi) Inventing Hobbies (Mixed–Interm.): Come up with an unusual new hobby for the teacher so they are not bored, and help them plan their free time (1982, 44–45). [P; TBLT]
- vii) Wonder Cure (Mixed–Interm.): Imagine you and your classmates are developing a new ‘wonder drug’ – what will it cure? What will it be called? Where can you get it? (1982, 52–53). [P, IP; TBLT]
- viii) Tourist Bureau (Mixed–Interm.): Create descriptions of your country that will attract tourists (it can be your country or Iran, Tajikistan, Afghanistan). What are the sights? What are the inexpensive ways to travel? When is the best time to come? [P; TBLT, CBI]
- ix) A New Foreign Land (Mixed–Interm.): Imagine a foreign country, describe its location, production, customs, culture, language. Compose a persuasive case why your imagined language should be taught at your university and how you might attract new students to the program (1982, 80–81). [P; TBLT]

E) Games

- i) 20 Questions (All levels): Students can ask up to 20 yes-or-no questions to determine the person, place, or thing a student is thinking of. [IP; CLT, TBLT]
- ii) Visual Memory (All levels): Students try to memorize a picture and tell the teacher what is in it. Directions: Work with a small group (3–4 students). When your teacher says “Go!”, unfold the exercise sheet and look closely at the picture. Try to remember everything you see in it. (Don’t write anything down!) When your teacher says “Stop!”, refold the exercise sheet and tell your groups’ “recorder” everything you recall seeing in the picture. Share your answers with the class. This can be a competition between two groups to see who remembers more (Christison and Bassano 1987, 27). [INT, IP; CLT, TBLT]
- iii) Charades (All levels): Either one or two people acts out a vocabulary word or phrase; the rest of the class has to guess in teams. [IP; CLT, TBLT]
- iv) *Yek Morgh Dāram* (Mixed–Beg.): Students play the Iranian children’s game to practice numbers (Mar’ashi 2017, 15). Alternatively, students could play the American card game “Go Fish” translated into Persian. [IP; CLT]
- v) ‘Simon Says’ (Mixed–Beg. Q2): Play the American game ‘Simon Says,’ in which students give and act out various commands, to practice imperative verbs (Shahsavari and Atwood 2015, 22). Encourage students to pick a Persian name, retitling the game (e.g. *Sām mige*, *Simā mige*). [IP; TBLT]
- vi) Poetry Challenge (Mixed–All levels): All students memorize one poem with several lines. They test each other by giving one half of the line (one hemistich) and the other team has to supply the other, and if they forget they lose the game. [P, IP, INT; TBLT]

F) Information-gathering activities

- a) Information-gathering activities include taking surveys, conducting interviews, and generally collecting information about classmates or other target-language speakers.
  - i) Classmate Background Interview (Heritage–Beg., Mixed Beg.): Students interview each other in class; the instructor can give a subject: family, class

- schedule, hobbies, thesis subject, habits, personality (some of the responses should be including justifications, explanations), etc. [IP; CLT, TBLT]
- ii) Find someone who . . . (All levels): Teacher creates a chart asking students to ‘Find someone who . . .’, filling in the blanks with relevant vocabulary. [IP; TBLT]
  - iii) Who am I? (Mixed–Beg.): Each student provides three facts about themselves. The class guesses who the facts refer to. [P, IP; TBLT]
  - iv) Sentence Starters (All levels): Introduce yourself to a classmate, then ask that classmate to complete one of the statements given in the next paragraph. Write down the person’s response and name next to the statement. Ask a different classmate to respond to another statement. Continue interviewing other students until your exercise sheet is complete. Be sure to write down each student’s name and share your responses with the rest of the class.  
E.g.: My favorite food is . . ./I like this class because . . ./The color I like best is . . ./My favorite thing to do on weekends is . . ./Studying is . . ./In five years I want to be . . .” Naturally, these should be in the target language and can be adapted to a Middle Eastern context (“On the night of Shab-e Yalda, we . . .”/“We celebrate Nowruz for . . .”/“Shiraz is . . .”) (Christison and Bassano 1987, 56). [IP, TBLT]
  - v) Generating Class Statistics (Mixed–Beg.): Survey the class to find out what everyone’s major is, then create a chart showing the most and least common majors among Persian-language students. [IP; CLT, TBLT]

G) Opinion-sharing activities

- a) In these activities, students compare values, opinions, or beliefs.
  - i) Perfect Match: “Work alone. Complete each of the statements below by circling A, B, or C. Then give reasons for why you picked the choices you did.  
1 E.g. A perfect Saturday night is:
    - a) a symphony concert and dessert
    - b) a fancy, expensive dinner and a walk in the moonlight
    - c) a large combination pizza and a good James Bond movie” (Christison and Bassano 1987, 57). [IP; CLT, TBLT]
  - ii) Perfect Person: Describe a perfect person in terms of looks, personality, why they are special, and what they do. What have they achieved? (These can be extended to larger discussion questions – What are the best qualities a person can have?) (Sadow 1982, 30–31). [IP; CLT]
  - iii) Student Center (Mixed–Interm.) Design a new student center for the campus, discuss what kinds of things the students would enjoy and make use of, what they will do there (1982, 41–43). [P, IP; CLT, TBLT]

H) Information-transfer activities:

- a) In Information-transfer activities, students take information presented in one form and convert it into another.
  - i) Summarizing the News (Mixed, Interm., Heritage–Beg.): Find short articles in the news and summarize them to present to your classmates orally. The instructor can limit it the options to specific categories such as ‘good news’ or ‘sports.’ [P, IP; TBLT, CBI]

- ii) Silent Video (Mixed, Beg.): Show the class a silent video and ask them what's going on. Have them describe what they see. Ask them where it is taking place. If possible, pick famous places and actions that are conducive to narration or description. [INT, P; TBLT]
  - iii) Verb Association (Mixed, Beg.): Show pictures to help students to review basic nouns, and then use them to introduce and learn new verbs. E.g. What can you do with this? – This is a boat. We row it./These are scissors. They cut flowers or fabric (Christison and Bassano 1987, 12). [IP; TBLT]
  - iv) Describing Pictures (All levels): One nice twist on this classic activity: Show students a very old historical picture of a group, and have them make up stories about their 'family history,' e.g. What were they doing just before the picture was taken? How are they dressed? How are they related to each other? (Sadow 1982, 12) [IP, INT; TBLT, CLT]
- I) Reasoning-gap activities
- a) During Reasoning-gap activities, students are asked to derive new information on the basis of given information.
    - i) Half-Finished Story (Mixed–Beg.): Give students a half-finished story that they must work together in groups to complete. [P, IP, INT; TBLT, CLT]
    - ii) Cartoon Sequencing (Mixed–Beg.): Put a sequence of pictures in order, write a dialogue for it, and share it with the class (Christison and Bassano 1987, 19). [P, IP; TBLT]
    - iii) Guess the Song Meaning (Mixed–Interm.): Have students bring in a song they'd like to share with the class. Give the title and play the song. Have them guess what the song is about before you discuss the meaning at all. The student who chose the song must describe the song and tell what s/he likes about it (Sadow 1982). [IP, INT; TBLT]
- J) Role Plays

Role plays have become standard practice in almost all foreign language classrooms today and are a familiar tool for teachers. A few notes on best practices for using role plays in class are offered here. First, the teacher should provide a roadmap of the items students need to cover in their scenario. S/he can provide extra vocabulary, and expressions and idiomatic terms can be added as necessary. Consider having an explicit discussion with your students regarding the fluency vs. accuracy debates. Typically, it is preferable to let students role play in class without many corrections as a fluency exercise. However, it is also possible to ask students to write their scenario out, have it corrected, memorize it, and play it in front of the class, so as to focus on accuracy. Adding references and details that are relevant from regions where the target language is spoken is always beneficial, as is the use of *realia* to the extent possible. Encourage students to add to the structure to make it as natural as possible by including greetings, leave-taking expressions, pleasantries, and politeness expressions. In the following, a scenario from Mar'ashi's *Proficiency in Persian* has been reproduced. Mar'ashi's book provides some of the most well-scaffolded scenarios specifically written for Persian language classrooms:

Situation Card #8 (Mar'ashi 2014, 193)

You and your friend are at Homa Travel Agency in London (Speak for the both of you).

- 1 Tell the travel agent that you wish to go to Tehran. You need two round trip tickets.
- 2 Explain that you wish to leave London this coming week and return a month later.

- 3 Ask how many flights to Tehran there are next week.
- 4 Inquire if the flights to Tehran are nonstop.
- 5 Ask the price for the cheapest tickets available.
- 6 Ask if you can pay with your credit card.

Further roleplays:

- a) Pretend you're a tour guide, and show off part of the city for a day. Tour guide: What have you heard about this area? What do you want to see? How much time do you have? Visitor: What is this area famous for? Where should I spend most of my time? (Sadow 1982, 84–85). [IP; CLT]
- b) Students are all going abroad, and they have to discuss how they are going to survive. This includes finding housing, food, the bank, the train station, the police station, inexpensive clothing, and navigating travel interactions (1982, 86–87). [IP; CLT]
- c) Imagine you are seeing a friend after 25 years at your high school or college reunion. Talk about your memories using habitual past. “Whatever happened to . . ./How long have you . . .” (1982, 88–89) [IP; CLT]
- d) Pick a famous person in Iranian or American society and interview them, or even a character in a film. [IP; CLT]

## 16.6 Conclusion

As has been noted in the activity sections, Communicative Language Teaching works very well in tandem with two approaches that it can successfully encompass: Task-Based Language Teaching and Content-Based Instruction. It is recommended, as ever, that instructors use a barrage of different strategies and extensively tailor to the needs of students and the contexts of specific institutions. In the course of investigating ways to apply communicative methods to Persian language teaching at the elementary and intermediate levels, a few significant conclusions have risen to the surface. First, CLT can help mitigate some of the issues encountered in mixed-classroom teaching by taking advantage of the differentiated nature of many communicative activities – the unpredictable nature of the type of communication students are asked to do in communicative exercises allows for greater flexibility in the level of the final product and hence is better tailored to the varying levels of students. Second, technology has opened up new avenues for both simultaneous and delayed communication with native speakers in ways that never existed in the past, and the modern communicative classroom should leverage these assets by scaffolding the students' engagement with the broader online Persian community through widely-used applications and websites such as Twitter, Facebook, Telegram, Pinterest, and more. Third, it has emerged in our review of heritage language research that heritage speakers should not be viewed as typical L2 learners, and certainly not as L1 learners. Instead their language background falls into an ambiguous category between L1 and L2 that requires special recognition and planning on the part of the instructor. Using CLT is critical to engage HLLs, who have different motivations and can sometimes benefit even more than L2Ls from exploring authentic contexts through CBI, because these more adequately meet their needs for cultural and community engagement. Fourth, the chapter has given indications of where reliable Persian-teaching resources that take a communicative approach can be found. Fifth, it has presented a host of sample activities specifically for the Persian-language classroom that can be adopted to further facilitate the transition to more communicative-based Persian instruction styles. These ideas represent merely a jumping-off point for instructors to

design and tailor their own activities. These points help illuminate the gaps between the state of contemporary Persian language-learning materials and the advances in foreign-language pedagogy, as well as the findings of SLA research. These findings have been more successfully integrated into up-to-date teaching resources for other foreign languages, largely by embracing the Communicative Language approach and the related methods, Task-Based Language Teaching and Content-Based Instruction. The information presented here aims to facilitate the closing of these gaps to the greatest extent possible, until more complete Persian teaching materials addressing them can be published in the future.

## Notes

- 1) We realize that some pedagogy researchers distinguish meaningfully between method and approach, however this chapter uses them synonymously in the broader meaning of a philosophy of teaching, rather than the description of specific set of processes. This is mainly to avoid linguistic tedium. To take a look at others who use it differently, see for example the summaries presented in Richards and Renandya 2002, 5–6.
- 2) It is important to note that this is a representative sample of current published materials. Many of our colleagues are using their own unpublished materials and workbooks. It is hoped many of these will be published soon so that others can benefit from them.
- 3) This series comes in four volumes: Elementary in two volumes, Intermediate in one volume and Advanced in one volume.
- 4) This series comes in two volumes, covering through Intermediate Persian.
- 5) This series comes in three volumes, covering through Advanced Persian.
- 6) This could also be used as an in-class activity, see Sadow 1982, 28–29.

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# THE PERSIAN LANGUAGE EDUCATOR'S ROLE IN DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE BLENDED LANGUAGE LEARNING

From principles to practice

*Daria Mizza and Mohamad Esmaili-Sardari*

## 17.1 Introduction

*Blended learning* (BL), also called *hybrid learning*,<sup>1</sup> has been defined in different ways, from the broad combination of any different teaching or communication modalities in education (Carman 2002; Maisie 2006; Ross and Cage 2006; Rossett, Douglass, and Frazee 2003; Singh and Reed 2001; Verkroost et al. 2008; Zemke 2002) to the more specific combination of face-to-face (f2f) with Internet-based distance instruction and communication (Osguthorpe and Graham 2003, 227), e-learning (Akkoyunlu and Soylu 2008; Koochang 2009), or online learning (Falconer and Littlejohn 2007).<sup>2</sup> This study has its foundation in this most specific definition of BL, which recognizes the value of both the f2f teaching and the appropriate use of technologies in a networked environment (Moran and Myringer 1999, 60).

In tandem with some researchers in the field (Bliuc, Goodyear, and Ellis 2007; Tick 2006), we move beyond the notion of simple presence of f2f interaction and technology, in order to illustrate how simple combination of dissimilar environments does not guarantee the effectiveness of blended courses (Johnson and Marsh 2014, So and Bonk 2010). Only a thoughtful combination of f2f and online environments, with online learning designed as a natural extension of traditional classroom learning (Collis and Moneen 2002), enables higher quality learning (e.g., Furstenberg and Levet 2010; Garrison and Vaughan 2008, 105–141; Southgate and Murphy 2011). Throughout the chapter, we will refer to the process leading to such thoughtful combination as the *blending process*.

Language educators play a leading role in this process (Johnson 2014, as cited by Johnson and Marsh 2014). When planning instruction and assessment, they decide how to engage diverse groups of learners in activities and tasks<sup>3</sup> in both components, in order to maximize desirable outcomes. With this aim in mind, language educators must commit time and effort to plan

the blending process so that online and f2f activities closely integrate and coordinate to create a seamless whole (Mizza and Rubio forthcoming 2020), in which each component generates pedagogical benefits. Maintaining such a close degree of integration and coordination between the online and f2f activities for the two parallel halves of the course to form a seamless whole, however, constitutes a complex and challenging process for many teachers.

In this chapter, we intend to follow the pathways of current research to simplify such a process, and suggest the main aspects that language educators should consider when embarking in a planning process to obtain an effective *blended sequence*<sup>4</sup> (see Section 17.2).

At the heart of the chapter, we propose a comprehensive example with a blended sequence in a course for learning Persian as foreign language at the Advanced<sup>5</sup> level offered at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (USA) (see Section 17.3). The course is based on content-based instruction (CBI) and is part of an overall innovation project for redesigning f2f language courses into blended courses, piloted in 2015 and fully implemented the following year.

As readers will see, this example envisages a thoughtful combination of f2f and online environments, with a seamless connection between what students do online and activities in the physical classroom to facilitate both content and language learning. Drawing on second language acquisition (SLA) principles, the example aims to help Persian language educators identify appropriate blended language learning (BLL) opportunities in their own context and recognize the important role that the teacher plays in combining *f2f* and *online components*<sup>6</sup> closely, so that they integrate and coordinate. It is important to keep in mind, however, that each instructional context necessarily requires adaptation and variation, because of its own constraints and opportunities.

## 17.2 The blending process: crucial steps based on SLA principles

Scholars such as So and Bonk (2010) and Johnson and Marsh (2014) urge close integration between the f2f and online environments. Several examples of course design reflecting such integration take maximum advantage of the offline/f2f time in the physical classroom for interaction and communication. The online avenues empower teachers to build a stronger learning experience, as technology opens up for accessing and engaging with content, producing output, and providing and reacting to feedback. For further discussion on the use of technology and online material in second language (L2) learning, read Chapter 18 in this volume.

In her work on the integration of the f2f and online environments in language learning contexts, Neumeier (2005, 171) stresses that teachers and course designers may opt for a low level of integration in which students self-select the activities and tasks. In the online component, for example, the pace of learning may be based upon the abilities and sometimes also interest of each learner. Learners should be offered a wide variety of choice: the availability of help mechanisms, multiple feedback options, all available if the users actively select them.<sup>7</sup>

Teachers and course designers may also choose a high level of integration where the expectation is that learners will tackle most, if not all, of the learning tasks and activities provided. A number of considerations, including normative beliefs about student choice and the nature of the course learning outcomes, may shape the decisions towards a higher level of integration. For example, when learning outcomes require significant contact hours in one mode of instruction, compared to the other, integration might be higher. In the online

components, teachers can integrate more sophisticated mechanisms for requiring completion of online tasks that are counted for assessment (e.g., feedback tools and plagiarism checkers).

In addition to integrating two different components, educators must ensure that both work in perfect harmony. This is accomplished by maintaining a close degree of continuity, or flow, between the online and in-person experiences, which ensures that content and tasks proposed f2f expand online and work completed online continues in class. A typical way to create this flow is to design online tasks to prepare the learner for the f2f portion of the lesson and then use some in-class tasks to lay the groundwork for what students will do online. The role of the f2f component is twofold: when preceding the online sessions, f2f prepares students for online work, and when following it, f2f requires students to reflect on it. During virtual exchanges in online message boards, for example, students can meet f2f twice: a first meeting prior to the virtual exchanges, in order to get familiar with the topic and its main vocabulary, and a second meeting following the virtual exchanges, in order to reflect and analyze what was said and how it was said. This last f2f stage constitutes *the focus on form and forms*<sup>8</sup> and contributes to the development of greater accuracy during communication, as students are made aware of structures as a part of their language practice. Thus, the two stages of the f2f component are complementary to the online component.

The result of this purposefully designed integration and coordination can take on different blended forms, from mostly f2f, to mostly online, to a perfect 50–50 split. All forms recognize, however, the critical role of the teacher in designing or redesigning learning experiences, based on crucial elements – input, communication, and collaboration – in the SLA process. Such role requires an active involvement in the development of technology-integrated activities and tasks that afford *learning autonomy*,<sup>9</sup> engagement, and collaboration.

### 17.2.1 Organizing input in the f2f and online modes

The input is a crucial element in the process of SLA (Gass 1997). For decades, scholars in the field of language education have cited the central role of “comprehensible input” (Krashen 1982 and 1985; among others) in the process of L2 acquisition, (“i + 1”). In addition, research emphasizes that, through the successful coordination with a partner, learners may “reach beyond what they are able to achieve alone” (Gibbons 2002, 8). Thus, the presentation of input is socially mediated because it may require interaction and assistance of a “more capable peer” (Vygotsky 1978, 86). Chapter 16 in this volume points out the same idea, stating that in mixed classes of heritage learners and L2 learners of Persian, placing them together in pairs will benefit the L2 learners as they will be exposed to the language and its use through their heritage peers.

According to the descriptors for input loading – *back-loading* and *front-loading* – (Cavage 2014; Mizza and Rubio forthcoming 2020), within a blended sequence, input is either presented during a f2f session or explored outside of the classroom. This constitutes a teacher’s choice based on the learners’ language proficiency and language awareness (Thanasoulas 2000) as well as the learners’ ability to use cognitive and metacognitive strategies to assume greater control over their own learning (Holmes and Ramos 1991).

In an input back-loading blended sequence (see Figure 17.1), the input is presented during an initial f2f meeting, with the activities related to input processing. The initial f2f meeting is followed by an online session. This organization is appropriate, for example, when teachers consider that learners may strive to process input presented in the online component. In this

case, learners carry the risk to bypass structural information otherwise essential for continued language development. To avoid such risk, a teacher-led f2f scaffolding plan, for example to activate background knowledge, helps students get familiar with input enabling them to process it.

The ensuing online component creates possibilities for enhanced student-teacher and student-student interaction and collaboration outside of the classroom. Here, teachers can use web-based resources and technology tools (Bell and Davis 1996; Jackson, Krajcik, and Soloway 1998) to design remote collaborative activities, such as virtual discussion and group story building. Read Chapter 18 in this volume for a discussion on using technology in material development for Persian language courses.

In an input front-loading blended sequence (see Figure 17.2), input is presented together with necessary related activities during an initial online session. The initial online session is followed by an f2f meeting. When presented online, learners may find the input particularly challenging, because they must simultaneously tackle new input material that is slightly beyond their knowledge and handle the complexity of working in an online environment. In this case, initial teacher guidance and monitoring are vital to support student access to input. Teachers can use an online scaffolding plan to guide learners to input comprehension. Such a plan may include individual activities activating background knowledge and introducing learners to the topic of the input, and/or more complex preliminary tasks to complete online with the assistance of teachers and peers.

Thus, as in the case of the input back-loading blending sequence, interaction and collaboration with teachers and students are no longer restricted to the following f2f exchanges between individuals in the physical classroom but may also take place in the online session.

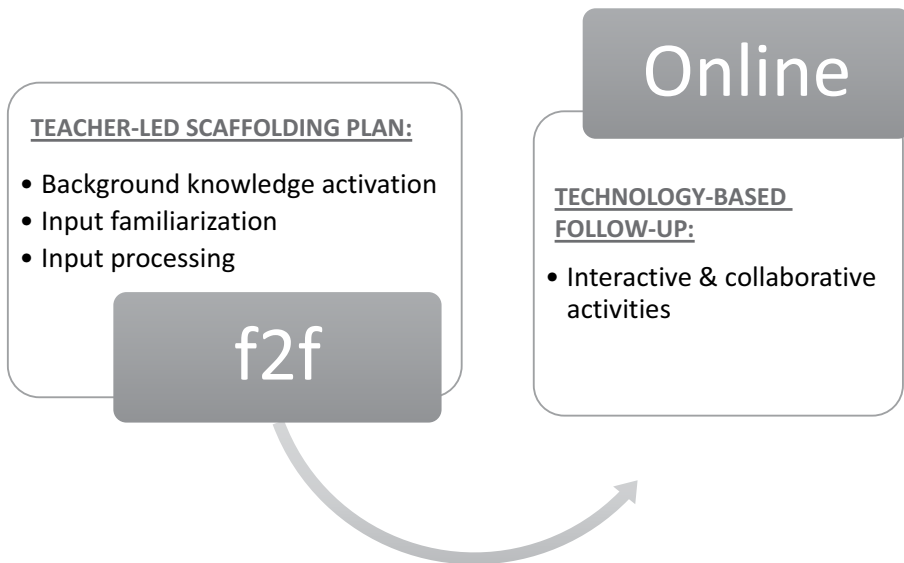


Figure 17.1 Visual representation of the components of the input back-loading blended sequence.

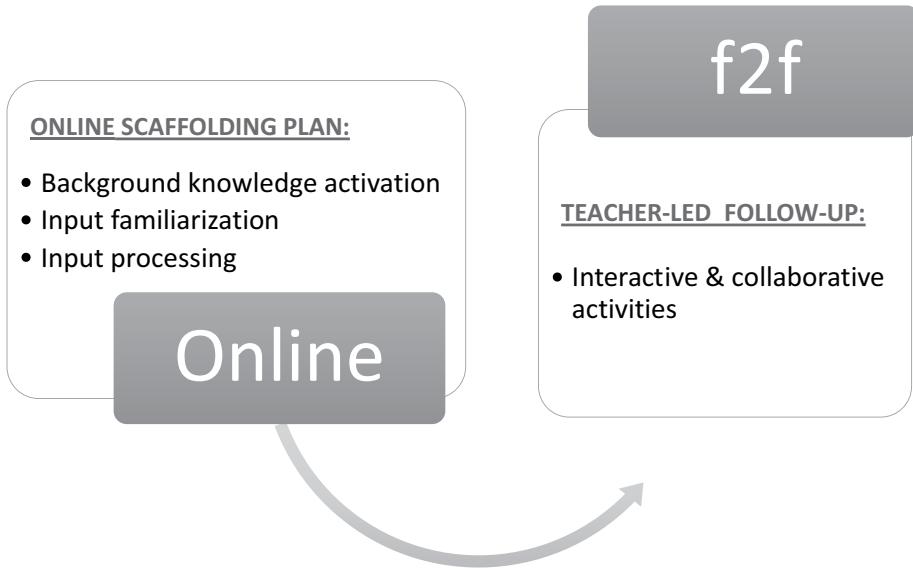


Figure 17.2 Visual representation of the components of the input front-loading blended sequence.

### 17.2.2 Layering activities and tasks

Effective blended sequences often include a balance of individual, collaborative, and cooperative-based activities and tasks,<sup>10</sup> often delivered and enhanced with tools that allow for unlimited individual as well as in-pairs, small-group, and whole-group activities, projects, and assignments (Johnson 2014). For the sake of efficiency, the chapter will refer to the latter types as collaborative activities and tasks.

When considering activities and tasks for language learning, teachers face the additional requirement for those that are, in addition to intrinsically interesting, cognitively engaging and appropriately scaffolded, as well as proficiency-oriented and communicatively based.

Based on the level of the students, their learning preferences, and task difficulty, teachers can start by determining the amount and the type of guidance (in the form of teacher and peer scaffolding) students may need to accomplish set learning outcomes.<sup>11</sup>

As a further element to guide activities and task *layering*, teachers should reference language learning principles and guidelines. Activities and tasks can be designed according to the principles of task-based language teaching (TBLT), a methodology associated with the communicative approach, which employs tasks as its main pedagogical tools to structure language teaching. The tasks included in the blended sequence of the example following are based on TBLT, thus mainly based on learning principles related to the importance of moving from *pedagogical* tasks, accomplished for the purposes of classroom learning, to authentic or *real-life* tasks, involving the use of language in the real world. For further discussion on TBLT, read Chapters 16 and 18 in this volume.

At the core of the task creation there may also be CBI, in which each unit is fundamentally theme-based and organized around cultural, geographic, historical, and political themes. Thus, tasks are designed and organized within cohesive themes and through them learners are focused

on learning about specific topics by using the target language (TL), rather than their native language, as a tool for developing knowledge, thereby developing their linguistic ability.

### ***17.2.3 Creating a favorable environment to communicate and collaborate***

Many BLL courses follow a model that restricts the online component exclusively to mechanical, non-communicative individual activities, mainly vocabulary- and grammar-related, while f2f time is mostly dedicated to communicative practice. At the base of such organization there are pedagogical reasons, linked to the importance of using online sessions to freeing up useful in-person class time for communicative activities and the value of engaging with content online to develop autonomous learning skills (Mizza 2019).

BLL can potentially facilitate autonomous learning, a learner capacity recognized and addressed in language courses in higher education. In courses following the model described previously, the use of a Learning Management System (LMS) can encourage students to initiate their own learning processes relying on tools for self- or independent-study, without exclusive overreliance on the teacher (Dang and Robertson 2010, as cited by Johnson and Marsh 2014). Individual input-based activities and pronunciation practice created with the integrated authoring tools of an LMS (e.g., questionnaires, assignments, and quizzes) are all examples of self- or independent-study activities that accompany written resources and video tutorials with grammar explanations and cultural content also posted on the LMS. These activities can be proposed in the online component of a blended sequence in preparation to the f2f component that has a communicative and collaborative focus.

Because of the lack of essential academic or peer support, however, online self- or independent-study activities could lead to student boredom or a strong sense of isolation (Genc Ilter 2009). To overcome this challenge, practitioners have begun to consider that a favorable environment to communicate, connect, and collaborate is not only established in the f2f component but can also be created in the online component that students can access, rather than on a self-study mode, on an autonomous mode.

Such autonomous access reflects the shift from “learning by the individual” to “learning as part of a community” that a minimum of four to five active people are required to activate (Kilpatrick, Jones, and Barrett 2003; Mizza and Rubio forthcoming 2020), especially in the case of productive skills of speaking and writing that “need to be learned through the experience of interacting with other people along with the guidance of a teacher” (Nakazawa 2009, 406).

Technologies supporting a blended instructional format, such as Web 2.0<sup>12</sup> offering writing platforms with or without voice feature (e.g., wiki [www.pbworks.com 2019], Padlet [www.padlet.com], VoiceThread [https://voicethread.com]), help pave the way for learner autonomy (Wichadee 2010).

Scaffolds, supporting elements in the process of language learning, can also contribute to develop learner autonomy. Teachers can then provide support by modeling desired performance, offering explanations about concepts with illustrations, and inviting learners to participate in a task in which the instructor acts more like a guide and gradually withdraw guidance. For a discussion on beliefs and strategies in L2 learners of Persian in the U.S., read Chapter 28 in this volume.

In sum, a thoughtful combination of f2f and online components may still propose online written resources and video tutorials on grammar structures and cultural content, as well as individual input-based activities. It does not, however, exclusively involve self- or independent-study. Rather, the teacher and peers assist each other, by engaging in interactive

and collaborative activities, such as group brainstorming in which learners' interests, experiences, and goals are able to emerge clearly. Thus, interaction and collaboration with teacher and other students are no longer restricted to the f2f exchanges between individuals, but they expand to the online component, in which students can engage proactively and collaboratively with course content.

With this purpose in mind, educators can encourage students to engage with and use the TL in creative and meaningful ways, in both f2f and online components (Mizza 2019). This can be accomplished through the creation of engaged communication in both components of the course, based on interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes of communication (ACTFL 2012). Online opportunities for students to practice interpretive (involving interpretation of a text), interpersonal (involving information exchange), and presentational mode of communication (based on presentation of information), just as in the physical classroom, can be provided through measured use of technology-enhanced activities.

By taking on a more autonomous role in the online component, students can benefit from its specific opportunities. This is accomplished by engaging proactively with online course content and by communicating and collaborating with other learners. For example, students can support each other in their acquisition of new information by inferencing and organizing authentic material posted online (interpretive mode). By opening up possibilities for more student-teacher and student-student interaction outside of the classroom, for example in an online discussion board, wiki, or Padlet, the teacher can then foster spoken language production (Richards 2010; Senior 2010) during f2f class time (interpersonal mode), so that communication is maximized.

### **17.3 The blended sequence: applications in a BLL course**

Described below is the blended sequence titled “What We Know About Iran Contemporary History” opening a Persian course at Advanced ACTFL level. This blended sequence is mostly f2f – with 80% of f2f instruction, equivalent to four weekly hours, and 20% online, equivalent to one weekly hour. In this blended sequence, activities, tasks, assignments, and assessments, as appropriate for a given mode and in a manner useful to the learner, pedagogically support learning outcomes. Thus, students are engaged in effective activities and tasks aligned with the learning outcomes.

In this process, the teacher plays a crucial role. In the following section, we will reflect on such role that sees the teacher responsible for organizing input (see Section 17.3.1), layering tasks (see Section 17.3.2); and creating favorable conditions for communication and collaboration (see Section 17.3.3). All of these elements contribute to leveraging the best of online and f2f instruction in the blended sequence.

#### **17.3.1 Organizing input**

As we have seen in Section 17.1.1, the organization of input within a blended sequence may vary from one course to another, or within the same course from one unit to another. The organization of the blended sequence opening the Advanced Persian course described here combines asynchronous online learning with f2f classroom-based teacher-led instruction. The course also elects an initial f2f meeting, followed by an online session, to conclude with an f2f one.

Characterized by input back-loading (see Figure 17.1), the blended sequence designed for this opening unit is different from the following sequences in the course. A back-loading organization is the ideal solution for two main reasons. First, from a logistical



point of view, the teacher must provide the course outline and specific orientation. This ensures students gain an understanding of the overall structure and requirements of the blended course. The online component of the blended sequence may be new for some students, who may address immediate concerns and request clarification to alleviate negative feelings associated with it. From a pedagogical point of view, this first sequence aims to establish a connection between learners. The fact that learners and the instructor meet together in the same physical space during the first kickoff session creates a community of learners, engaging course participants both online and offline throughout the whole course.

Thus, the organization of this first sequence with input back-loading is advantageous both for students and the teacher. Students find an environment emotionally supportive, as it offers an immediate social environment allowing immediate feedback, and the teacher is able to use context clues, such as facial expressions and body language, to ascertain the level of student understanding and engagement.

### 17.3.2 Layering activities and tasks

The blended sequence opening the Advanced Persian course is based on Willis’ task-based model (1996). According to this model, the sequence presents a series of tasks related to one another, but with different purposes and characteristics: the pre-task cycle, a task cycle, and a language focus. As illustrated in Figure 17.3, the blended sequence includes a pre-task and a post-task cycle taking place f2f, and a task cycle taking place online. Within the blended sequence, each one of the cycles prepares learners for the next.

Both the f2f and online components of the blended sequence offer students opportunities to actively participate and engage in communication, as well as collaborate together in the TL in order to complete the main task.

The main task engages learners’ interest, as the topic of the revolution in Iran’s contemporary history, interrelated with key political aspects, is particularly relevant to graduate students in international relations. With a primary focus on meaning rather than forms, the task exposes learners to real-life situations where they use language for meaning, rather than exposing students solely to language features.

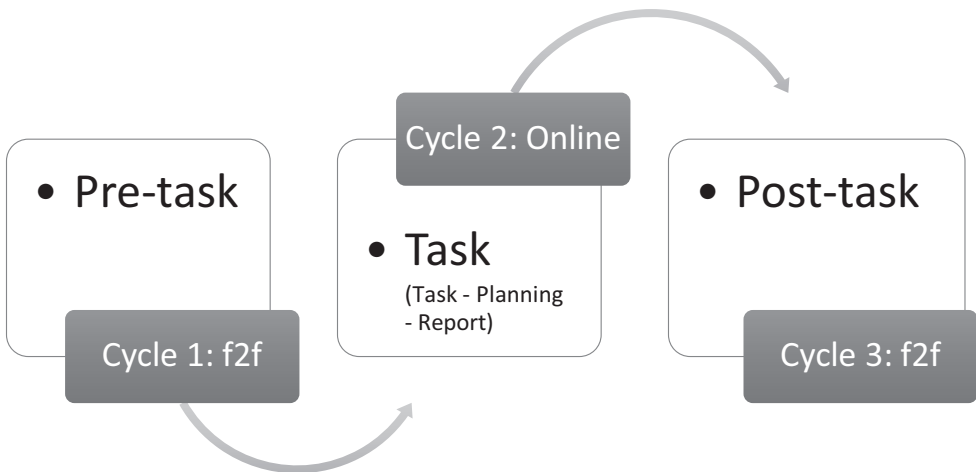


Figure 17.3 The three cycle-blended sequence: “What do we know about Iran’s contemporary history?”

The *focus on language* and *focus on form*<sup>13</sup> come at the end of the learning cycle, when learners are aware of linguistic forms that they are already able to use communicatively.

### 17.3.3 Creation of a favorable environment to communicate and collaborate

In the following sections, we provide the description of each component of the blended sequence of the Advanced Persian course and we reflect on how each part generates a favorable environment to communicate and collaborate. We also provide recommendations for practitioners who wish to propose a similar blended sequence in their teaching context and are ready to engage in the assessment and improvement of their own practice (see “Recommended Procedure” Section).

#### A) F2f component: pre-task cycle

Since this constitutes the opening sequence of the course, the teacher may take advantage of the f2f environment to clarify aspects of the course, inform students on the structure of all blended sequences, set expectations of their components, and demonstrate the outline of this first sequence.

During the f2f pre-task cycle, the teacher may also introduce the topic of this sequence and give the students clear instructions on the ensuing task cycle. To this end, she can help the students recall key structures and vocabulary by highlighting useful words and phrases for the main task. In this example, the teacher proposes some icebreaker activities in which learners are encouraged to use group-work to share their personal goals for taking the course and/or saying something about themselves as learners.

As readers can see in Table 17.1, the activities may be proposed in the f2f pre-task cycle to prepare students for the main input, presented at the end of the cycle: group survey, brainstorming, class discussion, vanishing words, and drag and drop. Activities are categorized by type (individual, in pairs, small groups, and whole group). Language structures involved are listed in the last column of the table.

Table 17.1 The f2f pre-task cycle preparing students for the main input

Component	Cycle	Activities	Type	Structures
f2f	Pre-task	I) Survey	Small groups	- Ws type of questions
		II) Introducing Lexical Keys	Individual	- Comparatives and superlatives, past tense, passive construction
		III) Discussion	Whole group	- Vocabulary: واقعه, دلیل (reason), تاریخ (event), عطف (pivotal), تاریخ (history)
		IV) Vanishing Words	In pairs	
		V) Drag & Drop	Individual	(history)
		VI) Main Input	Individual	

Table 17.2 Survey form for survey activity in small groups

از همکلاسی هایتان سوالات زیر را بکنید و جواب های آن را در هرستون بنویسید. (Instructions: Ask your classmates the questions below and note each answer in the space provided.)		
۱. اسم شما چیست؟	۲. چرا این کلاس را برداشتید؟	۳. چند واقعه مهم یا یک نقطه عطف مهم در تاریخ معاصر ایران را نام ببرید.



Figure 17.4 Activating background knowledge with the help of key pictures related to the topic.

Source: Component images from Wikimedia and Getty Images

#### I) SURVEY (SMALL GROUPS)

The survey is an activity proposed at the very beginning of the course when students learn the other learners' names (and an approximation of the pronunciation). To this end, students stand up and circulate around the classroom to fill-in the survey form (see Table 17.2). Students ask one another the general questions: "What's your name?" (اسم شما چیست؟) and "Why are you taking this course?" (چرا این کلاس را برداشتید؟) to break down barriers to conversation.

A further, important question of the survey is content-based: "Based on your knowledge, name one or more events that you think represent a pivotal moment in Iran's contemporary history." (چند واقعه مهم یا یک نقطه عطف مهم در تاریخ معاصر ایران را نام ببرید.) Through this question, the teacher intends to prepare students for the information that will be presented later in the sequence.

The third question of the survey (۳), facilitated by the provision of key pictures related to the event of revolution (see Figure 17.4) allows learners to activate background knowledge collectively and enables the teacher to elicit students' knowledge about the topic. The answer to this question may involve hypothesis generation, which will be tested in the ensuing activities (II and III).

#### Recommended procedure

Showing the survey form on the board to the whole class provides opportunity for reviewing known structures and vocabulary<sup>14</sup> and exploring unknown ones.<sup>15</sup> The instructor can check the understanding of the survey activity by providing an example of question and answer, using the

newly explored key structures and vocabulary. Finally, the instructor provides each student with the survey form (see Table 17.2) and explains that the activity requires collaboration. Students ask one another questions and write down respective answers. The teacher should circulate to monitor the process, listen to possible questions, and be ready to provide scaffolding to learners seeking help.

## II) INTRODUCING LEXICAL KEYS (INDIVIDUAL)

The verbal experience students had with the previous survey is balanced with the visual activity of a short video (Ashrafi 2015). This aims at raising readers' interest towards the main moments in Iran's contemporary history and stimulating learners' curiosity for testing the ideas from the previous survey. By presenting a list of important moments in Iran's contemporary history in the form of descriptive pictures and textual information, the one-minute long video also introduces the keywords of the sequence.

### *Recommended procedure*

After a first vision of the video in its entirety, the teacher pauses the video after each event listed and prompts the students to come up with the key word for each event (e.g., جنگ, مرگ, کودتا, . . . [coup d'état, death, war . . .]).

## III) TEACHER-LED DISCUSSION (WHOLE CLASS)

Based on the information collected with the survey, as well as the information provided in the video, the teacher-led whole class discussion aims at guiding students towards comparing information and checking their initial hypothesis under guidance. The discussion can be guided by a mix of questions, starting from easily answered questions, becoming more slightly challenging as the discussion develops. For example, initially students may be asked to rank the events from the survey and the video in terms of importance in Iran's contemporary history. The class discussion may continue with any question beginning with "How would you explain the importance you gave to this event?" (اهمیت این حادثه چیست؟), "Do you think that event A is more important than event B?" (آیا شما فکر می کنید این واقعه از واقعه ی دیگر مهم تر است؟). To facilitate and structure the answer, students can be required to cite at least two aspects related to the importance of the event A.

(آیا بازگشت آیت الله خمینی به ایران از گروگان گیری سفارت آمریکا مهم تر بود؟)

These questions should lead to an animated discussion on the pivotal events in Iran's contemporary history. Later in the cycle, a longer video segment is proposed as main input of the sequence, in which students will definitively find the answers to all of these questions (see Activity VI in this cycle).

It is crucial to propose this discussion f2f rather than online, so the teacher can establish a sense of leadership and creates f2f classroom discussion etiquette for actively listening to peers' ideas, respecting turns and waiting for an appropriate moment in the discussion to speak, asking for clarification when confused, etc.<sup>16</sup> With an established etiquette in the f2f component, students will get ready to respect the *netiquette*: a short from *net* – Internet – and *etiquette*, or a code of good behavior in the online component, with specific guidelines. In

sum, students start experiencing a sense of community in the f2f component that can be taken further in the online one.

### *Recommended procedure*

The discussion requires students to interact with the teacher and their peers, taking turns by raising their hands to endorse and/or oppose the information of classmates. The instructor can facilitate the discussion from the perspective of an expert in the subject and also acts as a moderator who seeks contributions from as many students as possible. Before the discussion begins, for example, the instructor may show an outline or list of guiding questions on the board. During the discussion, the instructor should respond to student contributions in ways that move the discussion forward and keep it focused on the topic at hand. At the end of the discussion, or at appropriate points in the session, she can then summarize the major ideas and write them on the board. This way, students can reinforce the most important points and understand their significance.

By following this procedure in the f2f class with the help of verbal (e.g., calling on all students to answer) and nonverbal cues (e.g., eye contact and moving around) to encourage participation, the teacher is able to enact ground rules for interaction that will also apply to any ensuing online communication. Such rules constitute an initial set of guidelines that can help clarify expectations and foster an environment of mutual respect and collaborative inquiry, first f2f and then online.

#### IV) VANISHING WORDS (IN PAIRS)

The vanishing words activity aims at reviewing and familiarizing learners with the main vocabulary of the unit (pivotal [عطف]), events and ideas, as well as structures (e.g., passive voice) to accomplish the main task.

The activity removes or requires the collocation of only certain types of words, also grammar-related. It is intended to be conducted in pairs but can also be a flexible activity, since it allows the instructor to adjust the difficulty to make it appropriate for the sub-level of the pair. Competent learners, for example, may be able to remember the sentence construction from the example given by the instructor, based on their awareness of the structure of the language or on their ability to conceptualize the sentence as a string of phrases. These learners can be encouraged to organize phrases in more productive ways.

### *Recommended procedure*

On any key word that the students encountered in the short video, such as “revolution” (انقلاب), the instructor can remove or require collocations, as in the examples provided in the following:

*Example 1.* Given the sentence: “Both events are very important, but the Islamic Revolution is more important than the White Revolution” may well be recalled as “Both revolutions/are/very important,/but the Islamic Revolution/is much more important than/the White Revolution.” When called to repeat the sentence, learners will have to re-organize it as a string of phrases.

*Example 2.* Given the sentence: “Both events are very important, but the Islamic Revolution . . .”, competent learners have the ability to predict the completion of

**کی اتفاق افتاد؟**

قبل از انقلاب	بعد از انقلاب
یکی از بزرگترین موفقیت های انقلاب استقلال بود.	نفوذ غرب در ایران محو شد.
گروگانگیری روی داد (اتفاق افتاد).	برنامه هسته ای ایران بین الملل محکوم شده است.
ازادی زیادتیر بود.	خمینی به ایران برگشت (آمد).
شاه دست نشانده غرب بود.	حکومت شاه نامحبوب شده بود.
حکومت ایران تروریسم و حزب الله را حمایت می کند.	

Figure 17.5 Drag and drop activity.

the sentence with a completion similar to “. . . is more important than the White Revolution.”

انقلاب ۱۳۵۷ ایران به عنوان یکی از مهمترین انقلاب های سیاسی معاصر شناخته شده است.  
 انقلاب اسلامی از انقلاب سفید مهمتر در نظر گرفته شده است.  
 انقلاب ۱۳۵۷ ایران به عنوان نقطه عطفی در تاریخ معاصر ایران شناخته شده است.  
 تنش میان محمد رضا شاه پهلوی و مخالفانش بیشتر شد.  
 در زمان انقلاب، آیت الله خمینی از شاه محبوب تر بود.

The previously given sentence is a very useful frame that, once learned, provides a starting point for the acquisition of other phrases that may include: a lot/a bit/older/than/etc.

V) DRAG AND DROP (INDIVIDUAL)

The individual drag and drop activity (see Figure 17.5) requires students to put the events in chronological order by placing them into the appropriate column, using the Iranian Revolution as a point of reference in time. By placing events before and after the Iranian Revolution, learners are obliged to reflect on the function of the verb tense along with the content of the rest of the sentence, giving an understanding of when the event happened.

VI) MAIN INPUT AND COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

With the help of the whole teacher-led class discussion, learners have now activated the necessary background in order to easily get the main gist from the longer video segment (VOA Persian 2015). This video constitutes the main input of the unit. After viewing the video in its entirety, students are required to answer two sets of comprehension questions, which begin with more global aspects related to the basic idea and the key words of the input (see Figure 17.6), and subsequently, go into smaller linguistic units (see Figure 17.7).

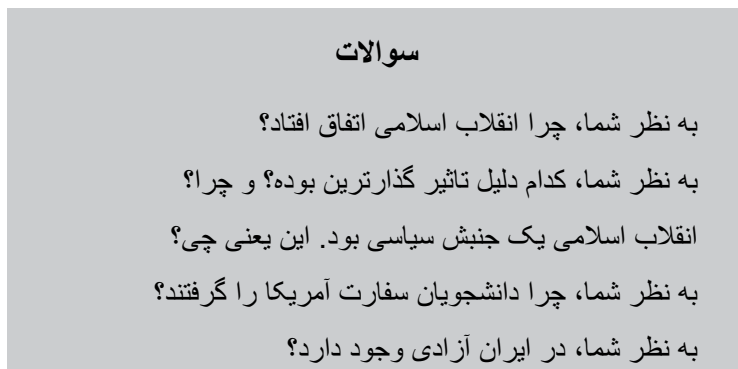


Figure 17.6 General questions related to the basic idea and the key words of the input.

- [- In your opinion, why did the Islamic Revolution occur?
- In your opinion, which was the most significant reason?
- The Islamic Revolution was a political movement; what does this mean?
- In your opinion, why did the students take over the American Embassy?
- In your opinion, does freedom exist in Iran?]

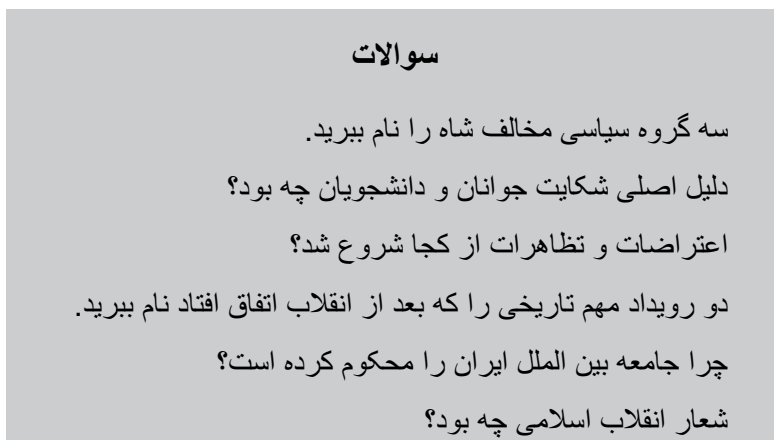


Figure 17.7 Detailed comprehension questions on the video input.

- [- Name three political factions or groups that compose Mohamad Reza Shah Pahlavi's political opponents.
- What was the chief complaint of Iranian youth/students?
- Where did the protests begin?
- Name two major events that took place in Iran after the Revolution began.
- Why has the international community condemned Iran?
- What was the motto of the Islamic revolutionaries?]

*Recommended procedure*

The input video segment should be played twice. The first time, it can be played without sound, for students to get the main idea of the segment. A second time it can be played with sound, only after the students have skimmed the list of more detailed comprehension questions (see Figure 17.7). These will be assigned as written homework with the request to be sent back to the instructor for correction and feedback.

In this process, and especially during the second viewing, the instructor should intervene to make salient the key words related to specific pieces of information. The teacher can highlight vocabulary from the vanishing words activity and stress important events classified from the drag and drop individual activity.

*B) Online component: task cycle*

After an initial connection among learners has been established f2f, students are considered prepared for the main communicative task proposed online. Using the language resources attained so far, students feel free to experiment with language by collaborating in small groups.

Students with different characteristics may uniquely benefit from the new online environment to complete the task. Shy or anxious students, reluctant to participate in the f2f setting, may prefer the online environment, which does not present the pressure of limited time or public speaking. Reflective students may prefer participating online, as task dynamics often stop for periods of time and then are picked up and restarted, making students able to work benefiting from ongoing reflection.

As readers can see in the activities described in the task cycle, an important element of the design of the online component is student-to-student interactions. These interactions allow learners to continue to experience a “sense of community” and enjoy mutual interdependence while avoiding the feeling of isolation that often characterizes the online environment.

Table 17.3 describes the online task phase that includes a task, then a planning, and finally a collaborative, student-led report.

1) TASK: RECAP AND ANSWER (SMALL GROUPS)

Students work in a pre-assigned group of three members, whom the teacher has previously selected based on the similarities of answers given during the in-class discussion activity. The groups are assigned to answer three questions on a wiki page. The questions are based on information provided on the long video input (VOA Persian 2015). The teacher should require word-limited explanation of relationships among the units and request that students explain general concepts. This creates an opportunity to produce language in contextualized and purposeful ways.

In answering the questions, students should apply form (e.g., the question structure and the specific vocabulary) and function (e.g., language used to clarify, explain, argue) to communicate and build ideas. These combined approaches increase knowledge on the topic through redundancy of ideas and their related vocabulary.

Table 17.3 The online task cycle

<i>Component</i>	<i>Cycle</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Tools</i>
<b>Online</b>	Task = Task + Planning + Report	I) Recap & Answer	Small groups	Wiki
		II) Ranking Graph	Small groups	Wiki
		III) Report	Small groups, whole class	VoiceThread



Questions guiding this activity may include:

Compare and contrast based on an in-depth analysis: “Compare . . .” “Contrast . . .” “What is the difference between . . .” “What is the similarity between . . .”

- What are the differences and similarities among the [various] groups who opposed the Shah?  
تفاوت ها و شباهت های بین گروه های مختلفی که مخالف شاه بودند چه بود ؟

Cause and Effect: “What are the causes/results of . . .” “What connection is there between . . .”

- What were the results of the protest?

نتایج اعتراضها چه بود؟

Clarification: “What is meant by . . .” “Explain how . . .”

. . . یعنی چی؟ توضیح بدهید چطور . . .

- What is meant by the phrase “the Nation of Iran is proud”?

معنی ’ملت ایران مغرور است‘ چیست؟

### *Recommended procedure*

Each small group is assigned questions on a specific wiki page. Students in small groups cooperate to perform activities structured for individually defined roles and responsibilities. For example, student A can take the role of chairperson, student B can be in charge of writing down the main ideas, and student C can be responsible for double-checking the answers.

#### II) PLANNING: RANKING GRAPH (SMALL GROUPS)

In the pre-assigned group of three members, students fill in a ranking graph posted on the group wiki page. On the group wiki, students are asked to rank the events based on the importance agreed within the group. The small-group task sees learners help each other to gather and organize survey and video information into a simple graph.

### *Recommended procedure*

On the wiki page of each group, the teacher can post the form containing the ranking graph for students to complete.

#### III) REPORT: WRITTEN AND ORAL REPORT (SMALL GROUPS AND WHOLE CLASS)

On their group wiki page, each group writes a brief written report (a paragraph of about 150–200 words) to justify the graph produced. In order to assure that students have accessed each other’s group timeline and read the respective written report, the instructor can ask each group to perform a peer assessment based on evaluation rubrics that she had previously sent by email.

Thus, each group shares the content of their written report with the rest of the classmates on the class VoiceThread where one or all group members present it orally with a one/two-minute speech.

### *C) f2f component: post-task review*

Taking as a starting point the group-ranking graph, in class the instructor initially reviews the main events in Iran’s contemporary history. Based on the written and oral report, she

Table 17.4 The f2f post-task cycle

Component/Mode	Cycle	Activities	Type
f2f	Post-task	Review: – Content – Language Focus	Whole class

then delves into language analysis (see Table 17.4). This can be accomplished through consciousness-raising activities that bring learners' attention to language aspects and patterns emerged in the small group reports. Finally, the instructor should assign relevant homework, engaging learners in language practice activities in both oral and written forms.

Example of activities that the teacher can use for language focus, either in class or as homework, are illustrated in Figures 17.8–17.10.



Figure 17.8 Language focus activity (1).



Figure 17.9 Language focus activity (2).



Figure 17.10 Language focus activity (3).

As a logical follow-up to the content-based communicative main task completed throughout the online component of this sequence, the next task could be an instructor-assigned reflective piece on students' blogs. This would be a self-critique about the online task completion in groups of three. Furthermore, the instructor can encourage learners to reflect on a hypothetical individual version of the group task, explaining how students would have done things differently.

#### 17.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter is to reflect on the active role that language educators must play in designing and implementing an effective BLL experience that meets learning outcomes, ultimately creating favorable conditions for language acquisition. In order to maximize learning potential, it is crucial that educators are cognizant of the interplay between SLA principles and the technology tools that enhance language instruction. Drawing on such awareness before delving into the delivery of content will enhance language instruction, both online and f2f. Thus, teachers should devote the necessary time and effort to carefully plan the design or redesign of the BLL experiences. The central goal of the design process is the integration and coordination of different learning environments – defined as *components* throughout the chapter – into a seamless whole. To gain the greatest pedagogical benefits, educators must design each component with a seamless transition. With this goal in mind, this chapter has followed current research to simplify the principle steps that teachers must take when embarking in the blending process to obtain an effective blended sequence.

In the first section of the chapter (see Section 17.2), we have identified the organization of input, the layering of tasks, and the creation of favorable environments as crucial steps in the blending process. Teachers should organize content and layer activities and tasks for students to generate communicative, autonomous, and collaborative experiences, both in the online and f2f components.

In the second section of the chapter (see Section 17.3), we have described an example of the specific implementation of the blending process: a blended sequence opening an Advanced Persian course. With the help of this example, we have illustrated the teacher's

active involvement in developing and layering technology-integrated activities and tasks that afford learning autonomy, engagement, and collaboration.

In this input back-loaded blended sequence, the input is presented in the f2f component and preceded by a scaffolding plan involving background knowledge activation and input familiarization (see Section 17.3.3, A, Activities I–VI). As a result, the online component proposes technology-integrated interactive and collaborative activities (see Section 17.3.3, B, Activities I–III).

The Web 2.0 tools available within the LMS (e.g., wikis, voice tools, and video interfaces) are key resources for collaboration and interaction among students. These tools are designed to be supported by interactions and guidance of the teacher albeit without overreliance.

Within the blended sequence, the teacher role is twofold. In the f2f classroom, her main role is to accompany students through tasks that are within reach, allowing students to build confidence and self-reliance. Students gradually become more autonomous and thus prepared to perform the ensuing online activities and tasks (see Section 17.3.3, A, and Section 17.3.3, C). Since the online task cycle aims at furthering learner autonomy, in the online component the teacher can assume the role of remote mediator (see Section 17.3.3, B). In this new role, she monitors student progress and provides encouragement. For example, a teacher may ensure that all students are on task and remind them of the time needed for each activity, after they have strayed from the assignment at hand.

In sum, the success of a BLL experience does not only rely on discerning the appropriate resources and tools. Simply putting content for students to access on an LMS suggests an insufficient blended course design, as the blended environment calls for teachers planning of instruction in advance. Thus, what makes BLL an effective solution is the language educators' proactive role to leverage resources and tools to streamline the language learning process?

In this chapter, we have focused on the planning and implementation phases of such process, but the implications of an educator's proactive role should extend to the delivery and evaluation phases as well. During the instructional delivery phase, for example, teachers should focus on providing the adequate guidance. Based on the complexity of the given learning environment, guidance may be proffered through the application of ad hoc instructional strategies to deliver and assess content.

A discussion on the teacher role in the delivery and evaluation of a BLL experience, however, is beyond the scope of this chapter. Thus, we recommend readers consult scholarly books and articles relevant to these specific phases and seek opportunities for relevant professional development.

Assuring the necessary preparation for language educators to make the best use of blended environments and realize the full potential of BLL experiences constitutes another important challenge. The access to purposeful research into teacher preparation and the identification of innovative institutions applying it constitute necessary actions that need to be taken to overcome such a challenge.

## Notes

- 1) To remain consistent with the terminology used by the key institution and case study cited throughout the chapter, the term *blended learning* has been selected over *hybrid learning*.
- 2) Despite the widespread use of the term *blended learning* in higher education, the definition and understanding of the concept remain elusive. Researchers (Johnson and Marsh 2014; Marsh 2012) urge a clear understanding of the concept for course designers to have pedagogical direction

- designing or redesigning their courses in a blended format. With this aim in mind, we recommend that interested readers consult recent publications that address this lack of clarity by illustrating different interpretations of the term and discussing the rationale for its adoption (see, for example, Mizza and Rubio forthcoming 2020; Torrisi-Steele 2011).
- 3) The chapter differentiates the term *activity* from the term *task*. While an *activity* refers to any purposeful classroom procedure that involves learners doing something related to language-learning outcomes, a *task* is an assigned work that is not simply linked to language learning. The outcome of a task takes into account learners' needs, focuses on meaning, offers opportunities for communication and interaction, and provides moments for reflection on language use (Richards 2014).
  - 4) The chapter uses the term *blended sequence* to refer to the combination of delivery modes – the f2f component/meeting and the online component/session. A blended sequence involves the instructor and students working together to achieve learning outcomes. Depending on length, the blended sequence can take one lesson, several lessons, or more to finish.
  - 5) This course language level is based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) guidelines. The ACTFL guidelines are an instrument for the evaluation of functional language ability regardless of where, when, or how the language was acquired. For further information, see [www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf).
  - 6) The chapter uses the terms *f2f component* and *meeting* interchangeably to refer to the environment in which language instruction occurs synchronously with the instructor-led physical classroom. The terms *online component* and *session* are also used interchangeably throughout the chapter to refer to the environment in which language instruction occurs remotely. The instruction of the online component/session can take place either synchronously or asynchronously, and with the support of technology.
  - 7) As Chapelle (2005) has pointed out in reference to reading and listening comprehension aids in CALL applications, the act of choosing to use such help leads to deeper mental processing that promotes language acquisition.
  - 8) During the *focus on form* stage, linguistic forms should be presented in meaning-focused interaction when learners need them for communication. Thus, attention to linguistic forms is brief and often spontaneous. In contrast, throughout the *focus on forms* stage, linguistic structures are presented as discrete grammar rules or other metalinguistic information. Thus, in the *focus on form* grammar is brought to the attention of language learners as a part of communicative language practice, while in the *focus on forms* grammar is taught explicitly to empower language learners to use the forms correctly (Graham and Kent 2007; Loewen 2018).
  - 9) The chapter follows Holec's (1979) definition and considers *autonomous learning* to be "the capacity or ability to take charge of one's learning". Autonomous learning is embedded in a course and is supported by teachers and peers. This contrasts with *self-study*, a method of learning involving studying alone, without teacher supervision, f2f or online class attendance. Autonomous learning is also differentiated from *independent study*, in which learning occurs with help from an instructor but not as part of an organized class.
  - 10) In a collaborative type of work each student contributes a separate component of a project, while in a cooperative type of work, students work together on the same product or project, but each with a different role.
  - 11) An example could be scaffolding strategies guiding learners to call upon background knowledge, which helps expose them to more comprehensible input.
  - 12) With the term *Web 2.0*, we refer to the second generation of the World Wide Web-based technologies that allows the user to go beyond just receiving information through the web. By using Web 2.0 technologies, the user is expected to interact, share information, and create content with others.
  - 13) Willis and Willis (2007) highlight the difference between *focus on language* and *focus on form*. *Focus on language* occurs when learners take the initiative to "pause their process for meaning and switch to thinking about the language itself" (113). In the *focus on language*, students work independently with meaning and highlight any language they need to draw upon. Students can look up the meaning of a word, revise sentences for accuracy, or rephrase drafts/word choice for clarity. Comparatively, *focus on form* occurs when the teacher isolates a specific structure and explains it outside the context of the communicative activity (114).
  - 14) Examples of known structures include five Ws type of questions (whose answers are considered basic in information gathering or problem solving), past tense, and comparatives and superlatives.

- 15) An example of unknown structure includes passive construction.
- 16) By requiring observance of etiquette, teachers can also explain the differences between a fight and a discussion. Examples of differences include the use of open-end statements inviting other students to agree or disagree vs. absolute statements, avoid insulting words, etc.

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# USING TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOP INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR PERSIAN

Based on task-based language teaching

*Peyman Nojournian*

## 18.1 Introduction

The use of technology in foreign language learning has been increasing in recent decades. People have been excited about technology and what it can offer or how it can facilitate learning and education in general. Despite recent advances in using more sophisticated forms of technology, such as information technology (IT), in education, these new forms are relatively new to the field of second language acquisition (SLA) and language teaching and still have some constraints (Reinders and Stockwell 2017).

For decades, language teachers have effectively used early forms of technology, such as radios, TVs, cassette and video players, as assistive tools to enhance the teaching and learning of world languages. Early mainframe computers were utilized to offer some limited text-based and guided language drills in the early 1950s and 1960s (Ahmad et al. 1985). However, the emergence of personal computers (PCs), and especially networks in the late 1990s, allowed for the introduction of better interactive learning tools in the form of multimedia and brought hope to different fields of language technology research, such as Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI), Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) and Web-Enhanced Language Learning (WELL), where the emphasis has started to move from computer to technology and the web as a medium. Learning and instruction would also imply the role of learners or instructors at the center of the learning process. The advancement in technology has resulted in a shift from traditional text-based learning to a more multimedia-based and communicative learning experience. Today, language-based computer games, apps utilizing virtual reality (VR) and simulations can create an interactive, cooperative and communicative learning environment for language teachers and language learners.

## 18.2 Effectiveness of technology in teaching and learning language

Although recent studies have exaggerated the effectiveness of technology in language learning, there have, nonetheless, been some studies showing a “small but significant effect of using technology” (Reinders and Stockwell 2017, 362). One of the main contributions of technology

to the field of second language learning is the possibility it creates for developing or simulating an effective and interactive learning environment, enriched with comprehensive target language input. That is why it is crucial to consider an important role for technology in teaching approaches. However, one should not confuse the role of learning using technology versus instruction.

While recent enhancements in technology, in the form of Artificial Intelligence (AI), for example, have created automated and expert systems, there is usually a human mind behind the scene who has designed the respective algorithm. Information or news websites, chat rooms, language forums, weblogs, etc. can potentially be non-instruction target language environments, while some technologies are purposely designed for instruction. Technology can be considered in two tails of a spectrum, from autonomous expert, AI systems or tutors to very ordinary user-based online assignments and activities. In the former, the technology can play the role of an instructor and be adaptive and interactive, while in the latter it can be used solely as an assistive tool by an instructor. Regardless of the definitions, whether technology is used as authentic instructional materials or as a means to enhance learning experiences, “it is at least a significant methodological innovation” (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2011, 1). To choose the appropriate technology for instructional needs, it is important to choose options that are fitting to the learning objectives in question (for example web-based, distance, blended, etc.) A comprehensive strategy would be to utilize the advantages of technology “while compensating for the difficulties posed by the absence of real-time, face-to-face interaction” (Doughty and Long 2003, 53). Eventually, technology may evolve to facilitate real-time interactivity. For further discussion on using technology in tandem with face-to-face second language teaching in the form of a blended course, read Chapter 17 in this volume.

### **18.3 Use of technology in teaching Persian as a foreign language**

For many decades in Iran, the Persian language was taught to the speakers of other languages by instructors who were mostly instructors of Persian literature or ESL<sup>1</sup> teachers. However, in the late 1990s, the Iranian Ministry of Higher Education approved a plan to offer a master’s degree in teaching Persian as a foreign language.<sup>2</sup> TPFL was not just created to address the high demand for Persian instruction in Iran but throughout the world as well. In the U.S., for example, Persian was categorized as a less commonly taught language<sup>3</sup> along with Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Russian, etc. The demand for LCTL instruction increased worldwide following a surge in global immigration. Regional conflicts and the crucial potential of LCTLs to enhance cross-cultural communications between nations were other important reasons for this expansion. Today, the learning of LCTLs or world languages has become vital to the security and socioeconomical welfare of all nations.

Early on, in the TPFL program in Iran, students utilized CALL principles and produced prototype applications using computer technology. For example, Nojournian (1999) designed a multimedia-based courseware called DAZFA<sup>4</sup> and developed a prototype application using Macromedia Director (Nojournian 1999). The prototype model showed how the acquisition of basic language skills, such as vocabulary, could be facilitated by an automated computer application. DAZFA demonstrated an elementary-level language lesson in which vocabulary items were introduced using clickable photos with embedded audios and included a short cultural video clip in the target language as well as a sample activity based on the video and the taught vocabulary.

Early CALL applications could offer guided learning tasks or activities, such as reading comprehension tasks on a computer monitor with clickable vocabulary and audios. As the

technology advanced, interaction was also introduced to CALL in the form of feedback and limited response checking, such as written feedback on multiple-choice quizzes. Sahra'i and Safari (2012) suggested SAZFA, an online portal for the TPFL program, but it was either not implemented or discontinued (Sahra'i and Safari 2012). Birjandi designed a similar portal that does not exist anymore (Birjandi 2013). Rezaee and Vazirnejad (2016) reported the launch of a web-based portal for the TPFL program by the Iranian government, offering four levels from novice to advanced in 16 units for each level. English was used in explaining the Persian sound system but there were scarcely audio files for the sounds. The lessons consisted of readings, lists of vocabulary items, mostly with their equivalents in English, a few photos, traditional grammar explanations in English and non-interactive drills (Rezaee and Vazirnejad 2016). The portal no longer exists because the organization merged into a new foundation under the name of Bonyad e Saadi. Virtual Persian<sup>5</sup> is another early web-based system for the TPFL program launched by the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, NYU. Virtual Persian consists of four levels, from novice to advanced, with ten lessons in each level, mostly dialogues read by participants and readings from a contemporary short story with parallel translations to English. The novice level lessons do not have exercises, but the intermediate and advanced levels have text-based true or false and multiple-choice questions. The higher advanced level features a video clip with questions and answers. The interactivity is limited to clicks on audios.

The Language Acquisition Resource Center<sup>6</sup> at San Diego State University launched a portal of web-based online resources for the Persian language in 2014, using Adobe Flash.<sup>7</sup> The LARC Persian portal includes several resources for the Persian script and basic grammar, conversational Persian and story-telling skills. The interactivity is limited to several drag and drop drills and vocabulary matches. However, the user is given feedback on the correctness of exercises. The conversations are mostly in written style and read dialogues, rather than acted, and the grammar is taught explicitly using a traditional approach.

Persian in Texas<sup>8</sup> is another web-based portal that mostly contains authentic materials in parallel Persian-English languages, uploaded to the internet as early as 2004. This web portal is mostly a collection of language material resources, consisting of video and audio clips, poetry texts, literary stories, songs and texts. The interactivity is limited to audio pronunciations and word equivalents in English.

Researchers of the Department of the TPFL at the University of Qazvin developed a prototype web-based course for elementary Persian using Moodle, a popular class management system. The lessons incorporate content for developing all main language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking as well as grammar and vocabulary. Some interactivity has been embedded in audio flash cards, grammar drills, feedback on exercises and recording of learners' output (Vakilifard, Mahdavi, and Khodadadian 2013). Mirdehghan and Jorghani (2013), from the same department, developed a blended learning model consisting of computer-based and class-based instructions. Their program considered learners' needs for Iranian Studies majors and used a pre-task, task and post-task model to integrate and teach all language skills (Mirdehghan and Jorghani 2013). For elaborate discussions on Persian language skills and subskills, read Chapters 9–14 in this volume.

In a blended-learning design, most of the interactivity can be foreseen in the face-to-face classroom interactions. Moreover, the technology can be used to provide learners with enhanced audio and video as the target language input. Post-task activities can also embed some form of interactivity such as feedback on students' input. For an example of a blended-learning design and sample tasks, read Chapter 17 in this volume.

Persian Language Online<sup>9</sup> is a free web-based resource created by the Persian Language Foundation in cooperation with the University of Cambridge, University of St. Andrews,

SOAS University of London and US-based Farhang Foundation in 2016. It offers sixty multimedia-based units for learning Persian from novice to intermediate level developed for college students. The instructional materials consist of readings and dialogues (mostly read by participants) with animated characters. Each lesson has a glossary and vocabulary-based activities. Materials have been provided in Persian with English equivalents and phonetic transcriptions. The interactivity is limited to sorting dialogues, and matching words. Other web-based learning apps include Easy Persian<sup>10</sup> and Persian Pod 101. Easy Persian offers mostly text-based lessons in grammar and vocabulary. Persian Pod 101<sup>11</sup> offers YouTube video presentations, teaching formulaic expressions with vocabulary drills. There are other web-based resources such as DLI<sup>12</sup> and CASL,<sup>13</sup> available to US military personnel, that use similar approaches to these systems.

Recently, through the availability of smartphones and mobile technology, several apps and games have been developed to facilitate the learning of languages such as Persian. However, these Persian learning apps are mostly flash cards, phrase books, and photo dictionaries, and are not really that different from the web-based projects previously mentioned.

In addition to web-based and CALL apps, individual language tools and resources seem to be useful for language learners (Da and Zheng 2018), although the guidance of an expert instructor may be necessary. Tools such as online dictionaries, translators, verb-conjugators, word-frequency lists, text corpora, enhanced or elaborated short stories (e.g. a day in Rostamabad of Shemiran),<sup>14</sup> word pronouncers (e.g. Fovo),<sup>15</sup> grammar references (e.g. Bashiri),<sup>16</sup> news, TV and cultural portals can also be used by language learners to increase exposure to authentic materials. However, instructor supervision is highly recommended because the raw instructional materials might not be suitable, especially for lower elementary learners and for those who do not know how best to use them.

The aforementioned CALL projects are similar in that they offer limited interactivity and lack a solid pedagogical foundation. The interactivity issue might be, in part, caused by technological limitations. To fix this issue, expert systems can utilize artificial intelligence to incorporate smart interactivity, such as speech recognition and text-to-speech synthesis, language understanding and machine learning. Table 18.1 illustrates technology and platforms that are currently available (to this date) to language learning and teaching. From the early electrical devices, such as radios and telephones, to recent electronic gadgets, technology has been used by language learners and in blended language classrooms. Nonetheless, technological limitation is one of the reasons that the field of language learning and teaching has not yet been fully automatized. Although there is controversy around the role of the language instructor in the future, this role may shift to the behind-the-scenes programmer. But for now, there is a need to ground the technology in innovative and effective pedagogical foundations so that real interactivity can be brought to blended classrooms and language teaching fields. Interpersonal, face-to-face activities and cooperative learning methods are the core of interactive language tasks currently missing from CALL.

Table 18.1 also shows that most forms of available technology provide limited interactivity, mostly in the form of clicking and drag-and-drop, typing, text feedback, etc. Voice recognition and language-understanding technologies are perhaps the missing links to high interactivity – but are still very limited and language-dependent. Nevertheless, current possibilities of chatting technology can facilitate interpersonal communication and fill the interactivity gap until the smart language technology becomes available. To this extent, the two areas of improvement, i.e. pedagogy and interactivity, will be discussed briefly after discussing pros and cons of using technology in teaching and learning world languages.

Table 18.1 Available technology to language learning, teaching and SLA to date

<i>Technology</i>	<i>Example (technology or app)<sup>17</sup></i>	<i>Smart</i>	<i>Interactive</i>
Multimedia-based (audio, video, text, photo, motion sensor, touch screens, etc.)	LCD Projectors, TV, Radio, Cassette Players, DVD/CD/MP3/Blue-ray Players, Satellite Receivers, TV Boxes (Apple TV, Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Google Chromecast, etc.), Tablets (iPad, Fire HD, Nook), Mobile/smartphones, Laptops, Computers, Smart Watches, Digital Cameras, Game Boxes (PlayStation, Nintendo Wii, Microsoft Xbox, etc.)	Smart TV, phone watch	Limited to tablets, smartphones and watches
Online meetings and chatrooms	Skype, Telegram, Adobe Connect, Google Hangout, Free Conference Call, Zoom, Facetime, Messenger	No	Facilitates interactivity
Text-based html, text corpora, text editor, online multimedia, html-based webpages, JavaScript, PHP, WordPress, etc.	Blogs, Padlet, Textivate, MS-Office, YouTube, Hulu, Vimeo, WeVideo, Netflix, TV Box, GLWiz (Persian TV), iTunes, online TVs, Video and Radio Stations, Google Play etc.	No	No
Storytelling apps, avatars and virtual reality	Pixton, Vyond, GoAnimate, StoryBird, AniMaker, FlipGrid, Extempor, StoryKit, Toontastic 3D, PowToon, CrazyTalk, QuickTime VR, etc.	No	Limited
Text-to-speech, speech recognition, MT	Nuance Dragon NaturallySpeaking, FarsiReader.com, CSTR Festival (free)	Yes	Yes
Authoring and movie editing	Adobe Captivate, Articulate, Animator, Windows MovieMaker, Avid, Hot Potatoes, SoftChalk	No	Limited
Online dictionaries	Persian: Vajeyab, Persian Learner, Google Translate, Farsi123 etc.	No	No
Class management systems, assessment	Moodle, Blackboard, Edmodo, Top Hat, Socrative, QuizWorks, Hot Potatoes, Sakai, Schoology etc.	No	Limited
Social networks	Facebook, Telegram, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Myspace, LinkedIn etc.	No	Limited
Vocabulary builders	Quizlet, Byki, Anki etc.	No	Limited
Game-based language apps	Duolingo, Kahoot, LinguaLift, Hello Talk, Babbel, Memrise, Busuu, Rosetta Stone, Beelinguapp, Quandary, Clozemaster, Lingio, Lango, MindSnacks, Quia (game maker) etc.	No	Limited
Presentations, voice-over, voice editors, screencasts, podcasts	PowerPoint, Prezi, Dubme, VoiceThread, Vocaroo (online audio recording and sharing), Audacity, Fovo, Bandicam, Camtasia, ScreenFlow, Elluminate, Echo360 etc.	No	No
Spell checkers and grammar checkers	Word Processors (MS Office, Page), Virastyar (for Persian editing in MS Word), grammarly.com	Yes	Yes
NLP, NLU (Taggers, Parsers etc.)	Assignment/test checkers (ACTFL AAPPL, OPIc), essay graders, summarizers, classifiers, MT	Yes	Yes

## **18.4 Pros and cons of using technology in SLA**

As for any assistive medium in SLA, usage of technology has its own pros and cons depending on whether it is used in isolation, independently, or as part of a language curriculum. The main advantage of using technology in SLA that can also be considered a gain in the learning environment is that the technology lends itself very well to personalized and independent learning, allowing learners to work at their own pace in an environment free of anxiety and stress. Learners can make mistakes without being embarrassed or stop a lesson whenever they like or repeat multimedia materials as many times as they need. Furthermore, technology is interesting for learners. Colorful, interactive and collaborative apps, gadgets, games, etc. can purposefully engage learners in the learning process because they provide them with rich and multimodal inputs in all possible forms. Multimodal inputs help learners activate different learning processes resulting in L2 acquisition (Hampel and Hauck 2006). Some forms of technology can even provide learners with a simulation of real-world tasks. “Simulations are one type of computer-based activity that allows students to be immersed and actively involved in an environment that is not otherwise accessible” (Marta González-Lloret 2003, 86). These activities are difficult to develop without technology; therefore, the technology makes it possible to go beyond the classroom and design tasks that are simulations of an otherwise out-of-reach reality. Finally, technology allows for the integration of language skills into different modes of communication. Reinders and Stockwell (2017) have reported decades of research on all L2 aspects in reading (Chun 2006), writing (Kessler, Bikowski, and Boggs 2012), listening (Jones 2003), speaking (Valle 2005), vocabulary (Fuente 2003) and grammar (Sauro 2009) and considered it an indication of interest in the field (Reinders and Stockwell 2017, 363).

One possible disadvantage of technology in SLA is an increase in the usage of multimedia in a language classroom, which may, adversely, decrease face-to-face interactions among learners or between learners and the instructor. However, to address this issue, recent research has also focused on the role of computers in mediating communications between learners, known as Computer-Mediated Communications (CMC). Language environments to be mediated may include text chats, emails, audio or video conferences, social networks, interactive video games, simulators, etc. While it is sensible to say that asynchronous CMC is a legitimate form of human communication, the synchronous form of CMC better resembles meaning transaction between interlocutors. The asynchronous form of CMC, which entails delayed communication, may also be beneficial in terms of allowing for a more enriched output.

Technology by itself might not be useful for learners if it is not used purposefully. The purposeful usage of technology emphasizes the important role of pedagogy and the instructor (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2011). Usage of technology should be built on solid and compatible pedagogical foundations. Displaying just a video clip in the classroom or playing an audio file or chatting on Skype would not offer much benefit to learners, unless there is a purpose behind each of those activities. Reinders and Stockwell (2017) consider three main roles for technology, namely: “a mediating role” between communicators, “a teaching role” on output assessments, and “a utilitarian role in the learning process” (Reinders and Stockwell 2017, 365). Although technology can assume a “teaching role”, it should not be seen as a threat to the role of a teacher because it is still dependent upon the teacher (Ahmad et al. 1985) who usually works behind the scene. Furthermore, Skehan (2003) believes that technology lacks the intelligence of the classroom teacher to make adaptations and appropriate pedagogic decisions (Skehan 2003). Doughty and Long (2003) believe that a language instructor is “(a) ordinarily the most reliable source on local circumstances, (b) the one who can best make decisions as a lesson unfolds, and (c) a major source of native L2 input and feedback on error”

(Doughty and Long 2003, 53). The use of technology over traditional methods in teaching, however, can only be justified by solid rationales in task design and development.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) are arguably most compatible with technology in developing instructional materials. Communication is one of the main purposes of language learning, and real-world language tasks would provide learners with authentic and rich inputs, often made available by technology. As technology increasingly becomes an integral part of daily life, technology-supported L2 teaching should reflect this reality. Furthermore, technology is useful to both CLT and TBLT, because these are approaches that put a great emphasis on using the target language. News-casts, YouTube videos, chatrooms, weblogs, social networks, etc. are great target language resources that can be used by an expert instructional materials developer to create rich language learning curricula. Finally, CLT and TBLT are also learner-centered and content-based, which entails that the technology can be utilized in learning. For further discussion on using CLT and TBLT in teaching Persian as a second language, read Chapter 16 in this volume.

## **18.5 Communicative and task-based language teaching**

TBLT<sup>18</sup> can be considered a subset of the communicative language teaching approach and is basically a language teaching theory informed by SLA and psycholinguistic research. The main mission of TBLT is to “promote language learning” by doing (Ellis 2003, 8) – meaning a hands-on approach – because a “practical hands-on experience with real-world tasks brings abstract concepts and theories to life and makes them more understandable” (Doughty and Long 2003, 58). Any real-world task that native-speakers of a target language do can be a model for learners of that language. For example, reporting a car accident to the police or negotiating a deal with a broker is considered a real-world language task (Long, 1985). Ellis (2017), citing Ellis and Shintani (2014), considers four criteria for determining whether or not an activity can be a task; an activity that “focuses mainly on meaning” and communication aims at an information gap activity, such as expressing opinion or solving a problem, and requires participants to utilize “their own resources”; and, finally, accomplishing the task should result in “a clear outcome”, such as a viable solution to a problem (Ellis 2017, 109). Therefore, most grammar drill activities are not considered a task because they do not conform to the four stated criteria. A language task can be further broken down to smaller subtasks or pedagogical tasks to fit a lesson plan. Therefore, TBLT has developed pedagogical principles and guidelines to effectively accomplish its main goal i.e. learning by doing. Among the many reasons TBLT has garnered interest is the “potential it offers for developing functional language proficiency without sacrificing grammatical accuracy and its compatibility with SLA research on language learning” (Doughty and Long 2003, 50).

## **18.6 TBLT Principles<sup>19</sup> and technology matches**

### ***18.6.1 Design target tasks based on learners’ needs***

A solid pedagogical design should take the needs of learners into account (Long 2005). Learners’ needs are the main force behind their motivation to learn a language. A student of Iranian studies, for example, needs to study contents in Persian related to the history and culture of Iran, whereas a real-estate agent who sells homes to the members of the Persian community in Los Angeles may need to learn the business jargon and negotiation strategies in the target language. Whatever the needs are, the contents and themes of the instructional materials need to

be clearly identified (Long 2005). Age and proficiency level are other learner-related variables important to learners' needs. A course designed for novice learners of the Persian language should consider teaching literacy skills, for instance. Several assessment techniques are available to language teachers that can help them place language learners into appropriate proficiency levels. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages<sup>20</sup> has developed guidelines to assess the oral and written proficiency of language learners in four major levels: novice, intermediate, advanced and superior. A learner at the novice level would mostly use memorized and formulaic expressions to accomplish some form of communication, whereas an intermediate learner would be able to create with the language and can usually handle a simple social interaction as a tourist would. An advanced learner, however, can narrate and describe in all time frames of past, present and future and handle a complicated social interaction, using paragraph as the output text-type. Superior level learners can communicate effectively using an extended discourse and express and support their opinions, hypothesize and function in an abstract and parametric domain across a variety of topics (ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012). An ACTFL-certified tester can conduct Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPI) and rate Written Proficiency Tests (WPT) to determine the level of learners before and after taking a language program, to measure proficiency improvements.

Technology can also be employed to identify learners' needs by giving questionnaires and language learning diagnostic surveys to students as well as online assessment tools such as computerized OPI or OPIc. Survey and assessment results can be analyzed to determine needs, age, level, aptitude, learning strategies, and information about task variables important to instructional materials developers. Task variables determine task complexity and the need to adjust or adapt the identified tasks to different proficiency levels. Task variables may include other task modes: pairs, groups, synchronous and asynchronous modes, picture clues, opinions, facts, or other modes of communication, such as interpretational, interpersonal or presentational. For a discussion on beliefs and strategies of second language learners of Persian in the U.S., read Chapter 28 in this volume.

### ***18.6.2 Use task, not text, as the unit of analysis (Long 2005, 22)***

Task design has a holistic approach to language learning, allowing for “learning-through-communication” rather than merely “learn[ing]-to-communicate” (Ellis 2017, 109). Tasks are not solely reading texts or dialogues but real-world language scenarios containing one or more language functions. “The focus in TBLT lessons is on task completion, not on the study of a decontextualized linguistic structure or a list of vocabulary items – and not the same phenomena at the supra-sentential level text” (Doughty and Long 2003, 56). A task can be further developed as a target task, then broken into pedagogical tasks. Target tasks are classified under task types, such as reporting, decision-making, analysis, jigsaw,<sup>21</sup> etc. Read Chapter 16 in this volume for further discussion and examples of task types in Persian language classes.

Once learners' needs are identified, target tasks can be developed (Long et al. 2003). For example, for novice level Persian learners, self-introduction would be considered an important task type and for an advanced learner who is a real-estate agent, describing a home or an apartment in detail would satisfy a needed task type. Depending on the task type, an instructional materials developer would be able to identify the proper technology for implementing pedagogical tasks. Voice recording technology, such as VoiceThread or similar software, can be utilized to enhance a self-introduction task. Novice learners are encouraged to practice oral production by recording and emailing their oral activities to their instructors. 3D animation technology can be used in the classroom to simulate a house tour in which an advanced learner



can navigate through the house and describe its different rooms and amenities for the class. Using technology provides multimodal inputs in the form of audio, video, image, text, etc. that enhances the learning process because it makes for efficient memory retention (Brandle 2008).

### ***18.6.3 Develop pedagogical tasks (PTs) or subtasks from task types***

Narrating, describing places or familiar objects, offering solutions, comparing objects or concepts, etc. are task type. Task types can be broken into PTs that range from simpler tasks (linguistically less complex) to harder and more complex contents and contexts (Nunan 1989; Long et al. 2003). Describing a home or an apartment in detail requires several PTs, such as describing a location - from a simple sentence to extended discourse with multiple descriptions using detailed spatial information.

### ***18.6.4 Enhance and elaborate an authentic and rich input***

An instructional materials developer should not impoverish or simplify the input and certainly should avoid engineering or fabricating the materials. One of the main advantages of technology is its easy access to authentic materials and resources. However, raw authentic materials cannot be immediately instructional before being prepared and fit to the learners' needs. They are often complex and level-inappropriate for learners. Therefore, lower-level learners cannot deal with raw authentic materials. Raw genuine materials can be enhanced by adding picture clues, audios, videos, word glossaries, text enhancements, etc. Linguistic ambiguity and complexity in authentic materials can be dealt with, and comprehensible input can be created by elaboration according to the learners' needs. Enhancement and elaboration should be gradually minimized as learners progress to the upper levels of proficiency. Technology can facilitate text enhancement by, for example, changing font face, style, size, color, format and adding punctuations and picture clues to texts. The quality of authentic audio or video samples can be enhanced by re-recording or editing. Subtitles or commentaries can be added to video clips using different applications. Presentations and computer screens can be recorded to be used as enhanced contents. JavaScript can be used to facilitate elaboration of a reading comprehension text in an HTML format; for example, by developing mouse-hovering functions to retrieve the meaning or picture of vocabulary items from a monolingual, bilingual or photo dictionary. Language text corpora can be used to create concordances with real context in which the language usage can be demonstrated. "Well-constructed input archives in the form of audio, video, and text-based corpora, the components of which are tagged for task complexity and perhaps controlled in terms of learner access could provide rich input" (Doughty and Long 2003, 62). CMC is another technology that can utilize authentic, rich input and output.

### ***18.6.5 Maximize the use of target language***

Using authentic dialogues, videos and texts will provide learners with comprehensible, rich input and output (for more on input and output hypotheses, see Krashen 2003). Chatting activities can be monitored to ensure maximum use of target language. Learners should be encouraged to do recording activities and increase target language usage at home. Recording exercises can also hone output accuracy and enhance classroom interactions if used as pre-task activities. Multimedia materials should be offered mostly in the target language except where there is a need to explicitly elaborate, for example, on grammatical complexities. In TBLT, language is a "tool for making meaning rather than an object to be studied" (Ellis 2017, 111).

### **18.6.6 Be a facilitator teacher**

If technology is used in a blended learning environment, a teacher should play the role of a facilitator and should always avoid becoming a lecturer. A good aspect of technology is its learners-oriented feature which allows learners more freedom based on their learning needs and style; technology itself can facilitate the language learning process.

### **18.6.7 Promote collaborative and cooperative learning**

Collaborative learning increases interactivity. Technology can be used to facilitate interactivity, even in interpersonal tasks. CMC can enhance this vital language skill outside of the classroom. Computer games that can incorporate problem-solving tasks, such as *Quandary*, are another excellent means to promote cooperative learning. Project-based activities such as *Pixton* (see the hands-on tasks section) are cooperative learning activities in which a group of learners can work on a comic-strip story-telling project, in real-time, in a classroom or at home. Project-based activities are also useful for more advanced learners and well-suited for heritage-learners because these activities often require learners to use a wide range of different language skills to solve challenging real-life problems. The open-ended nature of these sorts of activities give heritage-learners the freedom to be more engaged in the language activity and to use their maximum capability in doing the task. Some project-based activities can be designed to create connections between heritage-learners and the target language communities. For example, making a short documentary video-clip can be a great cooperative and project-based activity (Carreira and Kagan 2011), requiring that students record interviews with members of the target language community, translate, dub or provide subtitles and narrate in the background. Other project-based activities include creating products in the target language, such as brochures, posters, flyers, public service announcements, podcasts, websites, weblogs, online radios/TVs, newsletters, tutorials, manuals, infographics, timelines, reports, surveys, case studies, presentations, etc. For further discussion on collaborative versus cooperative language learning, read Chapter 17 in this volume.

### **18.6.8 Focus on form**

While meaning is an important component of communicative language learning, it alone is not enough (Doughty and Long 2003) because accuracy is also an important variable in communication, and correct form is the core of accuracy. TBLT encourages instructors to utilize teaching strategies to focus on form. This can be done through minimum and non-intrusive corrective feedback and the explicit teaching of grammatical problems if the need arises (Long 1991). Ellis (2017) believes that focus on form can be accomplished through pre-task, corrective feedback and post-task activities (Ellis 2017). Focus on form is a teaching strategy feature in teacher-involved scenarios and can also include input elaboration and enhancement, and can be implemented in CMC as well.

### **18.6.9 Provide corrective and negative feedback to increase accuracy**

Technology can be used to provide feedback to learners which in turn adds more interactivity. Most of the feedback mechanisms demonstrated by older technologies, were simple, only returning correct answers to learners. Today, however, smarter technology such as Natural Language Processing<sup>22</sup> can be utilized to accept a variety of user answers, and errors can be pinpointed, highlighted or underlined as negative or corrective feedback. Game-based language learning

apps use different forms of feedback and strategies to encourage learners to continue their language learning efforts, by creating a dynamic and laid-back environment for them. For further discussion on corrective feedback, read Chapter 14 in this volume.

Based on the interaction hypothesis, meaningful negotiations among learners are conducive to SLA and facilitate language acquisition (Long 1983). To add interactivity using the interpersonal mode of communication, we can combine the previously given solid pedagogical principles with CMC technology and develop meaningful web-based language activities for different proficiency levels. Three hands-on examples are given here to demonstrate an efficient use of technology based on TBLT.

### 18.7 Hands-on tasks for Persian based on TBLT and CMC<sup>23</sup>

**Target Task:** Apartment hunting with a roommate (adapted from Brandl 2012)

**Task Type:** Negotiation, decision-making, jigsaw

**Learner's level and needs:** Learners are college students at the intermediate level familiar with basic vocabulary and structures.

**Implementation:** Chatting technology (Skype, Telegram, Facebook, Zoom, FaceTime, WhatsApp, Google Talk, ICQ, etc.)

**Mode:** Simultaneous, colloquial

**Collaboration Type:** Pairs

**Scenario:** Two Persian learners (e.g. students A and B) are going to be roommates who are going to look for an apartment in Tehran. They are going to chat and find a proper place to rent. They have limitations and personal preferences, so they may have to give up one or more of their preferences. They get two different listings, named A and B, from their teacher. The learners need to negotiate in Persian by communicating their preferences, asking questions and finding the best match for the both of them.

#### *Pedagogical tasks*

- Describe the basics of what you are looking for and your preferences
- Ask questions about your partner's preferences
- Check your listings and offer your choices. Negotiate with your partner
- Resolve a problem and make a decision by giving up some of your preferences

**Rationale:** Negotiation of meaning, collaboration and interactivity are the main goals of this task. As participants state their preferences and give up some of their lower-priority needs, they learn how to negotiate and resolve a challenging problem. Collaboration in building knowledge together and sociocultural interaction are beneficial to language learning.

**تمرین<sup>24</sup>:** شما و هم‌اتاقی‌تان سال آینده در دانشگاه علامه طباطبائی مشغول تحصیل خواهید بود. پیش از شروع سال تحصیلی باید آپارتمانی در منطقه شمال غربی تهران و نزدیک به دانشگاه علامه اجاره کنید. لیستی از چهار آپارتمان موجود (لیست الف و ب) برای هر کدام از شما جداگانه ارسال شده است. با هم‌اتاقی خود لیست‌تان را چک کنید و با توجه به نیازها، اولویت‌ها و ترجیحات زیر، آپارتمان مناسبی را انتخاب کنید (فقط یک جواب). برای یادگیری بهتر و تمرین گفتار، متن‌های خود را به یکدیگر نشان ندهید:

**موارد مورد نیاز دانشجوی (الف):**

1. یک یا دو خوابه باشه ترجیحاً.
2. بالکن یا نورگیر خوب داشته باشه حتماً.

Table 18.2 Apartment listing A and B

آپارتمان نوع (ب)	آپارتمان نوع (الف) <sup>25</sup>
(۵) ۷۶ متری، پارکینگ، تک واحدی، طبقه دوم، ۲۰ متر انباری، آشپزخانه این، گرمایش از کف با پکیج، نوساز	(۱) ۶۰ متری، دوخوابه، طبقه دوم، تک واحدی، آسانسور، انباری، آشپزخانه این و شیک، دسترسی عالی، گرمایش شوفاژ از کف، ده سال ساخت
(۶) ۵۶ متری، یکخوابه، طبقه اول، انباری کوچک، شش واحدی، گرمایش گازی، پارکینگ	(۲) ۱۰۰ متری، دوخوابه، تک واحدی، طبقه دوم، پارکینگ، انباری بزرگ آشپزخانه این، نورگیر عالی، بالکن، گرمایش مرکزی از کف
(۷) ۱۴۰ متری، سه خوابه، تک واحدی، طبقه پنجم، ۳۰ متر پاسیو نورگیر عالی با بالکن، آشپزخانه شیک، انباری بزرگ، گرمایش مرکزی، پارکینگ	(۳) ۱۱۵ متری، دو خوابه، طبقه اول، تک واحد، آشپزخانه این و جدار، شیک‌دارای کم‌دیورای مناسب، پارکینگ، گرمایش پکیج و از کف
(۸) ۱۰۶ متری، دو خوابه، چهار واحدی، نورگیر عالی، بازسازی تئپز شده، خانه، طبقه دوازدهم با آسانسور، پارکینگ، گرمایش پکیج	(۴) ۱۲۵ متری، سه خوابه، نورگیر، پارکینگ، انباری بزرگ، نوساز گرمایش شو مینه

3. تک واحد باشه و ترجیحاً طبقه اول یا دوم باشه چون شما از پله نمی‌تونید بالا برید.
4. آشپزخونه مهم نیست چون بیرون بیشتر غذا می‌خورید.
5. پارکینگ حتماً داشته باشه چون ماشین دارید.

#### موارد مورد نیاز دانشجوی (ب)

1. بخاری یا حرارت مرکزی داشته باشه، ترجیحاً از کف.
2. حداقل دو خوابه باشه، ترجیحاً سه خوابه.
3. آشپزخونه بزرگ و این حتماً داشته باشه چون خودتون هر روز غذا درست می‌کنید.
4. متراژ بزرگ داشته باشه، با انباری بزرگ ترجیحاً.
5. ترجیحاً نوساز باشه

مناسب‌ترین پاسخ: مورد شماره دو

**Target Task:** Filling in a family tree chart<sup>26</sup>

**Task Type:** Finding information, role-play (adapted from Brandl 2012)

**Learners level and needs:** Learners are college students at the novice-mid or novice-high level.

**Implementation:** Chatting or forum technology (Skype, Telegram, FaceTime, Google Talk, WhatsApp, Zoom, ICQ, etc.)

**Mode:** Asynchronous, written or colloquial

**Collaboration Type:** In pairs

**Scenario:** Two Persian learners (e.g. students A and B) are going to work as a pairs and fill out family tree charts. Each student is given partial information about the family in question. They need to fill in as much information as possible. Each student will then post or ask their partner a question and the pair will check each others' work to complete the charts.

### Pedagogical tasks

- Read to find information and fill out a chart or form
- Ask questions to get the missing information
- Check information with your partner

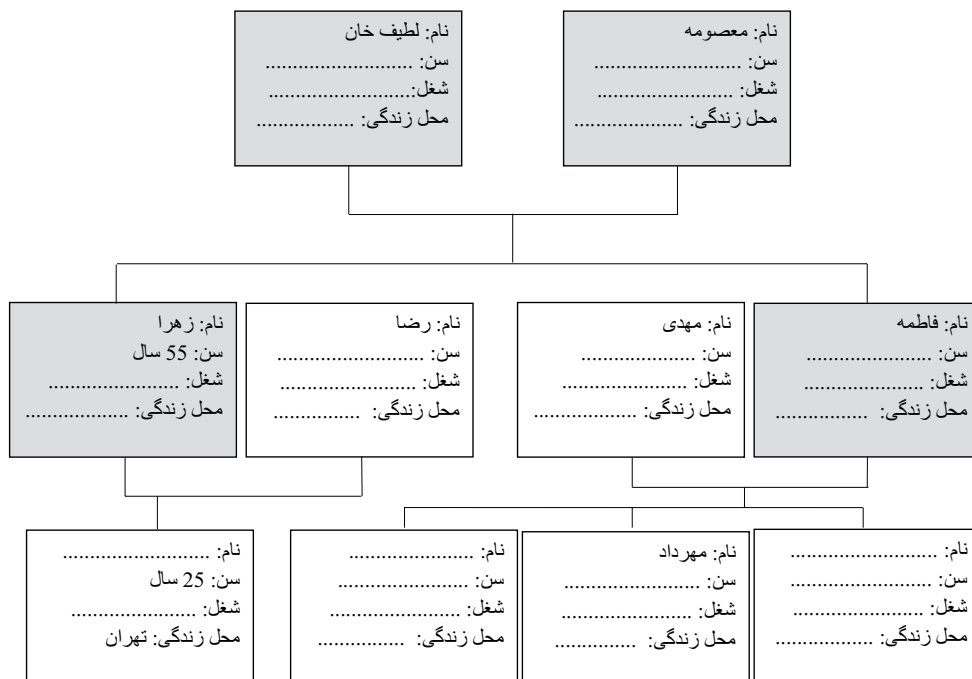


Figure 18.1 Family tree chart A. <sup>27</sup>جدول خانوادگی (الف)

**Rationale:** This task requires that learners extract important information from the provided texts and fill in family tree charts. To find all the required information, elementary level Persian learners need to ask simple questions from each other, such as *what is the name of the grandma? where does she live? who is her husband, who is her older daughter? where does her daughter live? etc.* The task can be done in a chat room or a text forum as an out-of-class assignment for an interpersonal interactivity at the novice level.

- دانشجوی (الف):** اول فرم "الف" را با اطلاعات زیر پر کنید. بعد اطلاعات بیشتر را از دوستان بپرسید. اطلاعات خود را با او به اشتراک بگذارید. برای یادگیری بهتر و تمرین گفتار، متن خود را به دوستان نشان ندهید.
1. مادر "زهرا" ۷۵ سالش است و با شوهرش در شهر "کرج" زندگی می‌کند.
  2. "سمیه"، نوهی "معصومه"، برادر و خواهری ندارد.
  3. پدرزن "مهدی"، ۷۸ سالش است و بازنشسته شده است.
  4. "مهران" و "مهرداد" هر دو در کاناذا زندگی می‌کنند و استاد هستند. خواهرشان معلم است و در تهران زندگی می‌کند.
  5. "سمیه"، ۴ سال از "محبوبه" کوچکتر است.
  6. "زهرا" همسرت "رضا" است.
  6. "مهران"، ۶ سال از برادرش "مهرداد" بزرگتر است.
  7. پدر و مادر "سمیه" در منطقه "پونک" زندگی می‌کنند. مادرش پرستار و پدرش دندانپزشک است.
  8. "مهدی"، ۱۰ سال از "زهرا" و ۵ سال بزرگتر از زن خودش است.
  9. شوهرخاله‌ی "سمیه"، خیاط است.

- دانشجوی (ب):** اول فرم "ب" را با اطلاعات زیر پر کنید. بعد اطلاعات بیشتر را از دوستان بپرسید. اطلاعات خود را با او به اشتراک بگذارید. برای یادگیری بهتر و تمرین گفتار، متن خود را به دوستان نشان ندهید.
1. نام پدر بزرگ "لطیف خان" است.
  2. "معصومه" چهار نوه دارد و خانه‌دار است.

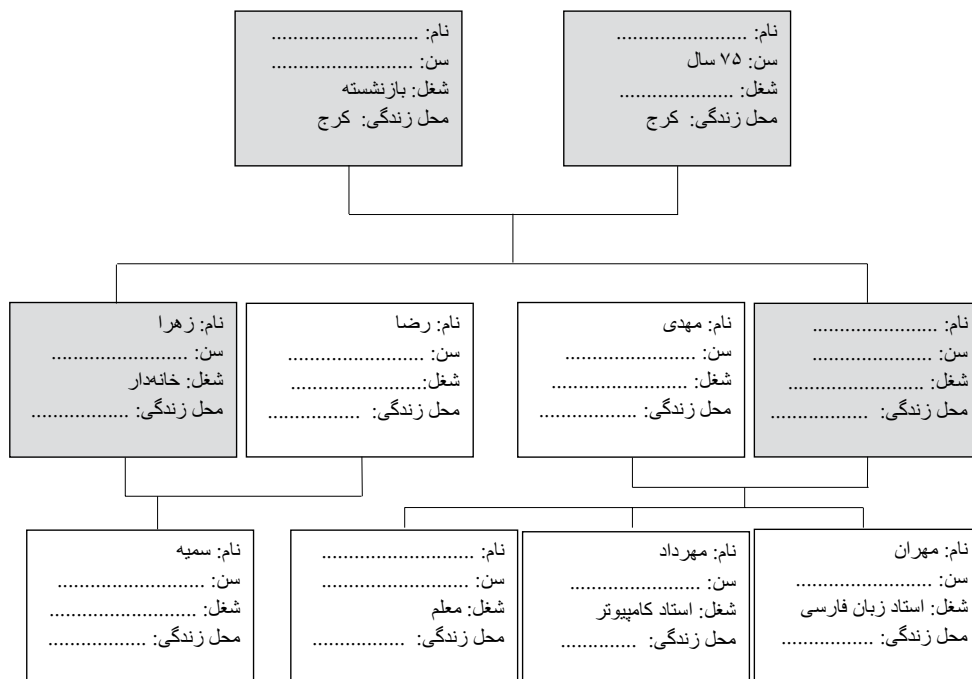


Figure 18.2 Family tree chart B. <sup>28</sup>جدول خانوادگی (ب)

3. "محبوبه" خواهر "مهران" و "مهرداد" است.
4. "مهران" با دختر خاله‌اش "سمیه" همبین است.
5. خواهرزاده "فاطمه"، ۳۵ سال دارد.
6. نام پدر "مهرداد"، "مهدی" است.
7. "زهرا"، ۵۵ سال دارد و شوهرش ۴ سال از او بزرگتر است.
8. "لطیف خان"، دو دختر دارد.
9. "فاطمه" گوینده است و با شوهر و بچه‌هایش در تهران زندگی می‌کند.

**Target Task:** Narrate a memorable event of your past travels using Pixton technology

**Task Type:** Narration (past tense), create a comic strip project

**Learners level and needs:** Learners are college students at the low or mid-advanced level.

**Implementation:** Comic strip (Pixton, Storyboard, GoAnimate, AniMaker, etc.)

**Mode:** Asynchronous, written or colloquial, real-time collaboration project

**Collaboration Type:** Group of two to three learners

**Scenario:** A group of 2–3 Persian learners works on a comic strip story-telling term project and create at least nine slides (in Pixton) or a short animation (GoAnimate, AniMaker) of a memorable event of their past travels. The students need to type narrations on speech bubbles or animation subtitles and record them with their own voices. Role-plays can also be embedded in the story and acted out using voice-overs or dubbing techniques.

### Pedagogical tasks

- Write a memorable event of your past travels
- Type the story on slide panels or animation frames (subtitles)
- Record your narrations, voices or voice-overs on slide panels
- Collaborate on a group project

**Rationale:** The main goal of this task is for advanced language learners to collaborate on a group project. The students will use a narration task to recount a memorable event, create a story, type it in the Persian language and finally record their narrations or act their roles. This is an integrative language task in which learners can collaborate on a project in real-time from the comfort of their homes.



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Figure 18.3 A sample of students' comic strip project using Pixton technology. Speech bubbles show recorded role-plays (slides are ordered from left to right).

Source: Made at Pixton.com

## 18.8 Technology and assessment

Language assessment has used technology in a wide range of applications to inform teaching and curriculum development. Formative or diagnostic assessments can be developed using authoring tools such as Hot Potatoes, QuizWorks and authoring technology for the assessment of different language skills. Computer-based placement tests, even if not as accurate as other forms of assessment, can be used by language coordinators to place learners in different proficiency levels or assess learners' achievements (e.g. JLU).<sup>29</sup> Recently computerized oral assessment tools, such as TOEFL,<sup>30</sup> IELTS,<sup>31</sup> and ACTFL's OPIc and AAPPL,<sup>32</sup> have been utilized to make assessments available to distant learners because they can be easily implemented online anywhere in the world. Technology-driven summative assessments are usually adaptive to the pace and level of learners and generate scores faster and more efficiently, resulting in the reduction of costs and time.

## 18.9 Conclusion

Without a doubt, we live in a world in which communication is becoming more and more vital to world peace and security. Less commonly taught languages are becoming world strategic languages now more than ever. Our understanding of how language learning happens has dramatically evolved, and perhaps language learning will become more efficient because of advancements in second language acquisition research and the introduction of technology to the field of language teaching. However, the connection between SLA research outcomes, modern language teaching and learning tools provided by technology must be strong for an ambitious efficiency in learning world languages to be attainable going forward. In this chapter, relevant principles emerging from communicative language teaching and TBLT approaches were reviewed, and possible applications of these principles to the field of teaching Persian as a foreign language using modern technology were discussed. In addition, guidelines were provided with several hands-on activities designed to remedy some of the limitations rooted in current technology, among which is the lack of intelligent interactivity and, perhaps, adaptive face-to-face interpersonal interactions. However, it seems that technological limitations in the field of language teaching are becoming less constraining, which entails a new set of guidelines to adapt to new complexity in the language task design. It seems, however, that the role of the language teacher will be relevant as far as human beings are behind the AI development.

## Notes

- 1) English as a Second Language.
- 2) Also known as TPFL.
- 3) Also known as LCTL.
- 4) Technologies and computer application names mentioned in this chapter in capital letters may be registered trademarks owned by their respective owners or companies. DAZFA is a Persian acronym, meaning Persian courseware.
- 5) [www.nyu.edu/pages/gsasweb/dept/mideast/virtualpersian/index.html](http://www.nyu.edu/pages/gsasweb/dept/mideast/virtualpersian/index.html).
- 6) Also known as LARC: <http://larc.sdsu.edu/persian/persiancourse/story.html>.
- 7) Adobe Flash is apparently losing its support by most browsers because of cybersecurity concerns.
- 8) <http://sartre2.byu.edu/persian/>.
- 9) [www.persianlanguageonline.com/](http://www.persianlanguageonline.com/).
- 10) [www.easypersian.com](http://www.easypersian.com).
- 11) [www.persianpod101.com/](http://www.persianpod101.com/).
- 12) Defense Language Institute: <https://hs2.dliffc.edu/farsi.html>.



- 13) Center for Advanced Study of Language: [www.casl.umd.edu/](http://www.casl.umd.edu/).
- 14) [www.lib.washington.edu/static/public/neareast/yekruz/index.html](http://www.lib.washington.edu/static/public/neareast/yekruz/index.html).
- 15) <https://forvo.com/languages/fa/>.
- 16) [www.jahanshiri.ir/](http://www.jahanshiri.ir/).
- 17) Technologies and computer application names mentioned in this table in capital letters are registered trademarks owned by their respective owners or companies.
- 18) It should be mentioned that SLA researchers have different approaches to the TBLT theory and its implementation. For more information see (Ellis 2017, 112).
- 19) Adapted from Doughty and Long (2003).
- 20) Also known as ACTFL.
- 21) Jigsaws are tasks that involve several learners who provide information to each other through interactions..
- 22) Also known as NLP.
- 23) Adapted from Brandl (2012).
- 24) Adapted from Brandl (2012).
- 25) The rental information has been collected from rental ads in Tehran.
- 26) Adapted from Brandl (2012).
- 27) Adapted from Brandl (2012).
- 28) Adapted from Brandl (2012).
- 29) <https://jlu.wbtrain.com/sumtotal/jlu2.0/HOME/index.asp> (check with guest login).
- 30) Test of English as a Foreign Language.
- 31) International English Language Testing System.
- 32) ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (a K-12 language assessment tool).

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# TEACHING PERSIAN THROUGH SHORT STORIES WITH PARALLEL ELABORATION

*Anousha Shahsavari*

## 19.1 Introduction

Reading is considered a critical component of developing second language proficiency (Krashen 1993). The teaching of reading as a separate skill in the Persian language classroom used to receive much attention. Most Persian courses offered for college level students and the textbooks developed for these courses have focused on “reading” as a primary skill. Persian language materials have nearly always included a section dedicated to reading. Prior to the revolution of the virtual world, the main source for these reading materials in Persian was literature. In academic settings, literature still contributes to the reading sources for teaching and learning Persian, but unlike other discourses, literature instruction in the Persian language classroom has not yet benefited from the “proficiency movement,” as it is reviewed and called by Kramersch (1987) and Kramersch and Kramersch (2000, 567). The proficiency movement was first started in the '80s, when Proficiency Guidelines (1986) were developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL 2019). Although the guidelines were created as a tool to assess the proficiency of foreign language speakers, its function was extended to help educators in teaching and developing curriculum and language materials. These guidelines are a description of what L2 learners can do with language in terms of four language skills in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context. The teaching of literature, no less than other discourse types, can benefit from the principles developed by the proficiency movement, in which the focus of instruction is more on what the students can do with the language, and not on what they understand and learn from the text. However, in some Persian language classes that use literature as the main content, the literary text itself is so intensely focused on that the factors involved in language learning are inadvertently marginalized and sometimes wholly ignored. As a result, a classroom that should be focused on facilitating language learning instead becomes a lecture on content by the teacher, and in the best case scenario, by a few students who are already at a high level.

Some of these issues go back to the role we give to comprehensible input language learning in classes incorporating Persian literature. Comprehensible input plays an important role in language acquisition (Krashen 1980). It may appear that the instructor facilitates exposure to comprehensible input by providing accommodation for learners such as describing a word or a phrase, paraphrasing a sentence, or providing more information about the context as the

students and the instructor summarize the main events of the story; however, this methodology raises two important concerns. The first is that it is impossible for the instructor to provide level-appropriate glossing for all students at the same time since students will be at different levels. The second and larger issue is that the instructor has to spend important class time to offer this accommodation. This time would be better spent devoted to more active participation from the learners, which based on Mackey (1999) is an important element in learner interaction. Learner interaction is believed to raise the effectiveness of comprehensible input in L2 acquisition (Long 1980).

This chapter combines analysis of research and teaching experience to answer a set of questions about using literature as reading materials. The goal in this chapter is to facilitate the creation of a dynamic curriculum in which focus shifts from providing comprehensible input to creating an opportunity for learner interaction.

- 1 What is reading? How has teaching reading changed in recent years?
- 2 How have Persian language instructional materials been influenced by these changes?
- 3 Why use literature? Why short stories?
- 4 How can we transform literary texts into teaching materials? What is the rationale behind what we do?

These questions provide an outline for this chapter. Read Chapter 13 in this volume for an extensive discussion on the reading skill and its treatment in Persian language courses.

## 19.2 What is reading? How has teaching reading changed in recent years?

When the proficiency movement began, L2 language teachers started redefining their objectives for teaching and their roles as educators. Among other aspects of language teaching and learning, the movement also affected how skills were described in terms of language learning and teaching. Reading in its general meaning involves the reader, the text, and the interaction between reader and text (Rumelhart 1977). For the purposes of this chapter, we define reading as a process undertaken by the reader in order to explore the meaning a text carries. Reading as so defined entails three interlinked operations – “*text-meaning building*,” “*personal-meaning construction*,” and “*knowledge refinement*” (Kod 2016). Based on Koda and Yamashita’s (2019) definition of reading ability, “*Text-meaning building* involves (a) analyzing word forms, (b) retrieving word meanings, and (c) integrating words meanings into larger text segments, such as sentences and paragraphs” (p. 32). In *personal-meaning construction*, the reader recognizes how the information on the text goes with her “real-life experiences and prior knowledge.” In this process, the links are created between text meaning and the relevant information stored in the reader’s memory. This information includes the reader’s real life experience, knowledge, and personal views on the topic. The third process, *knowledge refinement*, “involves the incorporation of personalized text meaning into the learner’s knowledge bases” (Koda and Yamashita 2019, 33). This operation goes beyond the comparisons of personal-meaning construction, and based on Koda and Yamashita (2019), involves the reader reflecting not only on the similarities and differences between text information and what the learner already knows about the topic, but also the change in the learner’s knowledge of the topic.

However we define it, it is important for language instructors to recognize that the “reading” skill, simple on the surface, is in fact a complex interaction of text and reader and that learners may need explicit assistance in this process when learning a second language.

Based on the overview by Paran (2012), the dominant view of reading, reading strategies, and teaching offered by reading specialists since 1980 is still valid in many respects. Paran suggests that the notable change that has happened since then is the shift of the focus from intensive reading to extensive reading. That means the transition of attention from grammatical forms, discourse markers, and other details in the form in order to understand the literal meaning and implications and so on, to reading longer texts in order to understand the content. However, an overview by Paran (2012, 450) suggests that “changes in theoretical understandings and in teacher training often do not filter down to the classroom and that change is context dependent to a very high degree.”

### ***19.2.1 Extensive reading***

Extensive reading may be misunderstood by teachers if they interpret “extensive” to mean more complex. Reading extensive materials involves reading longer texts, but the reading process must also come with reasonable comfort. It must be free from constant pauses and must not overwhelm the learners (Paran 2012).

For the lower levels of less commonly taught languages, when the contact hours are limited, and/or the students do not have any previous knowledge of the language, it takes time for students to reach the level at which they can start reading long texts, even more so for languages like Persian which introduce an entirely new orthography. Also, there is limited availability of authentic materials that are lengthy, manageable, and engaging. As much as reading long texts can be rewarding, it can be frustrating and in cases can create resistance and avoidance by students. For Persian, extensive reading may not be appropriate in the first year of instruction, but it is never too early to develop the reading strategies underlying extensive reading.

### ***19.2.2 The whole language and integrated-skill approach***

The holistic or whole language approach has also impacted the teaching of reading in the second language classroom. Whole language was suggested by educators like Harste and Burke (1977) and included literacy as a part of language. In whole language, the four modes of language – speaking, writing, listening, and reading – “are mutually supportive and not artificially separated” (Rigg 1991, 526). Among the principles listed or mentioned by Rigg (1991) and Dudley-Marling (1995) are:

- 1 language is being learned as a whole, and not as the sum of its unit,
- 2 language skills are in relationship to each other, and not separate skills
- 3 language learning is a social process
- 4 the learners are the center of classroom
- 5 classes are process-oriented as opposed to product-oriented
- 6 learning a language is associating the new information to the previous information and a built-up process.
- 7 students errors are a part of their learning process.

This approach is in accord with current pedagogical best practices. The segregated skill approach, which is still practiced perhaps due to logistically easier instructional methodology (Mohan 1986), is no longer advised by language teaching experts. Despite this, the separation of language skills is still practiced and pedagogically rationalized in language classes.

One contributing factor to the failure of theory to impact practice in our language classrooms is the gap between what research says and the commercial materials available to teachers. Although the whole language idea looks straightforward, in practice, it is not easy for the materials developer and the instructors to abandon tradition and avoid what they have internalized as language learning and teaching. There are language courses that use the most recent technology and claim to be modern but simultaneously apply the language teaching methodologies practiced in the '70s. The idea of whole language may seem easy to apply, but most of the time, even with training, it remains theoretical.

Over the past few decades, research in language pedagogy has shifted from a focus on intensive reading to extensive reading and from a focus on language skills in isolation into an integrated approach relying on interactions between the skills to facilitate learning.

### **19.3 How have Persian language instructional materials been influenced by these changes?**

This redefinition of reading skills has affected the way most new textbooks developed for lower level in Persian are advertised and how they introduce their approach to materials development. They still mention their attention to different language skills, and they claim that their approaches are integrated and include all skills in developing materials. For more information see the textbooks by Brookshaw and Shabani-Jadidi (2012), Nojournian (2017), Sahraei et al. (2017), Sedighi (2015), Shabani-Jadidi and Brookshaw (2019), and Shahsavari and Atwood (2015).

The textbooks by the authors mentioned previously, per their own descriptions, are developed to address the needs of learners at novice to intermediate high. There have not been many commercial materials available for Persian in advanced level in recent years. If they exist, commercial higher intermediate to advanced level materials may not receive the attention the lower level materials do, because the learners' needs become more specific as learners move to higher proficiency levels. According to Pachler and Field (1997), as learners' proficiency increases, their diversity in ability and interest extend, and their motivation and the resources available to them broaden. The students who are studying at the advanced level in foreign languages will not necessarily continue to study foreign language as a major. For many of them it is a means of supporting other subjects. Learners also become more independent as their L2 improves (Pachler and Field 1999).

Developing commercial materials for more advanced levels, especially text-centered materials, is not very efficient, because it may lose its relevance too quickly. In Persian, the learners' goals may still include studying literature for its own sake, or as a door to learn the language and understand the culture. A variety of other subjects, however, have been added to the field of Persian language teaching, including international relations, media studies, and political science. For the latter, students would rather read authentic and more recent materials: news ages fast and quickly becomes stale. However, a few books have been developed after 2010, to include different subjects. Among these books are *The Routledge Intermediate Persian Course: Farsi Shirin Ast II* by Brookshaw and Shabani-Jadidi (2012), *What the Persian Media Says* by Shabani-Jadidi (2015), *Enjoy Reading* by Sahraei, Shahbaz, Ahmadi-Ghader and Soltani (2018), *Iranology or Iran-shenasi* by Sahraei, Soltani, Shahbaz, Marsous and Shirinbakhsh (2018), *Persian Academic Reading* by Aghdasi (2018), *Persian Learner Part Four: Advanced Persian for College Students* by Nojournian (2018), *Intermediate Persian Reader* by Hillmann (2019), and *The Routledge Advanced Persian Course: Farsi Shirin Ast III* by Shabani-Jadidi (2020). Reading skills in most of the materials for advanced level are treated more or less the same.

*Enjoy Reading* and *Iranology* have a similar approach to materials development. *Enjoy Reading* is intended for pre-intermediate and intermediate level based on Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), however, due to the difficulty and complexity of the selected texts and the vocabulary intended to be learned, the texts can be also placed for higher levels. *Iranology* or *Iran-shenasi* is a content-based language textbook developed for intermediate and high-intermediate level based on CEFR. It is developed to address the needs of university students whose major is related to Iranian studies. The book, which focuses on introducing Iran as a country, utilizes a collection of texts that appear to be simplified to accommodate lower levels. The regular exercises for reading skills are reading comprehension exercises which appear in different formats. The instructor may also choose to ask questions as the text is being read in class and elicit “wanted” answers. Some of the textbooks integrate the four skills so there are interactions between skills around a topic or theme.

*What the Persian Media Says* includes authentic texts selected from newspaper texts that are published in Iran, accompanied by exercises that test students’ knowledge of the topic.

*Persian Academic Reading* targets students with strong background in Persian and includes authentic passages from various fields including history, philosophy, cultural studies, political sciences, economics, literature, religious studies, and tourism. Besides exercises in each unit that are meant to help students master the terms, optional exercises accompany each unit for learners to practice their writing.

In *Persian Learner Part Four: Advanced Persian for College Students*, Nojournian (2018) claims that the materials are designed to treat reading skills in an integrated fashion through task-based teaching approach.

*The Routledge Advanced Persian Course* (Shabani-Jadidi 2020) targets students of higher level proficiency. Each lesson includes an authentic text about Iran, a brief biography of a prominent poet and one of their most representative poems, and finally a Persian proverb and the story behind it.

In this chapter, we offer a framework through which literature can be used to incorporate reading in the language curriculum.

#### 19.4 Why use literature? Why short stories?

Literature as a means for language instruction has proven beneficial. It reinforces linguistic ability, raises cultural awareness, and creates opportunities for personal expression (Ur 1999).

Pickens (2007) lists several reasons for using literature in teaching: Literary texts are authentic; they are motivating; and literature makes learners focus on the form of the language and helps them handle linguistic creativity. It also contributes to intercultural understanding. An experiment by Elley and Mangubhai (1983, 53) confirmed “the hypothesis that high-interest story reading has an important role to play in second language learning.”

Using any piece of literature may appear authentic, but authenticity, although itself virtuous (Picken 2007), cannot be preserved if the texts have been stripped of the original context (Widdowson 1998). Widdowson believes that fiction, through its cautious perspective, can work well since the context is included in the text. In short stories the text can be contextualized by using other relative materials, including biography, movies, interviews, and other short stories.

The rationale for using stories for language teaching, as stated by Wajnryb (2003) can be well explained based on Willis’s (1996) three essential conditions for language learning: 1) exposure to accessible language, 2) use of the language to exchange meaning, and 3) motivation to process and use the exposure. In her view instruction is desirable but not essential. In our case short stories give us a platform to create Willis’s conditions for language learning.

### **19.4.1 Reading through literature**

Rosenblatt, in the 1970s, introduced the transaction theory based on which the comprehension developed from the transaction between the reader and the written word. In Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional view, the reader and the text and the process of making sense of the text are all part of a whole, not apart from it. Based on this theory, the reader can "live through" the piece of literature and not simply study it. In her reader response theory (1983), the reading skill is redefined as negotiation of meaning, which is not a new approach to reading instruction in literature. Although the writer's words are important, the knowledge and experience the reader brings to the process of making sense of the text are a part of reading comprehension.

In this chapter, materials development facilitates this transaction, while the tasks that do so are undertaken by the learners themselves – in other words, providing a setting in which students take ownership of this transaction, whose outcome is improving their language proficiency/literacy.

## **19.5 How can we transform literary texts into teaching materials? What is the rationale behind what we do?**

### **19.5.1 The framework for materials development: an integrated model for teaching literature**

When using literature for our language courses, we need to decide the best approach to meet the needs of our students and the objectives of the curriculum. Three main approaches have been proposed by Carter and Long (1991): the cultural model, the language model, and the personal growth model. The cultural model has been the traditional approach to teaching literature, in which the student's role is understanding the text and interpreting the text socially, politically, historically, and literarily. This approach does not lend itself to a learner-centered approach to language teaching, because the instructor retains the main role in communicating the knowledge. In the language model, which is still widely used by language teachers, the learners' engagement with the text stays at the linguistic level through language activities. The personal growth model emphasizes the interaction of the reader with the text. In this model, learning happens through the readers' interpretation and construction of meaning based on their own experience.

These three approaches with different focuses on the text are combined in a model called the Integrated Model, as Savvidou (2004) states, which was offered by O'Brien in 1999. Savvidou (2004, 4) believes that this approach "makes literature accessible to learners and beneficial for their linguistic development."

In Timucin's (2001) case study, he implements an integrated approach combining the linguistic description and stylistic approaches to teaching. The approach proves to have a positive impact on students' motivation, involvement, and appreciation of literary works. Savvidou (2004) defends this model as a desired approach to teaching language because it benefits from some of the strategies used in stylistic analysis in which the object is not just finding out the meaning of the text but more importantly how the text's elements, including vocabulary, structure, register, etc., contribute to that meaning. This model, first suggested by O'Brien in 1999 (Savvidou 2004), uses the elements of the stylistic approach but is not as demanding and technical. Savvidou (2004) believes that this model can be adapted for all levels with the careful selection of text.



This approach was itemized by Savvidou (2004, 4–5) into six stages to make literary texts work for language learning purposes:

- 1 Preparation and anticipation: “eliciting the learners’ real or literary experience of the main themes and context of text.”
- 2 Focusing: “Learners experience the text by listening and or reading and focusing on specific content in the text.”
- 3 Preliminary Response: “Learners give their initial response to the text – spoken or written.”
- 4 Working at it (I): “Focus is on comprehending the first level of meaning through intensive reading.”
- 5 Working at it (II): “Focus is on analysis of the text at a deeper level and exploring how the message is conveyed through overall structure and any special uses of language – rhythm, imagery, word choice etc.”
- 6 Interpretation and personal response: “The focus of this final step is on increasing understanding, enhancing enjoyment of the text and enabling learners to come to their own personal interpretation of the text. This is based on the rationale for the personal growth model.”

The theoretical background for this model looks sound, but the stages mentioned by Savvidou require further elaboration to be implemented in a classroom. For example, how should the materials be prepared to serve these stages and what are the roles of the instructor and the students in each stage?

To respond to these questions, this chapter suggests a parallel engaging model, which is offered through supplementary materials besides the literary text and engaging material parallel to the text. This model combines the main three approaches proposed by Carter and Long (1991): the cultural model, the language model, and the personal growth model. This model is an attempt to serve a learner-centered approach in which based on Tudor’s (1993) description of a learner-centered classroom, the main role of the instructor is preparing learners, analyzing learner needs, selecting methodology, transferring responsibility, and involving learners.

A parallel engaging model serves a learner-centered approach to materials development. The materials and assignments in this model are designed to involve students in making decisions about their needs, are geared around students’ learning styles, and consider students’ individual goals.

The materials in this model include 1) supplementary materials to provide context for the literary text, 2) meaning, interpretation, and modification of input for selected parts, 3) questions and activities that create opportunity for text analysis and personal interpretation. These materials are all accessible to the students as they read the story at home and discuss it in class. As we continue, I will explain how a “parallel engagement” model in developing materials for a language through literature course lends itself to the findings of research on second language acquisition.

### ***19.5.2 Putting theory to practice – challenges and opportunities***

When we use literature as the primary material in a language classroom, we cannot limit ourselves to helping students understand the text. We must also consider the structure of the curriculum and the role of students and teachers in the classroom (Short 1994).

“Persian Through Short Stories” is a course designed for the students at intermediate-high to advanced-low proficiency level based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines. The main characteristic of this course is the fact that it is flipped. The flipped classroom is a pedagogical approach in which the order of typical activities of homework and classroom, as it is followed in traditional teaching, is reversed (Garrison and Vaughan 2008). The principle of the flipped classroom is grounded in the theory of active learning (e.g., Bonwell and James 1991). Active learning as Bonwell and James (1991) describe involves students not only in doing things but also thinking about the things they are doing. Creating a learner-centered language classroom can be difficult without a flipped approach to teaching, because it can be hard for students to get engaged in an interaction without having the tools to interact. The flipped language classroom provides the tool for the students to do so. In the following section, I will review the main parts of the syllabus for “Persian Through Short Stories”: objectives, materials, and assessment followed by a description section on how this model takes advantage of relevant theories in second language acquisition.

### ***19.5.3 Objectives, materials, and assessment***

The objectives of the course are introduced to students in three main areas: language, literature, and the social context.

The course aims to improve students’ language ability and to help them get actively and effectively involved in a communicative environment. The language is challenging for the students in different areas: 1) Lexical challenges such as new terminologies, colloquialisms, made-up forms, idioms, etc.; 2) Discourse-related challenges such as identifying the speech act; i.e. narrate, inform, request, apologize; 3) Interpersonal challenges such as age and gender differences; 4) Functional challenges such as asking for repetition or more definition, agreeing and disagreeing, and hypothesizing.

The course is also designed to foster students’ skills as a critical reader of literature. Reading, discussing, and analyzing the works and the texts are used as gateways to a deeper understanding of Persian literature.

Finally, the course aims to familiarize students with social issues in Iran. Social critical literacy includes investigation of social, political, and cultural issues in reading and responding to literature. To achieve these goals, the following are pursued: 1) Reading the lines: understanding the plot of the story, identifying the climax; 2) Reading between the lines: understanding the larger setting, building a deeper view of the characters, putting the plot into a context, stating the purpose of the theme; 3) Reading beyond the lines: investigation of social, political, and cultural issues in reading and responding to literature.

The students read a few short stories during the course of a semester. Appendix B includes suggested stories. Each story, depending on how long it is, is assigned for one to five class sessions. The students are provided with a list of supplementary materials, independent from the text, for each story. For supplementary materials, students are asked to pick two pieces to read/watch/listen to, one as they prepare to read the story, and another as they finish reading the story. They pick materials depending on their interest and needs. They are encouraged to pick from different modes (reading/listening). They are asked to come up with a list of 10 important words total for this assignment. They should be able to explain later in class why these words are important. These supplementary materials include movies, biographies, interviews, reports, songs, etc. all related to the story’s style, theme, social context, cultural references, history, etc. Students are free to choose from different sources, which can help to boost their interest and attitude towards the story itself.

Students read the story at home. Each story is accompanied by an audio file in which the text is read slower than normal speed, with clear pronunciation. Students should listen to the audio file, but they are free to do it simultaneously as they read the story or before or after they read the text. Through provision of the audio file, students have access to pronunciation. This is important because the Persian writing system does not include short vowels /a, e, o/ in non-initial positions. In class, students should be able to read correctly the assigned part for each session. Although they are not asked to read the entire text in class, in order to discuss the accompanied questions in the table, they need to find the phrases and sentence/s related to the questions and, if needed, read them aloud in their group.

A table (see later) accompanies each story which facilitates students' reading. This table includes meaning and interpretation of selected texts from the story, linguistic explanation, questions from the text, and tasks for class activities. After each table, there is also a list of questions that are more general. Students can use the latter when they write their summary of the story before class, and later can use them as a source for additional pair discussions. The stories are divided into a few parts, each of which has 20 to 30 items in the table of the story. For each session, students read one part of the story and they use the table as a resource to follow the story. To be able to discuss the story in class, students should try to answer the accompanied questions. When they read the story, they should have the questions beside them to help them in reading and following the story. They do not need to answer the questions, but reading the questions will draw their attention to the importance of specific section they read.

After each table, students are provided with a few general questions about the story that provide them with the opportunity to bring more personal responses to the discussion.

For their homework, which should always be completed before each session, students are asked to write at least five long sentences retelling the part of the story they read for each class session. They also should pick two to five questions from the table and answer them through at least five long sentences. These assignments are graded on the overall quality, not on the grammatical correctness, or the interpretation of the story. For each session, students' homework also has a written component in which students respond to or answer questions about the story. Their writing then is checked by the instructor, and written corrective feedback is provided. Instructor feedback should focus on repetitive mistakes that most interfere with the comprehensibility of the student's output. Students check the feedback and apply them on their text. The final version will be checked and graded. For further discussion on corrective feedback to students' writing, read Chapter 14 in this volume.

In class, students are grouped in pairs, not in groups, maximizing their opportunities to interact and use the language. Class normally begins with a short introduction by the instructor in a form of Q&A on the style of the story, then it is left to the students to discuss the story itself in pairs. The pairs start with reporting a few important words they chose from the supplementary materials, and then they report the summary they wrote. They compare their understanding of the story as they report.

To continue the discussion and for the class activities, they use the parallel table. Active participation is demonstrated by meaningfully engaging in class discussion. Examples of in-class tasks are:

- Being able to read the story aloud correctly
- Discussing the assigned questions
- Discussing their findings by bringing examples from the text
- Giving feedback on another student's ideas
- Asking for elaboration

Class time is devoted to activating the vocabulary and structures that students have prepared at home through their homework. They should expect to spend at least 75% of class time doing activities in pairs.

Students also have two writing projects during the course of the semester, and for each of them, they are expected to choose some of the vocabulary they learned to write two pages. This is another opportunity for them to use the vocabulary they have learned. The project can be in a format of a creative work like a story or other forms of writing, including writing about the story covered in class or reporting on the life of an author they like, an artist they admire, a piece of art they are amazed by, or any other favorite subject. For each project, they must use at least 40 new words from the tables, including at least 20 verbs. The instructor will give corrective feedback on this assignment. To receive credit for this assignment, students should submit the improved text based on the feedback provided. The written assignment provides opportunity for output, and gives the instructor an opportunity for assessment and to provide feedback on students' output. Grades of this course mainly include the grades on students' homework assignments, class participation, and writing projects.

In class, the instructor remains a facilitator. The role of the teacher is facilitating and negotiating of the meaning, when needed. Outside the class, the instructor provides corrective feedback on students' written assignments.

### **19.5.4 Materials**

#### *Accessible language through input modification*

The classroom as described previously requires the use of materials that have been intensively prepared in advance. Careful consideration must be given in the development of these materials so that they can be used to facilitate text comprehension and language learning. Here we briefly outline the theoretical considerations motivating our chosen method for enhancing input texts.

Based on Willis (1996), learning happens under three combined conditions: exposure to accessible language, use of language to exchange meaning, and motivation to process and use the exposure. When teaching reading in our classroom, we strive to foster these three conditions. Comprehensible input (Krashen 1981) or accessible language is language that can be understood by learner despite them not knowing all the words and structure in it. In fact, there must be a comprehension problem or language learning cannot occur (Gallaway and Richards 1994). Reading instruction for L2 lies along a spectrum of instructor intervention ranging from intensive intervention to avoid any comprehension to a complete lack of intervention in which students are encouraged to solve the comprehension problem on their own with no supplementary materials provided or input modification.

This course takes a middle approach that facilitates students' comprehension of the text with elaboration (Yano, Long, and Ross 1994), rather than simplification, of the original text. As Long (1983) notes, simplification removes the comprehension problem without which learning cannot occur. Elaboration is a way for clarifying the meaning, so it involves "features such as slower speech, clearer articulation and emphatic stress, paraphrases, synonyms and restatements, rhetorical signaling devices, self-repetition, and suppliance of optional syntactic signals" (Parker and Chaudron 1987, 110).

Elaboration in this course is accomplished not by modification of the original text but first by inclusion of parallel materials, and later by involving students in the process of modification, thereby creating Willis' (1996) second condition for language learning. There are several reasons for this type of intervention in a literature-based language class. Besides the fact that the originality of the text is preserved, students are given freedom in using elaborated texts

as needed for their reading comprehension, and they are empowered to read what they might not be able to read otherwise. Empowered students are more motivated students, thus meeting Willis' third condition for language learning.

In this section we describe a parallel table that is the practical vehicle for delivering the elaboration we describe previously. Each story we read in the class is accompanied with a parallel table developed by the instructor. This table includes meaning, linguistic explanation, elaboration, questions, and activities that create opportunities for discussing the content of the story and sometimes the linguistic forms involved. Students have access to the table as they read the story prior to the class.

In this section the details of a specific parallel table is described. Appendix A shows a sample table for the shortest story for this course, "A Life" by Zoya Pirzad, but for detailed description, the first two sentences of the story "The Fish and Its Mate," by Ebrahim Golestan (1994), have been chosen. This story is assigned to the students for two sessions. Each session is 75 minutes. For each session students read one page of the story. The table accompanying the story consists of 47 items. This table is created as a Google Document, so it can be easily accessed by students and instructors. Students are able to make a copy of this file and write their notes on it. For the first session, in addition to studying the items 1 to 27 of the table, students choose to read or watch one of the supplementary materials (because the story is very short) whose source/links are provided on the top of the Google Document. These supplementary materials include "The Taste of Cherry," a movie whose theme is similar to the story, a part of an interview with the author, a movie by the author, the biography of the author, a piece of news about the author, and an interview with someone about the author's works.

For homework, students should:

- 1 List five words that they extracted from the supplementary materials and that they think are important
- 2 Write a summary re-telling the first page of the story in five long sentences (with different stories students read up to five pages for each session). The summary should be at least five long sentences.
- 3 Choose two to five questions from the table and respond to them in five long sentences.

The table included the meaning and interpretation for some of the words and sentences and questions as the students read the story at home. The immediate function of the table is the role it plays in students' "noticing," which has an important role in transforming input into intake (Schmidt 1995). Later in class the table is used as a detailed guide for pair work. It could potentially address the two last stages of the model suggested by Savvidou (2004) through simultaneously considering: 1) the "analysis of the text at a deeper level and exploring how the message is conveyed through overall structure and any special uses of language," and 2) "increasing understanding, enhancing enjoyment of the text and enabling learners to come to their own personal interpretation of the text."

مرد به ماهی‌ها نگاه می‌کرد. ماهی‌ها پشت شیشه آرام و آویزان بودند. پشت شیشه برای‌شان از تخته سنگ‌ها آبگیری ساخته بودند که بزرگ بود و دیوار هاش دور می‌شد و دوریش در نیمه تاریکی می‌رفت. دیوار می‌روی مرد از شیشه بود.

The translation: The man was looking at the fish. The fish were calm and hanging behind the glass. Behind the glass, with slabs of rock, they had built a pond, which was large with long walls that disappeared into the semi-darkness. The door that was in front of the man was made of glass.

For these first four sentences of the story, four items were presented in the parallel table (Table 19.1). The original table consists of four columns. The second column on the right

Table 19.1 Parallel elaboration

Translation of the questions and activities (provided for the reader of the chapter)	پرسش ها و تمرین ها Questions and activities (elaboration)	معنی و معادل و تقویت ورودی Meaning, interpretation, and input enhancement	واژگان و اصطلاحات Vocabulary, phrases, sentences	شماره number
Column 1: Number 1 Column 2: The man was looking at the fish. Column 3: Fish-fish (plural) Column 4: Why do you think the story starts with the eyes and gaze of the man? After you read the whole story, return to this line and try to answer this question again.	به نظر شما چرا داستان از چشمان و نگاه مرد شروع می‌شود؟ بعد از این که داستان را تمام کردید، دوباره برگردید و سعی کنید به این سؤال جواب دهید.	ماهی- ماهی ها	مرد به ماهی ها نگاه می‌کرد.	۱
Column 1: Number 2 Column 2: Calm and hanging Column 3: Calm and hanging (translation provided) Example for hanging: The curtain is hanging. Column 4:	الف- حدس بزنید لباسم را آویزان کردم چه معنی ای می‌دهد. شما لباس‌تان را کجا آویزان می‌کنید؟	Calm and hanging مثال برای آویزان: پرده آویزان است.	آرام و آویزان	۲
A) Guess what "I hung my dress" means. Where do you hang your dress? B) In Persian, hanging can be a strange adjective for fish. Why do you think the fish are hanging?	ب- در فارسی آویزان می‌تواند صفت عجیبی برای ماهی باشد. به نظر شما چرا ماهی ها آویزان هستند؟	Pond	آبگیر	۳
Column 1: Number 3 Column 2: Pond Column 3: Pond (translation Pond: /ābgir/: /āb/ (water) + /gir/ (get) /gir/ (get): The present stem for /gereftan/ (to get) Column 4:	الف- به نظر شما "آبگیر کردن" چه معنی ای می‌دهد؟	آبگیر: آب + گیر گیر: ستاک حال برای گرفتن		
A) What do you think /gir kardan/ means? 1 to get entertained by someone 2 to get stuck in something B) Do you think that the pond is a natural pond? What is it made of? Where does it go?	1 To get entertained by someone 2 To get stuck in something ب- فکر می‌کنید آبگیر یک آبگیر طبیعی است؟ از چه ساخته شده است؟ به کجا ختم می‌شود؟			
Column 1: Number 4 Column 2: The parapet in front of the man was made of glass. Column 3: parapet: short wall /divāreh/: wall /divār/ + suffix /eh/ Column 4:	الف- دیواره روبروی مرد می‌توانست از چه باشد؟ ب- به نظر شما چرا در سه خط اول داستان سه بار شیشه‌ای بودن دیواره روبروی مرد یادآوری شده است؟ آیا اگر راوی نمی‌گفت که این دیواره شیشه‌ای است خواننده فرض دیگری می‌کرد؟ آیا شیشه‌ای بودن این دیواره مهم است؟	دیواره: دیوار کوتاه دیواره: دیوار + ه	دیواره‌ی روبروی شیشه بود.	۴
A) What material the wall in front of the man could made of? B) In your opinion, why has the glassy nature of the wall been mentioned three times in the first three lines? If the narrator would not say that that wall is of glass the reader would assume differently? Is the fact that the wall is made of glass important?				

shows the words, phrases, or sentences chosen to be elaborated or discussed. The first column on the right shows the order they appear in the text. The third column from right includes meaning, hints, definition, or explanation on structure, sometimes in the form of input enhancement. Input enhancement, first coined by Sharwood Smith (1991), is a deliberate intervention by which selected features of input such as word order, tense, agreement, accent, etc. are made salient to the learner, in order to draw her attention to specific features of the text. The fourth column on the left (last column in the original table) includes questions that serve as opportunities for students to get engaged in activities in which they have opportunities to negotiate for meaning, discuss the content, interpret the story, and practice specific grammatical structures. The translation of the original table has been provided in the fifth column (from right) solely for the reader of this chapter; however, it was not provided for students of the course.

The first item of the table is the first sentence of the story “the man was looking at the fish.” Although this sentence looks very simple in structure and vocabulary, it is important for the story. This is an opportunity to ask meaningful questions about the story and the role of the narrator, while providing students with important vocabulary to the discussion including “in your opinion, why, story, eyes, gaze” and “start”. These are the vocabulary the students need to discuss this part of the story.

For the “meaning, interpretation, linguistic structure, and input enhancement,” which is column two, the differences between Persian and English in the plural form of “fish” have been noted. This column’s goal is to help students in their first reading. Sometimes the English meaning is provided here.

For item 2, the second item of the table is introduced: “calm and hanging.” The third column gives an example in which the “hanging” is used in a different context. The fourth column addresses both meaning and interpretation of the text, and usage of the item in different texts. “Hanging” has been mentioned six times in this table in different contexts. This will affect “noticing” as they use the table in different stages of approaching the text. Students are also expected to use “hanging” in their conversation when they discuss the questions. This will push them actively and meaningfully to use the vocabulary they have learned in several different instances.

Isolated and unrelated questions can be easily ignored by students. Students should be reassured that for them to answer linguistic questions, resources are provided in the table. For example, item 3, question 2 in the fourth column can be answered easier if students read the hint in column 3.

This table has 47 items, and the assignment is for two to three class sessions. If there are questions that are important for personal interpretation they can be followed by the table. For this story for example three questions did not get a chance to be included in the table and were added after the table. These questions helped students discuss their personal interpretation more:

- Why do you think characters do not have names in the story?
- What do you think the man is looking for in his dream?
- How do you think the man’s generation is different from the child’s?

### ***19.5.5 Extensive reading – a caveat***

The flipped classroom can provide extensive reading opportunities if the text is accompanied by enhancement, elaboration, and parallel activities. Through these interventions, when the class is flipped, differences in students’ proficiency and cultural awareness levels are considered. As they initially read and prepare for class activities, students can use the content of the table according to their level, allowing students of all levels to access the text. Input

elaboration allows for the introduction of extensive texts earlier in the curriculum than would otherwise be possible, accelerating the learning process.

There is a caveat here for choosing a level appropriate text. Knowledge of the texts vocabulary is not always sufficient to understand the text. A study by Martinez and Murphy (2011) on the “Effect of Frequency and Idiomaticity on Second Language Reading Comprehension” shows that readers often overestimate how much they understand texts especially when confronted with multiword and idiomatic expressions. For a discussion on the processing and acquisition of idiomatic expressions in second language learners of Persian, read Chapter 6 in this volume.

An example may show this better:

/ja-tun khali bud/. جاتون خالی بود.  
literally: Place-your was empty.

The literal meaning of this sentence “your place was empty” and the words “your,” “place,” “was” and “empty” are frequent words that students will learn easily, but the meaning of this sentence cannot be discerned solely from knowledge of the words. Persian in that case is a highly idiomatic language, and literature takes advantage of this aspect of language. In selecting the materials, this aspect of the language should be considered. We must consider more than just word frequency when judging the ability of students to understand a text. The following paragraph from the story of “Baqal-e Kharzavil” or “The Grocer of Kharzavil” by Khaksar (1988), a short story used in Persian through short stories courses, is an example of how a text with frequent words can be incomprehensible to a learner who already knows the vocabulary of the text:

یادم است که روی دنده چپ افتاده بودم. پیرمرد دم گرفته بود و یافریز دموکراسی اروپا را به رخم . . . می‌کشید. شاید من این‌طور فکر می‌کردم، اما او به واقع گندش را درآورده بود . . . مشکل بود دستش را درباره دموکراسی اروپا رو کنم. زبان انگلیسی‌ام زیاد خوب نبود، و من هم کرم این را داشتم که میان حرف‌هایم اصطلاحات عامیانه زبان خودمان را به‌کار ببرم. ترجمه آنها به انگلیسی، آن‌طور که دست و پا شکسته کارم را پیش می‌بردم، چیز خنده‌داری از آب درمی‌آمد.

Literal translation: My memory is that I was fallen on the left rib. The old man had taken breath and one tiny would pull the democracy of Europe on my face. Perhaps I was thinking so, but in fact he had taken off its stench. . . . It was difficult to do his hand on about European democracy. My English language was not very good, and I also had the worm to put in work, among my words, the slang of our language. Translating them into English, as I was moving forward my job with broken hand and feet would come up of water as a joke.

As one can see, the text is composed of frequent words, and a student in low intermediate is expected to know the vocabulary of this text. But it will not be easy for students to relate it to the actual meaning:

Translation into English: I remember that I was being hard-headed. The man started raving and boasting nonstop about European democracy. Perhaps that was what I was thinking. Actually, he had gone too far. . . . It was hard to prove him wrong about European democracy. My English was not very good, and I'd need to grimace like a monkey and intentionally use idioms of our own language while talking to him. That way, handling it with my broken language, it would come out very funny/laughable.

Considering this caveat, there are a few reasons why parallel engagement can help introduce extensive reading to the class. One is that the option of parallel modification makes it



easier to choose appropriate level materials, the text can be made accessible without touching the input itself. Second, we can give students the ability to manage their reading speed, especially when they read the text for the first time. So we are creating a text with fewer obstacles. Third, through this method we can address students' differences in proficiency level and background knowledge. We can provide materials that serve a mixed ability class and serve the underserved, which can motivate the students for reading. The students know that they will be engaged intensely in class discussion and that they need to be prepared to discuss the detailed questions on the fourth column in their own group of two.

## **19.6 Conclusion**

The methodology offered in this chapter is potentially confusing for students in a few ways. Students may expect a more structured approach in learning vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, in order to avoid confusion, it is important to explicitly describe its nature and approach. To bring more structure to the class, it will be useful if: 1) a few more advanced grammatical points are mentioned for each story and highlighted in the text, and the students are asked to use them in their daily writing assignments; 2) at least one writing project is dedicated to the analysis of one of the stories, and students are guided in using the questions of the parallel table to write their analysis.

It is not recommended that students answer all of the questions about the stories for class activities. The instructor can highlight the ones that are more important for analyzing the story and appropriate for elevating students' level.

A vocabulary quiz on the table would both overwhelm students and confuse them regarding the nature and objectives of the course, so it is not recommended. The students should be responsible for selecting their own vocabulary to master. Supplementary video materials seem to be what students most remember about this course, so it is recommended to spice up each session with a relevant short video.

This model suggests that when we prepare a short story for language class, we consider the following as necessary for improving comprehension on the one hand, and learner interaction on the other hand:

- 1 Providing context for the text through supplementary materials.
- 2 Providing input enhancement to highlight selected features of a language for students, such as word order, parts of words that express tense, agreement, and number for example, accents, idioms, and slang. This also includes any audio files which help students read the text.
- 3 Providing meaning and interpretation of selected vocabulary based on students and curriculum needs. Students will use it to read the story.
- 4 Creating activities for students to provide their initial response to the text, such as asking to retell the story in a few sentences, or writing about a particular section.
- 5 Providing questions and activities that direct students' attention to the importance of specific elements of the text and result in text analysis by the students, through which better comprehension can be reached. These activities are the source of class discussion.

This method's aim is not just to provide pre-modified input, but furthermore to provide students with opportunities for active participation and to empower them to discuss a story to reach an interactionally modified input, which results in better comprehension than a pre-modified input (Ellis, Tanaka, and Yamazaki 1994).

There are a few factors that should be considered in adopting this model. First, as previously noted, students should be informed of the learner-centered nature of the course and receive extra instruction on how to take responsibility for their part. Second, this is a labor-intensive approach, and adopting this model entails extra work from the instructors. Third, it needs to receive support from the department chairs and related administrative support language teaching with a learner-centered approach (Tudor 1993).

The benefit of this model is that the materials can be adjusted and reused to address students with different proficiency levels and needs. For example, for a higher level course more inference questions can be added, and more stylistic and cultural elements of the text can be considered in writing the questions.

The activities, if presented in parallel to the text, can constantly engage the learners with the text and help them pay attention to different aspects of the language when preparing for the class. This engagement continues during the class discussions. Based on detailed instructions and questions, students prepare beforehand to have whole-class brainstorming and pair work. What makes this model different is to provide students with the opportunity to start enjoying the text and having their personal interpretation with the aid of carefully designed instructions and questions, before attending the class. The activities avoid predetermined interpretation and leave space for students' own interpretations. The students are empowered and armed with confidence and voice needed to interact in a language class.

# Appendix A

The vocabulary and activity table and extra discussion questions on the story of “A Life” by Zoya Pirzad

جدول واژگان و تمرین‌های یک زندگی اثر زویا پیرزاد

تمرین	معنی و معادل	واژگان و اصطلاحات مورد بحث
<p>چه کسی به درخت نگاه می‌کند؟ او از کجا به درخت نگاه می‌کند؟ به نظر شما کدام جمله در ادبیات فارسی ممکن و درست نیست؟</p> <p>۱- حال مرا از شکوفه‌های گیلاس بپرس. ۲- مرا شکوفه باران کن. ۳- پرنده‌های شکوفه برگشتند. به نظر شما زن چند سال دارد؟ پیر است یا جوان؟</p>	<p>The tree has bloomed.</p> <p>چند دسته موی سفید را از پیشانی کنار می‌زند.</p> <p>She pulls back a wisp of grey hair from her forehead.</p>	<p>1 درخت شکوفه کرده است.</p> <p>2 چند طره سفید را از پیشانی پس می‌زند.</p>
<p>زن اول کجا بود و بعد کجا رفت؟ مگر از ابتدا روبروی پنجره نبود؟ چطور بگوییم I stood؟</p>	<p>She stands in front of the window.</p>	<p>3 روبروی پنجره می‌ایستد.</p>
<p>به نظر شما چرا زن لباس کلفت و آستین بلند پوشیده است؟ چرا یقه لباسش بسته است؟</p>	<p>Her white tick nightgown has long sleeves and a high collar.</p> <p>کلفت # نازک آستین بلند # آستین کوتاه</p>	<p>4 پیراهن خواب سفید و کُلفَتَش آستین بلند است و یقه بسته.</p>
<p>باد چه چیزی را تکان می‌دهد؟ چطور بگوییم you shook the chair؟ به نظر شما “صندلی را جابجا کردی.” یعنی چه؟</p>	<p>It shakes</p> <p>مثال: این عکس دنیا را تکان داد. زلزله شهر همدان را تکان داد.</p>	<p>5 تکان می‌دهد.</p>
<p>به نظر شما آیا زن سردش می‌شود؟ چطور بگوییم: She never seem to feel tired?</p>	<p>The blossoms never seem to feel the cold.</p> <p>انگار: As if انگار نه انگار: As if it has not happened مثال: روز بعد از جراحی رفت سرکار، انگار نه انگار که اتفاقی افتاده.</p>	<p>6 شکوفه‌ها انگار هیچ وقت سردشان نمی‌شود.</p>

تمرین	معنی و معادل	واژگان و اصطلاحات مورد بحث
زن چه چیز را به یاد می آورد؟	She remembers. یادش رفت:	7 یادش می‌آید
چه کسی زن را از خواب بیدار می‌کند؟	she forgot از جا بلند شو، از خواب بیدار شو	8 پاشو
زن و مرد چه چیزی را تماشا کردند؟	Stand up; wake up تماشا کردن: نگاه کردن به منظور لذت بردن	9 تماشا کردند
به نظر شما چرا لباس زن آستین نداشت و نازک بود؟ چرا سفید بود؟ معنی واژه‌های زیر را حدس بزنید: بی‌صبر: بی‌دریستر: بی‌فکر: بی‌فایده:	They watched (for entertainment) بی‌آستین: بدون آستین Her white long nightgown was sleeveless and thin.	10 پیراهن خواب سفید و بلندش بی آستین بود و نازک.
لباس خواب زن با لباسی که در زمان حال پوشیده چه تفاوتی دارد؟ چرا زن شرم داشت؟/از چه چیزی شرم داشت؟ زن خجالت می‌کشید به چشم‌های چه کسی نگاه کند؟ وقتی در اینجا زن پنجره را باز می‌کند بار چندم است که زن و مرد با هم شکوفه‌ها را تماشا می‌کنند؟	Her dress had a delicate lace around its open collar. Or maybe it was the shame that was repelling the cold. She was ashamed. که "نقش تأکیدی دارد و در اینجا" به معنی "وقتی" است.	11 دُورِ یَقَهٗ بازش توردوزی داشت. 12 یا شاید شرم بود که سرما را پس می‌زد. 13 خجالت می‌کشید. 14 زن که پنجره را باز کرد...
به نظر شما چرا در اینجا باد فقط یک شکوفه با خود می‌آورد؟ با "خوابیده بود" یک جمله بگویید. چطور بگوییم "he was holding her"؟	When the woman opened the window . . . It/she had brought a blossom with it/her. آغوش: بغل در آغوش گرفتن: بغل کردن to hold someone in arms The infant was calmly sleeping in the woman's arms.	15 شکوفه ای با خود آورده بود. 16 نُوژاد در آغوش زن، آرام خوابیده بود.
به نظر شما وقتی مرد انگشتش را روی صورت نوزاد می‌کشد چه احساسی دارد؟ چه چیزی مثل هلو است؟ به نظر شما به چه صفتی در هلو اشاره می‌شود؟ در اینجا که زن از خواب می‌پرد، چندمین بار است که درخت شکوفه داده است؟ به نظر شما چرا زن از خواب می‌پرد؟ وقتی باد دور درخت می‌چرخد، چه کسی داشت از پنجره حیاط را نگاه می‌کرد؟ به نظر شما شکوفه‌ها دنبال چه کسی می‌گشتند؟	She stroked the baby's face with her finger. Just like a peach She was startled. Literally: Jumped out of sleep. The wind was swirling around the tree. As if they were looking for something.	17 انگشتش را روی صورت نوزاد کشید. 18 درست مثلِ هلو 19 زن از خواب پرید. 20 باد دور درخت می‌چرخید. 21 انگار دنبال کسی می‌گشتند.

(Continued)

(Continued)

واژگان و اصطلاحات مورد بحث	معنی و معادل	تمرین
22 درخت خستگی سرش نمی شد.	سرش نمی شد: نمی فهمید؛ درک نمی کرد در اینجادرخت برای چندمین بار بود که شکوفه می داد؟ درخت هرگز خسته نمی شد	The tree never tired. tiredness خسته + ی: خستگی . . . . . گرسنه + ی: . . . . . ؟
23 دست دراز کرد و شکوفه چید.	S/he reached out and picked the blossoms. می چینم	در اینجا چه کسی دست دراز می کند و شکوفه می چیند؟ زن، مرد یا دخترشان؟
24 دامنش پر از شکوفه شد.	Her skirt was (became) full of blossoms.	به نظر شما زن چه احساسی دارد؟ جمله های زیر را کامل کنید: - خیابان ها پر از . . . . . بود. - . . . . . بر از بوی خوب شد. - لیوان پر از . . . . .
25 از سوزن نازک و نخ دراز گذشتند.	They passed through a thin needle and a long thread. Note: a picture of a needle with a thread is provided here.	زن با شکوفه ها چه کار می کند؟
26 دایره درست کردند.	They made a circle. دایره، مربع، مستطیل، مثلث	کی دایره درست کرد؟ چرا دایره؟
27 به آینه نگاه کرد.	She looked into the mirror.	در اینجا چه کسی به/در آینه نگاه می کند؟
28 نور شمع ها آینه را روشن کرد.	The light of the candles lit up the mirror.	به نظر شما چرا شمع روشن کرده اند؟
29 شکوفه های خودمان	Our own blossom	چرا زن با خودش حرف می زند؟ خودمان یعنی چه کسی؟
30 باد شکوفه ها را قلقلک می دهد. شکوفه ها حال خندیدن ندارند.	The wind tickles the blossoms. The blossoms are too tired to laugh. حال . . . . . نداریم. مثال: - حال راه رفتن نداریم. - حال حرف زدن نداشت.	چرا شکوفه ها خسته اند و حال خندیدن ندارند؟

گفتگوی بیشتر:

1. به نظر شما زن در آغاز داستان چند سال دارد؟
2. لباس زن را توصیف کنید.
3. اولین باری که زن شکوفه درخت را دید لباسش چگونه بود؟
4. زن و شوهرش، بار یازدهم، وقت بهار، در چه حالی بودند؟
5. بار بیست و یکم چه شباهتی و تفاوتی با بار یازدهم داشت؟ به نظر شما چرا شوهرش آنجا نبود؟
6. سی و یکمین باری که درخت شکوفه می دهد چه اتفاقی می افتد؟
7. چرا شکوفه ها برای چهل و یکمین بار حال خندیدن ندارند؟
8. به نظر شما در آخرین جمله این داستان شکوفه ها استعاره از چه هستند؟

# Appendix B

The list of suggested short stories for the course:

- 1 A Life by Zoya Pirzad اثر زویا پیرزاد
- 2 A Crazy Night by Moniru Ravanipour یک شب شورانگیز اثر منیرو روانیپور
- 3 My Little China Doll by Hushang Golshiri عروسک چینی من اثر هوشنگ گلشیری
- 4 The Fish and Its Mate by Ebrahim Golestan ماهی و جفتش اثر ابراهیم گلستان
- 5 My Father's Tonsil by Rasoul Parvizi زبان کوچک پدرم اثر رسول پرویزی
- 6 The Wolf by Hushang Golshiri گرگ اثر هوشنگ گلشیری
- 7 The Umbrella, the Cat, and the Slim Wall by Reza Ghasemi چتر و گربه و دیوار باریک اثر رضا قاسمی
- 8 Kharzavil's Grocer by Nassim Khaksar بقال خرزویل اثر نسیم خاکسار
- 9 Munis From the Story of Women Without Men by Shahnoush Parsipour مونس از مجموعه زنان بدون مردان اثر شهرنوش پارسپور
- 10 My Sister and Spider by Jalal Al-Ahmad خواهرم و عنکبوت اثر جلال آل احمد

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# TEACHING PERSIAN LITERATURE IN PERSIAN

## A content-based approach

*Asghar Seyed-Gohrab*

### 20.1 Introduction

Persian literature is perhaps the strongest testament of the Iranian civilizations, which incorporated elements of various other cultures and religions. It has preserved and transmitted the Persian and Islamic creation myth, world-views, religious affiliations, rules of proper conduct and political strategies of the Iranian peoples, in a wide range of literary forms and genres. A content-based approach to the teaching of Persian literature can be structured around questions that are also learning goals for the student. How and why did Persian literature emerge? For whom was it written? Why did Persian literature, especially poetry, become the icon of identity for Persian-speaking peoples in a vast area encompassing Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia and Caucasus, present day Uzbekistan, and Iran? Why did Persian poetry become a vehicle for political legitimization in parts of the Ottoman Empire and in Mughal India? Why did Persian poetry become the medium for mystics from the eleventh century, across a vast area? The student should also be familiar with formal literary aspects, such as rhyme and metre, imagery and metaphor, literary motifs, and periodization, that are essential for the appreciation of Persian literature. And there is the simplest question: what is the student's purpose in learning Persian literature? Is it purely for an aesthetic appreciation, to study one of the world's richest literary traditions, or is it to learn Persian language and culture, or to study the cultural and political history of the Persian-speaking world? This chapter will concentrate on only the most essential and basic aspects of Persian literature in a wide geographic context.

While Chapter 19 focused on the teaching methodology of literature with a focus on short stories, this chapter introduces the most vital discussions to be included in a Persian literature course whose language of instruction is Persian. Therefore, what follows will be an essential guideline for material developers for a Persian literature course, with a focus on Persian poetry. After each section, the author has given some suggestions for further reading, which are of benefit to the students of Persian literature.

### 20.2 The emergence of Persian literature

After the invasion of the Muslim Arabs in the seventh century, Arabic became the major administrative and scholarly language of the conquered Persian areas for about two centuries,

while the common people used variants of Middle Persian (*pahlavī*). Persians contributed to Islamicate culture significantly by translating works from Middle Persian and other languages into Arabic.<sup>1</sup> From the ninth century, Persian culture reasserted itself so strongly that Persia became one of the few conquered areas to retain its own language and culture. A major movement was the Shu‘ūbiyya, in which Arabs and non-Arabs claimed equality in literary domain.<sup>2</sup> This was an equalitarian movement to redress new identities of Muslims with different cultural backgrounds. The administration and bureaucracy of the vast new Islamic empire relied largely on the Sasanian bureaucracy and the Persian aristocracy. From the ninth century onwards, semi-independent dynasties, such as the Saffarids (861–1003) in Sistan, Samanids (819–999) in Bukhara, and Ziyarids (930–1090) in Gurgan emerged in the eastern Iranian lands, claiming independence from the Caliph in Baghdad. These dynasties claimed to be heirs to the pre-Islamic Sasanian Empire (224–650). They invited scholars, poets, and artists to their courts to promote their own reputation and to reassert Persian culture. The early literary texts from this period come from these courts. There are several stories about the rise of Persian literature. One account in the chronicle *Tārīkh-i sīstān* tells how the first Persian (as distinct from Pahlavī) poem was composed at the Saffarid court.<sup>3</sup> A poet recited a panegyric in Arabic for the Persian ruler Ya‘qūb Layth, who responded: *chīzī ki man andar nayābam chirā bāyad guft*, or “things that I do not understand, why should they be said.” His secretary Muḥammad ibn Waṣīf translated the poem into Persian. This story is usually told as an epitome of the revivification of Persian culture and the rise of Persian poetry as the crown and icon of Persian identity.

### Further Reading

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### 20.3 Some basic literary concepts

Perhaps the most lasting contribution of Arabic culture in this transitional period was the development of a resilient written tradition. Middle Persian literature had been an oral tradition, its remnants being written down after the Arab invasion.<sup>4</sup> Most of the literary terminology of Persian literature derives from Arabic, yet Persian literature developed as an independent literary tradition. The word *adabiyāt*, which denotes the concept of literature, derives from the root *adab*, which has a variety of meanings such as ‘education,’ ‘proper behaviour’ and ‘politeness,’ as well as ‘literary erudition.’<sup>5</sup> The modern usage of the term *adabiyāt* refers to all types of literature in verse and prose. A Persian verse consists of two hemistichs, which are called *miṣrā‘* or *miṣra‘*. Two hemistichs form one couplet or *bayt* (pl. *abyāt*). The term poetry is indicated by *shī‘r*, which refers to the art of poetry and everything related to it. The word also alludes to individual lines or an entire poem. The word for poet, *shā‘ir*, derives from *shī‘r*, and all activities related to the art of poetry are indicated by the noun *shā‘irī*. There are also Persian varieties of these terms such as *sukhan* or ‘word,’ ‘speech’ and *sukhan-dān* ‘littérateur’ and *sukhan-gū* or ‘poet.’<sup>6</sup> Alongside the term *shī‘r*, one finds *naẓm*. This literally means ‘order,’ ‘concatenate,’ ‘joining pearls in a row,’ but it is used to refer to poetry. A related term for a collection of poetry is *manẓūma*. Prose works are *nathr*. When an author’s poetry

and prose are collected in a modern volume, it is usually called *āthār-i manẓūm va manthūr* or ‘works in poetry and prose.’ The poetic works of a poet are usually collated in a volume, called a *dīvān*, which is structured alphabetically based on the rhyme pattern. In addition to the *dīvān*, there is the *kulliyāt*, or ‘collected works.’ Depending on the literary output of an author, the *kulliyāt* can be one or more volumes. The Persian literary tradition also has a rich genre of anthologies, called *tadhkira*, (lit. ‘memoire’), containing biographical information for an author and samples of his or her work.

#### 20.4 The poet, his position at the court and qualities

Persian poetry was written down after the advent of Islam, but several of its roots, in terms of themes, are in the oral literary tradition of pre-Islamic Persia.<sup>7</sup> Because it was oral, we know little about this literature but we have indications of the social position of a minstrel poet and poetry. In pre-Islamic times, poetry was combined with music, and the professional singers (*gōsān*) or *khunyāgar* (later *muṭrib*) performed poetry during all of life’s rituals, from the cradle to the grave.<sup>8</sup> Mary Boyce’s insightful analysis is indispensable in our understanding of the position of minstrels in Persia and how this tradition was transmitted to the Islamic period.<sup>9</sup> The early Persian poets also acted as minstrels. The eminent poet Rūdākī (860–940) at the Sāmānid court, and Farrukhī Sīstānī (d.c. 1037) at the Ghaznavid court, were both accomplished musicians. Nevertheless, a sharp distinction was made between a professional poet and a minstrel. In his mirror for princes, the *Qābūs-nāma* (1082–1083), Kay Kāvūs devotes two separate chapters to these functions, attributing different traits to these two professions. One difference is that the minstrel performs poetry while the poet composes it. Chapter thirty-five, “On the Rules and Rites of Being a Poet” (*dar āyīn-u rasm-i shā’irī*),<sup>10</sup> outlines the poet’s qualifications. He should know not only all aspects of poetry but also of the people and context in which a poem is to be performed. He admonishes his son, for whom the book is written, “Should the theme be one best suited for prose do not put it into verse; prose may be likened to subjects and verse to a king – what is fitted for the king is not so for his subjects.”<sup>11</sup> A few lines further, he continues,

you yourself must know each man’s worth, so that when you are composing a laudatory ode it shall be suited to the person to whom it is addressed. . . . [I]t is the poet’s duty to judge the character of his patron and know what will please him, for until you say what he desires, he will not give you what you need.<sup>12</sup>

Persian poetry was originally created at courts, as a courtly tradition. Rulers patronized poets for their literary works, and poets glorified the ruler’s name and position, legitimizing his rule by comparing him to pre-Islamic Persian kings. Poets at court provided kings and courtiers with wisdom and instruction, entertainment, and the cultivation of highly ornamented verbal skills.<sup>13</sup> This poetry maintains courtly aesthetics, and the aesthetic is politicized in polished language. This courtly tradition lasted to the twentieth century.

The poet who praises the patron is called *mādiḥ* and the praised one; the patron is called *mamdūh*. The poet has a high position at the court, alongside other indispensable functionaries such as secretaries, the astronomer, and physicians. These classes of functionaries each receive a chapter in Nizāmī ‘Arūzī’s *Four Discourses*, (*Chahār maqāla*, twelfth century). Chapter two is devoted to “The Essence of the Science of Poetry and the Poet’s Qualification” (*dar māhiyyat-i ‘ilm-i shi’r va ṣalāhiyyat-i shā’ir*), which emphasizes the public function of poetry for both the poet and the patron.<sup>14</sup> One should certainly deliberate that such books create an

ideal picture of the power of poetry, while poets often depicted an ideal picture in their introduction to the panegyric obliging the patron to live up to this ideal. As a boon companion, the poet is beside the ruler, commenting in poetry on court events such as abdications, the building of palaces, the births and marriages of princes and intrigues, but also on wars and the ruler's enemies. The reputation of the poet and the patron depends on the poetry, which will damage or elevate the patron's reputation in posterity. 'Arūzī emphasizes how important it is for the poet to know a wide range of sciences. As poetry suits any science, so any science is a suitable subject for poetry. In addition, the aspiring poet should have a sound character, proper behaviour, sharp perception and be inquisitive and open to any subject. A young poet should learn by heart a thousand couplets from ancient poets and ten thousand couplets from later poets. As a student, he needs a master (*ustād*) to teach him all the finesses of the art. 'Arūzī gives much attention to the skill of improvisation, which will transform the poet's career and increase his esteem among courtiers.<sup>15</sup>

### Further Reading

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## 20.5 Persian poetic forms

Students of Persian literature must also learn the poetic forms and their characteristics. Persian has a wide range of poetic forms which are used for different genres at different periods. The most used forms are rhyming couplets (*mathnavī*), panegyrics (*qaṣīda*), love lyrics (*ghazal*), quatrains (*rubā'ī*), and the *qit'a*. Other poetic forms which occur less frequently are the *tarjī'*-*band*, *tarkīb-band* or strophic poems, *musammaṭ*, *murabba'*, and more.<sup>16</sup>

The formal characteristics of the *mathnavī* are a metre and the rhyme scheme (aa, bb, cc, etc.), which means that each line rhymes internally and the poet is free to use any internal rhyme at any moment. This freedom has made *mathnavī* a favourite form for narratives and long didactic pieces. The length of a *mathnavī* varies from several short lines to some 100,000 couplets.

The *qaṣīda* has been used to praise rulers, courtiers, and religious figures. While the focus of the *mathnavī* is the narration, in the *qaṣīda* the poet's focus is on social life, his own connection to the man of power, and current interaction with the patron, as the poet expects to receive rewards. The *qaṣīda* has a mono-rhyme aa, ba, ca, and so forth. A Persian *qaṣīda* is commonly around forty to eighty couplets. The form allows the poet to position himself among contemporary poets, who are his peers and rivals, by outstripping them through novel and fitted metaphors, subtle allusions, and novel themes.

The *qaṣīda* consists of three main parts, the prologue (*nasīb*, or *tashbīb*), the praise piece (*madīh*) and the concluding plea (*du'ā'*) in which the poet asks for the patron's munificence. The poet mentions the patron's name in the transition between the prologue and the praise piece, called the *gurīzgāh*, or *makhlaṣ*. The poet adorns his poem with a rich gallery of rhetorical figures. The opening (*maṭla'*) and concluding lines (*maqta'*) are carefully treated to attract the audience's attention. At first sight, many prologues have little to do with the actual

praise in the middle of the poem, but there is always some connection: descriptions of spring when the rain falls, in the prologue, may refer to the patron's generosity and the flourishing of the empire, which are referred to in the praising section. The recurrent subjects of the prologues are homoerotic love, descriptions of wine, the cupbearer, and wine drinking, but also of pre-Islamic Persian festivals such as *nowrūz* and *mihragān*, the fire festival (*jashn-i sada*), and of Islamic feasts such as *'Īd al-aẓḥā* ('the Feast of Sacrifice') or Ramaẓān. As the *qaṣīda* celebrates social courtly life, protocols, and rituals, it also depicts celebrations around the foundation of buildings, victories, hunting expeditions, elegies (*marthiyya*, *mūyya*) on the ruler's death, and descriptions of courtly regalia such as the pen, the sword, the horse, etc. Other subjects such as intrigues at the court, satire, old age, etc. are also treated in the panegyrics. Sometimes description are so ornamented that they resemble another Persian literary genre, the riddle (*luḡḡaz*, *chīstān*).<sup>17</sup> While poets used riddles on a wide range of subjects for courtly entertainment, they could also show their virtuosity in creating cryptic metaphors. Other courtly subjects for the *qaṣīda*, used at the court to cement identity and religious affiliation, were debates (*munāẓara*), for example between an Arab and a Persian, or between a Muslim and a Zoroastrian, who argue for their own superiority.<sup>18</sup>

The *qaṣīda*'s heyday was between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries, when it gave way to the ghazal as a favourite form. Although lyrical pieces existed before the thirteenth century, as components of *qaṣīdas* and romantic *mathnavīs*, the ghazal developed as an independent poem from the twelfth century. Ghazals are included in the collected poetry of several major poets, such as Mukhtārī and Sanā'ī. In Sanā'ī's case, he used the ghazal chiefly for its mystical message. The formal aspect of the ghazal is the metre and rhyme. The ghazal's rhyme scheme is aa, ba, ca, etc. Its length varies from five to some fifteen couplets but is commonly between eight to ten couplets. As in the *qaṣīda*, the poet pays special attention to the opening line and the concluding lines. In the concluding lines, the poet mentions his *nom de plume* (*takhalluṣ*). This pen name both identifies the writer and serves as a poetic device to create an extra layer of interpretation. For instance, in Ḥāfiẓ's poetry, his name could also refer to a person who knows the Koran by heart.<sup>19</sup> A poet may use several pen names to identify himself with someone else or with an abstract concept. Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (1207–1273) uses the pen name of his beloved friend Shams ('the Sun') or variations on his name. In several cases he also uses *khāmūsh* or 'silence.'<sup>20</sup>

Almost all Persian poets have written quatrains (*rubā'īs*). The simple rhyme pattern (aaba or aaaa) and the pithy form of four lines allowed the poets to write about virtually any subject. Their quatrains were often cited as punch-lines in sermons and dialogues, and lend themselves for inscriptions on buildings, tombstones, and artefacts. Sufis used them in their sermons, theoretical treatises, and in their rituals such as the musical audition (*samā'*). There are also several large collections of quatrains on mystical love such as 'Aṭṭār's *Mukhtār-nāma* or Shirvānī's *Nuzhat al-Majālis*. Quatrains were also used for philosophical subjects, on which there are several collections with commentaries. Although the origin of the quatrain is uncertain, its metrical pattern is uniquely Persian, being based on variants of *hazaj* metre.<sup>21</sup>

The *qit'a*, usually described as a 'fragmentary piece,' is a popular form. The translation is misleading as this implies that the poem is incomplete. The reason for such terminology is that *qit'a* literally means 'piece,' and because the *qit'a* lacks the rhyming opening couplet as in a *qaṣīda* or *ghazal*. *Qit'a* poems vary in length from five to some eighty couplets, dealing with topical subjects. They can be characterized as occasional poetry dealing with aspects of social life, but also treating moral and ethical issues.

In addition to these classical forms which have remained popular to this day, modern European literary forms were introduced to Iran in the twentieth century. In the middle of the

twentieth century, poets wanted to write in a new form of poetry, very much different from the classical forms, which they called 'New Poetry' (*shi 'r-i now*) with Nīmā Yūshīj (1897–1960) as a pioneer. Experiments with 'new poetry' based on European models started in the Constitutional Revolution period (1905–1911). Political developments in the first decades of the twentieth century, the rise of the Pahlavi dynasty (1925–1979), Reza Shah's modernization program and World War II, made many literati believe that the classical Persian forms and contents could not express the needs of modern society.<sup>22</sup> Using a single metre and a single rhyme-pattern in an entire poem, with cliché imagery and metaphors, did not reverberate with the wishes of the modern poet. Form, metres, rhyme, and imagery had to enhance the meaning of a poem. Instead of following the classical conventional poetic rules, the poet had to convey his own feelings and ideas in a new form. Even when a poet wanted to imitate an old master, it had to have a personal tone with new form, imagery, and metaphor to suit his purpose.<sup>23</sup>

## 20.6 Metre and rhyme

An essential aspect of appreciating Persian poetry is metre, which gives rhythm and melody. Each poem, even if it contains over fifty thousand couplets, retains the same metre throughout. There are over three hundred metres, of which forty have been widely used. Some poets, such as Rūmī, are noted for using a wide range of metres. Persian metre is an adaptation of Arabic metre, yet there are theories that the Persian quantitative metric system may be an adaptation of "earlier [pre-Islamic] syllabic or accentuated metres."<sup>24</sup> The metres used in quatrains, which are very productive in the Persian literary tradition, are not productive in Arabic. Moreover, as J.T.P. de Bruijn remarks, the eleven syllabic pattern used in many Persian *mathnavīs* could be related to a pre-Islamic origin.<sup>25</sup> Whatever the case may be, the Arabic and Persian literary traditions have influenced each other through their long history and have exchanged literary elements. The prosodic system used in Persian is based on the Arabic metrical system developed by al-Khalīl and is called '*ilm-i 'arūz* or 'the science of metre.' There are many differences between Arabic and Persian prosody, which are beyond the scope of this introductory piece.

To read and to interpret a classical Persian poem, it is essential to know the metre used throughout the poem, which helps define the connection between individual words. One's reading of a word or phrase can simply be wrong if the metre is not understood. For this purpose, it is essential to scan (*taqīr*) a verse into different units to find out the metre. The Persian metre is quantitative, meaning that it is based on the value of the syllable. The metre consists of feet, with six or eight feet to a line. A foot is called *rukṅ*, (Pl. *arkān*) or *juz'* (Pl. *ajzā'*). Each syllable has one of three metrical values: a) short; b) long; c) extra-long. The system of values is as follows and must be learned by heart. A short syllable can consist of one consonant plus a short vowel such as *na*, or simply a short vowel such as *a*. The long syllable can be made of four combinations: a syllable consisting of a consonant, a short vowel, and a consonant, as in the word *bad*; a short vowel plus a consonant, such as the word *az* ('from'); a consonant and a long vowel, such as *mā* ('we'); or long vowels such as *ā*, *ī*, *ū*. The third value, the extra-long, appears in the following cases: a syllable consisting of a consonant, a long vowel, plus a consonant such as *bīn* ('see'); a consonant, a long or short vowel and two consonants, such as *kārd* ('knife') and *kard* ('did') respectively; a long vowel and a consonant such as *ān* ('that'); or a long or short vowel with two consonants, such as *ārd* ('flour') and *arj* ('worth,' 'value') respectively.

While these are the basic rules for the scansion, there are several exceptions. These are briefly as follows. Two short syllables can be substituted for one long syllable or vice versa.

The enclitic *-a* representing the *izāfa* (written as *Ezāfe* elsewhere in this volume), the conjunction *u*, words such as *tu* and *du* and the ending *-a* can function independently but they can also be connected to a preceding consonant. The enclitic suffixes of the singular personal pronouns may be taken as short or long syllables. A consonant at the end of a word and a vowel at the beginning of a word can be connected to each other. The word boundary is less important than the syllable. The value of the last syllable of the first word depends on this connection: the words *man az* ('I from') can be both two long syllables or it can be read *ma-naz*, in which case it is a short and a long syllable. The connection is also made when the penultimate syllable is extra-long. So *dastān* is not long-short-long but two times a long syllable. This rule is applied when the first word ends with a final vowel /ī/ or /ū/, or a diphthong such as /ay/ or /ow/ as in the words *Sa 'dī az* and *āhū az*, which are long-long-long or long-short-long.

Rhyme (*qāfiya*) is the next important element in the outward form of a poem. In prosodic works it is treated under the heading '*ilm-i qāfiya* 'the science of rhyme.' Persian poems can rhyme on a single syllable, but many poems, especially *ghazals* and *qaṣīdas*, use *radīf*, or addition of a word or a phrase to the rhyme, which is repeated in the entire poem. The poets love to experiment with this device to outstrip other poets in virtuosity. The *radīf* consists of a word or a short phrase attached to the rhyme and repeated in each couplet. The use of a specific metre and *radīf* rhyme is also a way to show that the poet is creatively imitating another poet. A good example is Rūdakī's poem about the scent of the Mūliyān, with the *radīf* rhyme *-āyad hamī*, which has been imitated by many poets till the present. The poem was written at the court of Naṣr ibn Aḥmad (873–892). The prince used to spend the summer in another cool town in Herat, but on one occasion, autumn had passed but the prince did not want to return to Bukhara and had decided to stay longer in Herat. The prince's retinue were longing for Bukhara. They tried to convince the prince to return, but he would not listen. They desperately offered the prince's intimate companion, the poet Rūdakī, a reward to persuade the prince to return to Bukhara. Rūdakī says that prose will have no effect on him, therefore he composes a poem and in the morning, when the prince is drinking his morning wine, he takes a harp and sings the following poem with this effective *radīf* rhyme.<sup>26</sup>

*bū-yi jū-yi mūliyān āyad hamī*  
*yād-i yār-i mihrabān āyad hamī*  
*rīg-i āmū-o durushtī-yi rāh-i ū*  
*zīr-i pā-yam parniyān āyad hamī*  
*āb-i jeyhūn az nishāt-i rū-yi dūst*  
*khīng-i mā-rā tā miyān āyad hamī*  
*ey Bukhārā shād bāsh-u dīr zī*  
*mīr zī tu shādmān āyad hamī*  
*mīr māh-ast-u Bukhārā āsmān*  
*māh sū-yi āsmān āyad hamī*  
*mīr sarv-ast-u Bukhārā būstān*  
*sarv sū-yi būstān āyad hamī*

The scent of the river Mūliyān comes to us,<sup>27</sup>

The memory of the friend dear comes to us.

The sands of the Āmū, toilsome though they be,

Beneath my feet are soft as silk to me.

On seeing the friendly face, the waters of the jeyhūn

Shall leap up to our horses' girth.  
O Bukhara, rejoice and hasten!  
Joyful towards thee hasteth our Amīr!  
The Amīr is the moon and Bukhara the heaven;  
The moon shall brighten up the heaven!  
The Amīr is a cypress and Bukhara the garden;  
The cypress shall rise in the garden!<sup>28</sup>

The poem had such an effect on the prince that on hearing this last couplet, he ran to his horse without wearing his boots, heading to Bukhara. His retinue ran after him for some distance, bringing his boots. This poem is an outstanding piece, arousing various sensory perceptions in the prince to go home. The *radīf* rhyme, meaning 'it comes,' has a different meaning in each line. In the first line it refers to the scent of the river reaching the prince, in the second it is the loving memory. In the second couplet, it refers to sand felt under the prince's feet like a soft silk. In this way the poet uses different compounds with the singular third personal verb *āyad* to arouse a different sense in the king. The particle *hamī* refers to the incessant duration of each of the actions.

### Further Reading

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## 20.7 Periodization of Persian literature

Modern historians of Persian literature have developed several theories on the periodization of Persian literature. The most common theory, used in both the Persian-speaking world and the West, is based on stylistic developments and is closely connected to geographical nomenclature.<sup>29</sup> It must be stated here that this periodization was increasingly used after the twentieth century in Iran. Several scholars consider this periodization a construct of Iranian nationalism. Here I am only concerned with the style of Persian and how a large number of scholars have examined Persian poetry based on the period and style. The first refers to the renaissance of Persian culture after the Muslim invasion, with Persian poetry as its articulate icon. It appeared at the early Persian courts such as that of the Samanids (819–999) in present-day Uzbekistan and is called the style of Khurāsān or Turkistān (*sabk-i khurāsānī*, or *sabk-i Turkistānī*). This period is famous for its inimitable simplicity (*sahl-i mumtani*), harmonious use of metaphors and limited use of Arabic words. In the space of one couplet, the poet uses several rhetorical devices in such a balanced and natural way that they appear very plain and pleasing to the reader, who may not immediately recognize that it is ornamented poetry. The dominant poetic form of this period is the *qaṣīda* and the *mathnavī*. With heroic epics such as Firdowsī's *Shāh-nāma* and a large number of *qaṣīdas*, Persian poetry asserted itself in this period as a dominant literary language in the eastern Iranian lands, reviving elements of pre-Islamic Persian culture.

The second period denotes the shift of literary activity from the eastern regions to the West and central parts of contemporary Iran. It is the period starting with the rise of the Saljuks (1040–1220) in the eleventh century and continuing to the rise of the Safavids (1501–1722).<sup>30</sup> It is called the style of 'Irāq (*sabk-i 'Irāqī*). The features of this style are the sophisticated



used of rhetorical devices, especially extended metaphors, the inclusion of mystical terminology in the poetic idiom, the increasing use of Arabic vocabulary, and a tendency by several poets, who could be called *poeta docti* ‘learned poets,’ to use difficult allusions. Prominent forms of poetry of this period are the *ghazal*, quatrain, and romantic *mathnavīs*. It is in this period that great masters of Persian literature such as ‘Aṭṭār, Niẓāmī, Rūmī, Sa’dī, Ḥāfiẓ and Jāmī flourished. This period saw also the incredible growth of Persian Sufi literature with masterpieces such as ‘Aṭṭār’s *The Conference of the Birds*, Rūmī’s *Mathnavī*, and Shabistarī’s *Gulshan-i rāz*.

The third period is called the Indian style (*sabk-i Hindī*) starting approximately with the rise of the Shiite Safavid dynasty in 1501 and ending about 1750 in Iran, but remaining as a dominant style for Persian poetry in Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent until the twentieth century. Many literati, scholars, and artists migrated to Indian courts where they were warmly received. A smaller number went to the Ottoman court. During this period the Sunnite Persians were converted to Shiism, which became the official state religion. The Safavids’ intolerance towards mystic orders, men of learning, and artists forced them to migrate. The Persian millennial movements such as the *hurūfiyya* provided another motivation for many Persian learned men to leave Persia for the Indian courts, where Akbar Shah (1542–1605), perhaps the greatest Mughal Emperor, was promoting Universal Peace (*ṣulh-i kull*) as part of his *Dīn-i Ilāhī*. A prodigious number of Persian literary works were written in India in this period. The poetic style could be described as extravagant and baroque. Poets intentionally deviated from poetic rules such as requirement of harmonious imagery. They used allegories and the debating genre, and dwelt on religious, mystical and philosophical themes. The style stopped in Persia in the mid-eighteenth century when Persian literati increasingly criticized the style for incomprehensibility. In its place they returned to the style of Khurāsān, imitating the early poets. This new period is called neoclassicism or ‘literary return’ (*bāzgasht-i adabī*) and lasted until the mid-twentieth century, when modern poets such as Nīmā Yūshij (1896–1960) introduced ‘new poetry’ (*shi’r-i now*).

While prominent poets today write mainly in the style of ‘new poetry,’ the advent of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and the Iraqi invasion of Iran on 22 September 1980 herald a new period for Persian literature. From the beginning of the war (1980–1988), the longest conventional war of the twentieth century, poets used both classical styled poetry and ‘new poetry’ to mobilize young Iranians to the front, to convey their abhorrence of war, and as a therapy to process traumatic atrocities of violence.

It should certainly be mentioned here that the number of female literati increased significantly after the Islamic Revolution. Sīmīn Bihbahānī (1927–2014), who was already an established poet, engaged with the social and political developments of the period, created new metres based on the classical metric system, and composed ghazals to express sociopolitical developments. The Revolution and war caused an exodus for Iranians who sought safety mainly in western countries. Here they started to write about the experiences of imprisonment under the Shah and the Islamic Republic, elaborating on the life between two cultures with all its consequences.

This periodization based on style is merely an indication of the shifts of cultural and literary activities from one region to another, as there have always been exceptions, of poets or poems employing a different style. Also the shift of the name of the dominant style from one region to another did not mean that other regions followed a different style: the dominant style could also be found in other regions. The conspicuous geopolitical aspect of this periodization of Persian literature shows how closely literary activities are connected to political changes in the Persian-speaking lands.

### Further Reading

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## 20.8 Genres, motifs, themes, and metaphors

The student must master the recurrent genres, motifs, and themes of Persian literature, several of which go back to the pre-Islamic period and are still strongly present in Persian poetry. The genre of the *pand*, 'precept,' (also named *andarz* and *naṣīḥat*) is an example. The precept, often addressed to a ruler, is strongly present in Persian heroic, romantic, and didactic epics as well as in the genre of mirror for princes and chronicles. Further examples of continuity with pre-Islamic literature are massive historical masterpieces, such as the Persian translation of Ṭabarī's *History* and Firdowsī's *Shāh-nāma*, which recount the pre-Islamic Persian legends, history, culture, and world-view. There are many epics which are entirely retellings of stories from pre-Islamic Persia, such as Gurgānī's *Vīs and Rāmīn*, Asadī's *Garshāsp-nāma*, and Niẓāmī's *Khusrow and Shīrīn*.

There are at least four main genres: heroic, romantic, mystic-didactic, and historic, each exemplified by a masterpiece. Some works cross the genres: Firdowsī's *Shāh-nāma* is usually and rightly considered as a heroic epic but it also contains fine examples of romance, didactic literature, and tragic epic. The genre of romance is associated with Niẓāmī of Ganja, who wrote three romances, the most famous being *Laylī and Majnūn*, which recounts the story of an Arab boy smitten by the love of Laylī. Niẓāmī changes the Arabic anecdotal narrative to a Persian courtly epic, introducing new elements such as meeting at school, descriptions of gardens and nature, a plea for vegetarianism, etc. This simple story is so powerful that it inspired more than a hundred creative emulations in various artistic forms in the Islamic world and beyond, up to the present day. The rock star Eric Clapton wrote his best-selling album *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs* based on a translation of Niẓāmī. The other two romances are based on the love stories of the pre-Islamic Persian kings Khusrow and his love for the Armenian princess Shirin, and the love story of King Bahram in *The Seven Beauties (Haft-Paykar)*. An episode of the last romance inspired Puccini to compose his opera masterpiece *Turandot*.

Another genre is mystic and didactic, exemplified by Sanā'ī of Ghazna's magnum opus *Hadīqa al-ḥaqīqa*, containing in its larger version some ten thousand couplets, treating a wide range of ethical and mystical subjects in verse. It was creatively emulated by several great poets who themselves became models for poets of subsequent centuries. Niẓāmī's *Makhzan al-asrār*, 'Aṭṭār's epics, and Rūmī's *Mathnavī-yi Ma'navī* are inspired by Sanā'ī's poem. The historic genre is represented by works dealing with Persian history. While several works depict specific Persian historical periods, others such as Alexander of Macedonia, treated by Firdowsī and especially Niẓāmī, could be considered as historical fictions. In Niẓāmī's hands the historical Alexander becomes a Persian king, a sage and a mystic in search of the Fount of Life. Historical works are usually concentrated on one person. In addition to such works in verse, Persian is rich in the genre of *dāstān* ('story'). These are popular prose narratives of a considerable length. The genre has remained popular in Persian speaking world for centuries. Favourite examples are *Samak-i 'Ayyār*, *Dārāb-nāma*, *Abū Muslim-nāma*, *Ḥamza-nāma*, *Iskandar-nāma*, *Ḥusayn-i Kurd*, and *Amīr Arsalān*.<sup>31</sup> Such stories were extremely popular and were recounted by professional storytellers down to the present age. It should certainly be

added that heroic, romantic, and religious stories in verse have their equivalents in the *dāstān* genre. The professional storyteller, who is called *naqqāl*, usually combines prose and poetry to tell a story to achieve the utmost effect on the audience. These stories were told at coffee-houses from Safavid times.<sup>32</sup>

There are a large number of motifs in Persian literature that must be known for the contextualization of a text and a sound analysis. Although many derive from the Arabic literary tradition, their treatments and developments are typically Persian. The recurrent motifs in Persian poetry are those related to nature, such as *rabī'īyyāt*, ('spring poems'), *kharīfīyyāt* ('autumnal poems'), those related to religious practice such as *zuhdīyyāt* ('poetry of abstinence'), *qalandariyyāt* ('poetry of libertine dervishes'), motifs of daily courtly life such as *khamriyyāt* ('wine poetry'), etc. In a panegyric, each of these motifs may occur, with the poet elaborating upon the theme. In ghazal poetry, the poet combines several motifs in such a way that they strengthen the imagery, creating a multiple interpretation of a certain subject. Employing several motifs simultaneously in one ghazal displays the poet's virtuosity and is much applauded by connoisseurs. Ḥāfiz's ghazals are famous for their polyphonic nature in which he weaves together several seemingly unrelated motifs and metaphors to create complex layers of interpretations. It is sometimes a puzzle to find the connection of one motif to another, but if they appear incoherent this may have to do with the reader's inability to recognize the internal cohesion among an arsenal of metaphors and motifs strung together by rhyme and metre. The phrase 'Like orient pearls at random strung,' used to refer to Persian ghazals, is now outdated thanks to several splendid studies by Lewisohn, De Bruijn, Yarshater and Hillmann.<sup>33</sup> The multilayered ghazal has also created perennial discussions about spiritual or profane interpretations. While scholars such as Ehsan Yarshater have defended the argument that Ḥāfiz's ghazals are bereft of a spiritual reading, other scholars such as Lewisohn believe in Ḥāfiz's spiritual message. Yarshater says, "Attempts at finding a mystical interpretation for Hafez's praise of wine and drunkenness are not supported by his *Divān*. . . . There is no indication at all that Hafez said one thing and meant something else."<sup>34</sup> On the authority of Hellmut Ritter, de Bruijn characterizes Ḥāfiz as not being

really a mystical poet but merely a *rend-mašrab* [drunken lout]: "like the qalandar, he does not withdraw from the pleasures of the world, mocks those who renounce the world and their kind, excusing his scandalous way of life by pointing to predestination, and for the rest puts his hope, in the manner of popular piety, in God's great mercy."<sup>35</sup>

Yet neglecting the mystic layer would decrease the appreciation of his poetry, for readers over the centuries have found that Persian ghazals, and especially those of Ḥāfiz, oscillate between heaven and earth, offering different messages for each reader. Whether the author 'meant something else' or not, the poetry of Ḥāfiz has been cited by mystics from the Balkans to Bengal for seven hundred years, and poets in imitation of him have said 'wine' and meant (among other things) spiritual ecstasy.

### 20.8.1 *Embellishing poetic work*

Persian poetry is deeply conventional. These conventions are detailed in literary manuals such as *Tarjumān al-balāgha* (written between 1088 and 1114) by Muḥammad b. 'Umar Rādūyānī, and *Ḥadā'iq al-siḥr fī daqā'iq al-shi'r* by Amīr Rashīd-al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Umārī, known as Rashīd-i Vatvāt (d. about 1182–83), which became a standard textbook. The use of rhetorical

devices to embellish speech and to strengthen an argument was related to the science of rhetoric (*ilm al-balāgha*) with several subcategories. One of these disciplines is the science of embellishment or *ilm al-badī*. The word *badī* is of Arabic origin, occurring in the Koran (2:117; 6:101), and means novelty. Persian rhetorical manuals are modelled on Arabic examples written by authors such as Jurjānī, a Persian scholar who wrote the influential book *Asrār al-balāgha* ('The Secrets of Rhetoric').<sup>36</sup>

The technical poetic terms have retained their Arabic forms for about a thousand years. Although classical Persian authors tried to find Persian equivalents, most of the terminology remained Arabic. Almost every century saw new Persian books on rhetoric, which sometimes improved on the previous work, and this has continued in modern times. Jalāl al-Dīn Humā'ī's *Sanā'āt* is a good example, following the classical example but in a simplified fashion to serve modern students of Persian literature. He retains the Arabic terminology, while Jalāl al-Dīn Kazzāzī, in his three volume work, coins comprehensible new Persian terms for almost the entire contents of Persian rhetoric. While his language is pleasing readable Persian, at times it sounds strange to the ear of a student trained in classical Persian rhetoric. In English, a practical source is certainly E.G. Browne's analysis of the most recurrent rhetorical devices in Persian poetry and prose, in his *Literary History of Persia*. Here he provides Greek and Latin parallels of terminology and at times even examples to demonstrate how Persian rhetoric works. Although there are many similarities between European rhetoric and Persian, there are also dissimilarities.

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## 20.9 The role of Sufism in Persian literature

Without a profound knowledge of Sufism, Persian poetry cannot be understood and appreciated, as many Persian masterpieces are inherently mystical. Persian literature is an aesthetic reflection of life: its most recurrent themes include love, the vicissitudes of life, death and the hereafter, and reflections on ethical quandaries such as truthfulness, justice, tolerance, and spiritual growth to become a perfect human being (*insān-i kāmil*). Sufism has something to say about all these themes and provides a language to address them. The works of Sanā'ī, 'Aṭṭār, Rūmī, Sa'dī, Ḥāfīz, and Jāmī are full of mystical allusions, theorization of mystical doctrines, and metaphoric descriptions of mystical states and stations. Moreover, poetry is used to express the theoretical and contemplative dimensions of Islamic mysticism and has been used to educate people in mysticism for about a millennium. While modern dictionaries of mystical vocabulary may help to appreciate Persian poetry, the student must read mystical manuals in prose and verse such as *Asrār al-towḥīd* by Abū Sa'īd, *Kashf al-mahjūb* by Hujvīrī, *Tadhkirat al-owliyā* by 'Aṭṭār and *Mirṣād al-'ibād* by Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, to name only a few. These books offer extensive information about mystical terminology, the lives of saints, mystical doctrines, spiritual

states and stages, and much else that is required to better appreciate a Persian poem. In Iran's and Afghanistan's modern educational system, selections from such books have been included in the curriculum. Furthermore, the prose used in these texts, especially 'Aṭṭār's *Tadhkira*, is still considered a model for a lucid, enjoyable, and compelling style in Persian.

### Further Reading

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### 20.10 Analyzing Persian poems

To appreciate a Persian poem, the student should focus first on the presentation form, starting with the identification of rhyme and metre. What is the rhyme? What is the metre? What is the length of the poem? The rhyme and length are among the elements that designate the form of the poem. By scanning (*taqṭī'*) each line according to the rules stipulated previously, the student can identify the metre. The next step is to look at the themes and motifs in the poem. In a ghazal, the poet uses several motifs at once to increase the effects in the meanings he creates. What is the subject matter of the poem? Often the poet combines, for instance, qalandariyyāt with khamriyyāt or other motifs to create different levels of meanings. These motifs are often depicted through a wide range of metaphors and imagery. The student should identify these metaphors and other rhetorical figures in the poem to see how the poet has composed his poem and what effects he wants to achieve. Having conducted the preliminary analysis, the student should examine the relationships among the motifs and should identify the relationship between the couplets. At first sight, the couplets in a Persian ghazal look unconnected, but a thorough analysis of motifs and imagery shows the deeper interrelated structure. The poet has often ingeniously connected each element to the others. The aim of analyzing a poem is not only to appreciate its aesthetic qualities but also to contextualize it in its literary, historical, religious, and cultural setting. Such an analysis offers an understanding of a specific period of Persian literature.

### 20.11 Geographical scope of Persian literature

Persian literature functioned for different purposes such as entertainment, code of proper conduct, the legitimization of political power, or as a means to convey spiritual thoughts and meditation, and for cultural prestige in a vast territory from Belgrade to the Bengal. It is often said that Persian was the second language of Islam. In specific periods, Persian was a *lingua franca*, the language of chancery, religious discourses, and the literati. Taking Ḥāfiz's *Dīvān* as an example, Shahab Ahmed discusses how

in the period between the fifteenth and the late-nineteenth centuries, [his poetry was] a pervasive poetical, conceptual and lexical presence in the discourse of educated Muslims in the vast geographical region extending from the Balkans through

Anatolia, Iran and Central Asia down and across Afghanistan and North India to the Bay of Bengal that was home to the absolute demographic majority of Muslims on the planet.<sup>37</sup>

There are several other sages who were part of the educational curriculum of Muslims in this area, whose works were read, commented, and applied in life. The famous Bosnian commentator Aḥmad Sūdī (d. 1591) wrote huge commentaries on Sa'dī's *Gulistān*, which is one of the many commentaries written from the sixteenth century onwards.

Appointed to teach Persian at the Ibrahim Paşa *madrasa* in Istanbul after his master's death, Sūdī devoted himself there to writing a series of commentaries in Ottoman Turkish – mostly philological in nature – on classics such as the *Maṭnawī* of Rumi, the *Bustān* and *Golestān* of Sa'dī, and the *Divān* of Ḥāfez.<sup>38</sup>

Sūdī's extensive commentaries were later used by German Orientalists in their translations of Persian literature. In some manuscripts, the Persian phrases are in red, followed by a long Turkish commentary with explanations of grammatical structures in the Persian. These commentaries were used as textbooks in schools.<sup>39</sup> The Turkic-speaking regions had developed a tradition of word-for-word translations from Persian texts so that the Persian texts were more easily understandable for a general public. One of the main aims of these commentaries was to teach the Persian language. While the literary merits of these works play a cardinal role, a key function of these commentaries for the broader public was to transmit the ethical wisdom of these texts. Persian literature was a veritable mine for proper conduct in this world and a spiritual guide for a redemptive eternal life Hereafter.

Another central literary work which permeated the ethical, social, and political life of Muslims in this vast area was Firdowsī's *Shāh-nāma*. This monumental epic, completed in 1010, describes Persian history from the dawn of the creation to the advent of Islam, in which the kingly tradition plays a central role. Contrary to the Islamic, Christian, or Jewish traditions, the first man in Firdowsī's epic is a king who is succeeded by a series of mythical, semi-historical and historical kings. The first human being in this Persian creation myth was King Kayumars, an androgen, who brought civilization to mankind. Each mythical king is responsible for another aspect of civilization. The epic was used to legitimize power from the thirteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century, by several Ottoman emperors such as Sultan Selim, in Mughal India, and of course in Persia itself. The *Shāh-nāma* is a rich source of courtly etiquette and conduct, stories on just rule, the traits of an ideal king, and many philosophical reflections on life, love and death. In this capacity, the epic became a popular document for several Ottoman Emperors who ordered men of letters to compose comparable epics, elaborating upon the ruler's exploits. Persian literature was an indispensable part of the Ottoman culture and the learned hierarchy of the Ottoman society were well versed in Persian. Perhaps the first Persian *Shāh-nāma* for a Turkish king was composed by Bahā' al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd Qāni'ī Ṭūsī, dedicated to the Saljuq Sultan of Anatolia 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād I (r. 1219–1237), which consisted of 300,000 couplets in thirty volumes.<sup>40</sup> Probably the first translation of Firdowsī's *Shāh-nāma* into Turkish was executed under Sultan Murād II (r. 1421–1451) in 1450–1451. Writing on the deeds of the Ottoman kings in the manner of the *Shāh-nāma* became so popular that the institution of *Shāh-nāmajī* was created, which chronicled the events of a ruler's reign.<sup>41</sup> Firdowsī's *Shāh-nāma* was also popular in the coffee-houses. For instance, Evliyā Çelebi reports on the recitations of professional storytellers at coffeehouses in Bursa.

The role of Persian literature in the Mughal Empire in India, and South-East Asia, was much more intensive, as Persian functioned as the official language of the Mughals. Many regions in the Indian subcontinent had become Persianized from the Ghaznavid period (977–1186), when mighty rulers such as Sultan Maḥmūd (c. 971–1030) conquered these areas, spreading the Persian language. Persian-speaking Indian poets participated in the literary activities in cultural centres such as Delhi and Lahore. The role of Persian literature in the South-East Asia is considerable. Here, many works of Persian poetry were translated, commented, and taught for many centuries, leaving a lasting effect on the literature of this vast area with diverse communities.<sup>42</sup> It goes far from the scope of this discussion, but it is perhaps proper to mention as an example the significant contribution of India in *Shāh-nāma* studies. The fourteenth century Persian poet ‘Isāmī wrote the *Futūḥ al-Salāṭīn*, for the founder of the Bahmanī dynasty, narrating historical events in 11,693 couplets, emulating Firdowsī’s *Shāh-nāma*.<sup>43</sup>

### Further Reading

- Fragner, Bert. 1999. *Die “Persophonie”: Regionalität, Identität und Sprachkontakt in der Geschichte Asiens*. Berlin: Halle an der Saale.
- Green, Nile, ed. 2019. *The Persianate World: The Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca*. California: University of California Press.
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- Rīyāhī, Muḥammad Amīn. 1990. *Nuḥūdḥ-i zabān va adabīyyāt-i Fārsī dar qalamrow-yi ‘Uthmānī* [Influence of Persian Language and Literature on the Ottoman Empire]. Tehran: Pāzhang.

### 20.11 Critical text editions

While these are essential background information for any student of Persian literature, it is important to include in an introduction to Persian literature syllabus an anthology of Persian prose and poetry with a vocabulary explaining words and phrases with specific connotations. Moreover, the student should know how to find the best text edition: a good critical text-edition will not only be closer to the original, it will also include copious explanations of the texts, the terminology, and the context in which words appear. Excellent example are Gh.Ḥ. Yūsufī’s editions of Sa’dī’s *Būstān* and *Gulistān*.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, most Persian literature was originally written in a lively performative context in which poems were recited at a gathering, or the texts were illustrated in manuscripts. Many of these manuscripts are now digitally available at libraries around the world, along with recordings of recitations and searchable digital corpus collections.

### 20.12 Conclusion

To appreciate Persian literature, it is necessary to learn themes, motifs, poetic forms, but also the context in which this literature was created. As we have seen, while the periodization of Persian poetry is based on style, it is closely related to political developments in a large area outside the contemporary Persian-speaking countries. Persian poetry is the carrier of Persian culture, and with the rise of Sufism, this poetry became the preferred medium for spiritual and ethical purposes for about a thousand years from the Balkans to Bengal. In this vast area, Persian poetry also functioned for political legitimization, as well as an icon for cultural prestige. Scholars and poets – and patrons, artists, and copyists – across this vast area have greatly contributed to Persian literary production, preservation, and transmission to today’s fortunate students.

## Notes

- 1) See G. Lazard, “The Rise of the New Persian Language,” in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. IV. *The Period from the Arab Invasion to the Saljuqs*, ed. R.N. Frye, 595–632. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, Chapter 19. Also see R.N. Frye, *The Golden Age of Persia: the Arabs in the East*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975. For a recent article on this topic see Chapters 11, 12 and 13 in *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. J.T.P. de Bruijn. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009, which also examines the influence of other literary traditions.
- 2) Many studies have been done on this topic, but I will limit myself to H.A.R. Gibb, “The Social Significance of the Shu‘ubiya,” in *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, ed. Stanford J. Shaw and William R. Polk, 62–73. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962; R.P. Mottahedeh, “The Shu‘ubiyah Controversy and the Social History of Early Islamic Iran,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 7 (1976), 161–182.
- 3) See *Tārīkh-i sīstān*, 209. A variant of the name is Muḥammad ibn Wāṣif but in Bahār’s critical text edition it is Waṣif. Also see S.M. Stern, “Ya‘qub the Coppersmith and Persian National Sentiment,” in *Iran and Islam, in Memory of the Late V. Minorsky*, ed. C.E. Bosworth, 535–555. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971; also see A. Ashraf in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, s.v. Iranian Identity, iii. Medieval Islamic Period.
- 4) See *Oral Literature of Iranian Languages: Kurdish, Pashto, Balochi, Ossetic; Persian and Tajik*, ed. P.G. Kreyenbroek and U. Marzolph. London and New York, I.B. Tauris, 2010; Also see J. Ashtiany, e.a. *‘Abbasid Belles-Lettres, the Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- 5) Dj. Khaleghi-Motlagh in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Adab i. Adab in Iran. G. Lazard, “The Rise of New-Persian Language,” in *Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 4, 595–632. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.
- 6) K. Talattof, “Nizami ganjavi, the Wordsmith: The Concept of Sakhun in Classical Persian Poetry,” in *A Key to the Treasures of Hakim: Artistic and Humanistic Aspects of Nizami Ganjavi’s Khamsa*, ed. J.C. Bürgel and C. van Ruymbeke, 211–244. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011.
- 7) For an excellent introduction to the Persian literary tradition see J.T.P. de Bruijn, “Classical Persian Literature as a Tradition,” in *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. J.T.P. de Bruijn, 1–42. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009. See also A. Tafazzulī, *Tārīkh-i adabiyāt-i pīsh az islām*, 113–114. Tehran: Mahārat, 1377/1998, in which Tafazzulī discusses how Middle Persian (Pahlavi) literature was transmitted in the ninth and tenth centuries.
- 8) Mary Boyce, “The Parthian *gōsān* and Iranian Minstrel Tradition,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1957), 10–45.
- 9) Referring to the Parthian life and that of their neighbours down to the Sasanian era, Mary Boyce states that these minstrels were “entertainer of king and commoner, privileged at court and popular with the people; present at the graveside and at the feast; eulogist, satirist, story-teller, musician; recorder of past achievements, and commentator of his own times.” See “The Parthian *gōsān* and Iranian Minstrel Tradition,” 17–18.
- 10) Reuben Levy translates this heading as “How to be a Poet.” See *A Mirror for Princes, The Qābūs Nāma by Kai Kā’ūs ibn Iskandar Prince of Gurgān*. London: The Cresset Press, 1951, 182. The term *shā’irī* refers to the art of poetry and anything related to it, including the poet. See J.T.P. de Bruijn, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. *Shā’ir*. 2. In Persia
- 11) *A Mirror for Princes*, 183.
- 12) *A Mirror for Princes*, 184.
- 13) J.T.P. de Bruijn, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Courts and Courtiers, x. Court poetry; also see J.S. Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*. Princeton, NJ: University of Princeton Press, 1987.
- 14) See Niẓāmī ‘Arūzī, *Chahār maqāla*, Tehran: Ishraqī, 1327/1909, 26–53; for a translation see *Revised translation of the Chahār Maqāla (Four Discourses) of Niẓāmī-i ‘Arūzī of Samarqand, followed by an abridged translation of Mirzā Muḥammad [Qazvīnī]’s Notes to the Persian text*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921.
- 15) See Seyed-Gohrab, “Improvisation as a Chief Pillar of the Poetic Art in Persian Literary Tradition,” in *Images, Improvisations, Sound, and Silence from 1000–1800 – Degree Zero*, ed. B. Hellemons and A. Jones Nelson. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018, 131–144.
- 16) For a discussion of these forms see Jalāl al-Dīn Humā’ī, *Funūn-i balāghat va ṣanā’āt-i adabī*, Tehran, Nimā, 1975; E.G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University



- Press, Vol. II, 41–78; E.J.W. Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*. London: Luzac & Co., 1900, I, 70–124.
- 17) Seyed-Gohrab, *Courtly Riddles: Enigmatic Embellishments in Early Persian Poetry*. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2010.
  - 18) See Seyed-Gohrab, “The Rhetoric of Persian Verbal Contests: Innovation and Creativity in Debates between the Persians and the Arabs,” in *Disputation Literature in the Near East and Beyond*, ed. Catherine Mittermayer and Enrique Jiménez, in the series “Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records,” Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020 forthcoming).
  - 19) J.T.P. de Bruijn, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Hafez. iii. Hafez’s Poetic Art; Idem., *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. 2nd ed., s.v. Takhalluṣ. Also see idem, “The Name of the Poet,” in *Proceedings of the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies. Part 2*, ed. Ch. Melville. Wiesbaden, Reichert Verlag, 1999, 45–56; P. Losensky, “Linguistic and Rhetorical Aspects of the Signature Verse (*takhalluṣ*) in a Persian *ghazal*,” *Edebiyât* 8 (1998), 239–271.
  - 20) Franklin D. Lewis, *Rumi. Past and Present, East and West: The Life, Teachings and Poetry of Jalâl al-Din Rûmî*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2000, 329–330 (authorized translation, *Mowlânâ: dîrûz tâ imrûz, sharq tâ gharb* (Tehran: Nashr-i Nâmak, 1384/2005, 2nd ed., 1385/2006).
  - 21) Seyed-Gohrab, “The Flourishing of Persian Quatrains after Omar Khayyam,” in *A History of Persian Literature: Persian Lyric Poetry in the Classical Era 800-1500: Ghazals. Panegyrics and Quatrains*, Vol. II, ed. E. Yarshater, London: I.B. Tauris, 488–568.
  - 22) On Nîmâ’s philosophy of a new type of poetry see *Essays on Nîmâ Yushij: Animating Modernism in Persian Poetry*, ed. A. Karimi-Hakkak and K. Talattof. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
  - 23) E. Yarshater, “A Star Ceases to Shine,” *Persica*, xvii (2001), 137.
  - 24) J.T.P. de Bruijn, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. Iran vii. Literature; See B. Utas, “Prosody: Meter and Rhyme,” in *General Introduction of Persian Literature*, ed. J.T.P. de Bruijn. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009, 96–122.
  - 25) J.T.P. de Bruijn, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. Iran vii. Literature. For the background and application of the metre hazaj see Benedikt Reinert, “Hazaj: Genese eines Neupersischen Metrums,” in *Classical Arabic Humanities in Their Own Terms: Festschrift for Wolfhart Heinrichs on his 65th Birthday Presented by his Students and Colleagues*. Leiden: Brill, 2008, 68–98.
  - 26) Translation by Edward G. Browne, *Revised Translation of the Chahâr Maqâla*, xi, 2, 1921.
  - 27) The word *müliyân* refers to the river Oxus.
  - 28) *Four Discourses*, 35. This translation is an adapted version by J. Landau, “Naṣîr al-Dîn Ṭûsî and Poetic Imagination in the Arabic and Persian Philosophical Tradition,” in *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry*, ed. A.A. Seyed-Gohrab. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012, 15–65.
  - 29) For the periodization of Persian poetry see see A.A. Seyed-Gohrab, “My Heart is the Ball, Your Lock the Polo-Stick: ‘Development of the Ball and Polo-Stick Metaphors in Classical Persian Poetry’,” in *The Necklace of the Pleiades: Studies in Persian Literature Presented to Heshmat Moayyad on his 80th Birthday*, ed. F. Lewis and S. Sharma. Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers / West Lafayette, IN, Purdue University Press, 2007, 183–205, in which I demonstrate how polo metaphors develop from the style of Khurāsân to the Indian style. See also J. Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968, 112–115.
  - 30) Daniela Meneghini, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Saljuqs. v. Saljuqid Literature.
  - 31) William Hanaway in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Dâstân-Sarâ’î; also see M. Mills, *Rhetorics and Politics in Afghan Traditional Storytelling*. Philadelphia: De Gruyter, 1991.
  - 32) Kathryn Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs, and Messiahs: Cultural Landscape of Early Modern Iran*. London and Cambridge, MA: Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs xxxv, 2002.
  - 33) A.J. Arberry, “Orient Pearls at Random Strung,” *Bulletin of Oriental and African Studies*, 11 (1943), 703, 699–712; Michael Craig Hillmann, *Unity in the Ghazals of Hafez*. Minneapolis, MN: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1976.
  - 34) E. Yarshater, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Hafez. i. An Overview.
  - 35) J.T.P. de Bruijn, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Hafez. iii. Hafez’s Poetic Art.
  - 36) For a German translation of *Asrâr al-balāgha* see H. Ritter, *Die Geheimnisse der Wortkunst: (Asrâr Al-Balāgha) Des ‘Abdalqâhir Al-Curcânî*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1959. On Persian Rhetorical Manuals and Its Relation to Arabic see “Traditional Literary Theory: The Arabic Background,” in *General Introduction of Persian Literature*, ed. J.T.P. de Bruijn. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009, 123–138.

- 37) Ahmad Ashraf, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Iranian Identity, iii. Medieval Islamic Period. Also see Shahab Ahmed, *What is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016, 32.
- 38) Hamid Algar, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 39) Tahsin Yazıcı, “Āthār-i Sa’ dī dar impirātūrī-i ‘uthmānī va Turkiyya,” in *Dhikr-i jamīl-i Sa’ dī*, III, Tehran: Vizārat-i Farhang va Irshād-i Islāmī, 1369/1990, 317–28; Franklin Lewis, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Golestān-e Sa’ di. (XI/1, 79–86)
- 40) Osman G. Özgüdenli, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Šāh-Nāma Translations, I. Into Turkish. There are many translations and imitations of the Shahnma. Özgüdenli refers to a Turkish verse translation accomplished by Hosayn b. Hasan Sharif, (better known as Šarifi of Āmed d. 1514), who “completed his translation at the command of Sultan Qānšawh Ğawri (r. 1501–16), the last Mamluk sultan, in Cairo in 1510, which took him ten years to accomplish.”
- 41) See Christine Woodhead, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., s.v. *Shāhnāme* ji; idem., “Reading Ottoman *şehnames*: Official Historiography in the Late Sixteenth Century,” *Studia Islamica*, 104–105 (2007), 67–80.
- 42) See S. Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier: Mas’ūd Sa’ d Salmān of Lahore*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2000; Munibur Rahman, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. *Shā’ir*, 4. In Muslim India; for information on the role of Persian in South-East Asia see M. Ismail Marcinkowski, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. Southeast Asia, I. Persian Presence In; also see T. Rahman, “Teaching of Persian in South Asia,” in *Persian Literature from Outside Iran: The Indian Subcontinent, Anatolia, Central Asia, and in Judeo-Persian (A History of Persian Literature)*, Vol. IX, ed. J.R. Perry. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2018, 48–68.
- 43) See A.S. Bazmee Ansari, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. 2nd ed., ‘Išāmī; also see Charles Melville, “The Shahnameh in India: Tarikh-i Dilgush-yi Shamshir Khani,” in *The Layered Heart: Essays on Persian Poetry, A Celebration in Honor of Dick Davis*. Washington, DC: Mage Publishers, 2019, 411–441.
- 44) Muşliḡ ad-Dīn Sa’ dī, *Būstān*, ed. G.H. Yūsufi, Tehran: Khārazmī, 1375/1996; idem, *Gulistān*, ed. G.H. Yūsufi, Tehran: Khārazmī, 1373/1994; Muḡammad Shams al-Dīn Ḥāfiḡ, *Dīvān*, ed. P. Nātil Khānlarī, Tehran: Khārazmī, 1362/1983; another excellent critical text-edition is of Fakhr al-Dīn As’ad Gurgānī, *Vīs u Rāmīn*, ed. M.J. Maḡjūb, Tehran, 1338/1959, which has an extensive introduction and invaluable information about various aspects of the poem. The texts published by Jalāl al-Dīn Humā’ī such as his edition of ‘Uthmān Mukhtār’s *Dīvān*, (Tehran, 1341/1962) remains exemplary for editors of text editions.

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# DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARD PERSIAN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

*Amirreza Vakilifard*

## 21.1 Introduction

Since 2000, many Iranian universities have started to admit international students, primarily from the Middle Eastern countries. Accordingly, the targeted universities established Persian language teaching centers to adequately furnish the students' Persian language skills, helping them function appropriately in academic courses presented in Persian language. For further discussion on university-level Persian language programs in Iran, read Chapter 24 in this volume. By the same token, these language centers certainly needed the relevant instruments to assess the language proficiency of the Persian learners. However, until 2010, no standardized Persian language proficiency test was available for this significant purpose.

Two main factors, that is, the rise in the number of Persian language teaching centers as well as the massive arrival of international students, motivated the authorities to develop a valid and reliable test for the assessment of learners' Persian language proficiency. They were concerned that the fairness of proficiency assessments might not be guaranteed in the increasingly internationalized higher education context. Inefficient progress tests used by various language centers have led to inaccurate assessment of candidates' language proficiency for admission to universities, causing them not to be sufficiently ready to take on academic subjects in the Persian language. This compromised the students' subsequent academic performance and posed problems for the staff who taught academic subjects to these students. This also sent conflicting messages about the role of language in academic performance to the learners. For a discussion on teaching and assessment for proficiency in Persian language programs in the U.S., read Chapter 15 in this volume.

Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi (2018) stressed the lack of a standardized Persian language proficiency test, pointing to the fact that the Persian language programs all over the world administered their own self-developed tests in order to evaluate the proficiency level of their students used for academic placement purposes. To solve this problem, in recent years, the need for a valid and reliable Persian language proficiency test was felt so that it could inform the stakeholders of whether the students are sufficiently ready and qualified to function properly in Persian academic courses.

This study is an attempt to describe and elaborate on the conventional procedures used in the development and validation of SAMFA as a newly developed language proficiency test for the Persian language. Accordingly, the following research questions lead this investigation:

- 1 What are the essential components observed in the development and validation processes of SAMFA as a standardized Persian language proficiency test?
- 2 What are the common procedures for the development of a SAMFA as a standardized Persian language proficiency test?
- 3 What problems and difficulties could be encountered in the development process of a Persian language proficiency test (SAMFA) in Iranian context, and what would be the future directions for appropriate and standardized administration procedures of Persian proficiency test?

It would be axiomatic that providing answers to these research questions could shed lights on the required procedures for the development of an effective Persian language proficiency test.

In Iran, in the year 2010, the “Center for Scientific and International Collaboration”<sup>1</sup> and the “National Organization for Educational Testing”<sup>2</sup> in the “Ministry of Science, Research and Technology”<sup>3</sup> started to develop a Persian language proficiency test with the help of test development experts and Persian language teaching researchers. The aim of the test was to determine whether the learners have attained a specific level of competence or not, i.e., SAMFA.

The development of SAMFA, which was initially a proficiency test for academic purposes, later on motivated the development of a proficiency test for general purposes as well and has indirectly influenced the quality of the achievement and final tests of Persian language centers in Iran. Over time, this test has been used not only for the admission of international students to Iranian universities but also as a replacement for TOEFL and IELTS, which were previously a requirement for the admission of international doctorate candidates into some Iranian universities.

SAMFA reflects what a successful Persian language learner is able to do in Persian language and attempts to directly represent the abilities of a successful Persian language learner. The National Organization for Educational Testing as the administrator of SAMFA in Iran and abroad is independent of universities and therefore Persian language centers and other test users can use the test to fairly compare the learners’ proficiencies from various language schools and countries.

In 2018, SAMFA was administered to Persian language learners three times merely within Iranian universities and in 2019, once in an international scope, outside the country for the first time, simultaneously, held in Georgia, Iraq, Bangladesh, Lebanon and Turkey. Persian language learners and international universities outside Iran are increasingly showing interest in SAMFA, and this raises the issue of fairness and equal opportunities. As with any proficiency test, SAMFA exerts washback effect on non-Iranian Persian language learners and Persian language centers’ teachers and syllabus designers. The main purpose of this research is to contribute to the knowledge in the field of test development as well as stages that typically must be accomplished in the development of most Persian language proficiency tests. It is noteworthy that a limitation of research material has been caused due to inaccessibility of the test-takers’ scores by the Iranian National Organization for Educational Testing, making further analysis and studies impossible.

## **21.2 Theoretical framework**

Language assessment involves collecting information to make evaluative judgments about a learner’s ability in understanding and using a particular language (Chapelle and Brindley 2002). Language proficiency tests assess the learners’ competence in a language regardless

of the specific courses probably taken by the learners (Hughes 2003). Read (2015) stated that “proficiency assessment focuses primarily on learners’ ability to use the language for functional communication, especially in the areas of advanced education, professional practice, and employment” (p. 111). Such a test is mainly conducted to assess the level of language learners prior to a specific language teaching program regardless of their knowledge about that language.

**21.2.1 Fundamental considerations in developing proficiency tests**

The approach to language development that we will present in this section begins by defining explicitly the qualities of usefulness. Test usefulness comprising several characteristics or qualities of language tests, such as construct validity, reliability, impacts and practicality. These components are fundamental in test validation; they will be further described in the following sections. Test usefulness is the significant consideration for quality management throughout the process of designing, developing and using a particular language test (Figure 21.1, adapted from Cambridge English Language Assessment, Lim 2013, 11). Quality management includes planning and management of processes contributing to implemented improvements over the time.

*21.2.1.1 Quality management*

Language test developers have to adopt a quality management approach to improve testing and to make sure that appropriate professional standards are met. Saville (2012) argues that quality management firmly supports the equilibrium of the processes underlying the validity argument. It also “provides the tools and techniques for linking theoretical concerns with the practical realities of setting up and administering assessment systems” (Saville 2012, 395).

According to Saville (2012), quality management includes two significant set of activities: (a) quality control and (b) quality assurance activities: Quality control activities check the quality of the test items and the information the clients (the test takers, teachers and other users) need. It also controls the quality of test administration as well as the quality of information gathered and stored for assessment objectives. Quality assurance includes some specific

QUALITY MANAGEMENT		
TEST USEFULNESS	CONSTRUCT VALIDITY Theory-based validity Context-related aspects of validity	VALIDITY
	RELIABILITY Scoring-related aspects of validity Criterion-related aspects of validity	
	IMPACT Consequential aspects of validity	
	PRACTICALITY	

Figure 21.1 Key elements of validation framework.



mechanisms, such as periodic audits, inspections and formal reviews that check, evaluate and improve the processes of test development; put in simple words, its main focus is to ensure that all processes are working sufficiently and that these processes are maintained to the required standard (ibid.).

### 21.2.1.2 Usefulness

Test usefulness refers to the use for which it is intended. Bachman and Palmer (2000, 17) assert that test usefulness is the most significant quality that needs to be considered in the development procedure of a proficiency test. According to Doucet (2001), a useful test is “a test that makes reasonable predictions while limiting the sources of error in the measurement and bias in the interpretations of the results” (p. 25). The overall usefulness of a given test is determined by qualities, including validity, reliability, impact and practicality.

### 21.2.1.3 Validity

Obviously, validity is considered a very important criterion for the quality of measurement among the specific test qualities in educational context. Validity refers to ‘the degree to which’ or ‘the accuracy with which’ an assessment measures what it is supposed to measure (Coombe 2018). In order to operationalize the validity, as an abstract test construct, multiple sources of information, such as empirical evidence, judgments and logical appreciation, must be assembled (Davies and Elder 2005). In testing literature, this procedure is referred to as test validation.

Among various introduced frameworks for language test development and validation, it seems that the socio-cognitive model has been very effective (Coombe 2018). This model that was developed by Weir (2005) considers the social, cognitive and evaluative dimensions of language use and relates these aspects to the context and the consequences of test use. The socio-cognitive model of test validation has multiple components, such as cognitive, contextual, scoring, criterion-related and consequential aspects of validity for careful interpretations of test scores.

A very significant concept relevant to test validity is construct validity. “A construct is an idealized and abstracted statement of the ability to be assessed. The test task performance of an individual test-taker can be used as the evidence of their ability in similar tasks in future” (Jenkins and Leung 2019, 82). In construct validation, the test developers desire to demonstrate that the test indeed measures the ability or the construct that it claimed to be measuring (Mousavi 2012). Messick (1998) proposed a unified view of construct validity in which he defined validity “as an integrated evaluative judgment of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores” (p. 39). In this perspective, the meaningfulness and appropriateness of the interpretations made on the basis of test scores are issues of construct validity (Chalhoub-Deville and Deville 2005).

Weir (2005) included the cognitive aspects of the test takers’ language proficiency and strategic ability within the executive resources and executive processing in the theory-based part of his proposed validity model. Weir maintains that the theory-based validity is a vital factor in determining the general validity of a specific test. Upon socio-cognitive approach to language test development, language processing is not realized in isolation and, thereby, the testers are required to define the context in which this processing operates. The testers also must empirically describe the situational factors potentially affecting this processing. The provided descriptions of both the situation and the conditions of language processing should

be maximally in consonant with those in the real world. In simple words, the testers need to specify the so-called context validity. Context validity is “the extent to which the choice of tasks in a test is representative of the larger universe of tasks of which the test is assumed to be a sample” (Weir 2005, 19).

#### *21.2.1.4 Reliability*

Reliability refers to the consistency of test scores. That is, if a test is conducted in another time, it must approximately produce the same scores (or results). For example, if the same test is administered to the same group of students twice in two different times under different conditions, the obtained results of the tests should not be considerably different (Coombe, Folse, and Hubley 2007). Reliability is a significant feature of a good test. It is considered as an attribute of validity.

**Scoring validity:** It is now widely accepted that reliability is considered a valuable and contributing factor to the overall validity of a specific test. It is now commonly viewed as a type of evidence (Chapelle 1999, 258). Some researchers use the term of scoring validity instead of reliability; they maintain that this influential quality is an adequate evidence for supporting the validity of a good test. In other words, if a test doesn't have this valuable characteristic, its validity is seriously jeopardized. It is argued that the best technique for estimating the reliability of a test is to score each skill or aspect of the language separately. The main advantage of this procedure is that as the markers assign different scores, the amount of reliability is risen considerably.

One sort of scoring validity is scorer reliability. It is used when we are concerned with the consistency of the rater in assessing the productive abilities of the learners, namely, speaking and writing skills (Weir 2005). More specifically, scorer reliability estimates the extent to which the human raters consistently score the spoken and written performances of the test takers. This reliability (scoring validity) is classified into two types: (a) inter-rater reliability and intra-rater reliability; the former deals with the consistency of scoring between two or more scorers. It is the level of consensus among raters. If everyone agrees, inter-rater reliability is 1 (or 100%) and if everyone disagrees, it is 0 (0%). Perfect inter-rater agreement can seldom be achieved. The latter refers to the consistency of scoring within the scorer him/herself (Coombe 2018). By the same token, this reliability concern the extent to which one rater is adequately consistent in assigning the score to the same single sample of language performance.

**Criterion-related validity:** Criterion-related validity is concerned with the correspondence between the scores obtained from a newly developed test and the scores produced by some independent external criterion. The chosen criterion could be a number of outside variables including a syllabus, teachers' judgments, performance in the real world, or another well-established test (Davies et al. 1999). This validity is also called empirical validity since the degree of correlation between the two sets of scores is determined by some statistical procedures.

Time factor divides the criterion-related validity into two classifications: (a) concurrent and (b) predictive validities. Concurrent validity deals with a situation in which a test designed to measure a particular ability is concurrently administered with another well-known and standard test (e.g., TOEFL) of which the validity is already established. Unlike concurrent validity, in predictive validity, the administration of two tests (i.e., the newly developed test and the criterion) is performed in some time interval. Its main purpose is to accurately predict a test taker's performance on a criterion test based on his/her score on the newly developed test (Weir 2005). For instance, the scores on an EAP test, whose

purpose is to measure learners' "readiness for university study, should correlate highly with the academic performance of the same students as measured by their grades on subsequent academic courses" (Davies et al. 1999).

To sum up, attempts were made to comprehensively elaborate on the concepts of context validity, theory-based validity, scoring validity, consequential validity and criterion-related validity that are contributing in the process of test validation and development.

#### *21.2.1.5 Impact*

Another quality of test is its effects and consequences on education and various aspects of society. In Bachman and Palmer's (2000) view, there are two levels for impact: (a) micro and (b) macro levels of impact. The micro level impact involves the effect that the test exerts over affected individuals. The macro level impact relates to the effect of the test on the educational system or the society at large. An aspect of impact is washback, which refers to the effect that a test might exert on students, curricula and the whole educational system (Winke 2011). Other than being positive or negative, washback has other aspects that add to its complexity. Washback effect could be immediate or delayed, direct or indirect, or apparent or not visible (Wall 2012, 80). Taylor (2004, 143) stated that the impact of high stakes tests should be examined. Therefore, high stakes tests endeavor to establishing evidence relating to consequential validity. Weir (2005, 210–215) proposes three main areas to examine consequential validity: (a) differential validity – or avoidance of test bias; (b) washback in classroom/workplace; (c) effect on individual within society.

#### *21.2.1.6 Practicality*

Practicality is an important characteristic of a test which refers to the way a test is implemented, developed and used according to the human, material and time resources available. Practicality of a test is related to the ways in which the test will be implemented (Bachman and Palmer 2000). More specifically, a test is practical when it is time-saving, easily administrable and not too much expensive; also, when its scoring or evaluation procedures are obviously defined (Coombe, Folse, and Hubley 2007). As a matter of course, the practicality of the test depends on whether the test is norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. In norm-referenced tests, students' performances (i.e., scores) are relatively compared to each other and, thereby, their scores are distributed along a continuum in rank order. Learner's score or performance is interpreted in relation to a mean or median, standard deviation and percentile rank. Practicality is the primary issue in this kind of test.

As a final point, it should be hastened to mention here that test developers need to find an appropriate balance among the previously given qualities of test, and that this will vary from one testing situation to another (Bachman and Palmer 2000).

### ***21.2.2 Language test development***

Read (2015) stated that the design and development of language tests includes a number of stages that are cyclical and iterative. That is, the original plan would undergo several rounds of revisions; therefore, test tasks and items need to be trialed several times before they function desirably. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2012), a standardized test is standards-based, grounded on research findings, and it utilizes systematic scoring and administration procedures (response format, number of questions and time limits).

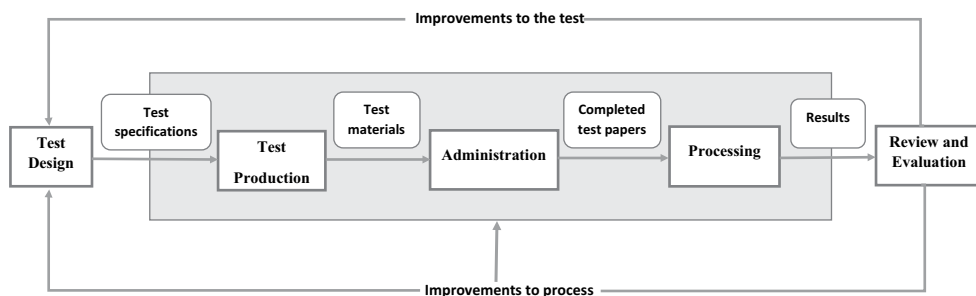


Figure 21.2 Core processes in language test development.

Source: Saville 2012

A crucial part of a quality management approach consists of defining stages and processes required in developing and administering language tests. Saville (2012) recognizes five *core processes* in a basic assessment cycle: 1) planning and design following a decision to develop a test; 2) development, including initial development and systems for test assembly; 3) delivery, including routine test assembly and the administration of the assessment; 4) processing, including marking and grading and issue of results; and, 5) review and evaluation (see Figure 21.2). According to Saville (2012), the previously mentioned processes produce four *outputs*: 1) specifications; 2) assessment materials and procedures; 3) completed assessments (test takers' responses); and, 4) results and interpretive information.

Coombe (2018) briefly identifies three important stages for test development: 1) planning; 2) design; and 3) administration:

- The *planning stage* is dedicated to gathering information about the purposes of the test, the characteristics of test takers, the standards and the effects of the test.
- In the *design stage*, a set of constructs should be identified by a comprehensive review. Stakeholders of a test draw on construct definition for score interpretations and inferences. In defining a construct, some considerations need to be taken into account. In Young, So and Ockey's (2013) view, these considerations could include “the age of the target population, the context of the target-language use, the specific language register, which is relevant to the assessment purpose, the decisions that assessment scores are intended to inform” (p. 4).
- In the *administration stage*, test developers usually test the draft specifications. They conduct pilot tests and analyze the results to identify the problem areas and, accordingly, make improvements.

## 21.3 Historical perspectives

### 21.3.1 Language assessment movements

Three movements for language testing were identified by Spolsky (1995) in Europe and United States from 1800 until 1980; that is, pre-scientific, psychometric-structuralist, and integrative-sociolinguistic movements:

- In pre-scientific movement, teachers' judgments about the learners' written and spoken productions on open-ended tasks formed the basis of assessment.

- In the psychometric-structuralist movement, statistics and measurement of close-ended tasks were emphasized. The focus was on the discrete aspects of language such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and dictation. From pre-scientific to psychometric movement, test format has endured some changes. Written and spoken production on open-ended tasks was replaced with short-answer items such as multiple choice, true/false etc.
- In the integrative-sociolinguistic movement, discrete-point tests were replaced with tests that tried to measure meaningful communication (Malone 2017). Integrative-sociolinguistic assessment emphasized the authenticity of the tasks and their resemblance to the tasks that the learners would perform in everyday life. In this approach, other data collection methods such as student portfolios and self-assessments were used (Malone 2017).

In recent years, language testing and Persian language teaching research has been growing slowly but steadily. All three of those movements could also be observed in Persian language testing, yet with a different time frame. Prior to the year 2000, Persian language testing was considered pre-scientific; since 2000 to 2010, it was psychometric-structuralist in orientation; and from 2010 to 2020 it adopted the integrative-sociolinguistic perspective.

### **21.3.2 Literature review**

In Iran, Persian language teaching centers were established in the 1990s; since then, these language centers have designed and conducted a series of non-standardized Persian language proficiency tests to meet their own needs. However, in reality, these tests were placement tests administered to assess the competence of learners who claimed that they could function appropriately in the Persian language since they did not probably desire to take Persian language courses before starting their academic studies. In an investigation, Vakilifard, Mirzayi Hesariyan and Mamaghani (2012) explored the reliability and validity of a test commonly used in the Persian Language Teaching Center at Imam Khomeini International University. The test measured listening, reading and writing abilities of the learners. The results showed that the test was generally valid and reliable. However, since the speaking skill was not included in the test, the test was not comprehensive and the validity argument could not be extended to the speaking section of the test.

Generally, even if the tests developed and administered in Persian language centers were adequately valid and reliable, they could not be qualified as influential instruments to assess the international students' academic language required at Iranian universities. This is due to the argument that one's appropriate function in a specific language doesn't support his/her academic achievements despite the fact that an adequate proficiency is needed to achieve academic goals via that language (Carlsen 2018).

Since the past two decades, attempts have been made to develop Persian language proficiency tests to enable research-based teaching of Persian as a second language. These efforts have mostly been unfocused and usually reflected in MA theses introducing frameworks for proficiency test development. Some of these major works are presented in this section.

In a preliminary investigation, Mousavi (2000) aimed at developing a test that could assess the general language skills of foreign students learning Persian as a second language. The test comprised four sections: (a) listening, (b) grammar, (c) vocabulary and (d) reading comprehension. Writing and speaking skills, essential for language learners, were excluded from the test. It should be mentioned that Mousavi separated grammar and vocabulary sections similar to that one evident in TOEFL test format.

In another study, Ghonsooly (2010) reviewed different language proficiency test models and took the one more in line with the realities of his testing situation. The researcher excluded writing and speaking skills from the selected model, and the modified version of the test assessed reading and listening skills along with the subskills of grammar and vocabulary. The test resembled the features reflected in standard tests, such as TOEFL and IELTS. To examine the validity of the test, Ghonsooly conducted a retrospective protocol analysis on three subject informants and adopted another validation procedure based on the argument theory. He also used Cronbach's alpha to measure the reliability of the test. The reliability of the test was reported to be 0.70. The results showed that while foreign students performed well on reading comprehension sections, they found grammar items the most difficult ones.

In her study, Metani Boorkhili (2010) attempted to validate "The International Persian Language Test". The test consisted of three sections: (a) listening (30 items), (b) grammar (30 items) and (c) vocabulary and reading comprehension (20 items each). Speaking skill was overlooked to be assessed; the grammar section was similar to the one observed in the TOEFL test. Each of the 100 items received one point, and following the ACTFL model, the scores were classified into levels ranging from zero to ten. The test was administered to a sample of 50 (9 females and 41 males) intermediate foreign students learning Persian as a second language at Dehkhoda Institute and Shahid Beheshti University. The average age of the participants was 26; they were from different nationalities. As a measure of validity, within each section correlation of each item with all other items was calculated. Cronbach's alpha was used to estimate the reliability of each skill as well as the whole test. Researcher analyzed the items with poor correlations to identify the causes of problems; for this case, he offered some suggestions to improve the problems. Generally, the test was reliable since Cronbach alpha coefficients for listening, grammar, reading and vocabulary, and the whole test, respectively accounted for 0.814, 0.816, 0.913 and 0.945. Given the validity of the test, Metani Boorkhili compared the test's skills, content, item number and scoring procedure with those of other tests. The results indicated that the test enjoyed an appropriate level of validity.

In his MA thesis, Jalili (2011) developed a Persian language test that measured the learners' ability in four skills. The test was purposed to assess the Persian language proficiency of international students pursuing their academic goals in Iranian universities. Jalili's study (2011) differed from Mousavi's (2000) investigation since Jalili followed the IELTS format in test development procedure. In this test, knowledge of grammar and vocabulary were also implicitly measured in sections that measured the four skills. Hence, there were no separate sections for grammar and vocabulary assessments. Jalili presented a sample of the test in the appendix to his thesis.

Golpoor (2015) designed a test to assess foreign Persian language learners' ability in four language skills. In the development process, care was taken to ensure the test's usefulness, validity, reliability, applicability, originality and psychometric properties. She administered the test to a sample size of 130 Persian language learners who were randomly selected and aged 18 to 38. The learners had been studying Persian as a second language for four to twelve months. The designed test was piloted by international students at Persian Language Teaching Center, Imam Khomeini International University in the spring and summer of 2015. The test had 100 items, and the students were allowed to answer the items within 210 minutes. The reading section consisted of 30 items with the time limit of 90 minutes. Its main purposes were to assess the students' abilities in inferring word meaning, comprehension, paraphrasing and rearranging. The listening section featured 30 test items; the students were permitted to answer questions in 90 minutes; the items measured students' competencies in remembering time and location details, paraphrasing and understanding the flow of events, comparisons and

classifications. The speaking test was performed by a 15-minute interview, and the learners were given 20 points. This section had general and academic parts. The writing assessment comprised two sections; in the first part, the students were required to write a letter, and in the second section, they were asked to write a 200–250 word essay. Writing test characterized with 20 points and the allocated time was considered 60 minutes.

As was mentioned, the majority of these investigations are MA thesis projects aimed at developing a test assessing the competency of overseas students learning Persian as a second language. It was also evident that most of the designed tests were incomprehensive replicas of proficiency tests developed for other languages. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no investigation elaborating on the procedures utilized in the designing and developing of a particular Persian language proficiency test. Hence, this study describe processes observed in the design, development and validation of the so-called SAMFA test for the Persian language.

### 21.3.3 Early developments in SAMFA

Prior to the year 2000 in Iran, the focus of Persian language testing was primarily on the assessment of reading proficiency and grammatical knowledge in the classroom. Listening tests were not available and there were no resources to teach listening skill. *Sedāy-e Delneshin-e Fārsi* (Vakilifard 2000) was the first instructional material for teaching listening comprehension skills in the Persian language. It was a textbook supplemented with audio tapes. Since then, listening tests emerged and were conducted along with both reading proficiency and grammar tests. Iranian universities admitted foreign students based on the assumption that these international students had to or were able to sufficiently function in the Persian language as Iranian students did. Similar to their Iranian peers, non-Iranian students majoring in humanities were obliged to pass preparatory and obligatory courses such as English language, Islamic knowledge and Arabic language. However, these students usually performed weakly or failed in the final exams of the courses dominantly due to deficiencies in their receptive and productive skills of Persian language, not the subject matters.

With the appearance of Persian language teaching textbooks, such as “Persian Language for International Medical Students” written by Vakilifard and Galledari (2002a) and “Persian Language for International Engineering Students” (Vakilifard and Galledari 2002b), for the first time an innovative movement started away from teaching Persian for general purposes toward teaching Persian for academic purposes. The preparatory courses mentioned earlier were no longer a requirement for international students and, alternatively, the courses, such as reading medical or engineering texts were introduced to Persian language program. This movement encouraged the stakeholders to assess learners' language proficiency not only in general Persian but also academic Persian as well.

Imam Khomeini International University was probably a leading university responsible for Persian language teaching program in Iran. However, in 2010, the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology determined to extend the program and sustain it in other Iranian universities. Accordingly, some top universities attempted to establish Persian language teaching centers in 2011. After Dehkhoda center in Tehran University and Persian Language Center in Imam Khomeini International University, Ferdowsi and Isfahan universities set up their own centers in 2014. Since then, the number of Persian language centers has risen to 15 in a period of four years.

The first official practice to develop Persian proficiency tests was begun by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology. In 2012, the National Organization for Educational

Assessment failed to develop a standard test for the Persian language teaching centers. This was also experienced by the Office for Non-Iranian Students in 2015 as well. Two factors, namely, increase in the number of Persian language centers and the lack of necessary standards for the assessment of learners' language, motivated the authorities to hold a series of meetings at the Center for International Scientific Cooperation, Development of Persian Language, and Iranian Studies Abroad with the cooperation of the National Organization for Educational Assessment and the Office for Non-Iranian Students.

A panel of experts started to design a test that could assess the language proficiency irrespective of how the language ability was acquired. The group explored and discussed standardized assessment criteria so that they could conduct a thorough inventory of the language abilities. The results of the meetings contributed to the development of a standard test called SAMFA that would assess Persian language skills both in general and academic domains. The Ministry of Science, Research and Technology substantiated SAMFA's regulation memo, and the National Organization for Educational Assessment became responsible for the administration of the newly designed test; the test development team was relocated to this organization.

## **21.4 SAMFA development process**

During the past decade, an increase has been observed in the demand for high-quality proficiency tests in Iran. Jones (2012) argued that in designing a test of language proficiency, which is a complex phenomenon, every context of learning needs should be considered. Therefore, considering the peculiarities of Persian language and the diverse backgrounds of Persian language learners, Persian language teaching and testing experts comprising the scientific committee of SAMFA started to establish the primary foundations of standardized assessment of Persian language skills. For elaborate discussions on peculiarities and specific features of Persian language, read Chapter 2 (for phonetics), Chapter 3 (for phonology), Chapters 4 and 6 (for morphology), Chapters 4 and 5 (for syntax) and Chapters 7 and 8 (for semantics) in this volume.

In the following sections, the three previously mentioned phases of the SAMFA test are explained in detail.

### ***21.4.1 The first phase: planning***

At this phase, information which is required for the subsequent stages is collected. First, the purpose of the test is elucidated. Then, a needs analysis is conducted to determine the domain of language use and the required language abilities. Characteristics of the target test takers are also identified, and standards for the proposed purpose are selected. To identify the critical communicative functions and tasks, a number of detailed observations are usually made and recorded. The transcriptions of observed tasks are studied to identify the features of general and academic discourse which the learners need to acquire.

General and academic SAMFA belong to proficiency tests, designed for adult learners. General SAMFA is designed for the learners wishing to take general Persian language courses at Persian language teaching centers for personal purposes, working in Iran, studying in Iranian high schools or migrating and living in Iran. Academic SAMFA is for the learners who aim at pursuing academic majors through the Persian language at Iranian universities or foreign universities requiring knowledge of Persian as a foreign language. The general and academic SAMFA differ in terms of content, context and purpose of the tasks. The objectives of these tests were clearly and accurately specified. Academic SAMFA draws on the features



of academic language and determines whether a learner is able to pursue academic courses through Persian language at Iranian universities. To operationalize the constructs of academic language proficiency, the lexical, grammatical and textual characteristics of academic Persian language were described.

### *21.4.2 The second phase: design*

In the second phase, before structuring of the specifications for general and academic SAMFA, a set of constructs was identified by a comprehensive review.

For assessing Persian language proficiency, language competence was broken down into listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. Within these skills, learner performance was measured in terms of linguistic units such as phonology (pronunciation), orthography (spelling), vocabulary (lexicon), sentence structure (grammar), discourse and pragmatic features of language. For example, oral production could assess overall conversational fluency or pronunciation of words, while the written forms may assess correct spelling or discourse-level competence (Brown and Abeywickrama 2012).

After stipulating each performance mode and linguistic units, specifications for SAMFA were designed. According to Hughes (2003), specifications for a test in general include information on content (operation, types and length of texts, topics, readability, structural range, vocabulary range, dialect, accent and style), test structure, timing, medium/channel, critical level of performance, and scoring procedures.

#### *21.4.2.1 Content*

Various attempts have been made to collect as much information about the content as possible so that later decisions about the features that influence the writing of the test versions would be less intuitive. For example, for the content of the grammar test, all important structures that had been listed in “Persian Framework of Reference for Teaching Persian to Speakers of Other Languages: Grammar, Vocabulary and Functions for Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced Levels” (Mirdehghan et al. 2016) were consulted. This source was the most authoritative research with regard to determining levels of grammatical content, vocabulary and functions for teaching the Persian language that identified six levels from elementary to advanced. This book provides the example of a clear use of standards. For an elaborate discussion on the Persian reference framework and teaching Persian varieties and dialects, read Chapter 24 in this volume.

General SAMFA assesses a learner’s ability to use the language for functional, communicative purposes that may include two main categories of productive and receptive skills on the basis of general topics and everyday social contexts. In contrast, academic SAMFA deals with academic language proficiency relevant to communicative tasks such as comprehending an academic subject or a university lecture and reading scholarly journal articles. The content of the SAMFA test was specified in terms of the following aspects:

**Operation:** Tasks that the learners were required to perform were specified, focusing on a single skill. Two examples of skills can be mentioned as follows: In the case of the reading test, a selected number of tasks may include guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context, recognizing the references of grammatical structures, etc. In the writing test, the learners might have been urged to provide enough evidence to support their claims and ideas, express their opinions pertaining the causes of events, offer solutions to problems, and identify strong and weak points.

**Length and types of texts:** The reading comprehension test contained four to five texts that were two to four paragraphs in length. The listening comprehension tests included ten short dialogs (ten questions), two long dialogs (ten questions) and two monologs (ten questions). In the general reading and listening tests, narrative and informative texts were used, but in the academic ones, only informative texts were applied. In the writing tests, the learners were required to write two essays on two topics, the first one 150 words long and the second one 250 words long. In academic SAMFA, the learners are required to compare, contrast, describe and interpret charts or graphs of the tasks.

**Topics:** In general SAMFA, topics were largely general and related to everyday issues, life changes, art, music, events etc. In academic SAMFA on the other hand, topics were chosen from various academic fields and disciplines. Therefore, reading comprehension texts, writing and speaking tasks dealt with topics in the fields of engineering, humanities, social sciences and medical sciences.

Texts and topics play an important role in language tasks on the whole. However, in the case of academic SAMFA, they assume an even more prominent role. Using texts that belong to various disciplines raised several concerns regarding the construct under the accurate measurement, the interaction of field-specific or background knowledge with language knowledge, and the intensification of topic effect. To tackle these problems in academic SAMFA, simple graphs were chosen regardless of background knowledge or cognitive abilities, which are not accessible to the learners in academic writing tasks. The learners were required to read graphs and describe the graph content. In this situation, it may be argued that score differences among test-takers could be due to differences in their ability to read graphs. To avoid construct irrelevant variance and ensure validity of score interpretations, listening tasks dealt with more general academic topics that were judged to be shared across various fields.

**Vocabulary and structural range:** Research on the vocabulary of Persian language and wordlists organized in terms of frequency of occurrence is in its infancy. Thus, the approximate range of lexical and structural domains for this test was drawn from “Framework of Reference for Teaching Persian to Speakers of Other Languages”.

**Dialect, accent and style:** The dialect and accent that the learners are expected to demonstrate in speaking test involves the formal one used in Tehran. In the listening tests, informal style and colloquial language are used. However, questions appearing on the listening section of the test booklet use formal style and written language. The learners are expected to be capable of writing and speaking to Iranians in terms of age, social status and level of education comparable to their linguistic performance.

#### *21.4.2.2 SAMFA's structure*

The SAMFA's structure was designed in a way that it would assess the learner's ability to use the language for communication. As such, it does not directly measure their knowledge of the language per se. Language knowledge is usually assessed in terms of language skills and components. Basic language skills include reading, writing, listening and speaking. Major language components involve grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (Chalhoub-Deville and Deville 2005). Read (2015) stated that in language tests, it is customary to test the four macro-skills separately and provide a profile of scores for the included skills. For this reason, the general SAMFA comprised listening, reading, writing and speaking sections. For further discussion on the acquisition of the four skills as well as the language components by second language learners of Persian, read Chapters 9–14 in this volume.

Academic SAMFA had a modular structure. Four discipline-based modules were provided covering social sciences, engineering, humanities and medical sciences. The candidates could select the module most appropriate for them. In academic SAMFA, reading, writing and speaking sections were modular; however, the listening section was not modular due to the difficulty of administration. Thus, a general listening section was designed for all participants consisting of general academic texts. The earlier-mentioned skills largely measured general academic proficiency in Persian.

**Number of passages and items:** Number of passages and items were as follows: The listening test included one scripted and audio-recorded monologue with ten items, two long conversations with ten items, and ten short scripted conversational exchanges with one comprehension item for each one. In total, the test comprised 30 multiple-choice questions. The reading test consisted of five general-style written passages for general SAMFA and four to five academic-style or field-specific texts for academic SAMFA, which were 150 to 350 words in length. In total, 30 multiple-choice comprehension items appeared on the test. Moreover, one or two items were usually concerned with finding the reference or the meaning of particular words in context. The writing test comprised two impromptu writing tasks (the first one, 150 words and second one, 250 words), involving a point of view on current issues or problems.

For academic SAMFA, one involved a point of view on an academic issue or scientific news, and the other required the interpretation of a table or graph. The tasks and topics were routinely based on disciplinary content. The speaking test included two independent tasks, to which the test takers responded on the basis of general or academic knowledge, in accordance with the general or academic module of SAMFA.

**Medium/channel:** SAMFA is a fixed-form test in which every test taker receives the same items delivered on a paper booklet. Since the test developers cannot control the test takers' prior experiences with proficiency tests, they have to prepare carefully crafted instructions to minimize the misinterpretation of the instructions. In SAMFA test, questions of listening, reading and writing sections were audio-recorded and played back during the examination session. Speaking test was administered face to face and was recorded.

**Test duration:** For each of the listening, reading and writing tests, the learners were allotted 60 minutes. The learners were allotted 15 minutes for the speaking test. In total, the learners would have 195 minutes to complete the SAMFA test. In the speaking test, the learners were allocated up to three minutes time to compose and organize their ideas on the topic.

#### *21.4.2.3 Criterial levels of performance*

Levels of successful performance were determined and clarified in simple statements. For writing and speaking skills, degrees of performance were determined in terms of accuracy, appropriateness, domain, flexibility and size included in the SAMFA's guidebook and scientific framework.

#### *21.4.2.4 Specification of scoring procedures and reporting formats*

In SAMFA, each aspect of a task is scored separately. In this scoring scheme, aspects of learner performance that were ignored in achievement tests of the Persian language teaching centers were attended to. The separate scores that were given based on different criteria were summed up to arrive at the resulting scores. For each of the four skills, a separate score was provided (maximum 60 points for each skill) and the average of these scores acted as the overall test score (maximum 240 points).

Since knowledge of the language components was not assessed in the test, it could be stated that SAMFA does not directly measure language knowledge. The test did not measure language knowledge since it was assumed that in performing on four skills, the learners inevitably would draw on their passive language knowledge. In addition, through some items of skills tests and some criteria of rating scales, language knowledge may be assessed indirectly. That is, the learners' language knowledge is assessed, but it is lost in the holistic score that is given for each skill and the overall test. Actually, from the point of view of the Office for Non-Iranian Students, those candidates receiving scores above the mean (30) for each of the four skills can enter Iranian universities. Those scoring below the mean (30) must enroll in and pass SAMFA in order to be certified.

Listening and reading tests are designed in multiple-choice format, and their answer sheets are scored via computer with the help of scannable computerized scoring. Since the scoring of writing and speaking tests were subjective, the raters had to use a rubric to achieve a final result. The rubrics make the expectations and the assessment criteria explicit (Jonsson and Svingby 2007). Well-designed rubrics are used to enhance the reliability, consistency and objectivity of the assessment (Ayhan and Türkyilmaz 2015).

The constructs important for analytical scoring were discussed, and criteria that would realize the expectations from Persian language learners were determined. The accurate specification of an analytical scoring raises scorer reliability. Based on these steps, a multiple-trait scoring rubric was developed. For this purpose, Hughes (2003) suggested rating scales. A series of writing samples were collected that covered the whole range of scales. Then, a group of testing experts reviewed these samples and they assigned a score in the relevant scales for each of these samples. These scored samples were used as a benchmark for subsequent uses. Within each performance level, a range of scores was possible.

The scoring rubric for the writing component of SAMFA was as follows. Writing was scored in terms of content (extent, relevance, subject knowledge, up to six points for the first composition, and up to twelve for the second one), organization (coherence, fluency, clarity, logical sequencing, up to four and eight points), vocabulary (richness, appropriate register, word form mastery, up to four and eight points), language use accuracy (use of articles, word order, tenses, prepositions, sentence constructions, up to four and eight points), and mechanics) paragraphing, spelling, punctuation, up to two and four points).

The detailed description of expected performance at each level was identified under four labels. These levels of performance included very poor, poor to fair, average to good, and very good to excellent. When the learner proficiency exceeded one of the four levels yet did not qualify to be assigned to the upper level, a plus (+) was used to indicate this situation. The first writing assignment received 20 points and the second one received 40 points. In total, there were 60 points for the writing test.

To enhance reliability, the writing test was scored by two raters independently. If the raters disagreed on any part, a third rater would score that part. To ensure a higher level of validity, two writing tasks were included in the writing test, and the test-takers were not allowed to choose the tasks. For the reliability of the judgments about the writings, the samples must be adequately long. Thus, the learners were required to write a 150-word essay in the first task and a 250-word essay in the second task. This helped to obtain reliable data about the writing ability of the learners.

For the speaking test, test takers participated in a one-to-one dialog lasting for 15 minutes. The learner was prompted to speak about two or three topics, and the conversation was audio-recorded. The test taker would defend her/his opinion in an extended spoken response. Later, in the National Organization for Educational Assessment, two experienced raters scored the

conversation according to scoring rubric of SAMFA's speaking section. In case of disagreement between the raters, the sample is scored by a third rater. The sample is evaluated in terms of six criteria.

The rubric for scoring the general SAMFA's speaking section included the following criteria: adequacy (range and choice of word, vocabulary, expression, lexical accuracy, gaps, up to ten points), grammatical accuracy (complete sentences, grammatical utterances, word order, broken sentences, bits of information, etc., up to ten points), fluency (using bits of information, halting, hesitation, gaps in using cohesive devices like connectors or conjunctions, etc., up to ten points), coherence and cohesion (up to ten points), pragmatic accuracy (socioculturally appropriate usage, use of slang, etc., up to five points), intelligibility (pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation, use of appropriate tone), and interaction (understanding the question's content, ability to communicate with the tester).

In the rubric for scoring academic SAMFA's speaking section, three subcategories were designed to reflect the dimensions of the construct that was considered important. These three criteria included the relevance of content (relevant, limited or sufficiently covering the task), credibility of the utterance, and the use of semi-academic terms and vocabulary. Performances in each category were judged by a numerical score from 0 to 4.

#### *21.4.2.5 Writing and moderating items*

According to Salisbury (2005), writing items involves three phases. In the exploratory phase, the item writer would search through possible texts and contexts. In the concerted phase, the writer works intensively in a concentrated manner to prepare the texts and items. In the refining phase, the writer reviews the items to improve the test and make it to conform more closely to domain requirements. Under the supervision of SAMFA's scientific committee, a group of testers experienced in teaching Persian to speakers of other languages started to write the items according to the specifications prepared in advance. In each test, texts were selected from various domains and subject areas to assure content validity and representation. Then, the prepared items were handed to two expert members of the scientific committee for careful examination to identify weak points of the items and provide suggestions for improvement of the items.

### ***21.4.3 The third phase: SAMFA administration***

In the administration phase of SAMFA, informal trialing did not take place. Though plenty of Iranian native speakers as well as non-Iranian learners were available, the test was not administered under test conditions to a group similar to that for which SAMFA was intended, due to concerns over the security of the test. But after each principal administration of the test, trained psychometricians collect the data, perform statistical analyses and interpret and evaluate them. After each administration two types of analyses are conducted. First, statistical analysis is conducted to examine test qualities such as reliability and item qualities such as item difficulty and item discrimination. Second, qualitative analysis is conducted to discover misinterpretations, unforeseen responses and problematic items. The problematic items are identified so that they are improved and preserved in the test's item bank for use in succeeding editions of the test.

#### *21.4.3.1 Make evaluations of different kinds of items*

To arrive at suitable multiple-choice items, SAMFA items should be examined in terms of item facility (IF), item discrimination (ID) and distracter analysis.

Item facility (IF) reflects the percentage of a proposed group of test-takers answering a particular item correctly. To calculate IF in a test like SAMFA, 27 percent of the participants who performed best in the test are compared against the 27 percent of the participants who performed worst (Seyf 2015). The formula for calculating IF is:

$$IF = \frac{\text{high group no. correct} + \text{low group no. correct}}{\text{high group no. examinees} + \text{low group no. examinees}}$$

The IF index would range from zero to one. The closer the index was to one, the easier the item would be. While Brown and Abeywickrama (2012) believe that appropriate test items have in general IFs that range between .15 and .85, Brown (2012) and Seyf (2015) claim that ideal items in norm-referenced tests would be the items that 30–70% of the examinees answered correctly, and items that have 0.30 and 0.70 facility indexes provide the maximum information about the difference between examinees. In SAMFA, the more the scores are spread over a curve and the more the variance of the items and inter-item correlations, the better the test would be.

Item discrimination (ID) is the ability of an item to differentiate between examinees of high and low ability. The formula looks like this:

$$ID = \frac{\text{high group no. correct} + \text{low group no. correct}}{\frac{1}{2} \times \text{total of two comparison groups}}$$

ID ranges from zero to one. The more the index is closer to one, the more the item's ability to discriminate high ability learners from the low ability ones. ID shows the level of agreement of an item with the whole test. Therefore, items that have high IDs are strongly correlated with the whole test. Good items enjoy average IF and high ID (Seyf 2015). In SAMFA, these indexes were used to decide on discarding or modifying the problematic items.

Distracter analysis is another useful tool in evaluating the effectiveness of the distracters in a multiple choice format test. In distracter analysis, we are interested in how the distracters draw the less proficient test takers away from the correct answer. To explore the effectiveness of each distracter, testers calculate the number of times each distracter was selected by the testees. When distracters are not effective, they are virtually useless. Malau-Aduli and Zimitat (2012) stated that "a distracter that fails to attract any examinees is dysfunctional, does not assist in the measuring educational outcomes, adds nothing to the item or the test (psychometrically) and has negative impact upon learners" (p. 927). There is no mathematical formula for calculating distracter efficiency and it is possible to make a conclusion by inspecting the distribution of responses. In a well-functioning item, less-able learners are more likely to select the distracters. These three indexes (item facility, item discrimination and distracter analysis) are particularly prominent for a standardized multiple-choice test that is to be administered repeatedly.

In the case of items that employ non-discrete response formats such as oral or written responses, practicality, reliability and facility play an important role. Practicality relates to clarity of directions, test timing and ease of administration and scoring. Since these tests are not discrete, reliability is determined by correlating the scores that two raters gave to the same learner responses. If a single rater is used, calculating reliability will not be possible. As Brown and Abeywickrama (2012) state, faulty directions, ambiguous language, inexact topics and culturally incompatible information could influence learner comprehension of the task requirements and make it unduly difficult for the learner.

### *21.4.3.2 Perform ongoing construct validation studies*

As SAMFA is a high-stakes test, it is essential that the final version of the test must be validated. According to Anastasi and Urbina (1997), content validity is a non-statistical type of validity involving the degree to which test content is a representative sample of the behavior domain that is being measured. To improve the content validity of SAMFA, the test specifications and the selection of items are reviewed by a panel of experts to see whether the items represent the behavior domain adequately.

Even if appropriate items are designed for the SAMFA test, they have to be assessed and scored validly as well. For example, in assessing Persian writing or speaking ability, speaking or writing samples should be collected from students in a valid way; however, this alone does not suffice. The scoring of writing or speaking samples should also be conducted validly. For instance, in evaluating a writing sample, if a rater gives more weight to mechanical aspects of the writing such as spelling and punctuation marks, the validity of the scoring procedure could be jeopardized.

For achieving more perfect inter-rater agreement in SAMFA, high-stakes decisions are made about the performance levels of Persian language learners in comparison to a pre-specified threshold score. Thus, inter-rater agreement is very important. However, to ensure SAMFA's validity, inter-rater agreement must be conducted at maximum degree. If significantly different scores are assigned to the same samples by different raters, there could have been a problem with the training of the raters. To improve inter-rater agreement, the raters should be trained adequately.

## **21.5 Problems and difficulties**

### *21.5.1 Washback*

Higher achievement thresholds that are set for Persian language learners by the SAMFA test might lead to higher competition among learners and generate fear of failure among them. There is uncertainty, concern, fear or even distrust of SAMFA among some stakeholders, especially among Persian language teaching centers. However, SAMFA has stimulated and encouraged other organizations to design more standard tests for their own purposes. For instance, Sa'di Foundation is developing a proficiency test for general purposes that is called AMFA. It appears that the availability of multiple standard Persian language proficiency tests would be a welcome result. Some of these proficiency tests could be elaborated and used to assess the language ability of Persian native speakers who are studying at K-12 classes inside Iran and out of Iran. We are not yet exactly aware of how SAMFA interacts with educational factors and its precise influences in broader contexts. Therefore, evaluation researchers must examine the close relationship between SAMFA and its central functions in Persian second language education.

### *21.5.2 Interrelation between content knowledge and language proficiency*

The role of content in language teaching and assessment varies significantly from context to context, and until now, the interrelation of the language and content constructs has not been completely explored (Bohn 2018). One of the challenging issues in developing academic SAMFA involved the interface between content knowledge and language proficiency, which

has not been empirically studied. Proficiency and content knowledge develop together. Thus, it is very difficult to separate these constructs. Byrnes (2008) explained that

because content knowledge in an L2 learning environment is even more a developmental matter than is the case for native language instruction, content assessment would benefit from principles that identify how content and language abilities develop simultaneously in language learning.

(p. 45)

In some situations as in Iran, there is a need or mandate to separate language assessment and content knowledge assessment. Another reason for separating language and content knowledge assessment is to use this information for diagnostic purposes. This separation helps to identify whether the source of learner problem lies in the language, content or both.

### ***21.5.3 Train the test score users***

Without any hesitation, the staff is the key consideration in assuring the quality of a test, and the senior managers need to be utterly responsible for checking and monitoring the qualification of their staff in performing their tasks within an organization. Hence, it is usually maintained that the organizations should employ and train qualified specialists (Saville 2012). As Bachman and Palmer (2010) affirm, “many who need to use a language assessment have had no training or experience in this” (p. 1). Over the last few decades, language testing has witnessed a rapid growth in terms of its theoretical concerns and its direct applications. For this reason, stakeholders who are involved in language testing need to familiarize themselves with essential concepts related to their specific language testing context. Davidson and Lynch (2002) emphasized the role of human resources in generating and using test specifications and items. To make test development more efficient, human resources should be well trained. Kim et al. (2010) reported that individual characteristics of item writers such as their previous experience, nativeness, cultural background, personality, and topic preference might influence their item writing.

In the case of SAMFA, these concerns are even more relevant. The National Organization for Educational Testing is challenged to educate the test score users within the organization. As SAMFA is the first established Persian proficiency test, test score users are not accustomed to it and are not familiar with descriptions of skill levels. As a result, there has been some confusion, misunderstanding and inappropriate score use.

To reduce these problems, rater training should be included in the assessment development process. At the least, training would make raters able to discriminate among different levels of performance more consistently (Wigglesworth and Frost 2017). Training would improve rater confidence and lead to the production of high quality items that test language skills more accurately.

### ***21.5.4. The validity of the uses and interpretations of SAMFA***

As with any other reliable test, there must be a validation program for SAMFA to examine the validity of its construct. It is suggested that the validity of the uses and interpretations of SAMFA should be carefully studied, based on multiple components of Weir’s (2005) socio-cognitive framework: cognitive aspects of validity, contextual aspects of validity, scoring aspects of validity, criterion-related aspects of validity, and consequential aspects of validity.



In addition, their interactions should be examined to support the specific uses and interpretations of test scores.

### ***21.5.5 Limited evidence addressing validity, reliability and fairness of rubrics***

SAMFA rubrics are being designed for the first time for the Persian language and used as a gate keeping instrument for foreign test-takers. There is limited evidence addressing validity, reliability and fairness of these rubrics. Hence, the function of rubrics and their scoring should be critically examined by the instructors. Pufpaff, Clarke, and Jones (2015) reported that little consistency was observed even among experienced faculty members' scoring of learner performance on the basis of rubrics. Therefore, further empirical research is needed to find efficient methods of increasing consistency in rubric-based scoring of Persian language learner performance.

## **21.6 Future directions**

### ***21.6.1 Performance-based assessment***

It should be mentioned that in Iran, for some operational purposes, such as certain jobs and skills, performance tests are a prerequisite. Performance tests assess the learner's ability to perform a certain act derived from the operational task, such as translating, summarizing, interpretation or transcription. Although learners who pass performance tests might need to achieve a higher level of general language proficiency, performance tests afford more practical and valid measures of skills that are needed in the workplace. In the Persian language, performance tests have not been developed yet, and as long as such tests are not available, the SAMFA proficiency test could be used in their place. However, this does not obviate the need for developing performance tests for the Persian language.

### ***21.6.2 Computer-assisted language assessment***

Major test developing organizations are always exploring the possibilities that new technologies provide for their tests. The computer is one of the technologies that has been used in computer-assisted language assessment (Chapelle and Voss 2017). It appears that in Iran's current sociopolitical situation, there is room to utilize computer technologies in language testing to better serve test developers, test takers and test users. In fact, scoring open-ended responses is a highly challenging process for computers; computers could be useful in the facilitation, contextualization and enhancement of Persian language testing.

### ***21.6.3 Integrated task-based assessment***

Currently SAMFA is designed to assess individual components of language proficiency such as speaking, writing, reading and listening. However, in the future it must move beyond and add integrated tasks into its assessment process as a further element of complexity. This could happen through incorporating more than one skill. For instance, the learners could be asked to read a passage and do a writing task based on reading that passage. These integrated tasks enhance the authenticity of the assessment for real-life situations. However, since such tasks require skills and strategies that could not be covered in a language test, further elements of complexity are added (Wigglesworth and Frost 2017).

#### **21.6.4 Persian language teacher assessment literacy**

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching-learning process. One of the most effective ways of enhancing Persian language learning within language centers is through the improvement of assessment procedures. Research shows that “teachers devote a large part of their preparation time to creating instruments and observation procedures, marking, recording, and synthesizing results in informal and formal reports in their daily teaching” (Cheng, Rogers, and Hu 2004, 360). To help students achieve higher levels of language proficiency, teachers should be encouraged to improve their assessment literacy. Currently, there is little emphasis on assessment in teacher development programs. No significant funds have been allocated to improve Persian language teachers’ assessment and evaluation practices.

No standards have been set for the assessment of the competence of Persian language teachers. Such standards would have to include a set of assessment competencies for Persian language teachers. Appropriate training and professional development should be provided for Persian language teachers so that their knowledge and skills are enhanced and they are enabled to make informed decisions through the assessment process, which is defined as the development, scoring, interpretation and sharing of the results of large-scale tests developed by the National Organization for Educational Testing.

While standards and standards-based education have witnessed considerable growth, language instructors have not had access to a framework of what is needed for the development, selection, use and interpretation of reliable and valid tests even for classroom assessment. Assessment, standards and politics are closely connected. This close connection makes it all the more important to train language instructors and to equip them with necessary skills so that they could assess their students’ progress toward local, national and/or international goals and standards (Malone 2017).

#### **21.6.5 Exit test development**

Exit tests of Persian language proficiency have not been developed yet. SAMFA has the potential to be used as an exit test for graduates or foreign students who are currently studying at Iranian universities without taking a proficiency test. Exit tests assess language proficiency upon graduation from university. Persian language exit tests could play two roles. First, they would motivate university students to improve their Persian language proficiency. Second, they could be presented to future employers as proof of proficiency in Persian language skills.

### **21.7 Conclusion**

Robust assessment procedures are needed to determine whether non-Iranian candidates of Iranian universities possess sufficient Persian language proficiency to start their academic studies in Iran. Learning Persian as a second language is not an integral component of the university programs in Iran. With an inadequate level of proficiency in Persian language, students would have a tough time in coping with the demands of university-level study. University faculty who teach academic courses would also face difficulties if their incoming students’ level of Persian proficiency is not adequate. Final exams of Persian language centers vary from one center to another in terms of standards required for successful entry into academic programs. Thus, the need for a standardized test of Persian language proficiency is highly emphasized.

To develop a standardized test, several steps need to be taken. First, validly constructed standards are needed that are free from bias. For this purpose, in line with institutional goals,

performance data should be carefully gathered and analyzed. Second, specifications should be designed that require sophisticated construct validation and consideration of practicality issues. Third, items must be constructed, and scoring and interpretation procedures be delineated. This would require several rounds of trialing the items before the final version is made available. If these steps are taken adequately, the end product would be a cost-effective, time-saving and accurate instrument that could produce informative measurements of learners' language abilities.

Since SAMFA was launched in 2015, it has acted as a gate-keeping instrument to filter international students of Iranian universities and let in the ones who possess a minimum required level of Persian language proficiency and are able to cope with the language demands of their academic fields. Different universities are encouraged to set their own minimum scores and threshold levels for academic Persian language proficiency according to their position on the ranking list of Iranian universities. This step was taken to allow the universities that are more attractive for foreign students to be able to admit the students who possess the highest intellectual and linguistic abilities.

For developing a brand-new standardized test of large-scale proportions, huge amounts of investments are needed. Though SAMFA has been designed and developed with a minimal budget, for its continuation and the solution of earlier-mentioned problems, more time and budget should be allocated. This chapter offered a discussion of the concepts of different validities. The validity as well as the reliability of SAMFA should be explored on the basis of the results which have so far been produced in six administrations of the test. Issues that are worth empirical investigation include SAMFA's internal factor structure, its concurrent or predictive validity, and the cognitive processes that test takers undergo to complete the test. The effect of this test on the stakeholders could also be explored. Its findings should also be communicated to the stakeholders to provide guidance for them.

Ready-made and validated tests such as SAMFA that are administered several times each year could relieve Persian language teaching centers from spending time and money to develop their own tests. In addition, in SAMFA, rubric-based analytic scoring is employed that could provide detailed information about learner abilities. This type of scoring, a multi-trait analytic mark scheme, is more interpretable since it allows identifying learners' weaknesses and strengths. For instance, writing or speaking skill is broken down into its component skills, and each component is scored separately. This detailed scoring allows the instructors and curriculum designers to diagnose learners' problem areas and take measures to improve the learners' abilities. Trong Tuan (2012) stated that analytic scoring is more explicit than other scoring approaches and thus enables teachers to provide learners with consistent and direct feedback.

In Persian language proficiency tests differentiated according to four academic disciplines, namely Social Sciences, Medical Sciences, Humanities and Engineering, the construct that is measured encompasses both language knowledge and content knowledge. However, little is known about the interrelationship between language knowledge and the content which the language is used to convey. Thus, background content knowledge should be considered in the interpretation of academic language proficiency tests that do not test background knowledge directly. Also, it is necessary to explicate the criteria that language test designers and practitioners in the academic fields use in judging performance in academic language proficiency tests and academic tests in various fields. These criteria could inform the construction of rating scales and the interpretation of test performances (Douglas 2005).

The last point is that the unique general language proficiency descriptors do not encompass the whole range of language abilities that Persian language learners would need to acquire. Brown and Bown (2014) emphasized that professional demands that are made from learners

should be considered, and instruction and assessment should be adjusted to the language norms of target discourse communities that the learners wish to join. It should be pointed out that we need to have different kinds of standards for proficiency. State and private institutions should be allowed to set their own standards for general or academic language proficiency since their specific contexts of use differ from one another. As Saville (2012) state, the standards could be set by the government, a professional organization, an external standards organization (e.g. ISO), and the organization itself and its internal rules and regulations. He mentioned that, in a quality management system, that quality cannot be imposed from outside but must be founded and controlled within an organization itself. In setting standards, the learners' purposes of learning Persian, their disciplinary orientations, institutional and curricular requirements, pedagogic approaches, and student cohort compositions must be considered (Jenkins and Leung 2019). It has been acknowledged that different real-life activities have their own language varieties. Thus, setting a common proficiency standard for students who wish to enter divergent professional communities is inadequate and misleading.

When institutions are allowed to set their own language proficiency standards, the key stakeholders of the language assessment process, i.e. students, teachers, and language schools, are given direct control over the design and use of language tests. This perspective is in contradiction to the view that a single type of standardized general Persian language proficiency test could be administered to learners who want to learn Persian language for divergent purposes and needs. Jenkins and Leung (2019) emphasize the importance of recognizing the "standard reality" of each individual context and argues against imposing a "mythical standard" for all language learners.

## Notes

- 1 سنجش استاندارد مهارتهای فارسی مرکز همکاریهای علمی بین المللی
- 2 سازمان سنجش آموزش کشور
- 3 وزارت علوم، تحقیقات و فناوری

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# SECOND LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT IN PERSIAN

*Nahal Akbari*

## 22.1 Introduction

Language assessment continues to be a key and thriving aspect of the second language learning and teaching process. As educational systems and language programs increasingly grapple with issues of accountability and demonstrating outcomes, the need for a broader and more comprehensive understanding of the nature of language ability as well as approaches to assessment and meaningful interpretations of test results for learners, teachers and other stakeholders receive more attention. Questions on how different types and contexts of assessment are connected to instruction in the classroom at a practical level, and to their real-world implications for test takers at a broader level, continue to challenge researchers and language educators. It is now widely recognized that assessment should be conceived of within an interlinked framework of cognitive, educational, social, ethical and even political considerations. Some of the new challenges and findings in the field are particularly relevant for teachers of Persian both in the United States and across the world, as more institutions of higher education offer Persian courses and more language learners are interested in demonstrating proficiency results for professional and academic purposes. For a discussion on different kinds of tests devised within Iran, see Chapter 21 in this volume.

## 22.2 Overview of testing and assessment

The terms “testing” and “assessment” have been used in the literature in a wide range of ways, sometimes interchangeably and sometimes deliberately distinguished to refer to two different sets of construction and administration practices. The current trend in applied linguistics is to consider assessment as the broad umbrella term that includes a wide range of methods, including formal and standardized measures or “tests”, as well as alternative ways to evaluate learning such as self-assessment, peer-assessment, portfolios and learning logs, among others. Increasingly, assessment has become the more acceptable term that implies a whole host of considerations and procedures for gathering information and designing, scoring and interpreting results in relation to language teaching and learning. Norris (2012) points out that the “ultimate goal of language assessment is to use tests to better inform us on the decisions we

make and the actions we take in language education” (p. 42). He invites language educators to consider factors such as users (including teachers, students, parents, organizations, employers etc.), as well as the intended use, purpose and impact of the test in selecting and designing tools for purposeful language assessment.

Language programs conduct assessment for a number of purposes including screening and selection of eligible students, placement at appropriate levels of instruction, monitoring student progress throughout the program, certification of exiting students after they have gained the desired knowledge, skills or abilities, and determining the effectiveness of instruction or program evaluation. The decision of programs to select certain existing measures or to develop their own for each of these purposes is a complex one. In the case of Persian programs in higher education contexts in the U.S., similar to several other languages, program administrators and instructors have generally developed their own tests mainly for the purpose of placement, assessing skills and knowledge, or in response to departmental and institutional proficiency requirements. Persian language instructors are increasingly becoming aware of and familiar with general proficiency guidelines in developing their curricular goals. This has been evident in their increasing active participation in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) workshops and professional development opportunities through the American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP), as well as other relevant conferences and annual meetings. However, unlike with some other languages, there is not much evidence of a coherent plan for the alignment of curricular goals with assessment practices across Persian programs at different institutions. There are few, if any, published reports or studies on how the expectations of a given Persian curriculum are met through its assessment practices. The alignment between curricula and assessment practices is an area that brings together the program goals and desired outcomes, teaching approaches, and tests in meaningful ways and through specific methods (Martone and Sireci 2009). More research in this area and reports from Persian programs will be valuable to the field.

### **22.3 Communicative language teaching and assessment**

Historically, along with the departure from structural, grammar-based teaching approaches toward communicative language teaching, language testing and assessment have likewise shifted from structural to communicative, and from analytical and discrete point to integrative and holistic (Davies 2014; Fulcher 2010). The advent of communicative approaches to teaching and learning informed by Canale and Swain’s (1980) influential work on the Hymesian concept of communicative competence meant that the field of testing and assessment would also inevitably evolve (Bailey 1998). In Canale and Swain’s (1980) model, communicative competence comprises an underlying system of knowledge including linguistic competence (knowledge of linguistic forms), sociolinguistic competence (the ability to use language appropriately in contexts), discourse competence (coherence and cohesion), and strategic competence (knowledge of verbal and nonverbal communicative strategies). The ensuing empirical and theoretical work of several other researchers further enhanced the notion of language competence or ability as having multiple components rather than being unitary or global (Bachman and Palmer 1996; Skehan 1998). The challenge, however, has been linking these abilities to performance and actual evidence when it comes to assessing them. Bridging the gap between communicative teaching and the ways in which it gets assessed is still a challenge for curriculum developers, test designers and language teachers. As Persian language educators try to incorporate



authentic materials that simulate real-world interaction into their teaching and aim to adopt communicative approaches to instruction, they should concurrently consider how they will assess the knowledge, skills and abilities of their learners differently. This can lead to significant enhancements to curricula, instruction and assessment in seamless ways that can potentially benefit students, reduce the anxiety caused by a perceived or actual disjuncture between teaching and testing, and even increase learner motivation. Arguably, one of the values of assessment for educational programs can be to “guide the efficient and effective learning of relevant content as well as motivate learning” (Fulcher and Owen 2016). Read Chapter 16 in this volume for a more elaborate discussion on using the communicative approach in teaching Persian.

#### **22.4 Basic principles and ongoing conversations in language assessment**

A long-standing question and ongoing challenge in the literature of language assessment has been if and how we can be confident that a test is effective and dependable. Brown (2004) enumerates the five criteria for evaluating tests – “practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback” (p. 19) – which are briefly reviewed here respectively. Test practicality is largely self-explanatory and does not need much explanation beyond noting such considerations as cost, time constraints and relative ease of test administration and scoring. The second principle, reliability, is concerned with the consistency of scoring and the extent to which the administration procedures of any given test are accurate. Examples of methods to determine reliability include administering the same test to an individual or a group of test takers more than once over a period of time (i.e., test-retest reliability), having more than one rater to score the same test to cross-check evaluations and determine the extent to which subjectivity or personal judgement might play a role in the score (i.e., inter-rater reliability), and creating more than one form of the same test by slightly varying the items and administering it to the same group to establish the correlation between versions (i.e., parallel or alternate form reliability).

Perhaps the most complex and intensely debated criterion to establish has been test validity. For the purpose of this broad overview, the notion of construct validity and the conversations around it is most relevant. A “construct” in language assessment can be defined as a meaningful interpretation of observed behavior. For instance, when we interpret a learner’s score on a vocabulary test or a listening test as an indicator of their vocabulary knowledge or listening ability, then these become the constructs that give meaning to the test score. Bachman (2007) identifies the understanding of the roles of abilities and contexts, and of how the interaction between them can affect performance on tests as an ongoing challenge in the field.

Closely related to the concept of construct is the issue of test validation. At its core, the validation of a language assessment tool or process involves gathering compelling evidence that the assessment does what it claims to do. Warranted interpretations of test results are only possible if we clearly identify the “constructs” we are assessing and what indicators or behaviors lead to our interpretations. Effective and meaningful validation, however, has become increasingly complex and perceived to be multifaceted in recent decades. Researchers have realized that the complexities of different languages and the process of learning, acts of communication, and the multiplicity of social and cultural contexts in which assessments are used do not allow for a straightforward and unitary approach to defining certain constructs for the purpose of assessment and establishing test validity. Along this line, there has been a growing

interest in practice-oriented, argument-based validation, originally proposed by Kane (1992, 2006). As Cumming (2013) points out:

[T]here is little agreement on theories of language acquisition for assessment purposes or, fundamentally, even whether language abilities should be assessed as a trait, behavior, or interaction in any given situation. Moreover, it is unlikely that a single theory of language learning could emerge or be applied uniformly as a useful construct across different language assessments given the enormous variation in languages themselves and their status in different societies, the conditions under which languages are taught, learned, and practiced, and the many, divergent purposes and populations for which language assessments are made.

(pp. 7–8)

When it comes to conceptualizing validity and reporting it, it is therefore imperative that studies of Persian language assessment tools be cognizant of this broader, more comprehensive approach to establishing test validity. For a similar discussion on test validity and reliability, read Chapter 21 in this volume.

The next principle, test authenticity, involves the extent to which the items or tasks in a given test correspond to the real-world tasks and situations of language use. Brown (2004) notes that for a test to have authenticity, features such as incorporating natural samples of language use, including meaningful and relevant items for the real-life experiences of test-takers, and contextualizing rather than isolating items should be present. And finally, the impact of language assessment on the curriculum design, teaching practices, and behaviors of students and teachers is generally referred to as the “washback effect”. Messick (1996) defines washback as “the extent to which the introduction and use of a test influences language teachers and learners to do things that they would not otherwise do that promote or inhibit language learning” (p. 241). Carr (2011) notes the significance of the washback of high-stakes tests on instruction. For example, in an effort to prepare students for multiple choice tests or the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPIs), teachers may incorporate test items or role-play activities that simulate these test formats into their instruction, or in extreme cases merely focus on them at the expense of other aspects of the curriculum. Language educators need to be aware of the risk of test preparation activities crossing the line in their teaching practices. That is, rather than helping learners develop test familiarity and strategies that assist them in demonstrating their skills and abilities on a given test, they might find the pressure of tests on their instruction in ways that make them focus primarily on better test results to the detriment of their students’ development of a richer and more holistic second language learning experience. As Persian language instructors see an increasing number of their students take some of the high-stakes standardized tests discussed in the next section, it would be important for them to consider the balanced, ethical ways in which assessment can inform and affect their instruction.

## **22.5 Standardized testing**

Looking at the history of standardized testing across the world and in the U.S., it seems that for several decades in the twentieth century the idea of tests that could be administered and scored in a consistent way, used efficiently and conveniently across different contexts with large numbers of test takers, and developed based on empirical principles, used to be very appealing and almost unchallenged (Brown 2004). Standardized tests were – and continue to be – used

across all levels of education from K-12 to higher education and in different professions such as medicine and law. In the case of language education, initiatives to increase the national capacity in foreign languages have inevitably led to a greater need for accountability and therefore the development of assessment mechanisms that can be used and meaningfully interpreted in a variety of contexts. Widely recognized proficiency scales and ability descriptors include the Common European Frame of Reference (CEFR), Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), the Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ASLPR), the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) guidelines, as well as the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) in the United States, among others.

Proficiency testing measures the individual's ability to use language for real-world purposes and to accomplish linguistic tasks, unrehearsed and regardless of any particular curriculum, across a range of topics and settings against one or more of the previously given language descriptors. Among other applications, proficiency testing helps address the problematic "seat-time" requirement in colleges and universities, which means that by virtue of going through the required language courses in a sequence (typically over a few semesters), it is assumed that students would make meaningful gains in their language learning process, achieve a certain level of language ability (beginner, intermediate or advanced), and fulfil certain academic or professional requirements. One of the most widely used standardized proficiency tests used by different organizations and academic institutions in the U.S. is ACTFL's speaking, listening, reading and writing tests. The best known and by far most commonly used tool for assessing speaking in different languages including Persian is the ACTFL's Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). Before discussing the ACTFL OPI in further detail, a note on one important distinction in the literature on standardized testing would be relevant; this distinction has to do with the broad categorization of tests into "norm-referenced" and "criterion referenced". Norm-referenced tests measure and rank test takers in comparison to each other's performance. A test taker's score would be compared to the norm of similar test takers and can be expressed as a percentile rank. In contrast, criterion-referenced tests are designed to assess the learners' knowledge of a well-defined domain of knowledge, and the performance of others does not impact the test taker's grade. Performance is measured against specific standards or criteria, and scores can be expressed as a percentage of the possible total score, or a certain descriptor.

ACTFL OPI is known as a criterion-referenced, interactive test of speaking. It comprises a 20- to 30-minute one-on-one interview between a certified tester and the test taker. The interview follows a specific protocol that is intended to adapt to the interests and abilities of the test taker throughout the course of the conversation. The interview (typically conducted over the phone) is recorded and double-rated, and an official ACTFL certificate stating the oral proficiency level is issued to the candidate. The test was originally developed in the 1950s and later came under major scrutiny and criticism beginning in the '80s on multiple grounds such as its validity claims. ACTFL has in response tried to address these criticisms through research and improvements to the test and providing new proficiency guidelines (see Malone 2008).

Because the ACTFL OPI is such a high-stakes and widely used test for different languages across many institutions and organizations for purposes such as certification, hiring and promotion, the debate around the test is ongoing among assessment specialists. For one thing, the ACTFL OPI continues to rely heavily on intuitive judgement rather than a theoretical, empirical foundation. In addition to language ability, several other factors such as personality and degree of familiarity of test format can impact the results. It also relies on the assumption that the descriptors and the criteria that assessors have been trained in are transferrable across languages. In addition to posing a major challenge to the validity claims of the test, this can open the door to major ethical issues. The problematic notion of ideal native speaker, thorny

issues such as the dominance of certain dialects or accents over the others in many languages, and the subjective judgement or preference of testers can create a major issue. One serious challenge that these questions pose is whether all test takers across different languages are, in fact, taking the same test.

The gradation of performance from informal settings at lower levels to formal at higher levels, as well as associating the functional ability to describe, narrate and explain with intermediate, advanced and superior levels respectively, has also been seriously challenged. This linear approach to a variety of demands of interactions across different contexts and global tasks can be misleading and potentially even prohibiting test takers from getting a chance to move up to questions at the next level during the course of an interview. Depending on their own background, education and level of familiarity with the literature of fields such as linguistics, discourse analysis and language teaching and learning, the testers might have varying degrees of ability to interpret the guidelines. For instance, if a highly capable language learner frames a discussion of an abstract topic within a personal narratives and anecdotes (as a personal style even in their first language, or due to lack of familiarity with the OPI format and expectations), they may be rated at a lower level since personal narratives are associated with the advanced, not the superior level. In training its testers, ACTFL should take measures to ensure that the complex sociopolitical, educational and ethical issues in assessment are taken into consideration. In fact, McNamara and Roever (2006) caution against a potentially narrow view of the training needed, stating that: “[i]n terms of academic training, we stress the importance of a well-rounded training for language testers that goes beyond applied psychometrics . . . a training that includes a critical view of testing and social consequences” (p. 255). In sum, while the OPI test continues to have several undeniable shortcomings, its elimination is neither feasible nor desirable. In fact, it can be argued that no alternatives are currently available for assessing speaking ability with the level of practicality, accountability and easily interpreted results as ACTFL OPI for non-specialists (Salaberry 2000).

Still another widely referenced proficiency descriptor is ILR, developed by the United States government. The history of ILR goes back to the mid-twentieth century, when during critical war times, it became evident that the United States’ lack of preparation in foreign languages was a major problem for many of its employees, particularly diplomats who were going to be stationed abroad. In the absence of a system developed by the academic community at the time, the Civil Service Commission concluded that the government needed to create its own objective criteria that would be applicable to all languages and civil service positions, unrelated to any particular language curriculum. The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) was tasked with developing a proficiency scale. After several iterations, by the 1980s the ILR proficiency scale of 0 to 5 levels, including full descriptions of “plus” sub-levels (e.g. 1+, 2+, etc.) within each category, was in place. Even after the development of the ACTFL proficiency guidelines, the government agencies have continued to adhere to the ILR definitions as their standard measure of language proficiency. Despite challenges and criticism from the testing research community on multiple grounds, ACTFL and the U.S. government continue to work closely to ensure that the two proficiency testing systems are complementary. Two major proficiency tests based on the ILR scale include the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) and Foreign Service Institute (FSI) test, commonly used by the State Department and many other government agencies.

The current version of DLPT (i.e., DLPT5, available for Persian) is designed to assess the general language proficiency in reading and listening of English speakers who have learned a foreign language. Listening and reading passages on the test selected from authentic materials and real-life sources such as signs, publications, radio and television broadcasts and online

sources. They cover a broad range of themes including social, cultural, political, economic, geographic, scientific and military topics. The test format is either multiple choice or constructed response (DLIFLC DLPT guides and information, 2018). The FSI test (also available for Persian) has speaking and reading sections, and it evaluates listening comprehension as part of the interaction with the tester about everyday, personal, social and current affairs topics. Test takers are also given an oral report on a subject based on English-language materials that provide some information they can use in their response. They can use that material as a guide or draw on their personal knowledge and experience about the subject. Afterward, they are expected to respond to follow-up discussion questions in language. Finally, they receive information, facts and opinions from the tester in the language on a subject in which test takers choose from several options and then report in English on what they learn. This demonstrates the test takers' comprehension as well as their ability to manage an interaction in accomplishing a specific, integrative task. As for the reading section of the test, examinees read quickly through several short texts in the language, varying in topics and difficulty levels, and are then expected to give a gist of the topics to the tester. This is followed by reading longer articles and giving a detailed oral report of the content. Bachman and Palmer (2006) offer empirical evidence demonstrating the validity of the speaking FSI.

Additionally, the Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) at the University of Oregon has developed a Persian Computerized Assessment of Proficiency (Persian CAP) based on its Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) for speaking, listening, reading and writing. Still another example of a standardized Persian proficiency test in the United States is the listening and reading test developed by the American Councils for International Education (ACIE). The test is sponsored and used by *The Language Flagship*, a federally funded national foreign language educational program, for the purpose of qualification, pre-departure and post-return assessment of their program participants, measuring proficiency levels within a range of L0+ to L3+ on the ILR scale. The University of Maryland Persian Flagship Program has also developed a two-tier listening, reading and writing proficiency test calibrated with the ACTFL and ILR scales and is currently used for internal assessment and annual tracking of student progress purposes. Ghonsooli (2010) developed one of the only Persian proficiency tests in Iran that was reported on in terms of its theoretical foundations, specifications and validity.

In general, interest around the world in developing national tests seems to have grown since the early 2000s. Government organizations and educational institutions are facing an increasing demand for ways to predict or demonstrate the ability of individuals to perform, with varying levels of language ability, in real-life work and academic settings. As such, there has been an ongoing need for standardized aptitude tests, proficiency tests and performance tests. Within Iran, the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT) has sponsored the development of the Persian Language Proficiency Test (PLPT) in two areas of general and academic proficiency. The test was officially sanctioned as the national standard test of Persian language in 2018 when the Iranian president signed into law a bill recognizing it as the national exam for assessing Persian language skills for a wide range of purposes such as issuing work permits and student visas, among other applications of the test (President Rouhani Signs into Law 2018). An early report on the preliminary stages of the development of the test and the theoretical foundations of the academic version of the test (PLPT-AV) was published by Sahraei and Jalili (2012). In their description of the theoretical foundations and test specifications, Bijankhan and Shayestefar (2016) report that it is corpus-based (i.e., relies on real texts produced by Persian speakers in real contexts) and aligned with the CEFR.

## 22.6 Assessment in the classroom

Standardized and externally mandated testing aside, a considerable amount of the language learning process and time of teachers in the classroom is devoted to assessment. It will be therefore in order to briefly focus on issues related to assessment in the classroom. Cumming (2009) notes that the conventional approach to classroom assessment is sequential. In other words, teachers first establish goals and objectives, then they use instructional materials or design activities and tasks that move learners toward those goals, and finally they evaluate how their students have succeeded in reaching those goals. As an alternative, there has been a growing interest over the years in the role of assessment during the learning process rather than at the end. That is, assessment *for* learning as opposed to assessment *of* learning has been gaining ground (Fulcher 2010). The notion of formative assessment refers to this particular type of assessment of learning in instructional settings, where assessment is utilized as a part of the learning process in order to give feedback to learners on what aspects of their knowledge, skills or abilities they need to improve, and more importantly, how they can improve their learning. Closely related here is the discussion around “alternative assessment” and “dynamic assessment” in the classroom. Drawing on the Vygostkian psychology and a socio-cultural theory of learning, this view of assessment allows for collecting diverse evidence of learning for diverse learners in different immediate situational contexts and informed by the dynamics of different interactions in the classroom (Scarino 2013). Teachers might assume that throughout their teaching, they are constantly engaged in alternative, formative and dynamic assessment: at any point in their day-to-day teaching when they ask questions, check on students’ understanding, ask students to produce language, have them work in pairs or groups and provide corrective feedback, they are indeed engaged in acts of non-traditional assessment concurrent with teaching. Even quizzes and chapter tests that involve follow-up review and feedback aimed at improving learning can be considered as planned formative assessments, therefore blurring the dichotomy of teaching and assessment on an ongoing basis (Ellis 2003).

However, as Fox (2008) notes, alternative assessment is philosophically different in the sense that, regardless of the form of assessment, it actively involves learners in the selection of what will be assessed, in collaborating with their teacher peers in identifying the evaluation criteria, in self and peer assessment, and in developing an awareness of their learning and performance. In sum, using different forms and techniques of classroom assessment such as portfolios or self-assessment and peer-assessment *per se* do not comprise dynamic or alternative assessment. Rather, the key distinction between non-dynamic and dynamic assessment is how actively learners are involved in determining the expectations and criteria of success in assessment activities, and how much awareness they gain of the gap between their current ability or performance and the desired level through assessment practices.

Linking instruction and assessment together in the classroom in more seamless ways requires instructors to reflect on their teaching approach and deliberately decide to assess students along similar lines. As a case in point, despite the various definitions of tasks and different conceptions of task-based language teaching (TBLT), the approach has received increasing recognition in second language teaching and learning over the past two decades (for more recent overviews, see Long 2015; Ellis 2018; Samuda and Bygate 2008; Van den Branden 2006). If teachers decide to incorporate tasks into their pedagogy, then naturally task-based language assessment (TBLA) (Norris 2009; Van Gorp and Deygers 2014) should also inform their assessment practices. In fact, performance/task/can-do-orientated instruction cannot and should not be assessed with discrete-point tests or skills/abilities-oriented assessment

(Bachman 2014). In reality, many language teachers are not as familiar with task-based language assessment as they are with the teaching approach.

Another concept related to alternative classroom assessment that is most often used interchangeably with task-based assessment is performance assessment. Both terms imply that in addition to tests that provide information on what students know about the target language, it is important to have information on what they are able to do in the language (Norris 2002). Fundamental to this type of assessment is the direct observation and evaluation of how learners use language to engage in meaningful, extended acts of communication. Norris (2009) advocates for this type of assessment as it helps assess language learning based on clearly identified target tasks, and it can be tied to expected proficiency levels while allowing the learners to demonstrate their ability to perform in certain situations that simulate real life professional domains. At the end of this chapter, a sample task/performance-based assessment activity is presented for an advance level content-based Persian course.

In a similar vein, the ACTFL has developed a cluster assessment model called Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA). What distinguishes IPA is clearly identifying the performance criteria and evaluating performance based on authentic tasks, language abilities, pragmatics, and so on. By emphasizing the three dimensions of interpretative, presentational and interpersonal communication and featuring three tasks each reflecting one mode, IPA incorporates the actual uses of language across communication modes and abilities. The test is standards-based, performance-based and integrative, and is designed to be used with rubrics that rate performance in terms of meeting, exceeding or not meeting the expectations for the task. The rubrics enable teachers and learners to identify strengths, areas in need of improvement, and proficiency level.

When it comes to the selection and design of appropriate classroom assessment, Fulcher (2012) and Malone (2013) highlight the importance of assessment literacy for language instructors. One of the key areas of assessment literacy and professional development for Persian language instructors/assessors should be keeping up with the research and practice of selecting and designing assessment tools and procedures, implementing classroom assessment, and integrating their interpretation of assessment results into decisions about the curriculum and instruction in their classrooms and programs.

## **22.7 Assessing Persian heritage language learners**

One of the challenges that Persian programs, similar to many other languages in the U.S. secondary and higher education context face, is the key issue of the placement of heritage learners in language classes. Although there is an abundance of placement tests and procedures for different languages, very limited research is available for the placement of heritage learners in general (Llosa 2014), and for Persian heritage learners in particular. Heritage learners are believed to excel in “listening and speaking skills and cultural/sociolinguistic knowledge” in comparison to their non-heritage peers, who are believed to “possess stronger reading and writing abilities of the prestigious variety as well as metalinguistic knowledge of the target language” (Fairclough 2011, 274). Once these learners are in language classes, approaches are recommended for addressing their unique learning profiles, instructional needs, motivations and attitudes toward language learning. Sedighi (2010) proposes a learner-centered approach, differentiated instruction, and creating opportunities for collaborative learning among Persian heritage and non-heritage learners who are most often placed in the same classes due to low enrollments. Megerdumian (2010) argues for an inductive, explicit linguistic approach where the focus is on the analytic discovery of language patterns and the heritage learners’ intuitive

knowledge of language rules. Through sample activities, she demonstrates how this approach allows Persian heritage learners to tap into their intuition to discover linguistic generalizations while performing specific tasks.

Informal interviews, demographic questionnaires, and self-assessment seem to be common to place heritage learners at different levels of instruction, particularly if they report that they have no literacy skills or very limited reading and writing ability. This is typically despite their relative fluency in speaking and even a higher-level listening comprehension ability. One area of research that would greatly benefit Persian programs is documenting and discussing their approaches to placement of heritage learners and the effectiveness of these approaches. In addition to placement, another notable gap in the heritage language assessment literature is in the area of classroom assessment and expected criteria of successful performance for heritage and non-heritage learners. For more information about Persian heritage language learning and teaching, read Chapters 3–4 in this volume, in which phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic properties of heritage language learners are discussed in detail. Chapters 16, 27 and 28 in this volume also discuss the differences between Persian heritage language learners and second language learners of Persian.

## **22.8 Conclusion**

This chapter provided an overview of the current approaches and ongoing issues in language assessment, as well as the use and effectiveness of some of the most recent assessment practices and procedures in second language education. The particular case of Persian as an additional language in the U.S. was discussed, and some of the commonly used standardized proficiency assessment instruments available for Persian were critically reviewed. Finally, some practical considerations in classroom assessment as an integral, ongoing component of instruction were highlighted. In conclusion, a sample performance-based classroom assessment activity is presented for an advanced-level, content-based Persian course (see appendix). The sample represents a dynamic group project that involves demonstrating knowledge of content, extensive communications among group members to accomplish the task, extensive reading and writing, and active involvement of the students in developing assessment criteria and peer-evaluation.



# Appendix

## Sample Task-based/Performance-based Assessment

Course: Introduction to Persian Media Literacy (content-based)

Level: Advanced (third-year Persian)

Task: Group activity creating a newspaper page based on authentic samples

صفحه های مختلف چند روزنامه ایرانی را ورق بزنید و با دقت بررسی کنید. لینک روزنامه ها را می‌توانید در بخش 3 مطالب کلاسی پیدا کنید. در مشورت با هم گروهیهای خود تصمیم بگیرید که:

موضوع صفحه روزنامه شما چیست؟

(... فرهنگ و هنر- ورزش- اقتصاد- جامعه- تکنولوژی- سیاست- روابط بین الملل – جهان – سینما)  
مخاطب شما کیست؟ گرایش روزنامه شما چیست؟ آیا داخل ایران چاپ میشود و یا خارج از ایران (اگر داخل ایران است به قوانین نظارت بر رسانه ها و موضوع سانسور توجه کنید). دقت کنید که گرایش شما در انتخاب واژگان، عکس ها، و تیترها تاثیر دارد.

هر کدام از افراد گروه باید یک متن بلند (حدود ۲۵۰ تا ۳۰۰ کلمه) و یک یا دو متن کوتاه (حدود ۱۵۰ تا ۲۰۰ کلمه) برای صفحه روزنامه تهیه کنید. متن ها می‌توانند بر اساس منابع فارسی یا انگلیسی باشند و خلاصه یک خبر یا موضوع روز و یا ترکیب شما از چند منبع باشند.

برای جلب توجه خواننده از عکس و تیرهای جذاب استفاده کنید

به استفاده خوب از فضای صفحه در محیط پابلیشر توجه کنید

اگر در صفحه جای خالی دارید می‌توانید مانند روزنامه های موجود از تبلیغات و یا آگهی استخدام و غیره استفاده کنید مطالب بکدیگر را بخوانید و بر اساس معیارهایی که با هم تعیین کردیم تصحیح کنید.

نسخه اول پروژه را به صورت الکترونیک روز ... آماده کنید. در این تاریخ لازم نیست همه مطالب کامل باشند نسخه دوم با تغییرات لازم باید تا روز آخر کلاس ... آماده باشد و در کلاس نشان داده شود.

نسخه نهایی روز امتحان پایان ترم تحویل داده میشود.

## English translation of task guidelines:

Carefully examine different pages of some Iranian newspapers (both in terms of form and content). You can find links to their PDF versions under module 3 on ELMS. In close collaboration with your team members, decide on the following:

- The content of your page
- Your audience and your assumed position (you can choose to be objective, or have a moderate, conservative, reformist etc. viewpoint). This will affect your choice of headlines, words and images. If your newspaper is published inside Iran be mindful of the oversight and censorship regulations.
- Each group member is expected to contribute a longer piece (250–300 words, and one or two short texts (150–200 words each). These can be based on English or Persian sources; they can be news, analysis or simply introducing an interesting topic or idea to your readers. You can base your piece on one source or synthesize information from different sources.
- Make sure you get the attention of your readers through using interesting headlines, pictures and your language choices!

- Make the best use of the space on your page so that it looks pleasant to the reader and is not cluttered. You can easily move text boxes around in Publisher. If there is space that you have not used try to fill it with ads, announcement etc., based on what you typically see in newspapers.
- If you cannot use Publisher or experience problems in the process, ask for help.
- Make sure to read and discuss each other's texts. Full editing is not expected, but give feedback to your teammate and edit their text as needed. Use the assessment criteria we developed together to give feedback to your peers and assess their work.
- **First draft** of your project in the publisher template is due **Wed. Oct. 5** (content does not need to be complete at this point)
- **Second draft** after incorporation of feedback due **Monday Oct. 10 (last session of class)**. **You will share your newspaper page with other class members this day.**
- **Final version should be submitted electronically on the day of your final exam.**

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## PART IV

# Social aspects of second language acquisition and pedagogy of Persian



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# PERSIAN AS A NATIONAL LANGUAGE, MINORITY LANGUAGES AND MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN IRAN

*Negar Davari Ardakani*

## 23.1 Introduction

Iran has been a multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural country during its long history. As far back as the Achaemenid era (550–330 BC), inscriptions were written in various languages of the diverse ethnic groups that inhabited the then Persian Empire, where languages and religions were addressed (Finn 2011, 219). The shift from multilinguality to Persian as a dominant language is believed to have occurred around four centuries after the advent of Islam in Iran (637 AD), when Persian became a dominant spoken and written language through a gradual natural bottom-top supra-stratization process of standardization and officialization (Perry 2012). It is believed that this standardization occurred because of the high status of the literary works in Persian and the support it received by the society (Modarresi 1989, 246; Perry 2012, 70–94; Sarli 2008, 23–54). Hence, the diachronic aspect of the survival, transformation and dominance of Persian has been a matter of covert policy implemented by many Muslim Persians who refused to learn Arabic and demanded an interpretation of the Koran in Persian (Frye 2000, 152–156; Spooner 2012, 89–117) and not an imposition by a political power, a process that is also related to the continuing development of Persian in the countries it has been spoken. The study of the situation is considered by Spooner as shedding light on hidden aspects of language policy (2012, 90). Perry (2012) considers Ferdowsi’s national masterpiece, the *Shahname* (*The Epic of Kings*) as an overt/institutional measure towards promoting Persian language and literature, which only appeared in the tenth century.

Miskub and Banuazizi (1992, 25) emphasize on the role of Persian in maintaining “Iranian-ness” versus “Arabness”. They believe that after Iranians became Muslim, they urged to maintain and incorporate their Iranian identity within the new Islamic identity through Persian language and not Persian arts, which did not accommodate Islam (ibid., 46–50).

Persian has maintained its high status among Iranians throughout its history with almost no interference with the rights and opportunities of other languages’ speakers. However, mid-19th-century radical sociopolitical changes affected the situation in some ways. During World

War II due to the inefficiency of the local government and interferences of foreign powers, Iran was divided by Britain and Russia. Reza Shah aiming at unifying the country through his despotic Persianification of the nation. A modern national identity was built through Persian language and literature and Iran's pre-Islamic history and culture by ignoring the multiethnic, multilinguistic, multicultural, and multireligious reality of the Iranian state (Kia 1998, 9–10) and by violating the rights of ethnic minorities, tribes and the rural population to the point that some groups tried to seek independence from the central government. However, Reza Shah succeeded in unifying the collapsing country; he offended the minority language speakers by depriving them of using their mother tongues and practicing their cultures. In addition, in a time in which not many of the ethnic populations could speak and comprehend Persian, a monolingual Persian literacy program was imposed on them, which caused lack of confidence in the targeted populations because of the failures they experienced due to a neglected pedagogical basis; they had to learn to read and write Persian while they could not speak and comprehend the language – as minority language speakers, the literacy program was exactly the same as the one for Persian speakers.

However, today the problem is partly solved due to the vast coverage of Persian media throughout the country and a very recent offering of a short pre-literacy program in provinces where people's mother tongue is not Persian. Nevertheless, a 10–20% gap still exists between the literacy rates of Persian (as mother tongue) speakers and minority languages' speakers.

On the other hand, the contemporary digital era and the consequent broad coverage of satellites with ethnic language programs throughout the country including the borderline provinces made mother-tongue languages more accessible to satisfy some identity needs of the speakers.

It is worth mentioning that Iran is not the only country having a monolingual educational system based on the national language (see Harrison 2019). Despite the fact that multilingualism is the norm of language societies, most countries' educational systems are based upon national/official languages, and multilingualism has been neglected and disregarded as a natural norm of societies (Benson 2014, 11–29), relying partly on the stereotypical belief that there is an instinct connection between national unity and the use of a single official language. The belief is today considered as a myth by many researchers, who argue that using and valuing one language at the expense of excluding many others could create divisions, inequalities and inequities. Mother tongues should be acknowledged, as they contribute to building self-identities of the speakers. Neglecting them could lead to the formation of deficient identities that may ultimately threaten the nation's wellbeing.

Iranians including the ethnic minorities have continuously shown their national unity in many political occasions during the past 40 years (e.g. in the 1979 revolution, Iran-Iraq war [1980–1988], Mohammad Khatami's [1977–2005] and Rouhani's [2013-present] presidential elections). The inclusive social contributions of the nation show that the minorities have well integrated into the multidimensions of Iranian national identity, which is partly due to their long-lasting residence in their territories in the country.

Despite the earlier-mentioned situation and considering the basic measures that have been taken regarding minority rights, there is still a long way to pave to maintain, nurture and develop the language capital of the country, which at the same time paves the path towards socioeconomic development. To achieve this, language-in-education planning based on a sound understanding of multilingual settings and an awareness of the substantial value of the capital of language(s) are required.

This chapter, by looking into the historical and contemporary status of Persian as a national language and the languages of Iran's ethnic minorities, surveys the background scene of the situation. By emphasizing the non-neutral and marked nature of standard languages (including the standard versions of minority languages) and the underlying inequality of their speakers, I highlight the inevitable hierarchical relation of co-existent languages and question the implementation of ready-made solutions for Iran's situation. I strongly argue against considering minority languages as a threat to the national language. I show that there is no conflict between promoting a national language and at the same time cultivating minority languages. The chapter will also delve into the related language-in-education aspects and discuss the pros and cons of the situation in the context of globalization. The argument is that Iran could linguistically, socially, politically and economically enjoy its rich linguistic capital by incorporating the teaching of multiple languages including minority languages into the public educational scheme. Multilingual education relying on multiple linguistic and cultural capitals provides diverse canals for acquiring and transferring knowledge and skills and promotes communication. It, therefore, affects the contribution styles of generations and creates social opportunities. This means that a decision to teach/use or not to teach/use a language could be influential in determining the future life of generations. In addition, within the Persian language, there are different varieties. For a discussion on core versus peripheral varieties of Persian and the necessity to shape a common framework for teaching Persian to speakers of other languages, read Chapter 24 in this volume.

Many researchers agree that the first step in designing a fair education system is to understand the sociohistoric context of the minority communities (in this case Iran's) (Obaidul Hamid, Hoa, and Baldauf 2013, 3; quoted in Tupas 2015, 118). Therefore, in the next section, a brief overview of the sociohistorical context of Persian and some major minority languages in Iran is presented.

### **23.2 An overview of Iran's language landscape**

Currently, 78 languages are spoken in Iran, of which 14 are non-Iranian and 64 are Iranian languages. The two languages Avestan and Salchuq have died and still, seven more languages are dying (Zoroastrian Dari, Tat, Zoroastrian, Khorosh, Halaula, Senaya and Mandaic). Twenty-nine languages are in trouble (3 threatened and 26 shifting towards Persian).

From the remaining 42 languages, Persian as Iran's national and official language is spoken by the majority of the population (98%) including 49,600,000 (61%) as their mother tongue. South Azerbaijani/Azeri, Central Kurdish, Arabic, Armenian and Gilaki are considered as Iran's institutional languages; Azeri and Kurdish are wider communication languages, and the three latter are educational languages. The total number of vigorous languages are 26; among them Southern and Western Baluchi, Mazandarani, (Afghanistan) Dari, Georgian, Kazakh, Northern Kurdish, Southern Pashto, Talysh and Turkmen are considered as developing languages. Only 12 (15%) are non-indigenous languages consisting of Kashkay, Khalaj, South Azerbaijani/Azeri, Khorasani, Turkmen and Kazakh (from the Altaic/Turkish family), Gulf-spoken and Mesopotamian Arabic plus Assyrian (from the Afro-Asiatic Semitic family), Armenian (a non-Iranian Indo-European language), Georgian (a Kartevian language) and Brahui (a Dravidian language) (Simons and Fenning 2018, 6–52).

Persians are Iran's largest ethnic group, comprising 61% of the population. Turks comprise 18%, Kurds 10%, Arabs 2%, Baluchis 2%, and Lors 6%. Others (including Mazandarani, Talysh, Gilaki, Armenians, Assyrians, and Georgians) comprise 1% (Iran Population,



2018–10–02). However, numbers for the speakers of the related languages are reported slightly differently; for example Aliakbari and Khosravian (2014, 191) report Persian speakers (as their mother tongue) 51%, Turkish speakers (25.4%) followed by Kurdish speakers (8%), Gilaki and Mazandarani speakers (7.4%), Lori and Balochi speakers (4%), Arabic speakers (3%) and Laki speakers (1.2%). The majority of Iran's minority language speakers live in borderline provinces; however, nowadays due to an increase in mobility, minority language speakers have dispersed all over the country (see Marchant 2015, 31, 54, 82, 104, 130).

The term "minority language" in the context of Iran could refer to both non-indigenous languages (e.g. Azeri, Turkmen, Arabic and Armenian) and indigenous languages (e.g. Kurdish, Baluchi, Lori, Gilaki and Mazandarani). Thus, it may refer to speakers of minor languages, major languages, tribal or ethnic and religious minorities with specific languages. Benson (2014, 11–29) avoids using the term "minority language" and instead uses the term "Non-dominated languages (NDL)", trying to de-emphasize the number of speakers. In my view "domination" is just as relative as "minority" and therefore still imprecise, as it may imply "world domination" or some very limited "local domination". Therefore, I choose to continue using the term "minority language".

### ***23.2.1 Iranian languages***

An overview of Iran's linguistic situation Ethnologue report combined with the available historical analysis of the situation (Iranica) shows that the majority of the languages spoken in Iran are Iranian/indigenous languages, which have been used in the region and by their speakers for millennia (Simons and Fenning 2018).

#### *23.2.1.1 Persian*

Modern Persian is an Indo-European language promoted from spoken Middle Persian (Pahlavi) due to its homo-glossic status, inclusivity (of ethnic and social communities), neutrality, its usage as a trade, bureaucracy and literary language (by the Turkish and Mongol dynasties), the society's preference towards preserving bilingualism regarding Arabic and other dominant languages such as Turkic languages, and last but not least the composition of the epic of Shah-nameh (Perry 2012, 70–94).

The language has successfully resisted change while maintaining and elaborating its productivity due to the natural process of standardization it has undergone. It has functioned as an international literary language and a major spoken language in the last millennium throughout the Iranian plateau, Central Asia, and India, influencing Konya and Istanbul, Cairo and Mombasa, Saray and Kazan (Paul November 19, 2013). It has also been used as the official foreign language in China from the early 13th century into the late 14th and as the primary literary language in India up to the 19th century. Persian was also used by the speakers of Parthian, Sogdian Khwarazmian and (pre-Turkish) Azari as the standard spoken and written language of their time, a situation that has continued among the speakers of current Iranian dialects and minority languages, e.g. Lori, Semnani, Yaghnobi, Qashqa'i Turkish (Perry 2012, 70–94). The use of Persian was delimited to Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan only from the early 20th century due to the emergence of nation-states and national languages. Iran's constitutional law has introduced Persian as the official language and script of Iran and the lingua franca of people and obliged all to use Persian in official documents, correspondence and texts, as well as in textbooks (article 15).

### 23.2.1.2 Kurdish

Kurdish is a West Iranian language consisting of a set of closely related dialects that are spoken in Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. Major dialects of Kurdish spoken in Iran are Southern and Northern dialects including Sorani (from Uremia to Mahabad to Divandareh spoken by 3,250,000), Kurmanji or Shikak (close to the Iran-Turkey border in northeastern parts of Iran and in the cities of Bojnord, Quchan and Mashhad, spoken by 350,000), Ardalani, which is highly affected by Hawrami and Kalahari (spoken in Sanandaj) and Kalhori, Hawrami and Laki (in Kermanshah, spoken by 2,000,000). Hawrami and Jaff are also spoken in the west of the land between Sanandaj and Kermanshah. Some Kurdish dialects are mutually incomprehensible, none of them has gone through the process of standardization and yet none of them has the status of a standard version of the language. Due to the strong influence of the Sorani tradition in Sulaymaniyah (in Iraqi Kurdistan), it has become the dominant literary and standard written language in Iranian Kurdistan too. Iranian Kurds are reported to be nearly 8 million, representing around 10 percent of Iran's population. Most Iranian Kurds live in the provinces of Kurdistan and Kermanshah in the borders of Iraq and Turkey. Some Kurds also live in West Azerbaijan, Hamadan, Ilam, Northern Khorasan, Razavi Khorasan, Qazvin, Mazandaran, Khuzestan, Sistan and Baluchestan and Lorestan (Simons et al. 2018, 6–52). Kurdish tribes have historically lived in the area semi-autonomously for centuries organized in tribal clans and emirates, until by the end of 19th century when a national identity emerged in response to social transformation, Ottoman pressures and western influence in the Middle East region (Maisel 2018, xiii).

In the Middle Ages, most Kurdish writers/poets composed their works in Arabic, Persian or Gorani (a Kurdish dialect with exclusively literary use). In the last few decades, Iran's national literacy movement has tended a shift of Gorani towards Persian, Hawrami, Laki and Kalhori. Kurdish literary figures have played significant roles in Persian literature (e.g. the Persian novel *Shohar-e Ahoo Khanom* by Ali Mohammad Afghani and the earliest examples of Persian free verse poems by Abulqasim Lahouti, the translation of many world masterpieces into Persian by Mohammad Ghazi and Ebrahim Younesi) (Maisel 2018, 236–237).

As in most border provinces, in Kurdistan literacy in Persian is below the average rate of the country and is reported to be 81% (Mehr News, 23.12.2018). Maisel believes that as a result of the monolingual Persian literacy program in schools, young Kurdish children are more inclined towards speaking Persian, especially in big cities, and the knowledge of Kurdish literacy is low. However, he states that some private schools and tutors are teaching Kurdish language and literature. Very recently the Iranian Ministry of Education has run a one-month preparatory Persian course for first-grade elementary students and also approved a course on the Kurdish language in middle schools (Mehr News. 3.08.2015). In 2015 the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology granted the permit for establishing the BA program in Kurdish Language and Literature at the University of Kurdistan in Sanandaj as enforcement of article 15 of Iran's Constitution law. Kurdish magazines and newspapers are published in Kurdish cities, and local TV and radio channels have programs in some Kurdish dialects (Maisel 2018, 237–238).

On the other hand, Iranian Kurdish musicians have almost dominated the nation's contemporary music (e.g. Keyhan Kalhor, Shahram Nazeri, and the Kamkars) with audiences in the country and around the world (ibid).

The majority of Kurds practice Sunni Islam, although some are Shiites, Christians, Jewish or followers of Ahl-e Hagh/Yarsanism (Marchant 2015, 102). The total number of the Kurdish ethnic community around the world is an estimated 35 million (Maisel 2018, xii).

### 23.2.1.3 *Baluchi*

Baluchi is a Northwestern Iranian language, a descendant of Parthian, and related to modern Kurdish, Tati and Talysh, but very different from them in many respects (Elfenbein 1988). It is the principal language spoken in Marv oasis in Soviet Turkmenistan, Sīstān and Baluchistan, Hormozgan, Kerman and South Khorasan in Iran (Simons and Fenning 2018, 6–52), Nīmrūz province in Afghanistan (where it has been an official language since 1978) and Makran in Pakistan. Large populations of Baluchi speakers reside in the United Arab Emirates and in Kuwait. Many Baluchi speakers are bi- or multilingual. Baluchi has been used as a written language from the first half of the 19th century and is now written mainly in Pakistan and sporadically in India, Iran (usually through a modified version of Urdu script) and Afghanistan (through Pashto script). However, it does not yet have a standard written language. The Baluchi population in Iran is about 2 million (Marchant 2015, 82). However, the total population is about 10 million (40,000 in Soviet Turkmenistan, 200,000 in Afghanistan, 1,178,000 in Iran (Simons and Fenning 2018, 6–52)), 500,000 in the Arabian Peninsula and 3,600,000 in Pakistan. Baluchi has borrowed many words mainly from Persian and from several different Indo-Aryan languages and Brahui – a Dravidian language with which it had been in close contact. Major dialects of Baluchi spoken in Iran are Khoroshi, Lotuni and Makrani (by more than 500,000), Rakhshani, Saravani, Yarahmadza and Bashkardi (more than 700,000). Different Baluchi dialects are completely comprehensible to all Baluchi speakers. Baluchi has a rich oral literature and its documentation started by the British only in the 19th century. The Sistan-Baluchistan literacy rate for 2017 is reported to be 76%, which is the lowest rate among Iran’s provinces while allocating the biggest growth in literacy to itself (Financial Tribune, 05 April 2017).

Baluchs are largely Sunni Muslims and around 10% of them are nomadic or semi-nomadic.

### 23.2.1.4 *Lori*

The Lori dialect continuum just like Persian belongs to the southern branch of Western Iranian. It is an oral language similar to Persian spoken by more than 2 million Iranians (Simons and Fenning 2018, 13, 19–21). The main difference between Lori dialects and Persian is in their phonology. The language is spoken in different dialects of Southern and Northern Lori, Bakhtiyari and Kumzari. Northern Lori is spoken by 1,500,000 in Hamedan, Ilam, Khuzestan, Lorestan and Markazi, and South Lori is spoken by 875,000 in Bushehr, Fars, Khuzestan, Kohkiluyeh and Boyerahmad. Bakhtiyari is spoken by 1,000,000 in Khuzestan, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiyari, Lorestan, Kohkiluyeh and Boyerahmad, Esfahan, Markazi and Kumzari, and by 700 in Hormozgan. Dezfuli, Shushtari, Andimeshki, Borujerdi, Giōni, Qorramābādi, Chagani, and Bālā Gerivā’i, Feyli, Nahavandi, Mahali (Rural) and Solasi are among other dialects of Lori (MacKinnon 2011). Approximately 700,000 Lori speakers are monolingual.

There is no written script for this language. The population of Loris is 4.8 million. They are a mix of Persian and Arab descent and mainly live along the western border with Iraq in the provinces of Lorestan, Bakhtiari, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmed. Smaller numbers live in Khuzestan, Fars, Ilam, Hamadan, Esfahan, Markazi, Hormozgan and Bushehr. The majority of Loris are Shiite Muslims.

### 23.2.1.5 *Gilaki, Mazandarani and Shahmirzadi*

Gilaki is an Indo-European Iranian language spoken in Gilan province by 2,400,000. It is considered a vigorous language. Its dialects are Galeshi (Rural Deylami), Rashti, Rudbari

(Urban Deylami), Some'e Sarai, Lahijani, Langerudi, Rudsari, Bandar Anzali, and Fumani. It is similar to Mazandarani and is used at home, market and work at all ages. The attitudes towards the language are positive. Gilaki has a rich literature and is used in published periodicals, radio and TV. The language has dictionaries and grammars. In 2012, the Bible was published in Gilaki. The script is Arabic. It is under a heavy influence of Persian (Simons and Fenning 2018, 15).

Mazandarani (with its two dialects Sari and Tabari) is spoken in Mazandaran, Golestan and Semnan by 2,340,000 people, and Shahmirzadi, another same-family language, is spoken by 36,000 in Semnan.

### **23.2.2 Non-Iranian languages**

Around 30% of Iran's population is from a non-Persian ethnic background and speaks non-Iranian languages as their mother tongue besides Persian as the official national language. Some of the most important are introduced in the following.

#### *23.2.2.1 Turkic languages*

Turkic speakers began entering Iran at the 11th century and Turkicized the Iranian languages during the last millennium in Azerbaijan and in western Iran, the areas along the Alborz up to Qazvin and east of the Zagros Mountains. During most of the second millennium, Turk dynasties such as the Safavids ruled the country (Windfuhr April 17, 2012). In 1828, Iran's Azeris were divided from the neighboring Azerbaijan by the Treaty of Turkmanchai. The community size of Azerbaijani-Turkish in Tehran, East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, Ardabil and Zanjan added to the smaller numbers in Hamadan, Qazvin and Karaj is fairly large, estimated at 16–22% of the country's population (world population review). They are the majority in the northwestern part of Iran and therefore a culturally dominant group.

Two distinct branches of Oghuz Turkic languages and dialects, i.e. the southwestern branch of Turkic and Khalaj (spoken by only 51,000), are used in Iran. Azeri (varieties of which are spoken in eastern Turkey and the republic of Azerbaijan and Northern Iraq) is the most prominent Turkic variety spoken in Iran. In addition to Azeri, the transitional central Oghuz dialects, Sonqori, South Oghuz, prominently Qashqa'I (spoken by 959,000), Khorasan Turkic variety (spoken by 886,000) and Turkmen of northern Khorasan (spoken by 719,000) are among other Turkic dialects used in Iran. It is worth noting that the prestige variety for Iran's Azeri is the one spoken in Tabriz (Windfuhr May 1, 2012).

More than 10,000,000 Iranian Azeris speak Azeri, write in Persian and cite prayers in Arabic. Unlike their neighboring Azeri speakers, they have never changed their script to Latin, even during one year of declared independence from Iran under the name of Azerbaijan People's Government from 1945 to 1946. Today in Iran, the books and magazines published in Azerbaijani use the Arabic alphabet (Khalili 2015, 168–169). Khalili's survey shows that most ordinary Iranian Azerbaijani ethnic citizens, either in Tehran or in Tabriz, described themselves as under the full influence of Iranian nationality. Azerbaijanis have played an active role in both the process of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and during the Iran-Iraq war (1980–1988), which is believed to have intensified the merging of Azerbaijani identity in Iranian national identity (ibid., 171; Cottam 1979). A comparison of literacy rates published by the Statistical Center of Iran in 2006 shows that the rate of literacy in Persian speaking provinces is

approximately 10% more than Turkish speaking provinces (Modarres 2004, 37). Since 23 September 2015, a BA program of Turkish language has offered by Allameh Tabatabayee University/Tehran.

Azeris are well integrated into Iranian society and therefore present in all different socio-economic and politic strata, and the majority of the working class and trade human resources. They are well educated and prominent in sociocultural and educational activities and movements. They are mostly Shiite Muslims and hence have intermarriages with other non-Turkish Iranians (Nercissians 2001, 62–63).

#### *23.2.2.2 Arabic*

Arabic speakers began entering and residing in Iran at the seventh century. Arabic as the language of Qur'an and Islam has gained the status of Iran's religious language from the emergence of Islam and also became Iran's official language in the early centuries of Islam. Persian and other languages of Iran were remarkably influenced by Arabic (Windfuhr March 29, 2012). Iranian Arabic-speaking populations mainly reside in the southwest Khuzestan province and along the borders of the Persian Gulf in Bushehr, Fars, Hormozgan, Kerman and Yazd; among them, 260,000 speak Gulf Arabic and 1,280,000 speak Mesopotamian Arabic (Simons and Fenning 2018, 37–39). Two percent of Iran's total population are Arabs (more than 1.5 million) (world population review). Arabic has been given the status of educational language and is being taught after elementary school at all levels. It has also been taught at universities since 1934. A majority of Arabs are Shiite Muslims and a minority are Sunni; very few are Christian and Jews.

#### *23.2.2.3 Armenian*

Armenian is a non-Iranian Indo-European language that is the national language of Armenia – Iran's neighboring country in the west. More than half of its 200,000 population reside in Tehran in some specific suburbs. The rest live in Azerbaijan provinces (Tabriz, Urumiyeh,<sup>1</sup> Ardebil, Ahar, Khoy, Shahpur/Salmas), Shiraz and some also in villages of Gorgan. The total population of Armenians in the world is 10–16 million. Iranian Armenians resided in Iran long before the Ottoman Empire Genocide in 1915, which formed the Armenian diaspora (Nercissians 2001, 61–62). Armenians have had their first schools related to the church in 12 AD and their first modern schools in Iran since 1833 (Baghdasarian 2001). Iran's Armenians are Christian. Therefore, intermarriages between them and non-Christian Iranians are rare. Armenians are both a linguistic and religious minority.

### ***23.2.3 The landscape of minority languages in Iran***

The earlier description of some of Iran's language minorities shows that bilingualism or multilingualism is the norm of language societies in at least 30 of Iran's provinces (Simons and Fenning 2018, 36–39).

It is worth mentioning that language speakers including minority language speakers identify themselves by “complex, interesting layered patterns of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic affiliations” (Windfuhr 2013, 15) including their local languages along with the national language (Davari Ardakani and Mostafa 2011; Baheri 2008, 125). It is also important to know that many of Iranian minority ethnic groups (e.g. Kurds, Baluchs, Lors and Gilakis) are indigenous

people of the land and therefore they share a single cultural and historical heritage with majority ethnic groups. Moreover, even the so-called non-indigenous residents of Iran have lived in the land for several hundreds of years up to millennia and therefore are merged into the native population. They have greatly contributed to the nation's solidarity and sovereignty throughout the history. Grebennikov (2013, 66) states that: "Iran has largely succeeded in forging an identity that surpasses niche and tribal cleavages. However, modern Iranian history suggests that some external interventions might have sharpened ethnic cleavages within." Sridhar (1996, 327–347) reports the same situation regarding ethnic disputes in India: "The British policy of 'divide and rule' had made minorities suspicious of the majority". He supports his statement by referring to J. T. Sunderland's book titled "India in Bondage" where he proclaims, "Before the British came to India, there seems to have been little hostility between Hindus and Muslims. . . . It is only since British Rule in India began" (1928, 267 quoted in Sridhar 1996, 332).

During the past century, Iranians have sought full citizenship rights including the expansion of culture-based practices, e.g. promotion of local languages for minorities at different levels of education. Grebennikov (2013, 76) states that

Iran's ethnic groups seem to have attained high ethnic self-esteem, with the ability to open up more space for themselves by influencing the growing national reform movement within the Iranian political system. They have repeatedly shown little interest in ethnic-inspired instability and no interest in separatism or reunification with outer related groups.

As a matter of fact, Iran's constitution has guaranteed the minorities some fundamental rights including the use of regional and tribal languages in the press and mass media, as well as teaching of their literature in schools besides Persian (article 15). It has also promised protection by the law for all citizens as a whole regardless of their ethnic group or tribe, color, sex, race, language, and the like (article 19) and all human, political, economic, social and cultural rights in conformity with Islamic criteria (article 20). Nevertheless, the constitution has not overtly stated the right for the minorities to establish their own schools. However, Armenians have had their own modern schools since 1833 (Baghdasarian 2001) in Tehran, Isfahan and Urumiyeh, and Armenian has been taught in Isfahan University as a Bachelor of Arts degree. Regarding other minorities, recently some permanent measures have been introduced in Iran's education system to facilitate teaching in minority languages or to teach such languages as a second language; e.g., since 2015 a one-month course is offered in bilingual primary schools to make sure that the students already speak and understand Persian before the Persian literacy program starts (Mehr News, 3 Aug 2015). Another measure taken against ethnic division is the allocation of a specific portion of mother universities' seats (*sahmiye-bandi konkur*) to the so-called deprived areas (including many borderline provinces with minority language speakers) since 1982 (Mehr News, 30.07.2014), which has enhanced the mobility and mixture of the population (Keiko 2004, 391–392).

### ***23.3.2 Planning for minority languages in the context of a respected dominant standard national language***

The unequal confrontation of minority languages with standard official languages has long been the concern of language planners and policymakers as well as social activists.

However, there have been different approaches towards the situation, some of which are the following:

- a) Explicit neglect of minority languages by implementing policies to empower the national/official language at the expense of minority languages loss;
- b) Implicit neglect of minority languages by implementing a laissez-faire policy;
- c) Providing minority language speakers some of their linguistic rights such as to speak and use their language at home, work, trade, media and literature (but not in mainstream education);
- d) Running a literacy program in minority language beside the national language literacy;
- e) Running a bilingual/multilingual literacy program;
- f) Running the literacy program only in minority language;
- g) Introducing the minority language as an educational/second/foreign language at the tertiary level;
- h) Running a multilingual and multiliteracy education program.

As is obvious, all options d to h require developing a standard variety of the minority language(s), a non-neutral process that may result in crucial status problems and challenges (Lane 2015, 263–283). The challenge is centered on the quality of the users' relationship to the variety that is chosen to be the standard (acceptance/rejection). The problem is that if the users reject the chosen variety, standardization will not empower the minority language and on the contrary, a new form of inequality and exclusion may emerge for those who reject the new standard code.

The official approach towards minority languages in Iran matches with c. Iran's Minority languages have not been used as the public schools literacy language, and as mentioned only recently, Istanbul Turkish and Surani Kurdish have been included in university programs.

To maintain minority languages and to fight against the hegemony of national/dominant language(s), Mother-tongue-based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) (options d and e) (Tupas 2015, 112–116) has been introduced. It is based on the proposition that "education in mother-tongue is a linguistic right" (Kosonen 2005, 96) emphasizing that "effective learning is best achieved through learners' mother tongue" (UNESCO 2009). MTB-MLE has proved to improve learning, increase political participation and expand life chances (Tupas 2015, 116). However, it has recently been criticized because of the unequal status of the languages involved (Tupas 2015, 117). The criticism is in line with Lane's (2015, 264) criticism of the standardization process. In this context it is understandable that the success of MTB-MLE is based on learners' positive attitude towards their local mother tongue. Therefore, it could not be taken for granted that "MTB-MLT removes the stigma from the face of minority languages" (Tupas 2015, 117). Surveys have shown that Iran's minority languages' speakers' attitudes are positive to their languages; however, there has been no survey of attitudes towards teaching them as literacy languages. Some of the probable challenges in the way of introducing minority languages into the education and literacy system are the following: an increase of study load, financial burden of designing and implementing a new curriculum and the documentation and standardization of the oral minority languages, and the probable stigma that the new standard will cause.

Iran's minority speakers respect and acknowledge learning Persian both as a national heritage capital and as the nation's lingua franca besides their mother tongues (Davari Ardakani and Mostafa 2011; Baheri 2008). It is interesting to know the first modern Persian primary

schools before the establishment of public nation-wide schools by Reza Shah had been established by Hassan Rushdiyeh in Tabriz.

Iran's language planning from the time of Reza Shah and his nationalistic Persian-in-literacy policy almost a century ago has mainly focused on Persian literacy advancement and Persian word-coinage for foreign loan words. The latter continued to be the focus of the second and third Academies up to the present time. It is worth mentioning that the lexical resources of local languages and dialects are considered as auxiliary resources of word-coinage after Persian and Arabic ones (*dastur-ol-amal-e vaje-gozini farhangestan*). However, it is only since 2012 that teaching Persian as a foreign language (TPFL) is institutionally recognized and followed by the Academy of Persian Language and Literature under the branch of the Sa'adi Foundation. Nevertheless, a TPFL master's program had been introduced by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology three decades ago on 13 February 1994. However, a specialized journal of dialectology has been published by the Academy, and documentation of Iran's languages and dialects has been started by the Institution of Cultural Heritage; the local languages and dialects of Iran have not been included for their own sake in the planning agenda of the language academies during the past century. Since the establishment of the language planning institutions and even before that from the early 20th century up to very recently, language authorities have considered the cultivation of Iran's minority languages as a threat to Persian as the national language (Davari Ardakani 2008, 269–295) and a *laissez-faire* (leave-it-alone) policy has been implemented relying on the myth of “one nation, one language”, which had once been a crucial factor in preserving national solidarity. It seems that the language policy, national unity and cultural identity plans (of Iran) have conservatively treated minority languages and dialects (Modarresi 2006, 1–3) under the strong influence of the nationalistic Pahlavi regime until the recent time (Marchant 2015, 12). Persian language planning researchers believe that promoting a national language is not in contradiction with nurturing other languages and dialects (Fallah 2007, 131–164; Modarresi 1992, 177–206, 2006, 2; Davari Ardakani 2010, 11–39). They have also emphasized the necessity of providing proper conditions and devising efficient methods of teaching Persian to the speakers of local languages. They have pointed out that educational failures due to insufficient proficiency in Persian may cause lack of confidence, identity crisis and social deprivation in the minority populations, while developing local languages and dialects could strengthen the speakers' positive attitudes towards themselves as well as towards the national language (Davari Ardakani and Moghani 2016, 21–44; Davari Ardakani and Mostafa 2011, 209–323; Modarresi 2005, 129–146).

A comparative educational assessment of bilingual children in East Azerbaijan (Tabriz and some surrounding villages) and their peer Persian monolinguals (in Tehran and some surrounding villages) shows an educational gap between the two groups (Modarres 2004, 31–41), a gap that may lead to a language shift towards Persian as Bosnali (2003) reports for Iranian Turkish speakers in Tehran and Salmas (a town in the province of Western Azerbaijan).

As mentioned earlier, attitudes towards Persian and the regional languages are shown to be positive nation-widely both among Persian speakers and minority speakers (Davari Ardakani and Mostafa 2011, 209–323; Baheri 2008, 10; Davari Ardakani 2006, 1–24). Mostafa (2008, 123), Baheri (2008, 126) and Aliakbari and Darabi (2012) through their attitude-assessing surveys respectively in Kurdistan, Azerbaijan and for Persian, Turkish, Kurdish and Lori showed that there is no conflict between appreciating, using and maintaining mother tongues (as symbols of individual and local identity and as intergroup communication tools) and at the same time using and acknowledging Persian (as a symbol of national identity). In the same line,



attitudes towards Azeri language and literature, its music, ethnic history and affiliation are shown to be positive among Tabrizi youth (Nouri 2015, 1476–1481).

On the other hand, Persian language and literature have long enjoyed the contribution of many Iranian poets, writers and language experts whose native language is not Persian; they have actively supported Persian through their works and even by their contributions to the Academies of Persian during the past century. Acknowledging this convergent contribution requires the emergence of a new discourse in Persian and minority language planning, a discourse based on the premise that “no contradiction exists between promoting Persian as the national language and cultivating minority languages as local languages”. The formation of the discourse is primarily due to a deep understanding of the advantages of multilingualism in general and multilingual education specifically and a reconsideration of the myth of “one nation, one language”, a belief that although it has had a great role in uniting the country since the beginning of the 20th century, is not necessarily true and does not apply to today’s global societies.

On the other hand, it is evident that language teaching in Iran’s public education (i.e. Arabic, English and other foreign languages) is suffering from substantial flaws (Mirhosseini, Kiany, and Navidinia 2011, 49–70). Iranian high school students after 7 years of studying Arabic are unable to communicate through it; it seems that it is only taught to enable them to read Qur’an and prayer texts. Nevertheless, the situation has been slightly different in the seminaries and also in theology and Arabic programs at universities, where more communicative functions were sought in teaching Arabic. The same is true for western foreign languages (e.g. French and English) that have long been taught to enable students to read scientific texts and to communicate, a situation that has continued up to the present time.

Looking at the bigger picture, we could easily see that the whole area of language-in-education teaching including religious language (Arabic), foreign languages, minority languages and even the national language itself have suffered from non-communicative teaching approaches. Consequently, the cognitive horizons that learning languages opens to the learners and the acts that using languages could fulfill are totally neglected, a situation partly caused by the 20th-century ideology of monolingualism, nationalism and localism. For an elaborate discussion on the most recent and effective teaching methodologies, including the communicative approach, read Chapter 16 in this volume.

### **23.4 National language and minority languages: solidarity and identity**

An opposition between national languages and minority languages has been taken for granted from when colonialism and nation-states emerged relying on the myth of “one nation, one language”. As a consequence, a common language has been considered as the only uniting element of a nation.

Although languages have historically functioned as identifying symbols of states and nations especially since the emergence of nation-states, they are not the only builders of national identity; other non-linguistic (e.g. socioeconomic) elements could also shape identities, and this is what “the dynamicity of identity” means; as Frye says:

these two [religion and language], although always present, did not assume an important place in the designation of identity until later.

(1993, 143–146)

Nowadays, we clearly see that the socioeconomic advantages of national/official languages have become the main reason of minority language shift towards the dominant language in many countries when the speakers no more see themselves in their mother tongues. This is because socioeconomic status brought by the languages becomes more important in identifying their “selves”. In this way, identity building (the construction of the “self”) would be understood as an indeterminate, ambiguous, fluid, multidimensional, multifaceted and self-defining entity that heavily depends on the elements of choice (Rasool 2004, 199–200). On the other hand, different identities are inhabited within various contexts; each of them needs the necessary cultural resources (including multilingualism) to live meaningful lives (ibid., 203). A survey of Iranian national identity symbols among high school and university students, university lecturers and the staff of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature in Tehran revealed the multiple elements of Iranian national identity as follows: culture, ethical characteristics (e.g. hospitality), ancient civilization (including ancient/historical monuments), myths, flag, sport, religion, ethnicity, national anthem, geography, economy, arts, languages (national and local), literature, science and technology, history, celebrities, politics and identity cards (passports, birth certificates etc.) (Davari Ardakani 2008, 3). The study supports the idea that language is not the only element of national identity and solidarity. Moreover, it is not a persistent element in the designation of identity (Frye 1993, 143–146).

However, this does not imply a denial of the importance of languages in the designation of national identity and hence national solidarity, as it is certain that a language that is valued by its speakers (either as a powerful communicative instrument or as something they have affectional attitudes towards) could turn into a symbol of identity. Since identity building is a process of building confidence and power, languages implying connectedness to any type of intellectual, political or economic power are more viable to become part of a nation’s or an individual’s identity, and at the same time, speakers may naturally tend towards languages which bring them power. As emphasized before, the salience of specific social identity markers, including linguistic and semiotic markers, may change over time and should not be taken for granted (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011, 13). Therefore, knowing the synchronic salience order of a nation’s elements of identity is fundamental in understanding the status of language(s). In other words, the image and perception of one’s group identity are not innate; they are shaped gradually and through their lived experience. Smith believes that each society has its own system of group identity, and he considers family, geography (place of origin), religion and country of citizenship among the most dominant identity shaping factors (1991 quoted in Khalili 2015, 163–165).

Rasool’s (2004, 203–206) statement that “the monocultural-monolingual metropolitan nation-state no more exists” is simply supported by looking at the linguistic landscapes of the countries around the world where we see that multilingualism has become the norm of most of the language societies and on the contrary, monolingualism is delimited to only isolated societies. There are 7105 distinct living languages, while there are only 193 United Nations’ recognized states (Simon and Fenning 2018). Hence, an average of 39 languages is spoken in every country. The numbers show that multilingualism is dominant across the globe, and very few countries are monolingual (Eisenclas, Schalley, and Guillemin 2015, 152). Accordingly, almost every individual has “multiple dynamic identities” and uses more than one language or a variety of a language regarding its different social needs and the functions that each language/language variety satisfies. In Rasool’s view, acquiring a range of linguistic skills, discourse styles and discursive knowledge enables people to function effectively as workers and consumers within the global cultural economy (Rasool 2004, 199–214).

Normally, social and individual multilingualism originates from social contacts, the emergence of which is not usually planned, while monolingualism is usually the result of a nation-building process (e.g. the promotion of a standard language through public education) or geographical isolation.

Nevertheless, the prevalent existence of social multilingualism is usually and easily neglected because monolingual public education is easier and less costly. Moreover, through monolingual public literacy education, the speakers of a single language could easily increase and gain some kind of power that states also benefit from.

On the other hand, the apparent unifying function of globalization that seemed to lead societies towards monolingualism has turned to cause reactions towards the dominance of a single language, i.e. English, and also the emergence of Englishes.

On the basis of these arguments, I believe that Iranian national solidarity and national identity, however partly relying on Persian as the country's national language, do practically include local identities of the nation partly due to the long co-existence of the indigenous and non-indigenous populations of the country. Consequently, ethnolinguistic minority groups should not necessarily be considered as "endangered authenticities" (Chow 1993 quoted in Rasool 2004, 209).

Iran's minority language planning should consider rights of information access, technologies and technological knowledge alongside linguistic rights (Rasool 2004, 210). Such accesses usually influence the users' linguistic attitudes and hence determine the future of languages (i.e. their social status, survival, shift, death, etc.).

### ***23.4.2 Language standardization and discrimination***

A standardized (national) language is useful, as it facilitates education, communication, economic and political running of a nation-state, workforce training and social cohesion. Such functions well justify the status of a standard language as a symbolic object, a social norm and a political tool (Lane 2015, 276), and there is no dispute about the value-based and social-prestigious status of standard languages.

However, many researchers have critically challenged the theories of linguistic standardization as being ideological and discriminative. Lane (2015, 263–283) sees "standardization as prioritizing some forms and structures ahead of others" and therefore some speakers ahead of others on the basis of sociopolitical, cultural and economic concerns. On the other hand, there is a mutual reflexive relationship between standards and users. Standards are established through their acceptance by the users as social actors who shape standard languages and are also shaped by standard languages (Duranti and Goodwin 1992 quoted in Lane 2015, 263–283). Therefore, the starting point for any language policy administration should be the user and not the standards (Cowen quoted in Lane 2015, 265–270).

Non-neutrality of standard languages is evidenced by the reality that standardization is a selection on the basis of the selector's priorities (Rutten 2016, 25–57) and therefore could delimit the linguistic rights of some groups. This is because they are considered the only true linguistic forms and not additions to existing repertoires.

On the other hand, multilingual policies that have originated to dismantle linguistic inequalities may create unwanted inequality. In other words, introducing multilingual education could not totally remove the pressures the speakers of minority languages' experience due to implementing a national standard language education policy since the sociopolitical implications of languages could never be removed from them.

### **23.5 Multilingual education paradigm for Iran**

Multilingualism could bring a deeper understanding of the diverse cultures and broader world views. It also could nurture liberation due to a recognition of diversity. It could bring more job opportunities and access to more diverse resources of information, it could facilitate communication and meaningful social relationships, positive approaches towards learning other languages and traveling. However, many nations are concerned about some probable consequences of multilingualism, e.g. penetration of loan words into the native language and the possibility of a shift towards the global dominant languages (Gorter 2015, 82–98). There are also some reported technical, ideological and discursive obstacles in the way of establishing multilingual education both in ethnic minority regions and at a national level. Implementation of the following measures could facilitate the process and to some extent avoid the inequalities brought by the hierarchical tiers of languages in a multilingual context:

- Assessing minority speakers' linguistic attitudes and demands: speakers of some minority languages may see the inclusion of their languages into the education system as a developing force of their languages, but this is not true about all minority societies. In other words, for certain minorities, only symbolic recognition of their language in educational institutions provides the required confidence and self-esteem.
- Promoting multilingual awareness, which means to provide the teachers and the learners a deep understanding of the necessity of learning and using more than one language including foreign, religious, local, trade and other languages as a path to know each other and to communicate with the world.
- Clearly stating linguistic, sociologic and economic aims;
- Deciding on the use of the languages as subjects, the medium of instruction, literacy medium, literature etc.;
- Deciding on the school year in which the different languages are introduced;
- Knowing about the special linguistic landscape including the geographical distribution, number and status of the languages and their varieties;
- Knowing about the national and global forces that affect minority language speakers;
- Introducing the multilingual program gradually and adapting it to the school pedagogies.
- Evaluating the students' learning outcomes;
- Re-conceptualizing teacher education to make sure that they have absorbed the required teaching methodology and also have positive attitudes towards minority language education.

Different models of multilingual education have been introduced based on the type of linguistic landscape, multilingual awareness, and education/literacy situation, some of which are accretive ( $ML^2+NL^3+FL$ )<sup>4</sup> [suitable for areas where ethnic minority group forms the majority and a degree of economic stability exists], balanced (ML, NL+FL), transitional (NL+DML<sup>5</sup> as a subject+FL) and depreciative, which is a bilingual education not for promoting minority languages but for diminishing them and promoting national or/and foreign languages. These four models form a continuum, trying to replace NL with ML to NL getting rid of ML. The three first models could be implemented in Iran's different minority societies regarding the minority language status locally, nationally and internationally, its geographical, linguistic, pedagogical, historical, economic and political contexts. For example, Turkish, Kurdish and Arabic have high economic capital because of the opportunities they afford for cross-border trading (Davari Ardakani 2016). Attitudes towards ethnic minority

language(s), Persian, Arabic and English/Foreign language are also important in the determination of the appropriate model for each region. Some localities do prefer degrees of promotion of minority language while some others just like to use it in non-official contexts. Even in some regions, we may encounter a preference of Persian because of the economic, social and political benefits that are associated with the language. On the other hand, the choice of any paradigm partly depends on the availability of a written variety of language; from this aspect Iran's ethnic minority languages could be categorized into those that possess both the spoken and written form, those that have functional writing systems of only limited usage and those that do not have a writing system. However, none of Iran's minority languages have been used neither as a literacy language nor as a language in education during the past century, except Armenian and Arabic. Considering such linguistic facts and regarding the specific linguistic landscape of each region a multilingual paradigm consisting of a combination of minority language(s), a national language, foreign language(s) and religious language(s)<sup>6</sup> with different preferences is suggested. It is worth mentioning that such multilingual approach is a desirable educational approach not only for minority language speakers, but also for all learners.<sup>7</sup>

Iran's multilingual education paradigm could be based on a teaching/communicational strategy called *translanguaging*,<sup>8</sup> which accommodates globalization, digital communication, the mobility of the population, and generally language use in real society. *Translanguaging* refers to a bi-/multilingual pedagogy that alternatively and systematically uses an integrated linguistic repertoire to improve communication (Gorter and Cenoz 2015, 54–74; García and Wei 2015, 223–240). It is defined as “the ability of multilingual speakers to move between languages”; an example would be to read a text in Persian and then prepare an oral presentation in, for example, Turkish. It may also encompass code-switching and code-mixing to allow bilingual/multilingual speakers move between two or more languages at phrase, sentence and discourse levels. In this way, the languages reinforce each other and understanding deepens, as it could act as a communication strategy which prevails over deficient cognitive processing and compensates for insufficient and limited second language proficiency. Consequently, it might constitute an advantageous and beneficial approach to establishing a framework for communication and honing basic and necessary first language skills. For more elaborate discussion on code-switching and interlanguage, read Chapter 27 in this volume.

Nevertheless, the implementation of *translanguaging* is not an easy task. A knowledge of the real status of the minority languages and their usages is essential in recognizing the boundaries between languages and the delimitations and possibilities of switching.

Therefore, any decision in this regard should be made after making sure that:

- a) Sufficient multilingual proficient instructors are available or an instructor training program is provided that covers all the involved languages including the learners' mother tongue, the national language and any other languages which are going to be *translanguages*;
- b) The value and reality of diversity are acknowledged and also diverse language backgrounds are taken into consideration. Otherwise, *translanguaging* would not be successful;
- c) The quality of *translanguaging* is guaranteed not to result in the emergence of a pidgin;
- d) Measures are taken for developing appropriate curricula and teaching materials comprising *translanguaging* tasks.

For a discussion on Persian as an interlanguage, read Chapter 26 in this volume. Notwithstanding the flaws and difficulties, the strategy if implemented carefully could be useful in

maintaining or revitalizing minority languages. There is a lot to be learned and experienced in this regard by Iran to secure the use of minority languages through formal or informal language education policies and to seek knowledge about the long-term contribution of multilingual education to a sustainable future for minority language speakers and for the whole nation.

### **23.6 Conclusion**

Minority literacy and education in Iran have not received sufficient academic attention. They have, however, been given sporadic attention by the Centre for Strategic Studies, the two ministries of education and of higher education and also by independent researchers. The issue has also been raised in the second term of the presidency of Rouhani in 2016 by him and his ministers.

Some of the rights allocated to minority languages in Iran's constitution, i.e. the use of mother tongues as local languages at home, street and bazaar and also in oral, visual and written media, have long been satisfied. However, only very recently teaching their literature at secondary and tertiary levels and a one-month pre-primary school Persian literacy program have been implemented. One must have in mind that many minority languages lack standard written and spoken varieties and therefore have never been thought of as being used in literacy, education and written media. On the other hand, some minority language speakers like Armenians have taught their language alongside Persian for almost two centuries. Arabic as a religious language has also been taught in upper primary school level during the past four decades (Multiple Authors 2011).

In the same vein, a policy of allowing minority students to enter higher education institutions with lower marks in the national university entrance examination (Konkur) have been implemented in Iran for more than three decades (the scholarship of deprived areas). The policy is based on the reality that in some specific regions (including many having their own ethnic languages), students do not have equal access to Konkur preparation programs, which are available in metropolitan cities like Tehran, Mashhad, Shiraz, Isfahan etc. However, no specific linguistic measure has been taken into consideration for the students whose mother tongue is not Persian, a situation that may cause inequality in the competition. One should consider that not all multilingual regions could be considered as deprived and marginalized.

Protection and promotion of minority languages as cultural capital are justified by several undeniable causes such as identity construction, cognitive development, language maintenance, etc. However, developmental engineering of the capital is only possible after gaining an awareness of the languages' landscapes.

In contemporary Iran, there are only a few provinces that could be considered monolingual (see Marchant 2015, 31, 54, 82, 104, 130). According to Ethnologue (Simons and Fenning 2018, 6–50), 78 languages belonging to five different language families, i.e. Indo-European (Iranian and non-Iranian), Altaic, Afro-Asiatic Semitic, Caucasian/Kartveian and Dravidian (Northern), are used throughout Iran. Almost 60% of the population (49,900,000) speak Persian as their mother tongue, and all the others except a minority, less than 2%, speak Persian alongside with their mother tongue. Therefore, a major part of the population is bi-/multilingual including almost one-third who speak a Turkish dialect, mostly Azeri.

Another prerequisite for designing and implementing an adequate language policy is gaining knowledge about the priorities of the minority language speakers in each area. Some of them may want their languages to be taught at as a literacy language in primary schools, as

a literary or/and educational language in high schools and universities which would only be possible for languages with standard spoken and written varieties (Eisenchlas, Schalley, and Guillemín 2015, 151–156), having in mind that standardization of the minority languages might itself raise new inequalities.

The problem for Iran is that there has been no nation-wide assessment of the minority language speakers' attitudes towards their ideal literacy/education program. However, the few studies carried out have shown that the nation's attitude towards the local languages and the national language are positive (Davari Ardakani and Mostafa 2011, 210; Baheri 2008, 10) and that minority languages' speakers would certainly like their languages to be acknowledged but no idea of how and in what degree and no guarantee of satisfaction upon incorporating minority languages into the Persian monolingual literacy program or substituting them. For a study on language learning strategies and beliefs about language learning, read Chapter 28 in this volume. Although this study has been done in the U.S., its arguments can hold for language learners' attitudes towards learning the language, in general.

Moreover, Iran's illiteracy rate is relatively low (currently less than 10%) and therefore not a cause for an urgent change in the present literacy program. Nevertheless, the 10–20% gap between the literacy rates in Iran's borderline provinces (which include the majority of minority language speakers) could support a proposal for gradual reform in Iran's language-education and literacy policy.

A view of Iran's educational system<sup>9</sup> shows that the general paradigm of teaching languages needs a fundamental reform (Mirhosseini, Kiany, and Navidinia 2011, 49). The two programs of English as a foreign language and Arabic as a religious language are not aimed at teaching languages for communication in the real world. Hence, Iran needs reform in language teaching besides taking measures for the promotion of minority languages. As the main missing aspect of Iran's language education is its connection to real-world usage of the languages, to compensate for this, literacy and education planners should focus on teaching languages as a performing skill and not a theoretical knowledge and hence to consider language as an act and language learning as a necessary life skill. Only after reform in general language teaching paradigm could Iran implement a multilingual education and literacy program.

A sound understanding of multilingualism is necessary for institutionalizing it. Iran's educational system needs to see languages as paths towards knowing one another and communicating beyond local and national levels. It needs to recognize the advantages of multilingualism for both minority language speakers and all other Iranians. Combining national language (Persian), religious language(s) (Arabic), minority languages and foreign language(s)/English in the language teaching agenda together with a change in the teaching methodology and pedagogy will bring in significant educational and social benefits leading to sustainable development. Having in mind that inadequate provision of English is also affecting Iranians' opportunities, as it reduces access to international communication, knowledge and trade, Iran needs to formulate its multilingual policies on the basis of its languages, backgrounds, needs, resources and opportunities. Even a very successful multilingual program should be accommodated to its specific context of implementation. What Iran needs is a multilingual flexible literacy and education curriculum aiming at developing greater confidence and broader communication for all citizens including minority speakers, something that could contribute to sustainable development throughout the society. Iran's multilingual education and literacy system in its preliminary stage could initiate with a strategy of selective language courses, and it seems that implementing an immediate replacement of the monolingual Persian literacy paradigm by a minority languages literacy paradigm is not the best solution to the problem (Gorter, Zenotz, and Cenoz 2014, 10) in the case of Iran.

To conclude, I have to say that the first step towards planning for Iran's minority languages is to recognize them as the nation's common cultural and economic capital. Through the introduction of this new discourse, any measure to preserve and cultivate minority languages and to promote the speakers' self-esteem would mean promoting the whole nation and the national cultural capital. And this could be done by introducing a discourse of multilingual education that recognizes the dynamics of combining different languages at first place. It is important to make sure that access to languages with high social and economic capital is provided; otherwise, it may bring deprivation and negative attitudes towards the minority languages (Beckett and MacPherson 2005; Adamson and Feng 2014).

Mother tongue literacy could be implemented as some later steps in Iran. Multilingual private schools as Non-Formal Education (NFE) systems can be developed parallel to the Formal Education (FE) system – and later adopted as part of the formal system whenever the society experienced the advantages. This will allow time and opportunity for the development of minority languages, particularly for the ones without a standard variety. Something very important is that the implementation of multilingual education needs to be gradual. The use of side-by-side bilingual learning materials in specific subjects and new assessment strategies are suggested to make sure that the languages are not being compartmentalized (Benson 2014, 11–19).

Given the rapidity of changes in the global economy, creating a multilingual and multicultural workforce enables the next generations to have better social and cross-cultural skills (Siew Kheng Catherine: 67–68). There are many challenges in establishing a multilingual education paradigm in Iran, e.g. lack of human and financial resources for recruitment of teachers, designing and implementing suitable curriculums including their timing and scheduling, and last but not least the current dominant monolingual top-down education and language policy.

Iran's new multilingual education policy is to be based on a concept of Iranian citizenship that includes Iranian ethnicities who have had a long historical presence in Iran. Turks, Arabs and Armenians have lived in Iran for more than a millennium; Kurds, Balochi, Gilaks and Lors are indigenous to the land and have resided in Iran for millennia – all having intermarriages with each other and with Persians. The merging of the populations is well shown in Marchant (2015). Iranians during their millennial common history have all contributed to the promotion of Persian as a lingua franca throughout ancient Persia. The existing positive attitude of the nation towards Persian makes implementation of MTB-MLE and formulation of educational policy an extremely hard task. What is known for sure at this stage is that acknowledging regional linguistic interests in the way that minority populations want brings national solidarity and social development.

I would like to end this start in Iran's minority languages by quoting from Ioan Bowen Rees, a leading Welsh political thinker who has said: "We bring up our children to speak [their local language] Welsh and be bilingual, not for the sake of the language, but for the sake of our children" (Rees 1990, 78 quoted in Gorter 2015, 95).

## Notes

- 1) In Urumiyeh most of the Christian minorities speak Assyrian and not Armenian. However, Orthodox, Assyrian and Armenian Christians live in peace and have friendly social interaction in this city.
- 2) Minority Language
- 3) National Language
- 4) Foreign Language
- 5) Dominant Minority Language
- 6) The proposed multilingual paradigm for Iran is based on a review of the cases of Cambodia, Mozambique, Basque (Benson 2014, 11–29), China, Singapore in . . . Singapore after a long time of English



dominance has now started teaching of their three ethnic languages through a strategy of compartmentalization, i.e. the Chinese take Mandarin; Malays take Malay and Indians take Tamil as a local language to acquire (Rappa and Wee 2006 quoted in Siew Kheng Catherine 2014, 70).

- 7) According to Benson (2014, 11–29) in Mozambique, schools are currently operating in 16 different non-dominant languages, and additional languages are in the process of development by linguists at the national university.
- 8) Translanguaging was developed in Wales, where education is important in the maintenance and revitalization of Welsh, a minority language (Lewis, Jones, and Baker 2012a).
- 9) The general education journey for an Iranian consists of one year of pre-primary school, six years in primary school, three years in middle school, three years in high school, four years for bachelor's degree, two years for master's degree and four to five years for Ph.D. degree.

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# TEACHING PERSIAN VARIETIES AND DIALECTS

## A Persian reference framework

*Mahinnaz Mirdehghan and Saeed Reza Yousefi*

### 24.1 Introduction

This chapter is presented in seven sections. After an introduction to the topic and a historical review of it, a brief typological sketch of “Persian language varieties” together with the difference between “core” and “peripheral” (dialectal) varieties of it is provided here.

The “core varieties” of Persian are represented as: “Iranian Persian (Persian/Farsi)”, “Tajiki Persian (Tajiki)” and “Afghan Persian (Dari)”, each of them having their own group of dialects, which are called “peripheral varieties”.<sup>1</sup>

The chapter further presents a geographical quantitative report of Persian teaching centers and programs throughout the world, which shows the focus on teaching Iranian Persian in comparison to the other two core varieties namely, Tajiki and Dari Persian. The main focus in the present research is to provide a list of extant Persian Teaching institutes throughout the world.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, the point is further discussed together with a classification among institutes teaching Iranian Persian (inside and outside of Iran) which is divided into three categories: (i) institutes administered by Iranian Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT), (ii) free institutes, and (iii) cultural associations. In sum, this section comes roughly to a number of 157 organizations that offer Persian language programs officially and unofficially (private institutes).

The next section illustrates the necessity for a well-structured framework for teaching standard Persian to speakers of other languages, which can result in the production of suitable and applied educational contents, according to the needs of the learners in different regions, organizations and countries. In this regard, a reference framework that can represent the general principles for developing and designing educational materials and textbooks, designing language teaching training courses, as well as evaluating language skills and certifications for different language levels, has always been an essential requirement for Persian language. Accordingly, this reference framework for Persian, dubbed *Persian Reference Framework (PRF)*,<sup>3</sup> which is developed mainly on the basis of the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* for teaching languages and is localized specifically for Persian, has been explained in more detail in Section 6.

Finally, the chapter is concluded by summarizing the main topics discussed throughout it, in its last section.

## 24.2 Historical review

In achieving the research goals, a review of historical ties of Persian and its ancestors (i.e. Indo-Iranian languages) is sketched in brief, which is then followed by the varieties of Persian.

*Indo-Iranian languages* constitute the largest branch of the *Indo-European* language family. With more than 1.5 billion speakers, it mainly consists of: *Iranic* (Iranian)<sup>4</sup> and *Indic* (Indo-Aryan) languages (Sims Williams 2002).

The Iranic branch (Iranian languages) is categorized in three stages of development: Old Iranian, Middle Iranian and New Iranian. Windfuhr (2009) mentions an estimated 150–200 million native speakers of the Iranian languages, as of 2008. Ethnologue estimates that there are 86 Iranian languages (Gordon 2005), the largest among them being Persian, Pashto, and the Kurdish dialect continuum (Cardona 2019). Among the New Iranian languages the present research is aimed to study the Persian language and its varieties and dialects (mainly to get to the topic of teaching Persian).<sup>5&6</sup>

Dabir Moghaddam (2013, XXIII) notes the following Iranian languages in Iran, 1) Farsi, 2) Gilaki, 3) Mazandarani, 4) Kurdish, 5) Gurani,<sup>7</sup> 6) Vafsi, 7) Laki, 8) Lari, 9) Raji, 10) Delwari, 11) Larestani, 12) Shahmirzadi, 13) Semnani, 14) Davani, 15) Balochi, 16) Naini, 17) Talishi, 18) Tati. He (ibid.) considers mutual understanding as a parameter to classify them, with a further distinction between “official” and “local” languages. Accordingly, he considers Persian as the “official language” in Iran and the rest in the earlier list as “local languages”. Noteworthy is the fact that they are all considered “languages” due to their lack of mutual intelligibility. Each language (official or local) by its own consists of a group of dialects (“dialectal group”). The following is a brief summarization of these languages:

Considering Dabir Moghaddam’s earlier-mentioned classification, within the present research “Core” and “Peripheral” varieties are categorized for Persian in which peripheral varieties are considered roughly to be the same as what Dabir Moghaddam (2013) mentions as “dialects” of each language (the language being official or local).

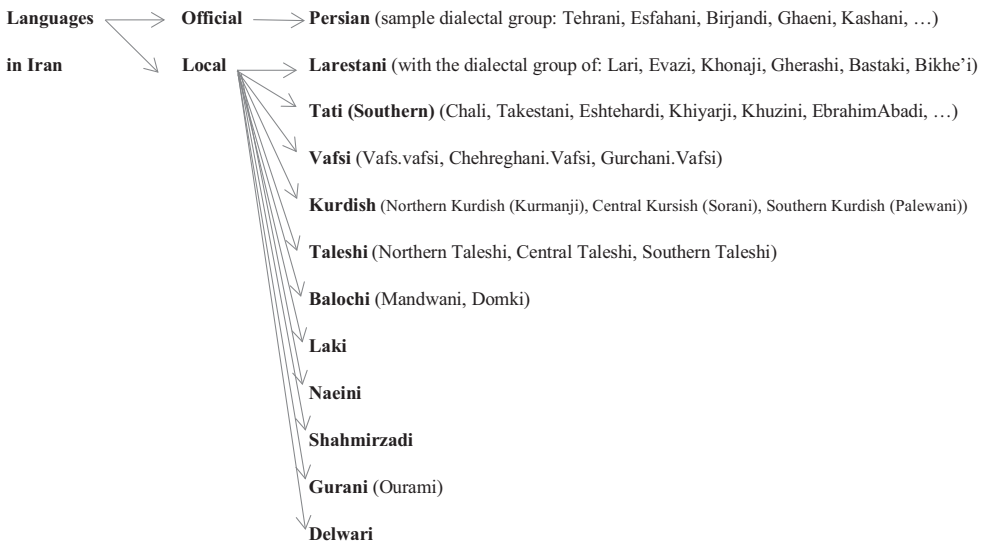


Figure 24.1 Languages in Iran.

The matter is discussed more in the following section, which considers “Core Varieties” (including: Iranian Persian, Tajiki Persian and Dari Persian) and “Peripheral Varieties” of Persian (including dialects of each of these three core varieties).

### 24.3 Modern Persian varieties

#### 24.3.1 Core varieties: Iranian Persian, Tajiki and Dari

*Persian*, also known as *Farsi*,<sup>8</sup> is one of the Western *Iranian (Iranic)*<sup>9</sup> languages within the *Indo-Iranian* branch.

There are three modern varieties of standard Persian (Solati (2013); Purmohammad (2013); Rafiee (2001)):

- *Persian* (i.e. *Standard Persian, Iranian Persian* or *Farsi*) is the official language of Iran and the primarily spoken language in Iran, which is also spoken by minorities in Iraq and the Persian Gulf states. Perso-Arabic script is the writing system used for it.
- *Dari* (i.e. *Dari Persian, Afghan Persian* or *Dari*) is spoken in Afghanistan where it is one of the two official languages of that country. It is written with a version of the Perso-Arabic script. Afghan Persian is officially known as “Dari” since 1958 (Olesen 1995).
- *Tajiki* (i.e. *Tajik Persian*) is the official language of Tajikistan and is spoken in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Tajik Persian is officially known as “Tajiki” since the Soviet era (Karimi Hakkak 2001, 511). Tajiki was written in the Latin script beginning in 1928 and the Arabic alphabet prior to 1928. After 1939, materials published in the Persian alphabet were banned from the country, and it is currently written in Cyrillic script (Perry 1996, 571).

The Persian language holds the official status in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, with approximately 110 million Persian speakers throughout the world<sup>10,11</sup> Persian speaking peoples of Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan can understand one another with a relatively high degree of mutual intelligibility (Beeman 2005).

The previously mentioned three varieties of Persian are termed here as “Core Varieties” indicating standard varieties of Persian with the official language status in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, respectively.<sup>12</sup>

The matter is considered in comparison to “Peripheral Varieties”, which are considered to be the *dialects* of the standard varieties.

#### 24.3.2 Peripheral varieties: dialects

Accordingly, each of the three core varieties, i.e. Persian, Dari and Tajiki, consists of a group of dialects (peripheral varieties) which are listed in the following:

*Persian* includes a group of dialects including: Tehrani, Esfehani, Birjandi, Kashani, Shirazi, Mashhadi, Yazdi, Hamadani, Ghaeni, for instance.

*Tajik* group of dialects can be categorized in four groups as noted by Windfuhr (2009, 421):

- 1 Northern dialects (Northern Tajikistan, Bukhara, Samarkand, Kyrgyzstan, and the Varzob valley region of Dushanbe)
- 2 Central dialects (dialects of the upper Zarafshan Valley)

- 3 Southern dialects (south and east of Dushanbe, Kulob, and the Rasht region of Tajikistan)
- 4 Southeastern dialects (dialects of the Darvoz region and the Amu Darya near Rushon)

*Dari* Persian consists of Kabuli, Mazari and Badakhshani as its main dialects; the Kabuli dialect of which has become the standard model of *Dari* in Afghanistan (Wahed Alikuzai 2013, 4).

In brief in this section the three “Core Varieties” of Persian were presented together with the group of dialects of each of them which were classified as “Peripheral Varieties”. The main focus in this chapter is on the core varieties of Persian, among which Iranian Persian has the most language teaching programs in different parts of the world. The matter is shown numerically in the following sections.

#### 24.4 Universities with Persian language programs focusing on Varieties of Persian (Tajik and Dari)

*Tajiki Persian* is only taught in Tajikistan. The *Dushanbe Language Center* located in the capital, Dushanbe, has a *Tajiki Persian* program for foreigners. As the conflict between Iran and the U.S. has grown, in order to school the future generation of Persian speaking diplomats, the U.S. State Department is directing language learners to Tajikistan instead of Iran.<sup>13</sup>

The *Dari Department of Kabul University*<sup>14</sup> is responsible for the expansion of *Dari* language and literature.<sup>15</sup>

Noteworthy is to mention that no credible institute has formal teaching programs for other dialects of Persian.

#### 24.5 A geographical quantitative report of the standard (Iranian) Persian teaching centers

As the country of Iran is the hub of the Persian language and culture, and *Iranian Persian* has the highest number of speakers among the other two core varieties of Persian (as well as other Iranian languages; see Appendix 1 for a brief review of the institutes offering programs for teaching other Iranian languages), this Persian variety is the most taught variety abroad, which is seen in the following sections in the high number of the institutes teaching this variety (in comparison to the other two varieties). Accordingly, the focus of this section is to sketch a view of the institutes teaching this variety of Persian.

The institutes teaching Iranian Persian ((1) *Inside Iran* [including 16 institutes] and (2) *Outside Iran* [including 106 institutes and 35 cultural associations]) are presented in three categories here:

- 1) *Administered by MSRT* (Iranian Ministry of Science, Research and Technology)
- 2) *Free Institutes*
- 3) *Cultural Associations*

In sum, the number of Persian language programs reviewed in this chapter shows 157 organizations, including Persian teaching programs in their curriculum planning, both officially and unofficially. Noteworthy is that within MSRT, it is the International Scientific Cooperation Center that is responsible for the expansion of Persian language and culture in the country and abroad.



### 24.5.1 Institutes administered by MSRT

This section is aimed at presenting a list of universities and institutes (inside and outside of Iran) for teaching Persian that are administered by MSRT. The list is provided on the basis of Ostadzade's (2018) report on the previous and current situation of Persian language and literature teaching centers abroad. The report shows that 14 institutes in Iran and 68 institutes abroad have Persian teaching programs that are directed by MSRT.

#### 24.5.1.1 Inside Iran

There are 16 institutes *inside Iran* with centers for teaching Persian language to speakers of other languages (TPSOL) (ibid., 8) (see Appendix 2 for a list of them).

#### 24.5.1.2 Outside Iran

Before continuing the topic, it's worth mentioning that MSRT considers some supplementary classifications in specializing and managing the Persian language teaching programs abroad, which can be summarized as follows:

- Persian language and literature
- Iranology and Iranian studies
- Orientalism and Oriental studies
- Linguistics
- Persian translation
- Islamic studies

On the basis of these specializing categories, Persian language seats around the world are considered to be classified by MSRT, so specialists and professors from Iran are sent abroad for teaching the related specialization.<sup>16</sup>

This section will present Persian language programs directed by the MSRT in five general regions, as well as the included universities within them. The matter is presented in the regions of:

- 1) Europe (with 16 Universities); 2) Caucasus and the Commonwealth of Nations region countries (with 21 Universities); 3) Asia and Oceania (16 Universities); 4) African and Arab countries (10 Universities); 5) South American countries (3 Universities); and 6) additional countries (4 Universities) (cited from Ostadzade 2018, 9). In sum, the number comes to 68 universities containing Persian language teaching programs administered by MSRT.

##### 24.5.1.2.1 EUROPE

In Europe, 13 countries, each with one or more universities, contain Persian language programs, which in general show a number of 16 universities for teaching Persian (ibid., 9) (see Appendix 3 for the list of these institutes).

##### 24.5.1.2.2 CAUCASUS AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS

This region includes eight countries, containing 24 Universities, for Persian language programs (ibid., 9) (see Appendix 4).

24.5.1.2.3 ASIA AND OCEANIA

This region includes six countries, with 14 Universities, for Persian language programs (ibid., 10) (see Appendix 5).

24.5.1.2.4 AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

This region includes six countries, with 10 universities, for Persian language programs (ibid., 10) (see Appendix 6).

24.5.1.2.5 SOUTH AMERICA

This region includes three countries, with three Universities (ibid., 10) (see Appendix 7).

24.5.1.2.6 ADDITIONAL COUNTRIES

MSRT plans to offer Persian language programs in universities in four more countries (ibid., 10) (see Appendix 8).

### **24.5.2 Free institutes**

This section is aimed at presenting a list of universities and institutes that include Iranian Persian language teaching programs but belong to the *second category*, labeled here as “free institutes”.<sup>17</sup> The classification is added here to show the attention of nongovernmental institutes teaching Persian, which by its own shows the importance of Persian language and the interests of learners around the world for learning it.

The search shows nine institutes in North America and 39 institutes in Europe. The matter in general comes to a number of 46 free institutes in the regions.

#### *24.5.2.1 North America*

For the list of free institutes offering Persian language programs in North America, see Appendix 9.

#### *24.5.2.2 Europe*

There are 10 countries in Europe with free institutes for teaching Persian, including Austria (with four), Bulgaria (with one), France (with six), Germany (with eight), Italy (with five), the Netherlands (with one), Poland (with two), Scandinavian countries (with two), Spain (with five), and UK (with five) institutes; which in sum comes to number of 39 institutes in Europe (see Appendix 10 for the list).

### **24.5.3 Cultural associations**

The following is a list of Persian language programs labeled as “Cultural Associations” here, which can be seen as informal associations for teaching and learning Persian throughout the world. The matter is considered in the following four regions: *Europe* (in four countries, including 26 associations), *Canada* (seven associations), *Japan* (one association), and *Australia* (one association), which in general show a number of 35 cultural associations.

#### *24.5.3.1 Europe*

The report contains France including 18 associations, Germany including six, UK with one, and the Netherlands with one association. Some of the following mentioned activities are directed by student associations in main universities (see Appendix 11 for the list of cultural associations in Europe).

#### *24.5.3.2 Canada*

For the list of cultural associations offering Persian language programs in Canada, see Appendix 12.

#### *24.5.3.3 Japan*

Only “Academic Society of Iranians in Japan”<sup>18</sup> offers a Persian language program as a cultural association in Japan.

#### *24.5.3.4 Australia*

Only “Iranian Australian Community Association of Southern Tasmania (IACAST)”<sup>19</sup> offers a Persian language program as a cultural association in Australian.

### **24.6 Persian Reference Framework (PRF)**

The matter will be followed on by illustrating the need for a well-structured framework for teaching standard Persian to speakers of other languages, which can result in the production of suitable and applied educational content. In this area, a reference framework that represents the general principles could shape the roadmap for developing materials for different language levels has always been an essential requirement, which has not got enough attention so far. This reference framework, called the Persian Reference Framework (PRF), will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### ***24.6.1 The necessity for developing a reference framework for teaching Persian to speakers of other languages***

For principled and successful teaching of a language, the existence of a teaching reference framework is a main prerequisite. According to Vandergrift (2006), a reference framework for languages can create a clear and consistent system for explaining the language skills for different countries and at the same time helps in mutual understanding of linguistic practical skills. In the area of teaching Persian as a second or a foreign language, there has not been such a framework to be used as a reference for selecting and classifying teaching contents or for determining the language level of Persian learners. Most of the activities in this area have focused solely on the preparation of the curricula, based on the designers’ language intuition or mere impersonator versions of the foreign material without any tending to the Persian idiosyncrasies, context subtleties, or the learners’ needs and favorites. For a discussion on developing a standard proficiency test for Persian, read Chapter 21 in this volume.

In a field study, Gharegazi, Asgharpour-Masoule, and DabirMoghaddam (2014) show that among the existing Persian teaching course books, very few sources are in accordance with

the standards of the new international frameworks. As analyzed in most cases, there is no clear scientific criterion for the classification of the teaching material in the curricula and in fact the only criterion has been the personal experience and intuition of the writers. According to their statistical data, more than half of teaching books in the area of teaching Persian to foreigners, no teaching classification or level determination is found (ibid.).

Due to the lack of a common teaching framework and a level determination within the existing Persian teaching sources, the need for presenting a framework for selection and classification of Persian teaching material is of great importance. Meanwhile European countries have been using a standard framework known as *Common European Framework of Reference* (CEFR) for solving such a problem. This framework has been active since 2001, and its goal is to produce a collection of reference definitions for different language levels; i.e., elementary to advanced (A1.C2). The aim of this framework is to pass the communication barrier among the European citizens with different linguistic backgrounds; also it tries to create some kind of cooperation among the activities of the teaching material designers and teachers in different countries (CEFR 2001, 2).

Therefore, the aim of this section is to investigate the characteristics and advantages of the CEFR and the possibility of using it for the Persian language. Accordingly, first we introduce the CEFR, its characteristics and its goals, and later the explanation for its advantages will be given. In the next section, after explaining the advantages of the CEFR, we will investigate the possibility of designing the Persian Reference Framework (PRF) for teaching it to speakers of other languages based on the CEFR.

#### ***24.6.2 A historical overview of the CEFR***

According to CEFR (2001, 1.2), this framework has been devised as one of the European Community's documents based on a political view and requests of the European Community members, in order to create a democratic political environment all over the European countries and other member states. Its main purpose is to standardize all language teaching discourses in Europe. This document has been authored due to the need to develop a common basis for designing language teaching programs, instructions and books. The framework is the main part of a bigger project called "Language Learning for the European Citizen", which started in 1991. In fact, it is the result of the previous research geared toward explaining and assessing language ability and usage. In other words, this framework is the result of three decades of efforts in the area of modern languages in the European community. The development of this framework has been in line with the basic changes in language teaching, i.e. the move from grammar-translation method to functional-conceptual approach and communicative approach, which occurred at the same time. In fact, this framework was the result of the need for an international common framework for language teaching, and it was believed to ease the participation and cooperation among the language teaching institutes in different European member states.

By presenting a common basis and a clear explanation of the goal, content and teaching methods, this framework makes the language teaching courses more transparent and higher in quality. Also, it can create the possibility for international cooperation in diverse areas. By using the framework, the different language competence levels in different contexts can be compared with each other.

#### ***24.6.3 The characteristics of a reference framework***

A reference framework for a language is a collection of linguistic descriptions that has been designed in a specific sequence, in order to show the expected order of the language development in time (O'Loughlin 2007). A reference framework must have different criteria:

It must be “comprehensive”, “transparent” and “consistent” (CEFR 2001). “Comprehensiveness” means that it must try to cover all aspects of language knowledge, skills and functions so that the language learners can describe their goals in reference to that framework (ibid., 7). “Transparency” means the data should be presented in a clear and accurate manner and be accessible and easily be intelligible by the users. “Consistency” means that the data should not have internal contradiction.

In connection with the teaching systems, consistency requires the coordinated relations among their components. General components of a teaching system include diagnosis of needs, determination of goals, content description, selection or content generation, execution of the teaching or learning program, usage of the teaching or learning methods, and assessments.

A comprehensive, consistent and transparent framework will not impose a single and defragmented system. On the contrary, it is open and flexible in order to be adapted based on the learners’ needs. A framework must be (ibid.):

- *Multipurpose*: it must be feasible for diverse goals with different teaching situations and approaches.
- *Flexible*: it must be adaptable with different situations.
- *Open*: it can be expanded or limited.
- *Dynamic*: it must evolve according to the experiences of usage.
- *User-friendly*: it must be easily understandable and useable.
- *Unbiased*: it must not be exclusively attached to any linguistic or teaching theory.

#### **24.6.4 General approach in CEFR**

According to CEFR (2001, 9), a comprehensive, transparent and consistent reference framework must be related to a general approach of functionality and language learning. Generally, the CEFR approach is an action oriented approach, because it sees the language learners and language users as social actors. It means they are seen as members of society who must practice some social tasks in specific situations, in a specific context and in a specific functional area (which necessarily is not language related). Although speech acts occur in linguistic activities, these activities are part of a more extensive social context. An action-oriented approach includes all the cognitive, emotional and voluntary resources of a person and all of his individual and practical abilities as a social actor.

#### **24.6.5 Requirements for a reference framework for language teaching**

Other than what has been discussed regarding the requirements for a reference framework for language teaching, the following can be considered the most practical reasons requiring a reference framework of language teaching (ibid., 5–6); a common reference framework will provide specific goals for language teaching and learning activities. Besides, it is a lifetime assignment to achieve language learning skills, which must be encouraged and facilitated throughout educational systems from preschool up to adult teaching. Also, it can, in all levels, encourage and facilitate the cooperation among different teaching institutes in different countries and create a suitable basis for mutual understanding of the characteristics of different languages. Also, it can help language learners, language teachers, curriculum and test designers and the educational administrators in determination and coordination of activities. And most

importantly, it can be used for programming the language teaching courses, giving certificates for the language skill levels and the programming of the language learning self-studies.

#### ***24.6.6 Reasons for choosing CEFR as the theoretical basis for developing PRF***

The reasons for choosing CEFR as the theoretical base for developing PRF are manifold. Most importantly, it is a well-known and global framework that, besides its uses for teaching European languages, has been used for teaching non-European languages such as Filipino, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic and Hebrew. Besides, the framework is context-free, flexible and open, so it's possible to revise, correct and localize it based on different languages and requirements. Accessibility of the basic sources and documents of this framework is another factor in choosing it; i.e. most of the higher level documents, meeting reports, supplementary sources and the presentation of the projects based on this framework are electronically accessible to researchers without any limitation. The other reason is that its approach to language teaching and learning is action-oriented, which is favorable for interactive teaching methods and a communicative approach, which makes it adaptable to the newest language teaching methods. For a more detailed discussion on language teaching methods including the communicative approach, read Chapter 16 in this volume. In addition, Chapter 17 in this volume discusses a blended content-based approach to teaching Persian.

Another reason is that being context-free, language-neutral and flexible makes it usable in terms of different languages. Another important reason is that, while all the other existing frameworks are limited to a specific language and are mostly inflexible, samples of this framework for different languages show a successful, high quality and scientific implementation of the framework. Furthermore, the reference framework is not limited solely to the definition of the competence and skill levels but has been assessed in different designs of the teaching contents for each level, and its ability for implementation and adaptability to different practical experiences has been investigated. Likewise, one of the most outstanding advantages of the reference framework is that it is not language-specific; i.e., it is not limited to a specific language's grammar, lexicon, phonology etc. Therefore, it can be localized based on any other specific language's needs. Therefore, not being specialized for a specific language, this framework has been implemented for many languages inside and outside Europe. Lotti (2007) has investigated the practicality of this framework in minority languages. Its practicality is shown on the following minority languages: Welsh (in UK), Irish (in Northern Ireland), Basque and Catalan (in Spain), Frisian (in the Netherlands) and Sámi (in Finland).

#### ***24.6.7 Persian Reference Framework (PRF) methodology***

The significance of having a reference framework for Persian that can represent the general principles and shape the roadmap for developing and designing educational materials and textbooks, designing language teaching training courses, as well as evaluating language skills and certifications for different language levels, has been considered as an essential requirement here.

Accordingly, this reference framework for Persian, which is developed mainly on the basis of the *Common European Framework of Reference* (2001) for teaching languages and its adaptation specifically for Persian, has been explained in more detail in this section. The matter is specifically developed by determining the selection and leveling of the three linguistic modules of grammar, vocabulary and function for elementary, intermediate and advanced levels.

The importance of this selection is of great importance in designing language teaching sources, which even affects the success of a language teaching program based on it. Although in recent years, different course books have been devised for Persian language teaching to speakers of other languages, unfortunately the lack of a reference framework for evaluation of the content and even principled selection and leveling has resulted in the failure of many of them. The designers, programmers and teachers of the language teaching programs can choose from these standard modules according to the language learners' needs or/and the prospects of the teaching program.

Consequently, based on the Common European Framework of Reference for teaching languages (CEFR) (CEFR 2001; CEFR Companion Volume 2018) and due to the necessity for planning a well-structured framework for Teaching Persian Language, and the lack of such a reference framework in representing the general principles for Persian, a project in developing and designing this reference framework was initiated by a team in Shahid Beheshti (National) University in Iran. This project, which is approved by the International Scientific Cooperation Center of MSRT as Persian Reference Framework (PRF), has been implemented within the following book: *Persian Framework of Reference for Teaching Persian to Speakers of Other Languages: Grammar, Vocabulary and Functions (For Elementary, Intermediate & Advanced Levels)* (Mirdehghan et al. (2017)).

In regard to developing a reference framework for teaching Persian the following studies can be consulted: Mirdehghan and Zandi (2010a, 2010b), Bagheri (2015), Montazeri (2015), Saedi (2015), Mirdehghan et al. (2017) and Sahraei and Marsus (2017).

In addition, Chapter 15 in this volume delves into the history of teaching Persian in American universities and colleges as well as aspects of proficiency guidelines developed by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

#### **24.6.8 Steps in developing PRF**

For creating the Persian Reference Framework (PRF), the following steps have been taken by a team of linguists and Persian language teachers in Shahid Beheshti (National) University in Tehran, supervised by Mahinnaz Mirdehghan (2017, III):

In the first step, after reviewing the reliable language teaching collections and the specialized teaching books in every module, the corpus for each language module as well as the grammatical, lexical, and functional notes have been compiled. Next, in the second step, the compiled linguistic corpora have been analyzed and certified based on the Persian language teachers' and linguists' reviews and comments. Later, in the third step, based on the notes on each module, six questionnaires have been devised for both language teachers and language learners. Further, in the fourth step, the fieldwork has been executed by distributing the questionnaires among the teachers and learners in different Persian language teaching centers throughout the country. Next, in the fifth step, after filling the questionnaires, they were collected and the data was inserted into the statistics software and the results were analyzed based on the agreement among the teachers and learners, notes for each module of grammar, vocabulary and functions have been determined and certified. And finally, in the sixth step, the leveled frameworks for different modules in three levels of elementary, intermediate and advanced levels have been devised.

These modules are designed in the form of user-friendly and practical tables for ease of use of syllabus designers and language programmers (Mirdehghan et al. 2017, 175–196). In total, 278 lexical (ibid., 180–190), 119 grammatical (ibid., 175–179) and 184 functional (ibid., 191–196) modules for Persian have been selected and categorized in three levels. It is noteworthy that

due to the open structure of the framework and based on the variants such as the teaching program length, total teaching hours, the type and prospects of the program, and the learners' needs, the number of the levels and extension of the sub-levels can be increased.

The designed framework for teaching the previously mentioned three Persian language modules not only proposes a unified approach toward different language levels, but also it will ease the design and evaluation of the syllabuses and the language skills of the learners.

#### **24.6.9 PRF characteristics**

The following are the most important characteristics of the Persian Reference Framework (ibid., IV):

- 1 Comprehensive collection for grammatical, lexical and functional modules;
- 2 Special attention to the language learners' opinions, needs and favorites;
- 3 Use of expert opinions of the Persian language teachers;
- 4 Provision of the results and the contents of each teaching level in different tables based on the needs of different groups, for the ease of accessibility for language programmers and textbook authors.
- 5 The flexibility of the structure of the framework such that with the growth of data, it's possible to review and revise the framework.

In sum, this project has been brought up using the European Framework of Reference for teaching languages and localizing it for the region. Accordingly, the localized Persian criteria (PRF) can be used for designing and planning educational courses and textbooks, and providing a harmony and balance between different areas of teaching, testing and evaluating Persian. This project is accomplished using standardized questionnaires designed for language learners and language teachers. The data was analyzed and the final results demonstrate: 278 lexical domains, 178 grammatical items and 184 functions selected and graded in three levels of elementary, intermediate and advanced in TPSOL (Mirdehghan et al. 2017, iii).

#### **24.6.10 Professional series developed on the basis of PRF**

Accordingly, and on the basis of the earlier-mentioned Reference Book for Persian (PRF),<sup>20</sup> a series of professional series entitled "PARFA" has been published for teaching Persian to speakers of other languages. PARFA provides a new integrated four-skills course book series for teaching Persian to adults who want to use Persian in daily life, and guides them from PARFA 1 (Elementary level) to PARFA 2 (Intermediate level) and finally PARFA 3 (Advanced level).<sup>21</sup> The PARFA syllabus links grammar, vocabulary, skills and functions as illustrated in the Persian Reference Framework (PRF).

The PARFA series are designed on the basis of PRF for the three earlier-mentioned levels of elementary, intermediate and advanced (together with an audio CD as well as tests and exams for each student's book).

### **24.7 Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter has been to introduce and investigate different language programs for teaching Persian varieties. First, we investigated the concept of core and peripheral varieties of Persian, within which Iranian Persian (Farsi), Tajiki Persian (Tajiki) and Dari Persian (Dari),



as the official languages of Iran, Tajikistan and Afghanistan have been listed as three core varieties of Persian. Among these three, due to Iran being the cradle of Persian civilization and culture, Iranian Persian has become the focus of most language teaching programs in different parts of the world.

Along the three “core varieties” of Persian, the group of dialects of each of them that were classified as “peripheral varieties” have been discussed. The main focus here is on the core varieties of Persian, among which Iranian Persian has the most language teaching programs in different parts of the world. The matter is shown numerically in this chapter by presenting different institutes in Iran and throughout the world offering Persian (especially Iranian Persian) language programs for foreigners. As the current inquiry shows, universities with Persian language programs focusing on Tajiki and Dari varieties of Persian are limited to Tajikistan and Afghanistan (Kabul University). The geographical quantitative report of the standard (Iranian) Persian teaching centers shows a number of 16 institutes “inside Iran” and roughly 106 institutes and 35 cultural associations “outside of Iran”, which include Persian teaching programs in their curriculum planning, both officially and unofficially.

The review shows the attention of nongovernmental institutes to teaching Persian, which by its own shows the importance of Persian language and the interests of learners around the world for learning it.

The previously given geographical report has been followed in the chapter by illustrating the necessity for a well-structured framework for teaching standard Persian to speakers of other languages, which can result in the production of suitable and applied educational contents, according to the needs of the learners. In this area, a reference framework for Persian that represents the general principles and could shape the roadmap for developing materials for different language levels for teaching Persian is an essential requirement.

Consequently, based on the *Common European Framework of Reference* for teaching languages (CEFR) (CEFR 2001; CEFR Companion Volume 2018) and due to the necessity for planning a well-structured framework for teaching the Persian language, and the lack of such a reference framework in representing the general principles for Persian, a project in developing and designing this reference framework was initiated by a team in Shahid Beheshti (National) University in Iran. This project has got approved by the International Scientific Cooperation Center of MSRT as *Persian Reference Framework* (PRF) and is explained in detail in this chapter, together with its methodology, characteristics, steps in its development and professional book series, which are all developed based on that.

# Appendix 1

## Institutes offering programs for teaching other Iranian languages

A brief review of the institutes offering programs for teaching other Iranian languages, namely Balochi and Pashto, is presented in the following. It's to be noted that for teaching other Iranian languages such as Tati, Taleshi, Vafsi etc., no organized institute has been found. However, some courses or programs can be found online in form of websites, weblogs and applications.

### I) Institutes teaching Balochi

- a) In Asia
  - 1 Pakistan
    - 1) University of Balochistan ([www.uob.edu.pk](http://www.uob.edu.pk))
    - 2) Balochi Academy, Quetta, Pakistan ([www.balochiacademy.org](http://www.balochiacademy.org))
  - 2 Iran
    - 1) University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran (to be presented)
  - 3 Bahrain
    - 1) Baloch Club, Bahrain
- b) In Europe
  - 1 Sweden
    - 1) Uppsala university ([www.uu.se](http://www.uu.se))
- c) In North America
  - 1) Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), Monterey, California ([www.dliflc.edu](http://www.dliflc.edu))

### II) Institutes teaching Pashto

- a) In Asia
  - 1 Pakistan
    - 1) University of Balochistan ([www.uob.edu.pk](http://www.uob.edu.pk))
- b) In Europe
  - 1 Germany
    - 1) Cultural Association of Mittelfranken Afghans (<http://afghan.akm.de/index.php/fa.it/sprachunterricht.farsi.paschto>)
- c) In North America
  - 1) Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), Monterey, California

# Appendix 2

## Institutes inside Iran

Institutes *inside Iran* with centers for teaching Persian language to speakers of other languages (TPSOL)<sup>22</sup>:

- 1 Imam Khomeini International University (IKIU) (<http://ikiu.ac.ir/en/>)
- 2 Dekhoda Center, University of Tehran (UT) (<https://icps.ut.ac.ir>)
- 3 Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (FUM) (<https://en.um.ac.ir>)
- 4 University of Isfahan (UI) (<http://ui.ac.ir>)
- 5 Shahid Beheshti (National) University (SBU) (<http://en.sbu.ac.ir>)
- 6 Alzahra University ([www.alzahra.ac.ir](http://www.alzahra.ac.ir))
- 7 University of Kordestan (UOK) ([www.ukh.edu.krd](http://www.ukh.edu.krd))
- 8 Shiraz University (<http://shirazu.ac.ir>)
- 9 Bu.Ali Sina University of Hamedan (<http://basu.ac.ir>)
- 10 University of Mazandaran (UMZ) (<http://en.umz.ac.ir>)
- 11 Shahid Chamran University (SCU) of Ahvaz (<http://scu.ac.ir>)
- 12 Payam.e Noor University (PNU) ([www.pnu.ac.ir](http://www.pnu.ac.ir))
- 13 Allameh Tabataba'i University (<https://en.atu.ac.ir>)
- 14 Kharazmi University (<https://khu.ac.ir>)
- 15 Tarbiat Modares University (TMU Research Center) (<http://modares.ac.ir>)
- 16 Sa'adi Foundation (<https://saadifoundation.ir/en>) (Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi (2018, 394))

# Appendix 3

## Universities in Europe

List of universities in Europe offering Persian language programs:

- 1 France
  - 1) Sciences Po University ([www.sciencespo.fr/en](http://www.sciencespo.fr/en))
  - 2) University of Strasbourg ([www.en.unistra.fr/](http://www.en.unistra.fr/))
- 2 Slovakia
  - 1) Bratislava University (<https://fphil.uniba.sk>)
- 3 Slovenia
  - 1) University of Maribor ([www.um.si](http://www.um.si))
  - 2) University of Ljubljana ([www.uni.lj.si](http://www.uni.lj.si))
- 4 Poland
  - 1) Warsaw University (<http://en.uw.edu.pl>)
- 5 Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - 1) The Oriental Institute in Sarajevo ([www.ois.unsa.ba](http://www.ois.unsa.ba))
- 6 Romania
  - 1) University of Bucharest (<https://en.unibuc.ro>)
- 7 Czech Republic
  - 1) Charles University in Prague ([www.cuni.cz](http://www.cuni.cz))
- 8 Germany
  - 1) The Free University of Berlin ([www.fu.berlin.de](http://www.fu.berlin.de))
  - 2) The University of Bonn ([www.uni.bonn.de](http://www.uni.bonn.de))
- 9 Belgium
  - 1) Catholic University of Leuven (KU Leuven) ([www.kuleuven.be](http://www.kuleuven.be))
- 10 Bulgaria
  - 1) Sofia University ([www.uni.sofia.bg](http://www.uni.sofia.bg))
- 11 Denmark
  - 1) University of Copenhagen ([www.ku.dk](http://www.ku.dk))
- 12 Hungary
  - 1) University of Budapest (Eötvös Loránd University) ([www.elte.hu](http://www.elte.hu))
- 13 Austria
  - 1) University of Vienna ([www.univie.ac.at/en/](http://www.univie.ac.at/en/))

# Appendix 4

## Universities in Caucasus and the Commonwealth of Nations

List of universities in Caucasus and the Commonwealth of Nations offering Persian language programs:

- 1 Ukraine
  - 1) Kyiv National Linguistic University ([www.knlu.edu.ua/en/](http://www.knlu.edu.ua/en/))
  - 2) Shevchenko University ([www.univ.kiev.ua/en/](http://www.univ.kiev.ua/en/))
- 2 Russia
  - 1) The Institute of Asian and African Countries at Lomonosov Moscow State University ([www.msu.ru/en/info/struct/depts/isaa.html](http://www.msu.ru/en/info/struct/depts/isaa.html))
  - 2) Moscow State Linguistic University (<https://linguanet.ru/en/>)
  - 3) Kazan Federal University (<https://kpfu.ru/eng>)
  - 4) University of Bahkortostan ([www.bashedu.ru/en](http://www.bashedu.ru/en)) (Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi (2018, 396))
  - 5) Saint Petersburg State University (<http://english.spbu.ru/>) (ibid)
  - 6) Saratov State University ([www.sgu.ru/en](http://www.sgu.ru/en)) (ibid)
- 3 Belarus
  - 1) Minsk State Linguistic University ([www.mslu.by/en/](http://www.mslu.by/en/))
  - 2) State Economic University (<http://bseu.by/english/>)
- 4 Georgia
  - 1) Tbilisi State University (TSU) ([www.tsu.ge/](http://www.tsu.ge/))
  - 2) Ilia State University (<https://iliauni.edu.ge/en/>)
  - 3) Kutaisi University ([www.unik.edu.ge/index.php?lang=en](http://www.unik.edu.ge/index.php?lang=en))
  - 4) The Free University of Tbilisi ([www.freeuni.edu.ge/en](http://www.freeuni.edu.ge/en))
- 5 Azerbaijan
  - 1) Nakhchivan State University (<http://ndu.edu.az>)
- 6 Turkey
  - 1) Istanbul University ([www.istanbul.edu.tr](http://www.istanbul.edu.tr))
  - 2) Atatürk University ([www.atauni.edu.tr](http://www.atauni.edu.tr))
  - 3) Ankara University (<https://en.ankara.edu.tr>)
- 7 Kazakhstan
  - 1) Al-Farabi Kazakh National University ([www.kaznu.kz](http://www.kaznu.kz))
  - 2) The Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages ([www.ablaikhan.kz](http://www.ablaikhan.kz))
  - 3) University of Zhambyl

8 Armenia

- 1) Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences ([www.brusov.am](http://www.brusov.am))
- 2) Russian Armenian University ([www.rau.am](http://www.rau.am))
- 3) National Academy of Sciences ([www.sci.am](http://www.sci.am))

# Appendix 5

## Universities in Asia and Oceania

List of universities in Asia and Oceania offering Persian language programs:

- 1 Bangladesh
  - 1) University of Dhaka ([www.du.ac.bd](http://www.du.ac.bd))
  - 2) University of Rajshahi ([www.ru.ac.bd](http://www.ru.ac.bd))
- 2 China
  - 1) Shanghai University (<http://en.shu.edu.cn>)
  - 2) Peking University (<http://english.pku.edu.cn>)
  - 3) Xiamen University (<https://en.xmu.edu.cn>)
  - 4) Guangdong University (<http://iie.en.gdufs.edu.cn>)
  - 5) Sun Yatsen University ([www.sysu.edu.cn](http://www.sysu.edu.cn))
  - 6) Luo Yang University of Foreign Languages ([www.uscet.net/partners/luoyang.foreign.languages.university](http://www.uscet.net/partners/luoyang.foreign.languages.university)) (Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi (2018, 395))
- 3 Australia
  - 1) Australian National University ([www.anu.edu.au](http://www.anu.edu.au))
- 4 Malaysia
  - 1) University Putra ([www.upm.edu.my](http://www.upm.edu.my))
- 5 Pakistan
  - 1) National University of Modern Languages ([www.numl.edu.pk](http://www.numl.edu.pk))
  - 2) University of Lahore ([www.uol.edu.pk](http://www.uol.edu.pk))
  - 3) University of the Punjab ([www.pu.edu.pk](http://www.pu.edu.pk))
- 6 India
  - 1) Jawaharlal Nehru University ([www.jnu.ac.in](http://www.jnu.ac.in))
  - 2) University of Delhi ([www.du.ac.in](http://www.du.ac.in))
  - 3) University of Mumbai ([www.mu.ac.in/](http://www.mu.ac.in/)) (Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi (2018, 395))

# Appendix 6

## Universities in Africa and the Middle East

List of universities in Africa and the Middle East offering Persian language programs:

- 1 Algeria
  - 1) University of Algiers ([www.univ.alger.dz](http://www.univ.alger.dz))
- 2 Tunisia
  - 1) El Manar University ([www.utm.rnu.tn](http://www.utm.rnu.tn))
  - 2) Manouba University ([www.uma.rnu.tn](http://www.uma.rnu.tn))
  - 3) University of Sousse ([www.uc.rnu.tn](http://www.uc.rnu.tn))
  - 4) Ez Zitouna University ([www.uz.rnu.tn](http://www.uz.rnu.tn))
- 3 Senegal
  - 1) University of Dakar ([www.ucad.sn](http://www.ucad.sn))
- 4 Lebanon
  - 1) Beirut Arab University ([www.bau.edu.lb](http://www.bau.edu.lb))
  - 2) Islamic University of Lebanon ([www.iul.edu.lb](http://www.iul.edu.lb))



# Appendix 7

## Universities in South America

List of universities in South America offering Persian language programs:

- 1 Brazil
  - 1) University of Brasília ([www.unb.br](http://www.unb.br))
- 2 Columbia
  - 1) National University of Colombia (<http://unal.edu.co>)
- 3 Uruguay
  - 1) University of the Republic ([www.universidad.edu.uy](http://www.universidad.edu.uy))

# Appendix 8

## Universities to offer Persian language programs in near future

List of universities to offer Persian language programs in near future:

- 1 Finland
  - 1) University of Helsinki ([www.helsinki.fi](http://www.helsinki.fi))
- 2 Australia
  - 1) University of Sydney (<https://sydney.edu.au>)
- 3 Mexico
  - 1) Mexico City University ([www.unam.mx](http://www.unam.mx))
- 4 Venezuela
  - 1) University of Caracas

# Appendix 9

## Free institutes in North America

List of free institutes offering Persian language programs in North America:

- 1) University of Chicago ([www.uchicago.edu](http://www.uchicago.edu))
- 2) University of Maryland ([www.umd.edu](http://www.umd.edu))
- 3) University of Utah ([www.utah.edu](http://www.utah.edu))
- 4) International Career Institute (<https://icieducation.co.uk>)
- 5) United States Military Academy ([www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu))
- 6) Boston University ([www.bu.edu](http://www.bu.edu)) in MA: At BU, students can study two years of Persian language in small classes and pursue further study on an individual basis.
- 7) University of Pennsylvania ([www.upenn.edu](http://www.upenn.edu))
- 8) University of Michigan (<https://umich.edu/>) (Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi (2018, 399))
- 9) University of Austin in Texas ([www.utexas.edu/](http://www.utexas.edu/)) (ibid.)

# Appendix 10

## Free institutes in Europe

List of free institutes offering Persian language programs in Europe:

### 1 Austria

- 1) University of Vienna: Institute for Orientalism (<https://orientalistik.univie.ac.at>)
- 2) University of Vienna: Institute for Linguistics – Indo-Germanic (<https://pling.univie.ac.at>)
- 3) The University of Innsbruck: Institute of Ancient History and Ancient Near Eastern Studies (<http://uibk.academia.edu>)
- 4) The Austrian Academy of Sciences: Institute of Iranian Sciences ([www.oeaw.ac.at/en/iran/institute/about.the.institute/](http://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/iran/institute/about.the.institute/))

### 2 Bulgaria

- 1) Centre for Iran, the Balkans and Central European Studies (<http://cibce.org>)

### 3 France

- 1) The New Sorbonne University – Paris 3: Institute of Iranian Studies (<http://univ.paris3.academia.edu>)
- 2) University of Strasbourg: Department of Persian Studies ([www.en.unistra.fr](http://www.en.unistra.fr))
- 3) National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations (INALCO) ([www.geresh.cam.ac.uk/national.institute.of.oriental.languages.and.civilizations.inalco](http://www.geresh.cam.ac.uk/national.institute.of.oriental.languages.and.civilizations.inalco))
- 4) Practical School of Advanced Studies, Paris: Iranian and Indian worlds (UMR 7528) ([www.paris.iea.fr](http://www.paris.iea.fr))
- 5) France College, Paris: Iranian and Indian worlds (CNRS) ([www.iran.inde.cnrs.fr/mondes.iranien.et.indien.research.groupe](http://www.iran.inde.cnrs.fr/mondes.iranien.et.indien.research.groupe))
- 6) MOM (House of the Orient and the Mediterranean), Lyon ([www.mom.fr](http://www.mom.fr))

### 4 Germany

- 1) University of Bamberg: Institute for Iranian Studies ([www.uni.bamberg.de/en/orientalistik/](http://www.uni.bamberg.de/en/orientalistik/))
- 2) University of Göttingen: Institute for Iranian Studies ([www.uni.goettingen.de](http://www.uni.goettingen.de))
- 3) University of Hamburg ([www.uni.hamburg.de](http://www.uni.hamburg.de))
- 4) University of Marburg ([www.uni.marburg.de](http://www.uni.marburg.de))
- 5) University of Köln ([www.portal.uni.koeln.de](http://www.portal.uni.koeln.de))
- 6) University of Heidelberg ([www.uni.heidelberg.de](http://www.uni.heidelberg.de))
- 7) University of Munich ([www.en.uni.muenchen.de](http://www.en.uni.muenchen.de))
- 8) Turfan Studies at the Berlin Brandenburg Academy of Sciences (<http://turfan.bbaw.de/projekt.en>)

### 5 Italy

- 1) The University of Naples Federico II: The Eastern Studies ([www.unina.it](http://www.unina.it))
- 2) The Sapienza University of Rome ([www.uniroma1.it](http://www.uniroma1.it))

- 3) Ca' Foscari University of Venice ([www.unive.it](http://www.unive.it))
  - 4) The University of Bologna: Alma mater studiorum, Ravenna office ([www.unibo.it/en/campus.ravenna](http://www.unibo.it/en/campus.ravenna))
  - 5) The Tuscia University ([www.unitus.it](http://www.unitus.it))
- 6 The Netherlands
- 1) The University of Leiden ([www.universiteitleiden.nl](http://www.universiteitleiden.nl))
- 7 Poland
- 1) Jagiellonian University, Dept. of Iranian Studies ([www.iranistyka.io.filg.uj.edu.pl](http://www.iranistyka.io.filg.uj.edu.pl))
  - 2) University of Warsaw, Dept. of Iranian Studies (<http://informatorects.uw.edu.pl>)
- 8 Scandinavian Countries
- 1) Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo, Iranian Languages ([www.uio.no](http://www.uio.no))
  - 2) The University of Uppsala, Persian Studies ([www.uu.se/en](http://www.uu.se/en))
- 9 Spain
- 1) The University of Salamanca: University Expert in Languages and Cultures of India and Iran ([www.usal.es](http://www.usal.es))
  - 2) The University of Sevilla ([www.us.es](http://www.us.es))
  - 3) The Autonomous University of Madrid: Department of Arab and Islamic Studies and Oriental Studies ([www.uam.es](http://www.uam.es))
  - 4) The University of Alicante: Region of Arab and Islamic Studies, Institute of the Near East Ancient (<https://eps.ua.es>)
  - 5) The University of Barcelona: Ancient Near Eastern Institute ([www.ub.edu](http://www.ub.edu))
- 10 UK
- 1) SOAS: Centre for Iranian Studies, Manchester: Middle Eastern Studies ([www.soas.ac.uk/lmei.cis/](http://www.soas.ac.uk/lmei.cis/))
  - 2) Durham: The Centre for Iranian Studies ([www.dur.ac.uk](http://www.dur.ac.uk))
  - 3) Oxford: Faculty of Oriental Studies ([www.orinst.ox.ac.uk](http://www.orinst.ox.ac.uk))
  - 4) British Institute of Persian Studies, The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (<https://royalasiaticsociety.org>)
  - 5) Iran Heritage Foundation, University of Edinburgh, University of St Andrews ([www.iranheritage.org](http://www.iranheritage.org))

# Appendix 11

## Cultural associations in Europe

List of cultural associations offering Persian language programs in Europe:

### 1 France:

- 1) Omid Cultural and Educational Association ([associationomid@gmail.com](mailto:associationomid@gmail.com))
- 2) The International Nowruz Day in Paris ([ajin.paris@yahoo.fr](mailto:ajin.paris@yahoo.fr))
- 3) Bahar Cultural Association in Paris
- 4) French Iranians Cultural Association (<http://aveciraniensenfrance.com>; [iranienfr@yahoo.fr](mailto:iranienfr@yahoo.fr))
- 5) Cultural Association of Persian Speakers in Montpellier ([pauseculture34@gmail.com](mailto:pauseculture34@gmail.com))
- 6) Parse Cultural Association (<http://association.parse.blogspot.fr>; [association.parse@gmail.com](mailto:association.parse@gmail.com))
- 7) Persian Letters Literary Association ([lettrespersanes.fr](http://lettrespersanes.fr); [lettrespersanes@wanadoo.fr](mailto:lettrespersanes@wanadoo.fr))
- 8) Association for the Dissemination of Culture of Art and Literature of Iran (ADCALI) (<http://adcali.com>; [adcali@hotmail.com](mailto:adcali@hotmail.com))
- 9) Association Norouz (<http://norouz.e.monsite.com>; [norouz.reims@hotmail.fr](mailto:norouz.reims@hotmail.fr))
- 10) Strass'iran.Strasbourg ([www.strassiran.org](http://www.strassiran.org); [contact@strassiran.org](mailto:contact@strassiran.org))
- 11) Arghanoun Cultural Association (<http://arghanoun.com>)
- 12) Setak Cultural Association in Paris ([mebrahim1980@yahoo.fr](mailto:mebrahim1980@yahoo.fr))
- 13) Ferdowsi Linguistic and Cultural Association (<http://association.ferdowsi.free.fr>; [association.ferdowsi@gmail.com](mailto:association.ferdowsi@gmail.com))
- 14) Nima Artistic and Cultural Association (<http://association.ferdowsi.free.fr>; [nima.lille@free.fr](mailto:nima.lille@free.fr))
- 15) Persian Letters Cultural Association in Paris ([lettrespersanes@wanadoo.fr](mailto:lettrespersanes@wanadoo.fr))
- 16) Aftab Cultural Association in Paris ([aftabassociation@yahoo.com](mailto:aftabassociation@yahoo.com))
- 17) Association for the Promotion of Iranian Culture in Strasbourg ([apci@altergen.net](mailto:apci@altergen.net))
- 18) Persepolis Cultural Association in Limoges ([vahid.meghdadi@hotmail.com](mailto:vahid.meghdadi@hotmail.com))

### 2 Germany

- 1) Dehkhoda German Iranian Society ([www.deutsch.iranische.gesellschaft.de](http://www.deutsch.iranische.gesellschaft.de))
- 2) Iranian in Germany Society ([www.iraniande.com](http://www.iraniande.com))
- 3) Iranian-German Cultural Association in Heidelberg ([www.divh.de](http://www.divh.de))
- 4) Lovers of Iranian Languages and Culture Association in Düsseldorf ([www.persischschule.de](http://www.persischschule.de))
- 5) Iranian Social and Cultural Association ([www.iskv.org/](http://www.iskv.org/))
- 6) Literary and Cultural Association of Iranians in Frankfurt ([www.1001shab.de/](http://www.1001shab.de/))

### 3 United Kingdom

- 1) Sokhan Association in London (<http://sokhan.co.uk/>)

### 4 The Netherlands

- 1) Association of Iranian Culture and Literature ([www.vicl.nl/](http://www.vicl.nl/))

# Appendix 12

## Cultural associations in Canada

List of cultural associations offering Persian language programs in Canada:

- 1) Iranian Association at the University of Toronto ([www.iaut.org](http://www.iaut.org))
- 2) Iranian Students' Association of University of Alberta (<http://www.isaua.org>)
- 3) Iranian Students' Association in British Columbia University (<http://ubcpc.com/>)
- 4) The University of Manitoba Iranian Student Association (<http://umisa.net/>)
- 5) Iranian Community Association of Ontario ([www.iranianassociation.ca](http://www.iranianassociation.ca))
- 6) Iranian Studies at McGill ([www.mcgill.ca/study/2018.2019/faculties/arts/undergraduate/programs/bachelor.arts.ba.minor.concentration.persian.language](http://www.mcgill.ca/study/2018.2019/faculties/arts/undergraduate/programs/bachelor.arts.ba.minor.concentration.persian.language))
- 7) Centre for Iranian Studies Concordia University, Montreal Quebec (<http://iranianstudies.concordia.ca>)

### Notes

- 1) For an elaborate discussion on different peripheral varieties of Persian and other dialects and language spoken in Iran for whom Persian is considered second language, read Chapter 23 in this volume.
- 2) For a detailed discussion on the historical review of teaching Persian in the world, see Shabani-Jadidi and Sedighi (2018).
- 3) The Persian Reference Framework (PRF) has been developed by a team of linguists and Persian language teachers in Shahid Beheshti (National) University in Tehran, based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). This project has been supervised by Mahinnaz Mirdehghan and implemented within the following book: *Persian Framework of Reference for Teaching Persian to Speakers of Other Languages: Grammar, Vocabulary and Functions (For Elementary, Intermediate & Advanced Levels)* (Mirdehghan et al. 2017).
- 4) The term *Iranic/Iranian* is applied to any language that descends from the ancestral Proto-Iranian language.
- 5) Other Iranian languages are just briefly noted in place to place to get to the main point.
- 6) For a more detailed list of Iranian languages, read Chapter 23 in this volume.
- 7) Dabir Moghaddam mentions "Ourami" as a local language in Iran, but according to Mackenzie (1966) it is a dialect of the Gurani language. The latter is what's considered in the present classification.
- 8) Spooner (1994) notes that the ambiguity between *Farsi/Persian* nomenclature comes from the fact that the term *Farsi* is the Persian pronunciation while the latter is the Anglicized version. Therefore, the term *Farsi* can be considered analogous to *Deutsch* for German, *Français* for French or *Russki* for Russian.
- 9) As used by Bechert, Bernini, and Buridant (1990) and Windfuhr (1979).
- 10) For centuries, Persian has also been a prestigious cultural language in other regions of Western Asia, Central Asia and South Asia by the various empires based in these regions (Encyclopedia Britannica: Persian literature, retrieved January 2019).
- 11) Encyclopedia Britannica: Persian literature, retrieved January 2019.
- 12) "Variety" is used here as a cover term to avoid using *language*, *dialect* and *accent* terms, while at the same time it can include them all.
- 13) Despite its cultural differences with Iran, Tajikistan is used as a substitute for American students interested in researching the Islamic Republic, based on US State Department's policies.
- 14) <http://ku.edu.af>.
- 15) The main subjects taught in this department are: general linguistics, literary arts, poetry, history of language evolution, and history of literature.

- 16) For a more detailed discussion on the previous and current situation of the Persian language seats and its challenges and solutions, see Ostadzade (2018).
- 17) Since there's not an organized and published source listing all the institutes offering Persian teaching programs, this section is mainly based on the information gathered in person and by online searches, which shows that it may be changed in time.
- 18) <http://asij.ir/>.
- 19) <https://sites.google.com/site/iacast2014/>.
- 20) Other research provided on the basis of PRF for teaching Persian for "specific purposes" can be referred to as follows: Ekhtiyarzade (2018), Dehghani (2018), Borumand (2017), Yahaqi (2017), Vali'i (2017), Bahrami (2017), Omidi (2017), Nosobaliva (2014), Karimzade (2016), Hajibagheri (2016), Molaeiyan (2016).
- 21) The book series includes nine books, including:
  - Student's book:  
Professional Series of PARFA: PARFA 1, Student's Book, Elementary Level (Mirdehghan et al. 2018b)  
Professional Series of PARFA: PARFA 2, Student's Book, Intermediate Level (Mirdehghan et al. 2018a)  
Professional Series of PARFA: PARFA 3, Student's Book, Advanced Level (Mirdehghan et al. 2018b)
  - Workbook:  
Professional Series of PARFA: PARFA 1, Workbook, Elementary Level (Mirdehghan et al. 2018a)  
Professional Series of PARFA: PARFA 2, Workbook, Intermediate Level (Mirdehghan et al. 2018b)  
Professional Series of PARFA: PARFA 3, Workbook, Advanced Level (Mirdehghan et al. 2018a)
  - Teacher's book (under publication)
- 22) Here, the Research Institute of Tarbiat Modares University and Sa'di Foundation have been added to the 14 other Persian Teaching centers in Iran listed by Ostadzade (2018), which comes to a number of 16 institutes in the country.

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# THE ACQUISITION OF PERSIAN PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

A case study about the comprehension of conversational implicature and presupposition in the learners of Persian as a second/foreign language (LOP)<sup>1</sup>

*Zahra Hamedī Shirvan*

## 25.1 Introduction

To be competent language users in the Persian language, second/foreign language learners not only have to acquire grammatical accuracy, but they must also learn pragmatic appropriateness. Compared to other aspects of language, like grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and the four skills, pragmatics has come to attention in Persian as a second language research and education much later. Read Chapter 2 in this volume, the focus of which is the acquisition of prosodic parameters of politeness in second language learners of Persian.

The study of pragmatics deals with areas such as deixis, conversational implicature, presupposition and conversational structure, etc. As Bardovi-Harlig (2017) mentions,

one of the ongoing issues in studying pragmatics in ISLA<sup>2</sup> is the lack of a pragmatics curriculum (for any language). Closely related to that is the lack of reference works (in any language) that catalogue the basic pragmatic phenomena for that language. It is hard to imagine the teaching of grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, listening, and reading and writing without the established associated pedagogies and reference works. Yet, in pragmatics there is no established approach that forms the basis for further inquiry.

(226–227)

One of the main objectives of this research is to assess and investigate Persian learners' level of understanding and comprehension of the conversational implicatures and presuppositions in some Persian conversations and sentences.

To achieve such a goal, the main research questions to be answered in this chapter are as follows:

Does the learning context have an effect on the pragmatic competence of those learning Persian as a second or foreign language? In other words, is there a significant difference

between the pragmatic competence of those learning Persian abroad and those who learn it in Iran?

Another important objective is to examine the extent of the attention of the Persian language teaching materials and textbooks to the Persian learners understanding of the conversational implicatures and presuppositions; therefore, one other main question will be: to what extent the teaching materials have dealt with and paid attention to pragmatic competence implicitly or explicitly?

With these ends in view, in this research a survey was conducted using a questionnaire to measure the knowledge of conversational implicature and presupposition of Persian learners. The data of the present study were collected from two groups of learners of Persian; the first group were 33 LOPs who were studying Persian inside Iran and the second group were 12 LOPs who were studying Persian outside Iran. In addition, two book series were examined in terms of their use of exercises and tasks related to conversational implicature and presupposition. In the research methodology, these issues are described with more clear details.

It can be said that this research would be the first attempt to assess Persian learners' pragmatic comprehension, namely conversational implicature and presupposition and also to investigate the amount of textbooks' attention to these two important pragmatic issues.

In the next section, some theoretical issues about pragmatics, pragmatic competence and other related topics will be introduced briefly. Then, the few previous studies in Persian L2 pragmatics will be introduced. In the next section, the Research Methodology, Data Collection procedure and the Participants are explained in detail; and finally, the main part of the research, that is data analysis and discussion, will be presented.

## **25.2 Theoretical issues: pragmatics, pragmatic competence, conversational implicature and presupposition**

There are various definitions of pragmatics; one of the most complete and concise definitions is expressed by Crystal, who defines it as

the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication.

(Crystal 1997, 301)

In more recent theories of language teaching, it is believed that grammatical competence, which was introduced by Chomsky, is not sufficient for a native-like command of a second/foreign language. In the theory of communicative competence, as first introduced by Hymes (1972, 1974), one important part is pragmatic competence. Bardovi-Harlig (2017, 149) believes the development of L2 pragmatic competence involves the development of both L2 sociopragmatic sensibilities and L2 pragmalinguistic resources. The development of L2 sociopragmatic knowledge is

the link between action-relevant context factors and communicative action (e.g., deciding whether to request an extension, complain about the neighbor's barking dog); while the development of pragmalinguistic resources which include the various linguistic devices that allow speakers to implement their sociopragmatic knowledge.

(Kasper 2001, 51, in Bardovi-Harlig 2017, 149)

Hence, while dealing with pragmatics, attention is paid to consider knowledge of the means to weaken or strengthen the force of an utterance (i.e. pragmalinguistic knowledge) and knowledge of the particular means that are likely to be most successful for a given situation (i.e. sociopragmatic knowledge) (Soler and Martinez-Flor 2008, 3).

According to Canale and Swain (1980, Canale 1983), who were among the first to introduce a model of communicative competence, pragmatic competence, which is the same as sociolinguistic competence, is the mastery of the sociocultural code of language use (this definition itself includes ambiguous terms like, 'sociocultural code').

Yule describes implicature as "something more than just what the words mean, an additional conveyed meaning" (Yule 1996, 35). He continues that "implicatures are primary examples of more being communicated than is said, but in order for them to be interpreted, some basic cooperative principle must be in operation" (ibid., 36).

Levinson (2000, 11) defines the notion of a generalized conversational implicature as "a default inference, one that captures our intuitions about a preferred or normal interpretation of a sentence, an utterance, a conversation or a text".

Thus, if a speaker utters for example a sentence like the following:

(1) John has three cows.

a hearer will infer from this sentence that John has only three cows, and no more. And in the following dialogue,

(2) A: Will you go to Mark's PhD party?

B: I have to prepare my inaugural lecture.

Speaker A will understand that speaker B implies with his or her answer (which is an indirect speech act – in Searle's terms) that he or she will not or cannot go to this party. (Senft 2014, 33)

Levinson (2000, 14) also points out "what is conversationally implicated is not coded but rather inferred on the basis of some basic assumptions about the rational nature of conversational activity."

Grice formulates these 'basic assumptions about the rational nature of conversational activity' in his Cooperative Principle: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the state at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1975, 45).

This principle is constituted by four maxims which are claimed to be generally valid; these maxims are 'Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner.' These concepts are defined as follows:

The category of QUANTITY relates to the quantity of information to be provided, and under it fall the following maxims:

- 1 Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
- 2 Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Under the category of QUALITY falls a supermaxim – 'Try to make your contribution one that is true' – and two more specific maxims:

- 1 Do not say what you believe to be false.
- 2 Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Under the category of RELATION, I place a single maxim, namely, 'Be relevant'.

Finally, under the category of MANNER, which I understand as relating not to what is said (like the previous categories) but, rather, to HOW what is said is to be said, I include the supermaxim 'Be perspicuous' and various maxims such as:

- 1 Avoid obscurity of expression.
- 2 Avoid ambiguity.
- 3 Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
- 4 Be orderly (ibid., 45).

### ***25.2.1 Importance of pragmatic comprehension in SLA***

According to Canale (1983) and Canale and Swain (1980), pragmatic ability, which is an important part of the language proficiency construct, is the ability to use language appropriately according to the communicative situation. Pragmatic comprehension refers to the comprehension of oral language in terms of pragmatic meaning. Therefore, second language learners need to acquire the pragmatic knowledge of the English language in order to achieve the following abilities:

- The ability to understand a speaker's intentions,
- The ability to interpret a speaker's feelings,
- The ability to differentiate the meaning of a speech act, such as the difference between a directive and a commissure,
- The ability to evaluate the intensity of a speaker's meaning, such as the difference between a suggestion and a warning,
- The ability to recognize sarcasm, joking, and other facetious behavior,
- The ability to understand the conversational implicature used in conversations by native speakers in order to respond appropriately,
- The ability to understand the presuppositions and the conventional meanings that are associated with certain words (Canale 1983, 6–9).

One important aspect of pragmatic competence in a second language is the ability to draw correct inferences. Therefore, if second language learners are expected to acquire pragmatic competence in the target language, they are required to be able to draw correct inferences, especially when dealing with native speakers.

### **25.3 Previous research in Persian L2 pragmatics**

The study of pragmatics in foreign/second language learning has a history of at least two decades. Some studies have concentrated on the comprehension or production of speech acts (Blum-Kulka 1991; Hassall 1997; Li 2000; Rose 2000, among others), refusals (Fe'lix-Brasdefer 2004), compliments (Rose and Ng Kwai-fun 2001) and apologies (Trosborg 1995).

Compared to other areas in learning Persian as a second or foreign language, the investigation of L2 pragmatics has received very little attention. Only a few studies have been conducted about learners of Persian pragmatic knowledge or Persian learners' pragmatic development.

Modarresi and Tajali (2013), have compared the amount and type of direct and indirect strategies and peripheral modifications employed by Persian speakers and Persian language

learners in the request speech act, in different contexts (concerning formality, familiarity and importance of the subject of request).

They have used a Discourse Completion Test, and also direct observation, as the main instrument for data collection. In total, 80 native Persian speakers and 80 Persian language learners of two levels in one age group of 20–30 participated in this study. Results indicated that there is no significant relation between the importance of the subject of request and formality and the amount of peripheral modifications employed by language learners when requesting. But, depending on the amount of familiarity with the addressee, they use peripheral modifications. However, native Persian speakers acted differently depending on the given variables, and this indicates that Persian language learners are not aware of suitable strategies in different contexts. Findings of this research can help the teachers of Persian language in this way that educational materials and class activities should prepare Persian language learners for applying suitable strategies when needed and communicating successfully in different situations.

Vakilifard, Ebadi and Ebrahimi-Marjal (2015) have investigated the types and the percentages of speech acts included in the conversations of teaching Persian to the speakers of other languages (TPSOL) textbook series titled *Let's Learn Persian* (2005) taught at the intermediate level. For this purpose, the whole speech acts in the dialogue sections of the selected textbooks were analyzed based on Searle's (1979) speech act framework. The reliability of results was checked by two independent inter-raters. The results of this study showed that the distribution of the speech acts in the conversations of this series was not equal and hence the pragmatic information in these course books was not adequate to develop learners' pragmatic competence. They have finally suggested some implications for material developers and textbook designers.

In another study, the speech acts in conversations of a book named *Farsi be Farsi* (2008) which is written for teaching Persian to the speakers of other languages has been analyzed. The main goal of study has been to assess the naturalness or authenticity of these conversations. The theory of speech acts of Searle (1969) and the five categories of Austin's (1962) were implemented as the framework of the study. The research questions of the study were: How frequent is each type of the speech act in the conversations of the book in question? And what are the differences between speech acts used in everyday conversations in Persian and the conversations in this book? The results show that the frequency of speech acts in everyday conversations in Persian and conversations in the book in question, is extensively the same, regarding the use of all speech acts except for Declaratives. (Behnam 2015).

## 25.4 Research methodology, data collection, participants

In this study, the Persian translation version of the questionnaire developed by Taghizadeh (2017) was used to measure the knowledge of conversational implicature and presupposition of Persian Learners with some small changes. All the LOPs were given 30 minutes to answer the questionnaire, and the learners who answered the questionnaire online were asked not to spend more than 30 minutes on it.

The data of the present study were collected from two groups of LOP. The first group consisted of 35 LOPs in the intermediate and higher intermediate level who were studying Persian at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. The data of this group were collected in about two months with a questionnaire distributed in chapter format. The nationality of these LOPs is given in Table 25.1. The second group consisted of 12 LOPs in the intermediate and higher intermediate level who were studying Persian at the Center of Teaching Persian to the Speakers of Other

Table 25.1 Respondents' country of origin

Thailand	Lebanon	Iraq	Germany	Syria	England	France	total
1	3	26	1	1	1	2	35

Table 25.2 Textbooks used as the sources of data in the second phase of analysis

<i>Let's Learn Persian</i>	Level	Publisher
Book 1	Basic	Madreseh
Book 2	Basic	Madreseh
Book3	Intermediate	Madreseh
Book 4	Advanced	Madreseh
Book 5	Advanced	Madreseh
<b>Modern Persian Teaching</b>		
Book 1	Basic	Ghabool
Book 2	Basic	Ghabool
Book3	Intermediate	Ghabool
Book 4	Advanced	Ghabool
Book 5	Advanced	Ghabool

Languages, the Najaf Branch<sup>3</sup> (in Iraq). The data of this group were collected through the same questionnaire which was designed online on Google Forms. The learners were all from Iraq and native speakers of Arabic.

The second phase of this research includes analyzing and studying two book series of TPSOL in terms of the amount of attention to conversational implicature and presupposition in their conversations and listening exercises. These two collections are *Let's Learn Persian*,<sup>4</sup> written by Zolfaghari et al., and *Modern Persian Teaching*<sup>5</sup> by Ghabool (2014). The first reason for choosing these books was that they were a series – in other words these books contain elementary level books to advanced level – and another reason is that both series are used as the main source to teach Persian in many centers inside and outside Iran. The profile of the books is given in Table 25.2.

## 25.5 Data analysis and discussion

In this part, every question of the questionnaire will be explained in detail and the results will be interpreted and discussed for both groups.

### 25.5.1 Interpretation of questions about conversational implicature and presupposition

*Question (1) Mohammad and Sina are having lunch at the university café*

MOHAMMAD: 'Asghar Farhadi's new movie has come to the cinema. Me and Michael are going to watch it tomorrow or the day after, are you coming?

SINA: I have two class seminars next week.



On the basis of Sina's response, Mohamad understands that he is going with them to the cinema. The first question about Conversational Implicature (CI) is targeting the Maxim of Relevance introduced by Grice (1961, 1975, 1978 and 1989). Grice's Maxim of Relevance is responsible for creating a large number of standard implicatures. According to Levinson (1983, 107), "if the implicatures were not constructed on the basis of the assumption of relevance, many adjacent utterances in conversations would appear quite unconnected".

The percentage of correct answers to the first question is 77%, and (30 of 39) respondents answered correctly to it, which is quite high and shows that many respondents have understood this response, although the maxim of relevance is flouted.

*Question (2) Golnush and Zahra are talking about  
Golnush's birthday party*

ZAHRA: Have you invited Maryam and Sara to the party?

GOLNUSH: I have invited Sara.

Based on this conversation, Zahra understands that Maryam has not been invited to the party. In this question, the focus is on Grice's Maxim of Quantity. According to Grice's theory of conversational implicatures, we should not say less or more than what is required. While Zahra refers to both Maryam and Sara in her question, Golnush only refers to one of them in her response and violates the maxim of quantity deliberately. Violation, according to Grice (1975), takes place when speakers intentionally refrain to apply certain maxims in their conversation to cause misunderstanding on their participants' part or to achieve some other purposes. However, considering Grice's cooperative principle, Golnush should be still trying to answer Zahra's question. To do so, instead of referring to her name or giving a direct response like 'I didn't invite Maryam', Golnush simply chose to omit her name and left it to Zahra to understand the conveyed message.

The percentage of correct answers to this question is only 13%, and only 5 out of 39 respondents answered correctly to this question, while 79% answered wrongly and 8% remained neutral. This shows that the violation of the maxim of quantity is challenging for the LOPs and they have trouble inferring the intended meaning of the speaker.

*Question (3) Hamid and Hushang are colleagues*

HUSHANG: Would you like a cup of tea?

HAMID: I like mine sweet, and we have run out of sugar.

According to Hamid's response, Hushang concludes that he will have a cup of tea.

The focus in this question is on the Grice's Maxim of Manner. Hushang offers his colleague, Hamid, a cup of coffee and he declines his offer. To do so, he does not use a direct 'no' response; instead, he refers to the fact that there is no sugar and he likes to have his coffee sweet. According to one of the submaxims of Manner, Hamid is supposed to avoid ambiguity; nevertheless, he violates this maxim and does not give a clear 'no' response to his offer.

The percentage of right answers to this question is 63%, and the percentage of wrong and neutral answers are 28% and 9%, respectively. It can be said that although Hamid's response is not a direct one, Persian learners were generally able to comprehend his indirect answer.

*Question (4) Jamshid and Ehsan are running together in the park*

JAMSHID: Can you slow down a bit? I'm running out of breath.

EHSAN: I am glad that I don't smoke.

Based on this conversation, you conclude that Jamshid smokes. This question focuses on the Maxim of Relevance. To reply to Jamshid's request to slow down, Ehsan's utterance seems irrelevant; however, considering Grice's Maxim of Relevance it can be concluded that there is a relationship between Ehsan's utterance and Jamshid being out of breath. Thus, it can be concluded that, the reason behind Jamshid being out of breath is that he is a smoker.

The percentage of right answers to this question is 77%, compared to the wrong answers' percentage and neutral ones, which are 15% and 8%, respectively. The high percentage of right answers show that Persian learners have understood the maxim of relevance in this conversation.

*Question (5) Narcissus and Kati have gone to a new restaurant in their city and are having dessert. Narcissus has already decided about what to eat, but Kati has not decided yet*

NARCISSUS: Do you like the dessert?

KATY: The cutlery set is new and beautiful.

Based on Katy's utterance, Narcissus can understand that she does not like the food. Like the previous question, this question also focuses on the Maxim of Relevance. To respond to Narcissus's question whether she likes her food or not, instead of commenting on the food, Katy refers to the cutlery set. Considering that she is still contributing to this conversation cooperatively, her response can be interpreted as an indirect 'no' to Narcissus's question.

The percentage of correct answers to this question is 61.5% and the percentage of wrong answers is 30.5%. In fact, 24 respondents out of 39 answered correctly to this question; out of them 14 have chosen "agree" and 10 "strongly agree", and this shows some kind of uncertainty for the Persian learners to decide on the answer of this question. The percentage of wrong answers is rather high, too. It can be concluded that interpreting indirect responses is not always easy for all learners.

*Question (6) Shahla and Yasaman are professors at a university. They are talking about the essay of a student called Maryam*

SHAHLA: How did you find Maryam's essay on physics?

YASAMAN: It was well typed.

According to Yasaman, the chapter was well typed. In order to answer Shahla's question, Yasaman is trying to be relevant and contribute to this conversation; however, her utterance conveys a meaning beyond what she has actually uttered. Shahla's question is about a student's chapter on physics and to respond to her colleague's question, Yasaman only refers to the presentation quality of the chapter rather than the content.

The results of this question are rather interesting. The percentage of correct answers is much less than that of wrong answers 31% vs. 62% with 7% neutral ones. This data shows that the question has been a relatively challenging one for the learners, and more than 50% of them haven't understood that Yasaman's utterance conveys a meaning beyond what she has actually uttered.

*Question (7) Ali is talking to a bank clerk to apply for a bank loan*

BANK CLERK: To be eligible for the loan, you must have 10% deposit, which is £15,000. Do you have this amount, sir?

ALI: Yes, I do.

According to Ali's response, he has £15,000 deposit, maybe more. This question refers to Grice's Maxim of Quantity. According to Grice (1975), while exchanging information in conversations, we should make our contribution as informative as is required. Here, when Ali agrees to the Bank clerk's utterance, he means that, he has at least £15,000 deposit. Therefore, from his utterance it can be concluded that, he either has exactly £15,000 deposit or he may have more.

The percentage of right answers to this question is 87%; while wrong and neutral ones are respectively 8% and 5%. In this question, the speaker is giving as much information as needed, so the learners seem to have no problem comprehending the utterance.

*Question (8) Sara and Amir bought an apartment in Tehran*

This sentence is likely to lead you to think that Sara and Amir bought separate apartments in Tehran. This question is generated considering Levinson's (2000) Maxim of Manner. According to Levinson's (2000) informative principle, a speaker should say as little as is required. Therefore, in this conversation we expect the minimum linguistic information that is needed to achieve communicational ends. Considering this maxim, this sentence would lead us to conclude that Amir and Sarah bought one apartment together in Tehran.

The percentage of correct answers to this question is 75%, with 10% wrong responses and 15% neutral ones. The percentage of the neutral responses is more than that of the wrong answers. It can be inferred that most of the learners have understood the meaning of the utterance correctly and the ones who were uncertain preferred to be neutral than to choose the wrong answer. So giving more information than needed is not necessary even for learners of Persian as a second/foreign language.

*Question (9) Jalal and Payam are two friends and also roommates.  
Jalal who is very tired, has gone to bed early tonight*

PAYAM: Shall we go to the football game tonight?

JALAL: I have had a hard day.

Based on Jalal's response, Payam concludes that Jalal is interested to go to football tonight. Considering the Maxim of Relevance, this question is generated. To respond to Payam's offer to go to the cinema, Jalal provides a statement which violates the Maxim of Relevance as

Jalal's response seems to be irrelevant to Payam's question; although, considering the information given about Payam in the introduction that he goes to bed early when he is tired and the fact that he has had a long day, it can be concluded that he is not looking to accompany Payam to go to the cinema. The percentage of right answers to this question is 74% and wrong answers 18.5%. Here a maxim has been flouted, but most learners have understood the meaning of the utterance.

*Question (10) Last night I went to the coffee shop in the neighborhood and ate three ice-creams*

According to this sentence, the speaker has gone first to the coffee shop and then had eaten three ice-creams.

Based on Grice's (1975) Maxim of Manner, those participating in a conversation should be orderly. Therefore, in the earlier example, it can be concluded that this person has gone to the coffee shop first, and then has had three ice-creams.

The percentage of correct answers to this question is 55% and the percentage of wrong answers is 40%. Among the correct answers, 12 of them are "agree" and 10 are "strongly agree". This is somehow an odd result; because no maxim has been violated and there is no indirect answer or ambiguity or even a word or structure above the level of the learners. But 40% of the respondents have responded wrongly to this question.

*Question (11) Bahareh and Sima, who are roommates, are sitting in the university café. Sally starts talking about their other roommate, Atefeh*

BAHAREH: Atefeh sometimes behaves very badly; I think we must find another roommate.

SIMA: Have you heard anything about the university's three-day tour to Isfahan and Kashan for this weekend?

According to this conversation Sima is interested to continue this conversation about Atefeh.

Here, the focus is on the Maxim of Relevance. To continue the conversation with Bahareh, Sima produces an utterance that is totally irrelevant to her statement. Thus, she intentionally violates the Maxim of Relevance because she is not interested to continue the conversation on the topic raised by Bahareh.

The percentage of correct answers to this question is 69% and the percentage of wrong answers is 28%. Here the maxim of relevance has been flouted intentionally, but most learners have understood the meaning of the utterance. It can be said that the violation of the maxims is not always so hard and challenging for the learners to understand.

*Question (12) After Saman has withdrawn money from an ATM, his friend Reza approaches him*

REZA: Saman! How are you doing? I need some cash.

SAMAN: Not bad; and you? There are three ATMs here and all of them are working.

According to this conversation, Saman is not going to lend Reza the money.

Based on Grice's Maxim of Manner, people involved in a conversation should avoid ambiguity; however, a speaker might intentionally violate a maxim by avoiding being clear in a conversation to convey more than what he or she had actually uttered. In this question, Saman uses an ambiguous response to Reza's statement as he is pretending not to understand Reza's real intention of requesting money of him.

The percentage of correct answers to this question is 80%, which is rather high, and it can be seen again that violation of a maxim didn't lead to misunderstanding in most of the learners.

*Question (13) Who left the door open?*

Based on this question, you will understand that somebody has left the door open.

When we use any interrogative words like 'who' in Persian, there is always something which is presupposed prior to asking that question. This structural presupposition is associated with wh-questions. Wh-questions in Persian are conventionally interpreted with the presupposition that the information after the wh-form (e.g. when and who) is already known to be the case. Therefore, this question will lead us to believe that the door must have been left open by somebody rather than something.

The percentage of right answers, wrong ones and the neutral ones to this question are respectively 81.5%, 16% and 2.5%. Most of the learners comprehended the presupposition of the utterance correctly.

*Question (14) Sohrab, who participated in a marathon race for a charity, is talking to his mum*

MUM: Ok, could you reach the finish line?

SOHRAB: I had almost reached the finish line when I felt a sharp pain in my left knee, and could hardly continue with the remaining path.

According to the first part of Sohrab's utterance, he didn't finish the race because of a pain in his left knee. In this conversation the lexical trigger of "could hardly continue" conveys this message that, despite difficulties in doing something, it was finally done. Therefore, in this example, Sohrab finally finished the race, though with pain and difficulty.

The percentage of correct answers is 52.5% in this question, which is almost near the percentage of the wrong answers, 45%. About 50% of the respondents answered wrongly to this question and it can be inferred that most of the learners didn't read the utterance till its end or notice the words; they have judged the meaning according to the sharp pain in his knee and thought that he couldn't continue the race till the end. The lexical trigger hasn't helped the ones who answered quickly or carelessly.

*Question (15) Amin is talking to his brother, Bahman, about one of their neighbors who is a very wealthy man*

AMIN: I saw Mr. Hosseini again in a new Benz, Yesterday. Only God knows how many automobiles he has.

BAHMAN: He is very rich; but he is not a happy man.

According to this conversation, rich people are usually happy.

Grice (1975, 46) uses the following example to demonstrate the conventional aspects that are associated with 'but'.

- (a) She is poor but honest.
- (b) She is poor and honest.

Grice argues that (a) and (b) have the same truth conditions, but that a speaker who utters (b), conventionally implies that there is some salient contrast between the poverty and honesty of the woman in question. 'And' and 'but' therefore, on Grice's account, share their truth conditional content; however, 'but' has an implied content that 'and' lacks. This question focuses on this conventional aspect of the word 'but' and the following sentence can be inferred (>> is the symbol of presuppositions).

(16) John: He is rich, but he is not a happy man.

>> Rich people are happy generally.

The percentage of right answers is 40% and that of wrong answers is 55%. The much higher percentage of wrong responses can show that some learners may have answered according to their personal beliefs and not according to the conversation.

#### *Question (16) Shirin is talking to her friend Fereshteh*

SHIRIN: I saw Mina's husband in a new car yesterday.

Based on this utterance, you are likely to believe that Mina is married.

In this utterance, the conventional meaning is associated with the word 'husband'. The fact that Shirin chose to refer to him as 'Mina's husband' not 'Mina's ex-husband' or 'Mina's boyfriend' means that she is trying to convey the message that Mina is married. Therefore, Shirin's sentence presupposes the following sentence:

>> Mina is married

The percentage of right answers and the wrong ones are respectively 77% and 18%. Because the word 'husband' is learned at the elementary level to the learners, it was expected that the percentage of correct answers would be higher than that.

#### *Question (17) No horses in the farm have been vaccinated*

Based on this sentence, you conclude that there are many horses in the farm.

In this sentence, the focus is on the notion of quantifiers' domain. Every quantifier has a presupposition about the noun phrase used in the sentence. Therefore, considering the existence of the quantifier (no), the following sentence is presupposed:

>> There are horses in the farm.

The percentage of correct answers in this question is 51%, while 35% answered wrongly and the neutral ones are 14%. It can be inferred the word "no", *hich* in Persian, has confused about 50% of the learners and has led them to choose the wrong answer or the neutral one.

*Question (18) Leila and Aida are roommates. Aida expects a parcel from her family via post*

AIDA: Has my parcel arrived?

LEILA: Your parcel has not arrived yet.

Based on this conversation, we conclude that Amy's parcel was expected to have arrived by now.

This utterance investigates the learners' knowledge of the conventional meaning that is associated with the word 'yet'.

The percentage of correct responses is 64% and the incorrect ones is 31%. It means that many learners have understood the conventional meaning and presupposition associated with the word 'yet', *hanuz* in Persian.

*Question (19) Darius regrets telling Hossein the truth*

Based on this utterance, the truth has been told to Hossein.

This sentence is chosen to investigate the learners' knowledge of this factive verb, regret. The presupposition trigger of 'regret' conveys a feeling of sadness or disappointment over an occurrence. Thus, its presence indicates that Darius has already told the truth to Hossein.

The percentage of correct responses is 67% and the incorrect ones is 33% with no neutral ones. It can be inferred that most of the learners are familiar with the verb 'regret', *Afsus khordan* in Persian.

*Question (20) Aria and Arash are talking about their friend, Parsa, together*

ARIA: Do you know where Parsa wants to go this summer?

ARASH: He will either return to France or go to Spain to his grandfather's home.

Based on Arash's utterance, you will conclude that Aria has been in France before.

According to Levinson (1983, 182), iterative verbs like, *come back, restore, repeat, return, etc.*, convey a repeated action. Therefore, it can be concluded that Aria has been in France before.

The percentage of correct responses is 61.5% and the percentage of incorrect ones is 33.5% which is rather a high percent. It is expected that the intermediate and high intermediate level learners know the meaning of come back, *bargashtan* in Persian, which denotes that the person has gone there before. But the results are against the expectation.

*Question (21) How I didn't realize that Parisa left the party soon!*

Based on this utterance, Parisa has left the party soon.

Here the focus is on respondents' knowledge of the factive verb of 'realize'.

According to Karttunen (1971, 341) "verbs like *know* and *realize* as factive verbs carry along the speakers' presupposition that the complement sentence represents a true presupposition".

The percentage of correct responses is 67% and the percentage of incorrect ones is 28% and 5% remain neutral. The results show that about two thirds of the students have answered correctly to this question and it means that they know what the verb ‘realize’ presupposes in Persian.

*Question (22) Mina and Mahshid are talking about their friend’s wedding*

MINA: Are you also invited to Paria’s wedding?

MAHSHID: Of course I am. Even Leila’s mother is invited.

Based on this conversation, you conclude that Leila’s mum was among the first people to be invited.

This question targets the conventional meaning that is associated with the word ‘even’. According to Huang (2007, 55), “the term ‘even’ being epistemic in nature, conventionally implicates some sort of unexpectedness, surprise or unlikeness”. Therefore, considering the word ‘even’, the following sentences can be implied:

(26) >> Other people were also invited to Paria’s wedding ceremony.

>> Of all the people under consideration, Leila’s mum was the least likely to be invited to Paria’s wedding ceremony.

The percentage of correct responses is 46%, while the percentage of incorrect ones is 41% with 13% neutral responses. The percentage of correct and incorrect responses is approximately equal, and this shows that the word “even” and its meaning(s) or its uses is not known to at least half of the respondents and it needs more practice in different contexts.

For a detailed analysis and discussion of the acquisition of ‘even’ by second language learners of Persian, read Chapter 8 in this volume.

*Question (23) Bijan and Arash are two friends who are seeing each other after one year at the university*

BIJAN: I didn’t know that you are working at the university!

ARASH: Oh, yeah, I’m working at the computer section of the Faculty as a student job.

BIJAN: Good! Do you like the job?

ARASH: My father wanted me to accept the job.

Based on this conversation, Arash does not like working at the computer section.

The focus in this question is on the Grice’s Maxim of Manner. Bijan asks about Arash’s opinion about his new part time job, but he didn’t like the job. However, he does not use a direct ‘no’ response; instead, he answers indirectly by saying the job had been his father’s choice.

The percentage of correct responses is 61.5% and the percentage of incorrect ones is 25.5%, and 13% remain neutral. More than 50% percent of the respondents have answered correctly, which shows that this indirect response has been understandable for many of them.



*Question (24) Yesterday I saw Shokoufeh with her twin girls on the street. The twins are now studying at the university*

Based on this utterance, Shokoufeh is married and she has twin girls.

In this conversation, the lexical trigger is the word “twins”, which means that she has two children now. This word can have the connotation that she is married now, but is it always true? In other words, is not possible that she is divorced now? Or is there any possibility that she has adopted the children? Does this sentence presuppose that she is now married?

The percentage of correct responses is only 22%, while the percentage of incorrect ones is 69% and 9% remain neutral. The results show that most of the students have thought that the woman who is seen with her twins is surely married now and didn't think about other conditions that somebody can have a twin, yet not married right now.

*Question (25) Behrouz and Payam are talking about a new movie that has come to the cinema recently*

BEHROUZ: Oh, how about last night's movie? It must have been fantastic!

PAYAM: When it was over, I was happy!

Based on this conversation, you can conclude that Payam has enjoyed the movie.

The focus in this question is on Grice's Maxim of Manner. Behrouz asks Payam's opinion about the movie, and he didn't like the movie. But, he does not use a direct 'no' response; instead, he answers indirectly.

Finally, in the last question, the percentage of correct responses is only 35%, while the percentage of incorrect ones is 56%, and 9% remain neutral. Here again wrong responses outstripped the correct ones, and it shows that more than half of the respondents didn't realize that being happy when the movie is over means that the speaker has not enjoyed it, and they didn't understand this indirect conversational implicature.

The results obtained from the questionnaires are all shown and compared in separate tables for both groups. The readers can see these tables in the appendix.

Among 25 questions of the questionnaire, question number two led to the least number of correct responses among all 25 questions. Only five respondents out of 39 answered correctly to this question, and the mean score was 18%. Question number seven also led to the most number of correct responses, and 87% answered correctly to it.

For most of the questions, there are not significant differences between the responses of the two groups, except for a few questions, which are highlighted in Table 25.5.

### ***25.5.2 Analyzing the textbooks in terms of conversational implicature and presupposition***

In this section, we examine and describe the mentioned book series in terms of the use of exercises related to conversational implicature and presupposition. It should be noted that out of ten books reviewed, only two volumes of them contained a few of these exercises, namely volumes 4 and 5 of the series “*Modern Persian Teaching*”. A few examples of conversational implicature exercises in the textbooks are described here.

In book 4 (Intermediate Level), on page 89, there is a listening exercise in which there is a conversation between two people about Iranian carpets and some multiple choice questions

Table 25.3 The frequency of exercises related to conversational implicature

Level	Book 4 (intermediate)	Book 5 (advanced)
Frequency	11	22

must be answered about this conversation. Three of these questions are about the implicit conversational implicature, that is about the meaning of the expressions “*Jaye Shoma khali*”, “*Qadametun ruye cheshm*” and “*Qabel nadareh*”, in Persian; in all these examples, the literal meanings are not intended, and the implied implicatures are intended.

In the same book, on page 79, there is a listening exercise, in which there is small talk, and then some multiple choice questions must be answered. In two of these questions, the conversational implicature that is perceived of these conversations is expressed and the student must choose in which dialogue this implicature has existed.

Now we will turn to the advanced level book of the series, book 5. On pages 9 and 10, there is a listening exercise, in which there is a conversation between three people (a university professor and two students) about the research methodology class, and students must answer a variety of exercises, including multiple choice questions. Four of these questions are about the implied conversational implicature of the expressions in the conversation.

On page 22, there is a matching exercise in which the students have to match some conversational implicatures with the dialogue characters based on a conversation between four people (a family: parents and two children on the train coupe). In fact, in this exercise the implied meaning of the words of each person is given and that must be connected with the characters themselves.

On pages 36 and 37, there are some multiple choice questions, which should be answered based on a reading on the previous page. Two of these questions are related to the implied meaning (indirect meaning of the sentences and expressions).

Table 25.3 summarizes the result of the investigation of these books and the frequency of exercises related to conversational implicature in them.

As shown in Table 25.3, the frequency of the implicature exercises is duplicated in the advanced level book (book 5) compared to the intermediate level one (book 2), and this seems like a logical development. As students’ knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and other structures in Persian develops, that is, their grammatical competence expands, they will be more ready for pragmatic competence practices.

## 25.6 Discussion and conclusion

In the first phase of this research, which was a quantitative study, two different groups including Group (1), who were studying Persian in context, and Group (2), who were studying Persian out of the context, answered 25 questions about conversational implicatures and presuppositions in Persian. The first group was 35 international students of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad who were studying Persian at the university at the intermediate or higher intermediate level. The second group were 12 students who were studying Persian at Ferdowsi University’s Persian Teaching Branch at Najaf, Iraq; all of them were from Iraq and were studying at the intermediate or higher intermediate level, too.

It can be said that this study is the first attempt at measuring the pragmatic competence of the Persian learners, focusing on conversational implicature and presupposition. According to

Table 25.4 Comparing the results of Group (1) and Group (2)

	<i>Average correct responses</i>	<i>Average incorrect responses</i>
Group (1)	59%	32.5%
Group (2)	62%	38%

the findings, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of Group (1) and Group (2) in terms of the percentages of the correct answers to the questions – 59% vs. 62% – nor in the percentages of the incorrect answers – 32.5% vs. 38%.

Table 25.4 shows a short summary of the results collected from the two groups. There is no large difference between the two groups in terms of correct and incorrect responses. However, surprisingly, the average correct responses of Group (2) are 3% more than Group (1). This can show that at the intermediate level, not only had the context of learning not affected the pragmatic competence – learning of conversational implicature and presupposition – but also even those who have not been in the context have somehow performed better in this regard.

Comparing the incorrect responses shows that there is a 5.5% difference between the two groups and that here Group (1) – who learned Persian in context – have performed better and made more correct choices.

Finally, it must be mentioned that this research has been a case study with some limitations; more studies with different groups of learners, different levels of proficiency, nationalities, etc. is required to reach much more accurate and reliable results.

In the second phase of this research, which was mainly a qualitative study, two book series of TPSOL, were analyzed in terms of the amount of attention they pay to conversational implicature in the speaking and listening parts of the books. In this phase, ten textbooks were analyzed to investigate the extent of attention to conversational implicature and presupposition in these materials. As mentioned in the data analysis, only two of the books, books 4 and 5 of the series *Modern Persian Teaching*, contain some exercises related to these pragmatic issues. It was shown in Table 25.3 that the frequency of the implicature exercises is duplicated in the advanced level book (book 5) compared to the intermediate level one (book 2), and this seems to be a logical development. In other words, by increasing students' knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and other structures in Persian, that is, expansion of their grammatical competence, they will be more ready to practice and perform well on pragmatic competence exercises.

Finally, it can be said that little attention has been paid to the instruction of pragmatics, namely conversational implicature and presupposition in these Persian language textbooks.

## 25.7 Future directions

Here are some suggestions for future research: Investigating the socio-pragmatic knowledge of the Persian learners will be a useful area. In other words, do learners of Persian know and use rules that guide the use of Persian Language in society and in the context? Another issue that needs to be investigated is teaching Persian pragmatics in the classroom setting; is it possible to teach pragmatics at all or not?

Factors influencing the learning of Persian pragmatics in second/foreign language learning context can also be a fruitful study. Investigating LOP's knowledge and comprehension of other areas of pragmatics like speech acts of request, compliment, apologies and refusals seems really necessary.

For a study on the acquisition of prosodic parameters of politeness in second language learners of Persian, read Chapter 2 in this volume.

Analyzing the Persian textbooks and materials which are designed for the LOPs in terms of other aspects of pragmatics like speech acts, etc. and examining how much these materials are successful in teaching pragmatic aspects of Persian language to LOP can be a continuation of the second part of this study. Another relevant and helpful issue can be exploring the relationship between learners' time spent studying Persian and their pragmatic competence. Is there any meaningful difference between the learners in terms of the time spending on learning Persian and pragmatic competence?

# Appendixes

Table 25.5 Frequency of the answers to each question (both groups)

	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Total</i>
Question 1	18	12	7	0	2	39
Question 2	4	1	12	19	3	39
Question 3	17	7	6	5	3	38
Question 4	4	2	17	13	3	39
Question 5	5	7	14	10	3	39
Question 6	11	1	16	8	3	39
Question 7	1	2	22	12	2	39
Question 8	12	17	3	1	4	39
Question 9	11	17	6	1	1	38
Question 10	9	7	12	10	2	40
Question 11	12	15	10	1	1	39
Question 12	4	2	18	14	2	40
Question 13	5	1	20	11	1	38
Question 14	14	7	13	5	1	40
Question 15	16	9	13	5	2	45
Question 16	3	4	15	15	2	39
Question 17	7	13	12	2	5	39
Question 18	7	5	20	5	2	39
Question 19	11	15	11	2	0	39
Question 20	9	15	10	3	2	39
Question 21	15	11	7	4	2	39
Question 22	12	6	12	4	7	39
Question 23	14	10	7	3	5	39
Question 24	5	3	10	17	4	39
Question 25	8	6	14	8	7	39

Table 25.6 Percentage of correct and wrong answers to each question (both groups)

	<i>Correct answer</i>	<i>Type of question</i>	<i>Percentage of correct answers</i>	<i>Percentage of wrong answers</i>	<i>Percentage of neutral answers</i>
Question 1	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	77%	18%	5%
Question 2	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	13%	79%	8%
Question 3	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	63%	28%	9%
Question 4	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	77%	15%	8%
Question 5	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	61.5%	30.5%	8%
Question 6	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	31%	62%	7%
Question 7	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	87%	8%	5%
Question 8	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	75%	10%	15%
Question 9	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	74%	18.5%	7.5%
Question 10	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	55%	40%	5%
Question 11	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	69%	28%	3%
Question 12	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	80%	15%	5%
Question 13	Agree or Strongly agree	P	81.5%	16%	2.5%
Question 14	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	52.5%	45%	2.5%
Question 15	Agree or Strongly agree	P	40%	55%	5%
Question 16	Agree or Strongly agree	P	77%	18%	5%
Question 17	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	51%	35%	14%
Question 18	Agree or Strongly agree	P	64%	31%	5%
Question 19	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	67%	33%	0%
Question 20	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	61.5%	33.5%	5%
Question 21	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	67%	28%	5%
Question 22	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	46%	41%	13%
Question 23	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	61.5%	25.5%	13%
Question 24	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	22%	69%	9%
Question 25	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	35%	56%	9%
Total			60.5%	35.5%	6%

Table 25.7 Comparing the percentage of correct and wrong answers to each question in both groups

	Correct answer	Type of question	Percentage of correct answers		Percentage of wrong answers		Percentage of neutral answers	
			Group1	Group2	Group1	Group2	Group1	Group2
	Disagree or Strongly disagree							
Question 1	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	74%	83.5%	18.5 %	16.5%	7.5%	0%
Question 2	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	18.5%	0%	63%	100%	18.5%	0%
Question 3	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	77%	33.5%	19%	50%	4%	16.5%
Question 4	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	74%	83.5%	15%	16.5%	11%	0%
Question 5	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	59%	67%	29.5%	33%	11.5%	0%
Question 6	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	44.5%	0%	44.5%	100%	11%	0%
Question 7	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	81.5%	100%	11%	0%	7.5%	0%
Question 8	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	78%	67%	7.5%	16.5%	14.5%	16.5%
Question 9	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	77%	83.5%	19%	16.5%	4%	0%
Question 10	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	43%	83.5%	50%	16.5%	7%	0%
Question 11	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	70%	67%	26%	33%	4%	0%
Question 12	Agree or Strongly agree	CI	78.5%	83.5%	21.5%	0%	0	16.5%
Question 13	Agree or Strongly agree	P	73%	100%	23%	0%	4%	0%
Question 14	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	40%	83.5%	57%	16.5%	3%	0%
Question 15	Agree or Strongly agree	P	42.5%	33%	51.5%	67%	6%	0%
Question 16	Agree or Strongly agree	P	66.5%	100%	26%	0%	7.5%	0%
Question 17	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	44.5%	67%	44.5%	16.5%	11%	16.5%
Question 18	Agree or Strongly agree	P	70%	50%	22%	50%	8%	0%
Question 19	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	75%	50%	25%	50%	0	0%
Question 20	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	59%	67%	33.5%	33%	7.5%	0%
Question 21	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	66.5%	67%	26%	33%	7.5%	0%
Question 22	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	44.5%	50%	37%	33.5%	18.5%	16.5%
Question 23	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	59%	67%	22%	33%	19%	0%
Question 24	Disagree or Strongly disagree	P	16.5%	33%	70%	67%	13.5%	0%
Question 25	Disagree or Strongly disagree	CI	37%	33%	51%	67%	12%	0%
Total			59%	62%	32.5%	38%	8.5%	3.3%

### Notes

- 1) LOP is used in this chapter as abbreviation for the phrase “Learners of Persian as a Second/Foreign Language”.
- 2) Instructed Second Language Acquisition.
- 3) This branch was also established by Ferdowsi University of Mashhad in Najaf and is under the supervision of this university.
- 4) Farsi Biyamuzim.
- 5) Amuzesh Novin Zaban Farsi.

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# 26

## PERSIAN AS AN INTERLANGUAGE

*Mahbod Ghaffari*

### 26.1 Introduction

Selinker for the first time introduced the concept of “interlanguage” in 1972 (Selinker 1972), but it seems that he actually wrote the paper three years before its publication when he was in the University of Edinburgh in 1969. According to him, apart from the linguistic systems of native and target language (first language and second language), there is a third linguistic system which has both rules from the other two linguistic systems and the rules which belong to neither of them. This third linguistic system is used by the learners of the second language and is influenced by their first language. Therefore, it is something between L1 and L2 and can be understood as a type of “pidgin”. Thus, interlanguage is different from both the first language of the learner and his/her target language but interlinks them. However according to Frith (1978) some other terms were used to refer to the same concept of interlanguage with some minor differences among which we can refer to Nemser’s approximative systems (1969), Corder’s idiosyncratic dialects (1967) and Richards and Sampson’s learner language systems (1974).

Not only are there transfers from the first language into the interlanguage, but the interlanguage consistently gets more similar and closer to the target language, and above that it is a language by itself which has its own characteristics and systematic rules and principles. The interlanguage is constantly changing and at any particular time it has its own grammatical, morphological and phonological rules and features. In language learning and the growth and development of linguistic competence and performance of the learner, five main processes are involved: language transfer, **overgeneralisation**, transfer of training, strategies of learning second language, and finally strategies of second language communication (Selinker, L., p 215).

Language transfer refers to the state that some of the characteristics and features of interlanguage are the result of the transfer from the learner’s native language. Overgeneralisation mainly refers to the overgeneralisation of specific linguistic rules and linguistic and semantic features of the second language that the learner has already learnt. Transfer of training refers to those features of the learner’s interlanguage that are due to the methods and resources (books, teachers, etc.) through which s/he has been learning the language. Strategies of learning a second language which refer to those rules of interlanguage are due to the tendency of learner to make the target language a less complex system. Strategies of second language

communication refer to those rules of interlanguage which are shaped as the result of the strategy of the learner to make use of his/her limited knowledge to maintain communication (Selinker 1972, 216–217). Although the interlanguage has its own system of phonology, morphology and syntax, its study can go further to semantic, pragmatic and discourse levels.

The holistic characteristics of the Persian interlanguage of English L1 speakers who are learning Persian show that it is systematic and includes its own specific rules which can be called the learner's internal grammar. In addition, the interlanguage and its related rules are not fixed, but dynamic, and it constantly changes during the time of language learning. This language is simple with less complex grammatical structures and vocabulary compared to the ones of the second language. The interlanguage of every learner is different from those of others, and it is because of different individuals' learning style and pattern, their first language, the resources they use, their communication needs in second language and their individual point in the continuum of language learning.

Therefore, Persian language learners will develop an interlanguage through their language acquisition journey which will have some features of their first language as well as some over-generalisation regarding the Persian language rules. This interlanguage will change through different stages of their learning process and is different for every individual. However, usually the native speakers of English who learn Persian as a second or foreign language share some aspects of Persian as an interlanguage. Cognitive, interlingual and intralingual factors can affect the form of this interlanguage. For an elaborate discussion on interlanguage and code-switching that is one of the salient characteristics of second language learners of Persian, read Chapter 27 in this volume.

## **26.2 Review of literature**

Although Persian is the official language in Iran, there are many other languages in the country and hence the first language or mother tongue of many Iranians is different from Persian. These speakers learn Persian as a second language at a later stage in their life, usually when they start going to school. For more detailed discussion on other languages, language varieties and dialects in Iran, read Chapters 23 and 24 in this volume.

Therefore, a few linguistic and pedagogical researches have been carried out regarding the Persian interlanguage of these speakers. Among these researches, we can refer to Sattari Golbaghi's research (2001) on the Persian interlanguage of Laki speakers based on the error analysis of their vocabulary, Ahmadian's MA dissertation (2004) on the Persian interlanguage of Kurdish speakers of Mahabad at intermediate level based on the error analysis in their written Persian, Mehdizadeh's MA dissertation (2007) on the Persian interlanguage of Kurdish speakers of Eilam based on the error analysis in their spoken Persian, Kamju's Research (2011) on the Persian interlanguage of Mazani speakers of Amol based on their morphological error analysis, and Khanbabazadeh's research and book (2009 and 2016) on the Persian interlanguage of Taleshi speakers based on their syntactic error analysis. Firstly most of these researches and papers usually introduce the works of Yip (1995), Ellis (1985), Keshavarz (1994) and James (1980), who are among the experts and specialists in language teaching and error analysis and have outlined different features for interlanguage. Although all of them believe that the interlanguage is permeable, systematic, dynamic and variable, some of them consider other features for it as well. Keshavarz introduces simplicity, or Ellis adds reduced system to the list. Secondly such researches on Persian interlanguage mainly use Keshavarz's framework and principles for error analysis. Through these researches, the findings show that the syntactic errors are much higher than morphological and semantic errors

regarding frequency and the interlingual errors which are due to the learners' native language are the main sources of their Persian interlanguage features.

Also, due to the opening of many Persian language centres in Iranian universities and institutions in the recent years, the number of foreign students of different nationalities and of different first languages has increased, and a number of researches have been done on the Persian interchange of such learners whose native language have not been English. Among these we can refer to Han Sati Hung's MA dissertation (2011) on the Persian interlanguage of Vietnamese speakers through a syntactic error analysis, Eslamis' dissertation (2013) on the Persian interlanguage of Russian speakers based on the error analysis of their written Persian at intermediate level, Motevalian and Ostovar's paper (2013) on the syntactic error analysis in the Persian interlanguage of Arab speakers, Motevalian and Malekiyan's research (2014) on the syntactic error analysis in the Persian interlanguage of Urdu speakers, the paper of Mirdehghan et al. (2014) on the Persian interlanguage of German speakers at elementary level based on the analysis of their error in written Persian and the paper by Taherzadeh et al. (2016) on the morphological error analysis of the Persian interlanguage of Arab speakers at intermediate level.

Most of these researches and papers were based on James's framework of error analysis (1998), which categorises the errors of written language into four main groups: spelling, mechanical, morphological and grammatical. The findings from these researches show that usually the grammatical errors are of the highest frequency and the spelling, morphological and mechanical errors are respectively of lower frequency.

Also they generalise that the errors are usually having interlingual sources (those influenced by the learners' native language) or intralingual sources (those happened because of the different linguistic features of Persian), but there are some errors which are considered ambiguous or not clear whether they are interlingual or intralingual. In other words, they can be attributed to both mother tongue language interference and target language at the same time.

Furthermore, most of these researches show that the intralingual errors (which can be in vocabulary domain or grammar) are of higher frequency and occur more often than the other errors, though the research by Motevalian and Malekian (2014) on Urdu native speakers shows that the interlingual syntactic errors are more frequent.

Amongst the intralingual semantic errors, the ones related to semantic relations are more frequent than the errors regarding morphological collocation. Also considering the semantic errors of interlingual nature, the frequency of the errors because of loan translations is much higher than the errors because of direct borrowing from L1. And amongst the syntactic errors, the ones related to verbs and prepositions have the highest occurrence respectively.

The other very recent research on Persian interlanguage is the work of Sajjadi and Sahrayi (2018) on the Persian relative clause and the hierarchy of its related noun phrase. They have done their research on 493 written texts of Persian learners (at different levels) irrespective of their first language. Their work is based on Keenan and Comrie's noun phrase accessibility hierarchy (1977), and they conclude that learning those Persian relative clauses which modify a subject and/or a direct object completely follow the hypothesis but the process of learning the other relative clauses do not agree with the hierarchy.

### **26.3 Characteristics of the Persian interlanguage of English speakers**

To discuss the characteristics of the Persian interlanguage in a Persian-English and English-Persian environment and to explain the phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic features of Persian as an interlanguage in this chapter, the author mainly uses the data and

findings from his ongoing research which is based on the teaching and examining of the English native speakers during the past eight years. These English native speakers have been learning Persian in academic and non-academic environments. The number of students whose works have been used for this analysis has been 128 students at Elementary level (A1-A2), 69 students at Intermediate level (B1-B2), and 27 students at Advanced level (C1-C2). These students were between 19–25 years old, of which about 52 percent were male and 48 percent were female.

From the very first stages of language learning, the learner of Persian language starts to get some knowledge of Persian and to reflect that knowledge in written or spoken forms. These performances have particular features and characteristics and are the result of the language rules of the learner's first language (in our case, English), the language learning process, the rules of the Persian language which s/he is learning and the resources (teacher, books, other teaching materials etc.) s/he uses.

With very careful consideration and analysis of the data from the interlanguage of those who are learning Persian at different levels in English speaking countries and environment, the characteristics of this linguistic system and the reasons behind these features and the factors making these transfers happen can be elaborated.

These characteristics can be phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic, and they will be discussed through examples in the following sections.

### **26.3.1 Phonological characteristics**

The analysis of the data from the English speakers who learn Persian shows that there are six different factors which are behind the special phonological characteristics of the interlanguage of Persian language learners.

Firstly, there are some phonemes of the Persian language which do not exist in the first language of the learners, in our case, English. For example, English speakers do not have the phoneme /x/ in their native language. Therefore, in the very first stages of language learning, they replace the phoneme with the closest possible phoneme which is available in English, and in this case, they use /k/ or /h/ instead of /x/, so they pronounce the word /xub/ meaning “good” as /kub/ or /hub/. The other example is using the phoneme /g/ instead of /q/, which is absent in English phonological system, so they usually utter /qalb/ meaning “heart” as /galb/. These examples are in line with Nemser's (1969) approximative system by which he portrays interlanguage as a systematic self-contained language system owned by learners. Interestingly, the analysis of the data shows that sometimes the learners do it vice versa; that is, when they are learning and practicing to pronounce the sound /q/, they **overgeneralise** it and even when the Persian word has the sound /g/, they replace it with /q/. As an example, the word /gol/ meaning “flower” is pronounced /qol/ by many learners.

Secondly, there are some phonemes in English which does not exist in Persian. For example, the phoneme /w/ is not present in Persian. Therefore, the analysis of the interlanguage of English speakers shows that they pronounce the word /vey/ meaning “he” as /wei/, because this is similar to the pronunciation of the English word “way” with which the learners are well familiar.

Thirdly, there are some differences between the phonological structures of Persian and English and at the same time the diacritics for short vowels are not usually shown in Persian texts. For example, no Persian syllable can have more than one consonant in initial position; so unlike English, there is no initial consonant cluster in Persian. Moreover, when there is a word in Persian which starts with a consonant and is followed by a short vowel and then one

or two consonants, in written Persian we do not show that short vowel and the learner will only see two or three consonants one after the other. So s/he will transfer the initial consonant cluster rule of his/her first language to pronounce the word in Persian. Therefore the learner pronounces the word /setāre/ meaning “star” in Persian as /stāre/ or the word /barādar/ meaning “brother” as /brādr/.

Fourth is the case or issue of writing a word or representing a word in a written form that leads to spelling mistakes. There are many occasions in which the learner has perfectly learned how to pronounce a word and use it verbally, but when writing it s/he makes a mistake, and it usually happens when the phonemes are present in both Persian and English but they are not exactly the same and with slight differences. For example, there are two vowels of /a/ and /ā/ in Persian. The former is considered a short vowel and the diacritic is not used for representing it, but the former is a long vowel, which is represented by a letter or character in Persian alphabet. The English speakers write frequently the word /mādar/ meaning “mother” as /madār/ or even the word /bad/ meaning “bad” as /bād/. This same error or characteristic is applicable to the phonemes represented by more than one letter/character in the alphabet such as the phoneme /s/, which has three letters in the Persian alphabet, or /z/, which is represented by four letters.

The fifth is the special case of the existence of a particular phoneme in both Persian and English, but the English speakers verbalise and pronounce it mainly when it is at the beginning of the word. For example, both English and Persian have the consonant /h/ which is normally pronounced in the initial positions of English words “hotel”, “happy”, “he” and so on. The Persian interlanguage of the English speakers shows that at lower levels of their competency, they can pronounce the consonant /h/ properly in words like /havā/ meaning “air”, /havij/ meaning “carrot” and /māhi/ meaning “fish” because the phoneme /h/ is coming at the beginning of the word or initial position of the syllable, but the same learners may struggle to pronounce /h/ when it comes in the middle or final positions of the syllables like in words /mehr/ meaning “kindness” or /sohbat/ meaning “talk”; thus, they drop the sound /h/ and pronounce these two words as /mer/ and /sobat/ respectively.

It seems that all these characteristics are the result of the properties of the learners’ first language.

The sixth one can be the result of overgeneralisation which happens during the language learning and is due to the nature of Persian language. For example, the word /tʃe/ in Persian changes to /tʃi/ in spoken Persian when it is not followed by a syntactically related noun or noun phrase. As an example, one writes /tʃe xordi/ in written Persian, but says /tʃi xordi/ in spoken Persian meaning “What did you eat?”, or one may write /hartʃe gofti, anjām dādam/ but may say /hartʃi gofti anjām dādam/ meaning “Whatever you said, I did.”. However when /tʃe/ is followed by a noun or noun phrase in exclamatory sentences or interrogative sentences, then even in spoken Persian it keeps the original form and is pronounced as /tʃe/. For example, in both written and spoken Persian, one says and writes /tʃe dust-e xubi!/ meaning “What a nice friend!” or /tʃe ruzi miravi?!/ meaning “What day are you going?”. However, the learner may overgeneralise the change of /tʃe/ to /tʃi/ in spoken Persian, and not only s/he makes the same sentences as /tʃi dust-e xubi!/ and /tʃi ruzi miravi/ when speaking in Persian, but also reflects this change in his/her written work.

So in general, the phonological features of interlanguage of Persian at earlier stages are as follows:

- 1 The Persian interlanguage of English speakers usually lacks some of the consonants of the target language /q/, /x/, /ʔ/ and occasionally /h/ particularly at lower and intermediate levels of language learning.

- 2 The consonant /w/, which is a phoneme in the learners' native language, English, is present as a consonant of the phonological system of the Persian interlanguage of English speakers at lower levels of language learning.
- 3 The use of initial consonant clusters of the learners, which is a phonological feature of English and not Persian, is a characteristic of the Persian interlanguage of English speakers at lower levels of language learning.
- 4 The Persian interlanguage of English speakers shows the learners' problem in differentiating the vowels /a/ and /ā/ in the target language, particularly at lower and intermediate levels.
- 5 Although the consonant /h/ is a phoneme in both English and Persian, the Persian interlanguage of English speakers shows that this consonant is dropped in coda (either when no other sound follows it or more likely when another consonant follows it in the same coda or in the onset of the following syllable) by the learners.
- 6 Overgeneralisation of a particular rule is another phonological feature of Persian interlanguage of English speakers when the learners overgeneralise a phonological change in spoken Persian and then they reflect this change in their written Persian.

The more the learners progress in acquiring Persian language and mastering the language, the more their interlanguage is similar to the features of Persian language regarding the phonology. Although the learners at a higher level show a great mastery of the phonemes and phonological system of Persian language, it can be claimed that regarding actual pronunciations of many phonemes, there are traces of **fossilisation**, because even some phonemes which exist in both languages are not articulated the same way and at the same place, so this is still more or less noticeable in the performance of proficient Persian language learners. For a more detailed discussion on the phonological errors made by second language learners of Persian and Persian heritage learners, read Chapter 3 in this volume.

### 26.3.2 Morphological characteristics

When English speakers learn Persian, they transfer some of the morphological features of their native language into Persian and/or they create vocabulary which is unique to their interlanguage of Persian.

One type of transfer is using a word from their native language in Persian. This particularly happens when the learners' vocabulary is very limited and they base their judgement on the semantic category of that particular concept and make a **false analogy**. For example, regarding the name of the sports, in many cases the same vocabulary which is used in English as the name of sports such as “*football*”, “*basketball*”, “*tennis*” and so on, is used in Persian (with minor phonological changes) to name those particular sports. In the early stages of language learning, the learners overgeneralise it and they use words such as “*chess*”, “*swimming*”, and/or “*polo*” instead of their Persian equivalents /ʃatranj/, /ʃenā/ and /tʃogān/ respectively. This process can be called “direct transfer” and is one of the most popular language transfers. When the learner doesn't know the equivalents s/he uses a word from his/her mother tongue, in our case from English. This can happen both in speaking and writing. One should pay attention to the point that such characteristics in interlanguage are different from the ones in codeswitching, which is a natural feature of language use and happens even when the speaker is a highly proficient in both languages (Myers-Scotton 2002). These kinds of examples of Persian interlanguage are the result of a second language learning and ongoing changes and development of the linguistic system of the interlanguage. In cases where the vocabulary of the same semantic

field in Persian and English do not completely map and one term in English is associated with two or more words in Persian, the learners will use the English term for all of them at early stages. For example, Persian uses different terms for maternal uncles and aunts and paternal uncles and aunts and also different terms for cousins. However, in the Persian interlanguage of English speakers at lower levels of language learning, one can notice that the learner may use the word “*uncle*” to refer to both /ʔamu/ (paternal uncle) and /dāyi/ (maternal uncle).

The other morphological feature of Persian interlanguage of the English learners is the outcome of another transfer named **loan translation**. In this transfer, the learner translates parts of a term or phrase into Persian when s/he doesn't know the correct term or vocabulary in Persian. In other words, s/he uses a literal equivalent for a particular phrasal verb they have in English. For example, the learner may use /barā-ye . . . didan/ or /barā-ye . . . negāh kardan/ to refer to the verb “*to look for something*” instead of /donbāl-e tʃizi gaʃtan/. In this example, the learner has used word-for-word translation instead of the appropriate compound word to express the action of “*looking for*”, that is, using /didan/ or /negāh kardan/ for the word “*look*” and /barā-ye/ for the word “*for*”. This happens extensively when in English we use a verb and a particular particle to refer to a particular action. Another example can be /biʃtar zibā/ for “*more beautiful*” where “*more*” is /biʃtar/ and “*beautiful*” is /zibā/, but the correct equivalent is /zibātar/. These are the result of first language transfer.

There are instances that the learner knows one of the equivalents of an English word which has two equivalents in Persian. For example the word “*you*” in Persian is /to/ to refer to second person singular and /jomā/ to refer to second person plural (or used in formal polite context to refer to second person singular). The interlanguage of Persian at an earlier stage shows that the English learner uses one of them (mostly /to/) in both cases, which may cause cultural conflict and misunderstanding and further may be considered an example of impoliteness. Another example is the verb “*to say*” for which at least two Persian equivalents can be considered: /goftan/ and /harf zadan/. The interlanguage of Persian at earlier stages shows that the English learner uses /harf zadan/ instead of /goftan/ in some contexts such as /nemidānam tʃe bāyad harf bezanam/ instead of /nemidānam tʃe bāyad beguyam/ meaning “*I don't know what to say.*”, but to express a sentence such as “*Don't say anything.*”, in Persian we can say both /tʃizi nagu/ and /harf nazan/.

The third morphological feature of Persian interlanguage is **overgeneralisation**. In this case, learners have already learnt a particular word formation process or morphological rule and they generalise it to all cases without being aware of the limitations and exceptions. This happens extensively in the suffixation process. For example, in Persian, the comparative adjectives and superlative adjectives are made by adding /-tar/ and /-tarin/ respectively to the adjective. For example, /tārik/ is “*dark*” and /tāriktar/ and /tāriktarin/ are “*darker*” and “*darkest*” respectively. English speaking learners add these suffixes to /xub/ meaning “*good*” and make /xubtar/ and /xubtarin/ which is an overgeneralisation of the rule, because the comparative form of this adjective is /behtar/ and the superlative form is /behtarin/.

Sometimes different suffixes are used for making adjectives in Persian. For example the suffix /-mand/ is added to nouns and make /servatmand/, /qodratmand/, /dāneʃmand/ and so on to refer to “*rich*”, “*powerful*” and, “*scholar*” respectively. The learner may use this same suffix and make words such as /tarsmand/ and /qammand/ to refer to “*fearful*” and “*sad* (for films and stories)” respectively, though for these two words the suffix /-nāk/ should be used, which changes the nouns to /tarsnāk/ and /qamnāk/.

The overgeneralisation as a morphological characteristic of Persian interlanguage is not limited to affixation. Sometimes the learners use a particular verb for similar semantic fields due to their own analogy. For example, in Persian the compound verb /bāzi kardan/ meaning

“to play” is used with sports such as “*football*”, “*volleyball*”, “*chess*” and so on. Some learners overgeneralise this term and use it for “*swimming*”, “*wrestling*”, “*skiing*” and so on, for which there are different compound verbs which contain the name of these sports; in the latter cases the compound verbs /*fenā kardan*/, /*kofti gereftan*/ and /*eski kardan*/ are used respectively.

The other characteristic of the Persian interlanguage is related to the verbal part of **compound verbs** where the learners use an inappropriate verb with nonverbal element of the compound verb. This mostly happens when the learner overgeneralises the verb /*kardan*/ meaning “to do”, which is one of the most frequent verbal elements in making compound verbs. For example instead of saying /*edāme dādan*/, /*nafas keʃīdan*/ and /*sut zadan*/, the learners say /*edāme kardan*/, /*nafas kardan*/ and /*sut kardan*/ to mean “to continue”, “to breathe” and “to whistle” respectively. Thus, the learner has overgeneralised /*kardan*/ as part of the compound verb instead of /*dādan*/ (literally meaning “to give”), /*keʃīdan*/ (literally meaning “to draw” or “to extend”), /*zadan*/ (literally meaning “to hit”). The examples here which refer to this characteristic on interlanguage are the result of the process of learning Persian language. However, the same characteristic can be found in the interlanguage of English speakers learning Persian, where it is because of the concept transfer from the learners’ first language. For example, the learners say /*dast tekān dādan*/ instead of /*dast dādan*/ to refer to “to shake hands” in which the learner has used /*tekān dādan*/ meaning “to shake” instead of /*dādan*/ meaning “to give” with the non-verbal element /*dast*/ meaning “hand”.

For further discussion on the phonological, morphological and syntactic errors made by second language learners of Persian and Persian heritage learners, read Chapter 4 in this volume.

### 26.3.3 Semantic characteristics

One of the semantic characteristic of the Persian interlanguage is related to the verbs /**budan**/ meaning “to be” and /**jodan**/ meaning “to become”. In Persian, there is a clear distinction between these two verbs, while the former refers to a stable state; the latter usually refers to a change from one state to another state. For example, in /*emruz xoʃhāl hastam*/ meaning “Today, I am happy”, /*hastam*/ meaning “I am” a conjugated form of /*budan*/ in the present tense expresses a stable state of feeling; but in /*vaqti mādaram rā bebinam xoʃhāl miʃavam*/ meaning “When I see my mother, I will become/be happy” the verb /*miʃavam*/ indicates a change of state and “becoming happy”. When English speakers who learn Persian are trying to convey this second meaning, some may say /*vaqti mādaram rā bebinam xoʃhāl hastam*/. So they use /*hastam*/ meaning “I am” instead of /*miʃavam*/ meaning “I become” and fail to convey the change of state. This semantic characteristic of the Persian interlanguage is the result of the learners’ first language, as in English, the verb “to be” is used extensively to mean “to become”.

The other semantic characteristic of the Persian interlanguage is related to cases where the learner has learnt one particular word in the second language through books, dictionaries or teachers and s/he overgeneralises that term for all other items in that category as s/he is not aware that there are other words and terms in the second language to refer to each particular item. A common example is using the word /*qalam*/ meaning “pen” to refer to any object that can be used for writing; so the learner use it to refer to “pencil”, “ballpoint pen” and so on, whereas the correct equivalents should be /*medād*/ and /*xodkār*/ respectively. This overgeneralisation is because of lack of vocabulary, and the learners need to use the communication strategy of resorting to the **limited vocabulary** resources they have to express what they mean.

For a detailed description on semantic properties of Persian that are difficult to acquire by second language learners of Persian, read Chapter 7 in this volume.



### 26.3.4 Syntactic characteristics

Careful consideration of the Persian interlanguage of English native speakers who learn Persian shows particular syntactic features which do not belong to standard Persian. In the following subsections, the syntactic characteristics of Persian interlanguage are explained based on different syntactic or grammatical factors. See Chapter 4 in this volume for a detailed discussion and categorisation of syntactic errors made by second language learners of Persian and Persian heritage learners.

#### 26.3.4.1 Word order

The first syntactic characteristic of Persian interlanguage related to **word order** is the use of SVO sentence word order. The unmarked word order of standard Persian is SOV, but at early stages and lower level, the learners commonly use SVO word order, which is the direct result of English which is the learners' native language. For example, the interlanguage of the learners shows that instead of producing /barādaram ketāb xarid/, they make /barādaram xarid ketāb/ for the English sentence "My brother bought books." where /xarid/ is the verb and /ketāb/ is the object.

The second characteristic of Persian interlanguage in this section is related to the order of noun and adjective in a noun phrase. In Persian usually the adjective or modifier follows the noun, but in English the adjectives precede the nouns which they modify. As the result of the learners' first language, in their Persian interlanguage they may bring adjective before the noun in earlier stages of their language learning. As an example, the English speakers say /gerān gol/ instead of /gol-e gerān/ for English "expensive flower" where /gerān/ is the adjective and /gol/ is the noun.

#### 26.3.4.2 Verb omission

**Dropping verb** is the other syntactic characteristics of Persian interlanguage. This happens mainly for the verb "to be" in early stages of learning Persian. For instance the learners of Persian when introducing themselves they usually drop the verb /ast/ or its spoken forms /e/, /st/ or /s/ meaning "is" from the end of the sentence; they may say /esm-e man jak/ instead of /esm-e man jak ast/ for "My name is Jack." This also happens when the learners use another structure to mean "I am Jack." For which the learner says /man jak/ instead of /man jak hastam/ where s/he drops the verb /hastam/ meaning "am" or "I am".

#### 26.3.4.3 Pronouns

Standard Persian is a **pro-drop language**, so using subjective pronoun can be redundant and it is used only in some particular contexts. In Persian interlanguage, the extensive use of pronouns as subjects is one of the main syntactic features as the learners are less likely to drop the pronoun, which is because of the nature of the English language, which keeps the subject.

The second syntactic characteristic of Persian interlanguage regarding the usage of pronoun is related to using the incorrect form of the third person singular pronoun. In Persian, there are two pronouns to show third person singular: the first one is /u/ which refers to a human (like "he" and "she" in English) and the second one is /ān/ which refers to a non-human entity (like "it" in English). In early stages of language learning, the learners usually use /u/ for all instances to refer to third person singular nouns. For example, they may say/diruz yek

ketāb xaridam va u rā xāndam/ instead of /diruz yek ketāb xaridam va ān rā xāndam/ meaning “Yesterday, I bought a book and I read it”. This characteristic in Persian interlanguage is due to the language learning process.

The third syntactic characteristic of Persian interlanguage related to using the **personal pronoun** is the time when the learner overgeneralises using the free forms of personal pronoun instead of the **enclitic** forms in object, object of preposition and the possessive adjective positions. In standard Persian, the free personal pronoun can be used in those positions provided that what they are referring to is different from the subject of the same sentence, otherwise the corresponding enclitic forms need to be used. So the learner may write /ketāb-e man rā az ostād gereftam/ meaning “I got my book from the professor.” where s/he has used free personal pronoun /man/ meaning “my” in possessive adjective position while the subject of the same sentence is “I” and referring to the same entity. The correct form of this sentence in Persian should be /ketābam rā az ostād gereftam/ where /-am/ is the enclitic pronoun meaning “my”. This syntactic interlanguage characteristic can even stay with the learners till later stages of language learning and is considered the result of the language learning process.

#### 26.3.4.4 Prepositions

Among those characteristics of Persian interlanguage which are related to prepositions are instances of dropping prepositions in Persian in cases where they should be used. This characteristic is due to the learners’ first language. For example, the learner says /har ruz mādaram komak mikonam/ instead of /har ruz be mādaram komak mikonam/ meaning “Every day I help my mother.” the preposition /be/ is deleted due to the learner’s first language as in English the verb “help” does not take any preposition.

The other type of characteristics of interlanguage related to prepositions is using prepositions where it is not needed. This happens with the expressions related to time where the learners use the preposition /dar/ before time in the same way they use English prepositions “at”, “in” and “on”. For example, the learners say /dar ruz-e dofanbe be bazār raftam/ instead of /ruz-e dofanbe be bazār raftam/ meaning “On Monday, I went to the bazār.” This characteristic is the result of the learners’ first language as well.

The third type of characteristics of interlanguage related to prepositions is using an inappropriate preposition. For example, the learners use preposition /dar/ instead of /be/ in the phrase /ʔalāqemand be/ meaning “interested in”. Again this happens due to direct loan translation from their native English language, as the equivalent of preposition “in” is usually /dar/.

So the learners say /dar fārsi ʔalāqemand hastam/ instead of /be fārsi ʔalāqemand hastam/ meaning “I am interested in Persian.”

#### 26.3.4.5 Indefinite marker /-i/

One of the characteristics of interlanguage is related to the **indefinite marker** /-i/. In Persian when a noun is not specific or definite it takes the marker /-i/. There are some cases where the learner drops this marker. For example, in the sentence /diruz polis dozd dar xiyābān-e mā dastgir kard/ produced by the learner meaning “Yesterday, the police caught a thief in our street”, the indefinite marker /-i/ is missing after /dozd/ meaning “thief”. This feature exists in the Persian interlanguage because of the learning process. This can be seen in the sentence /be didār-e dustam dar bimarestān raftam va barāyaf ketāb-hā bordam/ meaning “I went to visit my friend in the hospital and I took (some) books for him.” in which the indefinite marker /-i/

is missing after the plural noun /ketāb-hā/. The incorrect use of the plural marker /-i/, is another feature of the interlanguage which will be discussed later in Section 26.3.4.10.

Another case related to the same category, i.e. using the indefinite marker /-i/, is when the learner overgeneralises and uses /-i/ where it is not needed. For example, the learners produce sentences such as /yek sibi xordam/ meaning “*I ate one apple.*” or “*I ate an apple.*”. In such context, only the word /yek/ meaning “*one*” or the indefinite marker /-i/ can be used, so one of them is redundant. Another example is where a noun is made definite with some linguistic devices such as determinative adjectives /in/ meaning “*this*” or /ān/ meaning “*that*” and still the learner brings the indefinite marker /-i/ after the noun. For example, in the sentence /barādaram ān mājīni ra naxarid zirā gerān bud/ meaning “*My brother didn't buy that car because it was expensive.*”, the learner has used the indefinite marker /-i/ after /ān mājīn/ which is a definite noun meaning “*that car*” and does not need the /-i/. All these examples are the result of the language learning process.

#### 26.3.4.6 Object marker /rā/

In Persian, when a noun or a noun phrase is definite or specific and functions as the direct object of the verb, it is followed by the **direct object marker** /rā/. For example, in the sentence /mādaram ſomā rā did/ meaning “*My mother saw you*”, the word /ſomā/ means “*you*” and is the object of the sentence, and since all pronouns are specific, it is followed by the specific direct object marker /rā/. The nouns can be specific either semantically or grammatically, so all proper nouns, pronouns, nouns after demonstrative adjectives or possessive adjectives, and reflexives are considered specific.

Among those characteristics of the interlanguage which are related to the object marker /rā/ in Persian includes dropping /rā/ in cases where it should be used. This is likely due to the fact that an overt object marker like /rā/ does not exist in English.

English language does not have any marker to show the object of the verb, while in Persian /rā/ comes after definite specific direct objects and is considered an object marker. For this same reason, when English native speakers learn Persian, they often forget to use /rā/ after the definite objects, and this is one of the characteristics of their Persian interlanguage. For example, they say /in feʔr do bār xāndam/ instead of /in feʔr rā do bār xāndam/ meaning “*I read this poetry twice*”. So the learners forget to use /rā/ after /feʔr/ meaning “*poetry*” which is the specific object as it is preceded by determiner /in/. This clearly shows the impact of the learner's native English language on his/her Persian.

The second characteristic of Persian interlanguage related to /rā/ as an object marker is the incorrect use of /rā/, in other words, overgeneralisation of /rā/ and using it after non-specific indefinite object. In this case, this characteristic of interlanguage does not relate to the learner's first language but the process of learning Persian. For example, the learner may say /diruz be foruſgāh raftam va ketābi rā xaridam/ instead of saying /diruz be foruſgāh raftam va ketābi xaridam/ meaning “*Yesterday, I went to the shop and bought a book.*” in which /ketabi/ has indefinite marker /-i/ so it is an indefinite noun and cannot take object marker /rā/.

The third characteristic of interlanguage which is related to the object marker /rā/ is when we have a complex sentence embedding a relative clause. In Persian, when constructing a relative clause, the noun which the relative clause is referring to gets an enclitic /-i/, which is a kind of antecedent marker /-i/ and is different from indefinite marker /-i/; for example, in /mardī ke āmad/ meaning “*the man who came*”, /mard/ has got the antecedent marker /-i/ and is followed by the relative clause /ke āmad/. In another example, the learners may say /ketābi ke xāndam az dustam gerefte budam/ instead of /ketābi rā ke xāndam az dustam gerefte budam/

meaning “*The book which I read I had got from my friend.*” Therefore, while learning how to use the relative clause, the learners mistakenly consider this /-i/ an indefinite marker, and when the noun is in the object position they mistakenly do not bring /rā/ after the noun. This characteristic can be because of both the learners’ native language and the process of language learning.

The next characteristic of Persian interlanguage which is related to the object marker /rā/ is when the learner uses it in an inaccurate place in cases where a relative clause construction is used. In standard Persian, in such sentences, /rā/ should come after the noun and not after the verb in the relative clause. But the interlanguage of the learners shows that they use /rā/ at the end of the relative clause. For example, the learners may say /ketābi ke āvarde budi rā xādam/ instead of /ketābi rā ke āvarde budi xādam/ meaning “*I read the book which you had brought.*” in which the learners have used /rā/ after the verb /budi/ at the end of relative clause and not after the noun /ketābi/ to which the relative clause refers. This characteristic of interlanguage does not relate to the learner’s first language but rather to the process of language learning.

The fifth characteristic of Persian interlanguage which is related to using the object marker /rā/ is when the learner uses it between the nonverbal and verbal part of a compound verb. For example, in the sentence /dar muze be tʃizi dast rā nemizanam/ meaning “*In museum, I do not touch anything.*”, the learner has used /rā/ between the compound verb /dast zadan/ meaning “*to touch*” (literally “*hand hit*”). This is again a result of the language learning process.

The final syntactic characteristic of Persian interlanguage in this category is related to using the object marker /rā/ in the passive voice. In the early stages of language learning, Persian learners extensively use the object marker /rā/ in the passive sentences which normally comes after the definite object in active voice and is deleted when the sentence is changed to passive. For example, the learners may form the sentence /sarbāzān rā košte ʃodand/ instead of /sarbāzān košte ʃodand/ meaning “*The soldiers were killed.*” So they are using the verb in passive voice but still keeping /rā/ with the grammatical subject. This is again a result of the language learning process.

#### 26.3.4.7 Linking word

Missing the linking word /ke/ is amongst the syntactic characteristics of Persian interlanguage which is due to the learner’s first language. The learner says /ketābi xādam moʃallem be man dād/ meaning “*I read the book which the teacher gave me.*” which should be /ketābi ke xādam moʃallem be man dād/. In the interlanguage, the linking word /ke/ is deleted, which is due to the learner’s first language English, in which the relative pronoun can be deleted in such constructions; the English example can be “*I saw the man you were talking about.*”

#### 26.3.4.8 /-i/ in exclamatory phrases

In Persian, in exclamatory sentences, if /tʃe/ is followed by a noun or noun phrase, then the enclitic /-i/ is attached to the noun phrase, for example /tʃe ʃahr-e bozorgi/ means “*What a big city!*”, in which /-i/ has come after /ʃahr-e bozorg/. This /-i/ behaves like the indefinite marker /-i/ but it is somehow different. The interlanguage of Persian learners shows that they drop this /-i/ and make the exclamatory sentences without /-i/. For example, they may say the same sentence as /tʃe ʃahr-e bozorg/ where the enclitic /-i/ is missing. Once again, this feature is the result of the language learning process.

## 26.3.4.9 /-i/ in interrogative adjectival /tʃe/

Exactly similar to /-i/ in exclamatory phrases, in Persian, if the question word /tʃe/ is followed by a noun, then the enclitic /-i/ is attached to the noun; this is the interrogative adjectival /tʃe/. For example, in /tʃe rangi?/ meaning “*what colour?*” or /tʃe sāli/ meaning “*what year?*” or /tʃe ketābi/ meaning “*what book?*”, /-i/ has come after the nouns /rang/, /sāl/ and /ketāb/. The interlanguage of Persian learners shows that they drop this /-i/ and make this kind of interrogatives without /-i/. For example, they may say the same sentences as /tʃe rang?/, /tʃe sāl?/ and /tʃe ketāb/ respectively, where the enclitic /-i/ is missing in all examples. Once again, this feature is the result of the language learning process.

## 26.3.4.10 Plural/singular nouns

One of the characteristics of interlanguage is related to the plural or singular forms of the nouns. There are cases where the learner uses plural forms instead of the singular forms. One of the most common ones at early stages of learning Persian is using plural after a numeral greater than one, the same way the English speakers do in their native language, English. In English, count nouns which follow numerals greater than one are obligatorily plural (e.g. three dogs), but in Persian they must not have the plural marker and are always in singular form after any number. For example, the interlanguage of Persian learners shows that the learners may use /do sib-hā/ instead of /do sib/ meaning “*two apples*”. This same characteristic can be found when some Persian learners use count nouns after quantifiers such as /tʃand/ and /teʔdādi/, /kami/, and /xeyli/, respectively meaning “*some*”, “*a number of*”, “*a few*”, and “*many*”. Again, this is the result of language transfer from the first language.

Another common case is in sentences like /ketāb-hā behtarīn dust-hā-ye ma hastand/ instead of /ketāb behtarīn dust-e māst/ meaning “*Books are our good friends*”. In Persian, we can use singular nouns as a **generic nouns** to refer to all members of a particular group. We do not need to use plural forms in the way we do in English. In the aforementioned example both /katāb-hā/ and /dust-hā/ are in plural form by virtue of the plural maker suffix /-hā/, while we should use the singular generic noun. This characteristic of Persian interlanguage is again a result of the learner’s first language.

However, there are instances where the learner uses the singular form instead of the plural form. One of the most common ones at early stages of learning Persian is using singular after the expressions such as /yeki az/ meaning “*one of the*”, /teʔdādi az/ meaning “*a number of*”, /barxi az/ meaning “*some of*”, /hame-ye/ meaning “*all*” or “*all of*” and so on, while in standard Persian, these expressions are followed by plural nouns. For example, Persian learners may say /teʔdādi az ketāb/ instead of /teʔdādi az ketāb-hā/ meaning “*a number of books*”. Although this can be the result of the process of language learning, more specifically it can be because of Persian language-internal impact and has happened due to the existence of another similar construction in Persian where /teʔdādi/ meaning “*a few*” (without the preposition /az/) should be followed by a singular noun; therefore the learner overgeneralises the rule and keeps the noun singular after /teʔdādi az/.

Another characteristic of Persian interlanguage in this same category is the use of **double plural**. In Persian, in addition to the most regular pluralisation rule, which is adding /-hā/ to a singular noun, there are other available ways. One of them is a rather irregular way and is called “broken plural” which is a rule in Arabic language to make plural nouns and the plural forms are borrowed into Persian in their original Arabic form. For example, the word /filsuf/ is a singular noun meaning “*philosopher*”. The normal plural form of it in Persian can be /

fil̄suf-hā/; however, there is another broken plural form /falāsefe/ meaning “philosophers” borrowed from Arabic. There are instances that the learner, considering the latter form as a singular noun, adds the plural maker /-hā/ to /falāsefe/ and changes it to /falāsefe-hā/ to make it plural. This feature is due to overgeneralisation of the pluralisation rule and adding /-hā/ to nouns which are already in plural form made by means of other less frequent pluralisation devices and processes. Another example of this double plural is making /mardom-hā/ instead of /mardom/ meaning “people” where the noun naturally refers to a plural entity and considered plural.

#### 26.3.4.11 The *ezafe* marker

Another syntactic characteristic of Persian interlanguage is omitting the *ezafe* marker when needed. The *ezafe* marker is the vowel /-e/ which links syntactically related nouns (such as the possessive) or links a noun to an adjective or a series of adjectives. If the immediate phoneme which precedes *ezafe* is the vowel /ā/ or the vowel /u/, then the consonant /y/ comes before the *ezafe* marker. At early stages and lower levels, the learners have the tendency to drop *ezafe*, which can be noticed both in their spoken and written performance. For example, they produce the sentence /qazā mekziki dust nadāram/ instead of /qazā-ye mekziki dust nadāram/ meaning “I don’t like Mexican food.” where they have missed the *ezafe* and the accompanying consonant /y/ as the needed buffer. Another example is in spoken Persian where the learner says /moʔallem mehrabān be man goft/ instead of /moʔallem-e mehrabān be man goft/ meaning “The kind teacher told me.” where the learner is dropping the *ezafe* between /moʔallem/ meaning “teacher” and /mehrabān/ meaning “kind” (as in written Persian usually the diacritics representing short vowels are not used, then the /-e/ as *ezafe* marker is not shown. Therefore by looking at the learners written work one cannot decide if they have dropped the *ezafe* marker or not, but when they are asked to read aloud their own piece of work, they drop the *ezafe* marker. Dropping the *ezafe* marker as one of the syntactic characteristics of the Persian interlanguage of English speakers can be the result of their native language, where they can join syntactically related nouns and adjective without any linker and/or the result of the language learning process.

#### 26.3.4.12 Noun or adjective

One of the characteristics of interlanguage is related to the word form. A very frequent one is using an adjective form of the word instead of the noun. For example, the learner may say /be tārix-e irāni ʔalāqemand hastam/ instead of /be tārix-e irān ʔalāqemand hastam/ to mean “I am interested in Iranian history (or history of Iran)”. In this example, it can be seen that the learner is using the adjective /irāni/ instead of the noun /irān/. This is mainly due to the learner’s first language, English in which normally the adjective “Iranian” can be used; but using the adjective form in Persian makes a change in meaning (when the adjective /irāni/ is used it is describing and giving or attribute a feature to the noun /tārix/, while using the word /irān/ means the “history belongs to Iran”). The other example related to this category is in very early stages of language learning in a sentence like /man ahl-e eskātlandi hastam/ instead of /man ahl-e eskātland hastam/ meaning “I am from Scotland.” when the learner is trying to say where s/he is coming from. This time, using adjective /eskātlandi/ instead of the noun /eskātland/ is the result of the process of language learning and overgeneralisation, because to express the same concept one can correctly use the adjective /eskātlandi/ in the sentence /man eskātlandi hastam/ meaning “I am Scottish” in which there is no /ahl-e/. So it seems some

learners overgeneralised using the adjective form in the sentence /man ahl-e eskātlandi has-tam/ while in such sentences, the name of the country (which is a noun) and not the nationality (which is an adjective) should be used after the word /ahl-e/.

Another frequent type of such characteristics is using a noun instead of an adjective. In phrases such as /kāqaz-e divār/, /dastmāl-e jib/, and /madrese-ye pesar/ instead of /kāqaz-e divāri/ meaning “wallpaper”, /dastmāl-e jibi/ meaning “pocket tissue”, and /madrese-ye pesarāne/ meaning “boys’ school”, the learners have used nouns /divār/ meaning “wall”, /jib/ meaning “pocket” and /pesar/ meaning “boy” instead of the adjectives /divāri/ meaning “related to wall”, /jibi/ meaning “related to pocket” and /pesarāne/ meaning “for boys” respectively. In all these examples, using nouns instead of adjectives is due to the learners’ first language, English.

Another syntactic characteristic of Persian interlanguage is related to using the right form of an adjective. In Persian, there are adjectives which have somehow the same meaning but of different forms and different usage. For example, the adjective /fojāʔ/ means “brave”, and /fojāʔāne/ means “in a brave way” (which can be used as an adjective after nouns or as an adverb to describe a verb.) However, /fojāʔ/ is used with a noun which is animate like in /sarbāz-e fōjāʔ/ meaning “brave soldier”, but /fojāʔāne/ as an adjective accompanies an inanimate noun like in /nabard-e fōjāʔāne/ meaning “a brave battle” or “a battle in a brave way”. In the interlanguage of the learners we find that they use the adjective form /fojāʔ/ with both animate and inanimate nouns without paying attention to the limitation of its usage. This can happen in other similar pairs of adjectives such as /ʔāfeq/ meaning “lover of” and /ʔāfeqāne/ meaning “romantic”, /dalir/ meaning “brave” and /dalirāne/ meaning “in a brave way”, /qamgin/ meaning “sad” and /qamgināne/ meaning “sad” or “in a sad way”, and so on. This is a result of both the native language of the learner and the process of language learning.

#### 26.3.4.13 Verb forms: tense, aspect, mood and voice

One of the main morpho-syntactic characteristics of Persian interlanguage relates to the formation of present or past forms of the verb. The learners initially learn the rule which states that one can drop the past-forming morpheme from the past form of the verb and then by adding /mi-/ before it and the personal endings to the end of the root, different verb forms in present tense can be conjugated. For example /xaridan/ means “to buy” and /xarid/ is the past stem of the verb, from which /id/ is the past phoneme and can be dropped to get the root, then making the present form /mixaram/ meaning “I buy” where /mi-/ is used for making simple present and /-am/ is the personal ending referring to “P” as the first person singular subject. The learner often overgeneralises the rule and applies it to the exceptional cases; for example, from the infinitive /poxtan/ meaning “to cook” they make the present form /mipoxam/ instead of /mipazam/ in order to express “I cook” in which it is not sufficient to remove the past maker morpheme /t/, but the root should go through the phonological changes of which the most important one is changing the consonant /x/ to /z/, and in this particular example the vowel /o/ also needs to change to /a/. In some cases, the reverse way has been noticed too, where the learner knows the present form and wants to make the past form by adding the past maker morpheme /id/, which is the most frequent among all past making morphemes of /d/, /id/, /ad/ and /t/. For example, the learner already knows the verb /minevisam/ meaning “I write” in which /nevis/ is the root. The learner overgeneralises the rule that by adding /-id/ to the root and mistakenly makes the past tense form /nevisidam/ in order to express “I wrote”, whereas s/he doesn’t know that the correct past form is /nevestam/. Taking both examples into account, this characteristic is the result of overgeneralisation of the same rule.

One of the major syntactic characteristics of Persian interlanguage is confusion of verb forms. This can commonly be seen when the learner uses **progressive aspect** instead of simple past form or vice-versa. For example, English speakers who are learning Persian at different stages of learning produce sentences like /moʃkel-e ʃomā rā dānestam/ instead of /moʃkel-e ʃomā rā midānestam/ meaning “*I knew your problem.*”, where the learners are using simple past form rather than progressive aspect. It means that they are not using the progressive marker /mi-/ before the verb /dānestam/ in the past tense. This is mainly due to the learners’ first language, English, where they use simple past form to express such a concept, while in Persian the verb “*to know*” has mostly the concept of progression and “*knowing something for a while*”. Interestingly, if the learner uses the same sentence in present tense, s/he will keep the /mi-/ as present tense in written Persian has the same form for both simple present tense and progressive aspect. So the learner says /moʃkel-e ʃomā rā midānam/ meaning “*I know your problem*”. This can be because of the nature of this particular verb as well, as it is unlikely to be used in progressive aspect in present tense. Please note that Persian has other means of forming the progressive aspect – e.g. through the use of /dāftan/ meaning “*to have*”, as in /dāram minevisam/ meaning “*I am writing*” and /dāftam mineveftam/ meaning “*I was writing*”.

Another particular syntactic feature of Persian interlanguage is related to the verb /dāftan/ meaning “*to have*”. In standard Persian, all verbs in present tense and in past progressive tense take /mi-/ except /dāftan/ and /budan/ meaning “*to be*”. For example in /xāharam be madre miravad/ meaning “*My sister goes to school.*”, /miravad/ is in present tense meaning “*she goes*” and has the /mi-/, but in /xāharam keyk dārad/ meaning “*My sister has cake.*”, /dārad/ is in present tense without /mi-/ and means “*she has*”. Also in /xāharam keyk mixord/ meaning “*My sister was eating cake.*”, /mixord/ is in past progressive tense meaning “*She was eating*”, but in /xāharam qazā dāft/ meaning “*My sister had food.*”, /dāft/ is in past tense meaning “*She had*” and does not take /mi-/. This rule also applies to other compound verbs with /dāftan/ as their verbal part, such as /dust dāftan/ meaning “*to like*”, /entezār dāftan/ meaning “*to expect*”, /kār dāftan/ meaning “*to be busy*”, /bastegi dāftan/ meaning “*to depend*” and so on. There are a couple or three exceptions of such compound verbs such as /negah dāftan/ meaning “*to keep*”, /bar dāftan/ meaning “*to lift or to take*” and /dar nazar dāftan/ meaning “*to consider*” where the verbal part /dāftan/ can take /mi-/ in present tense and past progressive tense like any other verbs. However, the interlanguage of Persian learners shows that they overgeneralise the rule and apply /mi-/ for /dāftan/ in both present and past progressive tenses and make sentences like /emruz kelās midāram/ instead of /emruz kelās dāram/ meaning “*Today, I have classes.*” and /u rā dust nemidāram/ instead of /u rā dust nadāram/ meaning “*I do not like it*”. The examples show that this characteristic is again the result of the process of language learning and overgeneralisation of a rule in the second language.

Another example is in some complex sentences where the learners do not use the correct form of the verb mostly using simple past or past perfect tenses instead of the present **subjunctive** mood when the clause starts with /qabl az in ke/ meaning “*before*”. Learners may say sentences like /qabl az in ke be landan raftam, do sāl dar pāris zendegi kardam/ or /qabl az in ke be landan rafte budam, do sāl dar pāris zendegi kardam/ instead of /qabl az in ke be landan beravam do sāl dar pāris zendegi kardam/ meaning “*Before I went to London, I had lived in Paris for two years*”. This is a direct result of the learners’ native language, because in Persian regardless of the tense of the matrix clause, the verb in the subordinate temporal clause /qabl az in ke/ must be in the subjunctive. So in our case /beravam/ meaning “*I go*” in subjunctive mood. To some extent, this may happen after the phrase /baʔd az in ke/ meaning “*after*” when we refer to the actions happened in the past. Since English speakers usually bring the past perfect form of the verb in clauses containing “*after*” in English, they do the same expressing such



sentences in Persian; however, Persian usually uses the simple form of the verb rather than the perfect aspect in such clauses. For example, the learners may write /baʔd az in ke az kelās rafte budid, modir āmad/ instead of /baʔd az in ke az kelās raftid, modir āmad/ meaning “*After you had left the class, the head master came.*” in which the learner used the perfect aspect /rafte budid/ instead of simple past /raftid/.

Another example is using simple present form instead of the present **subjunctive** form. In Persian, to indicate the purpose of doing something, the purpose clause comes after /tā/, /ke/ or /tā in ke/ meaning “*in order to*” and the form of the verb in the purpose clause should be in subjunctive form. However, the learner says /be kelās miravam tā fārsi yād migiram/ instead of /be kelās miravam tā fārsi yād begiram/. This characteristic is the result of the process of language learning. There are plenty more of such examples in complex sentences such as conditionals, nominals and other adverbial clauses where the learners use different form of the verbs instead of subjunctive forms.

One other important example is interlanguage characteristic in the case of **indirect or reported speech** in Persian. Unlike English, in Persian, when the main clause is in the past tense, the tense of the verb in the reported speech stays in the same form that it is originally used in the direct speech. The characteristic of the Persian interlanguage of English speakers shows that they apply the same rules that they use in English to say indirect speech in Persian; that is, they change the tense of the verb in the reported speech; for example, the learners say /pedaram goft ke (mi-)āmad/ instead of /pedaram goft ke miāyad/ meaning “*My father said that he would come or he was coming.*” in which the learner has used /āmad/ or /miāmad/ which are past forms instead of /miāyad/ which is present form of “*to come*”. As it can be seen, this is the direct result of the learners’ first language. Similarly this impact from English on the performance of learners can be noticed when they change the tense of the verb in the subordinate clause when the verb in the main clause is in the past form and conveys meaning of perceptions such as “*hearing*”, “*seeing*”, “*knowing*”, “*understanding*” and the like. For example, the sentence /midānestim in mard ki-st/ meaning “*We knew who this man was*” is correct and learners may say /midānestim in mard ke bud/.

The other noticeable feature of Persian interlanguage is related to **active/passive voice**. Normally the syntactic rule that applies to active voice form of the verb in order to change it into the passive voice in Persian is that the main verb should change to participle form and then be followed by the verb /ʃodan/ in the appropriate tense. So the active sentence /mohandesān in pol rā se sāl piʃ sāxtand/ meaning “*The engineers built this bridge three years ago.*” changes to /in pol se sāl piʃ sāxte ʃod/ in passive voice meaning “*This bridge was built three years ago.*” in which the participle form /sāxte/ is followed by the verb /ʃod/ in past tense. More or less, learners keep on using this correct form, and the problem may occur in the correct form of the tense or forgetting to drop the object marker /rā/, which is not needed in the passive voice. However, regarding the form of the verb in the passive voice, the interlanguage would be to a large extent the same as the one in language of Persian native speakers. In cases of compound verbs with /kardan/ meaning “*to do*” as their verbal part in Persian, the passive voice is made by replacing /kardan/ with the verb /ʃodan/; so there is no more any need to change the verb to the participle form. But the learners overgeneralise the rule which is used for making passive voice forms of other verbs and apply it to the compound verbs with /kardan/. For example the learners say /miz-hā tamiz karde ʃod/ instead of /miz-hā tamiz ʃod/ meaning “*The tables were cleaned*”. This characteristic is the result of the process of language learning and overgeneralisation of a rule in the second language.

Another syntactic characteristic of Persian interlanguage is related to using **gerunds**. In Persian, gerunds are in the form of infinitive. For example the Persian proverb /jenidan key

bovad mānand-e didan/ has two gerunds and means “*Hearing is never like seeing.*” in which /jenidan/ is “*hearing*” and /didan/ means “*seeing*”. In cases where we have one word in subject, object, and object of prepositions there is no problem unless there is a noun which is more appropriate than and preferred to the gerund form of the verb, such as the Persian noun /āšpazi/ which means “*cooking*” and is preferred to the infinitive /poxtan/ in cases we may want to use a gerund. In such cases the English learners overgeneralise the rule and still use /poxtan/ instead of /āšpazi/. This is the result of teaching/learning process. This characteristic gets more complicated when there is a case of a gerund in phrases with more than only infinitive forms of the verbs. Normally, if that infinitive is accompanied by a definite object, the object comes after the infinitive and the infinitive takes the *ezafe* marker, so it is an *ezafe* construction; for example, in the sentence /sāxtan-e in xāne zaman mibarad/ meaning “*Building this house takes time.*”, /sāxtan-e xāne/ is the gerund in form of *ezafe* construction. But when the object is not definite and a general concept is expressed, then the singular generic noun usually precedes the verb; this can be seen in /lebās fōstan zaman mibarad/ meaning “*Washing clothes or clothes washing takes time*”. In the interlanguage of learners, one can notice that the tendency is towards bringing the nouns (definite or indefinite) before the verb. This is again a result of learning process as the learners have learned that Persian is an SOV language and hence object comes before the verb. So they overgeneralise the rule for all kinds of gerunds. This same characteristic is also noticeable when the verb usually takes the prepositional phrase such as /be . . . komak kardan/ meaning “*to help somebody*”. Although the prepositional phrase comes before this verb when /komak kardan/ is used as the main verb of the sentence, when it is part of the gerund, then the prepositional phrase follows /komak kardan/. But the learners say /be digarān komak kardan fāyede nadaran/ instead of /komak kardan be digarān fāyede nadarad/ meaning “*Helping others is of no use*”. The case of gerunds in interlanguage becomes more interesting when it is going to be used as the complement of a preposition of the main verb. For example the verb /foru? kardan/ meaning “*to start*” usually takes a direct object in the sentence, for example in /tim-e irān bāzi rā foru? kard/ meaning “*The Iranian team started the match*”. But when this verb takes a gerund it is usually used as an indirect object and /foru? kardan/ needs preposition /be/. Native speakers of Persian know that this gerund along with the preposition /be/ follows the main verb /foru? kardan/, so for example one says /ān-hā foru? kardand be zadan-e pesar-hā/ meaning “*They started hitting the boys*”. But the learners again overgeneralise the sentence word order of Persian and bring this gerund as the direct object before the main verb and say /ān-hā zadan-e pesar-hā rā foru? kardand/.

#### 26.3.4.14 Verb number (plural/singular)

One more characteristic of Persian interlanguage is related to number in verb **conjugations**. Normally the verb in Persian agrees with the grammatical subject regarding the number. But there are instances where the learner has used a singular noun instead of plural. This mostly happens at earlier stages of language learning and particularly when the form of the subject is singular but it refers to a plural noun or entity such as the word /mardom/ meaning “*people*”. The learner may say /mardom be xiyābān āmad/ instead of /mardom be xiyābān āmadand/ meaning “*People came to the street.*” where /mardom/ refers to more than one person and therefore needs a plural form of the verb /āmadand/ meaning “*they came*”. This syntactic characteristic of the interlanguage is the result of the language learning process.

Another example is related to the time when the subject refers to second person. In Persian, if the subject refers to the second person singular, then the verb takes /-i/ as personal ending to agree with the subject in number, and when the subject refers to second person plural, then

the verb takes /-id/ as the personal ending. There are many cases that the learner keeps the personal ending in singular form /-i/ despite the fact that the subject is second person plural. For example, they say /šomā kojā rafti/ instead of /šomā kojā raftid/ to express “*Where did you go?*”. It seems that this syntactic characteristic of the interlanguage is the result of the learners’ first language, because there is no distinction between second person singular and second person plural in English and hence the verb stays the same to agree with the subject regarding the number.

#### 26.3.4.15 Verb negation

Another noticeable syntactic feature of Persian interlanguage is related to verb **negation**. In Persian, in order to make a verb negative normally the morpheme /ne-/ or /na-/ is added to the beginning of the verb as the negative maker (in literary texts /ma-/ may be used as a negative maker). If it is a compound verb, then it is added to the verbal part of the compound verb. In imperative and subjunctive forms, if they have the marker /be-/, then the negative maker replaces /be-/. The interlanguage of Persian learners show that they overgeneralise the rule and they use it with subjunctive and imperative forms without dropping /be-/. For example, they would say /nabexor/ instead of /naxor/ meaning “*Don’t eat!*” or say /momken ast naberavad/ instead of /momken ast naravad/ meaning “*It is possible he does not go*”. The other instance which exists in the interlanguage of learners of Persian is bringing the negative maker /na-/ before the nonverbal element of the compound verb particularly when the nonverbal element is a preposition. For example, at lower levels, the learners say /mādaram az safar nabargaft/ instead of /mādaram az safar bar nagaft/ meaning “*My mother didn’t return from trip.*” where /bar/ is the nonverbal part of the compound verb /bar gaftan/ meaning “*to return*”. In both examples, the syntactic characteristic of the interlanguage is the result of the process of language learning.

Not considering the **double negative** is the other grammatical characteristic of Persian interlanguage that is the result of the native language of English speakers who are learning Persian. For example, the learners may say /hargez be kavir rafte?am/ instead of /hargez be kavir narafte?am/ to mean “*I have never gone to the desert*”. Unlike English, the word /hargez/ meaning “*never*” does not make the sentence negative, and still the negative marker /ne-/ is needed to be prefixed to the verb to make the sentence negative. This is also the case with words such as /hitf tǰīz/ meaning “*nothing*”, /hitf jā/ meaning “*nowhere*”, /hitf kas/ meaning “*nobody*” and the like.

## 26.4 Conclusion

The Persian interlanguage of English speakers shows that its phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic characteristics, features and rules are a mixture of those of English language (the learners’ first or native language), those of the Persian language (target or second language) and the ones which belong to neither of them but are special to the Persian interlanguage which are the result of communication strategy, language learning process, and the books and other learning aids. The study of this interlanguage shows that these features and rules are not fixed but changing through the process of language learning. On one hand, the less complex features such as word order, verb negation and phonological rules belong to the Persian language in the earlier stages of language learning and will fade and become less frequent or common at later and more advanced stages of language learning. On the other hand the more advanced and sophisticated features such as the verbal parts of compound verbs,

relative clauses, subjunctive forms of the verbs, and semantic features last for a longer time and would be present until later and even at higher stages of language learning. Therefore these characteristics can be considered to be hierarchical. Persian interlanguage is a continuum, and studying it at any cross section will show different characteristics and linguistic rules; and the Persian interlanguage of each individual can be different from that of another person but have many rules and features in common.

Regardless of the nature and the source of these features, they are more or less the result of some behavioural procedures such as overgeneralisation, lack of awareness of the limitations of the linguistic rules, incorrect comparison, incorrect classification, overcorrection, lack of linguistic knowledge and resorting to the communication strategies.

The detailed study of Persian interlanguage at different stages can be very useful for the instructors of Persian language as it helps them to anticipate the linguistic behaviour of their learners, develop their own pedagogical strategy to address the potential mistakes of their students, see how their learners juggle between the two languages and eventually help them to avoid or correct such mistakes more quickly so that they can get closer to a native-like proficiency.

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# INTERLANGUAGE AND BEYOND

## Persian-English codeswitching

*Shahrzad Mahootian and Lewis Gebhardt*

### 27.1 Introduction

What happens when we learn a second language as adults? In what ways does our second language interface with our first? What types of influences and obstacles should we expect to be exerted from the first language onto the second? Chapters 2–8 in Part I in this volume discuss the quality and quantity of first language influence on second language.

The process of second language acquisition is best described as a sequence of steps on a continuum, stretching from monolingualism to bilingualism. In this chapter, we examine a series of outcomes when Persian is acquired as a second language. We consider some of the phonological and grammatical interlanguage phases of Persian second language acquisition including Persian-English codeswitching. We also show that codeswitching requires a high level of grammatical and functional proficiency typical of native speakers. Moreover, we demonstrate how codeswitching is guided by universal principles of grammar and differs from interlanguage systems, structurally and functionally.

In the remainder of Section 27.1, we provide a brief review of grammatical and phonological features of Persian and examine common interlanguage structures resulting from the interface between these features and those of the same value in English. For further discussion on Persian-English interlanguage, read Chapter 26 in this volume. In Section 27.2, we provide a brief overview of codeswitching models and shows Persian-English codeswitches to be a natural, grammatical outcome of universal syntactic principles, specifically the head-complement principle and the Merge operation, as we detail how current syntactic theory accounts for the structure of mixed-language words and phrases. In Section 27.3, we examine some of the social motivations for codeswitching. We conclude with a brief summary in Section 27.4.

#### 27.1.1 *Some features of Persian*

##### 27.1.1.1 *Word order*

As others in this volume have discussed, the canonical word order of Persian is subject-object-verb (SOV), or more precisely SXV, where X may be a direct object as in example (1), a prepositional phrase as in (2), or adverbial phrase as in (3). We will use SOV when the phrase

preceding the verb is a direct object. Otherwise we will use SXV. In each example, the verb is in final position after the object, or prepositional or adverbial phrase:

- (1) man yek kolāh kharidam  
I a hat bought  
'I bought a hat.'
- (2) bache-hā bā minā raftand  
Child-pl with Mina went  
'The children went with Mina'
- (3) Behruz sā'at-e panj miyād.  
Behruz o'clock five comes  
'Behruz will come at five o'clock.'

However, Persian is not a strict SXV language and shows word order flexibility in a number of contexts. Most notable is when adverbial phrases of goal are involved. Goal adverbial phrases are those that use adverbs such as 'up', 'out' or 'in' (as in 'she went up/out/in'), or the preposition 'to' with a motion verb such as 'walk', 'run', 'move' and so on (as in 'they walked to the store'). In example (3a), *birun* 'out' precedes the verb *miram* 'am going' in typical canonical order. In (3b), the Persian adverb *birun* 'out' follows the verb *miram* 'am going', as it does in English, instead of preceding the verb. Both orders are acceptable.

- (3a) man birun miram.            (3b) man miram birun.  
I out am going                    I am going out  
'I'm going out.'

However, in cases where a prepositional goal phrase is used, in Persian the preposition *be* 'to' is optional when a specific location is mentioned as in example (4).

- (4) man miram (be) dāneshgāh  
I am going (to) university  
'I'm going to the university.'

A final important characteristic of Persian canonical order is that Persian is a pro-drop language. This means that subjects can, and mostly are, 'dropped'. For example, instead of the utterance in (4), native Persian speakers would commonly use the utterance in (5a) rather than the one in (5b):

- (5a) miram dāneshgāh                    (5b) man miram dāneshgāh  
am going university                    I am going university  
'I'm going to the university.'

Using the pronoun *man* 'I' adds a layer of meaning to the utterance, emphasizing *who* it is that is going to go to the university. Undoubtedly, these variations can create problems for a beginner learner of Persian. It is, therefore, good practice for the learner to start with the SXV order, and to eventually make their way up through the variations. Chapter 4 in this volume has an extensive

discussion on word order in Persian heritage learners and second language learners of Persian. In addition, Chapter 26 specifically discusses word order in English-Persian interlanguage.

The difference in word order can also be observed with the placement of adjectives and nouns. Persian adjectives occur after the nouns they modify, as shown in example (6), as opposed to the English adjective-noun order. Additionally, Persian adjective constructions also require a ‘binding’ particle between the noun and adjective called the *ezāfe*, transliterated as *-e* or *-ye* in the examples following, and glossed as EZ.

- (6) chaman-e sabz  
 noun- EZ adjective  
 lawn- EZ green  
 ‘green lawn’

The term literally means ‘addition’, though with possessive pronouns, the *ezāfe* creates an *of*-phrase as in example (7):

- (7) xuneh-ye man  
 house-EZ me  
 ‘my house’ (literally: house of me)

With its multiple functions, presented in the following, the *ezāfe* particle poses grammatical and phonological challenges for the PSL learner.

*Genitive ezāfe* links the possessor noun to the possessed noun, as in examples (8a, b):

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| (8a) khune-ye pariā | (8b) durbin-e man |
| house-EZ Paria      | camera-EZ me      |
| ‘Paria’s house’     | ‘My camera’       |

*Attributive ezāfe* links a noun, adjective, or prepositional phrase or infinitive to the noun being modified. Example (9a) shows the *ezāfe* between a noun modified by an attributive noun, while (9b) shows an *ezāfe* placed between a noun and an adjective, and (9c) shows two *ezāfe*, one between a noun and a modifying prepositional phrase, and another between the preposition *zir* ‘under’ and its complement, *miz* ‘table’:

- |                                |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| (9a) ketāb-e shimi             | (9b) ketāb -e qadimi |
| book-EZ chemistry              | book-EZ old          |
| ‘chemistry book’               | ‘old book’           |
| (9c) ketāb -e zir-e miz        |                      |
| book-EZ under-EZ table         |                      |
| ‘(The) book under (the) table’ |                      |

*Appositive ezāfe* serves to bind two elements such as geographic locations and their names as in (10a,b):

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| (10a) kuh-e damāvand | (10b) khalij-e fārs |
| mountain-EZ Damavand | gulf-EZ Persian     |
| Damavand mountain    | Persian Gulf        |



The *ezāfe* is also required between the given name and the family name, denoting someone of the X family:

- (11) parvin-e masudi  
 Parvin-EZ Masudi  
 ‘Parvin Masudi’ (literally: Parvin of the Masudi family)

*Quantification ezāfe* places an *ezāfe* between a quantifier such as *hame* ‘all’, ‘every’, *tamām* ‘all’ and a noun:

- (12a) Hame-ye bache-hā      (12b) tamām-e ruz  
 all-EZ child-pl              all-EZ day  
 ‘all of the children’              ‘all day’

For a more detailed discussion of the role of *ezafe* in Persian please see Mahootian (1997), Karimi (1989), Samiian (1983), Windfuhr (1979, 1990), Lazard (1957), among others. In addition, Chapter 26 in this volume has a section on *ezafe* marker in Persian.

Also, like many other Indo-European languages, Persian is a subject-verb agreement language, with a very regular pattern of past and present tense verbal suffixes that agree with the subject in person and number. Tables 27.1 and 27.2 show the agreement verbal suffixes for past and present.

In addition to the agreement suffixes, Persian verbs have three distinctive forms, an infinitival form, a past tense root and a present tense root. This aspect of Persian morphology may very well be the most difficult for the learner because, although there is a clear relationship between the infinitive and the past tense root, there is often very little morphological or phonological relationship between the infinitive and the present tense root. The upshot of these differences is that the learner has no choice but to memorize at least two forms for many verbs. In principle, this is no different from learning irregular verbs in English. In Table 27.3, we present the three forms of a few common Persian verbs. Note the differences between the past and present roots, as for example cases such as the last example *didan* ‘to see’, where there is no obvious phonological relationship between the present root and the infinitive and past root.

Table 27.1 Past tense verbal suffixes

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
1st	-am	-im
2nd	-i	-id
3rd	-	-and

Table 27.2 Present tense verbal suffixes

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
1st	-am	-im
2nd	-i	-id
3rd	-ad	-and

Table 27.3 Infinitive, past and present roots of some common Persian verbs

English infinitive	Persian infinitive	Past root	Present root
To eat	khordan	khord	khor
To live	zendegi kardan	zendegi kard	zendegi kon
To say	goftan	goft	gu/g
To sleep	khābīdan	khābid	khāb
To go	raftan	raft	-rav-/r-
To give	dādan	dād	dah/d
To sit	neshestan	neshest	shin
To see	didan	did	bin

A further source of learner interlanguage is the object marker *rā* (*ro*, *o*) which, among other functions, serves to indicate a definite direct object (DO) such as the examples in (13) and (14a,b). The direct objects are underlined:

- (13) man un film rā dust nadāshtam  
 I that movie DO didn't like  
 'I didn't like that film'

*rā* needs to also follow specific, definite objects, shown in examples (14a, b).

- (14a) Maryam bastani-ye man rā xord  
 Maryam ice.cream-EZ I DO ate  
 'Maryam ate my ice cream'

- (14b) ketāb-e fārsi-ye to rā peydā mikon-am  
 book-EZ Farsi-EZ you DO find will do-1st pers.  
 'I will find your Farsi book'

Because *rā* has multiple grammatical functions that are covered by a number of different elements in English (such as possessive pronouns and determiners such as *the*, *that*, *this*, its correct use can be problematic, even at advanced stages of PSL acquisition. For further discussion on *rā*, read Chapter 4 in this volume.

### 27.1.1.2 Phonological features

Though at first blush Persian phonology may appear vastly different than that of English, in fact it is not. However, there are three differences that can be problematic for some learners. Persian has three consonants that don't exist in English the velar fricative 'kh' (written خ), and the uvulars 'gh' and 'q', (غ) and (ق) respectively; two that are pronounced differently and in different environments, the flapped 'r' and the clear 'l'; and two that are used in different sound combinations than in English 'h' and the glottal stop (ع). As for vowels, though phonemically Persian and English vowels overlap, phonetically, all Persian vowels are pronounced as clear vowels; in other words, they are not diphthongized. Persian has two diphthongs: the round low back [ow] and front ey [ei]. Additionally, there is no high front lax vowel (IPA [I]) like the sound in the English word *pin*). The individual sounds aside, it is the sequence of sounds in Persian that are more problematic for learners. For example, sequences such as [ah], [ahr] and [ahv] are not found in English, which only allows syllable-initial /h/, but are found in common words in Persian, for instance in the name [ahmad], or the words [shahr] 'city' and [qahveh]

‘coffee’. A further feature of Persian phonology is gemination or consonant lengthening where a consonant is articulated (held) for a longer period of time than if the consonant was not geminated. For example, the [s] in [pessseh] ‘pistachio is held and articulated for a longer time than the [s] in [pesar] ‘boy’. For a more detailed discussion on Persian phonology in second language acquisition domain, read Chapter 3 in this volume.

### 27.1.2 *At the intersection of Persian and English: interlanguages*

Given these differences, we can expect that on their way to mastery, Persian second language learners (PSLL) pass through phases where the patterns they produce are different than those of the target language (Persian), on the one hand, and also differ from the learner’s L1, on the other. Interlanguage phases will differ based on the learner’s L1. For the purpose of this chapter, we look at some typical examples of English-Persian interlanguage patterns in the beginner and high beginner stages of learning Persian as a second language. The data presented in examples (15)–(17) are from a total of 45 homework assignments and 12 in-class presentations by seven graduate and undergraduate native-English-speaking beginner and high beginner learners of Persian as a second language. For a similar study on interlanguage characteristics of English-Persian, read Chapter 26 in this volume.

#### 27.1.2.1 *Morphosyntactic interlanguage systems*

As mentioned, major differences between Persian and English can be found in canonical word order of the two languages (Persian SOV v. English SVO), the order and construction of adjective phrases (noun-*ezāfe*-adjective in Persian v. adjective-noun in English), and the robust subject-verb agreement suffixation in Persian as compared to the minimal subject-verb agreement requirements in English.

*Word Order:* Beginners and high PSL beginners consistently show a pattern of SVO when producing sentences in the simple past and present. Compare the learner’s sentences in (15a, c) with the target sentence in (15b, d). Though the learner has produced correct target subject-verb agreement, they have not yet internalized the SOV order:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (15a) man kharidam nān.<br>I bought bread<br>‘I bought bread.’             | (15b) man nān kharidam.<br>I bread bought<br>‘I bought bread.’             |
| (15c) man kharidam shokolāt.<br>I bought chocolate<br>‘I bought chocolate’ | (15d) man shokolāt kharidam.<br>I chocolate bought<br>‘I bought chocolate’ |

Additionally, as these examples illustrate, the subject pronoun *man* ‘I’ is used where a native speaker would have dropped the pronoun.

*Agreement:* A further interlanguage development is illustrated in the sentences in (16). In these examples, we see a pattern of generalization in subject-verb agreement that matches neither English nor Persian. Here the learner has opted for the 3rd person singular present tense verb form of ‘to be’ ([-e] to mean ‘is’):

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| (16a) man khub-e<br>I good-is<br>‘I’m good’ | (16b) to khub-e<br>you good-is<br>‘You are good’ | (16c) mā khub-e<br>we good-is<br>‘We are good’ |
|---|--|--|

*Acquisition of ezāfe and rā:* With both the *ezāfe* and the *rā* we find two patterns, one of overgeneralization where both these particles are used generously throughout the learners' discourse regardless of whether the *ezāfe* or *rā* is needed. The other is undergeneralization where we also find beginner learners opting to use the *ezāfe* in only one of its required contexts, and the *rā* not at all. The sentence below is from a high beginner student. Notice the non-target use of the third *ezāfe* after *bozorg*:

- (17) dar tehrān tu-ye khāne-ye bozorg-e zendegi mikon-and.  
 in Tehran in-EZ house-EZ big-EZ life do-3rdPl  
 'They live in a big house in Tehran'

Phonological interlanguage systems are simply the speaker's attempt to hear and produce target sounds that don't occur in their L1. Often, although comprehension of these sounds is attained rather quickly, their production lags behind or is never quite achieved. Instead, the speaker lands on and maintains an approximation of the sounds. For example, the *kh* and *gh* sounds in Persian are often not fully acquired by English speaking PSLs. In their place *kh* is routinely produced as [k] or as [h], and *gh* as [g], an apt example of Nemser's (1971) *approximative system*.

Taken together, these examples support what Corder (1967) called a 'transitional competence' which Selinker (1972) and others built upon and expanded into what we now know as interlanguage. In the next section, we analyze codeswitching to show how it differs from interlanguage systems in both structural and functional properties, and the universal principles that can account for switches between any pair of languages, including Persian and English.

## 27.2 The structure of codeswitching

Codeswitching is a familiar term for many of us, referring to the natural use of languages that all bilinguals practice in some contexts. It is simply the alternation of two or more languages in the same utterance or discourse. Codeswitching can occur at the smallest structural level – that of the bound morpheme (in Persian and English these would be inflectional and derivational morphemes such as the plural Persian suffix *-hā*, Persian possessive person suffixes such as *-et*, *-esh*, or English '-s', English progressive *-ing*, and so on). Or it can involve larger language elements such as whole words, phrases and sentences. Examples (18)–(21) show different types of Persian-English codeswitches.<sup>1</sup> The first is between a free morpheme of Persian *shukhi* 'joke' and the bound English morpheme *-ing*. Example (19) shows a switch between the English determiner *my* and a Persian noun *eynak* 'glasses', while in (20) the entire prepositional phrase 'on the table' is in Persian (*ru-ye miz*). These types of switches are known as *intrasentential* switches (within a sentence). In (21) we have an *intersentential* switches (between sentences) from English to Persian and back to English. Both types are commonly used in by many bilinguals.

- (18) I'm *shukhi*-ing with you!  
 joke  
 'I'm joking with you!'  
 (19) Where's my *eynak*?  
 glasses  
 'Where's my glasses?'  
 (20) I saw them *ru-ye miz*.  
 on table  
 'I saw them on the table.'



syntax, read Chapters 4 and 5 in this volume. The phonological component of the grammar accounts for the sounds and how they're combined, as in the pronunciation of plural *-s* ([s] in *cats* but [z] in *dogs*). For more information on the acquisition of segmental and suprasegmental features in Persian and Persian phonology, read Chapters 2 and 3 in this volume. Finally, the semantics allows speakers and hearers to attach meaning to words and sentences. Chapters 7 and 8 in this volume discuss Persian semantics and the acquisition of Persian semantics by second language learners of Persian. Likewise, Persian speakers converse in Persian, and the sentences spoken and understood are accounted for by the grammar of Persian (some aspects of which were briefly sketched out in Section 27.1). For more information on the particular grammatical characteristics of English-Persian interlanguage, read Chapter 26 in this volume.

What happens, then, when a Persian-English bilingual speaker mixes the two languages together in conversation, in writing, blogs, texts and so on? Which grammatical structure is used English, Persian, or both? Are these mixtures an interlanguage phase or something else? In the following sections we address these and related questions.

### 27.2.1.2 *Is codeswitching grammatical? Codeswitching models – a brief history*

At one end of the language-acquisition continuum, bilingualism can result when a child grows up in a bilingual environment, developing both languages from infancy and becoming a native speaker of the two languages, fluent in both. At the other end of the continuum, a person acquires only one of the languages as a child and learns the second language at some period later in life, from later childhood to adulthood, sometimes largely in an classroom environment. When one of the languages is learned later in life, especially during adulthood, on their way to linguistic competence in the new language the speaker may pass through various stages of acquisition in what is now called interlanguage (Weinreich 1953, Corder 1967; Nemser 1971; Selinker 1972 and subsequent work). As explained earlier in Section 27.1, the speaker's interlanguages may consist of grammatical features adopted from their first language into the target language, or of newly created forms that are neither part of the speaker's first nor second language grammars. Each of these possibilities is an interlanguage phase, a linguistic system the learner uses on their way to mastering the target language. In contrast, in the case of a bilingual who is competent in both languages, codeswitching is not based on lack of mastery in one language but rather exploits competence in both languages. On this interpretation, there is a continuum of mixed-language use from interlanguage to the ability to codeswitch.

Early descriptive accounts (e.g. Timm 1975 and Pfaff 1979) noted patterns of when switching is possible and when it isn't. Many of these early accounts focused on the latter, when switching is not possible. Based on patterns where codeswitching was apparently ungrammatical, various constraints were proposed to characterize the syntactic conditions that blocked it. For example, Timm (1975, 477) noted that expressions like the Spanish-English codeswitch in (22) were ungrammatical: that is, English-Spanish bilinguals judged them to be impossible.<sup>2</sup>

(22) \*yo went  
I \_\_\_\_\_

Accordingly, she suggested a constraint on switching between a subject pronoun (*yo*), in one language and a verb in the other language (*went*). The reasoning seemed to follow that there must be a third grammar specific to codeswitching where such constraints reside. This meant that Spanish-English bilinguals, for instance, must have command of three grammars:

monolingual Spanish, monolingual English, and a Spanish-English codeswitching grammar.<sup>3</sup> For further discussion of the theoretical shortcomings of codeswitching third grammars see Appendix 1.

Many other very specific constraints were proposed over the years, with attempts to attribute the specific constraints to more general principles. There were various empirical problems with the proposed constraints, which often appeared to be based on what was not found in the researchers' data and what was specific to certain language pairs. For a summary of the proposed constraints see Mahootian (2006).

Following in the footsteps of previous researchers, armed with data from Persian-English codeswitches such as those in (19)–(21), two languages that did not share word order or other important morphosyntactic features, Mahootian (1993) set out to show that codeswitching does not require a third grammar, and that switches are governed by universal operations and rules of syntax. In Section 27.2.1.3, we provide a more detailed presentation of her Head-Complement model and provide an update of the model that is consistent with current syntactic theory. We reiterate the position that codeswitching is simply access to the lexicon of the two languages and the two languages' rules for combining morphemes and phrases, via the syntactic operation of Merge – the same operation that combines morphemes in each of the separate languages. Through codeswitching examples, we demonstrate that the head-complement relationship and Merge, as part of a general theory of grammar, account for codeswitching as much as it accounts for any monolingual grammar. In particular, we derive some Persian-English codeswitches in some detail, and through a comparison with examples from codeswitching with some other language pairs we show the same principle-based account of codeswitching applies to other language pairs. Moreover, the structured predictable nature of codeswitches, a consequence of universal principles which apply regardless of the language pairs involved, supports the claim that interlanguage and codeswitching are different (though to a degree) related phenomena.

### 27.2.1.3 An alternative to codeswitching specific rules

Mahootian (1993 and subsequent work) approached codeswitching from a different angle, with the assumption that codeswitching was a natural language phenomenon; she sought answers in universal principles of grammar. She proposed that codeswitching doesn't require additional grammars and instead suggested that codeswitched utterances can be accounted for by the universal principle that holds between the heads of phrases and their complements in all languages. She proposed the *Head-Complement Principle* which simply states that the language of the head of a phrase determines the order of its complement in codeswitching and monolingual contexts alike; complements can be in either language. Phrasal heads include verbs, determiners, prepositions and inflections such as negation, plural, possessive and so on. A Persian-English codeswitching example is given in (23a), from Mahootian (1996, 2006), with corresponding monolingual examples in (23b, c).

- (23a) ten dollars    *dād*  
                                gave  
                                'she gave ten dollars'
- (23b) She gave ten dollars
- (23c) dah toman *dād*  
                                ten toman gave  
                                'she gave ten tomans'

In (23b) the head of the verb phrase *gave ten dollars* is the verb *gave*. As an English verb, it requires its direct object complement to follow. In contrast, in (23c) the Persian verb *dād* requires its direct object complement *dah toman* to precede it. The codeswitched sentence in (23a) is the outcome of the speaker's choice to mix to two languages. The verb *dād* in (23a) is the head of the verb phrase *ten dollars dād*. Therefore, according to the Head-Complement Principle, *dād* determines what happens in the rest of the verb phrase. Since Persian verbs call for their direct objects to precede them, the English-language direct object *ten dollars* comes before *dād* rather than after the verb as it would in English. Keeping in mind the Head-Complement Principle as the universal principle guiding codeswitching, we discuss example (23a) in the context of a Merge operation.

#### 27.2.1.4 A merge model of codeswitching

Mahootian's proposal (1993, 1996, and elsewhere) made use of Joshi's (1985, 1987) tree adjoining grammar model to explain the technical details of codeswitched utterances. Here we maintain Mahootian's basic idea of the Head-Complement Principle and adopt current notions of Merge as assumed under Minimalism. As mentioned earlier, Merge, a core operation of the grammar, is simply the operation of combining morphemes or phrases with other morphemes or phrases, as long as the items being combined are syntactically compatible. The Head-Complement Principle can be more broadly understood as a specific case of the operation Merge. Words from the lexicon are merged into phrases, and phrases merge with other items in the lexicon, building up a structure until the sentence is formed.

Codeswitching uses the same rules. If an English head is used, the phrase will include the complement in the linear position required by English order. Likewise, if a Persian head is used, then the items in the phrase will follow Persian order. No separate codeswitching grammar is required. The only difference between monolingual and codeswitching grammars is the lexicon. The grammar of English includes the lexicon of English morphemes ( $L_{\text{English}}$ ) and the operation Merge. The grammar of Persian involves the Persian lexicon ( $L_{\text{Persian}}$ ) and the operation Merge. Persian-English codeswitching uses the same operation of Merge but exploits two lexicons,  $L_{\text{English}} + L_{\text{Persian}}$ . Again, there are no special rules or constraints unique to codeswitching and it is only the expanded lexicon that distinguishes codeswitching from the two monolingual grammars.

As mentioned earlier, Merge, a universally available operation, common to all language and thus assumed to be part of the human capacity for Language, combines syntactic objects. A syntactic object is either a morpheme taken from the lexicon or a phrase already constructed in the morphosyntax. Combining objects creates new syntactic objects. A head usually merges with a complement to form a phrase.

Here we outline how Merge results in the three sentences in (23), repeated here. Example (24) is English, (25) is Persian, and (26) is a codeswitching example. We provide a very simple account. An account with more details on the heads and the kind of complements they require is provided in Appendix 2.

- (24) She gave ten dollars
- (25) dah toman dād  
ten toman gave  
'She gave ten tomans'
- (26) ten dollars *dād*  
gave  
'She gave ten dollars'



In the English sentence in (24), the plural *-s* is an inflectional head that merges with its noun complement, *dollar*. The numeral *ten* also heads a phrase that includes as its complement the recently formed *dollars*. The verb *gave* heads a verb phrase and takes as its complement *ten dollars*. Finally, the pronoun *she* merges with the verb phrase. (This is not a head-complement Merge but we omit the details. Suffice it to say that English sentences require a subject.) The process is laid out in the steps in the following.

- (27) Merge *dollar* and *-s*  $\Rightarrow$  [dollars]  
 Merge *ten* and [dollars]  $\Rightarrow$  [ten dollars]  
 Merge *gave* and [ten dollars]  $\Rightarrow$  [gave ten dollars]  
 Merge *she* and [gave ten dollars]  $\Rightarrow$  [she gave ten dollars]

For the Persian sentence, *dah* ‘ten’ takes *toman* for a complement, resulting in the phrase *dah toman*. In turn, the verb *dād* ‘gave’ is a head that takes *dah toman* for a complement, yielding the sentence *dah toman dād*, with the complement on the left of the verb as required by Persian. Recall that Persian is a pro-drop language and doesn’t require a pronounced subject.

- (28) Merge *dah* and *toman*  $\Rightarrow$  [dah toman]  
 Merge *dād* and [dah toman]  $\Rightarrow$  [dah toman dād]

However, Merge doesn’t simply allow just any two items to combine. The operation is limited by a checking procedure that makes sure the combining objects match grammatically. For example, the article *the* cannot merge with *went* to yield *\*the went* because *the* wants to merge with a noun, not with a verb. For a detailed explanation and illustration of the operation Merge see Appendix 2.

### 27.2.1.5 Merge and Persian-English codeswitching

Since Merge does not specify the language of the morphosyntactic objects to be combined, Persian-English codeswitching can be easily accounted for through the same steps as we saw for the monolingual Persian and English examples previously. As an illustration, in (29) following, we show the derivation of the sentence in (26) where the verb is in Persian and the object is in English. The English phrase *ten dollars* is derived the same way as in the English sentence. The difference in (26) is that the Persian verb merges with the English phrase. Since the verb *dād*, the head, is Persian, its English-language complement phrase *ten dollars* must be on the left, not on the right as in English, resulting in the codeswitched phrase *ten dollars dād*.

- (29) Merge *dollar* and *-s*  $\Rightarrow$  [dollars]  
 Merge *ten* and [dollars]  $\Rightarrow$  [ten dollars]  
 Merge *dād* and [ten dollars]  $\Rightarrow$  [ten dollars dād]

Go to Appendix 2 to see how Merge can also produce a codeswitch, like the one in (30), between a free morpheme of English (*lawyer*) and the Persian bound possessive morpheme – *et* ‘your’:

- (30) I saw lawyer-*et-o* yesterday  
 – 2.Poss-Acc.Def  
 ‘I saw your lawyer yesterday’

The focus so far has been codeswitching between Persian and English. However, as mentioned, the main syntactic mechanism for codeswitching operates in the same way between any two language pairs. To illustrate the crosslinguistic validity of the proposed model, we provide some examples from other language pairs where the codeswitches can also be accounted for by applying the Head-Complement Principle and Merge. The following Japanese-English example is from Nishimura (1985) (glossing details altered slightly).

- (31) *sorekara* his wife *ni* *yattara*  
 also to give.Conditional  
 ‘Also, if (we) give (it) to his wife . . .’

The switch is within the adpositional phrase, a phrase which can precede the noun (preposition) as in English, or follow (postposition) as in Japanese. The head of the phrase is the Japanese postposition *ni* ‘to’, which requires a complement, in this case a determiner phrase object. Being a postposition, *ni* wants its complement to be on its left. The determiner phrase is the English expression *his wife*, preceding the postposition as expected. Note that the English expression itself follows English order, with the possessive head preceding its noun complement.

Another Japanese-English example adapted from Nishimura (1985) shows a switch between a free morpheme of English and a bound Japanese morpheme:

- (32) *she-wa* took her a month to come home-*yo*  
 -Topic -Exclamation  
 ‘As for her, it took her a month to come home, you know’

The switches in (32) involve two of the many discourse particles in Japanese, *-wa*, which marks topics, and *-yo*, an exclamation of sorts that emphasizes or insists on the truth of the preceding sentence. Whether the particles are bound to or morphologically independent of the word before them, *-wa* and *-yo* are heads of a topic phrase and tense phrase respectively, with their complement phrases to the left.

The Irish-English example in (33) (Laoire 2016) shows a switch involving the Irish determiner *an* ‘the’ and its noun complement, English *jackpot*, in an otherwise Irish sentence (glossing details are slightly altered).

- (33) *beidh an* jackpot *anocht a’ainn*  
 will.be the tonight do  
 ‘We’ll get the jackpot tonight’

The Irish article is like its English counterpart, not only in being a definite article but also in requiring a noun complement (in this case, ‘jackpot’) to its right.

Example (34a) presents a French-Moroccan Arabic codeswitch (Bentahila and Davies 1983), where the French determiner phrase *le drap* merges with the Arabic preposition *min fug* to create the mixed prepositional phrase ‘*min fug le drap*’. In (34b) a Wolof-English switch (Haust 1995, in Myers-Scotton and Jake 2009) is presented where the Wolof 2nd person possessive prefix *sa* has merged with the English noun phrase *little salary*. The resulting possessive phrase in turn has merged with the Wolof 3rd person copula *la* ‘is’ to produce ‘It’s only your little salary’. Example (34c) shows a switch between Palestinian Arabic and English free

morpheme *nudris* ‘study’ and the English bound progressive marker – *ing* (Myers-Scotton, Jake, and Okasha 1996).

- (34a) elle te pique *min fug* le drap  
 ‘it bites you through the sheet’
- (34b) Sa little salary rek la [. . .]  
 2s.poss little salary only 3s.cop [. . .]  
 ‘It is only your little salary, [. . .]’
- (34c) ?ihna we are supposed to be nudris-ing  
 1pl.top . . . . . study-prog  
 ‘We, we are supposed to be studying.’

Concluding this section, we have argued that (1) codeswitching does not require a third grammar in addition to the two monolingual grammars a bilingual has, and (2) codeswitching utterances derive from the Head-Complement Principle which applies to all languages, and the universally available operation of Merge: elements from the bilingual’s two grammars merge where the features between the elements match. Consequently, there is no need for additional codeswitching-specific constraints or rules. Although our focus for this chapter is Persian-English codeswitching, the Head-Complement Principle is assumed to be universal and applies to codeswitching between any pair of languages, as demonstrated by additional examples from language pairs other than Persian-English. These examples serve to not only highlight the capacity of Mahootian’s original Head-Complement model and its predictions for codeswitching, but also its successful recast within current syntactic theory. Moreover, the examples throughout serve to highlight the many possible codeswitches that could not be accounted for by previous models.

### 27.3 Functions of codeswitching and language choice

We have thus far discussed the structure of codeswitches as part of a larger, universal set of grammatical principles that govern all languages. We have also pointed to the differences between interlanguage systems and codeswitching, and although in the case of adult PSL learners, the two may overlap, codeswitching (unlike interlanguage) is not the result of speakers’ second language grammar on the way to fluency. Rather, the ability to codeswitch is the result of speakers’ native-like acquisition and knowledge of the grammatical system of their second language. This native-like knowledge is further supported by what is called *intentional codeswitching* (Mahootian 2005), a deliberate choice to codeswitch or choose one language over the other to deliver an extra-linguistic message. This is not to say that all codeswitching is deliberate and meant to convey an extra level of information. In fact, codeswitching may be intentional or unintentional. The latter, unintentional switching, is typically brought on by psycholinguistic factors. For example, imagine the PSL bilingual speaker who uses the term ‘business model’ on a regular basis in a monolingual English work environment, talking to another Persian-English bilingual about her job. Although the speaker knows the phrase in Persian, she often uses it in English, resulting in quicker access to the English version. This quicker access to one word rather than another can be explained by what’s known as the most common word phenomenon, whereby the words that are most commonly used are also the most readily accessible during language processing and production. Much of codeswitching in casual conversation between bilinguals is of the unintentional variety, and happens easily and fluidly.

Intentional switching, on the other hand, is the deliberate language choices bilinguals make. These choices, whether to go with L1, L2, or a mix of the two, is wholly influenced by speakers' perceptions of the expectations and norms of the discourse context and the interlocutors and the role each language plays in the relational dynamic with the interlocutors. A seminal article on the functions of codeswitching comes from Gumperz (1982) who identified six conversational functions of intentional codeswitching (pp. 75–78):

- (a) *Quotation*: when quoting someone, speakers will often switch into the language the person originally used, as in the following Persian-English in (35) (Mahootian et al. 2017, 156) and French-English example in (36):

(35) unvaqt John be man mige, "I don't think I can make it."  
then John to me says \_\_\_\_\_

'Then John says to me, "I don't think I can make it."'

(36) 'c'était bruyant mais je pense qu'elle a dit "can I have your number?"

It was noisy but I think that she has said \_\_\_\_\_

'It was noisy but I think she said "can I have your number?''

- (b) *Addressee specification*: switching between languages to address a message to a specific person in a conversation, as in the Persian-English example adapted from Mahootian et al. (2017, 156), where three friends are talking: the bilingual Iranian Persian-English speaker, the Iranian Persian-English Hearer 1(H1), and the American monolingual English speaker Hearer 2(H2):

(37) 'Well I don't know how to describe it but it just doesn't feel like home to me (directed to H1 and H2). to miduni manzuram chie, doroste? ('you know what I mean, right?' directed to H1).

- (c) *Interjection/sentence fillers*: speakers may codeswitch interjections or sentence fillers such as 'you know', 'know what I mean?' Spanish *eh* and *ay* (to intensify or draw attention) and *mira* and *fijate* ('look' and 'notice', respectively, to draw attention to a point being made), Japanese *neh*, Persian *doroste?* ('right?'), Hebrew *oy/oy vay* (as a disheartened response).

(38) Ay! You have to read the directions BEFORE assembling it.

- (d) *Reiteration*: switching languages to emphasize or clarify a message as in the Persian-English example in (39) the Hindi-English example from Gumperz (1982, 78) in (40):

(39) *chetori?* How're you doing?  
How are you? \_\_\_\_\_?  
'How are you? How're you doing?'

(40) Father in India calling to his son who was learning to swim in a swimming pool, first in Hindi and then repeated in English:

*Baju-me jao beta, andar mat.* Keep to the side.

Go to the side son, not inside. \_\_\_\_\_

'Go to the side son, not inside. Keep to the inside.'

- (e) *Message qualification*: switching to add more information as in the following Slovenian-German and English-Spanish examples (from Gumperz 1982, 60, 79, respectively). In (41) the speaker uses Slovenian to ask ‘Will you take coffee?’, then in German adds ‘Or tea?’ as a way of qualifying the initial offer to include tea as an option.

- (41) Uzeymas ti kafe? Oder te?  
‘Will you take coffee? Or tea?’
- (42) The oldest one, la grande la de once años  
\_\_\_\_\_, the big one who is eleven years old.  
‘The oldest one, the big one who is eleven years old.’

As the field continues to investigate the nature and functions of language choice, other codeswitching functions have been proposed:

- (f) To keep conversations private in public spaces or exclude others from a conversation.
- (g) To avoid translating idioms and cultural concepts. In the Persian-English example in (43) the speaker uses *korsi*, a furniture/heat producing item which was popular up to two to three generations ago, and for which there is no easy translation (go to <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korsi> to read a more detailed explanation and see images of *korsi*). In the English-Korean sentence (44) the Korean word *baek-il* is used instead of a translation which would be lacking the significance of this cultural ritual:

- (43) What we really need on this sub-zero night is a good old-fashioned *korsi!*
- (44) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ one hundredth day.  
‘We are celebrating the child’s one hundredth day.’

- (h) For creating humorous, playful effects.
- (i) To mark group or personal identity and/or emphasize solidarity and camaraderie. Mahootian (2005, 2012) concludes that mixed-code in writing is used intentionally to evoke a sense of cultural identity, unity and camaraderie. And Edwards (2013) reminds us that ‘Language clearly intertwines powerfully with conceptions and definitions of allegiance and ‘belonging.’ It possesses more than instrumental value; it is the vehicle of tradition and culture, and the medium of group narrative. Issues of psychology and sociology, of symbol and subjectivity, become important whenever we observe language in society. When more than one language is involved, then, we should expect ramifications in terms of identity and ‘groupness’” (p. 20).

For Persian-English bilinguals, the most significant social factors determining language choice are age and status of the interlocutors. Older bilingual speakers expect to speak and hear Persian and English without codeswitching. In exclusively Persian gatherings, using a language other than Persian is often considered disrespectful and even disloyal to one’s heritage. Additionally, codeswitching is seen by this generation as an assault on the purity of both languages (Persian and English) and a loss of Persian identity.

Interestingly, as is often the case, speakers aren’t always aware that they themselves codeswitch (unintentional codeswitching), as in the utterance following:

- (45) If you’re bilingual, *chetor fārsi harf ne-mizanid?*  
‘If you’re bilingual why don’t you speak Farsi?’

This is a comment made by an Iranian mother in her mid-60s, who has lived in the U.S. for over 20 years, to her children at a family dinner. The children, who range in age from 35–40, have spent more than half their lives in the U.S. All have received their university degrees in the U.S. and consider themselves bilingual in varying degrees. The mother frequently codeswitched, though she wasn't aware of it, and didn't approve of mixing the two languages. The age factor interfaces with the level of the formality of the context to steer speakers into a language choice. For example, whether the conversation is taking place in a formal, professional or casual setting will influence which language will be chosen and whether codeswitching will occur. A final factor, slightly less significant than the other two, is topic of conversation. Sometimes, despite a professional setting with bilingual elders, the L2 or even a L1-L2 mix will be considered appropriate. The pattern of switching and the attitudes of Persian-English bilinguals are consistent with those found in many other bilingual communities. In the example following, a Punjabi-English speaker laments (Romaine 1995, 122). We've added italics to the Punjabi for clarity.

- (46) I mean I'm guilty in that sense *ke ziada wsi English i bolde fer ode nal eda . . . wsi*  
 mix  
*kerde rene ā*. I mean, unconsciously, subconsciously, *keri jane e . . .*  
 "I mean I'm guilty in that sense that we speak English more and more . . . we keep mixing.  
 I mean unconsciously, subconsciously, we keep doing it . . ."

The speaker continues in English,

"you get two or three words of English in each sentence . . . but I think that's wrong. I mean, I myself would like to speak pure Panjabi whenever I speak Panjabi. We keep mixing, I mean unconsciously, subconsciously, we keep doing it, you know, but I wish, you know, that I could speak pure Panjabi."

Figure 27.1 shows the relationship between age, formality of context and codeswitching. Switching is less acceptable among older speakers and in more formal contexts.

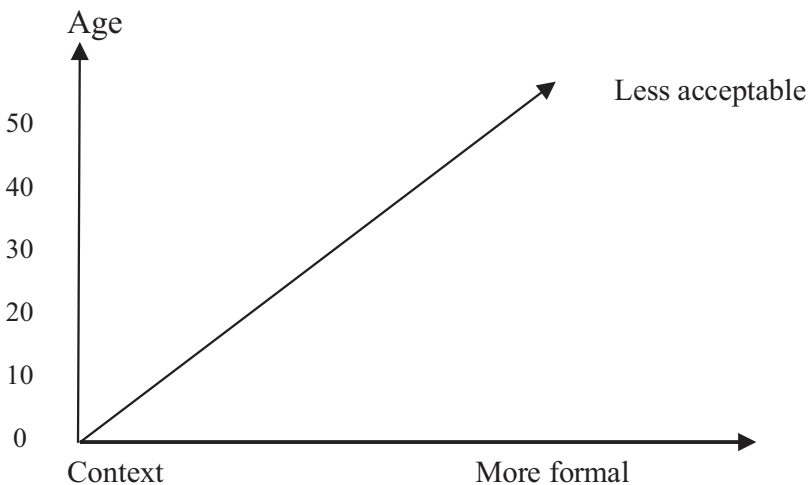


Figure 27.1 Acceptability of Persian-English codeswitching by age and context.

Table 27.4 Switching by age and context. YS=speakers < 35 yrs, OS=speakers > 35 yrs

	<i>YS</i>	<i>OS</i>	<i>Formal</i>	<i>Informal</i>
<b>YS</b>	F-E, F, E	F	F	F-E, F, E
<b>OS</b>	F	F	F	F

Table 27.4 presents some common pairings of interlocutors by age and formality of context, noting when switching would be acceptable (unmarked). Switching among younger Iranians (age 35 and under) is unmarked, with speakers' attitudes toward their own language mixing ranging from neutral to somewhat positive. However, these same speakers are extra careful to speak pure Persian when talking to Iranians of an older generation. The number one reason given for this shift to monolingual Persian is that they don't want to appear disrespectful toward their elders.

## 27.4 Conclusions

In this chapter, we examined Persian second language acquisition with special attention to Persian-English interlanguage and codeswitching. We considered some of the salient grammatical aspects of Persian faced by English-speaking learners. These aspects include different word order (English SVO v. Persian SOV, English adjective-noun v. Persian noun-adjective), Persian but not English being a pro-drop language, robust subject-verb agreement in Persian v. almost no agreement in English. Further, Persian verbs show a difference between their present and past roots while English present and past roots are mostly alike. Further, we noted some of the phonological differences between the two languages that may present stumbling blocks for the Persian-language learner; in particular, the velar fricative, the uvulars, and the medial glottal stop can be difficult to master by adult learners. Moreover, we discussed the status of codeswitching vis-à-vis interlanguage. We then showed in some detail that the ability to codeswitch is an outcome of the speaker's proficiency in two languages and guided by universal principles of grammar: codeswitches occur between heads and complements, and heads determine the order of the complement, while the complement is free to appear in either language. Lastly, we discussed some social and pragmatic aspects of codeswitching as further evidence of its qualitative difference from interlanguage grammars.

# Appendix 1

## Shortcomings of codeswitching third grammars

As important as the empirical problems was the theoretical issue of where the constraints come from and, more specifically, where the supposed third, codeswitching grammar comes from. To better understand these questions, let's consider the general view among linguists about how children acquire language. Many linguists and psychologists conjecture that children come to the acquisition process already equipped with some hardwired capacity to acquire a language. Part of the reason for this assumption is that, first, no matter what language is being acquired, children are able to master it in the same window of five to seven or so years. Second, the stages of acquiring languages are quite similar crosslinguistically. For example, nouns are among the first things learned, along with verbs for expressing basic needs and desires. Only later do children begin to master the grammatical aspects of the language such as articles and tense markers. This pattern of acquiring basic nouns and verbs before grammatical stuff holds cross-linguistically. A third reason is the well-known Poverty of Stimulus argument, going back to Chomsky (1959). According to this argument, children don't have sufficient linguistic input during the period of language acquisition to make deductions about the grammar that they achieve. Therefore, at least some prewired aspects to language and language acquisition must exist to guide children.

Whatever the hardwired capabilities of children, they still need language input from speakers in their environment. After all, a child has to learn the words of their language. But a child also needs to get input for syntactic facts like whether, in the language they are acquiring, the direct object precedes the verb or follows the verb. A child who grows up in a monolingual English environment has monolingual English input and will achieve, in that five-to-seven-year window, a monolingual grammar of English. A child growing up in a more or less balanced Persian-English bilingual environment receives input from Persian and input from English. In each case, the child enjoys thousands of hours of input and ends up a native speaker of two languages.

Now, where does the purported codeswitching grammar come from? Presumably, a child being raised in a bilingual environment must get some codeswitching input, but it's unlikely that the child gets the same thousands and thousands of hours of input they do from each of the separate languages. And, to our knowledge there is no literature claiming that there are nonfluent codeswitchers. So it doesn't seem that speakers need a whole lot of input in order to successfully and grammatically codeswitch. Further, if bilinguals require three grammars for two languages plus their codeswitching ability, then trilinguals would need knowledge of six grammars: grammar A, grammar B, grammar C, codeswitching grammar A/B, codeswitching grammar A/C and codeswitching grammar B/C (assuming that codeswitching is done between two language at a time). The proliferation of grammars would seem to require thousands of hours of input each. These conceptual arguments argue against there being independent codeswitching grammars.



# Appendix 2

## Heads and their complements

In order to clearly describe the morphosyntactic system through concrete examples, we simplify many technical syntactic details. First, we illustrate how Merge works in monolingual English and then we show the operation in Persian, and finally in a Persian-English codeswitching context.<sup>4</sup>

### Merge in English

To grammatically derive the sentence in (1), we start with the set of morphemes that will appear in the sentence (2). This set of morphemes is called the array (or numeration).

- (1) she will eat the pizza
- (2) {she, will, eat, the, pizza}

Each morpheme is itself a set of features that specify its semantic, phonological and morphosyntactic content as in (3) through (7). Here we list four major features for each of the morphemes in the array:

- (3) *she* category: Pronoun  
semantics: 3rd person, singular, feminine  
morphosyntax: nominative case, 3rd person, singular  
phonology: /ʃi/
- (4) *will* category: Verb; subcategory: modal  
semantics: Future  
morphosyntax: head of tense phrase (sentence); takes a verb phrase complement on its right  
phonology: /wɪl/
- (5) *eat* category: Verb  
semantics: ‘to consume, ingest solid food’  
morphosyntax: transitive verb (requires subject; requires object complement to its right); object must be accusative case  
phonology: /it/
- (6) *the* category: Determiner; subcategory: Article  
semantics: Definite, identifies a unique referent known to speaker and hearer;  
morphosyntax: head of determiner phrase and requires a noun complement to its right  
phonology: /ðə/
- (7) *pizza* category: Noun; subcategory (here) count, common  
semantics: ‘flat baked dough with toppings’  
morphosyntax: should form the complement of a determiner head, accusative case  
phonology: /pɪtsə/

Now, in order to build up the sentence in (1) let's start merging, two objects at a time, beginning with two morphemes from the array. First, the determiner *the* needs a noun complement, and the only possibility in the given array is *pizza*. Merge forms the determiner phrase in (8), with the head *the* on the left and the complement *pizza* on the right.

- (8) [<sub>DP</sub> the pizza]

At this point, besides the unused morphemes in the array we also have a new syntactic object, the determiner phrase [<sub>DP</sub> the pizza], which can merge with another of the morphemes remaining in the array. The only morpheme in the array that can take [<sub>DP</sub> the pizza] as a complement is the verb *eat*, which requires a determiner phrase complement. So *eat* merges with that determiner phrase to form the verb phrase in (9). Again, the head of the phrase, here the verb, is on the left and the complement it merged with is on the right.

- (9) [<sub>VP</sub> eat [<sub>DP</sub> the pizza]]

With *the*, *pizza* and *eat* used, remaining in the array are {will, she}. The pronoun *she* doesn't take a verb phrase complement, but the modal verb *will* does. So the next step in the derivation is for the morpheme *will* to merge with the newly formed syntactic object [<sub>VP</sub> eat [<sub>DP</sub> the pizza]]. Functioning as a head, *will*, which indicates tense, will take the verb phrase complement, resulting in (10).

- (10) [<sub>T</sub> will [<sub>VP</sub> eat [<sub>DP</sub> the pizza]]]

Once again, the head is on the left and the complement, the verb phrase, is on the right.

Finally, recall that the verb *eat* calls for not only an object but also a subject. We have already merged *eat* with its object, the phrase [<sub>DP</sub> the pizza], so what's needed now is a subject. The only morpheme left in the array is the pronoun *she*, which serves just fine as a subject, given its nominative case. Note that if the array included accusative *her*, that pronoun would have the wrong morphosyntactic features to function as a subject. The rules of English are that subjects, typically, precede everything else in the sentence. Subjects can be pronouns, and pronouns are determiner phrases, so the phrase comprising the single head *she* can merge with the syntactic object in (3) to give us the syntactic object in (11).

- (11) [<sub>TP</sub> she [will [<sub>VP</sub> eat [<sub>DP</sub> the pizza]]]]

The successive instances of Merge end up creating the entire sentence. At this point, all the morphosyntactic requirements of the morphemes in the array have been satisfied.

### Merge in Persian

Persian sentences are derived similarly, but Persian morphemes may differ from English morphemes. Each language may have morphemes that the other language lacks. Even when both languages have corresponding morphemes, they may differ to a greater or lesser degree in their precise features. Starting with an array of morphemes with their grammatical features, a series

of Merge operations takes place, making sure that all the morphosyntactic features are satisfied. We derive the sentence in (12) from the array of morphemes in (13).

- (12) minā sib-o khord  
 Mina sib-DO ate  
 ‘Mina ate the apple’

- (13) {minā, sib, -o, khord}

Given the array of morphemes {mina, pizza, -o, xord}, one obvious fact is that they are Persian, not English. Syntactically and semantically *minā* does correspond to *Mina* in English, *khord* to *eat*, and *sib* to *apple*. But *khord*, the head of the verb phrase, wants its object to precede it, not come after. Another morphosyntactic peculiarity of Persian with regard to English lies in the features of the suffix *-o*, which has no analog in English. As we noted in Section 1, it’s a noun suffix for a direct object that is definite, identifiable to both the speaker and hearer. The Persian sentence in (12) makes reference to a specific, definite apple: the sentence cannot mean ‘Mina ate *an* apple’. In fact, *-o* has the features in (14):

- (14) *-o* morphosyntax: accusative, takes a noun complement semantics: definite reference

Let’s assume that *-o* is a kind of definite determiner that also includes the feature for accusative case. Thus, it heads a determiner phrase with the head on the right. Second, note again that the direct object precedes the verb. This is because the verb is head of the verb phrase and calls for its object, its complement, to precede it. Again, the Persian head of the phrase is on the right, unlike in English with its heads on the left. Successive Merge proceeds as in (16).

- (16a) Merge *sib* and *-o*  $\Rightarrow$  [<sub>DP</sub> sib-o]  
 (16b) Merge *khord* and [<sub>DP</sub> sib-o]  $\Rightarrow$  [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> sib-o] khord]  
 (16c) Merge *mina* and [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> sib-o] xord]  $\Rightarrow$  [<sub>TP</sub> mina [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> sib-o] khord]]

*Merge and Persian-English codeswitching*

Now, let’s take the sentence in (17). Here a bound morpheme, 2nd person possessive suffix –*et* ‘your’, has combined with the English noun *lawyer*.

- (17) I saw lawyer-*et* yesterday  
 –2.Poss  
 ‘I saw your lawyer yesterday’  
 (18) {I, saw, lawyer, -et, yesterday}

The features for each morpheme are as follows.

- (19) *I* category: Pronoun  
semantics: 1st person, singular  
morphosyntax: 1st person, singular, nominative case  
phonology: /ai/  
 (20) *saw* category: Verb, transitive  
semantics: ‘perceive visually’  
morphosyntax: requires subject; complement is on its right  
phonology: /sə/

- (21) *lawyer* category: Noun, common, count  
semantics: ‘person who practices law’  
morphosyntax: singular  
phonology: /lojɾ/
- (22) *-et* category: Suffix  
semantics: 2nd person, singular, possessive  
morphosyntax: requires noun complement to its left  
phonology: /et/

For this sentence, Merge proceeds as follows: The Persian suffix *-et* marks the noun *lawyer* as possessed; the English noun *lawyer* is a complement to the left of *-et*, resulting in (23):

- (23) Merge *lawyer* and *-et*  $\Rightarrow$  [<sub>PossP</sub> lawyer-et]

Note that *-et* doesn’t care if its complement is Persian or English; it only cares that the complement has the feature of being a noun. So far, Merge has been with Persian heads specifying complements on the left. The next instance of merge, however, is with the English verb *saw*, which requires a complement on its right.

- (24) Merge [<sub>PossP</sub> lawyer-et] and *saw*  $\Rightarrow$  [<sub>VP</sub> saw [<sub>PossP</sub> lawyer-et]]

Finally, since the English verb needs a subject, a determiner phrase in nominative case, the pronoun can merge in this position.

- (25) Merge [<sub>VP</sub> saw [<sub>PossP</sub> lawyer-et]] and *she*  $\Rightarrow$  [<sub>TP</sub> she [<sub>VP</sub> saw [<sub>PossP</sub> lawyer-et]]]

The formation of the sentence in (17) through successive applications of Merge has been accomplished simply by using the morphemes from both languages and making sure that the features of each are satisfied. No special codeswitching grammar was needed to be invoked.

## Notes

- 1) Unless otherwise noted, the Persian-English codeswitching examples are from Mahootian (1993).
- 2) It should be noted that speaker judgments of stigmatized speech are notoriously unreliable. See Labov (1972), Rickford (1975), Pfaff (1979), Mahootian (1993), among others.
- 3) The earliest and best known of these proposals is Poplack and Sankoff’s (1981) proposal for two constraints and a third grammar to account for codeswitched utterances.
- 4) The literature on Merge within the Minimalist Program is large. A recent formalization of the grammar based on Merge is in Collins and Stabler (2016).

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# LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING

A study of university students of  
Persian in the United States

*Azita Mokhtari*

## 28.1 Introduction

This study will investigate learner beliefs about language learning and language learning strategies used by university students of Persian in America and compare these beliefs and strategies to similar findings for other languages. The goal is to broaden the study of learners' beliefs and strategies to cover those of university students engaged in studying the Persian language. The study surveyed the beliefs and strategies of students at similar levels in their language studies.

### *28.1.1 Statement of the problem*

Wenden (1987b) stated that learners' prescriptive beliefs about how best to learn a second language denote their awareness of language learning. These beliefs have the potential for developing self-regulation. Such beliefs indicate that learners have begun to reflect on what they are doing in line with their goals, and this awareness may ultimately lead to self-regulation. Later, Wenden (1991) illustrated specific action plans for cultivating supportive beliefs, attitudes, and strategies to promote learner autonomy. Similarly, Cotterall (1995) contended that learner beliefs are indicators of learners' readiness for a behavioral change toward autonomy, as a given set of particular beliefs and behaviors ultimately predicts a learner's degree of autonomy. These authors concluded that knowledge of beliefs enables both learners and teachers to construct a shared understanding of how to learn as well as what role beliefs play in the learning process; this knowledge is seen as an essential foundation of autonomy.

Furthermore, according to Wenden (1991) and Dickinson (1987), language learning beliefs and language learning strategies are both critical constituents of understanding "how to learn" a second language (L2). For this reason, language educators should nurture and help students develop effective language learning strategies and beliefs about language learning. Clearly, in order to accomplish this goal, the first step would be the identification of such beliefs and strategies. While previous research has indicated some similarity in beliefs and strategies across learner groups, Horwitz (1989) argues that it is important for teachers to be aware of the characteristics of their specific student group.

To date, there has been no research that has identified Persian language students' use of language learning strategies or their beliefs about language learning. Likewise, no study of effective language learning strategies and beliefs about language learning with particular attention to the Persian language has been attempted. As enrollments increase in less commonly taught languages (LCTL) in general, and in the Persian language in particular, it is important to better understand this under-studied learner group.

### ***28.1.2 Purpose of the study***

The major purpose of this study is to explore language learning beliefs and language learning strategies used by university students of Persian in the United States. Since there is almost no previous research on Persian language learners, this study will also compare its findings concerning the language learning beliefs and language learning strategies of Persian language students in the United States to the findings of previous studies involving other foreign language students. For further discussion on language speakers' beliefs about their first and second languages, read Chapter 23 in this volume.

### ***28.1.3 Significance of the study***

In the field of foreign language education, most studies related to learner beliefs and strategies have focused on the study of English or other commonly taught languages (CTL) in the U.S. such as French, Spanish, and German. Conversely, research on learner beliefs and strategies in Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) is rare. In the arena of Persian language, such research is nonexistent.

Finding out about students' language beliefs and their choice of language learning strategies will offer new insights as to what American students expect and how they go about learning Persian in the classroom. In addition, if students are found to hold unrealistic beliefs about learning Persian, instructors may attempt to modify the preconceived notions that may influence their choice of language learning strategies. Therefore, discussing realistic expectations regarding language learning task may help and engage students in more effective learning.

Furthermore, language beliefs can be culture-bound (Horwitz 1988; Kern 1995; Truitt 1995). Knowledge of students' beliefs can then help Persian instructors, most of whom are native Persian speakers, reduce potential classroom conflicts that may stem from inconsistencies between teacher and learner language beliefs. The findings of this study should contribute to research of foreign language teaching in the direction of better understanding and accommodating learners who take up the daunting task of learning challenging, less commonly taught languages such as Persian. This study will also add to the discussion of the variability of beliefs and strategies in specific learner groups.

Therefore, the current study will attempt to provide empirical evidence on language learners' beliefs and their use of language learning strategies in a previously unstudied target language. The study of Persian language learners' beliefs about language learning and their use of learning strategies has practical significance since to date neither the beliefs of students of the Persian language in the United States about Persian learning nor their use of language learning strategies has been investigated. It is hoped that this study will provide educators and course developers with a better understanding of an important group of students' "expectations of, commitment to, success in and satisfaction with their language classes" (Horwitz 1988, 283). This study should further provide information concerning the learners' use of strategies in

learning the Persian language, which can prove useful in developing enhanced and up-to-date Persian language courses.

## **28.2 Method**

The major objective of this study is to assess the beliefs about learning the Persian language and the use of language learning strategies of students studying Persian at three American universities. The intent of this study is to determine whether learners of the Persian language are similar to other language learners when it comes to beliefs, strategies, and the nature of their specific beliefs and strategies. Beliefs were measured using the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) (Horwitz 1987), and language learning strategies were identified by the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford 1989c).

This section describes the research methodology of the study and includes descriptions of the research design, research questions, instruments, participants, data collection, and data analysis.

### **28.2.1 Research design**

The present study is primarily descriptive. It uses three self-report questionnaires to identify the students' background, use of language learning strategies, and their beliefs about language learning.

The target population of this study is American college students studying Persian as a foreign language in three university settings. Students who participated in this study were enrolled in either first- or second-year Persian language courses at the University of Texas at Austin, the University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of California at Berkeley during the fall of 2003. The rationale for choosing these locations was firstly due to the historically large number of Iranian emigrants who have settled in California and Texas; secondly, the historically high number of enrollments in Persian language classes in these universities was considered; and finally the prestigious nature of Persian instruction in these settings was taken into account.

### **28.2.2 Research questions**

This study addresses the following research questions:

- 1 What beliefs about language learning do US Persian language learners report holding? How do the American university students' beliefs about language learning compare to those of other language learners?
- 2 Which beliefs about language learning are most common or least common among the participants in this study?
- 3 What language learning strategies do US Persian language learners report using? How do the American university students' language learning strategies compare to those of other language learners?
- 4 Which strategies are most common or least common among the participants in this study?

### **28.2.3 Instruments**

The instruments used in this study were: the Individual Background Questionnaire (IBQ, Appendix A), the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI, Appendix B), and the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL, Appendix C).



### 28.2.3.1 *Individual Background Questionnaire*

An individual background questionnaire (IBQ), developed by the author, was used to gather additional information on individual characteristics of the participants. The questionnaire elicited gender, age, mother tongue, language background, previous foreign language learning experiences, their perceived language learning proficiency, and their motivation for studying Persian.

Starting from item 12, subjects were asked about their Persian language experience. Items 12 and 13 asked the subjects how long they had been studying Persian and what had made them interested in learning Persian. The rest of the items solicited information about their perceptions of their proficiency in Persian and their expectation of their proficiency level by completing the entire course.

### 28.2.3.2 *The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)*

The BALLI was developed by Horwitz (1987) to elicit learners' beliefs about language learning. It contains thirty-four items relating to beliefs within five major areas:

- 1 foreign language aptitude
- 2 the difficulty of language learning
- 3 the nature of language learning
- 4 learning and communicative strategies, and
- 5 motivations and expectations

The BALLI is scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "1: strongly disagree" to "5: strongly agree". Since the BALLI measures a variety of individual beliefs about language learning, there is no composite score. The BALLI was developed based on free-recall protocols by language teachers from different cultural backgrounds, and focus group discussions with language students. It has been tested with American foreign language students, ESL students in the U.S., and EFL students abroad (Horwitz 1987).

Horwitz (1989) questions the appropriateness of reliability computations for the BALLI; however, several researchers have examined the reliability of the BALLI based on the correlation of the items with each other. In this study, Cronbach's alpha was found to be .53. Previously, Kim-Yoon's (2000) Cronbach's alpha for the BALLI was .71, Kunt's (1997) was .64, Truitt's (1995) was .61, Park's (1995) was .61, and Yang's (1992) was .69. These scores, which ranged from .61 to .71, seem rather low but may be expected since the BALLI is really a composite of individual items rather than a single scale.

### 28.2.3.3 *The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)*

The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL, Version 5.1 for English Speakers Learning a New Language) (Oxford 1989c) was used to measure the frequency with which Persian language learners use various language learning strategies. The eighty-item questionnaire is divided into six categories.

- 1 Memory strategies used for storage and retrieval of new information.
- 2 Cognitive strategies used for improving understanding and the production of language through various channels.

- 3 Compensation strategies used to compensate for missing target language knowledge.
- 4 Metacognitive strategies used for organization of learning and self-evaluation.
- 5 Affective strategies used to regulate emotions and motivations.
- 6 Social strategies used to build social interaction and learning with others.

The SILL uses a five point Likert-scale: “1: never or almost never true of me”, “2: generally not true of me”, “3: somewhat true of me”, “4: generally true of me” and “5: always or almost always true of me”. Following Oxford (1989c), this study uses the following indications based on the means derived for each item: mean ranges of (1) 4.5 to 5.0 on SILL indicate items that are “always or almost always used”, (2) 3.5 to 4.4 indicate items that are “usually used”, (3) 2.5 to 3.4 indicate items that are “somewhat used”, (4) 1.5 to 2.4 indicate items that are “generally not used”, and (5) 1.0 to 1.4 indicate items that are “never or almost never used”.

Cronbach’s alpha has been computed in several studies to determine the internal consistency for the SILL. The alpha coefficient of an earlier version (121 items), according to Oxford and Nyikos (1989), was 0.96 and 0.95 respectively based on a 1200 and a 483-subject university sample. According to Oxford’s and Nyikos’s (1989) study, several findings support the validity of the scale. Specifically, there was a correlation of 0.95 between two raters who matched SILL items with strategies in the taxonomy on which it was based. There was also a strong relationship between SILL items and self-reports of proficiency and motivation. Finally, a previous study in which the SILL was administered to more highly trained and less highly trained linguists verified that the more highly trained subjects reporting “more frequent and more wide-ranging” strategy use (Oxford and Nyikos 1989).

### **28.2.4 Participants**

The participants surveyed in this study were 166 students enrolled at the University of Texas (UT/67) at Austin, the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA/62) and the University of California at Berkeley (UCB/37) during the 2003 fall semester. The subjects were enrolled in the first-year and second-year Persian language courses at the time the data were collected.

The participants ranged from freshmen to seniors and ranged in age from 17 to 59, with an average age of 22. According to Table 28.1 following, of the 166 students, 51.8% were men and 48.2% were women. This finding is interesting in itself since enrollments in American colleges and universities, specifically in language classes, tend to a majority of women. Furthermore, 42.8% of the subjects reported Persian as their mother tongue, while 45.8% reported English as their mother tongue, and the rest reported other languages as their mother tongue. From the total population of the participants, 48.2% said they were second generation Iranian-Americans and 51.8% said that they were not second generation Iranian-Americans.

Thus, many of the Persian learners can be classified as heritage learners. A “heritage language” can be defined as “the language associated with one’s cultural background and it may or may not be spoken in the home” (Cho, Cho, and Tse 1997). A “heritage language student” may refer to “a language student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English” (Valdes 2001, 38). Thus, heritage learners can include students who are exposed to the language in the home as well as students who have family ties to that language. The participants’ range of experience with Persian language study was from 0 months to 228 months with an average of 18.1 months. See Chapters 3 and 4 in this volume for elaborate discussions on specific characteristics of Persian language acquisition by Persian heritage learners.

Table 28.1 Individual background questionnaire

<b>Age</b>					
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	
Total group	22.1	6.0	18	59	
<b>Sex</b> (Unit: %)					
	<i>M</i>			<i>F</i>	
Total group	51.8			48.2	
<b>Mother tongue</b> (Unit: %)					
	<i>PERSIAN</i>	<i>Persian-English</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Others</i>	
Total group	42.8	2.4	45.8	9.0	
<b>Are you second generation Iranian-American?</b> (Unit: %)					
	<i>Yes</i>			<i>No</i>	
Total group	48.2			51.8	
<b>Studying months</b> (Unit: Month(s))					
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	
Total group	18.1	36.3	0	228	
<b>How important is it for you to become proficient in Persian?</b> (Unit: %)					
	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Missing</i>	
Total group	3.0	36.7	59.0	1.2	
<b>So far how do you compare your overall proficiency in Persian to other students in your class?</b> (Unit: %)					
	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	8.4	28.3	47.6	14.5	1.2
<b>So far how do you compare your overall proficiency in Persian to native speakers of Persian?</b> (Unit: %)					
	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	38.0	36.7	22.3	1.2	1.2
<b>By the end of this course what do you expect your proficiency level to be?</b> (Unit: %)					
	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	3.0	28.9	51.8	15.1	1.2
<b>After two years of instruction what do you expect your proficiency level to be?</b> (Unit: %)					
	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	0.0	9.6	44.6	44.0	1.2

### **28.2.5 Data collection**

The questionnaires were administered during the 2003 fall semester. At each survey session, the study was explained to the volunteer subjects. Then a consent form was distributed to be read and signed by all the respondents. Then, the questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section consisted of the background questionnaire. The second section included the BALLI questions. The final section included the SILL items.

The survey administrators reiterated the confidentiality of the survey responses and reminded the respondents that there was no right or wrong answer on the IBQ, the BALLI, or the SILL. The subjects were asked to respond honestly.

### **28.2.6 Data analysis**

The quantitative analysis of this study used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 11.0 for MS Windows XP. The data collected for this study were analyzed according to the following procedures:

- 1 Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means and standard deviations, were calculated to summarize the responses to the IBQ, BALLI, and SILL items. These analyses identified the overall patterns of beliefs about language learning and the use of language learning strategies.
- 2 To compare responses across the three groups, a cross-comparison between the three groups (three settings) was made.
- 3 Finally, a cross-comparison with previous studies utilizing the BALLI and SILL was made.

## **28.3 Results and discussion**

This section presents the findings from the IBQ, the BALLI, and the SILL in order to address four research questions:

- 1 What beliefs about language learning do US Persian language learners report holding? How do the American university students' beliefs about language learning compare to those of other language learners?
- 2 Which beliefs about language learning are most common or least common among the participants in this study?
- 3 What language learning strategies do US Persian language learners report using? How do the American university students' language learning strategies compare to those of other language learners?
- 4 Which strategies are most common or least common among the participants in this study?

### **28.3.1 Results**

The results and discussion have been categorized into three sections: (1) a descriptive analysis of the IBQ items, (2) a summary of the descriptive analysis of the BALLI items, (3) a descriptive report of the most common and the least common beliefs endorsed by Persian language learners, (4) a summary of the descriptive analysis of the SILL items, (5) a descriptive report of the most common and the least common strategies reported by the Persian language learners, and (6) a comparison with other groups of language learners from the previous studies.

## 28.3.1.1 Descriptive analyses of IBQ

The individual background questionnaire solicited information about the subjects, including gender, age, mother tongue, foreign language learning experience other than Persian, their perceived language learning proficiency, and motivation for studying Persian.

Table 28.2 shows the range of participants' age at the three universities. The participants varied from freshmen to seniors and ranged in age from 17 to 59, with the average being 22. For the three settings, the mean distribution as well as minimum age (17–18) and maximum age (50–59) of the respondents seems to be reasonably equal, although UCLA has a somewhat higher mean age.

According to Table 28.3 following, a higher percentage of the participants (59.5%) from UC Berkeley were men, while 40.5% were women. The percentage of female participants was higher at UCLA (56.5%) and UT (53.7%).

As found in Table 28.4, a higher percentage of the participants (59.7%) from UT Austin reported Persian as their mother tongue, while 29.9% reported English as their mother tongue and the rest reported other languages. The percentage for UT Austin "Persian as the mother tongue" is relatively higher than that found at UCB (56.8%) or at UCLA (48.4%).

Table 28.2 Age

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Total group	22.1	6.0	17	59
UC Berkeley	21.8	5.7	18	50
UCLA	23.2	6.6	18	53
UT Austin	21.3	5.6	17	59

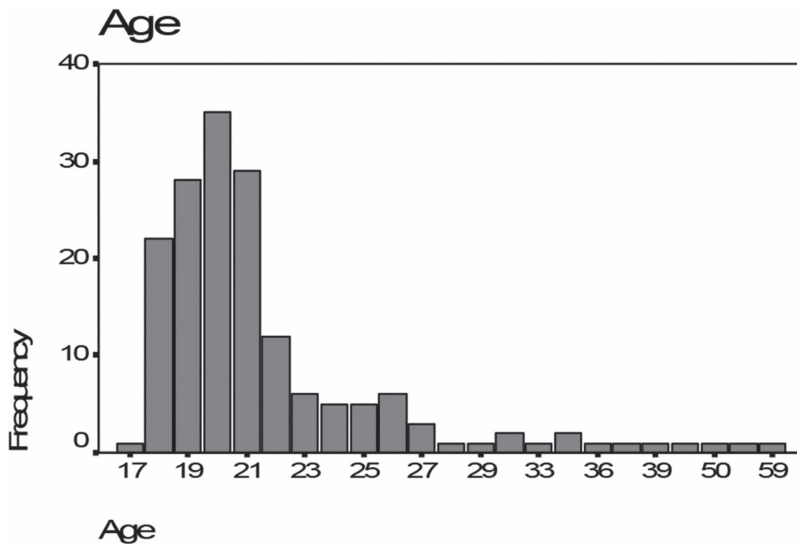


Figure 28.1 Age

Table 28.3 Sex

	(Unit: %)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>
<b>Total group</b>	<b>48.2</b>	<b>51.8</b>
UC Berkeley	59.5	40.5
UCLA	43.5	56.5
UT Austin	46.3	53.7

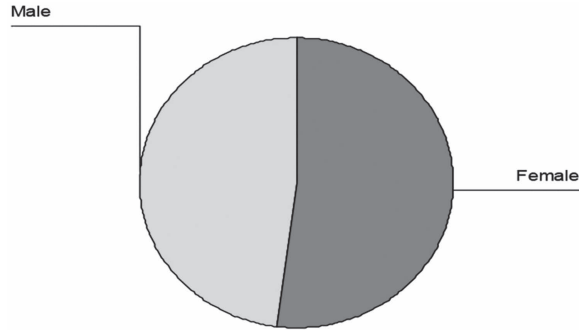


Figure 28.2 Sex.

Table 28.4 Mother tongue

	(Unit: %)			
	<i>Persian</i>	<i>Persian-English</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Others</i>
Total group	42.8	2.4	45.8	9.0
UC Berkeley	56.8	5.4	35.1	2.7
UCLA	48.4	1.6	37.1	12.9
UT Austin	59.7	1.5	29.9	9.0

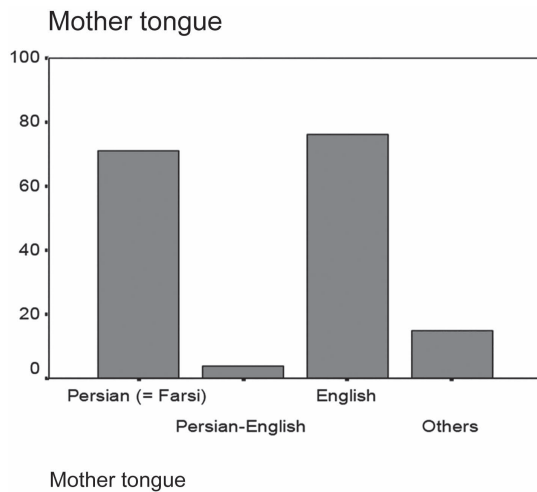


Figure 28.3 Mother tongue.

Comparing participants' responses about "mother tongue" and "second generation Iranian-American" shown in Table 28.5 following, interesting results were found in the three different settings (UB, UCLA, UT). All participants from UT who reported Persian as their mother tongue (59.7%), also reported their status as being second generation Iranian-Americans. Similarly, of the 48.4% participants at UCLA who reported Persian as their mother tongue, 41.9% of the total professed that they were second generation Iranian-Americans. At UCB, however, 56.8% reported Persian as their mother tongue but only 37.8% of the total reported that they are second generation Iranian-Americans.

The reason for this discrepancy could be in how the respondents viewed themselves in regards to being labeled as second generation Iranian-American. Even though many could be considered as fitting under the general label of "second generation", many could have been born in Iran and moved to the United States in their infancy or beyond. These may or may not view themselves as the second generation, deeming that the term second generation is fully applicable only to those who were actually born on US soil.

Another possible reason could be due to what is implied by the phrase "second generation Iranian-American". If only one parent is of Iranian descent, will the offspring see themselves as "second generation Iranian-Americans" or not? In general, it is this author's belief that the label "second generation Iranian-American" is not as clear-cut as it may appear on the surface. It seems likely, however, that Iranian Americans at UCB may have had somewhat different backgrounds than the Iranian Americans at the other universities.

As shown in Table 4.5, the students' range of experience with Persian language study was from 0 months to 228 months with an average of 18.1 months. The probable cause for this

Table 28.5 Are you second generation Iranian-American?

	(Unit: %)	
	Yes	No
Total group	48.2	51.8
UC Berkeley	37.8	62.2
UCLA	41.9	58.1
UT Austin	59.7	40.3

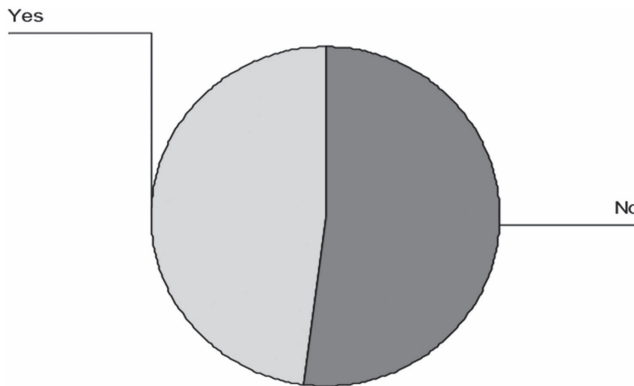


Figure 28.4 Second generation Iranian-American.

Table 28.6 Number of months studying Persian

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Total group	18.1	36.3	0	228
UC Berkeley	17.4	34.6	0	206
UCLA	21.0	42.8	0	228
UT Austin	13.8	28.9	0	182

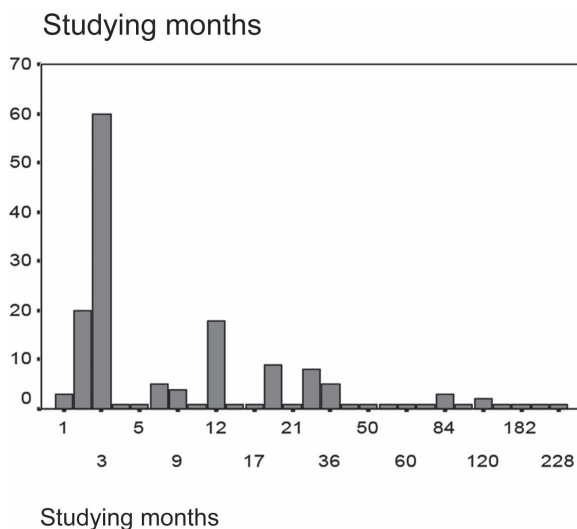


Figure 28.5 Number of months studying Persian.

inconsistency could be that some respondents misinterpreted the question “Number of months studying Persian” to mean number of months exposed to Persian.

It is also possible that there is no placement test requirement for Persian courses offered in the universities surveyed in this study. As it is the experience of this author as a Persian instructor, there are not generally placement testing requirements in place for students who register for Persian language classes. Even highly skilled Persian speakers are sometimes barred from taking first semester Persian. Such students may be given the option of taking a test for credit/noncredit or sitting in the class and earning an A. Therefore, even advanced students who may have graduated from high school in Iran and then transferred to a university in the U.S. or those who were tutored in the U.S. for many years before entering the university, may be allowed to register for first- or second-year Persian.

Table 28.7 displays beliefs of participants regarding the importance of becoming proficient in the Persian language. Of the 166 subjects, 59% felt that it is very important to do so while 36.7% said that it is somewhat important for them to become proficient in Persian. Only 3% reported that it was not important for them to become proficient in Persian. Thus almost all of the subjects valued learning Persian. In the case of heritage speakers, this might be due to the following two factors: valuing Persian mainly because of the parents’ influence, or valuing Persian as a language to communicate with relatives in Iran.



Table 28.7 How important is it for you to become proficient in Persian?

	(Unit: %)			
	<i>Not important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	3.0	36.7	59.0	1.2
UC Berkeley	2.7	35.1	59.5	2.7
UCLA	1.6	35.5	62.9	0.0
UT Austin	4.5	38.8	55.2	1.5

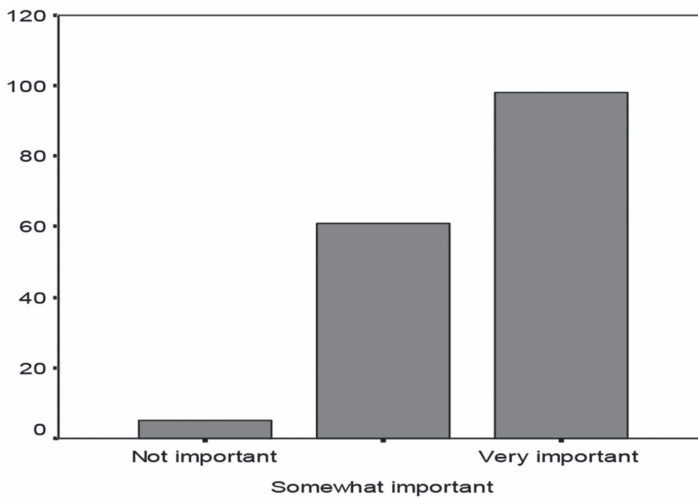


Figure 28.6 Importance of being proficient in Persian.

Table 28.8 So far how do you compare your overall proficiency in Persian to other students in your class?

	(Unit: %)				
	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	8.4	28.3	47.6	14.5	1.2
UC Berkeley	8.1	24.3	48.6	16.2	2.7
UCLA	4.8	30.6	54.8	9.7	0.0
UT Austin	11.9	28.4	40.3	17.9	1.5

When asked about their proficiency level in Persian compared to other students in their class (Table 28.8), 8.4% considered their Persian proficiency level as “poor”, 28.3% as “fair”, 47.6% as “good” and 14.5% as “excellent”.

In addition, in response to the item comparing their Persian proficiency level to those of native speakers (Table 28.9), 38% evaluated their Persian proficiency level as “poor”, 36.7% as “fair”, 22.3% as “good” and 1.2% as “excellent”.

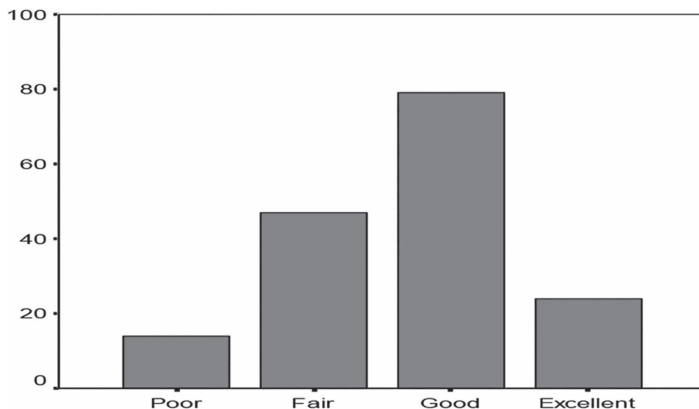


Figure 28.7 Comparison of overall proficiency in Persian to other students.

Table 28.9 So far how do you compare your overall proficiency in Persian to native speakers of Persian?  
(Unit: %)

	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	38.0	36.7	22.3	1.2	1.2
UC Berkeley	32.4	37.8	21.6	5.4	2.7
UCLA	33.9	37.1	29.0	0.0	0.0
UT Austin	44.8	35.8	16.4	0.0	3.0

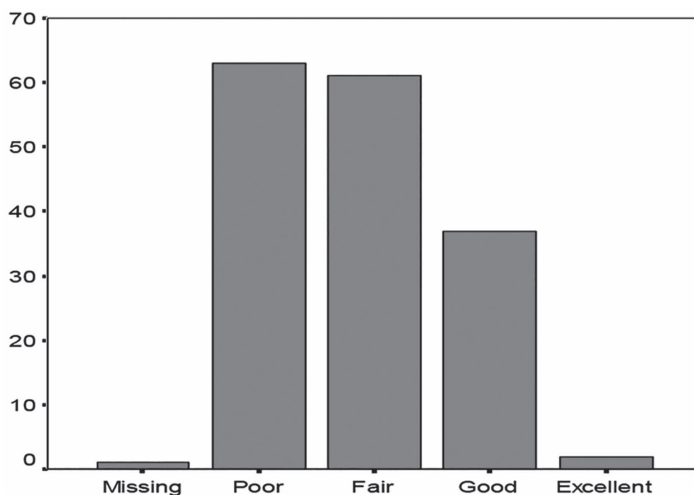


Figure 28.8 Comparison of overall proficiency in Persian to native speakers.

The resulting discrepancy between self-evaluated performances (comparison with a classmate vs. comparison with a native speaker) points to the possibility of respondents visualizing an ideal, abstract, and “super” native speaker. Whereas in comparing themselves with an actual classmate with whom they are closely associated and with whose performance they are

quite familiar, they lower the projected gap in performance in their minds. This may also be a reasonable response for someone who is a language learner.

According to Tables 28.10 and 28.11 following, almost half of the participants claimed that they expect their proficiency level to rise by the end of their current course and become even higher after two years of Persian language instruction.

Table 28.10 By the end of this course what do you expect your proficiency level to be?

(Unit: %)

	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	3.0	28.9	51.8	15.1	1.2
UC Berkeley	10.8	24.3	43.2	18.9	2.7
UCLA	0.0	22.6	59.7	17.7	0.0
UT Austin	1.5	37.3	49.3	10.4	1.5

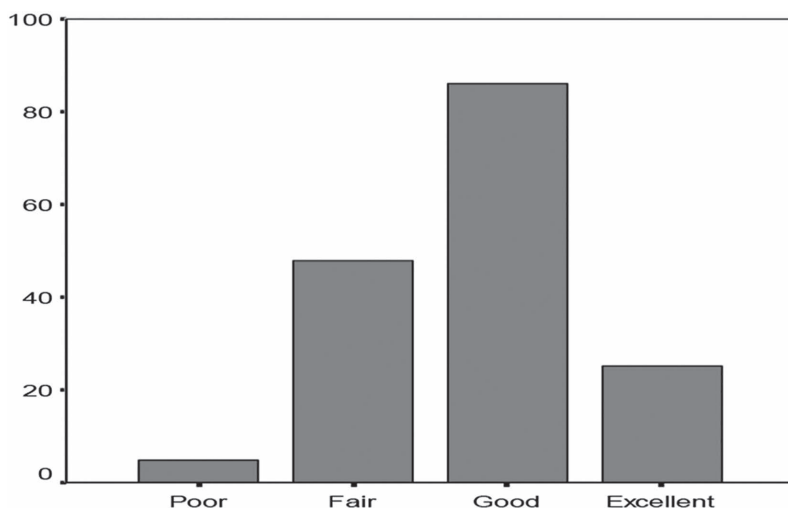


Figure 28.9 Expected level of proficiency by the end of the course.

Table 28.11 After two years of instruction what do you expect your proficiency level to be?

(Unit: %)

	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Missing</i>
Total group	0.0	9.6	44.6	44.0	1.2
UC Berkeley	0.0	16.2	51.4	29.7	0.0
UCLA	0.0	4.8	41.9	53.2	0.0
UT Austin	0.0	10.4	43.3	43.3	3.0

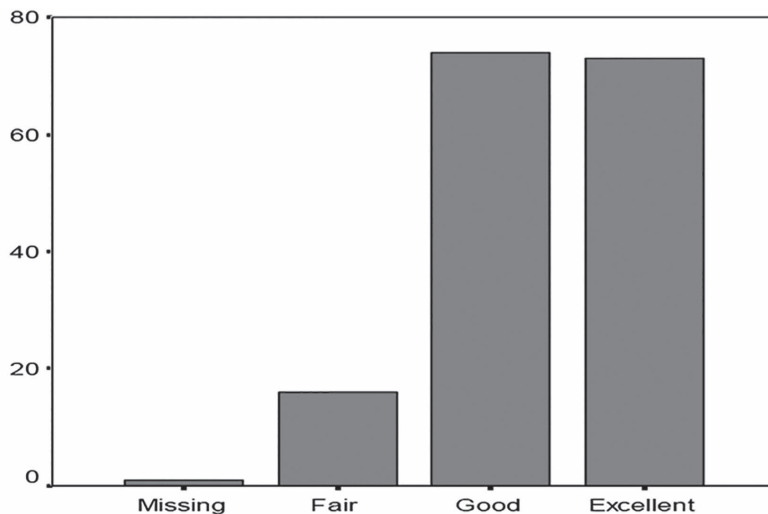


Figure 28.10 Expected level of proficiency by the end of the two-year instruction

Looking more closely at the data from UCLA, there is a higher percentage of respondents who chose “good” (59.7%) and “excellent” (53.2%) as compared to the other two surveyed settings, and a lower percentage from UCLA selected “poor” (0%) and “fair” (4.8%). Overall, the respondents from UCLA display more positive opinions toward their expected level of proficiency. This might be due to the possibility that their confidence in themselves, their teachers and their program is high as compared to learners at the other two universities or to differences in their backgrounds.

### 28.3.1.2 Descriptive analyses of the BALLI

The following tables and charts present the frequency of student responses in percentages, means, and standard deviations in each area of learner beliefs about language learning on the BALLI. Using Horwitz’s (1987) categories, they illustrate the five major areas in the BALLI: (1) the difficulty of language learning; (2) foreign language aptitude; (3) the nature of language learning; (4) learning and communication strategies; and (5) motivations and expectations.

Descriptive statistics were computed on the students’ responses to the BALLI items, which were included in the second section of the questionnaire. These analyses were done to address the first research question: “What beliefs about language learning do Persian language learners hold in the United States?”

#### 28.3.1.2.1 GENERAL BALLI RESPONSES

The results of the BALLI responses are reported in the following. Table 28.12 shows the mean of each subgroup of BALLI items and its rank in frequency. The highest mean belongs to “motivation and expectation” category; while the lowest belongs to “the difficulty of language learning”.

Table 28.12 BALLI categories and frequencies

<i>Beliefs</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
The difficulty of language learning	3.21	5
Foreign language aptitude	3.33	2
The nature of language learning	3.31	3
Learning and communication strategies	3.25	4
Motivation and expectations	3.63	1

Table 28.13 Descriptive statistics for the variables and mean difference of the beliefs

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
UCB	3.27	0.98	1.81 (19)	4.41 (1)
UCLA	3.31	0.98	1.69 (9)	4.55 (17)
UT Austin	3.43	0.97	1.94 (9)	4.67 (1)

Table 28.14 Differences in mean and standard deviation of overall beliefs among the five categories

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
DLL	UCB	3.17	0.89
	UCLA	3.12	1.03
	UT Austin	3.32	0.96
FLA	UCB	3.30	0.90
	UCLA	3.35	0.92
	UT Austin	3.33	0.88
NLL	UCB	3.25	0.95
	UCLA	3.26	0.96
	UT Austin	3.40	0.98
LCS	UCB	3.19	1.01
	UCLA	3.19	1.02
	UT Austin	3.35	0.99
MOT	UCB	3.42	1.13
	UCLA	3.65	0.96
	UT Austin	3.75	1.02

Note: DLL = Difficulty of Language Learning; FLA = Foreign Language Aptitude; NLL = Nature of Language Learning; LCS = Learning and Communication Strategies; MOT = Motivation and Expectations

#### 28.3.1.2.2 SUMMARY OF THE COMPARISON FOR THE BALLI

In summary, the descriptive analysis of the BALLI shows only small differences among the three groups. Beliefs about language learning by all the participants of this study, based on their responses on the BALLI, are shown in Tables 28.13 through 28.17. The mean scores of overall beliefs and standard deviations were calculated for UCB, UCLA, and UT to compare the differences between the three groups. As shown in Table 28.13, “belief” means were within the medium range for all three groups: 3.43% for UT, 3.27% for UCB, and 3.31% for UCLA participants.

The differences in the five categories of beliefs between the three groups were also compared. As indicated in Table 28.14, only small differences among the three groups in the type of beliefs they hold are shown. A slightly higher percentage of beliefs by UT students than by UCB and UCLA students are indicated for most categories. UT participants reported holding higher percentage of beliefs in all five categories except “Foreign Language Aptitude” where UCLA got the highest mean.

The individual belief items by all three groups, based on their responses on the BALLI, are shown in Tables 28.15 through 28.17. Table 28.15 presents belief categories, which fell into the high range. Items 3, 1, 11, 17, and 6 from each category were among the most common beliefs by all participants and were held more than other beliefs: a DLL item (Item 3), “Some languages are easier to learn than others” (M: 4.20); an FLA item (Item 1), “It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language” (M: 4.55); an NLL item (Item 11), “It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country” (M: 4.26), an LCS item (Item 17), “It is important to repeat and practice a lot” (M: 4.55); and an MOT item (Item 6). “I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak the Persian language very well” (M: 4.15).

More belief items fall within the medium range for the participants of this study (Table 28.16). More items from FLA and LCS were in the medium range than other kinds of beliefs. Some of the beliefs which fall within the medium-high range were: a DLL item (Item 14), “If someone spend one hour a day learning the Persian language, it would take him/her 3 to 5 years to become fluent” (M: 2.97); an FLA item (Item 15), “I have foreign language aptitude” (M: 3.49); an NLL item (Item 20), “Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules” (M: 3.02), an LCS item (Item 18), “I feel self-conscious speaking the Persian language in front of other people” (M: 3.27); and an MOT item (Item 30), “People from my culture think that it is important to speak a foreign language” (M: 3.45).

Table 28.15 Reported beliefs categorized by high mean range (M: 3.5 or above)

Category	Item (Mean)
DLL	3 (4.20), 6 (4.15)
FLA	1 (4.55), 10 (3.78), 34 (4.03)
NLL	8 (3.50), 11 (4.26), 25 (3.99)
LCS	7 (3.74), 13 (3.64), 17 (4.55)
MOT	6 (4.15), 23 (4.09), 31 (3.66)

Note: DLL = Difficulty of Language Learning; FLA = Foreign Language Aptitude; NLL = Nature of Language Learning; LCS = Learning and Communication Strategies; MOT = Motivation and Expectations

Table 28.16 Reported beliefs categorized by medium mean range (M: 2.5–3.4)

Category	Item (Mean)
DLL	4 (2.84), 14 (2.97), 28 (2.71)
FLA	2 (3.44), 5 (2.90), 15 (3.49), 32 (3.17)
NLL	16 (2.93), 20 (3.02)
LCS	12 (2.77), 18 (3.27), 19 (3.07), 21 (3.17)
MOT	27 (2.84), 30 (3.45)

Note: DLL = Difficulty of Language Learning; FLA = Foreign Language Aptitude; NLL = Nature of Language Learning; LCS = Learning and Communication Strategies; MOT = Motivation and Expectations

As seen in Table 28.17 following, there are fewer items within the low range than high and medium range of beliefs. This shows that participants of this study hold a relatively medium percentage of beliefs (M: 3.34). Items 24, 29, 26 and 9 from each category were among the least common beliefs by all the participants and were held less than other beliefs: a DLL item (Item 24), “It is easier to speak than to understand the Persian language” (M: 2.39); an FLA item (Item 29), “People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages” (M: 2.21); an NLL item (Item 26), “Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English” (M: 2.20) and an LCS item (Item 9), “You shouldn’t say anything in the Persian language until you can say it correctly” (M: 1.82). Interestingly, no item from the category of “motivation and expectations” falls within the “low belief range”.

In summary, almost half of the participants considered Persian as having medium learning difficulty, possibly because of the different alphabet and word order between Persian and English. They felt that it would take three to five years to achieve proficiency in the Persian language. On the other hand, the three groups were different in the perceived difficulties of language skills. About half (56.8%, 44.8%) of the participants at UCB and UT disagreed that speaking is easier than listening, only 38.7% of UCLA participants disagreed.

While American Persian language learners endorsed the concept of foreign language aptitude, the possibility that children are better language learners than adults and agreed that people who already speak a foreign language would learn and speak another one better, they disagreed with the idea that certain groups of people, such as people good at math or science were better or worse at language learning. Almost half of the participants (54.1% at UCB, 48.4% at UCLA, 47.8% at UT) from all three groups were neutral to the possibility of female superiority to male at learning foreign languages. A similar number of participants (51.4% at UCB, 51.6% at UCLA, 44.8% at UT) agreed that everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

In the area of strategies, the importance of repetition and practice and of excellent pronunciation in speaking was supported by good number of participants in each group. All the participants held quite similar beliefs regarding guessing, correctness, and anxiety. The participants in all three groups were less likely to enjoy practicing Persian with Persian native speakers they met.

A good number of the participants in each group reported strong motivations for learning Persian, particularly to get to know native speakers of Persian better, but not in order to get a good job. Eventually, they would have many opportunities to use their Persian language skills.

*Table 28.17* Reported beliefs categorized by low mean range (M: 2.4 or below)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Item (Mean)</i>
DLL	24 (2.39)
FLA	22 (2.42), 29 (2.21)
NLL	26 (2.20)
LCS	9 (1.82)
MOT	N/A

Note: DLL = Difficulty of Language Learning; FLA = Foreign Language Aptitude; NLL = Nature of Language Learning; LCS = Learning and Communication Strategies; MOT = Motivation and Expectations

### 28.3.1.3 Descriptive analyses of the SILL

In general, participants of this study reported using a variety of learning strategies to learn Persian. The following discussion of learning strategies is based on the descriptive analysis of the subjects' responses to the SILL. The frequencies of responses (in percentages), means and standard deviations for all the SILL items are presented in the following tables and charts.

Descriptive analyses of the participants' responses to the SILL were conducted to examine the strategies which were most and least frequently used by learners of Persian as a foreign language. The five point Likert-scale items of the SILL ranges from (1) never or almost never to (5) always or almost always. In general, high means are considered to be in the range of 3.5 to 5.0, medium 2.5 to 3.4, and low 1.0 to 2.4. The overall frequency of strategy use (the overall SILL mean) was 3.13, which indicates moderate usage of learning strategies by the participants.

According to Oxford's classification of learning strategies (1990a), the SILL items are divided into six subgroups; (1) memory strategies (items 1 to 15), (2) cognitive strategies (items 16 to 40), (3) compensation strategies (items 41 to 48), (4) metacognitive strategies (items 49 to 64), (5) affective strategies (items 65 to 71), and (6) social strategies (items 72 to 80).

#### 28.3.1.3.1 GENERAL SILL RESPONSES

The results of the SILL responses are reported in the following. Table 28.18 shows the mean of each strategy subgroup and its rank in frequency of strategy use. The highest mean belongs to the "motivation and expectation" category; while the lowest belongs to "the difficulty of language learning". The most frequently used strategies were compensation and social strategies followed by metacognitive and memory strategies. The least frequently used strategies were affective strategies whose mean was far below the frequencies of the other strategies. As mentioned in the previous section, a mean score in the range above 3.5 on all SILL items is considered to reflect high use of a given strategy, 2.5 to 3.4 indicates medium use, and below 2.4 shows low use of a strategy (Oxford 1990a).

#### 28.3.1.3.2 SUMMARY OF THE COMPARISON FOR THE SILL

In summary, the individual strategy use by all the participants of this study, based on their responses on the SILL, is shown in Tables 28.19 through 28.23. The mean scores of overall strategy use and standard deviations were calculated for UCB, UCLA, and UT to compare the differences between the three groups. As shown in Table 28.19, strategy usage means were within the high range for UT students (M: 3.84) and medium range for UCB (M: 3.03) and

Table 28.18 SILL categories and frequencies

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Memory	2.93	5
Cognitive	3.30	3
Compensation	3.47	1
Metacognitive	3.17	4
Affective	2.54	6
Social	3.41	2



Table 28.19 Descriptive statistics for the variables and mean difference of the strategy use

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
UCB	3.03	1.09	1.43	4.03
UCLA	3.09	1.09	1.37	4.18
UT Austin	3.84	1.20	1.33	4.67

Table 28.20 Differences in mean and standard deviation of overall strategy use among the six categories

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Memory strategies	UCB	2.85	1.04
	UCLA	2.83	1.11
	UT Austin	2.88	1.00
Cognitive strategies	UCB	3.35	1.09
	UCLA	3.32	1.10
	UT Austin	3.28	1.08
Compensation strategies	UCB	3.40	1.09
	UCLA	3.49	1.06
	UT Austin	3.54	0.97
Metacognitive strategies	UCB	3.06	1.13
	UCLA	3.22	1.14
	UT Austin	3.19	1.04
Affective strategies	UCB	2.48	1.12
	UCLA	2.60	1.04
	UT Austin	2.86	0.92
Social strategies	UCB	3.28	1.11
	UCLA	3.44	1.06
	UT Austin	3.44	1.01

UCLA (M: 3.09). Therefore, UT participants reported overall higher strategy use than UCB and UCLA when learning Persian.

The differences in the use of the six categories of strategies between the three groups were also compared. As indicated in Table 28.20, a higher use of strategies by UT students for most categories of strategies except for cognitive and metacognitive strategies which showed a difference between the three groups. UT participants reported using memory, compensation, affective and social strategies, whereas UCB participants used cognitive strategies and UCLA participants used metacognitive and social strategies more frequently.

The individual strategy use by all three groups, based on their responses on the SILL, is shown in Tables 28.21 through 28.23. Table 28.21 presents strategy categories which fell into the high use range. Items 1, 39, 45, 46, 63, and 79 from each category were among the most common strategies by all the participants and used more than other strategies: a memory strategy (Item 1), "I create associations between new material and what I already know" (M: 3.91); a cognitive strategy (Item 39), "I look for patterns in the new language" (M: 3.92); a compensation strategy (Item 45), "I ask the other person to tell me the right word if I cannot

Table 28.21 Reported strategy use categorized by high usage (M: 3.5 or above)

Category	Item (Mean)
MEM	1 (3.91), 7 (3.52)
COG	17 (3.64), 18 (3.60), 20 (3.57), 31(3.77), 32 (3.81), 36 (3.81), 37 (3.56), 38 (3.54), 39 (3.92), 40 (3.65)
COM	41 (3.96), 42 (3.57), 44 (3.89), 45 (4.01), 46 (4.01)
MET	50 (3.52), 62 (3.64), 63 (3.95)
AFF	N/A
SOC	72 (3.79), 73 (3.67), 74 (3.57), 77 (3.52), 79 (3.96), 80 (3.63)

Note: MEM=Memory Strategies; COG=Cognitive Strategies; COM=Compensation Strategies; MET=Metacognitive Strategies; AFF= Affective Strategies; SOC= Social Strategies

Table 28.22 Reported strategy use categorized by medium usage (M: 2.5–3.4)

Category	Item (Mean)
MEM	2 (3.00), 3 (2.96), 4 (3.16), 6 (2.71), 8 (3.19), 10 (3.32), 11 (2.84), 13 (3.26), 15 (3.40)
COG	16 (3.34), 19 (3.16), 21 (3.10), 22 (3.19), 23 (2.99), 24 (3.27), 25 (3.22), 26 (3.04), 27 (2.54), 28 (2.63), 29 (2.89), 30 (3.44), 33 (2.77), 34 (3.16), 35 (3.35)
COM	43 (3.39), 48 (2.80)
MET	49 (2.79), 51 (3.40), 52 (2.64), 53 (2.84), 54 (3.39), 55 (3.12), 56 (3.16), 58 (3.07), 59 (3.28), 60 (3.22), 61 (2.95), 64 (3.38)
AFF	65 (3.28), 66 (2.83), 67 (3.48)
SOC	75 (2.88), 78 (3.28)

Note: MEM=Memory Strategies; COG=Cognitive Strategies; COM=Compensation Strategies; MET=Metacognitive Strategies; AFF= Affective Strategies; SOC= Social Strategies

think of it in a conversation” (M: 4.01) and Item 46, “When I cannot think of correct expression to say or write, “I find a different way to express the idea: for example, I use a synonym or describe the idea” (M: 4.01); a metacognitive strategy (Item 63), “I learn from my mistakes in using the new language” (M: 3.95); and a social strategy (Item 79). “I try to learn about the culture of the place where the new language is spoken” (M: 3.96). It is noteworthy that no item from the “high strategy usage” falls within the category of affective strategy. This shows that participants of this study rarely use this type of strategy.

More strategy uses fell within the medium range for the participants of this study (Table 28.22). More items from the cognitive and metacognitive strategies were in the medium range than other kinds of strategies. Some of the strategies that fall within the medium-high range were: a memory strategy (Item), “I go back to refresh my memory of things I earned much earlier” (M: 3.40), a cognitive strategy (Item 30), “I seek specific details in what I hear or read” (M: 3.44), a compensation strategy (Item 43) “In a conversation I anticipate what the other person is going to say based on what has been said so far” (M: 3.39), a metacognitive strategy (Item 51) “I decide in advance to pay special attention to specific language aspects; for example, I focus the way native speakers pronounce certain sounds” (M: 3.40), an affective strategy (Item 67) “I actively encourage myself to take wise risks in language learning such as guessing meanings . . .” (M: 3.48) and a social strategy (Item 78), “In conversation with others

Table 28.23 Reported strategy use categorized by low usage (M: 2.4 or below)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Item (Mean)</i>
MEM	5 (2.20), 9 (1.79), 12 (1.51), 14 (2.02)
COG	N/A
COM	47 (2.27)
MET	57 (2.31)
AFF	68 (2.10), 69 (2.47), 70 (1.36), 71 (2.35)
SOC	76 (2.34)

Note: MEM=Memory Strategies; COG=Cognitive Strategies; COM=Compensation Strategies; MET=Metacognitive Strategies; AFF=Affective Strategies; SOC= Social Strategies

in the new language, I ask questions in order to be as involved as possible and to show I am interested” (M: 3.28).

As seen in Table 28.23 following, there are fewer items within the low range than high and medium range of strategy use. This shows that participants of this study use a relatively medium percentage of strategies (M: 3.13). Items 12, 47, 57, 70, and 76 from each category were among the least common strategies by all the participants and used less than other strategies: a memory strategy (Item 12), “I use flash cards with the new word on one side and the definition on the other” (M: 1.51); a compensation strategy (Item: 47), “I make up new words if I do not know the right ones” (M: 2.27); a metacognitive strategy (Item:57), “I plan what I am going to accomplish in language learning each day and each week” (M: 2.31); an affective strategy (Item 70), “I keep a private diary or journal where I write my feelings about language learning” (M: 1.36); and a social strategy (Item 76), “I have a regular language learning partner” (M: 2.34). Interestingly, no item from the category of cognitive strategy and only one item from the categories of compensation and social strategies each fall within the “low strategy usage”.

### 28.3.2 Discussion

Using the research questions as a framework, the following section discusses and interprets findings of the data analyses. Each section offers interpretations of findings based upon the descriptive analysis of the data (IBQ, BALLI, and SILL). The findings of the current study are then compared with those found in previous studies, mainly with studies related to American students learning other foreign languages (LCTL and CTL).

#### 28.3.2.1 Research question 1

What beliefs about language learning do US Persian language learners report holding? How do the American university students’ beliefs about language learning compare to those of other language learners?

Based on the descriptive analyses of the BALLI developed by Horwitz (1987), this study identified American students’ beliefs about learning the Persian language. Using Horwitz’s five categories for the BALLI, this study found that only small differences exist among these categories. The highest mean belonged to the “motivation and expectations” category, while the lowest mean belonged to the “difficulty of language learning”.

In terms of frequency of beliefs about language learning, Persian language students hold strong beliefs about motivation and expectations of learning Persian. They also strongly

expressed a desire to have Persian-speaking friends and to learn to speak Persian. In spite of these beliefs about language learning, many of these students felt self-conscious and timid speaking Persian. Thus, these students may not be willing to practice Persian with others. These findings suggest that even though it is assumed that students' beliefs are related to their use of language learning strategies (Park 1995; Yang 1992; Wenden 1986, 1987a), this relationship may depend on the types of beliefs, language learning strategies, and individual characteristics of learners.

With respect to difficulty of language learning, most participants considered Persian as a language of medium difficulty, which can be learned and spoken fluently between three to five years. Participants mostly believed that they would ultimately learn to speak Persian very well. The Persian learners tended to believe that learning Persian takes the same time as the time the American believed was required to learn French in Kern's (1995) study. Perhaps this similarity is related to American students' objectives and expectations for learning a foreign language. Interestingly, a similar result was also shown in Oh's (1996) study where Japanese learners tended to believe that Japanese was a relatively difficult language and it takes three to five years to learn the language. While many French learners (in Kern's 1995) and Japanese learners (in Oh's 1996) agreed that it is easier to speak than understand a foreign language, Persian learners in this study disagreed with this belief.

Concerning foreign language aptitude, most of the participants agreed that it is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language, and also agreed with the statement that "it is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one". The results from Kern (1995) and Oh (1996) also supported this belief. In addition, students from all these studies shared the same belief that everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

On the topic of the nature of language learning, a good number of participants agreed that it is necessary to know the foreign language culture in order to speak well. The same result was shown by Japanese language learners (Oh 1996) whose emphasis was on learning the target culture. However, this belief was not supported by French language learners (Kern 1995) and other foreign language learners, such as German and Spanish (Horwitz 1988). This difference of opinions might be due to the nature of less commonly taught languages such as Persian and Japanese rather than commonly taught languages such as French, German and Spanish. Persian language learners also believed that it is best to learn a foreign language in the foreign country. This was well supported by both foreign language learners in Kern's and Oh's study as well as by foreign language learners in Horwitz's (1988) study. Many also agreed that learning a foreign language is different from learning other academic subjects.

Regarding "learning and communication strategies", most of the participants felt that it is important to repeat and practice when speaking Persian. This belief was previously supported by all the other foreign language learners (Horwitz 1988; Kern 1995; Oh 1996; Kuntz 1996). Exactly half of the participants disagreed with the notion that they should not say anything in the Persian language until they could say it correctly and they also said that it was O.K. to guess if they do not know a word in the Persian language. These numbers were much higher according to previous studies (Yang 1992; Park 1995; Oh 1996; Kunt 1997; Hong 2006). This could be due to the possibility that native speakers, both instructors as well as students, convey common myths to the non-native learners both directly and indirectly.

Finally, concerning "motivation and expectations", the great majority of the participants in each group expressed the wish to learn Persian well in order to get to know native speakers better and not for bettering their opportunity for getting a good job. They reported that they expected ultimately to learn Persian very well. In previous studies (Horwitz 1987; Yang 1992; Park 1995; Truitt 1995; Kunt 1997; Hong 2006), a high percentage of participants who were

comprised of students learning English as a second /foreign language, expressed the belief that if they learn English very well, they would have better job opportunities. Studies on American students learning foreign languages (Kern 1995; Oh 1996; Kuntz 1996), however found that, a high percentage either disagreed with or were neutral towards this belief.

It seems that at least as far as it is true of this study, students have integrative motivation in expressing a wish for “learning the language well, getting to know the native speakers, making friends and learning the culture”. On the other hand, the ESL/EFL students in previous studies, who expressed a wish to better their chance of getting a better job through their learning of the English language, clearly hold instrumental motivation. This point could be generalized to cover all the LCTLs versus the CTLs, that learners of LCTL embark on the learning expedition due to integrative motivations but this is not so in the case of CTLs. The evidence from studies on American students learning foreign languages (Kern 1995; Oh 1996; Kuntz 1996) cited previously also supports this. At this point it is warranted to point out that since September 11, 2001, there has been such a great shift in looking at and classifying so many of LCTL as desirable, necessary, crucial, and strategic (entailing better jobs and salaries) that there could well be a change in the motivation of current and future students starting on their journey from integrative to instrumental. It is also possible that these students are indicating that they have personal but not strategic reasons for learning Persian.

### *28.3.2.2 Research question 2*

Which beliefs about language learning are most common or least common among the participants in this study?

Based on the participants’ responses on the BALLI, some of the individual items fall within the high mean range. These items show the most common language learning beliefs in each category among the participants of this study. Regarding “difficulty of language learning”, items 3 and 6 were among the most common beliefs by all participants. These were: “Some languages are easier to learn than others” and “I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak the Persian language very well”. Concerning “foreign language aptitude”, items 1, 10, and 34 scored high means. These were: “It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language”, “It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one” and “Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language”. On the topic of “nature of the language learning”, items 8, 11, and 25 were reported as most common beliefs, which were “It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language”, “It is better to learn a foreign language in a foreign country” and “learning a foreign language is different from learning other schools subjects”. Regarding “learning and communication strategies”, items 7, 13, and 17 were highly scored. These include “It is important to speak the Persian language with an excellent accent”; “It is o.k. to guess if you don’t know a word in the Persian language” and “It is important to repeat and practice a lot”.

Furthermore, based on the participants’ responses on the BALLI, some of the individual items fall within the low mean range. These items show the least common language learning beliefs in each category among the participants of this study. Regarding “difficulty of language learning”, item 24 was among the least common beliefs by all participants. This was: “It is easier to speak than understand the Persian language”. Concerning “foreign language aptitude”, items 22 and 29 scored low means. These were: “Women are better than men at learning foreign languages” and “People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages”. On the topic of “nature of the language learning”, item 26 was reported as the most common belief, which was “Learning a foreign language

is mostly a matter of translating from English. Regarding “learning and communication strategies”, item 9 was scored low. This includes “You shouldn’t say anything in the Persian language until you can say it correctly”. Interestingly, no item from the category of “motivation and expectations” falls within the “low belief range”. This shows that participants of this study have high levels of motivation and expectations for learning the Persian language.

Comparing the three groups in this category, only small differences among the three groups in the type of beliefs they hold are shown. Although the means for beliefs about language learning were within the medium range for all three groups, a slightly higher percentage of beliefs by UT (M: 3.43) students than by UCLA (M: 3.31) and UCB (M: 3.27) students are shown for most categories. UT participants reported holding a slightly higher percentage of beliefs in all five categories except in “Foreign Language Aptitude”, where UCLA got the highest mean.

A potential basis for holding stronger beliefs by UT students relative to the two other locations may be in the high percentage of confirmatory responses to the question on the IBQ: “Are you second generation Iranian-American?” (UCB: 37.8%, UCLA: 41.9%, and UT: 59.7%). As these figures illustrate, the percentile disparity between UCB and UCLA is low (about 4%), yet exhibits an increase in favor of UCLA, whereas the percentile difference between the two aforementioned settings and UT is very high (about 20%). This constancy is mirrored in the holding of beliefs about language learning where it demonstrates a steady rising slope for UCB, UCLA and UT (respectively: M: 3.27, 3.31, and 3.43), which could very well be indicative of existence of a connection linking heritage background to beliefs about language learning.

### *28.3.2.3 Research question 3*

What language learning strategies do US Persian language learners report using? How do the American university students’ language learning strategies compare to those of other language learners?

Based on the descriptive analyses of the SILL developed by Oxford (1990c), this study identified American students’ Persian language learning strategies. In general, the students of Persian reported using a variety of different strategies. Almost none of the Oxford’s subgroups of strategies received a low-use rating (2.4 or below). Furthermore, the overall frequency average; i.e., the grand mean of all 80 items was 3.13, which indicates that this sample used language learning strategies at a moderate level. This study compares the frequency of strategy use between the present sample and previous samples from other studies, which have used the SILL. The samples included for this comparison were those who learned L2 in foreign language situations. Samples, which learned L2 in L2 environments (e.g., ESL), were excluded since research studies have shown that strategy use is generally higher for the latter groups. In other words, it is highly likely that if learners are surrounded by the target language all day, their need for using strategies will be higher than those who have limited exposure to L2.

The majority of foreign language students from previous studies (Oxford 1986; Oxford and Nyikos 1989; Green 1991; Douglas 1992; Nakayama 1995) used learning strategies at moderate level (2.5 to 3.4). None of the Puerto Rican students (Green 1991) was consistently low frequency strategy users. This might be due to the fact that these students were studying English in a so-called mixed ESL-EFL environment. Similarly, participants from the current research and Nakayama’s (1995) study used strategies at a higher level than other

studies. The difference might have resulted from the fact that most of the participants of the present research had previously studied at least one foreign language, mostly Indo-European languages such as Spanish, German and French, in high school or college before attempting to learn Persian. Therefore, they might have already developed certain strategies with which they felt comfortable or which they found worked for them. On the other hand, it is possible that Persian, as an Indo-European language, demanded the use of the same learning strategies.

In terms of the individual items of the SILL, most items belonged to the mean ranges between 2.5 and 3.4, indicating that Persian language learners in this study “sometimes” used most of the strategies inventoried by the SILL to learn Persian more effectively. Interestingly, Yang (1992), Park (1995), Nakayama (1995) and Hong (2006) report that university students in their studies also “sometimes” used most of the strategies in the SILL. Compared to the earlier-given findings, many language learning strategies in the SILL used by the foreign language learners in the U.S. reported by Nyikos and Oxford (1993) belonged to the categories of “never or almost never used” and “generally not used” as well as “usually used” and “sometimes used”. In other words, foreign language learners in the U.S. used language learning strategies more broadly than EFL university students in Taiwan and Korea. However, findings of the current study do not support the latter statement. This might be due to either the nature of the Persian language as a less commonly taught language or the nature of the Persian instruction in the United States.

#### *28.3.2.4 Research question 4*

Which language learning strategies are most common or least common among the participants in this study?

American students employed a variety of language learning strategies. In the following section, the use of strategies by the participants is provided in descending order from most to least used and gives a possible rationale for the results. By means of descriptive analyses of the SILL, this study found that 26 items were among the most common strategies by all participants and were used more than other strategies, whereas 11 items were among the least common strategies by all participants and were used less than other strategies. The highest mean belonged to items #45 and #46. These were “I ask the other person to tell me the right word if I cannot think of it in a conversation” and “I find a different way to express the idea”, respectively. The lowest mean belonged to item #70, which was “I keep a private diary or journal where I write my feelings about language learning”.

In general, compensation strategies emerged as the most popular strategies in the current study as well as previous studies (Phillips 1991; Yang 1992; Mullins 1992; Nakayama 1995; Hong 2006). On the other hand, memory and affective strategies were the least frequently used, which is, in fact similar to worldwide findings with a variety of samples using various versions of the SILL (Oxford and Cohen 1992). Learners seem to use a limited set of memory strategies on a regular basis rather than using a variety of memory tricks occasionally.

Another point to be noticed is that strategy use by the present sample was quite similar to that of the study by Nakayama (1995). First, the overall frequency of strategy use in both studies was relatively high, compared with the other studies. Secondly, frequencies of use by categories were almost alike except for one slight difference in order; in both cases, compensation and social strategies were used the most frequently, whereas memory and affective strategies were employed the least frequently. The preference for these types of strategies

may indicate that participants tended to rely heavily on compensation and social strategies to process information due to their lack of overall language competence and knowledge. In addition, the high use of compensation and social strategies may reflect the methods of teaching and ways of learning Persian in the United States both of which encourage students to use translation, gestures, clues, and synonyms in order to process information in the language learning classes. The high use of social strategies by the participants of the current study was also supported previously by other studies (Douglas 1992; Nakayama 1995; Wharton 2000; Hong 2006).

On the other hand, the low mean score for memory strategies supports the findings by Phillips (1991) in which Asian ESL students used memory strategies the least frequently among the six categories of learning strategies in the SILL (ESL/EFL Student Version). In addition, it is interesting that American students in this study used metacognitive strategies similar to students in Oxford et al. (1990) and Phillips's (1991) studies. Regardless of the importance of practice strategies, included in the category of the cognitive strategies, to learn an L2, participants of this study were reluctant to use independent and interactive practice strategies. Regarding this, several possible explanations can be offered: (1) Students may not have enough opportunities to practice Persian outside the classroom; (2) These students may avoid practice strategies because practice strategies usually accompany affective demands such as lowering anxiety; (3) Instructional practice and classroom objectives may suppress these students' use of practice strategies, and (4) These students may not be aware of enough practice strategies.

Finally, as for affective strategies for regulating emotions, learners of foreign languages may not find themselves in situations requiring spontaneous responses in the L2 or in which they may experience culture shock; thus, affective strategies are, in general, underused. Moreover, based on familiarity with teaching Persian, this author can attest that another possible reason behind this might be due to the fact that these students may not be aware of the existence of affective strategies. This indicates that there is a need for instructing students in strategy training at the beginning of the course.

Comparing the three groups in this category, strategy usage means were within the high range for UT students (M: 3.84) and medium range for UCB (M: 3.03) and UCLA (M: 3.09). Therefore, UT participants reported overall higher strategy use than UCB and UCLA when learning Persian. The comparison in the use of the six categories of strategies between the three groups also showed a higher use of strategies by UT students for most categories of strategies except for cognitive and metacognitive strategies. This showed a significant difference between the three groups. UT participants reported using memory, compensation, affective and social strategies; whereas, UCB participants used cognitive strategies and UCLA participants used metacognitive and social strategies more frequently.

A potential basis for the elevated usage of language learning strategies by UT students relative to the two other settings may possibly be traced in the high percentage of affirmative responses to the query on the IBQ: "Are you second generation Iranian-American?" (UCB: 37.8%, UCLA: 41.9% and UT: 59.7%). As these figures illustrate, the percentile disparity between UCB and UCLA is low (about 4%) but exhibits an increase in favor of UCLA, whereas the percentile difference between the two aforementioned institutes and UT is very high (about 20%). This consistency is paralleled in the application of strategies where strategy use demonstrates a steady intensifying gradient for UCB, UCLA and UT (respectively: M: 3.03, 3.09 and 3.84), which could very well be indicative of existence of a connection tying heritage background to the use of learning strategies.



## **28.4 Conclusions and implications**

### **28.4.1 Conclusions**

The current study is the first research attempt to investigate US Persian university students' beliefs about language learning and their use of language learning strategies. Particularly, students learning a less commonly taught language, such as Persian, may have different language beliefs and use different language learning strategies than those students learning a commonly taught language. This study has also presented empirical evidence reflecting learners' beliefs about language learning and their self-reported use of learning strategies.

- 1 The current study indicated that American university students reported holding various beliefs about language learning inventoried by the BALLI. That is, these students responded to all the items in the BALLI from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The American university students in this study were highly motivated for learning Persian integratively. For instance, participants believed that learning the Persian language is very important because they would get to know the Persian native speakers as well as their culture better. This shows that students were motivated to learn Persian more for social interaction rather than academic purposes or better job opportunities. This study found that not only learning context influenced the beliefs of the students but also societal trends in language learning regarding the advantages of Persian fluency was influential too. Furthermore, in spite of the dominant grammar-translation method used in teaching Persian in the United States, many of these students rejected the importance of teaching mainly translation and grammar in learning Persian.

In addition, the participants strongly expressed a desire to learn to speak Persian well and make Persian-speaking friends. These participants also acknowledged the importance of cultural knowledge, learning environment, pronunciation, and guessing in speaking Persian. Furthermore, the participants in this study held both similar and different beliefs concerning language learning from those of American foreign language learners (Horwitz 1988; Kern 1995; Oh 1996), ESL university students (Horwitz 1987; Siebert 2003) and EFL university students (Yang 1992; Park 1995; Truitt 1995; Nakayama 1995; Kunt 1997; Kim-Yoon 2000; Hong 2006). Some of contrasting findings across the studies with learners in various learning and cultural contexts may support the argument that learners' beliefs are influenced by the different language learning contexts (ESL/EFL/FL or LCTL/CTL), educational or cultural backgrounds.

- 2 This study investigated the most and least common beliefs held by American university students of Persian. By means of descriptive analyses of the BALLI, this study found that 14 items were among the most common beliefs held by all participants and were held more than other beliefs, whereas five items were among the least common beliefs held by all participants and were held less than the other beliefs. The highest mean belonged to items 1 and #7. These were "It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language" and "It is important to repeat and practice a lot" respectively. The lowest mean belonged to item 9, which was "You shouldn't say anything in the Persian language until you can say it correctly".
- 3 American university students learning Persian as a foreign language in the United States employed a variety of language learning strategies inventoried by the SILL (FL Student Version) when learning Persian and reported similarities and differences in strategy use.

Among the strategies, the American university students in this study used more compensation and social strategies than metacognitive, memory and affective strategies. In addition, a comparison of findings of previous studies revealed several similarities as well as some differences in the responses to the SILL items between participants of the current study and those of ESL learners (Chang 1990; Phillips 1991; Osanai 2000), EFL learners (Yang 1992; Park 1995; Wang 1996; Nakayama 1995; Chou 2002, Chang 2003; Hong 2006) and FL learners (Oxford and Ehrman 1995; Wharton 2000).

- 4 This study investigated the most and least common language learning strategies used by American university students of Persian. By means of descriptive analyses of the SILL, this study found that 26 items were among the most common strategies used by all participants and were used more than other strategies; whereas, 11 items were among the least common strategies used by all participants and were used less than other strategies. The highest mean belonged to items 45 and 46. These were “I ask the other person to tell me the right word if I cannot think of it in a conversation” and “I find a different way to express the idea” respectively. The lowest mean belonged to item 70, which was “I keep a private diary or journal where I write my feelings about language learning”.
- 5 A comparison between the three settings indicated that the mean for learning beliefs was within a slightly higher range for UT students than for UCLA and UCB students. However, this mean was within a noticeably higher range for strategy use for UT students than for UCB and UCLA students. Therefore, UT participants reported overall higher strategy use than UCB and UCLA when learning Persian. This study showed a higher use of strategies by UT students for most categories of strategies except for cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which showed a significant difference between the three groups. UT participants reported using memory, compensation, affective, and social strategies, whereas UCB participants used cognitive strategies and UCLA participants used metacognitive and social strategies more frequently.

### **28.4.2 Implications**

The findings of this study have both theoretical and pedagogical implications for research on second or foreign language teaching and learning and practice of Persian instruction in the United States. This study found variety in the strategy use and beliefs about language learning of American university students.

Theoretically, this study explored language learning strategies and beliefs about language learning of American university students learning a strategic, less commonly taught language in the United States. It has been argued that learners’ prescriptive beliefs about how to best learn a second language represent their awareness of language learning and have the potential for developing self-regulation. Such beliefs indicate that learners have begun to reflect on what they are doing in line with their goals, and this awareness may ultimately lead to self-regulation.

In addition, studies in language learning strategies create profiles of good language learners as students who are actively engaged in language learning and are able to problem-solve regarding their own learning. One consistent finding is that all language learners report using some type of strategies in their language learning. Differences across learners are in the relative effectiveness of strategy application; that is, the appropriate implementation of the right strategies at the right times.

Pedagogically, the findings of this study suggest that strategy training conducted in a regular language classroom can help less successful students become successful in learning Persian,

which will help them become more effective and autonomous Persian learners outside the classroom. Nevertheless, the findings of this study add more ideas about exploring the beliefs, strategy use, and strategy training for students of less commonly taught languages:

- 1 Participants of this study show high integrative motivation and self-perceptions of foreign language aptitude. They believe that they will learn to speak Persian very well and they strongly believe that by learning Persian they can get to know Persian native speakers and their culture better. Therefore, instructors can help students by discussing the value of knowing Persian and the importance of sociocultural elements in learning the Persian language. Instructors should also develop a curriculum that reflects the needs of these culture-oriented students.
- 2 Persian language learners in this study believe that “learning a foreign language is not mostly the matter of translating from English”. In addition, they believe that learning Persian is not just learning the grammar rules. Therefore, Persian instructors should use methodologies that the field of foreign language instruction currently promotes, such as the communicative language teaching method, which is more learner-centered and more practice-oriented and emphasizes social interaction for the development of students’ proficiency more than other methods. This way, instructors can help students by providing frequent positive feedback, creating a non-threatening environment in which students feel comfortable speaking Persian and most of all by making learning Persian fun.
- 3 The participants of this study are engaged in language learning strategies less frequently. This might hypothetically be due to such universal factors as follows:
  - A) The nature of the language: Persian, being a less commonly taught language may affect the learners differently than say a commonly taught language. The unfamiliar characteristics of the language (visually unfamiliar writing system, right to left writing, SOV word order, unwritten short vowels). This includes the cultural aspects of the language too (what is expected from the students).
  - B) The nature of the language instruction: it is highly probable that the instructors in the less-commonly taught languages field, including Persian language, do not engage in instructing the students in “strategic training”, “awareness raising”, and/or similar topics.
  - C) The nature of the student: these two points notwithstanding, the only conclusion to arrive at is that the students engaging in the learning of the Persian language are not highly effective language learners.

Therefore, since effectiveness in both language teaching and learning is the objective, educators need to know who their students are and how they approach language learning. Instructors should also be more involved in introducing the relevant language learning strategies to the Persian language students. Finding out about students’ language beliefs and their choice of language learning strategies will offer new insights as to what they expect and how they go about learning Persian in the classroom. In order to achieve this goal, the instructors need to be familiar in the field of foreign language education and its teaching methodologies, specifically less commonly taught languages.

- 4 Strategy training should be combined with belief training to increase training effects. In order to maximize training effects in large groups, teachers should identify more effective learning strategies for specific groups of students and focus on teaching these strategies

to the students. In addition, if students are found to hold unrealistic beliefs about learning Persian, instructors may attempt to modify the preconceived notions that may influence their choice of language learning strategies. For instance, if the instructors find that the students believe that Persian must be difficult to learn, they might influence these beliefs by providing students with relevant facts such as the origin of the Persian language (Indo-European), the sharing of many loan words by both languages, the lack of case-marking, gender, neutral and dual (as opposed to French, German, Arabic) in Persian. Therefore, discussing realistic expectations regarding language learning task may also help and engage students in more effective learning.

# Appendix A

## Individual Background Questionnaire (IBQ)

1. Date \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age \_\_\_\_\_
3. Sex \_\_\_\_\_
4. Mother Tongue \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are you second generation Iranian-American?
  - Yes
  - No
6. If not, what do you consider yourself? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Language(s) you speak at home \_\_\_\_\_
8. Language(s) you have been exposed to at home \_\_\_\_\_
9. Language(s) you have studied. How long? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How do you evaluate your proficiency in the above language(s)? (Write down the name of each language next to the appropriate choice)
  - Excellent
  - Good
  - Fair
  - Poor
11. Other languages you have been exposed to. How? \_\_\_\_\_
12. How long have you been studying Persian? \_\_\_\_\_
13. What made you interested in learning Persian? (Mark all that apply)
  - Being second generation Iranian American
  - Needing Persian for academic purposes
  - Having ties to Iranians (friends, spouse, etc.)
  - Needing Persian for performing job related duties
  - Persian will benefit you in the job you will eventually have
  - Required to take a language for graduation
  - Need it for travel
  - Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_
14. How important is it for you to become proficient in Persian?
  - Very important
  - Somewhat important
  - Not important
15. So far, how do you compare your overall proficiency in Persian to other students in your class?
  - Excellent
  - Good
  - Fair
  - Poor

**16. So far, how do you compare your overall proficiency in Persian to native speakers of Persian?**

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

**17. By the end of this course, what do you expect your proficiency level to be?**

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

**18. After two years of instruction what do you expect your proficiency level to be?**

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

**19. Has language been your favorite subject? \_\_\_\_\_**

# Appendix B

## Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

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In the following are some statements about learning foreign languages. Read each statement and then decide if you (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree. There is no right or wrong answers. We are simply interested in your opinions. Questions 4 & 14 are slightly different and you should mark them as indicated.

- REMEMBER:
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Neither agree nor disagree
  4. Agree
  5. Strongly agree

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.
2. Some people are born with a special ability, which helps them learn a foreign language.
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.
4. The Persian language is: 1) a very difficult language, 2) a difficult language, 3) a language of medium difficulty, 4) an easy language, 5) a very easy language.
5. People from my culture are good at learning foreign languages.
6. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak the Persian language very well.
7. It is important to speak the Persian language with an excellent accent.
8. It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.
9. You shouldn't say anything in the Persian language until you can say it correctly.
10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
11. It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country.
12. If I heard someone speaking the Persian language, I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language.
13. It's o.k. to guess if you don't know a word in the Persian language.
14. If someone spent one hour a day learning the Persian language, how long would it take him/her to become fluent?  
1) less than a year, 2) 1–2 years, 3) 3–5 years, 4) 5–10 years, 5) You can't learn a language in 1 hour a day.
15. I have foreign language aptitude.
16. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.
17. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.
18. I feel self-conscious speaking the Persian language in front of other people.
19. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.
20. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.
21. It is important to practice in the language laboratory.
22. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.
23. If I get to speak the Persian language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.

24. It is easier to speak than understand the Persian language.
25. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.
26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English.
27. If I learn to speak the Persian language very well, it will help me get a good job.
28. It is easier to read and write the Persian language than to speak and understand it.
29. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.
30. People from my culture think that it is important to speak a foreign language.
31. I would like to learn the Persian language so that I can get to know its speakers better.
32. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.
33. People from my culture are good at learning foreign languages.
34. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.



# Appendix C

## Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Version 5.1 (c) R. Oxford (1989c)

The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) is designed to gather information about how you, as a student of a foreign or second language, go about learning that language. On the following pages, you will find statements related to learning a new language. Please read each statement and mark the response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that tells how true the statement is in terms of what you actually do when you are learning the new language.

1. **Never or almost never true of me**
2. **Generally not true of me**
3. **Somewhat true of me**
4. **Generally true of me**
5. **Always or almost always true of me**

### Part A

When learning a new word . . .

1. I create associations between new material and what I already know.
2. I put the new word in a sentence so I can remember it.
3. I place the new word in a group with other words that are similar in some way (for example, words related to clothing, or feminine nouns).
4. I associate the sound of the new word with the sound of a familiar word.
5. I use rhyming to remember it.
6. I remember the word by making a clear mental image of it or by drawing a picture.
7. I visualize the spelling of the new word in my mind.
8. I use a combination of sounds and images to remember the new word.
9. I list all the other words I know that are related to the new word and draw lines to show relationships.
10. I remember where the new word is located on the page, or where I first saw or heard it.
11. I use flash cards with the new word on one side and the definition or other information on the other.
12. I physically act out the new word.

When learning new material . . .

13. I review often.
14. I schedule my reviewing so that the review sessions are initially close together in time and gradually become more widely spread apart.
15. I go back to refresh my memory of things I learned much earlier.

### Part B

16. I say or write new expressions repeatedly to practice them.
17. I imitate the way native speakers talk.

18. I read a story or a dialogue several times until I can understand it.
19. I revise what I write in the new language to improve my writing.
20. I practice the sounds or alphabet of the new language.
21. I use idioms or other routines in the new language.
22. I use familiar words in different combinations to make new sentences.
23. I initiate conversations in the new language.
24. I watch TV shows or movies or listen to the radio in the new language.
25. I try to think in the new language.
26. I attend and participate in out-of-class events where the new language is spoken.
27. I read for pleasure in the new language.
28. I write personal notes, messages, letters, or reports in the new language.
29. I skim the reading passage first to get the main idea, then I go back and read it more carefully.
30. I seek specific details in what I hear or read.
31. I use reference materials such as glossaries or dictionaries to help me use the new language.
32. I take notes in class in the new language.
33. I make summaries of new language material.
34. I apply general rules to new situations when using the language.
35. I find the meaning of a word by dividing the word into parts which I understand.
36. I look for similarities and contrasts between the new language and my own.
37. I try to understand what I have heard or read without translating it word-for-word into my own language.
38. I am cautious about transferring words or concepts directly from my language to the new language.
39. I look for patterns in the new language.
40. I develop my own understanding of how the language works, even if sometimes I have to revise my understanding based on new information.

### **Part C**

41. When I do not understand all the words I read or hear, I guess the general meaning by using any clue I can find, for example, clues from the context or situation.
42. I read without looking up every unfamiliar word.
43. In a conversation I anticipate what the other person is going to say based on what has been said so far.
44. If I am speaking and cannot think of the right expression, I use gestures or switch back to my own language momentarily.
45. I ask the other person to tell me the right word if I cannot think of it in a conversation.
46. When I cannot think of the correct expression to say or write, I find a different way to express the idea: for example, I use a synonym or describe the idea.
47. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones.
48. I direct the conversation to a topic for which I know the words.

### **Part D**

49. I preview the language lesson to get a general idea of what it is about, how it is organized, and how it relates to what I already know.
50. When someone is speaking the new language, I try to concentrate on what the person is saying and put unrelated topics out of my mind.

51. I decide in advance to pay special attention to specific language aspects; for example, I focus the way native speakers pronounce certain sounds.
52. I try to find out all I can about how to be a better language learner by reading books or articles, or by talking with others about how to learn.
53. I arrange my schedule to study and practice the new language consistently, not just when there is the pressure of a test.
54. I arrange my physical environment to promote learning; for instance, I find a quiet, comfortable place to review.
55. I organize my language notebook to record important language information.
56. I plan my goals for language learning, for instance, how proficient I want to become or how I might want to use the language in the long run.
57. I plan what I am going to accomplish in language learning each day or each week.
58. I prepare for an upcoming language task (such as giving a talk in the new language) by considering the nature of the task, what I have to know, and my current language skills.
59. I clearly identify the purpose of the language activity; for instance, in a listening task I might need to listen for the general idea or for specific facts.
60. I take responsibility for finding opportunities to practice the new language.
61. I actively look for people with whom I can speak the new language.
62. I try to notice my language errors and find out the reasons for them.
63. I learn from my mistakes in using the new language.
64. I evaluate the general progress I have made in learning the language.

### **Part E**

65. I try to relax whenever I feel anxious about using the new language.
66. I make encouraging statements to myself so that I will continue to try hard and do my best in language learning.
67. I actively encourage myself to take wise risks in language learning, such as guessing meanings or trying to speak, even though I might make some mistakes.
68. I give myself a tangible reward when I have done something well in my language learning.
69. I pay attention to physical signs of stress that might affect my language learning.
70. I keep a private diary or journal where I write my feelings about language learning.
71. I talk to someone I trust about my attitudes and feelings concerning the language learning process.

### **Part F**

72. If I do not understand, I ask the speaker to slow down, repeat, or clarify what was said.
73. I ask other people to verify that I have understood or said something correctly.
74. I ask other people to correct my pronunciation.
75. I work with other language learners to practice, review, or share information.
76. I have a regular language learning partner.
77. When I am talking with a native speaker, I try to let him or her know when I need help.
78. In conversation with others in the new language, I ask questions in order to be as involved as possible and to show I am interested.
79. I try to learn about the culture of the place where the new language is spoken.
80. I pay close attention to the thoughts and feelings of other people with whom I interact in the new language.

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# UTILIZATION OF NEOLOGISMS IN TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT OF ADVANCED PERSIAN

## A sociolinguistic approach

*Ramin Sarraf*

### 29.1 Introduction

This chapter will cover a brief history of the Academy, the socio-linguistic issues it entails (including language policy, language standardization and official language), and the differing views of the applied linguistics field regarding teaching neologisms. We will go over sample lessons, exercises and assessment using the neologisms coined by the Academy. The language of instruction is Persian; the level is advanced.

### 29.2 A brief history of language standardization in Iran

Since the 19th century, the Iranian government has been actively involved in officially reforming the language. The fact that Modern Persian was influenced by Azerbaijani Turkish through the Qajar court, and by contact with Western European languages (Meskoob 1992), as well as the flooding of Arabic terms in Persian dictated this reform. Thus, policies to modernize the Persian language continue to be implemented simultaneously and unofficially. These two processes usually work in contrary to each other.

According to Jazayeri (1983), language modernization is a natural process during which a language undergoes change. This change takes place as a result of acquiring the linguistic terms relating to tools, concepts and phenomena, which the language had so far lacked. This is an unconscious process, and it is unstoppable. When enough modernization has occurred, people, especially those who consider themselves masters in the language in its original form, begin to take notice.<sup>1</sup> Then usually a call to arms against the invading vocabulary is raised and the process of language reform is instigated.

Language reform, sometimes used synonymously with language Purification, is a conscious process, expected to rid the language from “new” foreign words, and replace them with words native to the language. One problem with this process is that it is always many steps behind the modernization process. Also, if the language had access to words to use that were equal to the foreign terms, it would have long ago adopted them. Language reform calls for

research into the depths of the language well for salvaging appropriate terms. The next step is the forming of bodies to implement language reform, i.e. the Language Academies. This is both time consuming and costly. Thirdly, citizens are not willing to sacrifice ease, economy, or in some cases the prestige that using loanwords carry. Because of this, a social conflict ensues that might evolve into a no-win situation for all sides.

The Persian Academy is engaged along with other duties, in coining new words. As Joan Rubin says in *Directory of Language Planning Organizations* (1979): “How little is known about language correction in general and language planning organizations in particular”. This is very true of the Iranian/Persian Academy(s); little is known of the history, function and the processes for term selection. Since as Rubin (1979) says for studying language planning “there is no better way than to observe people who do language planning”, a short study of the Persian Academy(s), will be provided here.

There have been few studies of the Persian Academy per se except Jazayeri (1979), and Jazayeri (1983). The former is in Spanish, and the latter is an article prepared immediately after the Islamic Revolution in Iran and does not cover the latest developments in language planning in Iran. Another article that is somewhat useful in this regard is by Perry (1985); also Kia (1998) sheds light onto parts of the history of the early days of the Academy. Sarraf (2001, 2012), covers the topic of the Persian Academy, including history, word products and current trends in depth. Dabir-Moghaddam (2018), is another informative, succinct newer survey of this topic. For more information about the language planning and standardization of Persian language in Iran, read Chapter 23 in this volume.

## 29.3 A brief history of the Persian academies

### 29.3.1 *The First Persian Academy*

The idea of purifying the Persian language dates back to the 19th century;<sup>2</sup> in 1906, the Constitutional Revolution took place and according to Kamshad (1966), the Iranian society experienced an extraordinary boom in journalism. One year after the revolution, at least 84 newspapers were being published in Iran. Many of these papers adopted and propagated “simple Persian”.

The dream of ridding Persian from foreign words was finally achieved to some extent during the reign of Reza Shah Pahlavi (1925–41). From early on, he had understood the need for a modern army that would be used to suppress the traditional power centers, thus began the modernization of the Iranian army and police. However, the fact that the Persian language did not have the equivalent words and terminologies for the European military terms, blocked Reza Khan’s ambitions. The Iranian military either had to adopt thousands of new European words in their everyday language, or new Persian equivalents for the foreign words had to be produced.

To this end in 1924, while still acting as both the Commander-in-Chief, and the Prime minister, Reza Khan ordered the Ministry of War to form a committee to create new Persian equivalents for European military words.

Although the members of the committee were neither linguists nor specialists in Iranian languages, their accomplishments were impressive. In the first year of its existence, the committee produced three to four hundred new words, many of which are still used in the everyday language. Examples of these from Badre’i (1977) are: /forudgāh/ for ‘aerodrome’ (airport), /havāpeymā/ for ‘avion’ (airplane), /gordān/ for ‘bataillon’ (French, battalion or an army division).

In 1925, the Ministry of War organized a second ‘committee’ to translate military rules and ranks. This committee continued its separate existence until the end of Reza Shah’s reign in 1941, and in spite of the formation of the Academy of Iran (the First Academy) in 1935. However, after the formation of the Academy of Iran, all the new words produced by this committee would be sent to the Academy for ratification.

The Second Committee targeted and changed not only military European terminologies but also Arabic and Turkish words which were in use by ordinary people. Two examples from Badre’i (1977) that have caught on are: /vatan/ ‘homeland’ (originally Arabic /watan/) was changed to the Persian word /mihan/. And the Arabic word /mamlekat/ ‘kingdom, country’ was changed to the Persian word /keshvar/.

According to Badre’i (1977), and Jazayeri (1986) in 1932, a society was organized by the Teachers’ Training College of Tehran for creating new scientific terminologies. In eight and a half years of existence, this society produced about 3,000 new words, of which many were adopted and used in school texts. Some of these new words were: /tapesh/ for ‘pulsation’, /geravesh/ for ‘gravitation’ and /peyvaste/ for ‘continuous’.

As a result of the growing pressure from nationalist army officers, bureaucrats and intellectuals who were “Persianizing” the language at will, the prime minister, Foroughi, approached Reza Shah and expressed the need to establish an academy to uniformly modernize the language.<sup>3</sup> Reza Shah, already aware of the creation of language academies in Turkey and Egypt as early as 1932, accepted.<sup>4</sup> Already the ministry of education had formed the Medical Academy (Akademi-ye Tebbi) to produce medical terms.<sup>5</sup> The word /farhangestan/ as an equivalent for ‘academy’ was a creation of this Academy. After a few meetings, however, the Academy was dissolved, and all language planning activities were handed over to the Farhangestan-e Iran<sup>6</sup> (referred to in this chapter as the First Academy) which was established on May 19, 1935. The Shah tasked Foroughi to create an academy to standardize word creation. Foroughi was also appointed as head of the Academy.

At this time, the elite who had a say into what was called for in language reform and how it should be attempted fell into three main groups: 1) those who wanted to rid the language of Arabic elements and bring in pre-Islamic Persian words, foremost among them Reza Shah himself, 2) those who did not see any problem with the Arabic elements in Persian and wanted to keep them, amongst these were the clergy and the religious set and 3) the middle camp, those who opposed the presence of so many Arabic words in Persian but who also felt an attachment to the classical Persian which had borrowed from Arabic, among which was the prime minister Foroughi.<sup>7</sup>

Due to the conflict between these groups, especially between the first and last, the Farhangestan was deemed anti-purist and Foroughi was dismissed from his posts as prime minister and the president of Academy on December 2, 1935. Another reason for Foroughi’s forced resignation was Reza Shah’s impatience at the slow pace of the purification campaign<sup>8</sup> and the passive resistance of some of the scholars in the Academy who “deliberately suggested awkward and clumsy Persian roots in order to underline the fallacy of making too rapid and too sweeping changes”.<sup>9</sup>

In its first years of existence between 1935 and 1941, the first Persian Academy produced many new words. It also changed a significant number of place names, from Arabic and Turkish to Persian.<sup>10</sup> Many of the new words manufactured and approved by the Academy were adopted by the public (/afsar/<sup>11</sup> “crown or tiara” for ‘officer’), but there were also many new words and names that were never adopted (/kankāshestān/<sup>12</sup> = ‘parliament’, from /kankāsh/ ‘burrow, search, dig, look for’ and the suffix for country /-estān/ for the originally Arabic /majles/).



Immediately after Reza Shah's abdication, the Academy found itself on the defensive and its products were openly ridiculed and criticized. Eventually, the Ministry of Education published an order abandoning the new mathematical words approved by the Academy which had been used in schoolbooks.

### **29.3.2 The Second Persian Academy**

In 1970, Farhangestan-e Zaban-e-Iran (Iranian Academy of Language, here referred to as the Second Academy), was established and was active under the presidency of Dr. Sadeq Kia until 1979. According to Jazayeri (1983), its methodology seemed to be an improvement over the first, it was more serious and better organized, its members were in general better qualified, many of them honestly believed in what they were doing (contrary to the first Academy), and its membership was larger and its appeal to public was expanded. It saw its main task as the provision of necessary technical terminology and tried a more democratic approach to the problem: The Academy's word selection committee published a series of glossaries of technical terms in English with proposed Persian equivalents, under the heading *pishnehad-e shoma chist?* (What is your suggestion?).

According to Rubin (1979), the Academy operated under the supervision of the Administrative and Coordinating Council of the Imperial Foundation of Iranian Academies, which was headed by the Minister of Culture and Arts. Its goals were set out as: 1) to preserve the Persian language at its longstanding cultural level, and keep it up-to-date to meet modern scientific, technical and cultural needs; 2) to investigate and study old and modern Iranian languages and dialects to facilitate the solution of linguistic problems and to enrich and expand Persian vocabulary. The Academy consisted of a Supreme Council and nine Research Departments: Word Selection, Old and Middle Iranian Languages, Iranian Dialectology, Grammar and Orthography of the Persian Language, Contacts between Persian and other Iranian Languages and Dialects and non-Iranian Languages, Technical Terms relating to Arts and Crafts, The Colloquial Variants of the Persian Language, and Iranian Proper Names. It also had a Library, Phonetic Laboratory, Secretariat, and Computer Services Department. Its professional staff numbered 38 full-time, 38 part-time, 59 full-time support staff. Also, about 220 scientists cooperated with the Academy. Its periodical was *The Journal of the Iranian Academy of Language*.

Jazayeri (1983) also states that one of the products of language reform in Iran (and this Academy) was confusion, and the reason for that was "the unwillingness of the many people involved to work with others, or to accept terms introduced by others." This is not documented in the First or Third Academies; however, in a separate study on the Hebrew Academy's word selection procedures and problems, similarities are documented (Rubin et al. 1977). Jazayeri (1983) predicts that the new government in Iran will not be supportive of language purification; times have shown this to be untrue.

### **29.3.3 The Third Persian Academy<sup>13</sup>**

In 1991, almost 13 years after the termination of the Second Academy, and under a longer title, the Academy for Persian Language and Literature of the Islamic Republic of Iran (The Third Academy) was founded. Its charter was ratified by the Supreme Council for Cultural Revolution, which specifies one of the duties of the Academy as word selection. Under Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 2 of The Academy's Charter, it is called on "to establish units for word making and selection and organize similar units in universities and other cultural and scientific

institutes, and to coordinate their operation through providing expertise” and “to oversee word making and equivalent selection in translating from other languages into Persian language, and establishing the necessary criteria for safeguarding and fortifying the health of the Persian Language in the face of new expressions and ideas.”

Even though the current Academy is structurally more or less the same as the previous (Second) Academy and enjoys the facilities of its predecessor, its goals have changed. The words targeted by the Third Academy are mostly Western words. This is not surprising to many including Jazayeri (1983), who thought this would happen. However, it should be remembered that the *raison d’être* for the first Academy was the massive infusion of European military terminology, and that purifying the Persian language from Arabic elements, and the prestige of actually having an Academy were secondary reasons for its establishment. Similarly, as the Third Academy acknowledges, after 13 years of inactivity on one hand and great advancements of technology on the other, if something was not done, then the Iranians could kiss their language good-bye. As it is, today every term that deals with the computer industry is being used and understood by the specialists and to some extent average people, such terms were among the first to be targeted by the Academy.<sup>14</sup>

The methodology that this Academy engaged in was to begin with the corpus method and find a list of foreign words and their frequency as they appeared in the media. Then the Word Selection Committee debated each word as to whether or not it needed to be replaced, left as is, or leave the decision to a specialized (e.g. scientific) committee. Then and only then, the words that needed to be replaced were issued an ID (rather a dossier) in which all necessary information was entered. This included the Persian form, the English form, the meaning(s), usage(s), part of speech, and examples of usage in Persian.

In the dossier, etymological information on the item, in the source language, together with explanations, meanings, etc. from several different dictionaries, sometimes even different languages, such as English, French and German was entered. Also, by looking at Arabic and Urdu dictionaries, information on how these two languages had solved their problems in regard to the item was extracted and included. Recently, experiences from the Persian speakers in Tajikistan and also the Second Academy have been included. Also included were the equivalents listed for each word in English/Persian, Persian/Persian dictionaries and books translated from European languages into Persian. Everything was then entered into the Academy’s computer database.

Members, who had been given the dossiers for each term in advance, would then meet and discuss the suggested terms coming from both outside the Academy and from the members, and arrive at a decision regarding which term would be henceforth used.

The current Academy, having studied the outcome of the previous two Academies, is convinced that the Persian words selected for foreign terms by the Terminology Department, before any ratification should be announced to the public in general, and to the specialists in particular, to solicit input. The words are distributed by the media as a whole and by the Academy’s Newsletter (*khabarname-ye farhangestan*) specifically and the public is asked for their views, suggestions and input. A 24-hour answering machine is connected to one of the Academy’s phone lines for this specific purpose. For each word, the consideration phase is six months. During this time, the public input is gathered, and the results are sent to the Terminology Department, who reviews the suggestions and then the final candidates are put on the agenda for the Academy Council’s ratification. The council votes on the final item, and the final list is sent to the I. R. Iran President, after whose approval it is distributed to the government institutes and organizations.

### 29.3.4 Comparison of the three academies

In the area of duties, all three Persian Academies had been assigned to compile a dictionary; so far none has appeared. Perry (1985), on evaluating the two early Academies, calls their actions “insipid” as they were not able to bring about radical changes expected of language planning institutes, among them the compilation of the Academy’s own dictionary. As to how successful the Iranian Language Academies have been, Perry (1985) says:

In Farhangestan, individual members were certainly competent and diligent scholars, but the glossaries they produced were not widely distributed, public feedback was not actively sought, and the collection and analysis of lexical material was the sporadic work of individuals or small committees. The endeavor was not coordinated with any educational or literacy campaigns and no dictionary was published.

It should be noted that Perry is referring to the first two Academies. Second, “literacy campaigns” were not necessary in Iran, due to the number of people who were already literate. Furthermore, since no changes in the script took place, like that of Turkey, there would be no need to engage in such campaigns. The reason none of the academies have so far seriously considered the dictionary project could be due to the fact that several authoritative dictionaries exist in Iran, among them: *Loghat Name-ye Dekhoda*<sup>15</sup> and *Moin Persian Dictionary*. Finally, as Perry (1985) puts it:

It is the spirit of an age of discovery, reappraisal, and popularization that periodically prompts the speakers of any language to revive dormant morphology in an effort to understand what they are talking about instead of merely parroting the past.

It seems that it is also the spirit of the age that is giving a boost to the acceptance of the new terminology produced by the current Academy.

## 29.4 Use of neologisms in foreign language instruction

### 29.4.1 Definition of neologism

According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary ([merriam-webster.com](http://merriam-webster.com)), neologism is defined as:

- 1 : a new word, usage, or expression
- 2 *psychology*: a new word that is coined especially by a person affected with schizophrenia and is meaningless except to the coiner, and is typically a combination of two existing words or a shortening or distortion of an existing word

Under this definition, the Merriam Webster Dictionary, adds:

The English language is constantly picking up neologisms. Recently, for example, computer technology has added a number of new terms to the language. “Webinar,” “malware,” “netroots,” and “blogosphere” are just a few examples of modern-day neologisms that have been integrated into American English. The word *neologism* was itself a brand-new coinage at the beginning of the 19th century, when English speakers first borrowed it from the French *néologisme*. Its roots, however, are quite old. Ultimately,

“neologism” comes from Greek *neos* (meaning “new”) and “logos” (meaning “word”). (merriam-webster.com).

Per definition No. 1, a neologism can be said to be any new word, with the emphasis on *new*. Therefore, both slang<sup>16</sup> and technical words fit under this definition. The common practices in teaching foreign languages, e.g. English, dictate the use of both slang and technical words be covered in the classroom. Some language instructors tend to shy away from introducing slang and argot in the classroom, as one example, most Modern Standard Arabic instructors come to mind.

#### **29.4.2 Current research on neologism**

In researching studies on Persian and neologisms, very few were found. Momeni, Raghboudost and Teymouri (2016) was one. This paper, however, deals with the second definition, the one used in psychology. One other study on Persian neologisms, conducted by Megerdooonian and Hadjarian (2010), deals with the usage of neologisms in the blogosphere. Megerdooonian and Hadjarian (2010) state that “[t]he exponential growth of the Persian blogosphere and the increased number of neologisms, create a major challenge in NLP applications of Persian blogs”.

The current chapter is the first in advocating on the use of neologisms in Persian language instruction, with the language standardization/policy at its core.

Rets (2016, 813–820), in “Teaching Neologisms in English as a Foreign Language Classroom”, states:

This article draws attention of English teachers to the increasing number of new words or neologisms that appear in the English language. It is argued that one can understand the culture by examining its new words, thereby neologisms should be integrated into the vocabulary material offered to English learners.

In papers addressing neologism instruction in languages other than Persian, Kern (2017) propagates the use of neologisms (meaning specifically slang and dialectical variations of the standard language), to battle the effects of language standardization by the central government. This is an innovative approach to a socio-linguistic issue in language education. Kern (2017, 26–40) states:

This paper proposes a pedagogical framework for incorporating sociolinguistic diversity in the language classroom to counter the promotion of standard varieties. It problematizes the standard language ideology especially as it pertains to the standard variety of Spanish and the prestige of the Real Academia Española. It reviews current critical pedagogical approaches to address linguistic ideologies in the Spanish heritage language classroom and puts them in dialogue with Kramersch’s (2006) concept of symbolic competence and a multiliteracies approach. . . . The proposed framework demonstrates how (socio) linguistics can contribute to pedagogy by encouraging an approach guided by sociolinguistic sensitivity.

Therefore, it is necessary to implement neologisms into language education classroom if not for any other reason, for covering the sociolinguistic aspect of the language and the wealth of information that go along with each neologism. In addition to the sociolinguistic features,

neologisms can be an effective assessment tool, and greatly benefit instructors in assessing the language learners' skills and expertise. Since there is a date stamp attached to each neologism (in the case of Persian Academy terms), it can additionally serve as a valid tool for tracking the progress of the distribution of each term in the language by creating correct assessment tools. The fact that most of these neologisms generate ridicule and are used as the butt of jokes (as we shall display later) further serves the language learner in understanding jokes and references to them in humorous situations, yet another sociolinguistic aspect (a negative one) to ponder when creating teaching material and tests. In the case of Persian language and the neologisms coined for the purpose of language standardization, the current chapter is promoting the opposite of Kern (2017); as native speakers know these terms, in order to understand the day-to-day language, the students of the language need to have a working competency of such terms too.

Looking purely from the standpoint of structure and function, neologisms are words created by native speakers for use by native speakers and must follow the rules of the language. These new words, after an introductory period, will be learned, recognized, and eventually used by native speakers. This applies to slang, argot, technical terms and most language policy-driven words. The only differentiating factor is the "Seal of Approval" that some of these words receive and the rest do not, plus the stigma that some words (slang) have attached to them. Based on linguistics and applied linguistics methodologies, the study, instruction and assessment of any language is not limited to portions of that language, and there cannot be a discriminatory approach to language learning and teaching. In other words, all words are equal, and politics should be checked in at the door of the classroom. Language instruction should be free from any bias, discrimination and prejudice. The language policy a country is implementing is mainly aimed at the children of the country, learning to speak, read and write the "Official" form. As Baugh (1997, 33–41), in *Linguistic Discrimination in Educational Contexts*, states: "Many nations provide a combination of public and/or private education for (some?) children who represent their future citizens, and many of these schools have classrooms of different sizes that also vary considerably in their linguistic composition." Thus, emphasizing policy driven language instruction for the children of the country. The fact that the children are "schooled" in the official form of the language, necessitates that foreign language learners focusing on the language in question need to learn and master the same register of the language, voluntarily and through non-compulsory methods. Baugh (1997) adds: "Some schools, or classes within schools, may be linguistically homogeneous – while other schools, or classes within them, may be dissimilar from a linguistic point of view." What is inferred is the fact that the linguistic diversity has no impact in the design and implementation of the language policy, and that a "one size fits all" language instruction is enforced. Learning a language, in this case Persian, is no different as an adult or a child, the only difference is being obligated to learn or choosing to. The content remains the same, the method differs.

### ***29.4.3 Neologisms as the bridge between Persian language pedagogy and sociolinguistics***

Foreign language learners need to perform at the level of the native speakers and thus need to be instructed in a manner that facilitates this goal. In addition, regarding assessment, the learners need to be assessed on the same footing as the educated native speakers and display proficiency in all aspects pertaining to the language and no linguistic gaps can be allowed or tolerated. In arguing for the value of teaching neologisms coined by an "internal authoritative

body” to foreign language learners, looking at the guidelines of the Academy for selecting words/vocabularies can help. The guidelines following are translated from Persian as they appeared in a 1999 publication by the Academy:

Article 1. In selecting Persian equivalents for foreign words and expressions, the Persian word should be as much as possible close to “today’s standard Persian Language”, which is the language in use in lectures and writings and is in use by the educated (class) and scholars.

This article references “today’s standard Persian Language” and stresses the language in use in lectures and writings and is in use by the educated (class) and scholars. So, the language standardization intent is made obvious, together with the focus on elitism, which can be interpreted as discriminatory.

Article 2. In word selection the rules of the pure/clear/clean and current Persian grammar should be observed.

This article focuses on the concepts: “pure/clear/clean”, which sound vague, unless one is more or less familiar with the intent; *pure* Persian is the form of language that has been “cleaned” from Arabic elements. An impossible task given the 15 centuries of Arabic influence on Persian in terms of vocabulary, grammar and script.

Article 3. In word selection the phonetic rules of the Persian language should be observed and selecting unmelodious and aversion causing words should be avoided. The selected Persian word to the extent possible should be shorter than its foreign equivalent.

This article by focusing on phonetics and prosody of the language is a step in the right direction; however, the words created by the Academy, generally replace a foreign word with a phrase: “پاس”, /paas/ replaced with: “پزیرش ورود و خروج”, /paziresh-e vorood va xorooj/ in defiance of this article.

The rest of the articles, presented in the following, do not need any comment and are self-evident.

Article 4. In choosing equivalents, words with ability to be parsed or conjugated, and enable noun, adjective and verbs to be formed from them are preferable.

Article 5. In the selection of equivalents, the following hierarchy should be observed:

- 5–1. Currently in use and familiar Persian words which have long existed in the Persian language.
- 5–2. Newly formed compounds, using Persian productivity processes, and Persian words.
- 5–3. Familiar and current Arabic words and expressions in the Persian language.
- 5–4. Newly formed compounds, using Persian productivity processes, and current Arabic words in Persian.
- 5–5. Words selected from other contemporary Persian and Iranian dialects.
- 5–6. Words selected from Middle and Old Iranian languages.

Article 6. In selecting the equivalent, a word whose meaning is clear and readily comes to mind is preferred over one whose meaning is unclear and does not come to the mind easily.

Article 7. In selecting words especially for the sciences, for any term that has a specific meaning, preferably only one word be selected, keeping away from synonyms.

Paragraph: For a foreign term that has different definitions in different branches of science, selecting various equivalent words based on tradition, background and shared knowledge of users in each field is permitted.

Article 8. Finding equivalents for those foreign words that have become universal and international is not necessary.

Article 9. In the few cases where selection of an equivalent word fitting the customary Persian templates is not possible, and by necessity recourse to new methods is perceived, action will be taken based on what the Academy council votes/approves.

## 29.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, we covered a brief history of the Persian Academy, the socio-linguistic issues it is intertwined with, (including language policy, language standardization and official language), and the differing views of the applied linguistics field regarding teaching of neologisms. We went over sample lessons, exercises and assessment using the neologisms coined by the Academy. In the Persian language, the existence of the Persian Academy, and its output of words, with the envisioned goal of replacing “foreign” words with those of Persian origin prove to be an untapped source that is valuable in the Advanced level Persian instruction and assessment. To date, no study has been undertaken on the merit of these terms in language instruction or how they can best be incorporated into language lessons and proficiency level tests. Based on the literature review, the words created by the Academy do qualify as “authentic” and can and should be included in material created for language instruction for students engaging in foreign language instruction. To sum, here are the key reasons why it is advantageous to do so:

- 1) The fact that authentic language instruction requires the learner to be instructed at and to function at the same level as a native speaker.
- 2) Context-based and content-based language instruction similarly stipulate that the foreign language learner be instructed via the same resources available to a native speaker.
- 3) The cultural background of the neologisms made by the Academy is an important educational tool in instructing the Culture component of the Five Skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing and Culture. The cultural aspect also informs the satirical, joking aspects of the general population’s belief and outlook towards the neologisms.
- 4) The sociolinguistics background of the neologisms is an important factor in educating advance level students in the intricacies of the language and the ongoing language policies in the target language.
- 5) The diachronic aspect of the study of neologisms is important for the advanced level student and leads to a better understanding of word formation rules in the target language

and the linguistic rules governing the language, including phonetics, phonology and morphology.

- 6) The introduction of the official neologisms requires the introduction of the unofficial neologisms, namely slang and argot into the classroom. Both slang and argot are important aspects of foreign language education at any level and more so for the advanced level.

To demonstrate how this can best be accomplished, two sample lessons and two tests have been included in the Appendix.



# Appendix

In the following sample lessons/tests, the following is strictly observed:

- 1) The language of instruction is Persian.
- 2) The texts/content chosen are all authentic; no editing or simplifying of the texts has been attempted.
- 3) The texts/content are available online.
- 4) The translations are provided.
- 5) This type of lesson/test can be utilized in online education format in addition to in-person.
- 6) The lessons/tests can be used for both group work and individual work.
- 7) The tests can be used to assess the levels of students. As they do not cover only one level, it is possible to glean information at the mid-low or even advanced-low levels, but the highest score will come from advanced level students.
- 8) Reading aloud is an important aspect of the lessons/tests and class time needs to be dedicated to it, as in the case of Persian, the prosodic features of juncture, pause and stress show that the reader understands the underlying grammar rules.

## Sample Lesson No. 1

کد خبر: ۱۱۲۷۴۸۲

اردیبهشت ۱۳۹۵ - ۲۰۰۸:۵۹ تاریخ انتشار

سیاسی “مجلس

با رای نمایندگان مجلس تصویب شد:

**ممانعت مجلس از دو شغله بودن در دستگاه های دولتی**

نمایندگان مجلس به منظور تامین نظر شورای نگهبان، لایحه قانونی اصلاح قسمتی از قانون تجارت را اصلاح و تصویب کردند.

همچنین وکلای ملت به منظور رفع ایرادات شورای نگهبان، اصلاحاتی در طرح تسریع در امر تخلیه و بارگیری کشتی ها در بنادر انجام دادند.

براین اساس در انتهای بند 5 ماده واحده این طرح “پذیرش ورود و خروج” جایگزین کلمه “پاس” شد و در بند 7 نیز عبارت “پاسگان” جایگزین کلمه “گارد” شد.

بعد از خواندن متن به سوالات زیر پاسخ دهید:

(1) کدام گزینه صحیح است؟

(1) در مجلس دو کلمه جدید پاس و پاسگان تصویب شدند.

(2) دو کلمه پاس و پاسگان توسط مجلس رد شدند.

(3) مجلس دو کلمه پاس و پاسگان را جایگزین یکدیگر شناخت.

(4) مجلس تصویب کرد که از این پس به جای کلمه پاس از عبارت “پذیرش ورود و خروج” استفاده شود.

(2) جستجو در فرهنگ لغت فارسی آن لاین دهخدا کلمه پاسگان را به معنی زیر نشان می دهد:

**زنبورک و پاسگان**

**لغتنامه دهخدا**

زنبورک و پاسگان. [رَمُ رُکُ] (اخ) دهی از دهستان قنوات است که در بخش مرکزی شهرستان قم واقع است و 100 تن سکنه دارد. (از فرهنگ جغرافیایی ایران ج 1).

جستجو در فرهنگ لغت فارسی آن لاین معین کلمه پاسگان را به معنی زیر نشان می دهد:

**گارد**

**فرهنگ فارسی معین**

[فر.] (ا.) گروه مسلحی که پاسداری از مکان یا مقامی را بر عهده داشته باشد یا در اجرای مراسم تشریفاتی شرکت کند، پاسگان (فره)، محافظ، نگهبان.

به نظر شما تعریف کدام فرهنگ به کلمه پاسگان در متن می خورد؟

(2) دو ستون زیر را باهم تطبیق دهید و معادلهای هر کلمه را در ستون مقابل مشخص کنید:

- |                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| a) Guardian/protector        | پاس (1)        |
| b) Head guard/police officer | پاسبان (2)     |
| c) Officer of the guard      | پاسبخش (3)     |
| d) Police station            | پاسدار (4)     |
| e) Policeman                 | پاسگاه (5)     |
| f) Portion of night          | پاسی از شب (6) |
| g) Shift (guard)             | سپاس (7)       |
| h) Thanks!                   | سرپاس (8)      |

به نظر شما معنی پاس در کلمات فوق چیست؟

(الف) تشکر

(ب) نگهبانی

(ج) وقت

(د) احترام

(ه) اصطلاح ورزشی است

در فرهنگ فارسی متوسط معین، ذیل پاس چنین آمده:

(4) پاس از خواندن این مداخل آیا جوابتان را عوض می کنید؟ چرا؟

کلمه "پاسگان" را بلند بخوانید، چند جور میتوان این واژه را تلفظ کرد؟

(5) متن را به انگلیسی ترجمه کنید:

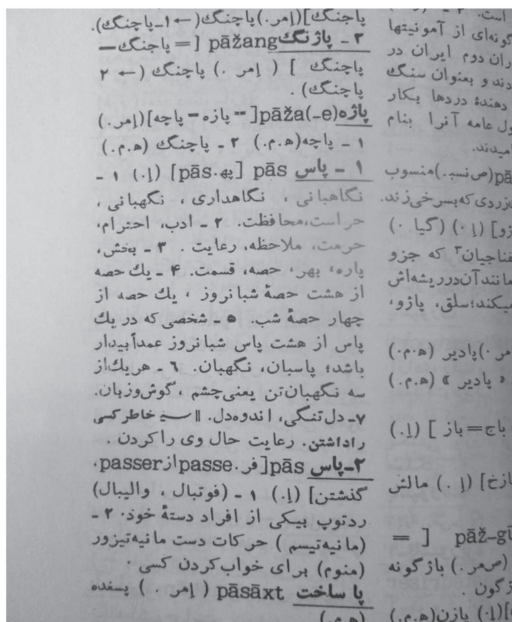


Figure 29.1 The word "پاس" (/paas/) as defined in Mohammad Moin's Persian dictionary.

The nation's lawyers also made reforms to expedite the discharge and loading of ships to ports to address the defects of the Guardian Council.

Accordingly, the word "pass" was replaced by "acceptance of entrance and exit" at the end of paragraph 5 of unit one of this plan, and in paragraph 7 the word "pasgan" replaced the word "guard".

(6) به نظر شما کلمه جان پاس یعنی چه؟

- 1) life guard
- 2) body guard
- 3) dear guard
- 4) John, pass (the ball)!

(7) در اینترنت جستجو کرده و معنی جان پاس را پیدا کنید.

www.vajehyab.com

### جان پاس bodyguard

واژه‌های مصوب فرهنگستان [عمومی] محافظ شخصی (fr.) guard, garde

(8) پاسخ خود را به سؤال 6 مرور کنید. آیا پاسختان تغییر کرد؟ چرا؟

اجزای کلمه پاسگان را مشخص کنید:

(الف) پا + سگ + ان

(ب) پاس + گ + ان

(ج) پاس + گان

(د) پا + سگان

دلیل انتخاب خود را توضیح دهید.

### Sample Lesson No. 2

کد خبر ۳۳۸۳۱۳

May 2014 تاریخ انتشار: ۱۰:۴۹ - ۸ خرداد ۱۳۹۳ - 29

صفحه نخست "اجتماعی"

پ پ

### مسئله‌ای به نام پارکومتر!

پارکومتر، ایست سنج، توقف سنج؛ نامش را هر چه می‌خواهید بگذارید. این وسیله زرد رنگی که کنار خیابان‌ها سبز شده و قرار است نقش پارکیان‌ها را برای ما بازی کند این روزها برای خودش ماجراهایی پیدا کرده. چطور باید

از آن استفاده کرد؟ چرا برخی پارکومترها در محل دید تعبیه نشده‌اند و همین موضوع سبب جریمه‌های ۲۰

هزارتومانی بی‌شماری برای رانندگان شده؟ چرا با وجود شارژ کردن این وسیله باز هم رانندگان جریمه می‌شوند؟

چرا ماموران راهنمایی و رانندگی بدون توجه به خرابی‌های احتمالی یا در دیدن نبودن آن باز هم برای رانندگان

جریمه صادر می‌کنند؟

(1) متن را سرعت مرور کنید و تعداد وام واژه‌ها را مشخص کنید:

1 (الف)

2 (ب)

3 (ج)

5 (د)

(2) کلمه شارژ را در متن پیدا کنید، معنی آن را حدس بزنید:

(الف) charge

(ب) pay

(ج) park

(د) fine

3) بنظر شما کلمه پارکومتر یعنی چه؟

- الف) parking meter
- ب) parkometer
- ج) parking attendant
- د) meter maid

4) به نظر شما کلمه پارکومتر از چه زبانی قرض گرفته شده؟

- الف) انگلیسی
- ب) آلمانی
- ج) فرانسوی
- د) روسی

5) کلمات زیر را بلند بخوانید و اعراب گذاری کنید:

- پارکومتر
- ایست سنج
- توقف سنج
- پارکبان
- تعبیه
- شارژ کردن

parcomètre

Parkometer, stand-meter, stop-meter; call it whatever you want. This yellow-colored device that has grown on the streets and is set to play the role of parking attendants for us has its own stories these days. How to use it? Why aren't some parkometers installed in visible locations, and this has resulted in countless 20,000 Toman fines for drivers? Why are drivers still fined after paying this device? Why do police officers still impose fines on drivers, regardless of being out of commission or out of sight?

### Sample Test No. 1

فدراسیون دوومیدانی ترکیه: علیه پدیده زورافزایی "دوپینگ" مبارزه می‌کنیم

رئیس فدراسیون دو و میدانی ترکیه اعلام کرد با همکاری دیگر سازمان‌های کشور، برای جلوگیری از آسیب‌های ورزشی، علیه پدیده زورافزایی "دوپینگ" مبارزه می‌کنیم.

آناتولیا/خبرگزاری آناتولی

فاتح چین‌تیمار، رئیس فدراسیون دوومیدانی ترکیه در مصاحبه با خبرنگار آناتولی گفت: با همکاری وزارت ورزش و جوانان و اداره کل جوانان و ورزش علیه پدیده زورافزایی مبارزه می‌کنیم. وی با اشاره ممنوعیت دو ساله الوان آبیگس دونده ترکیه از فعالیت به دلیل انجام دوپینگ، تاکید کرد: "پس از این به هیچ وجه ورزشکارانی که اقدام به دوپینگ می‌کنند را تحمل نخواهیم کرد. هدف ما گسترش ورزش پاک است. دوومیدانی مادر رشته‌های ورزشی است. مادران باید پاک و نظیف باشند". چین تیمار در پایان اظهار داشت: سازمان جهانی مبارزه با دوپینگ و اتحادیه بین‌المللی فدراسیون‌های دوومیدانی که با این پدیده مبارزه می‌کنند از ابتکار فدراسیون ترکیه تشکر و قدرانی کرده اند.

Fateh Chin Timar, the director of the Field and Track Federation of Turkey, in an interview with the Anatoli reporter said: "In cooperation with the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and the Directorate General of Youth and Sport, we are fighting against doping." Referring to the two-year ban on Turkish runner Alwan Abilges for doping, he stressed: "From now on, we will not tolerate doping by athletes at all. Our goal is to develop clean sports. Track and Field is the mother of all sports, Mothers must be clean and pure." Chin Timar, in conclusion

stated: the World Organization Against Doping and the International Union of Track and Field Federations, who are also battling this phenomenon, have expressed their gratitude for the initiative taken by the Turkish Federation.

(1) جملات زیر را مرتب کنید:

- (الف) فدراسیون رئیس ترکیه دوومیدانی با همکاری گفت وزارت و جوانان ورزش و کل اداره ورزش جوانان و علیه پدیده زورافزایی می‌کنیم مبارزه.
- (ب) ممنوعیت ترکیه وی با اشاره دوندۀ فعالیت دو ساله از دلیل به انجام تاکید دوپینگ، کرد
- (ج) ”ورزشکارانی کرد پس از این به وجه هیچ که به دوپینگ اقدام تحمل می‌کنند را نخواهیم. هدف گسترش ما ”ورزش است پاک. مادر دوومیدانی است رشته‌های ورزشی. پاک مادران باید نظیف و باشند.
- (د) سازمان مبارزه دوپینگ جهانی با اتحادیه و بین‌المللی دوومیدانی فدراسیون‌های که با پدیده این می‌کنند مبارزه ابتکار از فدراسیون تشکر ترکیه و کرده اند.

(2) کلمه دوپینگ را در متن زیر پیدا کنید و دور آن خط بکشید. چند بار این کلمه در متن استفاده شده است؟

آنتالیا/خبرگزاری آناتولی

فاتح چین‌تیمار، رئیس فدراسیون دوومیدانی ترکیه در مصاحبه با خبرنگار آناتولی گفت: با همکاری وزارت ورزش و جوانان و اداره کل جوانان و ورزش علیه پدیده زورافزایی مبارزه می‌کنیم. وی با اشاره ممنوعیت دو ساله الوان ابیلگس دوندۀ ترکیه از فعالیت به دلیل انجام دوپینگ، تاکید کرد: ”پس از این به وجه ورزشکارانی که اقدام به دوپینگ می‌کنند را تحمل نخواهیم کرد. هدف ما گسترش ورزش پاک است. دوومیدانی مادر رشته‌های ورزشی است. مادران باید پاک و نظیف باشند“. چین تیمار در پایان اظهار داشت: سازمان جهانی مبارزه با دوپینگ و اتحادیه بین‌المللی فدراسیون‌های دوومیدانی که با این پدیده مبارزه می‌کنند از ابتکار فدراسیون ترکیه تشکر و قدردانی کرده اند.

(3) در متن کلمه معادلی برای دوپینگ استفاده شده است، این کلمه چیست؟ زورافزایی

(4) کلمه زورافزایی را به عوامل سازنده اش تجزیه کنید و هریک را به فارسی معنی کنید.

زور+افزایی

نیرو+بیشتر+ پسوند اسم/صفت ساز

(5) متن را به انگلیسی بخوانید و معادل کلمه های زیر را در متن فارسی مشخص کنید:

In cooperation with the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and the Directorate General of Youth and Sport, we are fighting against doping, said Fateh Chinimara, president of the Turkish Athletics Federation. Referring to the two-year ban on Turkish runner Alwan Abilges for doping, he stressed: “After this we will not tolerate doping athletes at all. Our goal is to develop clean sports. Mothers must be clean and clean.” China’s Treasury said at the end: the World Organization Against Doping and the International Union of Runner-up Federations are grateful for the initiative of the Turkish Federation.

Federation  
Field and track  
Athlete  
World Organization  
Initiative  
Ban  
Phenomenon  
against

جستجوی واژه‌های مصوب فرهنگستان زبان و ادب فارسی

واژه یا بخشش از واژه:  
دورنمایی  
جزء آغازی واژه:  
جزء پایانی واژه:  
حوزه:  
دقت:  
منه نظر: ۲  
جستجو | باگ کردن

مصوب	بیکانه	حوزه	تعریف	شماره دفتر
زورافزایی	doping [عمومی]	استفاده از داروی محرک یا تقویتی غیرمجاز پیش از شرکت در مسابقه ورزشی	1	

برای به دست آوردن بزرگراه‌های گنگستری، برای استفاده از دیکشنری فارسی، کافی است روی شماره دفتر در دیکشنری که می‌خواهید یادکرد آن ساخته شود کلیک کنید.  
کد منبع این ابزار را می‌توانید در کدهای منبع  
هرگونه پیشنهاد، انتقاد، مشکل، تشکر: ... را می‌توانید در صفحه‌ی بحث با من در میان بگذارید.

Figure 29.2 Screenshot of webpage showing the neologism “زورافزایی” (doping) and its definition.

### Sample Test No. 2

متن زیر را که خبری در مورد کلیپ ویدئویی بالاست بخوانید و به سئوالات پس از متن پاسخ دهید.  
**واکنش به شوخی با فرهنگستان زبان و ادب فارسی/ برای کسب شهرت دروغ‌های شاخدار می‌گویند**  
 تسنیم نوشت: عضو فرهنگستان زبان و ادب فارسی توضیحاتی درباره شایعات منتشر شده در فضای مجازی درباره معادل فرهنگستان ارائه داد.

در سال‌های اخیر هرگاه سخن از فرهنگستان زبان و ادب فارسی به میان می‌آید، بخشی از آن به مصوبات فرهنگستان برای واژگان بیگانه اختصاص دارد. در این میان، برخی معتقدند که مصوبات فرهنگستان زبان و ادب فارسی نتوانسته در سال‌های گذشته در میان عموم رایج شود و تنها چند نمونه موفق در این زمینه وجود دارد که انگشت‌شمار است. این عده، عمدتاً مثال‌هایی را مطرح می‌کنند که فرهنگستان بارها اعلام کرده که این واژگان از سوی فرهنگستان اعلام نشده و جعلی است.

چندی پیش نیز ویدئویی در فضای مجازی با تمسخر به برخی از همین کلمات جعلی منتشر شد. محمدرضا ترکی، دانشیار گروه زبان و ادب فارسی و عضو وابسته فرهنگستان زبان و ادب فارسی، با انتشار یادداشتی کوتاه به توضیحاتی درباره این قبیل کلمات و اقدامات اخیر پرداخته که در ادامه می‌آید:

**در حاشیه بالابر، خویش‌انداز، دراز‌آویز زینتی و ...!**

جوانکی جاهل در بک ویدئو برابر نهادهای فرهنگستان به جای واژه‌های فرنگی را با لحنی مستهجن به ریشخند گرفته که چرا فرهنگستان به جای آسانسور “بالابر” و به جای سلفی “خویش‌انداز” و به جای کراوات “دراز‌آویز زینتی” و به جای تیلت “رایانک مالشی” و ... را تصویب و پیشنهاد کرده است!  
 آدم جاهل‌تری هم در پای این ویدئو نوشته: “فلانی فرهنگستان را با این سخنان پودر کرده(!)” و آن را در فضای مجازی منتشر کرده است!

با توجه به فضای عوام‌زده مجازی این لودگی، مثل موارد مشابه قبلی، میلیون‌ها بیننده و لایک‌کننده هم داشته است و همچنان دست به دست می‌شود! این در حالی است که هیچ‌یک از این اصطلاحات مصوب و پیشنهاد فرهنگستان نیستند و بارها و بارها ارتباط چنین تعبیراتی با فرهنگستان تکذیب شده است. مراجعه به وبگاه این مرکز علمی هم همین نکته را ثابت می‌کند.

ظاهراً عده‌ای برای لودگی و کسب شهرت یا رسیدن به اهداف خاص پروایی از گفتن دروغ‌های شاخدار و جعل

اصطلاحات بی‌ربط ندارند!

- (1) در عنوان خبر فاعل جمله را مشخص کنید. بعضیها
- (2) طبق عنوان، آنچه در ویدئو گفته شده همه دروغ است. *بله/خبر*
- (3) مرجع خبر چیست؟ *تسنیم*
- (4) در خبر از چه کسی نقل قول شده است؟ *محمد رضا ترکی*
- (5) این شخص چه رتبه ای دارد؟ *دانشیار گروه زبان و ادب فارسی*
- (6) این شخص عضو کجاست؟ *فرهنگستان زبان و ادب فارسی*
- (7) طبق متن، این شخص ادعا می کند که کلمات نقل شده در ویدئو و منصوب به فرهنگستان هیچ کدام برابر نهاد فرهنگستان نیست. *درست/غلط*
- (8) کلمه بالابر

## Notes

1) Two examples are at hand:

- a) E'atemad us-Saltane (1840–96), Naser ed-Din Shah's minister of publications, expressed his opposition to importation of new foreign words. He wrote:  
 "I lament that our present Persian language has mixed with foreign languages. There is no Academy in Asian countries that could rectify this problem so that we could have thirty to forty thousand new! Persian words in our hands and then we did not have the need to use non-Persian words in speaking and writing." See E'temad-us-Saltane (1985).
- b) In 1978 the President of the Academy is quoted as having said that the language needs one million new words! (Perry 1985). Given the times the numbers seem enormous.

2) Kia (1998) writes:

One early Iranian writer who glorified Iran's pre-Islamic history and called for a complete purification of Persian from all Arabic words and terminologies was the Qajar prince, Jalal od-Din Mirza (1832–71). The prince denounced the influence of the Arabic language and called on Iranians to read and study their history as an independent and ancient people. In order to demonstrate the ability of the Persian language to purge itself from Arabic words, Jalal od-Din Mirza wrote in a simple Persian free from Arabic words (i.e. Farsi-ye Sare).

It is interesting that his life was so short, especially among the Qajar dynasty, where one king alone ruled for fifty years and in the end was assassinated!

- 3) Badre'i (1977).
- 4) Badre'i (1977).
- 5) Badre'i (1977).
- 6) Badre'i (1977).
- 7) Wilber (1975)
- 8) As Perry (1985) notes, the Persianization of the army jargon was brought about very fast, this could be one of the factors that Reza Shah became impatient with the Academy. He might not have fully understood the difference between Army personnel, who are used to obeying orders without questioning them, and the population in general.
- 9) Wilber (1975).
- 10) For example, Qarajedagh was changed to Arasbaran, Soltanabad to Arak, Salehabad to Andimeshk and, Mohammareh to Khorramshahr. As for rivers, Qizil Ozan was changed to Sefidrud and Qara Ayni to Sia Cheshmeh. See Kia (1998)
- 11) Perry (1985)
- 12) Perry (1985).
- 13) Most of the materials in this and other sections that deal with the Third Academy have been translated by this author from the "Approved General Terms-1 and 2, Academy of the Persian language and literature, Terminology Department (1999, 2000).
- 14) The word /rāyāne/ has been taken from the stem of: /rāyānīdan/ meaning: to analyze, evaluate, compare, order, arrange, organize and the Persian concrete noun maker suffix /-e/, which was actually one of the creations of the Second Academy, is accepted and used.

- 15) This dictionary enjoys its own organization, sponsored by the government (both before and after the revolution) and can be said to be official. However, the most used dictionary is Moin, due to its more manageable volumes, (6 as opposed to about 50 for Dehkhoda) and price. Both the Moin and Dehkhoda have online versions which are pirated and truncated, hence inauthentic, users for whom authenticity is important will do better using the hardcopy of these dictionaries.
- 16) For a detailed list of Persian slang words, refer to:
  - 1) *Designing a Persian Slang Dictionary*. By Sarraf, Ramin. (2008). PhD dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin.
  - 2) *Persian Slang Dictionary*. By Sarraf, Ramin. (in progress). Hyattsville, MD: JTC Press.

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